

## SUNDAY OF THE MAN BORN BLIND



*Icon of the Ascension*

# *May 25, 2014*

## *SUNDAY OF THE MAN BORN BLIND*

*THE THIRD FINDING OF THE PRECIOUS HEAD OF THE HOLY AND GLORIOUS PROPHET, FORERUNNER AND BAPTIZER JOHN;  
PASSING INTO ETERNAL LIFE (1951) OF BLESSED MYKOLA (NICHOLAS) TSEHEL'SKYI, PRIEST AND MARTYR*

### *SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF MAY 26 – JUNE 1*

WEDNESDAY, MAY 28

6:00 PM – Great Vespers with Lytia for Ascension (fulfills obligation for Ascension)

THURSDAY, MAY 29 – THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD (OBLIGATORY FEAST)

9:00 AM – Paschal Matins

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy

SATURDAY, MAY 31

6:00 PM – Great Vespers

SUNDAY, JUNE 1 – *SUNDAY OF THE FATHERS OF THE 1ST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL; THE HOLY MARTYR JUSTIN  
THE PHILOSOPHER AND HIS COMPANIONS: CHARITON, CHARITA, EUPELISTUS, HIERAX, PEON,  
VALERIAN AND JUSTUS*

8:45 AM – Divine Praises

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy

Father James, Choir, Social Committee, and all parishioners:

One of the most special days of my life took place last Sunday when I was ordained to the Ministry of the Diaconate, and Susan and I would like to express our sincere appreciation for all the support you have given us. The singing for the Divine Liturgy was beautiful, the luncheon was wonderful and the food was delicious, but our appreciation goes beyond that. Your support and prayers over the past three years assisted Susan and me to endure many trials as we strived to achieve God's Will, and we now look forward to doing all we can to assist the parish as we strive to grow and to make the Word of God present to all.

Yours in Christ,  
Fr. Dcn. Frank

All Parishioners

### **Apostles of the Gulag**

#### **Prayerful Parent**

Priest and martyr Father Mykola Tsehelskyi was born on 17 December 1896 in the village of Strusiv, Ternopil District. In 1923, he graduated from the Theological Faculty of Lviv University. On 5 April 1925 Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky ordained him to the priesthood. He was a zealous priest who cared for the spirituality, education and welfare of his parishioners. After the war he was repressed by the Bolsheviks because he refused to convert to Russian Orthodoxy. Father drank deep from the bitter cup of intimidation, threats and beatings. On 28 October 1946 he was arrested and on 27 January 1947 he was sentenced to ten years imprisonment. He was deported to Mordovia (Russia), but his wife, three children and daughter-in-law were taken to Russia's Chytnyska region. He lived in extremely horrid conditions, in a camp that was notoriously strict and cruel. He suffered from severe pain due to illness, but this did not break his strong spirit.

He died a martyr for the faith on 25 May 1951 and is buried in the camp cemetery.

*"My dearest wife: the feast of the Dormition was our 25th wedding anniversary. I recall fondly our family life together, and every day in my dreams I am with you and the children, and this makes me happy ... I give a fatherly kiss to all their foreheads and I hope to live honestly, behaving blamelessly, keeping far from everything that is foul. I pray for this most of all." -- From the letters of Father Mykola Tsehelskyi written in Mordovia*

# MANY HATS, ONE PERSON: SIN AND ANXIETY

*By Douglas Cramer*

There's a phrase I like that sums up our life in the modern world: "We all wear many hats." It's true – we do. Time management gurus like Steven Covey encourage us to structure our schedules according to the different roles we play, the different hats we wear – spouse, parent, child, worker, householder, friend, athlete, volunteer. But here's what's great about the phrase "many hats" – if we think about it, it reminds us that even though we wear many hats, there's one person, the same person, underneath each of them.

You know what's wrong about focusing on our hats instead of the person underneath? It can lead us to fall in to a dangerous sin – the sin of anxiety. You may not think of anxiety as a sin. But Jesus Christ teaches us that anxiety leads us away from Him, and from our salvation. And whatever separates us from God is sinful. We must overcome anxiety and worry. And thank God, the Scriptures and the teachings of our Church teach us how.

Let me tell you though one thing that makes me anxious – the statistics on anxiety in America! According to the National Institute of Mental Health, 1 in 8 Americans between 18 and 54 have been diagnosed with an anxiety disorder. That's 20 million people! Anxiety is the number one mental health problem for women, and second only to drug and alcohol abuse for men. Anxiety is the most common mental health problem in America, more common than even depression.

Now Ben Franklin once said: "Do not anticipate trouble or worry about what may never happen. Keep in the sunlight." Keep in the sunlight. And as Christians, don't we know the source of the True Light? And don't we know that we can learn to live in that Light?

This points us towards the solution to anxiety. We get ourselves tangled up when we are too concerned about what will happen in the future. We worry and obsess about problems that may never come. The solution to this is so simple, it can seem foolish. It lies in one of Jesus's teachings from the Gospel of Matthew:

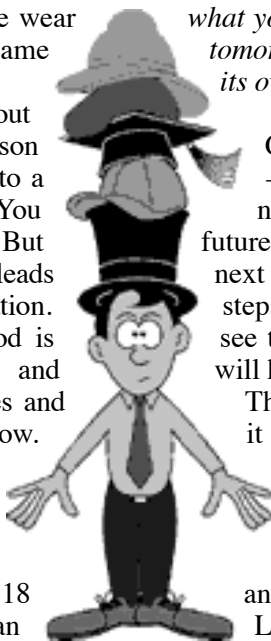
*Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. ... Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things.*

Fr. Anthony Coniaris once wrote that God always gives us light for our path - but only enough for us to take the next step. When we look towards the future, do we see the light shining on our next step? Or do we only see that all the steps beyond the next are still dark? Do we see the light, or do we worry about what will happen to us in the dark?

This is why anxiety is a sin – because it is rooted in fear, fear of what might happen to us. And worrying about ourselves always drives us away from God. There's a short book by the Christian writer CS Lewis that anyone can read, called "The Screwtape Letters." It's written as the letters of one devil to his underling Wormtongue, to

teach him how to be better at tempting humans. The senior devil, Screwtape, tells Wormtongue that "There's nothing like suspense and anxiety for barricading a human's mind against the Enemy [which is what the devils call God]. He wants men to be concerned with what they do; our business is to keep them thinking about what will happen to them."

When we are anxious about our future, about what will happen a month from now, or a year, or a decade, we are living as if we don't believe in





God. We are not trusting that He will be there for us. We are saying, “Even if there’s light shining on the next step I must take, I don’t trust You. I don’t trust that after I take that next step, You will shine your light on the step I must take after that.”

Our worry, our anxiety about the future, leaves us staring in to the unlit distance believing that all is dark. We can’t see; we’re blind. But if we follow our Lord’s teaching – “Do not worry about tomorrow” – we won’t be blind, we will be dazzled by the brightness shining on the next thing we need to do. And trusting in the light of God’s presence, we will focus on who we are now, instead of what we might need to do in the future. Of course it’s a lot easier to say “don’t worry, trust God” than it is to actually put it in to practice. But these are a couple of my own ideas about how to get started:

First, talk to God. If I start thinking that I’ve got to solve a problem all by myself, I start to worry. If it’s true that sharing a problem with someone else will help, how much more true is it that sharing a problem with God will help? So get in the habit of talking to God. Don’t get caught up in using words that sound prayerful. Just talk to God like you’d talk to someone you trust. “God, I’m worried about my meeting tomorrow. I’m worried I’ll get in trouble. I don’t know what to do.”

Next, listen! You know the old saying: We’ve got one mouth and two ears because we should listen twice as much as we talk. So listen for God’s answer, for a quiet voice – a voice in the heart, not the ears. Perhaps you’ll hear something like, “You’re worried about your meeting because you haven’t finished the project you promised you’d finish. Tomorrow you need to apologize for that; tonight you need to at least get started on it.”

Then, test God! This might seem disrespectful. But it’s not. In the book of Malachi, the Lord says:

*Prove Me now in this ... if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it.*

If you want to learn to trust God, you need to test God. You need to do what God tells you to do, to take the next step that he has lit up for you, and see what happens. In my experience I always find that God leads me from anxiety and worry to peace and joy.

This isn’t to belittle the seriousness of mental disorders. It is a sad truth that diseases of the brain are as real as any other physical illness, and that we should all be grateful to God for treatments that modern medicine has found for us. But we must understand that this fact co-exists with the fact that anxiety is also spiritual sickness, brokenness, and sin. And our Lord teaches us how to confront and heal this sickness.

Like any healing, overcoming anxiety takes time. If you are anxious, be gentle with yourself. Settle in to yourself, find the person under all the hats, and try to see the light that God is shining on the next step you should take. This light is His presence. He is here for us. Trust that He is showing you what you need to do next, this very moment. Remember the words of Jesus Christ: “Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?” We must trust that God will be always be here for us. Trust, and we will find peace. Even more, we will find the Prince of Peace.

*This reflection is adapted from a speech originally written for Fr. Christopher Metropulos of St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Ft. Lauderdale, FL, and SCOBA's Orthodox Christian Network. Learn more about the powerful ministries of OCN on their website, [www.myocn.net](http://www.myocn.net).*

## ASK FATHER:

**Question: Is there a dress code in the Church, and if so, why?**

**Answer:** First, it should be said, that it is a recent phenomenon in some Roman Catholic and Protestant churches to advertise “casual”, “relaxed” or even no dress code at all for worship and fellowship. This answer will not directly critique this practice other than to say that this has never been part of and is in clear contrast with Christian tradition.

Both the Old and New Testaments are full of calls to modesty and respectfulness not only in inward spirit but also in outward appearance as the one is connected to and influences the other. Since the time of Adam and Eve, who covered themselves with clothing after the Fall, the way in which one dressed has been directly connected to the way in which one relates to God and one's neighbor. Cleanliness, simplicity, appropriateness, humility, etc., are not only virtues of the soul but also virtues of the body, which, St. Paul tells us, is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

**Question: What's the dress code?**

**Answer:** The Scriptures offer us a dress code, with not only calls to the aforementioned virtuous principles, but also specific details in relation to: cross-dressing (Deut. 22:5), body markings (Deut. 14:1, Lev. 19:28), braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire (1 Tim. 2:9, 1 Pet. 3:3-4), and head coverings (1 Cor. 11) to name a few.

Now to be sure each of these references has nuances related to culture and epoch; for example men wear kilts in Scotland. Yet, just as it would be incorrect to overlook these nuances, so too would be incorrect to be dismissive of the teaching itself. Therefore, throughout the Christian world, the Scriptural teaching remains the ideal or standard, yet the application remains pastorally flexible in order to bring about spiritual growth and progress in the faithful. For this reason, one will observe both strict adherence to the dress code such as in monasteries or parishes whose faithful

are from traditionally Christian cultures, as well as appropriate flexibility in churches who pastorally care for and missionize non-Christian societies. In general, it is a good idea to be aware of the dress code, and not only refrain from being critical of it but also to respectfully follow it because it has salvific import for us and others.

**Question: What is the dress code at our Parish?**

**Answer:** There are four basic categories:

1) men, 2) women, 3) children, and 4) everyone.

1) Men should not wear hats, bandanas, shorts, sleeveless shirts, or casual footwear like sneakers. Shirts should be buttoned. Leaving the top button unbuttoned is OK if no tie is worn. Tight fitting clothing is just as inappropriate for men as for women.

2) Women should not wear miniskirts, spandex-tight clothing, low-cut or revealing tops (unless covered with a sweater or other garment), or casual footwear like sneakers.

3) Children should be given a little more flexibility but should still wear “church clothes” so that they know they are somewhere that is special and holy.

4) Everyone should refrain from clothing that is immodest, ostentatious, a fashion-statement, or otherwise distracting from the prayerful and sacred space of the Lord's House. Clothing or bodily adornments with images, symbols, or writing should not be worn or at least covered up, so that the holy icons and Word of God do not have to compete with the logo of our favorite sport team, the name of a music band, or the slogan of our political party.

This being said, we should not take it upon ourselves to enforce the dress code upon anyone else, especially visitors to our Church. As people become familiar with our way, they will slowly start to adapt themselves to the ways of the Church, naturally growing in Christ with that which pertains to both soul and body. If you have questions or concerns, please speak with Fr. James.



## *Appeal of His Beatitude Sviatoslav to the Faithful of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church on the Occasion of the Missionary Days*

Dearly Beloved in Christ!

Today I address all of you faithful of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, led by your priests and bishops, and invite each one of you to embark together with me on an extraordinary pilgrimage that will last for ten days—from the Ascension to the Descent of the Holy Spirit, Pentecost. We are calling this pilgrimage the *Missionary Days* in which we turn the attention of our entire Church towards our common vocation as “missionaries,” that is to say a community ready to share God’s Word of salvation with others.

The stages of this pilgrimage are based on a reading of the Acts of the Apostles throughout this decade of days for our overall growth, highlighting the following topics:

1. *The gift of baptism and divine adoption*: lest we forget, Whose children we are and that we have a “heavenly citizenship;”
2. *The Word of God*: to remind ourselves that God made Himself known to the human race and continues to speak to us;
3. *The teachers of faith*: to remember those who gave us the gift of faith and who now guide us in the faith;
4. *The gift of consecrated life*: to appreciate the great gift of monastic and religious communities in the Church and to accompany those vocations by our prayers;
5. *To be a disciple of Christ*: to feel the calling that God has for each of us—FOR ME—to follow Him and live according to His teaching;
6. *Responsibility for the gift of faith*: to be aware that this gift demands our continual response and efforts;
7. *Willingness to testify —to serve*: to give witness to God’s wonderful works and to serve Him and our neighbour as the Lord Himself showed us; 8) *Our Cross*: that we be not afraid of life’s difficulties and challenges, and carry our crosses bravely for the sake of Christ;
8. *To be filled with a missionary spirit*: to experience that to be with Christ is an indescribable joy that should be shared with everyone;
9. *The gift of the Holy Spirit*: that we may always be open to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit, Who already dwells in us and moves us towards what is good.

Once St. Joseph and the Blessed Virgin, making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, took the twelve-year-old Jesus by the hand and, for three days, walked patiently, enduring the hardships and struggles of the journey towards their meeting with God in the Lord’s temple. On the Sunday of the Samaritan Woman, we heard the following words about Jerusalem:

“But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him” (Jn 4: 23). Our pilgrimage, however, is not tied to a place, but rather to a spiritual state. It is important to listen and mediate on God’s word and our Holy Mother Church’s teachings that our pastors, priests and bishops hand down to us. With every passing day of our pilgrimage, may the gift of God’s love and the joy of sharing in the journey increase within us. On the tenth day, the feast of Pentecost, may we all fervently ask the Holy Spirit to restore in us the joy of our life in Christ, renewing our countenance as Christ’s disciples, reviving our parish communities, raising and resurrecting our native Ukraine.

Embarking together on this pilgrimage, let the entire parish community, as the People of God, gather on May 29th, the feast of the Ascension of the Lord, in their church. So as not to get lost and to make all of our stops together, in accordance with the defined daily program, I ask you to bring

along “The Guide to the Missionary Decade,” our pilgrimage’s itinerary. This little guide book can be purchased at your local parish and, in accordance with it, your pastors will lead you from the Ascension to Pentecost. If you cannot attend daily worship at your parish, make this spiritual pilgrimage at home with your family.

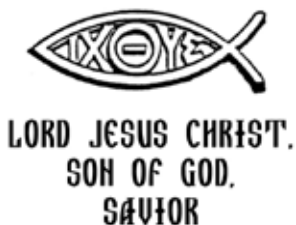
Today, on Mother’s Day, I especially want to greet all of our mothers and thank them for the birth, education and handing down of the gift of faith to their children and grandchildren. Today I’m praying for you to our Lord so that He may give you, dear mothers, the strength and grace in this time to take by the hand and guide your children—and entire family—to church so that we may all come together and make this missionary pilgrimage so as to grow in to the full measure of Christ’s disciples, who are willing to share with others their faith in the Lord.

† SVIATOSLAV

Given in Kyiv

at the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ

on the feast of the Holy Great Martyr, Victory-bearer and Wonderworker, George  
6 May 2014



### Sunday offering for May 18

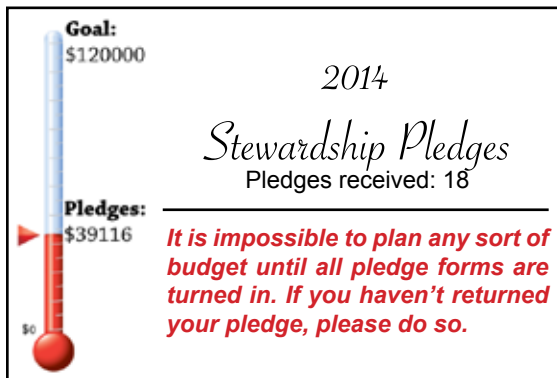
Amount	Number
\$15.00	2
\$20.00	2
\$32.00	1 (loose)
\$40.00	3
\$50.00	1
\$75.00	1
\$100.00	1
\$200.00	1
\$300.00	1
\$400.00	2
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\$1427.00	

Parishioner Total: \$1429.00

Average / parish household (42): \$34.80

Weekly Stewardship Goal: \$2125.00

Deficit: (\$698.00)



### Pastor:

Fr. James Bankston: (619) 905-5278

### Pastoral Council:

Fr. Deacon Frank Avant: (760) 805-1667

Vladimir Bachynsky: (619) 865-1279

Mark Hartman: (619) 446-6357

Luke Miller: (858) 354-2008

Jeanine Soucie: (718) 674-4529

### Social Committee Chairpersons:

Olga & Michael Miller:  
(858) 483-3294

### Finance Committee:

Bohdan Knianicky: (619) 303-9698

Fr. Deacon Frank Avant: (760) 805-1667



**Українська Греко-Католицька Церква  
Святого Йоана Хрестителя  
St. John the Baptizer  
Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church**

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La Mesa, CA 91941  
Parish Office: (619) 697-5085

**Website:** [stjohnthebaptizer.org](http://stjohnthebaptizer.org)

**Pastor:** Fr. James Bankston  
[frjames@mac.com](mailto:frjames@mac.com)

Fr. James' cell phone: (619) 905-5278

*The Joy of Entering Heaven Through the Flesh of Jesus*

Dearly beloved, through all this time between the Resurrection of the Lord and His Ascension, the providence of God thought of this, taught this and penetrated their eyes and heart. He wanted them to recognize the Lord Jesus Christ as truly risen, who was truly born, truly suffered and truly died. The manifest truth strengthened the blessed apostles and all the disciples who were frightened by His death on the cross and were doubtful of His Resurrection. The result was they were not only afflicted with sadness but also were filled with "great joy" when the Lord went into the heights of heaven. It was certainly a great and indescribable source of joy when, in the sight of the heavenly multitudes, the nature of our human race ascended over the dignity of all heavenly creatures. It passed the angelic orders and was raised beyond the heights of archangels. In its ascension, our human race did not stop at any other height un-

til this same nature was received at the seat of the eternal Father. Our human nature, united with the divinity of the Son, was on the throne of His glory.

The Ascension of Christ is our elevation. Hope for the body is also invited where the glory of the Head preceded us. Let us exult, dearly beloved, with worthy joy and be glad with a holy thanksgiving. Today we not only are established as possessors of paradise, but we have even penetrated the heights of the heavens in Christ. The indescribable grace of Christ, which we lost through the "ill will of the devil," prepared us more fully for that glory. Incorporated within Himself, the Son of God placed those whom the violent enemy threw down from the happiness of our first dwelling at the right hand of the Father. The Son of God lives and reigns with God the Father almighty and with the Holy Spirit forever and ever, Amen. (*St. Leo the Great*)