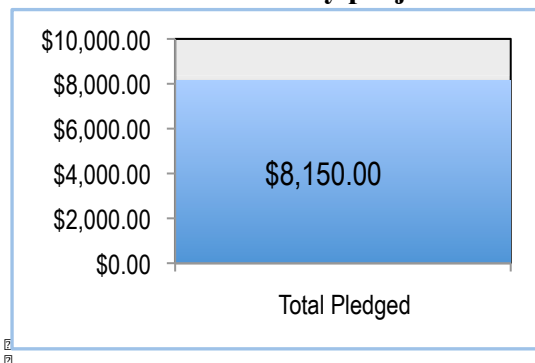


FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
FIFTEENTH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW



Icon of Zacharias -- September 5th



Catechism for Youth and Young Adults

(5-18) will begin in October. Registration forms are available in the church hall. Please return them to Fr. James by September 19th so that the appropriate number of needed texts can be ordered. The schedule and cost of text books for the classes will be determined once the number of students has been finalized.

Generations of Faith

On Sunday September 19th after the Divine Liturgy we will continue our whole parish catechetical program called "Generations of Faith." There will be a Pot-Luck luncheon followed by the learning session.

Special Presentation Today



Alexander Kuzma, Executive Director of the Ukrainian Catholic Education Foundation (UCEF) is visiting San Diego this weekend. UCEF is the primary North American organization supporting the University in L'viv. I have invited him to give a talk to our parish following the Divine Liturgy today. He will talk about the Ukrainian Catholic University's plans for their new campus in L'viv. He will also talk about recent developments affecting the University's struggle for academic and religious freedom. It promises to be an interesting talk. There will be an opportunity for Q&A. Please join us in the church hall.

For more information about UCEF and its activities visit its website: ucef.org.

WALKING DOWN THE PATH

Adapted from Parish Publishing LLC

In his book, *In His Light*, the Rev. William Anderson opens with a delightful story about a farm boy who had a fear of the dark. One night the boy's father told him to go to the barn and feed the horses. The boy turned pale. With this, his father stepped onto the porch, lit a lantern, and held it up.

"Son," he said, "how far can you see?" "I can see halfway to the barn," the boy said. The father gave his son the lantern and said, "Walk halfway to the barn." When the boy reached the halfway point, the father called out, "How far can you see now?" The boy said, "I can see the barn." "Good," said the father, "walk to the barn door." When the boy called back that he had reached the barn door, the father said, "Open it and tell me what you can see." The boy open the door and shouted back, "I can see the horses!" "Good," said the father, "now feed them."

That story makes an excellent point. The lantern didn't light up the whole barnyard. It lit up only a part of the path leading to the barn. But that was enough to get the boy started down the path. And as the boy walked down the path, he found the rest of the way himself.

Like the boy, we all need to get started down the path... the path of accepting the challenge of becoming partners in God's work on earth. To do this we need two things: the light of Christ and the courage to follow where this light leads. If we have this light and this courage we will be able to overcome our fears and fulfill our service to the Lord. What is our path? Where is the Lord trying to lead us?



THE NATIVITY OF THE MOST-HOLY THEOTOKOS AND EVER-VIRGIN MARY

Celebrated on September 8th



The Most Holy Virgin Mary was born at a time when people had reached such a degree of moral decay that it seemed altogether impossible to restore them. People often said that God must come into the world to restore faith and not permit the ruin of mankind.

The Son of God chose to take on human nature for the salvation of mankind, and chose as His Mother the All-Pure Virgin Mary, who alone was worthy to give birth to the Source of purity and holiness.

The Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary is celebrated by the Church as a day of universal joy. Within the context of the Old and the New Testaments, the Most Blessed Virgin Mary was born on this radiant day, having been chosen before the ages by Divine Providence to bring about the Mystery of the Incarnation of the Word of God. She is revealed as the Mother of the Savior of the World, Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Most Holy Virgin Mary was born in the small city of Galilee, Nazareth. Her parents were Righteous Joachim of the tribe of the Prophet-King David, and Anna from the tribe of the First Priest Aaron. The couple was without child, since St Anna was barren. Having reached old age, Joachim and Anna did not lose hope in God's mercy. They had strong faith that for God everything is possible, and that He would be able to overcome the barrenness of Anna even in her old age, as He had once overcome the barrenness of Sarah, spouse of the Patriarch Abraham. Ss Joachim and Anna vowed to dedicate the child which the Lord might give them, to the service of God in the Temple.

Childlessness was considered among the Hebrews as a Divine punishment for sin, and therefore the righteous Ss Joachim and Anna had to endure abuse from their own countrymen. On one of the feastdays at the Temple in Jerusalem the elderly Joachim brought his sacrifice to offer to God, but the High Priest would not accept it, considering him to be unworthy since he was childless.

St Joachim in deep grief went into the wilderness, and there he prayed with tears to the Lord for a

child. St Anna wept bitterly when she learned what had happened at the Jerusalem Temple. Never once did she complain against the Lord, but rather she prayed to ask God's mercy on her family.

The Lord fulfilled her petitions when the pious couple had attained to extreme old age and prepared themselves by virtuous life for a sublime calling: to be the parents of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, the future Mother of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Archangel Gabriel brought Joachim and Anna the joyous message that their prayers were heard by God, and of them would be born a most blessed daughter Mary, through Whom would come the Salvation of all the World.

The Most Holy Virgin Mary surpassed in purity and virtue not only all mankind, but also the angels. She was manifest as the living Temple of God so the Church sings in its festal hymns: "the East Gate.. bringing Christ into the world for the salvation of our souls".

The Nativity of the Theotokos marks the change of the times

when the great and comforting promises of God for the salvation of the human race from slavery to the devil are about to be fulfilled. This event has brought to earth the grace of the Kingdom of God, a Kingdom of Truth, piety, virtue and everlasting life. The Theotokos is revealed to all of us by grace as a merciful Intercessor and Mother, to Whom we have recourse with filial devotion.



Troparion – tone 4

Your Nativity, O Virgin, has proclaimed joy to the whole universe! The Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God, has shone from you, O Theotokos! By annulling the curse, He bestowed a blessing. By destroying death, He has granted us eternal life.

Kontakion – tone 4

By your Nativity, O Most-Pure Virgin, Joachim and Anna are freed from barrenness; Adam and Eve from the corruption of death. And we, your people, freed from the guilt of sin, celebrate and sing to you: The barren woman gives birth to the Theotokos, the Nourisher of our Life.

TRUE BEAUTY, PASSED BY?

Adapted from an article by Tom Beaton

Washington, DC Metro Station on a cold January morning in 2007. The man with a violin played six Bach pieces for about 45 minutes. During that time approx. 2 thousand people went through the station, most of them on their way to work. After 3 minutes a middle aged man noticed there was a musician playing. He slowed his pace and stopped for a few seconds and then hurried to meet his schedule.



- ❖ 4 minutes later: the violinist received his first dollar: a woman threw the money in the hat and, without stopping, continued to walk.
- ❖ 6 minutes: A young man leaned against the wall to listen to him, then looked at his watch and started to walk again.
- ❖ 10 minutes: A 3-year old boy stopped but his mother tugged him along hurriedly. The kid stopped to look at the violinist again, but the mother pushed hard and the child continued to walk, turning his head all the time. This action was repeated by several other children. Every parent, without exception, forced their children to move on quickly.
- ❖ 45 minutes: The musician played continuously. Only 6 people stopped and listened for a short while. About 20 gave money but continued to walk at their normal pace. The man collected a total of \$32.
- ❖ 1 hour: He finished playing and silence took over. No one noticed. No one applauded, nor was there any recognition.

No one knew this, but the violinist was Joshua Bell, one of the greatest musicians in the world. He played one of the most intricate pieces ever written, with a violin worth \$3.5 million dollars. Two days before Joshua Bell sold out a theater in Boston where the seats averaged \$100.

This is a true story. Joshua Bell playing incognito in the metro station was organized by the Washington Post as part of a social experiment about perception, taste and people's priorities. The questions raised: in a common place environment at an inappropriate hour, do we perceive beauty? Do we stop to appreciate it? Do we recognize talent in an unexpected context?

One possible conclusion reached from this experiment could be this: If we do not have a moment to stop and listen to one of the best musicians in the world, playing some of the finest music ever written, with one of the most beautiful instruments ever made.... How many other things are we missing? Are we hurrying past what is most important and truly beautiful in life?

The Lord said to His disciples: "Blessed are the eyes which see the things that you see. For I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen them, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard them." In Jesus Christ, the God-Man, we have not only the revelation of Who God is – the Source of all true beauty, wisdom, goodness and love, but we also have the revelation of man is called to be – how we are to live, what our priorities are supposed to be, where we can find true fulfillment. The Lord reveals to us the very meaning of life, both in this age and in the next: "and this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."

Life is busy. We each feel ourselves constantly pulled along from one thing to the next. There never seems to be enough time. Yet, unless we are able to slow down a bit, we will miss what is truly beautiful in life, what truly matters, what the Lord calls the "better part", "the one thing truly needful". Take the time, or better yet, make the time, for God and each other. In so doing, you will experience the true beauty of life, you will be granted a taste of the Kingdom to come. Joshua Bell sold out theaters because of his beautiful music but few listened in the busy subway. Jesus Christ offers us the free gift of eternal life, the beauty of the Age to come, but few make the time in this busy world to receive the gift. The question for us is: In a common place environment at an inappropriate hour, do we perceive true beauty? Do we stop to appreciate it?

Святкуємо 50-років!

Celebrating 50 Years!

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

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Zacharias and Elizabeth

Zachary (Zacharias) was a priest in the Temple of Jerusalem. His wife, Elizabeth, the Theotokos' cousin, was beyond childbearing age. Zachary was told by angel in a vision that they would have a son and they should name him John. When Zachary doubted this he was struck dumb and could not speak. After the birth of The Forerunner, Zachary's speech was restored when he wrote, "John is his name."

Elizabeth was visited by the Ever-Virgin Mary, at which time Mary spoke the hymn of praise known as the Magnificat. This is all that is known of Elizabeth and Zacharias, and is found in the first chapter of St. Luke's Gospel.

According to many Fathers of the Church, based on an ancient tradition, Zacharias was slain between the temple and the altar (Matt. 23:35). The reasons being: first, because even after the Virgin Mary gave birth, he continued to refer to her as virgin and number her among the virgins; second, because Zacharias' son John was not found during the slaughter of the Innocents, since the elderly Elizabeth had taken him and carefully hid him while he was yet an infant, in an unnamed place somewhere in the desert, where, according to the Evangelist, "the child grew, and became strong in spirit, and was in the deserts until the day of his manifestation to Israel" (Luke 1:80). When the child John was not found, his father, Zachary, was slain by Herod's command.