

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
SECOND SUNDAY OF LUKE



*Icon of Charitina and Methodia -- October 5th*



**October 5, 2014**

**Tone 8**

**SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**  
**THE HOLY MARTYR CHARITINA**

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 6 – OCTOBER 12

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11

**PLEASE NOTE: NO VESPERS THIS EVENING**

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12 – *SUNDAY OF THE FATHERS OF THE 7TH ECUMENICAL COUNCIL; THE HOLY MARTYRS PROBUS, TARACHUS AND ANDRONICUS; OUR HOLY FATHER COSMAS OF JERUSALEM, BISHOP OF MAIUMA AND HYMNOGRAPHER; ST. MARTIN THE MERCIFUL, BISHOP OF TOURS*

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy

For All Parishioners

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*If you are reading the bulletin during the Liturgy (including the homily),  
please **stop** and be attentive - будьмо уважні!*

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**Fr. James & Fr. Deacon Frank  
will be away...**

Fr. James and Fr. Deacon Frank will be out of town from 10/6/14 through 10/9/14 for the annual clergy retreat. In case of an emergency please contact either Fr. Matthew Alejo of Holy Angels Byzantine Catholic Church at (858) 277-2511 or (661) 800-8383, or Fr. James Babcock at (714) 600-3660.

***Pastoral Visits***

As a new deacon serving our parish I would like to take the opportunity to meet and visit with everyone in order to get to know you better and to understand how I might best serve you and our community. I will be contacting everyone to set up a convenient time to meet.

– Fr. Deacon Frank

***Iconography Workshop Postponed***

Due to a delay in Oleh Skoropadsky's travel to the U.S. the iconography workshop has been postponed.

**Warm Welcome!**

We warmly welcome all of our visitors!  
It is a blessing to have you with us!

*Thank You!* to everyone who helped with the Open House yesterday. Your time, talent and treasure are greatly appreciated!

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*Our parish Praznyk dinner will  
be held next Sunday, October 12.*

**October Birthdays**

Andriy Ivasyk	– October 1
Erin Avant	– October 6
Olga Gerega	– October 14
Joseph Hartman	– October 18
Mark Lozovyj	– October 28
Christia Bankston	– October 29

## MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

by Metropolitan ANTHONY (Bloom)

We cannot partake deeply of the life of God unless we change profoundly. It is therefore essential that we should go to God in order that He should transform and change us, and that is why, to begin with, we must all become converts. Conversion in Latin and Hebrew means a turn, a change in the direction of things.

Conversion means that instead of spending our lives in looking in all directions, we should follow one direction only. It is a turning away from a great many things that we know are ultimately not good for us. The first impact of conversion is to modify our sense of values: God being at the center of all, everything acquires a new position and a new depth. All that is God's, all that belongs to Him, is positive and real. Everything that is outside of Him ultimately has no value or meaning.

But it is not a change of mind alone that we can call conversion. We can change our minds and go no further; what must follow is an act of will and unless our will comes into motion and is redirected Godwards, there is no conversion; at most there is only an incipient, still dormant and inactive change in us.

Repentance must not be mistaken for remorse, it does not consist in feeling terribly sorry that things went wrong in the past; it is an active, positive attitude, which consists in moving in the right direction.

It is made very clear in the parable of the two sons (Mt. 21 :28) who were commanded by their father to go to work in the vineyard. The one said, "I am going," but did not go. The other said, "I am not going," and then felt ashamed and went to work.

This was real repentance, and we should never lure ourselves into imagining that to lament one's past is an act of repentance. It is part of it, of course, but repentance remains unreal and barren as long as it has not led us to doing the will of the Father. We have a tendency to think that it should result in fine emotions and we are quite often satisfied with emotions instead of real, deep changes.

## WORDS EVERY CHRISTIAN SHOULD KNOW

**Holiness** consists not only in the absence of evil or sin: holiness is the presence of higher spiritual values, joined to purity from sin. God is the only one holy by nature. He is the Source of holiness for angels and men. Men can attain holiness only in God, "not by nature, but by participation, by struggle and prayer" (St. Cyril).

**Asceticism** is man's struggle to keep the commandments of Christ. It encompasses not only his bodily and spiritual effort, but also the method by which he passes through the three stages of the spiritual life, namely: purification, illumination, and deification (union with God).

**Purification** refers to the process by which one is cleansed from the passions through: 1) the rejection of all evil thoughts and desires from the mind and heart, 2) the turning of the soul's three powers (reason, desire, and will) towards God, and 3) the overcoming of self-love by love for God and neighbor.

**Illumination** refers to the process by which the grace of the Holy Spirit, received in Baptism, enlightens the person purified (or at least being purified) of the passions to the true knowledge of God and creation. Illumination is seen primarily in the gift of discernment by which one distinguishes between 1) what is from God or above nature, 2) what is according to nature or good, and 3) what is unnatural or evil.

**Deification** is union with God, the goal of Christian life; experienced in part during this life, but more fully and unendingly in the next. Scripture says that God is a consuming fire. When man is united with God in the state of pure prayer, he becomes entirely engulfed in the flame of divine love and sees the Uncreated Light of Divinity. This state cannot be described in words but is known only through experience. Union with God imparts immeasurable love, humility, and thankfulness. Deification is what man was created for from the beginning; it is what makes man truly man.



# HAS YOUR BIBLE BECOME A QURAN?

*Fr. Stephen Freeman*

<http://blogs.ancientfaith.com/glory2godforallthings/2014/10/01/bible-become-quran/>

Those who engage in debates on a regular basis know that the argument itself can easily shape the points involved. This is another way of saying that some debates should be avoided entirely since merely getting involved in them can be the road to ruin. There are a number of Christian scholars (particularly among the Orthodox) who think that the classical debates between Christians and Muslims during the Middle Ages had just such disastrous results for Christian thinking.

Now when engaging in religious debates it is all too easy to agree to things that might make for later problems. It is possible, for example, to agree to a comparison of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament and the Book of the Quran. After all, Muslims have a holy book – Christians have a holy book. Why should we not debate whose holy book is better?

It is even possible to agree with the Muslim contention that Christians (and Jews) are “People of the Book.” Of course Muslims meant that Christians and Jews were people of an inferior book, but were somehow better than pagans. Again, it is possible, nevertheless, to let the matter ride and agree that Christians are “People of the Book.”

And it is also possible to give wide latitude to the Muslim claim that the most essential matter with regard to God is “Islam,” that is “submission.” After all, if God is the Lord of all creation, then how is submitting to Him, recognizing and accepting that He is God, not the most important thing?

But each of these proposals had disastrous results in the history of Christianity and may very well be the source of a number of modern distortions within the Christian faith.

Thus, at the outset I will state:

1. The Bible is not the Christian Holy Book.
2. Christians (and Jews) are not People of the Book.
3. Submission to God is not a proper way to describe the Christian faith

Further, any and all of these claims, once accepted, lead to fundamental distortions of Christianity. An extreme way of saying this is that much of modern Christianity has been “Islamified.” Thinking critically about this is important – particularly in an era of renewed contact with Islam.

## **The Historical Debates**

Most modern Christians are unaware of the contacts and debates between Christianity (particularly in the West) and Islam (particularly in Spain) during the Middle Ages. A great deal of the learning in early European Universities, especially in the model of scholasticism, owed much to the encounter with Islam scholasticism – this was especially so for the work with Aristotelean philosophy. Christian, Jewish and Muslim scholars, such as Thomas Aquinas, Moses Maimonides, and Ibn Rushd (Averroes), are foundational for Medieval thought. (Averroes is sometimes called the “Founding Father of Western secularism”). But the rationalist movement represented by these schools had lasting effects in the Christian West – not all for the best.

The notion of the Scripture as the Book whose place and authority in Christian life are similar to the Quran in Islamic life is one such idea. Islam has no Church – no one stands between the believer and Allah. There are communities, to be sure, but not in the necessary form of classical Christianity. The exaltation of the

sovereignty of God and the working of the Divine Will (predestination) are hallmarks of Muslim thought. They eventually become hallmarks within certain forms of Christian scholasticism.

The Protestant Reformation is rightly described as a product of Christian scholasticism. Other historical forces shaped it, but it is worth noting that Luther, Calvin and their like were all “schoolmen.” Their ideas, particularly in Calvin, were largely absent prior to the Medieval dialogs with Islamic scholasticism. It is not that the Reformers borrowed directly from Islam – but that Islam contributed certain key notions that have, in time, become foundational for certain segments of contemporary Christianity.

### **The Bible is not the Christian Holy Book**

As I have recently written, the Bible is properly seen as the Holy Scriptures, a collection of writings that span some 1500 years or more. They represent a variety of genres, address very different situations and understandings of God, and lastly (in the case of the New Testament) represent the internal documents of the primitive Christian community. Christians treat these books as inspired, though there are some books not included, or only included by some Christians, that are also recognized as having a case for inspiration.

The Christian Scriptures are books (particularly in the Old Testament) that have a unique history of interpretation. Christians and Jews, traditionally, do not read these books in the same manner. In such a sense, they do not possess an “objective” meaning. Indeed, Christian Fathers have recognized more than one meaning being present in the text.

The Christian community predates its own texts (the New Testament) and is not described as in any way having a foundation on the Scriptures – the Apostles and Prophets are described as the foundation of the Church. And though the Tradition does not describe the Scriptures as

somehow inferior to the Church, neither do they consider the Scriptures to exist apart from the Church. They are the Church’s book.

In short, the place of the Scriptures within Christianity are utterly unlike the place of the Quran in Islam. Any confusion on this point is a distortion of the Scriptures.

### **We are not People of the Book**

Christians are not baptized into the Bible. Jews were circumcised and made part of the Covenant people before ever a word of Scripture was written. God revealed Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob some hundreds of years before Moses ever wrote a line.

Christians may rightly see Islam as an ersatz version of Christianity – an attempt to create a rival to meet the peculiar needs and desires of the man, Muhammed. The Quran is Muhammed’s distorted idea of the role played by a “book” in the life of Christianity and Judaism. It is his attempt to create a rival. But this book, unlike any writing or utterance of a Biblical prophet, came with new claims. The Quran is what a misinformed desert preacher thought the Christian and Jewish holy books looked like. It is a poor substitute and a caricature of those writings. In this sense, the Quran is more akin to the Book of Mormon, a fabrication that tells what Upstate New York con-men thought an ancient religious book should look like. It tells us much about the mind of 19th century Upstate New York, but nothing about God. The Quran tells us about the perception of a 7th century Arabian merchant, but nothing about God.

It is thus a supreme religious irony that such a misperception should have changed how Christians saw their own sacred texts. But, it can be argued, this is indeed the case. The movement from authoritative Church to authoritative book that occurs over the 15th and 16th centuries (the Protestant Reformation), should not be considered apart from the dialog with Islam in the two or three centuries that preceded it. It is

worth noting that scholasticism in the West was largely begun in Andalusian Islam. It was not a natural development from within. Scholasticism was ultimately rejected in the Christian East.

Martin Luther's, "Hier, stehe ich!" (demanding that only a Scriptural argument would be an acceptable response to his position) would have been unimaginable four or five hundred years before. The "Bible" had not yet become a Christian Quran. Today, however, many Christians are indeed, "People of the Book."

### **Christianity is not submission to God**

On the face of it, denying that Christianity is submission to God seems ludicrous. Surely, if God is truly God, then submission to Him is the only proper response. But submission is not a word that passes the lips of Christ. His invitation to become a child of the Father is not a demand to submit to the Supreme Being. It is why there can be no conversion at the point of a sword in Christianity, and why conversions at the point of a sword have never ceased in Islam. (Such conversions have indeed occurred in Christian history – but have been later subjected to deep criticism and condemnation).

The question placed in Christian Baptism (Orthodox) is: "Do you unite yourself to Christ?" This is the language of union, reflecting St. Paul's teaching that Baptism is union with the death and resurrection of Christ. The modern Evangelical phrase, "Do you accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior?" has more in common with Muslim submission. For there need be no union implied in the question – many who have become Christians under the guise of this question have no perception of union whatsoever.

Obedience to the gospel is, in critically important ways, not at all the same thing as submission. In proper Christian understanding, obedience is a cooperative action, a synergy between God and believer. As such, it is part of the eternal dance of union between Creator and created.

Submission (particularly as taught in Islam) contains no synergy – it is the recognition of a force that can only move in one direction. It is the diminution of the human person, even its obliteration. Obedience, rightly understood, is an invitation into true Personhood – and, strangely, the beginning of true freedom.

Classical Christianity exalts the dignity of the human person and proclaims a gospel that unites humankind to God. The proclamation of Christ's Lordship, though derived from Christian teaching, can easily become a distortion that takes on the submission demands of classical Islam. I have seen such a Christianity. It is not a pleasant place to dwell.

Contemporary Christianity needs to come to its historic senses and reexamine its various distortions of the gospel. Christ is not a cypher for Allah – they are nothing alike. The fullness of Christian distinctives is required in our present confrontation with Islam. The Bible is not the Christian Quran. It is nothing like it. Being able to articulate this is essential. Christians are the Body of Christ and not People of the Book. The absence of a true ecclesiology in contemporary Christianity is a hallmark of its Islamification. The call to relationship with God in Christ, true union in the Divine Life of the Triune God, must be rightly proclaimed and taught among Christians. We have centuries of unthinking to do if we are to reclaim the wholeness of the Christian faith and speak truth to error.





### ***Please Note:***

When you are away, please don't forget that the church still relies on your contributions. Our bills do not go on vacation. Your absence on any Sunday does not negate your obligation to support your home parish.

### ***Cards for sale***

Various Greeting Cards are available for sale in the church hall following each Divine Liturgy. See Mary Kitt to purchase.

### **Going to the Hospital?**

Please let your Father James know, so that he can add you to the prayer list, or, if you like, pay you a visit. If you know someone else is in the hospital please let Fr. James know.

## **Share 2014**

We do not doubt the Resurrection of Christ, His gift of salvation to us all. How are we prepared to reciprocate for this most wondrous of gifts? Let us help our eparchy bring Christ's salvation to others by making a contribution to **Share 2014 – Annual Eparchial Appeal.**

Ми не сумніваємося у Воскресінні Христа і Його дару для нашого спасіння. Як ми готові віддячити Йому за цей найчудовіший із всіх дарів? То ж допоможемо нашій єпархії принести Христове спасіння до інших внесок в **Share 2014 – Єпархіальний Заклик.**

#### **Goal:**

\$120000

2014

*Stewardship Pledges*

Pledges received: 18

#### **Pledges:**

\$39116

***It is impossible to plan any sort of budget until all pledge forms are turned in. If you haven't returned your pledge, please do so.***

### **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:**

Vacant: Please consider volunteering as chairperson.

### **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  
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***Loving Our Enemies***

Those who close their eyes to the demands of love fall asleep in the desire for worldly pleasures. Therefore be watchful. Eating, drinking, carousing, gambling, and hunting are pleasures, but evils of every kind follow in the wake of these vanities. No one can deny that they are enjoyable, but love of God's law must come first, for to love God means to keep His commandments. Which commandments? You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, and you must love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

My brothers and sisters, to widen our hearts we need not depend upon ourselves. Ask God to help you love one another – to love everyone without exception, not just your friends but enemies as well; not because they are your brothers and sisters in Christ, but so that they may be.

Pray that you may always have a warm fraternal love for other people, both for those who have become your brothers and sisters, and for your enemies that they may become such. Whenever you love brothers or sisters you love friends, for they are already with you, joined to you in faith unity. If they live virtuously you love them as people who have been changed from enemies into brothers and sisters. But suppose you love people who do not yet believe in Christ, or if they do, yet believe as the devil believes – they believe in Christ but still do not love Him. You must love just the same, you must love even people like that, you must love them as brothers and sisters. They are not such yet, but you must love them so that they may become such through your kindness. All our love, then, must be fraternal.

*St. Caesarius of Arles*