

TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



*Icon of Saint Andrew -- November 30th*



***November 29, 2015***

**27TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – *TONE 2***

**THE HOLY MARTYR PARAMON;**

**THE HOLY MARTYR PHILOMENUS AND HIS COMPANIONS;**

**OUR VENERABLE FATHER ACACIUS, WHO IS MENTIONED IN “THE LADDER”**

**SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF NOVEMBER 30 – DECEMBER 6**

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5**

**6:00 PM – Great Vespers**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6 – 28TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST;**

**OUR HOLY FATHER NICHOLAS, ARCHBISHOP OF MYRA IN LYCIA, WONDERWORKER**

**8:45 AM – Divine Praises**

**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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### **Mark Your Calendars**



On December 13 St. Nicholas will visit our parish. Please come and greet him and enjoy the Christmas bake sale and bazaar.



### **Varenyky for sale!**

Place your order with Olena Bankston. Other food items such as holubtsi, kolach, kutia can be made to order. Speak with Olena Bankston.

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

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

### **THE NATIVITY FAST**

began November 15<sup>th</sup>, and concludes at the Divine Liturgy on Christmas day, December 25<sup>th</sup>. This 40 day fast is given to prepare us for the celebration of the Lord's birth in the flesh. During this time we should not only modify our diet so we can change our minds and hearts, but we should also seek to avail ourselves of God's forgiveness and grace in the Sacraments of Holy Confession and Communion. Questions? Please see Fr. James.

### **PARISHIONERS THAT ARE HOME BOUND**



If you or a loved one cannot make it to Church, Fr. James would be more than pleased visit at your home, in the hospital, at a nursing home, or any other place. It is no inconvenience at all.

Please be sure to schedule a visit.



# LET MY PRAYER RISE — THE SACRED CENSER

by Michael Gavalas, [trisagionfilms.com](http://trisagionfilms.com)

The offering of incense has long been part of the worship of God since the Lord commanded Moses to burn incense to Him in the Tabernacle on Mount Sinai.

“When Aaron lights the lamps in the evening, he shall burn incense on it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations.” – Exodus 30: 8

A half-century before the coming of Christ, Malachi gives “a remarkable and clear prophecy that the Gentiles, in their worship of God, in every place or church will burn incense before Him – as Israel had done.”<sup>1</sup>

“‘For from the rising of the sun even to its going down, My name has been glorified among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered to My name, and a pure offering, for my name shall be great among the Gentiles,’ says the Lord almighty.” – Malachi 1:11

Continuing even to this day, incense is offered in nearly every service of the Orthodox Church through the use of a metal censer. The rising smoke, the sweet aroma of incense, and the sound of the bells on the censer mix with the sound of the chanting and the visual scene of icons in worship. With our senses are fully engaged, and our mind and heart are elevated towards God.

The incense spreading throughout the church symbolizes the prayers of the faithful sent up to God and at the same time it is a symbol the Holy Spirit mysteriously embracing them.

It is also a reminder of the frankincense given to Christ by the Three Wise Men and of the sweet smelling myrrh which was prepared to anoint Christ at His burial.

The metal censer is also filed with symbolism, with the bottom bowl representing the universe, of which earth is a part. The top bowl represents the heavens. The twelve bells represent the voice of the twelve apostles and their teachings.

The fire pot is earth and the charcoal is man who requires the fire of the Holy Spirit to give him life and light. We blow on the charcoal to set it afire just as God put life in man by breathing on him.

During the service, incense is placed on the smoldering coals in the censer, which the deacon or the priest then swings to and fro, censuring the church, the icons, and then the people. This indicates that we are all icons of Christ and acknowledging the image and likeness of God within each, as we bow reverently.

Even in heavenly worship, God is honored with incense, as described in Revelations, with the prayers of the saints rising up before God, accompanied with incense from the hand of an angel

Before every censuring the priest reads a quiet prayer:

Listening to this prayer we understand that the smoke visible to everyone denotes the invisible presence of the Lord's grace, which is sanctifying the faithful.



1 Note from Orthodox Study Bible (Thomas Nelson Pub.)

## WHAT IS “A CATHOLIC IN GOOD STANDING?”

In a poll conducted by Bishops in the U.S. which was released in April of 2008:

- 68 % of all Catholics surveyed believed that they could be in good standing with the Church without going to Mass / Divine Liturgy weekly.
- 30% said they go to Confession (Reconciliation-Penance) less than once a year and
- 45% said they never go at all.

The truth of what “a Catholic in good standing” must do is summed up in the following six items known officially as **“Precepts of the Catholic Church” (Церковні заповіді):**

The five precepts of the Church are set in the context of a moral life bound to and nourished by liturgical life. The obligatory character of these positive laws decreed by the pastoral authorities is meant to guarantee to the faithful the indispensable MINIMUM in the spirit of prayer and moral effort, in the growth in love of God and neighbor.

1. The first precept “You shall attend Mass (Divine Liturgy) on Sundays and holy days of obligation” requires the faithful to participate in the Eucharistic celebration when the Christian community gathers together on the day commemorating the Resurrection of the Lord. In 1996 the Vatican’s Instructions for Applying the Liturgical Prescriptions of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches (<http://www.ewtn.com/library/curia/eastinst.htm>) recognized in paragraph 64, that “The Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches thus provides for the possibility, inspired by n. 15 of the *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, to satisfy the precept of Sunday either by participating in the Divine Liturgy, or by taking part in the Divine Office.” Thus, the 1999 PASTORAL GUIDE OF THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE USA, states: “Art. 170 - Although

every Catholic may fulfill his obligation of assisting at the Divine Liturgy, Vespers or Matins on Sundays and holy days in any Catholic church, our faithful should as a rule attend their own parish church,” and Article 460 further reiterates this: “Art. 460 - The celebration of the Canonical Hours, especially Matins and Vespers must be introduced where they have fallen into disuse in parishes, especially since the decision of the Holy See (of Rome) now allows these canonical services to satisfy the Sunday and Holydays obligation of the faithful by their participation in them.” So if – on a particular Sunday - the Divine Liturgy is being celebrated at an inconvenient time, one may attend the Matins or the Vespers, rather than not attending any service at all.

2. The second precept “You shall confess your sins at least once a year” ensures preparation for the Eucharist by the reception of the sacrament of reconciliation (confession-penance), which continues Baptism’s work of conversion and forgiveness.
3. The third precept “You shall humbly receive your Creator in Holy Communion at least during the Easter season” guarantees as a minimum the reception of the Lord’s Body and Blood in connection with the Paschal feasts, the origin and center of the Christian liturgy.
4. The fourth precept “You shall keep holy the holy days of obligation” completes the Sunday observance by participation in the principal liturgical feasts which honor the mysteries of the Lord, the Virgin Mary, and the saints. Ukrainian Catholics have all Sundays and Twelve Major Feasts to strive for, while the minimum requirement for being a “Catholic in good standing” includes Sundays and September 8, September 14, November 21, December 25, January 6,

February 2, March 25, Ascension Thursday, August 6, August 15 and our Patronal Feastday on June 24. So if, for example, you ask a priest to issue a sponsor certificate for you, claiming in effect that he is a credible witness to your being a “Catholic in good standing,” and he refuses to do so, that probably means, for starters, that you are not living up to precepts one, two, four and six in such a way that he can say, without lying, that he personally witnesses you as doing so. You may either see if another priest can honestly be your witness; or, have courage and take the hint for what it is: you are subtly being invited to become a Catholic in good standing. Try and see it from his point of view: are you perhaps asking a priest “to participate in your sins”? Why are you surprised he doesn’t want to do so? Do you really want your priest to lie for you or to cheat for you?

5. The fifth precept “You shall observe the prescribed days of fasting and abstinence” ensures the times of asceticism and penance which prepare us for the liturgical feasts; they help us acquire mastery over our sinful instincts (passions) and acquire freedom of heart.
6. The sixth precept also states that the faithful have the duty of providing for the material needs of the Church, each according to his/her abilities. Each of us should volunteer our time, offer our talents without a salary, or donate from our “treasure”, for the good of the Church.

For the official texts please refer to # 2041-2047 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* - *Катехизм Католицької Церкви*

#### English:

<http://www.vatican.va/archive/catechism/p3s1c3a3.htm#ten>

#### Ukrainian:

[http://catechismus.org.ua/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=92&Itemid=42](http://catechismus.org.ua/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=92&Itemid=42)

### ON KEEPING A SPIRITUAL FAST

There is both a physical and a spiritual fast. In the physical fast the body abstains from food and drink. In the spiritual fast, the faster abstains from evil intentions, words and deeds. One who truly fasts abstains from anger, rage, malice, and vengeance. One who truly fasts abstains from idle and foul talk, empty rhetoric, slander, condemnation, flattery, lying and all manner of spiteful talk. In a word, a real faster is one who withdraws from all evil.

– St. Basil the Great



### THE SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION

is one of reconciliation with God, bringing about not only a clearing of the conscience through the remission of sins, but also a healing of the soul through our recommitment to Christ. This Sacrament should therefore be received frequently by all Catholic Christians but especially during each of the fasting seasons, including the Great Fast. For those who wish to receive Holy Communion, the Sacrament of Confession is indispensable and absolutely necessary to maintaining our spiritual health and well being. Fr. James is available to hear confessions following any service or at any other time by appointment.



# HEALING THE BROKENHEARTED

By VRev. Vladimir Berzonsky

*“The Lord...heals the brokenhearted, and binds up their wounds” (Psalm 147:3)*

How does the Lord heal the brokenhearted and bind up our wounds? He uses the healing myrrh with which the Holy Spirit sealed us at the sacrament of Anointment following baptism. Christ Himself wipes away our tears. Then He mystically snips pieces from our pure and precious baptismal garments, fashioning tourniquets in order to staunch the bleeding. He ties invisible strips of bandages and wraps them around our sores. We too are the agents of the Lord. He expects the same spiritual treatment from us. Our task is to assuage the pains of those in misery, to put together the cracks in broken hearts, and to comfort the weeping and grieving brought about by a world that inflicts suffering upon the children of God.

We celebrate the advances in medical science and praise the Lord Almighty for the bounties that technology has made possible. We live longer, healthier and more productive lives, especially when we obey our physicians and take advantage of the breakthroughs in conquering diseases that have afflicted past generations and shortened life spans of those who went before us. It is the emotional traumas, the mental afflictions, and the ignorance of a civilization that for the most part has rejected faith in God. Now it finds itself lost on the way to His Kingdom. The advances in spiritual progress won by those blessed pioneers of union with the Holy Trinity are rejected, ignored or ridiculed in the present postChristian era. There are no spiritual breakthroughs that conquer rampant acts of aggression such as spousal abuse, random shooting sprees, and even serial killings. Sexual liberation bringing about such aberrant behavior as rape, pedophilia and other forms of physical gratification through exploitation of the innocent and weak has no permanent cures.

The first stage in the process of healing should be the simplest -- where do we find them? The injured are everywhere. The maimed are endemic. One need only to go out from oneself and listen, look and sense with a heart that pumps with love for a sign of people in anguish.

Those most likely to do so are the ones who themselves have been wounded. The fortunate few who aren't sure just what they should be seeking are those who have somehow escaped suffering. How can I help, they say. What can they contribute to the one who is in anguish, other than a platitude: "It will be alright, just have faith"? The response from the afflicted: "Easy for you to speak of faith. Have you ever been tested yourself? Have you ever found yourself abandoned, without hope, wallowing in darkness alone and lost? If not, better be silent -- you don't know what you are talking about. Do you know the feeling of life without meaning? Can you understand what Jesus was feeling when He said, 'My God, why have You forsaken Me'?"?

Despite all the wonders of medical science conquering the many diseases, they cannot "heal the brokenhearted." That phrase describes the anguish, grief, self-pity and suffering that is both spiritual and psychological. What medication can be prescribed for a tormented soul? What is the pill that offers bliss to the miserable? Who but God alone can bring joy to a wounded heart, and how does He do that other than to convey it through us? And when you find such a heart overwhelmed with joy, laughing when there's nothing funny, just from sheer delight, sensing love and returning that love, when such a heart is filled with serenity, the peace of God that passes beyond all understanding, at one with God and all others, such is one who had been healed with the balsam of the Spirit and bound with the spotless baptismal garment's strips. The broken heart has been repaired -- in a better state than it had been before the trauma that required healing. It confirms the faith that believes all is well, all will be well with the one who goes on affirming the presence of the Lord. The one healed from a spiritual illness has the trust in God strengthened. Her faith had been tested, and with the trial ended, she is set free to continue the journey through this world and time, and onward to the Kingdom of God.

The more you pay attention  
to the cup on the left,  
the less you care about  
the cup on the right



### ***Mission Days Prayer***

*O Lord, God, shine forth the light of Your Holy Gospel, so that the Christian faith might spread through us, the baptized, as children of the Light. Let us be witnesses to Your Living Presence in our lives and in our parish community, O Lord, hear us and have mercy. The Holy Spirit provides everything: He sends the prophets, leads priests to perfection, teaches wisdom to the uneducated, makes theologians of fishermen, and unites the entire Christian community, O Comforter, Consubstantial with the Father and Son, glory be to You!*

### **Sunday offering for November 22**

Amount	Number
\$10.00	1
\$15.00	1
\$17.00	1 (loose)
\$20.00	3
\$25.00	1
\$30.00	1
\$40.00	2
\$50.00	2
\$100.00	1
\$600.00	1
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\$1037.00	

Parishioner Total: \$1037.00

Average / parish household (42): \$12.49

Weekly Stewardship Goal: \$2200.00

**Deficit: (\$1088.00)**

**Year-to-date deficit: (\$45,367.00)**

### **GOD'S EXTENDED HAND**

FOCUS (Fellowship of Orthodox Christians United to Serve) has provided us with a special bin for collecting donations of clothing, toiletries, etc. to be distributed at GEH. It is located near the door of the church hall.

#### **Pastor:**

Fr. James Bankston: (619) 905-5278

#### **Pastoral Council:**

Vladimir Bachynsky: (619) 865-1279

Mark Hartman: (619) 446-6357

Luke Miller: (858) 354-2008

#### **Social Committee Chair:**

Megan Hartman (619) 540-4291

#### **Finance Committee:**

Bohdan Knianicky: (619) 303-9698





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

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

**Pastor:** Fr. James Bankston  
[frjames@mac.com](mailto:frjames@mac.com)  
Fr. James' cell phone: (619) 905-5278

***Proclaiming God's Kingdom***

Supposing two men come to a city without food, money, or a change of clothes. Who do you think would welcome them, where would they find an open door? Who would want to know them? What sort of lodging would they find and where would they start to look for it? One must surely marvel at the power of one who could send His disciples out in such a way, and at the faith of those whom He sent.

What had these men to offer? What was their message? "He was crucified," they said. The preachers were Jews, men of lowly station, ignorant, illiterate, poor. Their teaching was about a cross: hence the need for faith. But power triumphs through difficulties. The cross was proclaimed and temples were destroyed; the cross was proclaimed and kings were conquered; the cross was proclaimed and the worldly-wise were

put to shame, pagan festivals were abolished, and pagan deities destroyed. Why be so amazed that the apostles were believed, or that they themselves could believe, and that they returned home safely after being welcomed everywhere? But these are truly great marvels and we should not fail to realize this. Unknown strangers, poorly dressed, and without contacts, traveled all over the world proclaiming someone who had been crucified, and offering a life of fasting in place of drunkenness, and annoying self-restraint in place of sensuality. It can hardly have been easy for those addicted to such vices to receive these exhortations to renounce them and live upright lives. And yet whole peoples seized upon this teaching, whole nations embraced it.

*Eusebius of Emesa*

**For more information on Eastern spirituality, visit  
[www.ecpubs.com](http://www.ecpubs.com)**