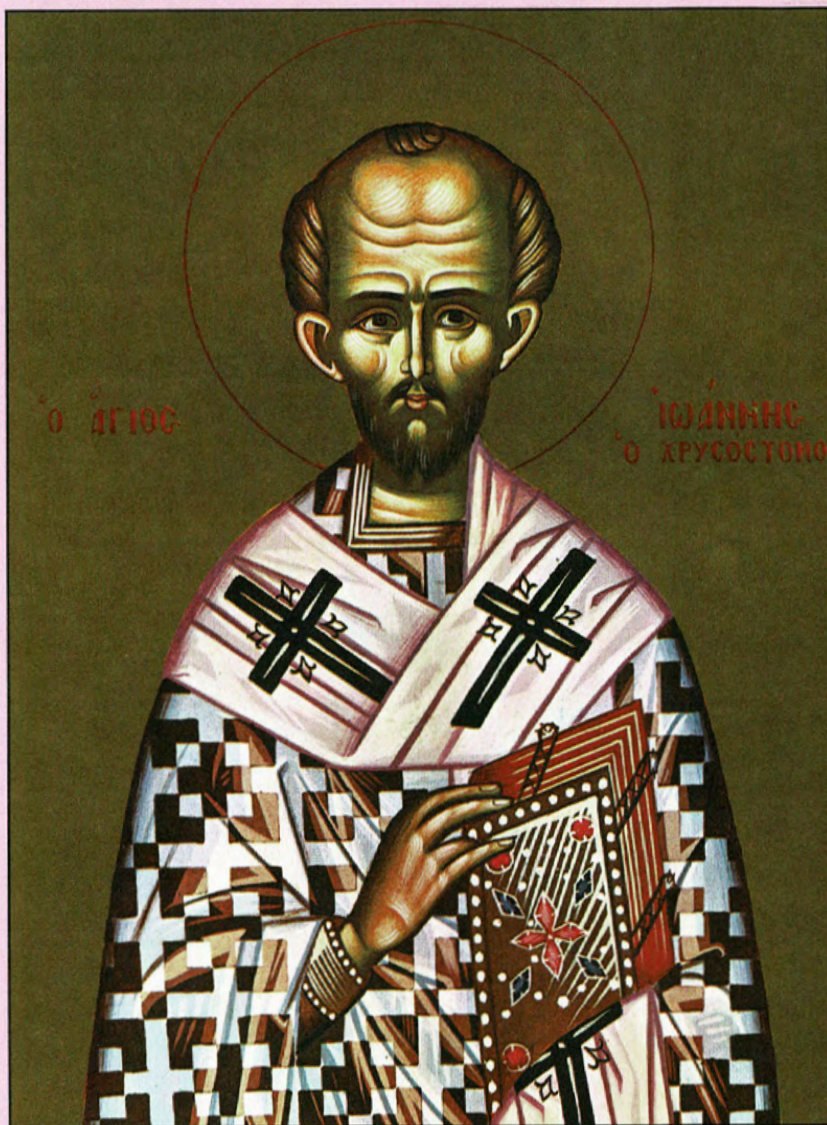


TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
EIGHTH SUNDAY OF LUKE



Icon of Saint John Chrysostom -- November 13th



November 12, 2017

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

OUR HOLY FATHER JOHN THE MERCIFUL, PATRIARCH OF ALEXANDRIA;

OUR VENERABLE FATHER NILUS, THE FASTER ON MOUNT SINAI;

THE HOLY HIEROMARTYR JOSAPHAT, ARCHBISHOP OF POLOTSK

TONE 6

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR NOVEMBER 13 – NOVEMBER 19

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18

6:00 PM – Great Vespers (satisfies Sunday obligation)

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19 – TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST;

THE HOLY PROPHET OBADIAH; THE HOLY MARTYR BARLAAM OF CAESAREA IN CAPPADOCIA;

OUR VENERABLE FATHERS BARLAAM AND IOASAPH

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy

For All Parishioners

NATIVITY FAST

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **Nativity Fast** is a period of abstinence and penance practiced by the Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, and Eastern Catholic Churches, in preparation for the Nativity of Christ, (December 25). Like the Western Advent, the Nativity fast prepares Eastern Christians for the celebration of Christmas. However, it differs in two significant respects: The Eastern fast runs for 40 days instead of four weeks (Roman rite) or six weeks (Ambrosian rite) and thematically focuses on proclamation and glorification of the Incarnation of God, whereas the Western Advent focuses on the two comings (or *advents*) of Jesus Christ: his birth and his Second Coming or Parousia.

The fast is observed from November 15 to December 24, inclusively. Sometimes the fast is called **Philip's Fast** (or the Philippian Fast), as it traditionally begins on the day following the Feast of St. Philip the Apostle (November 14). Some churches, such as the Melkite Greek Catholic Church, have abbreviated the fast to start on December 10, following the Feast of the Conception by Saint Anne of the Most Holy Theotokos.

Joint Panakhyda to commemorate Holodomor

Next Sunday, November 19th at Holy Protection Ukrainian Orthodox Church, 9558 Campo Road, Spring Valley CA 91977. It will begin at 12:00 Noon.

All are invited.

Parish Rummage Sale – Thank You!

A tremendous “Thank You” to all the wonderful volunteers who helped make this a successful event. May God bless you for your generous giving of your Time, Talent and Treasure.

Дуже Дякую!



Притча про милосердного самарянина

Лука 10, 25 – 37

Перше запитання Ісуса: «В законі що написано?» (Лк. 10, 26) визначає подальший зміст усієї притчі. Коли наприкінці ми читаємо: «Іди і ти роби так само» (Лк. 10, 37), то, звичайно, розуміємо, що повинні наслідувати самарянина. Ми йдемо, але не дуже далеко і не дуже довго. Чому? Бо почули відповідь Ісуса як моральну настанову, як принцип, якого мусимо дотримуватися. Проте любов є в зовсім іншій площині.

Законовчитель запитав: «А хто мій ближній?» (Лк. 10, 29). Ісус своєю відповіддю розвернув кут зору, ставлячи запитання: як ти поводишся з іншими? Таким чином, у центрі вже не «я» посеред ближчих і дальших людей, а інші, такі які вони є, і я йду до них, виходжу за межі свого егоцентризму і стаю їхнім ближнім. Центр уваги переміщується від мене до інших.

Як Ісус дає нам приклад незосередження на собі? Те, що Він говорить, – більше, ніж притча, бо йдеться про любов Отця до всіх людей. «Обдертою, півмертвою» (див. Лк. 10, 30) є кожна людська істота, всі ми, люди всіх часів, незалежно від їх становища. У притчі сказано, що священик «випадком» (Лк. 10, 31) ішов тією дорогою, тоді як Отець навмисне, з любови до нас, посилає свого єдинородного Сина, щоб ми отримали через Нього життя. Подібно до самарянина, Ісус у нашому світі непоцінований або незнаний, як чужоземець. Він приходить до нас, шукає нас, промовляючи: «бачу я,

бачу бідуювання народу мого» (Вих. 3, 7). Самарянин «змилюсердився» (Лк. 10, 33). Це слово вживається у Біблії лише стосовно Бога і Христа, і дослівно означає: «бути розчуленим до глибини душі». Самарянин посадив пораненого на власну скотину, а Ісус бере нас на себе, приймає нашу людську природу, приймає нас, щоб дати нам життя. Він доглядає за нами, намащує нас бальзамом свого Духу, Святого Духу Утішителя. А кому Він потім поручає пораненого? Він поручає його нам. У цьому – сенс існування Церкви в цьому світі, аж до дня, коли Він «повернеться» (див. Лк. 10, 35), і того дня ми приймемо суд залежно від того, як любили.

Очевидно, що настанову «Іди і ти роби так само» (Лк. 10, 37) неможливо виконати власними силами. Але стати ближніми одні для одних ми можемо завдяки «такій самій» любові, якою Отець любить нас через свого Сина. Зосередження не на собі, а на інших походить від Бога. Милосердя не можна навчитися за зразком. Нас має проникнути милосердя самого Бога. Його можна отримати серцем убогим і лагідним, і передавати іншим людям, адже Святий Дух сходить, коли ми стаємо ближніми будь-якої пораненої людини. Тоді ми є живими членами Христа Ісуса, «єдиного приятеля всіх людей» (пор. Йо. 11, 11; Мт. 11, 19; Лк. 7, 34).

Жан Корбон, *Це називається світанком*,
Львів, Свічадо 2007

OF KINGS AND THINGS AND WHAT MATTERS

November 6, 2017 · Fr. Stephen Freeman

On October 25, 1415 (St. Crispin's Day), the army of King Henry V of England engaged the army of Charles VI of France at Agincourt, in Northern France. The battle was famously depicted in Shakespeare's Henry V. Estimates say that as many as 10,000 Frenchmen died, while as few as 112 Englishmen perished (the numbers reported vary somewhat). Henry's speech before the battle is classic:

And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,
From this day to the ending of the world,
But we in it shall be remembered-
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
For he to-day that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,
This day shall gentle his condition;
And gentlemen in England now a-bed
Shall think themselves accurs'd they were not here,
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.

Somewhere that morning, unrecorded by Shakespeare, a French farmer awoke and fed his pigs. He milked his cows, said his prayers, and wondered whether winter would be early. He heard about the battle some weeks later and shook his head.

Agincourt was a single battle in a conflict known as the Hundred Years War, a contest between the Plantagenet rulers of England and the House of Valois, the Rulers of France. Our farmer had many counterparts across France and England, who "now a-bed," managed to miss the excitement and the danger. They went about their business, encumbered by the increased taxes levied by their overlords to support the constant warfare. However the history books tell it, this was not a war between England and

France. It was a war between royal houses. Our farmers carried on their lives as well as they could despite the war games of the wealthy.

Battles such as Agincourt make for great drama and entertaining movies. The history books generally move from one such event to another, creating a narrative that makes the world turn on such occasions. It is, of course, much ado about nothing.

The history of the world lies with the farmer and his wife and children, safely in their beds, or sweating in their fields. Those who lay dead on the battlefield might very well have represented the end of their line, remembered by Shakespeare, but erased from the genetic memory of the generations to come. The lore surrounding those who hold "power" in this world, serves only to feed the illusion that such power is the pivot point of history. Many aspects of our modern world have invested this world-view with enormous value.

It is relatively easy to deconstruct the claims of "England versus France" if it can be seen as Plantagenet versus Valois. But our modern world has changed its mythology and declared every man a king. In a democracy, it is everyman's war, "us versus them." At its worst, modern democratic warfare targets civilians with impunity. Those asleep in their beds may very well discover that they are unwittingly on the battlefield as the bombs fall around them.

In 1415, there was little difference between a farmer in England and a farmer in France. They were both Catholics, and attended the same Mass in Church. "England" and "France" were words used by Royalty but not yet a primary part of the common man's life.

The rise of the nation state (something largely coterminous with the Reformation) was also the rise of a “national” consciousness. National Churches (a hallmark of the Reformation) helped reinforce this new self-awareness. Of course, nothing had changed to differentiate farmer from farmer across the Channel. Their lives, though now separated religiously, remained largely indistinguishable.

The myth of national consciousness has never abated. The modern nation is an abstract concept, reinforced by massive propaganda and martial law. We are taught to think in terms that were once foreign to our ancestors. **It is also foreign to the Kingdom of God.**

Henry V’s speech suggests that the average guy in England, unfortunate enough to have missed the battle, would rue the day. The implication, of course, is that “this battle is important.” It is another way of saying, “I am important.” And this is patently untrue.

The Scriptures describe a different view of history:

God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are... (1 Cor. 1:27-28)

The narrative of history offered in the Scriptures is not the tale of kings and battles. The most important characters are utterly obscure: a shepherd, a girl, a slave, a fisherman, a carpenter, a vine-dresser. The word of a young girl, just past puberty, is later described by a Church father as the “cause of all things.”

Our culture magnifies the narrative of political, military, and financial power. In the stories it tells us, we imagine ourselves to

somehow be participants in their lives. But that is to dwell in the realm of imagination. The truth of the world can be found in the words of that young girl:

He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty. (Lk. 1:51-53)

The truth of our existence is in the hands of God, who has great regard for the life of the farmer and his family, and those quietly “a-bed,” while the imaginations of the falsely mighty run their course.

The gospel and the commandments of Christ are written from the perspective of those that “are not,” even while they imagine themselves to be among those that “are.” When the Rich Young Man came to Christ, he was among those who were “powerful.” He had the ability to do much “good.” Christ’s invitation to him was to join the dispossessed. That same invitation is given to all of us. Renouncing the “imagination of our hearts” we are invited to come to our senses.

The world as seen through the eyes of its “managers” (whether they are royals or simply the “body politic” of modern democracies) is a false vision. Such a viewpoint always fails to see what is truly taking place and wrongly assigns responsibility and respect where it does not belong. The outcome of history is solely in the hands of God. Though our lives consist of a thousand million tiny things, they are the things that matter. Love. Pray. Share your stuff. Be kind. Forgive your enemies. It matters.

“WHADDYAMEAN FASTING? IT’S THE HOLIDAYS!”

adapted from Marek Simon, Assistant Director of Antiochian Village Camp

Christmas parties, good ole’ St. Nick, & shop, shop, shop! Our Christmas list is prepared well in advance and - look out! - lights and trees up in November! These are a few things that begin to consume many of our minds as the holiday season approaches. We can’t wait until Christmas and the array of fashionable clothes, iPhones, and decisions, decisions! LCD or Plasma? Mac or Windows? And who knows what else! It’s a time to eat, drink and be merry, right? But wait a minute. Did I hear someone say that we are supposed to be fasting???

For us Orthodox Christians, November 15 marks the beginning of a 40-day fast that concludes on the Feast of our Lord’s Nativity (a.k.a., Christmas). The Nativity Fast is a time of preparation for the birth of our Lord. We are taught to fast from meat, dairy products and fish. Let’s be honest. Many of us go to schools and live in homes where we do not observe any sort of fast during this time, and for those of us who do, it’s pretty difficult to say the least! How can we possibly go to a Christmas party and not eat meat or cheese or drink eggnog?

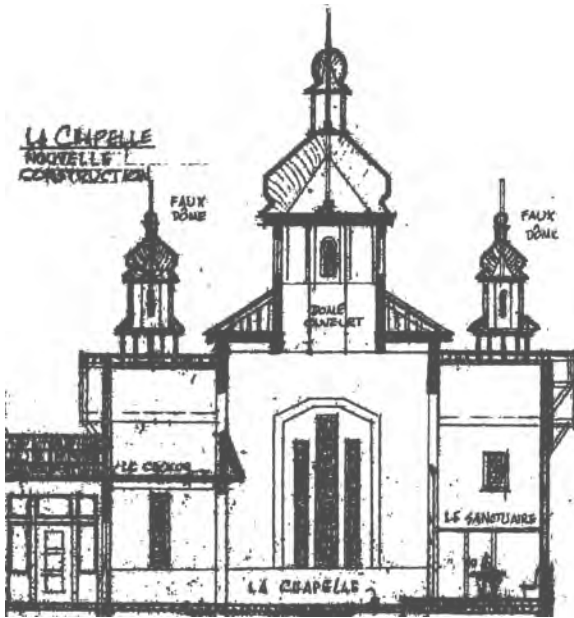
Why would someone choose to fast during this time when it seems like everyone else is doing the opposite? In reality, the answer is pretty simple: Jesus Christ. We are taught to fast during this time, not as a punishment or because the Church doesn’t want us to have fun, but because the Church is concerned with one thing and one thing only, our salvation.

Think about it. The world we live in today teaches us to continually seek to do one thing - love ourselves. Jesus Christ, through the Church, teaches us to continually seek to do another thing - love our neighbor. Society teaches us to order the best-tasting, most expensive steak. Christ teaches us to forget about the steak, eat a

plate of spaghetti or some lentil soup, and use the money to buy a meal for someone who hasn’t eaten in days. Society teaches us to spend time and money on Christmas trees, Christmas lights, and expensive gifts. Christ teaches us to be a tree that bears fruit, to be a light in the darkness, and to put on the gifts of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, & self-control (Gal 5.22-23).

There are no easy answers to the situations we may face this holiday season if we choose to follow the narrow way of the Gospel. One thing that must be said is that we cannot do it alone. We need each other! Our friends, families and our churches should be fasting together as best we can. We also need prayer. Fasting is of no value unless we pray also. Encourage your family and friends to pray together at meals. You could even attend Vespers.

Perhaps most importantly, talk with your priest or spiritual father about how to approach the Fast. He will be your guide and source of wisdom to help during this time. Each day is an opportunity for us to choose to live as a Christian and accept the responsibility that goes along with it. Rather than just spending hours at the mall looking for the perfect gift, we could spend a couple of hours serving at a soup kitchen and a few dollars on clothes for people who cannot afford to clothe themselves. What a wonderful project this would be for your parish this fasting season. We are all quite capable of fasting beginning November 15. As stated above, talk to your priest about how to start, especially if you’ve never done it before. Approach the days ahead not as the ‘holiday season’, but as preparation for a ‘Holy Day’, the day of the birth of our Lord. May Christ strengthen and guide you in the upcoming months!



FROM THE DESERT FATHERS

A brother questioned Abba Poemen saying, “If I see my brother committing a sin, is it right to conceal it?” The old man said to him, “At the very moment when we hide our brother’s fault, God hides our own and at the moment when we reveal our brother’s fault, God reveals ours too.”

Another brother questioned him in these words, “What does, ‘See that none of you repays evil for evil’ mean?” (1 Thess. 5:15) The old man said to him, “Passions work in four stages – first, in the heart; secondly, in the face; thirdly, in words; and fourthly, through deeds. If you can purify your heart, passion will not come into your expression; but if it comes into your face, take care not to speak; but if you do speak, cut the conversation short in case you render evil for evil.

Sunday offering for November 5

Amount	Number
\$5.00	2
\$7.00	1
\$10.00	1
\$12.00	1 (loose)
\$15.00	1
\$20.00	3
\$25.00	1
\$30.00	1
\$40.00	3
\$50.00	1
\$75.00	1
\$105.00	1
\$120.00	2
\$160.00	1
<hr/>	
\$799.00	

Parishioner Total: \$759.00
Visitor Total: \$40.00

Average / parish household (43): \$9.73
Weekly Stewardship Goal: \$2200.00

Deficit: <\$1,441.00>



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

4400 Palm Avenue
La Mesa, CA 91941
Parish Office: (619) 697-5085

Website: stjohnthebaptizer.org

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

Prayer is the Light of the Spirit

Prayer and conversation with God is a supreme good. ... I do not mean the prayer of outward observance but prayer from the heart, not confined to fixed times or periods, but continuous throughout the day and night.

Our spirit should be quick to reach out toward God not only when it is engaged in meditation; at other times also, when it is carrying out its duties, caring for the needy, performing works of charity, giving generously in the service of others, our spirit should long for God, and call Him to mind, so that these works may be seasoned with the salt of God's love, and so make a palatable offering to the Lord of the universe.

The spirit... like a child crying tearfully for its mother, it craves the milk that God

provides. It seeks the satisfaction of its own desires, and receives gifts outweighing the whole world of nature. ... I speak of prayer, not words. It is the longing for God ... a gift not given by man but by God's grace. The apostle Paul says: We do not know how we are to pray but the Spirit himself pleads for us with inexpressible longings.

Practice prayer from the beginning. Paint your house with the colors of modesty and humility. Make it radiant with the light of justice. Decorate it with the finest gold leaf of good deeds. Adorn it with the walls and stones of faith and generosity.

St. John Chrysostom

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