

SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC MAN



Icon of Jesus Healing the Paralytic Man

April 22, 2018

4TH SUNDAY OF PASCHA – OF THE PARALYTIC

OUR VENERABLE FATHER THEODORE OF SYCEUM, BISHOP OF ANASTASIOPOLIS

**ХРИСТОС ВОСКРЕС!
ВОІСТИНУ ВОСКРЕС!**

**CHRIST IS RISEN!
TRULY HE IS RISEN!**

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR APRIL 23 – APRIL 29

SATURDAY, APRIL 21

Please Note: No Vespers this evening

SUNDAY, APRIL 22 – 5TH SUNDAY OF PASCHA - SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC;

OUR VENERABLE FATHER THEODORE OF SYCEUM, BISHOP OF ANASTASIOPOLIS

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy

For All Parishioners

Fr. James will be away

Fr. James will be out of town from this week for the annual Clergy Conference. In case of an emergency please contact Fr. Brian Escobido of Holy Angels Byzantine Catholic Church at (858) 277-2511.

**A Prayer for the
Construction of our New Church**

O Lord Jesus Christ our God, Cornerstone of Your holy Church, Giver of every good gift, the One who first loved us, look down upon us Your people who desire to build a new church unto Your glory and grant us the wisdom, strength, and resources to accomplish this task in accordance with Your will. Remember the friends and benefactors of this parish who support the construction of this holy church and bless them with Your good things. And as You did proclaim that even if Your disciples were silent, the very stones would cry out, so also grant that this holy church may proclaim You and draw all who dwell in the surrounding area to worship You in spirit and in truth. In flame our hearts with love for You that we may offer to You ourselves and all You have given us to the glory of Your holy Name. For You are the true Philanthropist—the Lover of Mankind—and to You do we send up glory, together with Your eternal Father, and Your most holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, always, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

**A heart-felt “Thank You”
to all those who helped
plan, prepare, set-up, serve
and clean up the delicious
Sviachenne meal last week.**

Looking ahead:

Our annual rummage sale will take place on Saturday, June 23rd. We will be accepting donations beginning in June. Volunteers are needed. Please contact Olena Bankston at (619) 905-5279.

Sunday offering for April 15

Amount	Number
\$5.00	1
\$10.00	1
\$15.00	1
\$20.00	4
\$25.00	2
\$30.00	1
\$40.00	2
\$45.00	1 (loose)
\$50.00	2
\$100.00	2
\$105.00	2
\$150.00	1
\$1055.00	

Parishioner Total: \$1035.00

Guest Total: \$20.00

Average / parish household (43): \$13.53

Weekly Stewardship Goal: \$2200.00

Deficit: <\$1165.00>

YOU ARE NOT YOUR SIN – PART 2...THE CHAINS THAT BIND

Fr. Stephen Freeman

Imagine that you have been shackled with chains on your ankles. The chains are heavy, make a lot of noise, and make it impossible for you to run. You cannot successfully climb over anything or dance. The chains are heavy enough that you quickly become exhausted and are limited in the things you can do and for how long you can do them. Imagine



that not only are you shackled, but so is everyone around you. Some only have light handcuffs, while others are almost immobile with the chains they bear. Some have these terrible devices on their heads that make it impossible for them to turn their heads. This, of course, makes for very great problems in the culture you live in. For one, bicycles are not very popular. Sports are extremely limited. Clothes are primarily zippered things. There are laws about the chains and devices. Recently, it has even become illegal to discuss the chains, so that no one is embarrassed. There are even discussions and academic papers about the chains. There are fads in which the chains are painted various colors, or even have bells attached to them. There are clubs.

This is an analogy for sin. We did not invent the chains. They get there in various ways. Some are even born with them. Others have more chains added by parents and neighbors, etc. Over the years, we do add some chains ourselves. Our behavior adapts to the chains – over that we have very little choice. **But, please note, we are not our chains.** The chains may affect us, but we do not become the chains. They may affect us so deeply that we completely organize our lives around the limitations they impose. But the limitations and the chains are still not us.

Many people like to discuss the origin of the chains. Who were the first to have them? Was it their fault? Is it our fault? In truth, it's largely a moot point. We have the chains and many of them are clearly not our fault. It's true that my chains slow me down and I trip over them a lot. Perhaps if I were more careful...

I wrote earlier that "you are not your sin."

Neither are you your chains. Are you responsible? Sure, in some way. Are you free? There is still mobility, but nothing like complete freedom. Try riding a bike or swimming with leg irons. Responsibility means staying off the bike and out of the water. But that's not really the same thing as freedom, is it?

The New Testament not infrequently uses the term "bondage" to describe our sinful condition. The chains are a picture of what bondage looks like. Many people speak of sin as though it were something else, as though we were a group of people who willingly chose to act as though they had chains but are, in fact, actually free. So, all of the chain-driven behavior is really only a choice. It's your fault...entirely.

Jesus sets us free from our bondage. That is the clear teaching and meaning of His Pascha. He descends into the origin of our bondage, the bondage capital of the universe (Hades), and binds the "strongman." And He sets at liberty those who were in bondage:

He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men." (Now this, "He ascended" – what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of

the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) (Eph. 4:8-10)

And

Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. (Heb 2:14-15)

Also

For the creation was subjected to frustration, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. (Rom 8:20-21)

I am not trying to develop some complete scenario of judgment, heaven and hell. **However, sin as bondage and Christ as the destroyer of bonds is an essential New Testament image and at the very heart of the Church's understanding of His Pascha.** For those working within the metaphors and images of the legal/forensic world, Pascha is about a payment or an appeasement (propitiation) offered to the Father, freeing us from the righteous penalties of sin (which is understood as breaking the bonds of sin-debt).

Hidden within the legal/forensic image, however, is a false notion of human beings and their freedom of choice and action. The "bondage" in that imagery is a self-imposed burden that we deserve because we have broken the Law and owe a debt. We deserve it because we could have done differently. Our "chains" are entirely of our own making. It is argued, as well, that this concept of freedom and responsibility are absolutely essential to what it means to be a person.

What I think has taken place in the thoughts of many, is a transfer of the legal/forensic version of what it means to be human into the more Orthodox narrative of Pascha. It creates a very confused account that does not really make sense.

What does it mean to be a person? Most moderns assume that "personhood" is the correct way to describe the state of any individual. **Each individual is a person, created in the image of God.** Inherent to personhood, in this understanding, is freedom. **If there is no freedom, then there is no true personhood.** But, again, the modern consciousness has a false understanding of persons and presumes many things that are simply not true.

Human beings are not the utterly free agents imagined by modernity. The Tradition does not describe us as existing in a fullness of personhood. The language and understanding of what it means to be a person is rooted in the discussion and doctrine of the persons of the Holy Trinity, and the person of Christ as the God/Man. It is not rooted in what we experience and know to be the present case for human beings.

Indeed, the patristic consensus is that **human beings are created according to the "image" of God, but that we fail to fulfill the "likeness."** Expressed in a variety of ways, it is understood in the Orthodox Church, that human beings, created to be fully personal in the image and likeness of Christ, are not yet fully personal and in the image and likeness. Personhood is the end for which we are created, not the place from which we all begin. And personhood is not properly defined as merely a mode of existence that entails freedom. The image according to which we were created is the Crucified Christ (the Lamb was slain "from the foundation of the world"). The Crucified Christ is the image revealed to us of the Person of Christ as self-emptying love. True Personhood does not merely exist as freedom, it is freedom as self-emptying love. It is always freedom-for-the-Other.

We live a shackled existence. Some are far more bound than others. This is not to say that we have no freedom, or that we are not responsible for what we do with the freedom we have. But our “range of motion” is greatly restricted. We are hampered such that we frequently fall and take missteps. What is shackled in our existence?

St. John of Damascus notes: For either man is an irrational being, or, if he is rational, he is master of his acts and endowed with free-will. (*Exact Exposition*, XXVII).

The Fathers are quite clear, however, that our *nous* is darkened. We do not see clearly and our reason is impaired. We do not see God or perceive Him as we ought, nor do we see the good clearly as we ought. **Our reason is shackled.**

In the same manner, our will is shackled. We do not hold an insane person to be responsible if they commit suicide. The daily suicide of us all is frequently just as much a matter of something beyond our responsibility. Again, we are certainly responsible, but we are also insane. **There**

are very good reasons that we ask for forgiveness for things we have done, “both voluntary and involuntary.” That is simply the state of our present condition.

And it is this shackled existence of bondage that Christ destroys in His Pascha. It is His deliverance that forms the bulk of our hymnography within the Paschal Triduum. Of course, it is reasonable to ask why it is we still behave as we do if Christ has set us free from bondage.

The answer is simple: **that victory has not yet been made manifest in its fullness. We are not yet as we shall be.** We are not yet as fully free as we shall be, nor are we yet the persons that we shall be. And though the victory has begun within our lives, we “do not yet see all things under Jesus’ feet.” But for those who see Christ’s victory, the celebration has already begun, for they see the assurance of the promise that has been made to us:

“We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”

TEN COMMANDMENTS OF HUMAN RELATIONS

1. **Speak to people.** There is nothing so nice as a cheerful word of greeting.
2. **Smile at people.** It takes 72 muscles to frown, only 14 to smile.
3. **Call people by name.** The sweetest music to anyone’s ears is the sound of his own name.
4. **Be friendly and helpful.** If you would have friends, be a friend.
5. **Be cordial.** Speak and act as if everything you do is genuine pleasure.
6. **Be genuinely interested in people.** You can like almost everybody if you try.
7. **Be generous with praise** – cautious with criticism.
8. **Be considerate with the feelings of others.** There are usually three sides to a controversy; yours, the other fellow’s, and the right side.
9. **Be alert to give service.** What counts most in life is what we do for others.
10. **Add to this a good sense of humor,** a big dose of patience, and a dash of humility, and you will be rewarded manyfold.

MIDFEAST OF PENTECOST

The time of Pentecost is 50 days. Indeed, the word Pentecost, means “fifty.” In the middle of the feast, that is on the 25th day, always a Wednesday, we celebrate the feast known as Mid-Pentecost. The feast unites and connects Pascha (the beginning) with Pentecost (the ending).

The symbol of water provides the theme for the feast of Mid-Pentecost. “Whoever is thirsty should come to Me and drink.” As the Scriptures says, “Whoever believes in Me, streams of life-giving water will pour out from his heart.” Christ said this about the Spirit which those who believe in Him were going to receive (John 7:37-38). This passage is also part of the Gospel reading for the Sunday of Pentecost.

Anticipating the gift of the Holy Spirit by Christ, the Troparion and Kontakion of Mid-Pentecost express the yearning of the believer with these words:

Troparion

In the middle of the Feast, O Savior, fill my thirsting soul with the waters of godliness, as Thou didst cry to all: If anyone thirsts let him come to Me and drink! O Christ God, Fountain of our life, glory to Thee!

Kontakion

Christ God, the Creator and Master of all, cried to all in the midst of the feast of the law: Come and draw the water of immortality! We fall before Thee and faithfully cry: Grant us Thy bounties, for Thou art the Fountain of our life.

.....

A Reminder about Standing on all Sundays and everyday from Pascha to Pentecost

This is not an innovation, rather it is the explicit reiteration of a long tradition and teaching of the early church about the nature of the celebration of the Lord’s Day (i.e. Sunday.) This proscription of the church dates from the time of the Ecumenical Council of Nicaea (325 AD.) There was a divergence in practice in various places and the church identified the need to emphasize the resurrectional character of the Lord’s Day. The fact that an Ecumenical Council discussed and eventually issued a Canon (rule) on this subject shows the importance in the eyes of the church fathers. Canon 20 of the Council (which has never been negated) states: Since there are some communities that still bend their knees on the Lord’s Day (Sunday) and on the days of Pentecost, this Holy Council decrees that the common prayers (i.e., at Liturgy) are to be rendered to God standing.

To be very clear – This canon of the First Ecumenical Council applies to Every Sunday of the Year! **One should NOT kneel during Divine Services on ANY Sunday** (custom and the practice of the Latin Church notwithstanding).

Пригадуємо що стоїмо підчас Служби Божої кожної Неділі року і кожного дня від Великодня до Неділі П’ятдесятниці

Це не є нова вигадка а виразне повторення стародавнього звичаю і повчання стародавньої Церкви про праведне додержування Господнього Дня (Неділя). Це повчання ще із Собору Нікеї (325р). Були різні звичаї в різних місцевостях і Церква рішила наголосити Христове Воскресення кожної Неділі. Ця справа була така важлива що Церковні Отці рішили надати закон. Канон 20 (яке ніколи небуло заперечене) каже: Тому що є деякі громади що ще клякають в Неділю і в дні П’ятдесятниці, цей Святий Собор проголошує що в спільній молитві (Служба Божа) молимося Богові стоячи.

Вияснюємо – Цей Канон Нікеї стосується кожної Неділі в році! **Не клякаємо під час неділішної Служби Божої** (не залежно від особистого звичаю ані Римо-Католицької традиції.)

You are invited

On May 4, 5 and 6, the Fatima Group will be hosting some special events in San Diego. You do not want to miss this!!

The guest speaker will be Dr. G. C. Dilsaver, author of *The Three Marks of Manhood: How to be Priest, Prophet and King of Your Family*.

Catholic University of America says: "Dr. G.C. Dilsaver is rightly considered by many to be the father of Christian psychology, for his book *Imago Dei Psychotherapy* enunciated the foundational principles of the first fully integrated Christian psychotherapeutic conceptualization."

Having since gone far beyond his groundbreaking seminal work, and indeed formally repudiated the inherently flawed and harmful mental health profession, Dr. Dilsaver has developed the unique science, spiritual discipline, and soul-deep intervention of Psychomoralitics.

Dr. Dilsaver will give three presentations:

Friday: (Women only) REGAL FEMININITY: God's Sweet Distillation

Explores the true, and utterly obfuscated, feminine charism and the need for a new devotional promulgation of that charism.

Saturday: (Men only) KINGS AMIDST THE RUINS: Founding a New Christendom in Apocalyptic Times.

Conference 1: Beneath the Illusion: Today's Dystopic Cultural Landscape and Rampant Demonic Activism.

Conference 2: AWOL: The Absence of Masculine Militancy and the Prescription of Penitential and Prophetic Patriarchy.

Conference 3: To the Ramparts: Championing the Cause of Faith & Family.

Conference 4: A New Christendom: Arising from the Patriarchal Community of Families.

Sunday: (Men and Women) THE ROYAL AGE OF CHRISTIAN FAMILIES: The Call of the Third Millennium

Advances that this is indeed the age of the laity, read the age the family, because never before has the family, Holy Matrimony, fatherhood and motherhood, and God-given gender been so under attack; and prescribes a deeper, more radical Faith, for "where sin abounds grace abounds more."

Plus: a short separate presentation and extended Q & A on The Failure and Danger of the Mental Health System.

If you would like to attend, please email me at Triumph.4evr2@gmail.com, and I will send you the eVite.

Pax,

Bruce de Wit



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

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Website: stjohnthebaptizer.org

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

The Cure of Baptism Foreshadowed

What manner of cure is this? What mystery does it signify to us? For these things are not written carelessly, or without a purpose, but as a figure and type they show in outline things to come, in order that what was exceedingly strange might not, by coming unexpectedly, do harm among the many the power of faith. What then is it that they show in outline? A Baptism was about to be given, possessing much power, and the greatest of gifts, a Baptism purging all sins and making men alive instead of dead. These things then are foreshown as in a picture by the pool, and by many other circumstances. And first is given a water which purges the stains of our bodies, and those defilements which are not, but seem to be, as those from touching the dead, those from leprosy, and other similar causes; under the old covenant one may see many things done by water

on this account. However, let us now proceed to the matter in hand.

First then, as I before said, He causes defilements of our bodies, and afterwards infirmities of different kinds, to be done away by water. Because God, desiring to bring us nearer to faith in Baptism, no longer heals defilements only, but diseases also. For those figures which came nearer [in time] to the reality, both as regarded Baptism, and the Passion, and the rest, were plainer than the more ancient. ... And this miracle was done in order that men, learning that it is possible by water to heal the diseases of the body, and being exercised in this for a long time, might more easily believe that it can also heal the diseases of the soul.

St. John Chrysostom