

SUNDAY OF THE MAN BORN BLIND



Icon of the Gospel of the Man Born Blind

May 6, 2018

6TH SUNDAY OF PASCHA – OF THE MAN BORN BLIND

THE HOLY AND RIGHTEOUS JOB THE MUCH-SUFFERING

**ХРИСТОС ВОСКРЕС!
ВОІСТИНУ ВОСКРЕС!**

**CHRIST IS RISEN!
INDEED HE IS RISEN!**

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR MAY 7 – MAY 13

WEDNESDAY, MAY 9 – LEAVE-TAKING OF PASCHA – PRE-FEAST OF ASCENSION

6:00 PM – Great Vespers with Lytia for Feast of the Ascension (*Satisfies obligation*)

THURSDAY, MAY 10 – ASCENSION OF OUR LORD, GOD, AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST (*OBLIGATORY FEAST*);
THE HOLY APOSTLE SIMON THE ZEALOT

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy For All Parishioners

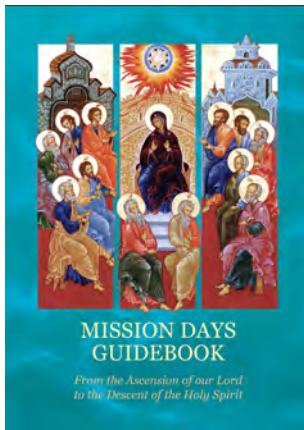
SATURDAY, MAY 12

6:30 PM – Great Vespers (*satisfies Sunday obligation*)

SUNDAY, MAY 13 – SUNDAY OF THE FATHERS OF THE FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL;
THE HOLY MARTYR GLYCERIA

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy For All Parishioners

Mission Days Guidebook



The Synod of the Bishops of the UGCC in 2013 decided to proclaim in all the parishes of our Church a Decade of Missionary Work and celebrate it annually for ten days between the Feasts of the Ascension of the Lord and the Descent of the Holy Spirit. The Decade of Missionary Work is a time when we reflect on the vocation of the church community to follow Christ's command to proclaim the Good News of Salvation to all peoples, to pass on the word of the Gospel “not only to people who are alienated from Christ and His Church, but also to “our own”, baptized, but who do not practice their faith”. The Decade of Missionary Work must remind us of the duty to be missionaries who lead others to faith in Jesus Christ.



We present you copies of the Guide to the Decade of Missionary Work, which is a good tool for accomplishing the task. After all, through the power of the Mystery of Baptism, we have an obligation to share the experience of our faith in Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, not only with our relatives and friends, but also with all whom God places on our life's path. This is especially true outside of Ukraine, since our Churches are often associated with foreigners as “Ukrainian”, reducing it exclusively to the nationality factor. Instead, our task is to show that under the term “Ukrainian” there is another important word “Catholic”, that is, “universal”. Catholic – means open to all people, regardless of their nationality.

ВОЗНЕСІННЯ ГОСПОДНЕ

Після Воскресіння Господь наш Ісус Христос ще сорок днів перебував на землі. Він мав зійти на небеса відразу, але залишився, щоб переконати всіх в істинності Свого Воскресіння.

Святим апостолам Він «...являв Себе живим із багатьма вірними доказами, впродовж сорока днів являючись їм і говорячи про Царство Боже» (Діян. 1, 3).

Христос возноситься на небо з гори Єлеонської, де так часто проводив ночі в молитві, де зрадив Його Іуда, звідки починався Його голгофський шлях. Христос возноситься на небо, де належить Йому бути, і де Він повинен приготувати місце для нас: «...Я йду приготувати місце вам» (Ін. 14, 2).

Як у Старому Завіті первосвященик входив у святая святих, щоб просити за людей перед Богом, так і Христос возноситься на небо, «...щоб заступатися за них» (Євр. 7, 25). Уже самої Його присутності на небі достатньо для нас, тому що Той, Хто освятив і підніс у Його Особі людську природу, покрий милістю і тих, заради кого Христос прийняв людське єство. Отже, «Хто зійшов, Той же і піднявся вище всіх небес, щоб наповнити все» (Єф. 4, 10).

Христос був піднесений на небо Своєю божественною силою. Хмара, що приховала Його від очей апостольських, була не засобом перенесення, а почесною Божества, як і слава Бога Ізраїлева у вигляді хмари наповняла скинію. «І покрила хмара скинію зібрання, і слава Господня наповнила скинію» (Вих. 40, 34). Місце Його після Вознесіння - місце «вище за всі небеса». Чому ж апостоли після Вознесіння, розлучившись із Христом, повертаються до Єрусалима без смутку, з радістю? Вони запам'ятали насамперед обіцянку Христову: «Я з вами по всі дні до кінця віку. Амінь» (Мф. 28, 20). Він, Всюдисущий і Всенаповнюючий, завжди з нами Своїм Божественним і людським єством: у світі, в Церкві, в Євхаристії, у житті, в душі.

Вознесіння Христове зміцнює нашу віру, яка й полягає в тому, щоб вірити в невидиме. Великою заслугою апостолів було те, що вони через видиме людство Ісуса Христа увірували

в Його Божество. Але ще більша заслуга тих, котрі вірують у Нього, не бачивши: «Блаженні ті, що не бачили й увірували» (Ін. 20, 29). Вознесіння Христове зміцнює нашу надію. Той факт, що Христос людську природу возніс на небо, дарує нам надію, що й ми там будемо. Крім цього, Сам Христос говорив: «І коли піду й приготую вам місце, прийду знову й візьму вас до Себе, щоб і ви були там, де Я» (Ін. 14, 3). Вознесіння Христове зіграє в нас любов до небесного. Апостол Павло говорить: «Шукайте горнього, де Христос сидить праворуч Бога; про горнє помишляйте, а не про земне» (Кол. 3, 1); тому що «де скарб ваш, там буде й серце ваше» (Мф. 6, 21).

А про те, що Дух Святий і є та сама любов, що спрямовує нас до всього небесного, говорить Божественний Учитель Своїм учням: «Краще для вас, щоб Я пішов; бо, як Я не піду, Утішитель не прийде до вас; а як піду, то пошлю Його до вас» (Ін. 16, 7).

«Що далеко від очей, далеко від серця», - це прислів'я справедливе тільки щодо стосунків між людьми, але не ставлення людини до Бога. Тут вірніше буде інше: «Далеко від очей - близько до серця». Адже й після Вознесіння Христос не раз являвся людям: Він з'явився на шляху в Дамаск, щоб із Савла, гонителя Церкви, зробити апостола народів. Можна з вірою прийняти, що являвся Він і Своїй Пресвятій Матері, поки Вона перебувала на землі. Являвся Він багатьом святим угодникам. Побачимо й ми Його під час кінця світу, коли Він прийде судити живих і мертвих.

Головною справою для нас має бути те, щоб у той останній день показати праведному Судії й засвідчити перед Ним, що Його Вознесіння дійсно стало для нас зміцненням віри, утвердженням надії й зігріванням любові. Якщо так буде, тоді ми почуємо з вуст Божественного Спасителя: «Прийдіть... наслідуйте Царство, уготоване вам від створення світу» (Мф. 25, 34). Амінь.

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

GOD'S ASCENSION, MAN'S EXALTATION

by Rev. Romanos V. Russo

www.cnew.org

Have you ever tried to look straight into the sun? The brightness of that created orb of light is so stunning that blindness results if we do not avert our gaze. What then can we say of the refulgent splendor of the mystery of Christ's resurrection? Surely this uncreated brilliance lies beyond the ken of the eyes of our souls. Yet the Psalmist sings: "In Thy light shall we see the light." (Ps. 35:9)

A prism! If you want to experience the lustre of pure natural light without having to dim your eyes before its power, refract that light through a prism and behold the colors of the rainbow! In the same way the Church takes the radiance of the Risen Christ and refracts it through the prism of her liturgical life.

Behold the mystery of the Risen Christ rendered accessible to the soul of man: contemplate Him as the liberator of Adam and Eve from sheol; ascending to the Father; and sending the Holy Spirit.

In doing this the Church follows the example of the Gospels. Compare the four accounts of the end of the Master's sojourn among us in the flesh. Notice that in St. Luke's account in Chapter 24 the entire mystery is presented in one breathless exclamation: the empty tomb, the announcement of the angels, the vesper meal with the pilgrims to Emmaus, the appearance to the Apostles, the promise of the Spirit, and the Ascension.

Read it once through and see if you don't have the impression that all these events were experienced as one – in rapid, dizzying succession. After all, it

was Eternity breaking down the wall of separation from the world of time. But later St. Luke himself – in the Acts of the Apostles – and the other evangelists came to contemplate the Mystery according to the prismatic pattern the Church would later adopt for its festal cycle: first Pascha (Easter), then the Ascension, and finally Pentecost.

"What is it we commemorate this day?" asks St. John Chrysostom of the Feast of the Ascension. The golden-mouthed Patriarch of Constantinople replies to his own question: "This day all mankind was restored to God."

In the beginning when God created man "after His own image and likeness," He planted a thirst in man's heart that could be slaked only by God Himself. As St. Augustine said, "You have made our hearts for Thee, O Lord, and they shall not find their rest until they rest in Thee." Though the fall deadened this appetite for Divinity, it did not destroy it utterly.

The Son of God emptied Himself of the Godhead so that His poverty could enrich our humanity with Divinity. He took upon Himself a human nature and united it to His Divine Person. By the Resurrection He destroyed human mortality; by His Ascension He brings back to the Father in His own Person His human nature – and ours. Listen again to Chrysostom:

We who were unworthy of earthly dignity now ascend to a heavenly kingdom, and enter into heaven, and take our place upon a royal throne; and this nature of ours, because of which the Cherubim guarded the

gates of Paradise, this day sits high above the Cherubim.... This day they see our nature upon the royal throne, shining in immortal beauty and glory.

“From dust to dust” – this was to have been man’s fate. But if man accepts to follow Christ, he finds that his journey ends not as earth in earth, but Godlike in heaven.”

When the evangelists speak of the forty days that separate, or rather unite, Easter and the Ascension, we must reflect on the mystical character of the number forty. In the Scriptures, forty usually implies a period of transition: the forty years of wandering in the desert before the Israel of old could enter the Promised Land; the forty days’ fast by which Our Lord prepared for His earthly ministry: the forty hours Our Lord spent while in the tomb destroying death by His own death.

Scholars tell us that the ancients revered this number because it was the product of the four points of the compass (or alternatively, the four elements or the four seasons) and the “perfect” number, 10 – the number which points to infinity.

The forty days of Christ’s risen life are meant to stand as an invitation for us faithful who “have been baptized into Christ” to “put on Christ” (Gal. 3:27). The Ascension reveals the destiny of humankind: to be united intimately with God. What the serpent had craftily suggested in Eden, “You shall be gods,” now becomes reality. As St. Peter proclaims in his second epistle:

He has granted to us His precious and exceedingly great promises; that through these you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust. (2 Pet. 1:4)

During the forty days of Lent we tried to make good that escape through

repentance. During the forty days of Pascha we glory in our newness of life, realizing that this life is His. “I now live – not I, but Christ lives in me!” (Gal. 2:20). This is the joy of the Ascension feast. It is the feast of man’s own destiny achieved by Christ’s compassionate love for mankind.

Listen to the Mystery glorified in the Byzantine Vespers of the feast:

Human nature fell in Adam to the depths of the earth, O Lord. In Yourself have You restored it. Today You’ve lifted it above the powers and principalities of heaven. You loved it and granted it a throne with you. You had compassion on it and granted it a share in your own destiny.

The feast of the Ascension, then, is not the feast of the Lord’s farewell. How can we rejoice if we are left orphans, bereft of the fellowship of Christ? It is the feast of the Lord’s presence! Though He is taken up in His body, His presence is revealed, not hidden, by the cloud.

In Exodus the Holy Spirit led the first Chosen People on their pilgrimage by His presence in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. The cloud of the Ascension prefigures the fiery tongues of Pentecost; both cloud and fire, as in Exodus, are signs of the presence of Christ’s Holy Spirit.

Before He ascended to the Father, Jesus could be here or there, then or later: but once ascended, He is present everywhere and always – by His Spirit, through His Church, in you and in me.

Truly, in this light do we see the Light.

Father Romanos is a regular contributor to Catholic Near East Magazine.

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.

Молитва на Будову нашої нової Церкви

Господи Боже, Ісусе Христе наш, наріжний камінь Твоєї Церкви, Ти перший огорнув нас своєю любов'ю, Ти податель всіх земних благ, споглянь на нас, твоїх дітей, які прагнуть збудувати новий храм на Твою славу. Даруй нам мудрість, силу та ресурси для здійснення цього будівництва, якщо на це Твоя Свята воля. Благослови та підтримуй всіх жертводавців цієї парафії, які долучатимуться до будівництва цієї святині. Ти сповістив, що, навіть тоді, коли твої учні будуть мовчати, то каміння буде кричати. То ж подай, щоб ця церква, наповнена Духом Святим та Твоєю правдою, наvertала до Бога всіх тих, хто живуть в її околицях, щоб Тебе величати. Наповни наші серця любов'ю до Тебе, щоб ми віддали себе і все Тобі, на славу Твого святого імені. Бо ти справжній наш Податель – Чоловіколюбець – і Тобі возсилаємо з безначальним Твоїм Отцем, і пресвятим, і благим, і животворящим твоїм Духом, нині і повсякчас, і на віки віків. Амінь

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**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 неділішньої Служби Божої** (не залежно від особистого звичаю ані Римо-Католицької традиції.)

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.

May Birthdays:

Ihor Ivasyk	–	5/4
Luke Haywas	–	5/4
Patriarch SVIATOSLAV	–	5/5
Bohdan Kniahynyckyj	–	5/10
Iryna Ivasyk	–	5/18
Olga Fedunyak	–	5/21
Fr. James	–	5/22

***Многая і благая літа!
Many blessed years!***

Sunday offering for April 29

Amount	Number
\$5.00	1
\$13.00	1 (loose)
\$15.00	1
\$20.00	2
\$30.00	1
\$40.00	2
\$50.00	1
\$100.00	1
<u>\$105.00</u>	<u>2</u>
\$543.00	

Parishioner Total: \$543.00

Average / parish household (43): \$10.65

Weekly Stewardship Goal: \$2200.00

Deficit: <\$1657.00>



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

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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

A Link to Baptism

The cure of the blind man also symbolizes mankind's means for its recovery from its blindness. It symbolizes the Sacrament of Baptism. Baptism is called holy enlightenment. Those who have been recently baptized are called the newly enlightened. This gospel from Saint John was read in the ancient Church on Holy Saturday when Catechumens were baptized. As this man is cured of his blindness when he washes in the waters of the pool of Siloam, as Jesus tells him to do, so are we brought out of darkness into a new life when we are baptized as Christ instructed us to be. Jesus restores His creation, mankind, with the potential to become what it was meant to be before the fall of Adam.

We also hear in the reading that after this man was cured many of those who knew him before did not recognize him. He is still the same man

but something has significantly changed about him. He is no longer blind. So when we are illuminated we are also new persons, though our outward appearance might be the same. To symbolize this newness a white garment is put on us to show the purity with which we start this new existence. We must, however, become different and unrecognizable in our inward and outward actions also. We must manifest our new existence to those around us through these actions. We must radiate this new found light to others by the way we live our lives. We must say to the world, "I am he who was blind but now my eyes are opened." Credit must be given to Him who has cured us of our darkness by living our lives according to the lessons of the illumination we have received and the continued guidance we get with the reception of the Holy Spirit.