

IN PRAISE OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

Mary, Mother of God, we salute you. Precious vessel, worthy of the whole world's reverence, you are an ever-shining light, the crown of virginity, the symbol of orthodoxy, an indestructible temple, the place that held Him whom no place can contain, mother and virgin. Because of you, the holy gospels could say: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

We salute you, for in your holy womb He, who is beyond all limitation, was confined. Because of you, the Holy Trinity is glorified and adored; the cross is called precious and is venerated throughout the world; the heavens exult; the angels and archangels make merry; demons are put to flight; the devil, that tempter, is thrust down from heaven; the fallen race of man is taken up on high; all creatures possessed by the madness of idolatry have attained knowledge of the truth; believers receive Holy Baptism; the oil of gladness is poured out; the Church is established throughout the world; pagans are brought to repentance.

What more is there to say? Because of you, the light of the only begotten Son of God has shone upon those who sat in darkness and in the shadow of death; prophets pronounced the word of God; the apostles preached salvation to the Gentiles; the dead are raised to life, and kings rule by the power of the Holy Trinity.

From a Homily delivered by St. Cyril of Alexandria



HOLY RESURRECTION ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese
Ecumenical Patriarchate

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Potomac, Maryland 20854
301-299-5120(Office) 301-367-9051(cell)
www.holyresurrection.com
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YouTube: HROC Media

Very Rev. Peter Zarynow, Pastor
Protopresbyter John Fedornock

Subdeacons Anastasios Davis & Theodoros Zarynow Reader Stephen Sudik



Sunday 14 February 2021

Sunday of Zacchaeus

Martyr Tryphon

Epistle: 1 Timothy 4:9-15 Gospel: Luke 19:1-10

Tone Three

14 Feb (SUN) Sunday of Zacchaeus

Chanting of the 3rd Hour 9:10am
Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom 9:30am/Group B
Socially distanced Coffee Social to follow

15 Feb (Mon) FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD INTO THE TEMPLE

Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom 9:30am
Blessing of Candles
(attendance open to all)

17 Feb (Wed) 37th Wednesday after Pentecost

Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom 9:30am
Panachida: +Met. Orestes (44th Anniv of repose)
(attendance limited to those 65+)

21 Feb (SUN) Publican & Pharisee Sunday

Chanting of the 3rd Hour 9:10am
Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom 9:30am/Group A
Panachida: Pañi Deborah Dahulich (49th Anniv of repose)-
brother-in-law George
Socially distanced Coffee Social to follow

Announcements:

Confessions be heard by appointment. Please contact Fr Peter to schedule All faithful are encouraged to come to the Sacrament every 8-10 weeks, on average, to help maintain spiritual health.

The Annual Meeting of the Parish of Holy Resurrection Orthodox Church will take place, via Zoom Conference, on Sunday 21 February from 1-2pm. Link to connect to the meeting will be sent out during the week before the meeting. All parishioners in good spiritual and financial standing will have a voice and a vote at the meeting. Reports from Committee Chairs were emailed the week of 8 February. This is the second of three announcements.

On the bulletin board in the hall, you will find the sign-ups for Bulletin sponsors (\$30/month) Let us try to have these filled as soon as possible. There are a few spaces left, so let's try to fill it as soon as possible.

Grocery Gift cards from Giant are still available. Contact Mark or Marie Sudik to have them mailed to you.

ACRY Cash Day Tickets are now available from Nick Dzubak during Coffee Social. Cash Day (probably virtual this year) will be held on 07 March. Tickets are again \$10 each. All 300 tickets need to be sold for Cash Day to work.

DATE CHANGE: The next ACRY Soup Sale will be on Sunday 28 February. Each ACRY household is asked to make at least one 5-qt batch of soup. Containers can be found in the ACRY closet. If it is not "your Sunday" to be in attendance, please make sure your soup is here before Divine Services begin. Call FrPeter to set up early drop offs

REMINDER --- 2021 DIOCESAN ASSESSMENT

Being our parish, and we as its faithful, are a part of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese (ACROD), each adult parish member (who is over 18 years of age and not a full-time undergraduate student or first enlistment military) has been assessed \$75 .00 in 2021 to support the work of the Diocese (Seminary, Camp Nazareth, etc.) and administration. A special envelope, Diocesan Assessment, is included as the first envelope in your box. The parish receives the invoice from the Diocese in January, so please try to submit the assessment as soon as possible after the first of the year. If there are any questions, or if you want to break up the assessment into payments, please see Debi Myers after Divine Services.

Follow Your Diocese On-Line

Diocesan Website: <http://www.acrod.org> Camp Nazareth: <http://www.campnazareth.org>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/acroddiocese> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/acrodnews>

NOTE: While we are in the situation where we are not able to meet fully, if you are able, please continue to make your regular tithe/offering to the parish. Even though we are not together, the bills continue to come in (electric, water, communications, etc.) Your continued support is necessary and appreciated. Your offering can simply be made through the PayPal button on our parish website homepage or by sending it in the mail to the church.

During this time of Covid-19, if you have any candle requests, please email or text them to Fr Peter by no later than Wednesday evening. Candles will be lit as requested.

CANDLE OFFERINGS

Eternal Light: Happy Birthday Jason-love Mom & Dad (*Mnohaja L'ita!*); In loving memory of Pa i Deborah Dahulich (48th anniversary of repose)-brother-in-law George (*Memory Eternal!*)

Vigil Candles Offered For the Living (*Many Years! Mnohaja L'ita!*)

1-health of Mom-your loving family- Chrysa, Taina & Craig
1-health father Michael-love Alex & Melanie
2-for health-love Mom & Dad
Jonathan & Lara; Stephanie
2-for health-John & Sheila
HROC parishioners; Family members
3-special intention-John & Sheila
Fr. Peter & family; Diocesan Priests & their families; OCMC Missionaries
1-health of Chris Fallon-Michael, Kathleen, John & Anna
1-specail intention Lee Roby-Scott
2-special intention-brother George
Archbishop Michael; Barbara Knighton
2-special intention-George Dahulich
Metropolitan Gregory; Bishop Matthias
8-for health-George Dahulich
Fr Tom Kadlec; Fr Jim Dutko; Chris Fallon; Charlie Myers; Barbara Knighton; Pañi Kathy Dutko Kamilah Wimberly; Randy Wimberly
3-happy birthday-George Dahulich
Pam Bealo; Benjamin Davis; Amy Rosics
1-health of Savannah, Chloe, Caroline, Christopher, Natalie, Cole-love Grandparents
20-health & healing-John & Marie Smith
Irene Dzubak; Melanie Samson; Fr Tom Kadlec; John & Barbara Homick; Chris Hudack; Ray & Georgene Ammon; Marge Tomasevich; Carol Miller; Marie Skasko; Pañi Eleanor Pribish; Lois Erhard; Chris Fallon; Emilia Zak; Stephen Brancho; Charlie Myers; Debbie & Tom Delare; Rose Marie Jung; Pañi Jean Hutnyan; Tim Dzubak; Jessica Kadlec-Krchmar

6-special intentions-the Breno Family
Breno Family; Fedornock Families; Peart Family; Nakonecznyj Family; Zankej Family; Fabian Family
1-happy birthday Rachel Fedornock-the Breno Family
2-specail intention-Mom & Dad
Angela & Brian; Stephen
1-special intention Mark-love Marie
1-special intention Marie-love Mark
8-for health-Mark & Marie
Mom/Baba; Ann Thear; Verna Czap; Nancy Shields; Mike & Josie Czap; Skeets; Williams Family; Charlene Myers
12-health & special intention- Mark & Marie
Chris Hudack; Ray & Georgene Ammon; Marge Tomasevich; Irene Dzubak; Carol Miller; Alex & Eleanor Breno; Fr John & Pañi Marge; James Battaglini; Bridget Myers; Charlie Myers; Pañi Bernadette; Fr Peter
1-health of Charlie-love Debi
2-for health-Charlie, Debi, Jacob & Joey
Grammy; Skeets
2-specail intention-love Mom & Dad
Jacob; Joey
1-health & healing Hayley, Bob, Chris Hudack, John Homick, Peggy and Bruce, Andrea and all who are sick -Lois
1-for health Savanah, Caroline, Natalie, Karen K, Elizabeth Michel, Marge Tomasevich, Jeanne Delasko, Aunt Ann, Georgene and Ray-Lois
2-special Intention-Lois
Lillian; Pañi Bernadette
1-happy birthday John Fallon-Mom & Dad
1-happ birthday Mike Sumner-the Fallons

Vigil Candles In Loving Memory: (*Memory Eternal! Vicnaja Pamjat!*)

1+in loving memory of Les-love Carol
1+in memory Mother & Father. Carol Miller
1+loving memory of my husband Tom-your loving wife Ann
1+in loving memory of our father-Chrysa, Taina and Craig
1+in memory of Steve Sheftic-love your family
2+loving memory-the Fallons
Pañi Jeannette; Anna & John Luchok
1+in memory of Marion Fallon-Diane
1+in loving memory of Helen Rowland-Diane
1+in loving memory Parents & Grandparents-Diane & Brian
1+Memory Eternal Parents/Grandparents-Koval Family
2+Memory Eternal-Koval Family
Uncle George & Uncle Tony
3+Memory Eternal . love Alex, Melanie
mother Katherine; father John; mother Elaine

5+in memory-John & Sheila
Dad Kraynok; Mom Kraynok; Charles Hrapchak; Anna Hrapchak; Evelyn Hrapchak
1+In loving memory of Metro-Love, Joan and Family
1+in loving memory of parents Peter & Ann Dahulich-love son George
1+in memory Helen Beveridge-Mark & Marie
1+Eternal Memory to father George Plowchin-daughter Rose
1+Eternal Memory Alan Reid-Rose Plowchin
1+in memory of mother Anna Soperak (30th Anniv)-Pa i Marge Fedornock
1+in memory of father Michael Soperak (50th Anniv)-Pa i Marge Fedornock

Please pray for the following: Metropolitan Gregory, Bishop Matthias, Fr. Frank & Pa i Connie Miloro; Pa i Betty Jean Baranik, Fr. John Fencik, Fr. Paul Stoll, Fr. Robert Teklinski, Fr. John Gido, Dn. Peter Skoog & family, Pañi Kathy Dutko, Fr. Gregory Allard, Fr. Lawrence Barriger, Fr. James Gleason, Fr. Luke Mihaly, Fr. Ted & Pa i Marjorie Mozes, Fr. Thomas Blaschak, Hieromonk Michael, Fr Thomas Kadlec; Pa i Donna Smoley, Fr. Michael & Pa i Annamaria Slovesko, Fr John & Pa i Patricia Duranko, Fr. Christopher Rozdilski, Fr John & Pa i Cindy Zboyovski, Fr. Jonathan & Pa i Marsha Tobias, Fr Robert Lucas, Pañi Delores Zuder; Pa i Amy George, Pa i Dorothy Hutnyan, Fr Michael & Pa i Elenore Polanichka; Presbyter Tulla Pateras, Elisa Castilla, Ann Thear, Beth & Ed SkeetsqWilliams, Carol Miller, Cindy Russell, Michael Buchko, Dorothy Mastronicola, Angie Wali, Nancy Lynn Arthur, Tony Zankej, Justin Popek, Karen Ogden, Joshua, Faye & Tess, Emilie Dixon, Shirley Miree, Michael Rake, Olga Vasconez, Diane Dupere-Lindell, Gerry Sadler, Ann Eckert, Lois Hall, Marshal Smith, Dave Stanton, Florence Gregoric, James & Melody Peyton, Louann Giger, Daniel Ward, Jennifer Brady, Carol Blum, Katie Bleeker, Alexi Williams, Missy Johns, Susan Buckley, Constance Amey, James Lazor, Debbie Dell, Rose & Douglas Eade, Edward & Grace Yoon, Michael Dinneen, Kellie Barrett, Joan Detwiler, Joan Kondratick, John Homick, Jim David, Melanie Samson, Mary West, Laura Gary; Richard & Wendy Sulich; James Durachko, Julia Rapach, Randi Caffalle, Hayley Marshall, Jon Green, Aleia Dick, MaryJane, Kyle & Rosie Brant, Mary Agnes, Alicia, Lisa Chernov, Stephen Brancho, Emily, MaryMargaret, Leslie Perez, Thomas & Deborah Delare, Diana Hannan; Ed Murphy; LeLe Luu; Bridget Myers; Devan Merrill; Joann Wiant; Bob Fitzurka;; Richard, Kari, Nicholas & Daniel Zarynow; Olga Vovk; infant Emilia Zak; Susan B.; Gregory Naugle; Dorothea Fotis; Daniel Winsky; Lela; Vladimir; Carly; Anna Fallon & baby; Brittany Arata & twins; Pa i Kathryn Dutko & baby

May Our Lord Jesus Christ Touch Them with His Healing Hand!



All of the end of year contribution statements were mailed out in the first week of February.

If you do not receive yours by 24 February, please contact Marie Smith.



Fifth Issue of SPF50 NOW AVAILABLE!!

Scripture – Prayer - Family

Thank you to all our families who have participated in the SPF50 Ministry. Together we have completed 4 of the SPF50 publications!!

The fifth edition of SPF50 is now available. The reading schedule began on **January 10, 2021.**



We are excited for the NEW reading program in the fifth edition!! The NEW reading program will highlight many **ESSENTIAL Biblical Stories** like Creation, Noah and the Ark, the Exodus, the call of the Prophet Samuel, and many others throughout the Old and New Testaments. If you haven't joined SPF50 yet, the new year is a great time to start! Make a commitment to reading Scripture and praying together with your family. Even the busiest of families can make a commitment to read from the Bible and pray together for 50 minutes a month. Don't forget to fill out the Commitment Card which is available in the SPF50 Section of the Diocesan Website, and then return the Card to your parish priest.

To access this material or to find out more about how SPF50 can help your family grow in Christ, visit the Diocesan Website at acrod.org and look for the SPF50 logo.

DIOCESAN "HOMEROOM" MINISTRY

Calling all youth ages 5-18! If you signed up for the new Diocesan "Homeroom" Ministry, don't forget to PARTICIPATE online each week by posting comments, pictures and videos. Parents, if you signed your child up for the "Homerooms", help them to participate. We have 65 youth from 27 parishes across the Diocese signed up for the "Homerooms", but not all are participating yet. If you need any help logging on, downloading the app, or posting, or have any questions, please email fr.stephen.loposky@gmail.com. Thank you!!

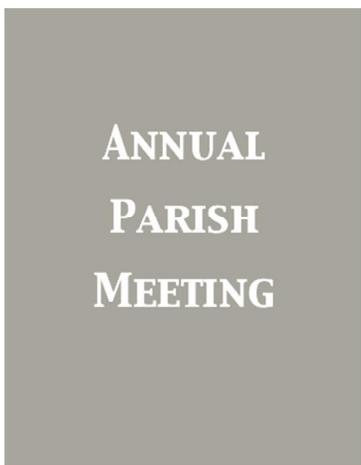
If you are truly interested in the welfare of your children, why do you not watch as strictly, but once a week, how they attend to their lessons in the study of the Law of God, as you do in some home-work, which the children seemed to be forced to have prepared within the next twelve hours for their public school? You must obey God, above the public and all other masters, or lose your souls for the responsibility which rests upon you for the present and future welfare of your children. + St Sebastian Dabovich



PARISH ANNUAL MEETING OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Join us at our Parish Annual Meeting on February 21 from 1:00 pm to 2:00 on Zoom. It will be great to see people that we haven't seen since last spring! All members who are in good spiritual standing (see Fr. Peter for questions) and up to date on your financial obligations (see Debi Myers for questions) may have a voice and vote at the meeting. Find out what is planned for the future and give your ideas!

The slate of candidates for Council officer elections: Vice President nominee Carol Miller; Financial Secretary nominee Debi Myers; Curator nominee Mark Sudik; and two Auditor nominees Tom Koval and Andrey Taveira DaSilva.



Annual activity reports from parish organizations, committees, officers, and priest will be sent by email to be read before the meeting. Any questions on these reports will be answered at the meeting.

A second group of reports being sent will be discussed at the meeting so have them available at the meeting. That group includes the Agenda, 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes, 2020 Unaudited Treasurer's Report, 2021 Budget

Proposal, Build for the Future committee report and 2021 Parish Goals. Parishioners will receive the emails from Fr. Peter on or about February 7. If you do not receive the emails, please contact Father Peter. See you at the Zoom meeting! A link and information to join the meeting will be sent a couple of days prior to the meeting.

Sunday of Zacchaeus

The Calling of Zacchaeus

The paschal season of the Church is preceded by the season of Great Lent, which is also preceded by its own liturgical preparation. The first sign of the approach of Great Lent comes five Sundays before its beginning. On this Sunday the Gospel reading is about Zacchaeus the tax-collector. It tells how Christ brought salvation to the sinful man, and how his life was changed simply because he "sought to see who Jesus was" (Luke 19:3). The desire and effort to see Jesus begins the entire movement through Lent towards Pascha. It is the first movement of salvation.

Our lenten journey begins with a recognition of our own sinfulness, just as Zacchaeus recognized his. He promised to make restitution by giving half of his wealth to the poor, and by paying to those he had falsely accused four times as much as they had lost. In this, he went beyond the requirements of the Law (Ex. 22:3-12).

The example of Zacchaeus teaches us that we should turn away from our sins, and atone for them. The real proof of our sorrow and repentance is not just a verbal apology, but when we correct ourselves and try to make amends for the consequences of our evil actions.

We are also assured of God's mercy and compassion by Christ's words to Zacchaeus, "Today salvation is come to this house" (Luke 19:9). After the Great Doxology at Sunday Matins (when the Tone of the week is Tone 1, 3, 5, 7) we sing the Dismissal Hymn of the Resurrection "Today salvation has come to the world," which echoes the Lord's words to Zacchaeus.

Zacchaeus was short, so he climbed a tree in order to see the Lord. All of us have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). We are also short in our spiritual stature; therefore, we must climb the ladder of the virtues. In other words, we must prepare for spiritual effort and growth.

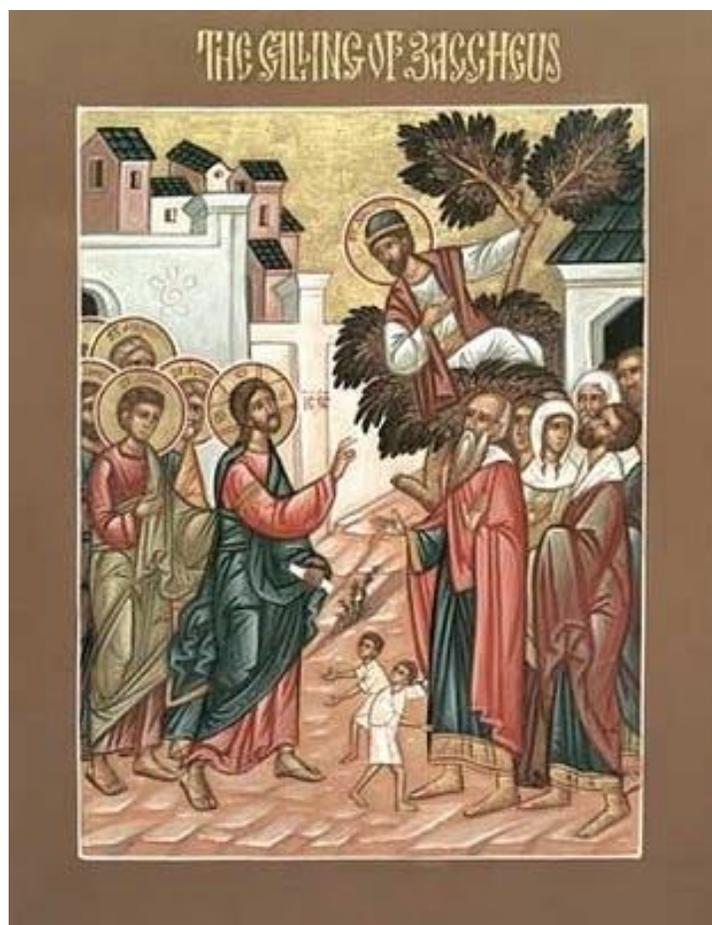
"Today, salvation has come to this house" (Luke 19:9)

Thus, it was spoken by the One Whose word is life and joy and restoration of the righteous. Just as the bleak forest clothes itself into greenery and flowers from the breath of spring, so does every man, regardless of how arid and darkened by sin, becomes fresh and youthful from the nearness of Christ. For the nearness of Christ is as the nearness of some life-giving and fragrant balsam which restores health, increases life, give fragrance to the soul, to the thoughts and to the words of man. In other words, distance from Christ means decay and death and His nearness means salvation and life.

"Today, salvation has come to this house" said the Lord upon entering the house of Zacchaeus the sinner. Christ was the salvation that came and Zacchaeus was the house into which He entered. Brethren, each one of us is a house in which sin dwells as long as Christ is distant and to which salvation comes when Christ approaches it. Nevertheless, will Christ approach my house and your house? That depends on us. Behold, He did not arbitrarily enter the house of the sinner Zacchaeus, rather He entered as a most desired guest. Zacchaeus of little stature climbed into a tree in order to see the Lord Jesus with his own eyes. Zacchaeus, therefore, sought him; Zacchaeus desired Him. We must also seek Him in order to find Him and desire Him in order that He would draw nearer to us and, with our spirit, to climb high in order to encounter His glance. Then He will visit our house as He visited the house of Zacchaeus and with Him salvation will come.

Draw near to us O Lord, draw near and bring to us Your eternal salvation. To You be glory and thanks always. Amen.

From the writings of St. Nikolai Velimirovich: Zacchaeus Of Little Stature

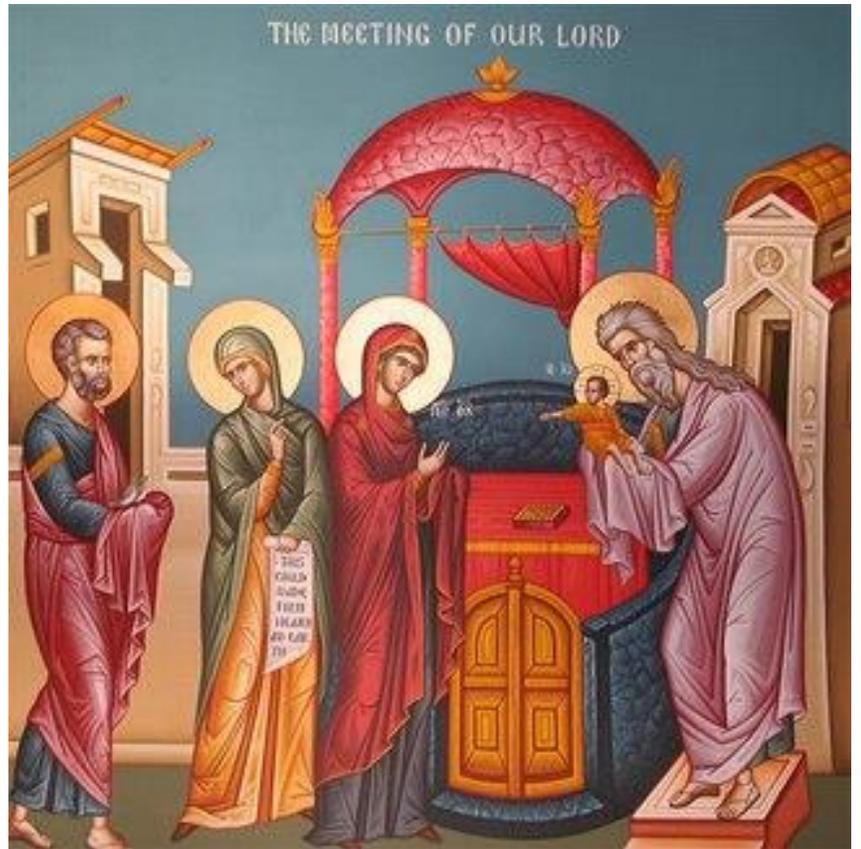


THE MEETING [PRESENTATION] OF OUR LORD IN THE TEMPLE

Commemorated 02/15 February

The fortieth day after His birth, the All-holy Virgin brought her divine Son into the Temple of Jerusalem, in accordance with the Law, to dedicate Him to God and to purify herself (Leviticus 12:2-7; Exodus 12:2). Even though neither the one nor the other was necessary, the Lawgiver did not want in any way to transgress His own Law, which He had given through Moses, His servant and prophet. At that time, the high-priest Zacharias, the father of John the Forerunner, was serving in the Temple.

Zacharias placed the Virgin, not in the temple area reserved for women, but rather in the area reserved for virgins. On this occasion two very special persons appeared in the Temple: the Elder Simeon and Anna, the daughter of Phanuel. The righteous Simeon took the Messiah in his arms and said: *Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation* (Luke 2:29-30). Simeon also spoke the following words about the Christ-child: *Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel* (Luke 2:34). Then Anna, who from her youth had served God in the Temple by fasting and prayer, recognized the Messiah and glorified God. She then proclaimed to the inhabitants of Jerusalem the coming of the long-awaited One. But the Pharisees who were present in the Temple, having seen and heard all, became angry with Zacharias because he had placed the Virgin Mary in the area reserved for virgins, and they reported this to King Herod. Convinced that this was the new king spoken of by the Magi from the East, Herod immediately sent his soldiers to kill Jesus. In the meantime, the holy family had already left the city and set out for Egypt under the guidance of an angel of God. The Feast of the Meeting of our Lord in the Temple was celebrated from earliest times, but the solemn celebration of this day was established in the year 544 A.D., during the reign of Emperor Justinian



SAINT SIMEON THE GOD-RECEIVER (03/16 February)

During the reign of the Egyptian Emperor Ptolemy Philadelphus, Simeon was chosen as one of the famous Seventy, to whom was entrusted the task of translating the Bible from Hebrew into Greek [The Septuagint]. Simeon was performing his task conscientiously, but in the process of translating the book of the Prophet Isaiah he came upon the prophecy: *Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son* (Isaiah 7:14). He became confused and took a knife to remove the word "virgin" and replace it with the words "young woman," and thus to translate it into Greek. At that moment, however, an angel of God appeared to Simeon and restrained him from his intention, explaining to him that the prophecy is true, that it was correctly written. The messenger of God also said that Simeon would become convinced of it personally, for, according to the will of God, he would not die until he saw the Messiah born of the Virgin. The righteous Simeon rejoiced to hear such a voice from heaven, left the prophecy unchanged and thanked God, Who made him worthy to live and see the Promised One. When the young Child Jesus was presented in the Temple in Jerusalem by the Virgin Mary, the Spirit of God revealed this to Simeon, who was very old and "as white as a swan." Simeon quickly entered the Temple and there recognized both the Virgin and the young Child by the light that shone around their heads like a halo. The joyful Simeon took Christ into his hands and prayed to God to release him from this life: *Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation* (Luke 2:29-30). Anna the Prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, was also there; she too recognized the Messiah, and she proclaimed Him to the people. At that time Anna was eighty-four years old. St. Simeon died shortly thereafter. This righteous Elder Simeon is considered to be a protector of young children.

On the Blessing of Candles:

On the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple (Luke 2:22-40), it is customary to bless candles. Thus, this Feast is sometimes known as Candlemas. Fr. John McGuckin writes: *“When Christians pray, from time immemorial they have lit candles. The candle is a sign of the fire of the Holy Spirit. Their cheerful radiance (especially if at the time of prayer, one dims the lights a little) becomes a little sacrament of the resurrection grace of Christ. The flame also serves to remind us of how pure and heartfelt our prayer is meant to be, even if, at times, we are praying in a doldrum and may hardly feel any grace at all. The candle reminds us that Christ and his Holy Spirit pray in and through us, unfailingly. They see the heart’s intent and always draw close in time of prayer. Their prayer (in us, through us, over us) is never dim, always luminous.”* (Prayer Book of the Early Christians, Kindle Loc. 97-102)

Before reading the Gospel at the Divine Liturgy, the celebrant prays that God will illumine our hearts with the pure light of His divine knowledge so that we can understand His Gospel message. Hieromonk Gregorios in his commentary on the Liturgy says concerning the use of candles in the Orthodox Church: *“We asked Christ to enlighten us with the light of divine knowledge because He is the illumination of our souls and bodies. This Light of Christ is symbolized by the light of the candles and lamps which we light at the Divine Liturgy and other services...”*

St Nikodimus of the Holy Mountain explains why we have lights in church: *“First, to the glory of God, the true Light who enlightens every man [cf. John 1:9]. Secondly, to banish the darkness of night and give consolation... Thirdly, as a sign of joy and delight... Fourthly, in honor of the martyrs and saints...”*

Fifthly, to suggest the light of our good works. And sixthly, for the forgiveness of our sins.’

St Symeon the New Theologian writes in this connection: *“The candles which you light reveal to you the intelligible light. Just as the church, that house of great beauty, is full of light from many candles, so the house of your soul, which is more precious than that church, should be illumined and full of light in a noetic sense – that is to say, that within you all the spiritual virtues should burn with divine fire... The multitude of burning lamps signify the illumined thoughts which should shine within you like lamps, so that there should be no dark thought in the house of your soul, but that all should be aflame and shining with the light of the Holy spirit.”* (THE DIVINE LITURGY: A COMMENTARY, pp 161-162)

In the book of Revelation, St. John gives us this wonderful image of Christ, both Lamb and Lamp of God. As Lamp He bears the divine light which is the glory of God: *“And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb.”* (Revelation 21:23)

On this Feast of the Meeting of the Lord, we bless candles and contemplate the role of light in the world and in our lives – a light that comes from God and is a way we experience and encounter our Creator.

A Prayer for the blessing of candles:

O Lord Jesus Christ, the True Light, Who enlightens everyone born in this world, pour out Your blessing on these candles and sanctify them by the light of Your Grace. Grant also, O Merciful One, that as these lights, kindled with a visible flame, scatter the darkness of night, so may our hearts by an invisible fire – that is, enlightened by the glowing of the Holy Spirit – avoid the blindness caused by every sin. May we see with the cleansed eye of our soul those things that are pleasing to You and necessary for our salvation. Having overcome the darkness of this world, grant us to attain to the light that never fades: For You are our Savior, and to You we send up glory, with Your unoriginate Father, and Your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.



BEATITUDES PART III: BLESSED MOURNING

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted” (Mt 5.4). This is the second beatitude, and it logically follows the first. If one is poor in spirit, liberated from the spiritual and physical lusts of this world, he will necessarily mourn and weep over the conditions of man.

The poor in spirit know how foolish and sad it is to be caught by sin, to be victimized by falsehood and evil, to be wedded to destruction and death. Viewing the realities of this world without God, the world captivated by its own vain imaginations, the world thinking itself rich and prosperous and needing nothing but in fact “wretched, pitiable, poor, blind and naked” (Rev 3.17), the spiritually poor man can only mourn. Knowing what could be from God, and what is actually with God, he will mourn and weep like the prophets over sinful Israel, like Jesus over the corpse of Lazarus and the city of Jerusalem (Jn 11.35, Mt 23.37), like Jesus Himself in the garden, confronted by His own cup of suffering which was so senseless and cruel.

Blessed mourning for sin is essential to the spiritual life. But in the victory of Christ, it is not morbid or joyless. On the contrary, it is filled with hope, with gladness and with light.

As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting; for you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us. For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret, but worldly grief produces death. For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you... (2 Cor 7.9–11).

In his writings, Saint John Climacus (7th c.) follows this teaching of Saint Paul. It is the classical teaching of the Christian spiritual tradition. The end of blessed mourning is not despondency or remorse, it is repentance and salvation. It is the “mourning which causes joy.”

Mourning, according to God, is sadness of soul and the disposition of a sorrowing heart which ever madly seeks for that which it thirsts...

Mourning is a golden spur in a soul which is stripped of all attachment and all ties...

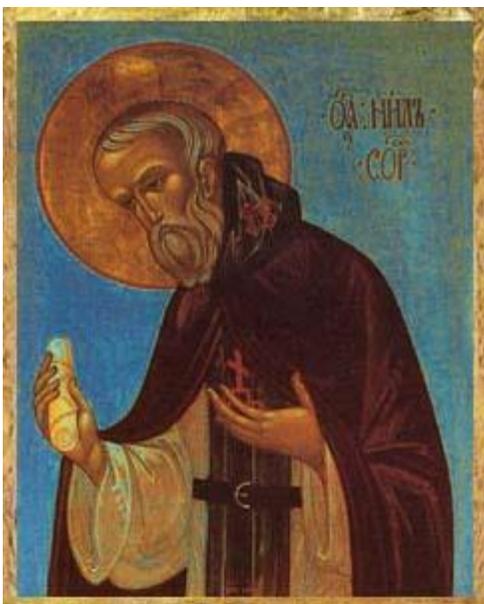
Keep a firm hold of the blessed joy-grief of holy mourning and do not stop working at it until it raises you high above the things of this world and presents you pure to Christ.

The fruit of morbid mourning is vain glory and self-esteem, but the fruit of blessed mourning is comfort.

He who is clothed in blessed and grace-given mourning... knows the spiritual laughter of the soul.

My friends, God does not ask or desire that man should mourn from sorrow of heart, but rather out of love for Him he should rejoice with spiritual laughter.

When I consider the actual nature of compunction, I am amazed at how that which is called mourning and grief should contain joy and gladness within it, like honey in the comb (The Ladder of Divine Ascent, Step 7).



“So do not make a passion the remedy against passion,” says Saint Nilus of Sinai, “lest you anger... Him who granted you this blessing [of mourning and tears]. For in shedding tears for their sins many people forget the purpose of tears, and getting into a frenzy, they go astray” (Saint Nilus of Sinai, 5th c., Texts on Prayer).

MARTYR TRYPHON

Commemorated 01/14 February

The Martyr Tryphon was born in Phrygia, one of the districts of Asia Minor, in the village of Lampsacus. From his early years the Lord granted him the power to cast out demons and to heal various maladies. He once saved the inhabitants of his native city from starvation. Saint Tryphon, by the power of his prayer, turned back a plague of locusts that were devouring the grain and devastating the fields.

Saint Tryphon gained particular fame by casting out an evil spirit from the daughter of the Roman emperor Gordian (238-244). Helping everyone in distress, he asked only one thing from them: faith in Jesus Christ, by Whose grace he healed them.

When the emperor Decius (249-251) assumed the imperial throne, he began a fierce persecution of Christians. Someone reported to the commander Aquilinus that Saint Tryphon was boldly preaching faith in Christ, and that he led many to Baptism. The saint was arrested and subjected to interrogation,

during which he fearlessly confessed his faith.

He was subjected to harsh tortures: they beat him with clubs, raked his body with iron hooks, they scorched his flesh with fire, and led him through the city, after iron nails were hammered into his feet. Saint Tryphon bravely endured all the torments without complaint.

Finally, he was condemned to beheading with a sword. The holy martyr prayed before his execution, thanking God for strengthening him in his sufferings. He also asked the Lord to bless those who should call upon his name for help. Just as the soldiers raised the sword over the head of the holy martyr, he surrendered his soul into the hands of God. This event occurred in the city of Nicea in the year 250.

Christians wrapped the holy body of the martyr in a clean shroud and wanted to bury him in the city of Nicea, where he suffered, but Saint Tryphon in a vision commanded them to take his body to his native land to the village of Lampsacus. Later on, the relics of Saint Tryphon were transferred to Constantinople, and then to Rome.

In Russia, Saint Tryphon is regarded as the patron saint of birds. There is a story that when Tsar Ivan the Terrible was out hunting, his falconer carelessly allowed the Tsar's favorite falcon to fly away. The Tsar ordered the falconer Tryphon Patrikeiev to find the bird within three days, or else he would be put to death. Tryphon searched all through the forest, but without luck.

On the third day, exhausted by long searching, he returned to Moscow to the place called Marinaya Grove. Overcome with weariness, he lay down to rest, fervently praying to his patron saint, the Martyr Tryphon, for help.

In a dream he saw a youth on a white horse, holding the Tsar's falcon on his hand. The youth said, "Take the lost bird, go to the Tsar and do not grieve." When he awakened, the falconer actually spotted the falcon on a pine tree. He took it to the Tsar and told him about the miraculous help he received from the holy Martyr Tryphon. Grateful to Saint Tryphon for saving his life, Tryphon Patrikeiev built a chapel on the spot where the saint appeared. Later on, he also built a church dedicated to the holy Martyr Tryphon in Moscow.

