



Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

*The 35th Sunday after Pentecost,
February 14th , Tone 3, Lu. 19:1-10*

The Sunday of Zacchaeus

Troparion of the Resurrection, Tone 3

Let the heavens rejoice! Let the earth be glad! For the Lord has shown strength with His arm! He has trampled down death by death! He has become the firstborn of the dead! He has delivered us from the depths of hell, and has granted to the world great mercy!

Kontakion of Annunciation, Tone 8

O Victorious Leader of triumphant hosts! We, your servants delivered from evil, sing our grateful thanks to you, O Theotokos! As you possess invincible might set us free from every calamity so that we may sing: Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride!

For Nativity/Theophany: Feasts of Divine Illumination..

I know Thee, O Lord; I know Thee clearly. I know Thee, since I have been taught by Thee; for no one can recognize Thee, unless He enjoys Thine illumination.

On this day, the Sunday before the beginning of the Lenten Triodion, we commemorate the repentance of the tax-collector, the Holy Apostle Zacchaeus, who desired to behold Christ. The Holy Fathers placed today's commemoration here to prepare us, little by little, for dawning season of Great Lent. Knowing that we are basically slow to exhibit a desire for repentance, the Holy Fathers, by Zacchaeus' example, teach us in these preliminary weeks the need to recognize our sins and our need to turn away from them.

Zacchaeus, the Holy Apostle of Christ, was that earnest and wealthy chief tax-collector appointed by the Romans about whom the divine Apostle and Evangelist Luke speaks in his Gospel (19:1-10). As we learn from this passage of the Holy Gospel, Zacchaeus was very short, and hence, due to the crowds, he could not see our Lord Jesus Christ with his own eyes, as he desired when the Lord was passing through Jericho. He therefore went up into a sycamore tree in order to see Him. The Lord acknowledged this good will of Zacchaeus and his sincere faith, and as He passed by, He called him by name and announced His wish to be guest in his house, saying to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house" (Luke 19:5).

Zacchaeus accepted this proposal of the Lord with all his soul, and he rushed with joy and received Him in his home and offered Him hospitality with all willingness. It was not only because he believed in Christ with all his soul that he hosted Him with particular willingness, but also because he actively repented for his former sins, and he said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold" (Luke 19:8). True, the Jews could not tolerate this, and "they all murmured, "He has gone to be the guest of a man who is a sinner"" (Luke 19:7); but the Lord, who knows the hearts of all, saw his disposition and, honoring the power of his repentance, forgave and blessed him and all his house, saying, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham" (Luke 19:9).

Zacchaeus' conversation in this manner offers us two important lessons: first, God's compassion and the signs of sincere and active repentance, and second, the fact that correction of evil as far as one is able is an inseparable proof of sincere repentance. In this manner the good Zacchaeus exceeded the ordi-

Announcements and Activities

Great Vespers— Saturday, at 5:30 PM.

Divine Liturgy— Sunday, at 10AM.

Back indoors: Doubtless all of you have read my latest Directive 2/5 informing you of our being back inside the temple, at 25% capacity (55 people) and with masks and social distancing. For those who are at greater risk and want to livestream or read the Typika, father can give you communion at the door at the end of liturgy.

Parish Council— today, after Divine Liturgy.

Spring Fundraiser— want to give you early notice of the upcoming fundraiser. As you know our fundraisers are a critical part of our budget. So, “all hands on deck”. Please mark your calendars for Saturday, March 6th. We'll keep you posted about what we need as we get closer.

Pray for... Hierarch Nikolai (Soraich)— battling cancer. **Natalia**—Olga's friend. Sunday's brother, **Joe**, ill. **Chance**— Kerri's nephew **Emory**—a young relative of Kirk and Kathy. **Linda**, Mary S.'s daughter. **Sarah**—the sister of John Deak who is battling cancer. **Theresa**, cancer, and husband **Ron**, the daughter-in-law and son of Linda D. Samir's friend, **Johnny**, who has been improving in the battle to save his sight. **Anna J.**, who is battling health issues related to her bone marrow transplant and battle with Lyme Disease. **Hanna**— a friend of April's who has a brain injury. **Darko**— who had surgery for cancer and has to undergo chemo. **Reposed Michael**, Brian R.'s cousin. **Barbara Ranjo**, cancer surgery and recovering. **David**, newly reposed. **Tony**, health and an upcoming surgery. **John**, health. **Dana and Era**, two young women who are battling health issues. **Carol**, **Mike Miller's friend**. **Julie**, a friend of Katherine M. **Michaela and family**— Heather's friend battling cancer. **George**— Sunday's husband who has been battling health issues. Mara's dad, **Ratp** who recently had surgery. **Fr. Paul Lazor**, sometime dean of St. Vladimir Seminary reposed.. **Vera**— **Newly-Reposed**. **Linda D.** post surgery pain. **Nicole**, **Aiden and Kate**. **Zoya**, who lives in Russia and is suffering from the covid virus. **Brian**, Sunday's brother. **George and Alex**, health problems. **Reposed Mel R.** faithful member and husband of Marianne. **Jerry**— the husband of Elise, Katie and Anna R. Who passed last Thursday. **Metropolitan Theodosius** newly reposed. **Reposed Darrel**, Kyle's father. **Diane F.** recovering from Surgery. **Erika and Family**. **And, finally, all those who have lost their lives or are suffering as a result of the current Pandemic (which has been growing in numbers across the country and in the world), wildfires, hurricanes, and civil unrest.** **Jerry**— **Reposed**. **Don**, **Judy**, **Paul**, **Thomas**, **Marcella** **Reposed**, friends of **Karen and Scott T.**; **Donald**, reposed, a relative of Stephen and Luci F.

nances of the Mosaic Law in his generosity, for which cause he was accounted worthy of the Lord's blessing.

After the Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension of the Lord, it is said that Zacchaeus was a disciple of the divine Apostle Peter, who afterwards ordained him Bishop of Caesarea. His memory is also celebrated on April 20.

The Holy Fathers, knowing the weakness of human nature in our attempts to change from sinful, self-centered life to one of humility and repentance, placed this Gospel lesson before us today to instill in us a desire to repent just as Zacchaeus possessed a desire to behold Christ. Having his example before us, let us now prepare ourselves for the approaching struggles of the Great Lent as we set out on our journey to behold Christ's Life-giving Resurrection.

(Synaxarion for the Sunday of Zacchaeus, taken from the internet)

From the Lives of the Saints... THE VENERABLE AUXENTIUS

Auxentius was a very prominent aristocrat among the noblemen and courtiers at the court of Emperor Theodosius the Younger in Constantinople. Inflamed with love for Christ, Auxentius was tonsured a monk and remained for a short time in Constantinople. When men began to praise him, he fled from their praise and settled on a mountain near Chalcedon called Skopa, which later was referred to as Auxentius's Mountain. His desire to remain there permanently, hidden from men, was not realized. Some shepherds discovered him and made his whereabouts known. They began to bring the sick to him for healing, and he healed many, restoring sight to the blind and cleansing lepers by anointing them with oil. He also raised the palsied and freed many who were demon possessed. All of this was cause for amazement, but his humility was cause for even greater amazement. Whenever he was implored to heal someone, he would excuse himself with the words: "I also am a sinful man!" Compelled by many requests, he approached healing in the following manner: He either invited all present to pray to God with him for the sick person, or else he first strengthened their faith and then told them that God would give to them according to their faith, or else he prayed over the head of the sick person: "The Lord Jesus Christ heals you!" He did this so that the act of working miracles would not be attributed to him but rather to God Almighty. He participated at the Fourth Ecumenical Council [Chalcedon, 451 A.D.] and strongly defended Orthodoxy against the Eutychian and Nestorian heresies. In the year 470 A.D., the Lord took his youthful soul in his old age, and his aged body remained in the earth from which it was created.

Taken from the Prologue of Ochrid, by St. Nikolai Velimirovich

“There do not exist many or few, nor small or great problems. The only problem is the absence of Christ from our lives” (From the life and teachings of Elder Epiphanius Theodoropoulos)