



Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

Sunday of Zacchaeus

Troparion of the Resurrection, Tone 8

Thou didst descend from on high, O Merciful One. Thou didst accept the three-day burial to free us from our sufferings. O Lord, our Life and Resurrection: Glory to Thee!

Troparion of the Meeting, Tone 1

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, full of Grace: from you shone the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God, enlightening those who sat in darkness; rejoice and be glad, O righteous Elder! You accepted in your arms the Redeemer of our Souls, who grants us the Resurrection.

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!

February 6th , Tone 8, Lu.19:1-10

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

Announcements and Activities

As there are no major holy days during the week days of the coming 2 weeks, Fr. Lawrence will use the time to fulfill some out-of-town duties. God willing, he will travel to S.F. for a needed meeting with His Eminence. He will make a trip to the monastery of St. Barbara to hear a confession of a spiritual daughter. And he will travel to Bakersfield to bless the home of a former member who asked him to do so. I will be available for call or text, and will not be staying over night at any of the locations. We Will have Liturgy for All-Souls, on Feb. 26.

Saturday Great Vespers— on Saturday, at 5:30 PM.

Sunday Divine Liturgy— 10AM.

House Blessings— Fr. Lawrence placed a sign-up sheet for House Blessings in the Social Hall, on the table against the wall with the double doors to the patio. If, in addition to the blessing itself, you are interested in dining or having refreshments with Father and Matushka, you'll want to adjust the time you sign up for accordingly. There are, of course, still concerns about the new Omicron variant and its highly contagious characteristic. If you would prefer to not have Fr. Lawrence come for now, he understands completely and will gladly do it at another time when you are feeling more comfortable. Let Fr. Lawrence know if you become ill and he will let you know if he becomes ill.

Church School/Adult Ed.— will next meet on Sunday, February 13th.

Coffee Hours— This week's Coffee Hour is being sponsored by Luci and Linda. Next week's Coffee Hour will be our Bagels and Coffee week.

Annual Meeting— We had a good Annual Meeting. We adopted the budget presented by Parish Council

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 HOLY FEMALE MARTYR DOROTHEA

Dorothea was a prominent and beautiful maiden from Caesarea in Cappadocia. Sapricius, the administrator of the province, turned Dorothea over to the two pagan sisters, Christina and Kallista, in order to turn her from Christ. But the opposite occurred: Dorothea succeeded in converting both sisters to the Christian Faith. Enraged, Sapricius ordered that the two sisters be bound back to back, thrown into a vat of pitch and set on fire. He then sentenced Dorothea to death. She joyfully heard the sentence and cried out: "I give thanks to Thee, O Christ, Lover of souls, that Thou art leading me into Thine all-holy mansions!" Theophilus, a certain nobleman who was present, laughed at these words and cried out to Dorothea: "Listen, O bride of Christ--send me apples and flowers from the pomegranate tree in your bridegroom's Paradise." "Indeed, I will do that," replied the martyr. When Dorothea was at the place of execution, suddenly a beautiful young man appeared with three beautiful apples and three red flowers from the pomegranate. This was an angel of God, and it was winter. Dorothea asked the angel to take them to Theophilus and tell him: "Behold, this is what you desired!" When Theophilus received the message and saw the gift, he was thoroughly frightened. Everything turned upside down for him, and he, a confirmed pagan, became a Christian. He was tortured and slain for Christ, and his soul entered the Paradise of the Lord Jesus soon after that of St. Dorothea.

SAINT PHOTIUS, PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE

Photius was a great beacon of the Church. He was a relative of the emperor and a grandson of the glorious Patriarch Tarasius. He vigorously protected the Church from papal love of power and other Roman distortions of the Faith. In six days he went through all the ecclesiastical ranks, rising from a layman to patriarch. He was consecrated Patriarch on the Feast of the Nativity of Christ in the year 857 A.D., and he reposed in the Lord in the year 891 A.D.

Taken from the Prologue of Ochrid, Compiled and edited by St. Nikolai Velimirovic)

“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)