

January 19, 2020: The 29TH Sunday after Pentecost (The healing of the 10 lepers)

Epistle: Col. 3:4-11:

When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them. But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

Gospel: Like 17:12-19:



Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up their voices and said, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!” So when He saw them, He said to them, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. So Jesus answered and said, “Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?” And He said to him, “Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well.

The theme of this Sunday's gospel reading is **gratitude**. Although this is a real story, the actual encounter between Christ and the ten lepers, its moral is as valid today as it was two thousand years ago and throughout the ages ever since.

St Luke relates to us that although all ten lepers who, according to the rules of the time had to leave their families and communities and live in isolation, prayed with the same intensity ("*Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!*") and, as a result, received the same gift of healing, only one of them proved to be a man of character. And what's more interesting, this man wasn't even part of the "chosen people" but a Samaritan, a "*foreigner.*" He alone returned to his benefactor and thanked Him.

It is important to notice that this man didn't come back to thank his benefactor in a casual manner (the way we do it so often with a cold "thanks"); he "*fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks,*" which means that he engaged in an act of adoration and praise, a liturgical act.

When we show our gratitude to God for all the blessings He gives us on a daily basis **we are the ones** who actually benefit from this. We turn toward our benefactor, the merciful and loving God and, just like the cleansed Samaritan, reaffirm our role and vocation as liturgical beings.

As Orthodox Christians, we do this every day as individuals as part of our private prayers and collectively, as a community, when we come to partake in the Eucharistic celebration, on Sundays and Feast days.

Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!

Fr. George Bazgan

Sunday Fellowship

The following families are scheduled to look after
this Sunday's fellowship:

**Dincă Cornel & Gabriela
Serghe Ion & Rozica
Manic Dumitru & Svetlana**

Thank you all very much!

Altar boys for this Sunday:

**Cotfasa Matthew
Pătru Nicolae Stelian**

A Christian's conduct in Church

Before I begin to address the topic of „church conduct,“ it is important to address the question „Why do we come to church?“

We come to church on Sundays (the Day of the Lord) in order to reaffirm our vocation as liturgical beings, to continue our spiritual growth and to strengthen our communion with Christ and His Church which began when we were accepted into the community of the faithful through the Sacraments of Christian Initiation: Baptism, Chrismation and Holy Eucharist (Communion).

For an Orthodox Christian, attending the Divine Liturgy is not only a privilege but an obligation as well. It is a privilege in as much as we, as members of the visible Church are called to bring the Eucharistic elements (bread and wine), be part of their transformation into the Body and Blood of Christ and then, partake of them in the form of the Holy Eucharist, all this in the context of the Divine Liturgy, the highest form of prayer we can offer to God. It is also our obligation to attend the Divine Liturgy, obeying thus one of the commandments of the Church.

In order to benefit the most from our presence in Church we must keep in mind a few rules:

- 1. Come to Church on time (before 10:00) in order to participate in the entire Divine Liturgy.**
- 2. If the service is already in progress, you must stop and see what is going on. If you came in during the Scripture readings (Epistle or the Gospel), you should wait at the back of the church until the reading is over and then, quietly, take your seat.**
- 3. Pick up the liturgical book and follow closely the service, reading all of the prayers.**
- 4. During the Divine Liturgy you are not allowed to talk to other people. You can do that at the end, during the fellowship.**