

Orthodox Church in America + Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church Williamsport, PA.



5th Sunday of Pascha
The Samaritan Woman
May 14th, 2023

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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Today's Scripture Readings:

Epistle: Acts 11:19-26, 29-30

Gospel: St. John 4:5-42

CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!
Christos Voskrese! Voistinu Voskrese!
Christos Anesti! Alithos Anesti!

***A Paschal welcome to everyone, and especially to all the
Moms & visitors this morning! Please join us for some
fellowship after in the Parish Hall!***

Services, Events & Announcements

- + *Compline / Bible Study*** – Wednesday May 17th at 5:30
- + *Parish Council Meeting*** – Thursday May 18th at 5:30
- + *Great Vespers*** – Saturday May 20th at 5
- + *Hours & Divine Liturgy*** – Sunday May 21st at 9:40 - Fellowship following in the Hall / Church School & Orthodoxy 101
- + *Happy Mother's Day*** to ALL of our moms! Thank you for ALL that you do, and May Grant You Many More Blessed Years!

Our Giving – May 7th, 2023

Tithes/Offerings - \$4,191.00 / Online Giving - \$205.00

Candle Offerings – \$64.00

Thank you all for your giving for the work of Church!

Regarding Holy Communion: Only those faithful who are Orthodox Christians and have **properly prepared themselves** by fasting, prayer [i.e., *Prayers Before Communion*], recent **confession**, and who were *at least present for the reading of the Epistle and Gospel* should approach to receive the Holy Eucharist. *We should all be at peace with everyone too.* If you have any questions about Communion, please see Fr. Seraphim. 😊



† ***Are We Broken or Transformed?*** by Fr. James Guirguis

It is only when someone is at the brink of despair that they are open to a life-changing experience of Jesus Christ. In times of comfort it is easy to have an encounter with Christ but the results of the encounter are usually insignificant. In the life of every Christian there must be a life-changing experience of Jesus Christ and the love and healing that He offers. We should ask ourselves if

we have had this experience and if we have not had it, we should quietly reflect and pray and question why we have not had that experience. We should determine what is holding us back from a true encounter with the Lover of mankind. Is it all of our comfort? Is it our comfort in material things, comfort in our distractions, comfort in our relationships, or even comfort with ourselves and our own sense of virtue and spirituality?

The woman at the well had the potential to be transformed into a completely different person through the healing grace of the relationship and love she received from our Lord and Savior. This was possible for her because she came empty and in many ways she was broken and suffering. It is so important for us to also come to the Lord with our brokenness and loneliness and suffering. We have to find that within us. Sometimes God in His mercy will use our outer circumstances to bring us to a place of need. Sometimes the Lord will allow us to become sick or weak physically. But sometimes we must sit quietly and dig deep within to acknowledge that we are all like this poor woman at the well. Above all else we must learn to repent in a way that makes our brokenness and necessity for Christ a reality. There is no doubt that we each need a life changing encounter with the Lord, and there is no doubt that we are each capable of having this because the Lord in His grace is hungry for this relationship with each of us. He is present, but where is our heart? Do we recognize that we are sick and have been enemies of Christ through our own sinfulness and pride?

Some of us are going through the motions of being Christians and believers. I know this because I have moments where it is easy to do the same thing. Christ our Lord is not interested in rituals and religious routines that are done by rote habit. These ritual practices and observances will not save us by themselves. They have the

potential to save us when they enliven and enlighten our hearts and minds and kindle a burning desire for God within us. But apart from our deep desire for a daily relationship with Jesus Christ, they are just hollow and superficial.

How do we kindle that relationship? We start with dedicated times of silence and repentance in our day. ... [W]e reflect on our own sins and the ways we have hurt others or come short of the glory of God. We do this away from our phones or other distractions. We repent daily as an act of dying to ourselves or killing off the old man and his ways. For some it is enough to sit in front of the icons quietly, for most it will include using a prayer book or slowly and intentionally reading psalms. One of the most important things we can do to prepare for an encounter with Jesus Christ, is to prepare ourselves on Saturday evenings for the great and holy events of the coming morning, the Divine Liturgy and the Holy Eucharist (communion). God is waiting and He offers Himself to each of us. We have encountered Him, but have we been changed?

(www.orthochristian.com/93755.html)

+ *Today's Gospel: St. John 4:5-42*

So, He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus, therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of

God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?" Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw."

Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly."

The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father.

You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

The woman said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When He comes, He will tell us all things.” Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am He.”

And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, “What do You seek?” or, “Why are You talking with her?” The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men,

Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ? Then they went out of the city and came to Him. In the meantime, His disciples urged Him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.” But He said to them, “I have food to eat of which you do not know.” Therefore, the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?” Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.

Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and then comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.

For in this the saying is true: ‘One sows and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors.”

And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, “He told me all that I ever did.” So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days.

And many more believed because of His own word.

Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is (indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world.)" (NKJV)

"But I say to you," the Lord says, "love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, pray for those who persecute you." Why did he command these things? So that he might free you from hatred, sadness, anger and grudges, and might grant you the greatest possession of all, perfect love, which is impossible to possess except by the one who loves all equally in imitation of God.

St. Maximus the Confessor

Prayers For the Health and Salvation of those in need: Many Years!

Priestmonk Ambrose (Young), Abbot Tryphon, Mitred-Archpriest Nicholas (Harris), Mitred-Archpriest Daniel & Mat. Myra (Kovalak), Archpriest Moses (Berry), Pres. Eva (Koutroulelis), Pres. Rosy (Tanveer), Mat. Mary Lynn Henry, Mat. Deborah Belonick, Paul Beard, Evelyn Chabal, Phoebe Davis, Michael Kuzmiak, Juliana Matusiak, Elias Ciaccio, Elizabeth Wadsworth, Sebastian Fillar, Infant John, Infant Wyatt, Isaac Bannister, Barbara Cain, Vera Christopher, Paisios Sundin, Christine Perrin, Agnes Andreanoff, Michael Juran, Edward Hojnicky, & those suffering from the war in Ukraine.

Prayers for the Newly Departed: Memory Eternal!

Mat. Carol Steffaro +4/14, John Fravel +4/5, Barbara Shatto +4/14, Phillip Kundis +4/28, Ian Young +5/10 & Those who have lost their life in the war in Ukraine.