

Thirty-Fifth Sunday After Pentecost
Sunday of the Last Judgment
“Meatfare Sunday” – Last day of eating meat until Pascha
February 23, 2025

On February 23rd we Celebrate:
Hieromartyr Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna.
Venerable Gorgonia, Sister of Saint Gregory the Theologian.



Icon of the Second Coming of Christ

Holy Wisdom Orthodox Mission

1355 North 4th Street • Grand Junction, CO 81501 • 970-778-4160

<https://www.holywisdomorthodox.com>
holywisdomorthodox@gmail.com

Great Vespers, Saturday Evenings at 6:00 pm
Divine Liturgy, Sunday Mornings at 9:30 am (Hours at 9:05 am)
Paraklesis to the Theotokos, Wednesday Evenings at 6:00 pm
Very Reverend Archpriest Luke Uhl, Retired, Interim Rector

Holy Wisdom Orthodox Mission
is a Parish in the Diocese of the West
of the Orthodox Church in America
Under the Spiritual and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of
Archbishop Benjamin of San Francisco and the West



SUNDAY EPISTLE AND GOSPEL READINGS 2

Epistle, Sunday of the Last Judgement, (140) 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2

BRETHREN, Food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse. But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak. For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols? And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble. Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

Gospel, Sunday of the Last Judgment, (106) Matthew 25:31-46

THE LORD SAID: “When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’ Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’ Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.’ Then they also will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?’ Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’ And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”



In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

In its confession of the faith, the Church asserts that Christ will come “again in glory to judge the living and the dead.” This is called the “Final Judgment”, the “Last Day.”

Note that this Judgment Day, is called “Final” or “Last”. There is also a judgment which is occurring now, the one which began at the start of humanity, when God expelled the first humans (Adam and Eve) from paradise and cut them off from the tree of life because of their sin. We continue to distance ourselves from the glory to which God calls us – or we come closer to God by the way we live.

There will also be a Particular Judgment for each one of us after our bodies die and our souls stand before God Who will examine our lives and determine which of His commandments we fulfilled and which we failed to obey.

At the “Final” or “Last” Judgment the Divine Power of God will enable each person to recall all their actions, good and bad, so that each person’s objective knowledge may accuse or absolve his conscience.

In this way each and every person will be simultaneously judged, and thereafter some will depart to everlasting joy while others will depart to eternal and unending suffering.

Let us be clear to understand that God is not a “judge of men” like a magistrate in civil court who passes sentence and imposes a punishment.

Rather, God is a Judge because of what He is: the Possibility of life and true existence. When we voluntarily cut ourselves off from this Possibility, we automatically “judge” ourselves.

It is not God’s sentence, but rather His very existence, that judges us when we sin. When we sin, we disobey His will and His commandments, we consequently separate ourselves from Him.

Christ tells us that in our relationships with other people we can gauge our capacity to Love God and to obey His commandments.

Perhaps God’s commandments can be summed up in these words: “What the Lord requires of us is show justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with God.” (*cf. Micah 6:8*)

And again, consider the words of Saint John the Apostle and evangelist: “If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God Whom he has not seen.” (*1 John 4:20*)

Amen.

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

On the past two Sundays of this pre-Lenten period, our focus was on God’s patience and limitless compassion, of His readiness to accept every sinner who returns to Him. On this third Sunday, we are reminded of a complementary truth: no one is so patient and so merciful as God, but even He does not forgive those who are not merciful.

The God of love is also a God of righteousness, and when Christ comes again in glory, He will come as our Judge. Such is the message of Lent to each of us: turn back while there is still time, repent before the End comes.

This Sunday sets before us the eschatological dimension of Lent: the Great Fast is a preparation for the Second Coming of the Savior, for the eternal Passover in the Age to Come. But the judgment is not only in the future. Here and now, each day and each hour, in hardening our hearts toward others and in failing to respond to the opportunities we are given of helping them, we are already passing judgment on ourselves.

Another theme of this Sunday is that of love. When Christ comes to judge us, what will be the criterion of His judgment? The parable of the Last Judgment answers: love—not a mere humanitarian concern for abstract justice and the “poor,” but concrete and personal love for the human person – the specific persons we encounter each day in our lives.

Christian love is the “possible impossibility” to see Christ in another person, whoever he or she is. Each encounter is not merely an occasion for a “good deed” or an exercise in philanthropy, but as the beginning of an eternal companionship in God Himself.

The parable of the Last Judgment is about Christian love. Not all of us are called to work for “humanity,” yet each one of us has received the gift and the grace of Christ’s love. We know that all persons ultimately need this personal love—the recognition in them of their unique soul in which the beauty of the whole creation is reflected in a unique way. We also know that people are “in prison and are sick and thirsty and hungry” because that personal love has been denied them.

And, finally, we know that however narrow and limited the framework of our personal existence, each one of us has been made responsible for a tiny part of the Kingdom of God, made responsible by that very gift of Christ’s love. Thus, we shall be judged on whether we have accepted this responsibility or rejected it, on whether we have loved or refused to love.

Amen.

A Dialogue with a Spiritual Father on Fasting

Father, bless!

“The Lord bless you.”

Father, I would like you to tell me a few things about fasting.

“In order to say something, you must experience it, you must live it. Only one who was born near the sea or is a seaman can speak of the sea. But I will tell you what the Fathers said who were very familiar with fasting.”

When did fasting appear?

“Fasting is natural to man. It was given to man by God, in Paradise.”

But why did God give fasting? To constrain man?

“No, to free him! Saint John Chrysostom writes that when God created man, He took him and placed him in the hands of fasting, which is an affectionate mother and teacher. It does not limit but it cultivates man.”

Is fasting necessary, Father?

“Chrysostom will again reply: ‘If fasting was necessary in Paradise, it is much more necessary outside of Paradise. If medicine was useful before an injury, it is much more useful after an injury.’ Fasting was given in Paradise as a precaution to not fall. Since man fell it is given therapeutically.”

Then what is the purpose of fasting?

“‘Fasting withers evil desires,’ says Maximos the Confessor; and Symeon the New Theologian says, ‘it softens our hearts.’ Through fasting ‘every good work is accomplished and perfected,’ says Gregory Palamas.”

How should we fast, Father?

“Fasting is a means and spiritual tool which is not limited to food, but the entire man must fast. Listen to Chrysostom: ‘Do you fast? Give me proof of it by your works. If you see a poor man, take pity on him. If you see a friend being honored, do not envy him. Do not let only your mouth fast, but also the eye and the ear and the feet and the hands and all the members of our bodies. Let the hands fast, by being free of greed. Let the feet fast, by ceasing to run after sin. Let the eyes fast, by disciplining them not to glare at that which is sinful. Let the ear fast, by not listening to evil talk and gossip. Let the mouth fast from foul words and unjust criticism. For what good is it if we abstain from eating meat, but bite and devour our brothers?’”

How do we bite and devour our brothers?

“With slander and criticism, which proceed from the lack of love for them.”

By your prayers, Father!

“The Lord’s! Remember: fasting is meant primarily to hunger for God!”

If you have any questions or concerns, speak with your parish priest!

Sunday of the Last Judgement, Sunday of Meatfare

On this day we commemorate the inescapable second coming of Christ, ordained by the most divine Fathers to be observed after the parable of the Prodigal, so that no one who has learned of the love of God for mankind from it will live in laziness saying, “*God loves mankind, and when I am separated from Him by sin, all is prepared for my restoration.*”

This fearsome day of judgment has been designated for commemoration now, that through fear of death and the expectation of future torment, those who live in laziness may be encouraged to the virtues, not trusting only in the love of God, but also realizing that He is the righteous Judge who will judge all men according to their deeds.

In other words, those souls who have passed over are obliged to undergo judgment. And this present feast is a type of symbol of this in that it is presented now as a final celebration just as it will be the last event after our death. For it behooves us to contemplate that as the beginning of the world and Adam’s fall from Paradise are commemorated on the following Sunday, so this day is the end of all days and of the world itself.

The commemoration is called the second coming, since Christ appeared to us at His first coming in the flesh and delivered humanity, and He will come again to judge whether that which He commanded us has been observed.

And when will this second coming occur? No one knows; for although He mentioned several preceding signs, the Lord concealed it from His Apostles.

And when the angels sound the trumpets, all the nations of mankind will gather from all places and from all the ends of the earth in Jerusalem, for it is the center of the earth. And there the thrones will be set for judgment. Then all souls will be reunited with their bodies and clothed in incorruptible beauty, transformed into one likeness.

And with one word the Lord will separate the righteous from the sinners. Those who have done good will receive eternal life, and the sinners will be once more sent to eternal and everlasting torment.

Let it be noted that Christ will not ask who fasted, or who was naked, or who performed miracles, for although these things are good, mercy and compassion are far better.

For all the Church of God will joyfully delight in attaining the Kingdom of Heaven, being close to God in His holy place, and receiving everlasting glory and exaltation. But those who are separated from God through wasting the life of their souls in laziness and temporal nourishment will receive torment and darkness and be eternally deprived of the divine radiance.



The 70-day Triodion period, with its fixed four Sundays prior to the Great Fast (also called “Great Lent”), began to be formed in its current form during the sixth century. Saint Dorotheos of Gaza (ca. AD 505 - 565) writes that an eighth week was added to the original seven-week period of fasting before Pascha. This week, which we call Cheesefare Week, begins today on this “Meatfare” Sunday. By “Meatfare” we mean a day of eating flesh meats.

The Saint states, *“The holy Apostles elected to consecrate out of the 365 days of the year, seven weeks of fasting, and they so ordained this observance. Later, the holy Fathers thought it advisable to add another week for two reasons. First, they wished to better prepare themselves for entering on the labor of fasting during Great Lent. Second, they desired to honor with their fasting the holy number of forty days during which our Lord Himself fasted.”*

Regarding this second consideration, we must first understand what the Church means by “fasting.” As is well known, Orthodox Christians “fast” not by avoiding all food but by “abstaining” only from vertebrate products (meat and dairy), wine (along with all alcohol), and olive oil (as well as all oils).

Strictly speaking, the Orthodox do not fast (abstain) on Saturdays and Sundays because wine and olive oil are consumed on these days – nevertheless abstaining from eating vertebrate products on weekends during fasting seasons.

A 40-day fast is calculated as follows: to six weeks of Great Lent (30 weekdays), are added the five days of Holy Week and the five days of Cheesefare Week for a total 40 days, corresponding to the time the Lord fasted in the wilderness (*cf. Matthew 4:1-11*),

Holy Saturday is not considered among these forty “fast” days but is observed separately. This is because it is a most-sacred day, consequently a day of strict fasting (no food) as thus as the only Saturday fast day of the year.

Curiously, the five days of Cheesefare Week are counted among the forty days even though it a week of fasting only from meat but not from dairy products.

The term “*meatfare*” (Greek: “*apokreas*,” Latin: “*carnival*”) to describe this Sunday dates to the reign of Emperor Justinian (AD 527-565) when, in AD 545, a disagreement arose among the various Eastern Churches as to the above-mentioned calculation of the forty days of fasting.

Some believed the five days of Holy Week were to be considered as part of the Lenten fast, and thus began the forty days on this Sunday. Others regarded Holy Week and Holy Saturday as separate from the Lenten Fast and thus began the forty days a week earlier (this past week). To minimize strife between the two groups, the emperor ordered that meat should be sold in the markets during a “meatfare week” to accommodate the first group and during which the others could fast if they chose to do so.

It is difficult to trace when the Apocalyptic theme of the Second Coming and Last Judgment was established for this Sunday. Hymns relating to the Judgment were composed for this day by Saint *☞ Continued on page 8*

Tone 7, Troparion, Resurrection

By Thy Cross Thou didst destroy death. • To the thief Thou didst open Paradise. • For the Myrrhbearers Thou didst change weeping into joy, • and Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God, • to proclaim that Thou art risen, • granting the world great mercy.

Tone 8, Troparion of the Temple, of the Midfeast of Pentecost

O Savior at the Middle of the Feast, • fill my thirsting soul with the waters of piety, as Thou didst cry to all: • “If anyone thirst, let him come to Me and drink.” • O Christ God, Fountain of our life, glory to Thee.

Tone 4, Kontakion of the Temple, of the Midfeast of Pentecost

Glory... Christ God, the Creator and Master of all, • cried to all in the midst of the feast of the law: “Come and draw the water of immortality.” • We fall before Thee and faithfully cry: • “Grant us Thy mercies for Thou art the Fountain of our life.”

Tone 3, Kontakion, from the Lenten Triodion

Both now... When Thou, O God, shalt come to earth with glory, • all things shall tremble, • and the river of fire shall flow before Thy judgment seat; • the books shall be opened, and the hidden things disclosed; • then deliver me from the unquenchable fire, • and make me worthy to stand at Thy right hand, O Righteous Judge.

Tone 3, Prokeimenon, Triodion

Great is our Lord, and abundant in power, His understanding is beyond measure. (*Psalm 146:5*)



Continued from page 7 ☞ Romanos the Melodist (AD 490-556). A similar hymn, attributed to Saint Theodore the Studite (AD 759-826), about the Judgement is found in a ninth-century text of the *Triodion* for this Sunday. Additionally, a tenth-century lectionary from the Church in Constantinople indicates that today’s Gospel, Matthew 25:31-46, is the assigned reading.

As far as the carnival nature of Meatfare Week, Saint Theodore the Studite in his *Catechetical Lecture* for Meatfare Sunday: “*Brethren and fathers, it is our tradition to cease eating meat as we enter the Fast. And yet one may see among certain men in the world a great competition in meat-eating and wine-bibbing – and one might even behold spectacles of outrageous behavior which it is shameful to speak about. Brethren and fathers, it is necessary for our salvation that we eat with moderation and give thanks to the Lord for what we have; in this way we make worthy preparation for the Divine Banquet awaiting us. But they who are possessed by the wiles of the devil do the opposite, demonstrating that they have accepted the Evil One rather than the other: Him Whom we receive through peaceful quiet and humility.*”



Евангелие

Когда же придет Сын Человеческий во славе Своей и все святые Ангелы с Ним, тогда сядет на престоле славы Своей, и соберутся пред Ним все народы; и отделит одних от других, как пастырь отделяет овец от козлов; и поставит овец по правую Свою сторону, а козлов - по левую. Тогда скажет Царь тем, которые по правую сторону Его: приходите, благословенные Отца Моего, наследуйте Царство, уготованное вам от создания мира: ибо алкал Я, и вы дали Мне есть; жаждал, и вы напоили Меня; был странником, и вы приняли Меня; был наг, и вы одели Меня; был болен, и вы посетили Меня; в темнице был, и вы пришли ко Мне. Тогда праведники скажут Ему в ответ: Господи! когда мы видели Тебя алчущим, и накормили? или жаждущим, и напоили? когда мы видели Тебя странником, и приняли? или нагим, и одели? когда мы видели Тебя больным, или в темнице, и пришли к Тебе? И Царь скажет им в ответ: истинно говорю вам: так как вы сделали это одному из сих братьев Моих меньших, то сделали Мне. Тогда скажет и тем, которые по левую сторону: идите от Меня, проклятые, в огонь вечный, уготованный диаволу и ангелам его: ибо алкал Я, и вы не дали Мне есть; жаждал, и вы не напоили Меня; был странником, и не приняли Меня; был наг, и не одели Меня; болен и в темнице, и не посетили Меня. Тогда и они скажут Ему в ответ: Господи! когда мы видели Тебя алчущим, или жаждущим, или странником, или нагим, или больным, или в темнице, и не послужили Тебе? Тогда скажет им в ответ: истинно говорю вам: так как вы не сделали этого одному из сих меньших, то не сделали Мне. И пойдут сии в му'ку вечную, а праведники в жизнь вечную. (Мф. 25, 31-46).



Святитель Игнатий Брянчанинов

Во имя Отца и Сына и Святого Духа.

Величественно изображено в Евангелии от Матфея второе, славное пришествие Господа, нелицеприятный и страшный суд Его над племенами и народами. Эта необыкновенная ☩ 2

☩ картина, представленная с необыкновенной простотой и ясностью, невольно оживляется перед взорами ума, поражает сердце страхом. Созерцая эту картину, можно изобразить состояние, в которое она приводит душу, словами Иова: *Ужас мя сретет и трепет, и зело кости моя стрясе: устрашишася же власи мои и плоти.* При наступлении суда для изгнанников с неба, страна изгнания и клятвы - земля - запылает, а небо светится, как свивается одежда. Мертвецы всех времен и народов, возбужденные животворящей трубой - Словом Божиим - восстанут из гробов и составят из себя необозримое и неисчислимое собрание. Полки и воинства святых Ангелов придут на страшное зрелище, на великое служение. И ангелы отверженные предстанут на суд. Сын Божий воссядет на престоле славы, славы страшной по необъятному величию ее. Все разумные создания потрясутся от страха, увидев Создателя своего, вызвавшего их в бытие из ничтожества единым всемогущим Словом. Они будут предстоять перед Тем Словом, для Которого нет невозможного исполнения. Они будут предстоять перед Той Жизнью, при Которой, вне Ее, не может быть иной жизни. **Справедливо сказали Отцы, что в это грозное время вся тварь, если бы она не была удержана всемогуществом Божиим, и предоставлена самой себе, обратилась бы в ничтожество.** Праведники, увидев лицом к лицу Правду совершенную, сочтут свою правду не имеющей никакого значения, а грешники оправданием, чуждым евангельского разума, осудят себя. **Решится участь всех на вечность.** Прежде наступления этого суда Божественный Апостол сознается, что он не может оправдаться, хотя и не знает за собой никакого греха: потому что Судия его - Бог. Все святые, во время земного странствования своего, часто приходят воспоминанием и размышлением благочестивым на страшный суд Христов, - благовременным, спасительным страхом ограждают себя от страха, который возбудится в погибших отчаянием; благовременным осуждением себя они стараются благовременно снискать оправдание, плачем отвратить плач. **Братия! Нужно, необходимо нам, немощным и грешным, частое воспоминание второго пришествия и страшного суда Христова: такое воспоминание есть благонадежнейшее приуготовление.** Страшен тот Суд, который ожидает всех людей после общего воскресения, страшен и тот суд, который ожидает каждого человека после его смерти. Последствия того и другого суда или вожделенны или бедственны. **Если земные суды, на которых дело идет об одном тленном и временном, возбуждают нашу заботливость: тем более должен озабочивать нас суд Божий.** С какой другой целью Господь возвестил нам о нем так ясно, как не с целью возбудить в нас душеспасительный ☩ 3

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2 ☞ страх, могущий предохранить нас от греховной, беспечной жизни, в которой - условие нашей гибели? Преподобный Илия, Египетский инок, безмолвствовавший в Фиваидской пустыне, говаривал: «Меня устрашают три времени: время исшествия души из тела, время суда Божия, и время изречения, какое последует о мне от Бога».

Аминь.

Протоиерей Вячеслав Резников

Во имя Отца и Сына и Святого Духа.



Суд этот совершится, когда в конце земной истории *«придет Сын Человеческий во славе Своей, и все святые Ангелы с Ним»*. Тогда Господь *«сядет на престоле славы Своей, и соберутся пред Ним все народы»*, все до одного потомки Адама. И всех этих людей Господь сразу разделит, *«как пастырь отделяет овец от козлищ»*. **Господь видит без обвинителей и свидетелей, кто куда стремится, кто что любит, кто чему предал свою душу. Но чтобы никто не мог обвинить Его в пристрастии, в предопределении каждого заведомо к гибели или к спасению, Он непременно даст каждому сказать последнее, свободное слово, чтобы и весь мир увидел то, что всегда видит Он.**

Господь обратится сначала к *«тем, которые по правую сторону Его: придите, благословенные Отца Моего, наследуйте Царство, уготованное вам от создания мира: ибо алкал Я, и вы дали Мне есть; жаждал, и вы напоили Меня; был странником, и вы приняли Меня; был наг, и вы одели Меня; был болен, и вы посетили Меня; в темнице был, и вы пришли ко Мне. Тогда праведники скажут Ему в ответ»*... И Господь с уверенностью говорит, что скажут праведники. Господь уверен, что они спросят с недоумением: *«Господи! Когда мы видели»* Тебя таким и *«послужили Тебе»*?! Но почему они именно так спросят? Ведь читали же они Святое Евангелие, и в том числе - то, что мы читаем сейчас. Они прекрасно знают слова, которые Господь скажет далее: *«так как вы сделали это одному из сих братьев Моих меньших, то сделали Мне»*. Праведники все это «проходили», и много раз слышали с амвона, что, делая добро ближнему, делаем Самому Господу. Но Господь знает, что не ответят праведники согласием, дескать, «да, Господи, мы это знаем, это написано в двадцать пятой главе Евангелия от Матфея!» Господь знает, что все равно, не смотря ни на что, они ответят таким искренним, недоуменным вопросом. Потому что **праведник хотя и трудится, и старается выполнять всё, что повелел Господь, но перед его глазами всегда, в первую** ☞ 4

23 февраля 2025 г.

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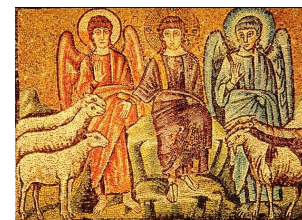
3 ☞ **очередь, крест Господень**, это главное, и ни с чем не сопоставимое знамение его любви. Праведник не может даже помыслить, что способен дать что-то Тому, Кто Сам дает всем все, включая и возможность давать что-то другим.

Потом Господь обратится к *«тем, которые по левую сторону: идите от Меня, проклятые, в огонь вечный, уготованный диаволу и ангелам его: ибо алкал Я, и вы не дали Мне есть; жаждал, и вы не напоили Меня»*... Но и этим тоже дается право последнего слова. Причем, они находятся в более выгодном положении. Даже если они и не читали Евангелия, то вот, только что они слышали, как отвечали праведники, как отрицали свою праведность, споря даже с Самим Богом. И они слышали, как сказал Господь праведникам. Но они все равно упорно оправдывают себя, как оправдывал себя богач из притчи о богатом и Лазаре. Они ни в чем не виноваты. Они, по их словам, от всей души бы послужили Господу, если бы он явился им. И одновременно они всю жизнь отталкивали от себя всякую протянутую к ним руку. И так прошла их жизнь. Но Господь дает им последнюю возможность. И что им стоит сказать: «Да, Господи, ничего доброго не сделали мы ни Тебе, ни ближним, но - помилуй нас «по велицей милости Твоей»!

Некоторые, рассуждая об этом Евангелии, делают вывод, что - вот что надо для спасения: помогай ближнему, делай добрые дела. А вероучение и Богослужение придумано людьми. Но на самом деле - **без правой веры и без участия в церковных Таинствах просто невозможно ответить так, как ответили праведники, дать такую оценку своим трудам!** Думается, если бы праведники согласились с Господней оценкой, а грешники взмолились бы о милости, - участь и тех, и других была бы противоположна. Но Господь сразу поставил одних по правую, а других по левую руку. Он знал, кто что ответит. Он Своею любовью все сделал, чтобы все ответили, как первые, и не Его вина, если иные ослепили себе глаза и заткнули уши.

«И пойдут сии в муку вечную», уготованную *«диаволу и ангелам его»*. Заметим: не потащат их, но - сами пойдут, в своем поистине бесовском противлении Богу и Его правде.

Аминь.



The Children's Word

"Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them, for to such is the Kingdom of Heaven." Mark 10:14

Sunday, February 23, 2025

Volume 13, Issue 8

Staying on track

Have you ever taken a train, or have you watched a train chugging down the tracks? A train has to stay on the tracks to get to where the people want to go.



Next week, we will start a journey too. Where do we want to go? We want to get to our Lord's Resurrection on Pascha. We start Lent so that we can stay on track, so we can get to Pascha, and so we can grow closer and closer to God. We will pray more, go to church more, help each other more, and read our Bibles more, but hurt people less, and eat fancy foods less. We do these things so that we can stay on track. If we go off track, maybe we won't get to where we want to go!

We know we want to stay on track and grow closer to God, but did you know we want to help *other* people to stay on track too? In today's epistle reading, Saint Paul tells the new Christians to help other Christians stay on track too. Christians should help others grow close to God too. We have to always think about other people. We have to make sure we are setting a good example for others. We have to remember that other people might be watching us to see what we do and what we don't do during Lent. So, let's all try to stay on track this Lent, and we can help our friends stay on track too!

WORD SEARCH

Can you find these words in the jumble?

Eavesdrop
Eudocia
Helping
Hymns
Lent
Listen
Martyr
Neighbor
On Track
Prayer
Psalms

L	W	U	O	Y	Y	J	P	K	N	F	U	E	R	O
D	I	M	D	B	S	I	A	Q	K	M	A	Y	N	L
G	H	S	E	E	K	Z	I	B	G	D	T	T	G	T
W	N	M	T	G	Y	T	C	W	R	R	R	T	R	S
A	L	I	G	E	F	H	O	X	A	A	K	Q	N	Q
S	P	A	P	L	N	K	D	M	C	Z	R	M	F	D
W	B	V	W	L	J	U	U	K	C	W	Y	Q	N	G
D	P	R	A	Y	E	R	E	A	I	H	L	K	K	M
X	A	Z	O	J	D	H	I	Y	O	M	K	T	L	A
B	P	S	R	O	B	H	G	I	E	N	D	N	S	O
E	Z	J	I	Q	C	D	V	W	S	P	M	Z	M	G
I	E	K	S	N	B	A	K	S	L	N	H	G	L	S
U	E	G	O	N	L	Q	I	G	E	C	A	S	A	F
P	Q	X	I	G	Z	L	T	B	N	C	X	C	S	C
E	A	V	E	S	D	R	O	P	T	C	O	G	P	K

WHAT'S IN THE ICON?

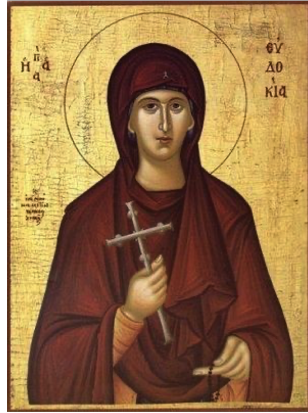
Here are some icons of three different saints named Eudocia!

Can you look at the icons to see which one was a queen, which one was a martyr, and which one was a nun?



LISTENING IN SAINT EUDOCIA THE MARTYR

Have you ever eavesdropped, and heard something you probably shouldn't have? Maybe you heard your parents talking about your birthday surprise. Maybe you listened to two classmates talking about YOU. Listening in is hardly ever a good idea. *But* for St. Eudocia, it *was*!



St. Eudocia was a very early saint—She lived just about a hundred years after Christ lived! At first, Eudocia was not a Christian, and she was definitely going down the wrong path. She made lots of mistakes. But one day, a holy man, Germanos, came to stay at the house of her next-door neighbor (who was a Christian). As Eudocia was trying to sleep, she could hear Germanos singing psalms from the Bible. He was also reading some prayers, asking for forgiveness.

St. Eudocia *really* couldn't sleep then. She started to think about all the mistakes she made. The next day, she began to turn her life around. She was baptized. She gave her valuable things away to the poor. She prayed all the time. She changed everything. Soon, she became very holy, and even gave up her life for Christ when the governor found out she was a Christian.

We celebrate St. Eudocia on Saturday, March 1st (OC: March 14th).

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Saint Eudocia, pray for us!



The Children's Word is a weekly bulletin for Orthodox Christian young people. Copyright 2025 Alexandra Houck. Email is orthodoxchildrensword (at) gmail.com. Find it each week at orthodoxchildrensword.org.