

SUNDAY OF THE PUBLICAN AND PHARISEE



Icon of the Publican and Pharisee

Jan. 17, 2016: Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee	
Epistle: 2 Tim. 3: 10-15	Gospel: Lk. 18: 10-14
Mon., Jan. 18	8:00 + Msgr. Stephen Hrynuck (Muto Family)
Tues., Jan. 19	8:00 + Olga Moskel (Nieces & Nephews)
Wed., Jan. 20	8:00 + Kimberly Jacobs Mellow (Parents)
Thurs., Jan. 21	8:00 + Andrew & Anna Smagula (Son Joseph)
Fri., Jan. 22	8:00 + The Victims of Abortion
Sat., Jan. 23	No Morning Divine Liturgy. 10:30 Confessions 2:00 pm Confessions 4:00 pm For Our Parishioners
Sun., Jan. 24	9:00 + Justina & Michael Golay & Deceased Members of Family 11:30 + Robert Harris (Carol & Bob Kearney)

Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee

Introduction

The Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee is the first Sunday of a three-week period prior to the commencement of Great Lent. It marks the beginning of a time of preparation for the spiritual journey of Great Lent, a time for Eastern Christians to draw closer to God through worship, prayer, fasting, and acts of charity. It is also on this day that the Triodion is introduced, a liturgical book that contains the services from this Sunday, the

tenth before Pascha (Easter), to Great and Holy Saturday.

Biblical Story

The name for this Sunday is taken from the parable of our Lord Jesus Christ found in Luke 18: 10-14. This is the story of two men, one a Pharisee, a member of a Jewish sect known for its diligent observance of the Law, and the other a Publican, a government official charged with the responsibility of collecting taxes.

Both men enter the temple, and the Pharisee stands openly and prays, thanking God that he is not like other men, specifically extortioners, the unjust, adulterers, “or even this tax collector” (v. 11). He then begins to list his religious accomplishments by stating, “I fast twice a week, and I give tithes of all that I possess” (v. 12).

In direct contrast to the pride of the Pharisee, the Publican goes to a place where he will not be noticed by others and beats his breast saying, “God, be merciful to me a sinner!” (v. 13).

Having told this story, Jesus affirms that it was the Publican who returned home justified and forgiven rather than the Pharisee. He states, “Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted” (v. 14).

The theme of this parable is repentance. Repentance is the door through which we enter Great Lent, the starting-point of the journey to Pascha. To repent signifies far more than self-pity or futile regret over things done in the past. The Greek term *metanoia* means “change of mind.” To repent is to be renewed, to be transformed in our inward viewpoint, to attain a fresh way of looking at our relationship with God and with others. The fault of the Pharisee is that he has no desire to change

his outlook; he is complacent, self-satisfied, and so he allows no place for God to act within him. The Gospel depicts him as a man that is pleased only with himself who thinks that he has complied with all of the requirements of religion. But in his pride, he has falsified the meaning of true religion and faith. He has reduced these to external observations, measuring his piety by the amount of money he gives.

The Publican, on the other hand, truly longs for a “change of mind.” He humbles himself, and his humility justifies him before God. He becomes, in the words of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3), “poor in spirit.” He acknowledges that he is a sinner, and he knows that salvation is only found in the mercy of God. Here we find an example of true humility, an essential aspect of repentance. A “change of mind” and the transformation of our lives can only happen when we humble ourselves before God, acknowledge our willingness to turn from sin, and receive His grace into our lives.

Our preparation for Great Lent thus begins with a prayer for humility, the beginning of true repentance. Through repentance, we can find and return to the true order of things, a restoration of our spiritual vision that will guide us in a very difficult and chal-

lenging world. By entering Great Lent in humility and repentance, we can attain deeper communion with God

as we receive His forgiveness and He blesses by guiding us to greater spiritual heights.

Tragic Anniversary

One of our founding father, Thomas Jefferson, had said: "The most important function of the Government is to Protect the Lives of its citizens." Friday, January 22, 2016, we sadly observe the 43rd anniversary of the Supreme Court decision which legalized the murder of unborn children. On this day, please pray for all the victims of this massacre -- for all the children who have not been born. Pray for those who provide this evil -- that they may see the error in their ways and repent! Pray for those who suffer as a result of having had an abortion!

Thousands and thousands of people will be gathering in Washington, DC, on Thursday and Friday. The Solemn Vigil Mass for Life takes place Thursday evening at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

EWTN begins live coverage at 6:30 pm. On Friday, the Pro-Life Rally and the March for Life takes place. EWTN begins coverage at 9:00 am.

In the words of St. John Paul II: "A nation that kills its own children is a nation without hope." Let us pray for an end to this modern day genocide!

Keep Greeting One Another

A reminder to all: just as we prepared for Christmas with a 40-day preparation and fasting period, so now we celebrate the bright days of Christmas, New Year's, and Theophany for 40 days. Please continue to sing our beautiful Christmas carols, and to greet one another with our traditional "*Christos Razhdayetsia! Slavite Yeho!*" Christ is

Born! Glorify Him!" During the darkness of the Winter months, do all you can to keep the bright light of Christ burning brightly! Let Christ shine through you!

Note: according to tradition, we continue to sing Christmas carols up until the Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord on February 2nd.

Congratulations

Congratulations and Best Wishes to **Luca Vincent Sestili**, along with his parents Vincent and Shannon, on the occasion of his reception of the Holy Mysteries of Initiation during the

11:30 Divine Liturgy. Luca, we welcome you into our Parish Family and pray that God grant you many happy and blessed years. Mnohaya i Blahaya Leeta!

2015 Tax Reports

Parishioners who want a 2015 end of year financial report for tax purposes

are asked to contact the Parish Office at 570-489-2271.

Holy Name Society Raffle

The Holy Name Society is having its annual raffle and tickets were mailed to parishioners. Please support this raffle

with a \$10.00 Donation. The proceeds of the raffle are used for expenses related to our parish.

Know a Marriage that Needs Help?

Throw them a lifeline and tell them about **Retrouvaille**, an international program that helps couples who are experiencing marital difficulties. This program is for all couples, at any stage of marriage that needs help to communicate with each other in a more

attentive and loving manner. The next program in the Scranton Diocese begins Feb. 26 - Feb. 28, 2016, at The Ramada Inn in Clarks Summit. For more information or to register, please call 800-470-2230 or visit www.helpour-marriage.org

Fresh Pyrohy for Great Lent

St. Vladimir Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church is sponsoring a Lenten potato and cheese pyrohy sale on Saturday, February 6, 2016 from 2:00 to 6:00pm in the Parish Center, 428 North Seventh Avenue, Scranton.

These are freshly made that day and are not frozen. Cost is \$7.00 per dozen. Orders should be placed no later than Monday, February 1 and are being taken by Leslie Izak at 570 342-3749.

L.U.C. Annual Lenten Retreat - March 11 to 13, 2016

St. Mary's Villa Retreat Center, Sloatsburg, Ny

This year's theme is "Merciful, like the Father".

This is the motto of Pope Francis' Jubilee Year of Mercy. It is a time of exploring the meaning of mercy and our allowing God's unconditional love and limitless mercy to transform our lives. We will explore prayer and forgiveness and our own ability to reconcile and forgive as well as expand our capacity to trust. This spiritual event will be our "door to mercy" through which we choose to pass, trusting in the power and love and mercy of God to transform our lives.

Retreat Director is Archpriest Father Daniel Troyan who is pastor of Holy Ghost Ukrainian Greek Catholic

Church in West Easton, Pennsylvania. He has served in many Ukrainian Catholic parishes from Ohio through Pennsylvania in his 34 years of priesthood. He has served as Director of Evangelization and Coordinator for the Shroud of Turin exhibit for the Archeparchy of Philadelphia. He has been a member of the League of Ukrainian Catholics since his youth and is presently National Spiritual Director of the LUC. He presently resides in West Easton with his little dog "Brother Timmy", who is Youth Director for the children of the parish.

Additional details along with registration information will be made available shortly.

Bus Trip

On Saturday, May 21, 2016, North Anthracite Council of the League of Ukrainian Catholics is sponsoring a bus trip to the annual St. George Ukrainian Street Festival in New York City's Lower East Side of Manhattan and to Brighton Beach [Little Odessa], Brooklyn. Participants are also welcome to do their own thing for part of the day if they so wish.

The 55 passenger bus will depart

from Edwardsville's St. Vladimir Church, 70 Zerby Avenue at 8:30am and from Scranton's St. Vladimir Church, 428 North Seventh Avenue at 9:15am. Departure for home directly from Brighton Beach will be at 9:00pm. Cost is \$40.00 per person.

Full nonrefundable advance payment reserves a seat. For reservations contact either Paul Ewasko at 570 563-2275 or Andrew Jamula at 570 822-

5354. Check to be made out to North Anthracite Council of LUC. Early reservations are recommended as the bus is expected to fill quickly.

Collection Processing Team...

The Collection Processing Team for the month of January 2016 is Team #1: William Vervan, Roger Barren, and Jerry Sereditch.

Sunday Collection for January 9 & 10, 2016: \$3,730.00

Altar Boy and Lector Schedule for January 23 & 24, 2016

	Altar Boys	Lectors
4:00 pm	Daniel Chylak -- Joseph Chylak	Michael Shumek
9:00 am	Patrick Marcinko -- Michael Roberts	Pat Marcinko
11:30 am	Jordan Radle -- Brian Radle	Frank Lesnefsky

House Blessing Request Form

Fr. Nestor:

I (we) would like you to come and bless my (our) home, if possible, during the 2016 Theophany (Jordan) Season 2016.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Fr. Nestor will call to arrange a convenient time.

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Rev. Nestor Iwasiw, Pastor

The Pharisee and the Tax Collector

We really ought to confess our poverty, our destitution to the Lord our God. This is what the tax collector confessed, who did not so much as dare to raise his eyes to heaven. As a man and a sinner he did not have the wherewithal to lift up his eyes. He was looking at his own emptiness, but he knew what ample wealth the Lord disposed of. He knew that he was coming, thirsty, to the fountain. He indicated his parched throat, he earnestly beat the breast he wanted filled. "Lord," he said, beating his breast, lowering his eyes to the ground, "be gracious to me, a sinner" (Luke 18:13).

What I say is, that he was already to some extent rich, since he had the idea of making such a request. After all, if he had still been completely poor, from where would he have been able to produce these gems of confession? All the same, it was a better endowed and wealthier man who went down justified from the Temple. The Pharisee, though, went up to pray and did not ask for anything. "They went

up to the Temple," He says, "to worship" (Luke 18:10). One asks, the other does not. And where did this other belong? "There are those who think themselves rich though they have nothing" (Proverbs 13:7). "Lord," he said, "I thank you that I am not like other men, unjust, extortioners, adulterers, like this tax collector here, for example. I fast twice a week, I give tithes of everything I possess" (Luke 18:11-12).

He was being boastful, but it was all hot air, no solid substance. He thought himself rich though he had nothing. The other man admitted he was poor, though he already had something. To say nothing else, he had the earnestness to confess. And they both went down. "But that tax collector," He says, "was justified more than that Pharisee. For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, and who humbles himself shall be exalted" (Luke 18:14).

St. Augustine of Hippo

For more information on Eastern spirituality, visit
www.ecpubs.com