



CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF MARCH 3, 2013

A Warm Welcome!

We warmly welcome all of our visitors! Please consider staying after the service for fellowship at our coffee hour in the hall.

Catechumen Meetings

are held twice a month following the coffee hour. This month's meetings are Sunday, March 10th and 17th. All welcome!

Baptism of Matthew Nicholas

Today, March 3rd, we will have the Baptism of Matthew Nicholas McFarland. We congratulate him, his parents, Michael and Nada, his godparents, Nicholas and Anna Marie Evanusa, as well as the entire family on this joyous occasion. May the Lord grant the newly illumined servant of God, Matthew Nicholas, many blessed years!



SUNDAY, MARCH 3RD

Prodigal Son Sunday

8:40a.m. Pre-baptismal Prayers
 9:00a.m. Baptismal Div. Liturgy
 Coffee Hour
 Altar Servers Meeting

SATURDAY, MARCH 9TH

Memorial Saturday

5:00p.m. Memorial
 6:00p.m. Great Vespers

SUNDAY, MARCH 10TH

Sunday of the Last Judgment

Cheesefare Sunday

8:40a.m. Hours
 9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy
 Coffee Hour
 Choir Practice



Altar Servers Meeting – Sunday, March 3rd

A meeting of altar servers will take place today, Sunday, March 3rd, following the coffee hour. All those who already serve in the altar or have interest in doing so are asked to be present for this important meeting. We need volunteers for this important ministry / privilege. Questions, please see Fr. John.

Choir Practice – Sunday, March 10th

All asked to please attend this important, pre-lenten practice!

What are Meatfare (3/10) and Cheesefare (3/17) Sundays?

These are the final days we partake of meat and dairy products, respectively, until Pascha. During the week before Great Lent, called Cheese-week, though we aren't partaking of meat anymore, dairy products are permitted on every day, including Wednesday and Friday. This week is meant to help transition us into the season of the Great Fast. Questions? Health concerns? Please ask Fr. John.

The Rite of Forgiveness – Sunday, March 17th

Great Lent begins this year on Monday, Mar. 18th. The Sunday before the Great Fast is called Forgiveness Sunday, for on this day we ask each other's forgiveness, remembering that there can be no true fast, no genuine repentance, no reconciliation with God, unless we are at the same time reconciled with one another. Please don't miss it, otherwise we will repeat this Rite the following Sunday(s).



READER SCHEDULE

Sunday, Mar. 10th

Jodi McElwee

Sunday, Mar. 17th

Gabriela Jones



Living: Fr. Alexander Atty, Fr. Christian, Mat. Dunia, Hayley, Tyler Pelesh, Wallace & Michelle, John Trax, Maleah Morsey, Victoria Kokkinos, Karen Nichols, Denise Royal, Jane Koshutko, Nina Gordon, Mirela & Chris, Bruce Eckerd, Stella, Ari, Nedelina, Liliana, Irene Clenney, Katie Hawley, Alice Peters. **Departed:** Fr. Michael Mihalick, Kathryn, Avramia.

CASH FLOWS THROUGH 1/31/13					CASH FLOWS IN FEBRUARY 2013					FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT		
OPERATING		OTHER		ALL	OPERATING		OTHER		ALL	ASSETS & LIABILITIES – 3/3		
Income	Expense	Income	Expense	Net	Income	Expense	Income	Expense	Net	Checking	Overdue	Due 2/2014
3,945	3,751	645	0	+839	4,658	4,288	4,275	5,660	-1,015	+649	0	-28,625

The paschal season of the Church is preceded by the season of Great Lent, which is itself preceded by its own liturgical preparation. The first sign of the approach of Great Lent comes five Sundays before its beginning. On this Sunday the Gospel reading is about **Zacchaeus** the tax-collector. It tells how Christ brought salvation to the sinful man and how his life was greatly changed simply because he "sought to see who Jesus was" (Lk 19:3). The desire and effort to see Jesus begins the entire movement through lent towards Easter. It is the first movement of salvation.

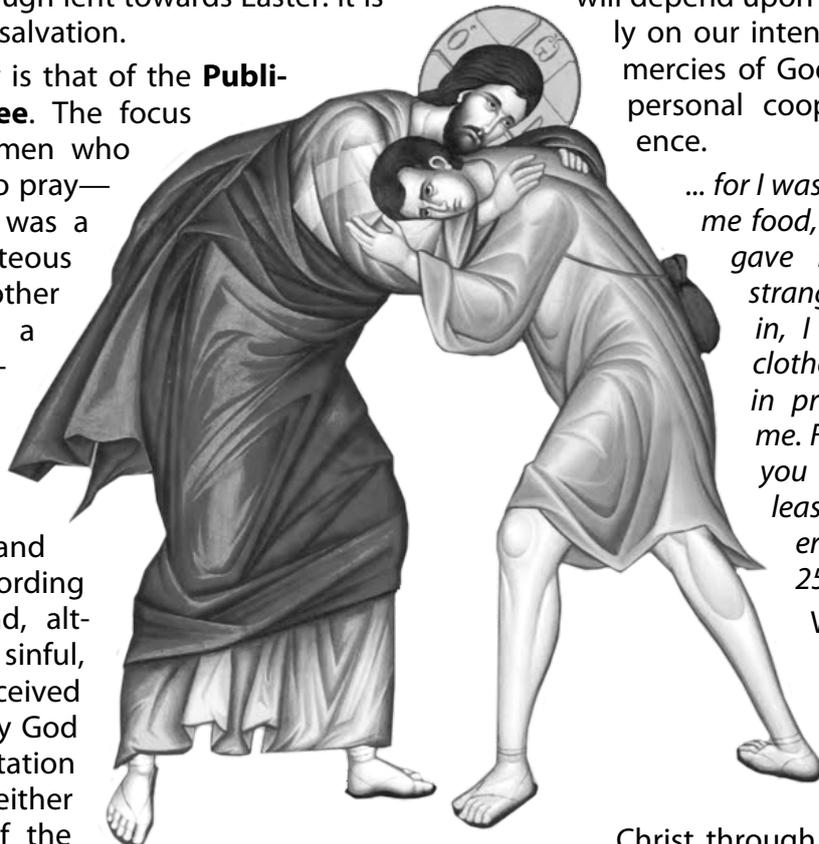
The following Sunday is that of the **Publican and the Pharisee**. The focus here is on the two men who went to the Temple to pray—

one a pharisee who was a very decent and righteous man of religion, the other a publican who was a truly sinful tax-collector who was cheating the people.

The first, although genuinely righteous, boasted before God and was condemned, according to Christ. The second, although genuinely sinful, begged for mercy, received it, and was justified by God (Lk 18:9). The meditation here is that we have neither the religious piety of the pharisee nor the repentance of the publican by which alone we can be saved. We are called to see ourselves as we really are in the light of Christ's teaching, and to beg for mercy.

The next Sunday in the preparation for Great Lent is the **Sunday of the Prodigal Son**. Hearing the parable of Christ about God's loving forgiveness, we are called to come to ourselves" as did the prodigal son, to see ourselves as being "in a far country" far from the Father's house, and to make the movement of return to God. We are given every assurance by the Master that the Father will receive us with joy and gladness. We must only "arise and go," confessing our self-inflicted and sinful separation from that "home" where we truly belong (Lk 15:11-24).

The next Sunday is called **Meatfare Sunday** since it is officially the last day before Easter for eating meat. It commemorates Christ's parable of the **Last Judgment** (Mt 25:31-46). We are reminded this day that it is not enough for us to see Jesus, to see ourselves as we are, and to come home to God as his prodigal sons. We must also be his sons by following Christ, his only-begotten divine Son, and by seeing Christ in every man and by serving Christ through them. Our salvation and final judgment will depend upon our deeds, not merely on our intentions or even on the mercies of God devoid of our own personal cooperation and obedience.



... 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 in prison and you visited me. For truly I say to you, if you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me (Mt 25).

We are saved not merely by prayer and fasting, not by "religious exercises" alone. We are saved by serving

Christ through his people, the goal toward which all piety and prayer is ultimately directed.

Finally, on the eve of Great Lent, the day called **Cheesefare Sunday** and **Forgiveness Sunday**, we sing of Adam's exile from paradise. We identify ourselves with Adam, lamenting our loss of the beauty, dignity and delight of our original creation, mourning our corruption in sin. We also hear on this day the Lord's teaching about fasting and forgiveness, and we enter the season of the fast forgiving one another so that God will forgive us.

If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses (Mt 6:14-18).

HOMOSEXUAL MARRIAGE AT THE DUSK OF LIBERTY

By Fr. Johannes L. Jacobse

To define homosexual coupling as marriage violates natural law. It takes one male and one female to create a child and constitute a family. A male-to-male or female-to-female coupling is naturally sterile; biologically closed to the creation of new life (which is not the same thing as saying that either partner is infertile). A homosexual “family” then, is necessarily an artificial creation.

Heterosexual marriage is not a creation of the State nor is the State the final judge or arbiter of the moral legitimacy of heterosexual marriage since it exists in nature and predates the rise of the State. The State merely affirms what already exists in nature when it codifies heterosexual marriage into law. However, when the State decrees homosexual couplings as a morally licit marriage, it violates natural law. It arrogates unto itself an authority to define human relationships that do not exist in nature.

Moral relativism is being crafted into law but this creates a new conflict. A society cannot live with the tension between nature and the State and thus is left with two available choices: 1) return to the norm of heterosexual marriage found within nature, or 2) destroy the definition of morally licit marriage altogether. The first is the choice of the Christian and anyone else who believes the moral tradition references an authority higher than the State. The second is favored by those who believe that the State is both the source and judge of rights.

President Obama has declared that “gay rights” is a centerpiece of his second term agenda. This is a dangerous development. The arrogation of authority by the State to define what kind of relationship is morally licit, as well as the employment of the machinery of the State to enforce it allows for an encroachment of the State into personal life that will lead to tyranny if not reversed (see my essay: *The Artist as Vandal: Culture and the Desecration of Religious Symbols*).

The ground is being tilled for the persecution of Christianity because Christians, by the mere fact that they are believers in God, testify allegiance to a higher law to which even the State must be subject. The State, in elevating relationships not in accord with natural law, will necessarily refuse that reasoning because it strikes at the heart of its arrogation of moral authority and what will eventually become the rationale for its legitimacy to rule.

If homosexual marriage becomes the law of the land, exemptions for believers concerning homosexual marriage will be abandoned in short order. The moral relativism codified into law stands against the assertion of a higher law and the tension this creates — particularly the assertion that the State is acting in morally illegitimate ways — will be resolved by prosecuting those who disobey the State.

In the long run, Christians won’t be prosecuted for objecting to homosexual marriage as such. They will be prosecuted for denying that the State has the power to define what is morally licit. That is why we are on a path to tyranny. The drafters of the Manhattan Declaration understand this.

We are one step closer to the catacombs. Bishops and priests need to take special note because they will become the first targets of the coming hostility in order to demoralize the faithful. Clergy who today still hope for compromise with the homosexual cultural agenda must recommit to the moral tradition and bear the scorn that comes with defending it. If they don’t, they will fall from the faith and lead others with them. Clergy who are practicing homosexuals need to be removed from office because their internal confusion fosters greater moral confusion in the Church at a time when it needs more clarity.

From the Observer, the American Orthodox Institute Blog, aoiusa.org, January 25, 2013.

