

:: Synaxarion Reading for the Sunday of Zacchaeus ::

Zacchaeus, the Holy Apostle of Christ, was that earnest and wealthy chief tax-collector appointed by the Romans about whom the divine Apostle and Evangelist Luke speaks in his Gospel (19:1-10). As we learn from this passage of the Holy Gospel, Zacchaeus was very short, and hence, due to the crowds, he could not see our Lord Jesus Christ with his own eyes, as he desired when the Lord was passing through Jericho. He therefore went up into a sycamore tree in order to see Him. The Lord acknowledged this good will of Zacchaeus and his sincere faith, and as He passed by, He called him by name and announced His wish to be guest in his house, saying to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house" (Luke 19:5).

Zacchaeus accepted this proposal of the Lord with all his soul, and he rushed with joy and received Him in his home and offered Him hospitality with all willingness. It was not only because he believed in Christ with all his soul that he hosted Him with particular willingness, but also because he actively repented for his former sins, and he said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold" (Luke 19:8). True, the Jews could not tolerate this, and "they all murmured, "He has gone to be the guest of a man who is a sinner"" (Luke 19:7); but the Lord, who knows the hearts of all, saw his disposition and, honoring the power of his repentance, forgave and blessed him and all his house, saying, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham" (Luke 19:9).

Zacchaeus' conversation in this manner offers us two important lessons: first, God's compassion and the signs of sincere and active repentance, and second, the fact that correction of evil as far as one is able is an inseparable proof of sincere repentance. In this manner the good Zacchaeus exceeded the ordinances of the Mosaic Law in his generosity, for which cause he was accounted worthy of the Lord's blessing.

After the Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension of the Lord, it is said that Zacchaeus was a disciple of the divine Apostle Peter, who afterwards ordained him Bishop of Caesarea. His memory is also celebrated on April 20.

The Holy Fathers, knowing the weakness of human nature in our attempts to change from sinful, self-centered life to one of humility and repentance, placed this Gospel lesson before us today to instill in us a desire to repent just as Zacchaeus possessed a desire to behold Christ. Having his example before us, let us now prepare ourselves for the approaching struggles of the Great Lent as we set out on our journey to behold Christ's Life-giving Resurrection.

Any announcements for the Sunday bulletin? Please submit by Wednesday each week to Fr. Andrew, by email or phone.



St. George Orthodox Church of Spring Valley

211 E. Minnesota St., Spring Valley, IL 61362
Church Office: (815) 664-4540
www.stgeorgeorthodox.org

Pastor: Father Andrew Kishler
frandrew@stgeorgeorthodox.org
773-575-3272 (cell)

January 26, 2014 – The Sunday of Zacchaeus

Venerable Xenophon, his wife Mary, and their two sons Arkadios and John, of Constantinople;
Translation of the relics of Venerable Theodore the Studite

Orthros Morning Prayers, 9:00 am
Divine Liturgy, 10:00 am

The Holy Bread today is offered by George and Lynette Forsa and family.
May God grant them many years!

TODAY: Our potluck and Annual Meeting will follow the Divine Liturgy. Every member of St. George Church should plan to attend!

NEXT SUNDAY: The Holy Bread and coffee hour will be offered by Dee Khoury.

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 6):

When Mary stood at Thy grave, looking for Thy sacred body, angelic powers shone above Thy revered tomb; and the soldiers who were to keep guard became as dead men. Thou led Hades captive and wast not tempted thereby. Thou didst meet the Virgin and didst give life to the world, O Thou, Who art risen from the dead, O Lord, glory to Thee.

St. George is a parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
The Most Reverend Metropolitan PHILIP, primate
The Right Reverend Bishop ANTHONY, Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest
www.antiochian.org

Troparion for St. George the Great-Martyr (Tone 4):

Since thou art a liberator and deliverer of captives, a help and succour of the poor and needy, a healing physician of the sick, a contender and fighter for kings, O great among martyrs, the victory-clad George: Intercede with Christ God for the salvation of our souls.

Kontakion for the Presentation of Christ (Tone 1):

Thou, O Christ God, who by Thy birth, didst sanctify the Virgin's womb, and as is meet, didst bless Simeon's arms and didst also come to save us. Preserve Thy fold in wars and confirm them whom Thou dost love, for Thou alone art the Lover of mankind.

Epistle Reading for the 32nd Sunday after Pentecost

The Lord will give strength to His people.

Ascribe to the Lord, O sons of God; ascribe to the Lord honor and glory.

The Reading from the First Epistle of St. Paul to St. Timothy (4:9-15)

Timothy, my son, the saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance. For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe. Command and teach these things. Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Until I come, attend to the public reading of scripture, to preaching, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophetic utterance when the council of elders laid their hands upon you. Practice these duties; devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress.

Gospel Reading for the Sunday of Zacchaeus

The reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke (19:1-10)

At that time, Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. And there was a man named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector, and rich. And he sought to see Who Jesus was, but could not, on account of the crowd, because he was small of stature. So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Jesus, for He was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down; for I must stay at your house today." So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. And when they saw it they all murmured, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost."

Announcements and Upcoming Events

For a full calendar of events and services at St. George, consult the calendar on our website, www.stgeorgeorthodox.org.

Today after Liturgy: Our ST. GEORGE ANNUAL POTLUCK AND MEETING. All parishioners of St. George Church should make every effort to attend. We will look at our finances from the past year, a budget for the new year, the status of our various ministries, and an update on the parish house. Your pastor also plans to share his vision for our church community.

Next Sunday February 2: Fr. Andrew has been asked to cover services at St. George in Cicero, IL, but our good friend **Archdeacon Saed Rihani** will serve Deacon's Typika and Holy Communion here in Spring Valley.

From Fr. Andrew and Kh. Patty: A big THANK YOU for all of your Christmas cards, greetings and generous gifts! We were truly not expecting such generosity and we deeply appreciate it. We are blessed to be a part of your community, and we hope this is merely the first of many Christmases together!

A note on home blessings: The Orthodox Church recommends that each home be blessed by a priest with prayer and Holy Water each year. As soon as my family gets settled into our new home in Spring Valley, it will be my great joy to visit all of you, spend time with your families, and bless your homes with the blessing of the Jordan River. More information and a sign-up sheet will be available in the coming weeks. Nothing elaborate is required on your part, and even a meal is not necessary. Feel free to ask if you have any questions.