Saints Peter and Paul Russian Orthodox Church

Washburn St &S Fillmore Ave, Scranton, PA 18504

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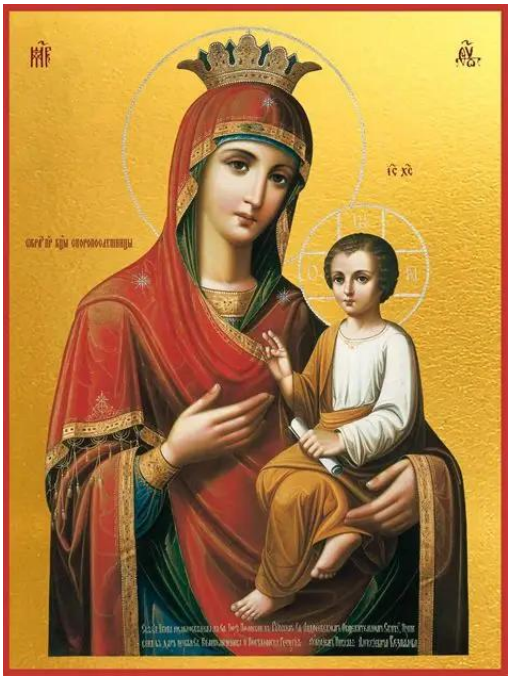


25th Sunday after Pentecost

Tone 8

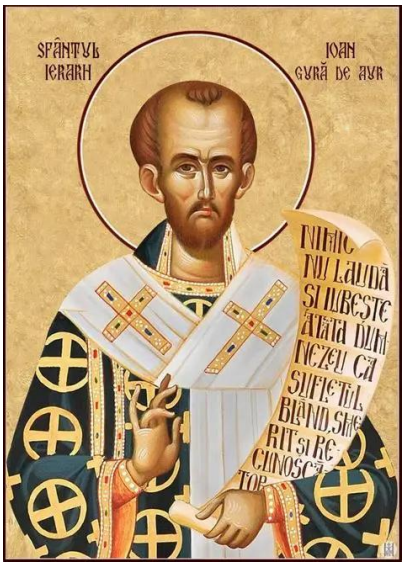
Today's Scriptural Readings:

Ephesians 5:8-19 / Matthew 9:9-13

1 Corinthians 4:9-16 / Luke 10:25-37

This Week's Liturgical Calendar

Monday, Nov 23rd		
Tuesday, Nov 24th	***St. John the Merciful, patriarch of Alexandria (620).***	Great Vespers: 6: 00 p.m.
Wednesday, Nov 25th	***St. John Chrysostom, archbishop of Constantinople (407).***	Great Vespers: 6: 00 p.m.
Thursday, Nov 26th	***Holy and All-praised Apostle Philip (1st c.).***	Great Vespers: 6: 00 p.m.
Friday, Nov 27th		
Saturday, Nov 28st	***Beginning of Nativity Fast***	Great Vespers: 5: 00 p.m. Confession: 6: 00 p.m.
Sunday, Nov 29th	***Holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew (60).***	9: 00 am: 3rd and 6th hour, Confession, Divine Liturgy,



Saint John Chrysostom (c. 347–407)

Saint John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, was one of the greatest Holy Fathers and teachers of the Orthodox Church. He was born in Antioch and raised in the Christian faith by his devout mother, Anthusa. Having received an excellent education, he devoted himself to prayer, fasting, asceticism, and the study of Holy Scripture.

He was ordained a deacon in 381 and a priest in 386. His extraordinary preaching earned him the name *Chrysostom*, meaning "Golden-Mouthed."

In 398, he became Archbishop of Constantinople. Saint John tirelessly defended the poor, instructed the faithful in Christian life, and condemned immorality, greed, and injustice. St John's fearless preaching brought him into conflict with the imperial court, resulting in his persecution and exile.

Exhausted by suffering and the hardships of exile, Saint John reposed in the Lord on September 14, 407, with the words:

"Glory to God for all things!"

St John's spiritual legacy includes numerous homilies, interpretations of Holy Scripture, and the Divine Liturgy that bears his name.

Holy Father John Chrysostom, pray to God for us!

Reverent Burial of Sacred Items

On Saturday, November the 21st, the Holy Icon was recently buried in the Church's cemetery. We thank Mary Ann Hogan and Cyril Bartlett for their help!

May God grant you many blessings, true joy, and fulfillment in serving God, His Holy Church and God's people.

If you have sacred items that need to be reverently buried, including Orthodox crosses, wooden or mounted icons, and paper icons (including those printed in our parish bulletin), please speak with the parish priest or any member of the Parish Council.

Thank you!

Parish Communications and Community Outreach.

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Cap 3. On hope in God alone and on confidence in Him.

Although, as we have said, it is very important not to rely on our own efforts in this unseen warfare, at the same time, if we merely give up all hope of ourselves and despair of ourselves without having found another support, we are certain to flee immediately from the battlefield or to be overcome and taken prisoner by our enemies. Therefore, together with complete renunciation of ourselves, "we should plant in our heart a perfect trust in God and a complete confidence in Him. In other words, we should feel with our whole heart that we have no one to rely on except God, and that from Him and Him alone can we expect every kind of good, every manner of help, and victory. Since we are nothing, we can expect nothing from ourselves, except stumbling and falls, which make us relinquish all hope of ourselves. On the other hand, we are certain always to be granted victory by God, if we arm our heart with a living trust in Him and an unshakable certainty that we will receive His help) according to the psalm: 'My heart trusted in him, and I am helped' (Ps. xxviii. 7).

The following thoughts will help you to be grounded in this hope and, thereby, to receive help:

(a) that we seek help from God, Who is Omnipotent and can do all that chooses, and therefore can also help us.

(b) that we seek it from God, Who, being Omniscient and Wise, knows all in the most perfect manner, and therefore knows fully what Is best for the salvation of each one of us.

(c) that we seek help from God, Who is infinitely Good and Who comes to us with ineffable love, always desirous and ready from hour to hour and from moment to moment to give us all the help we need for complete victory in the spiritual warfare which takes place in us, as soon as we run with firm trust to the protection of His arms.

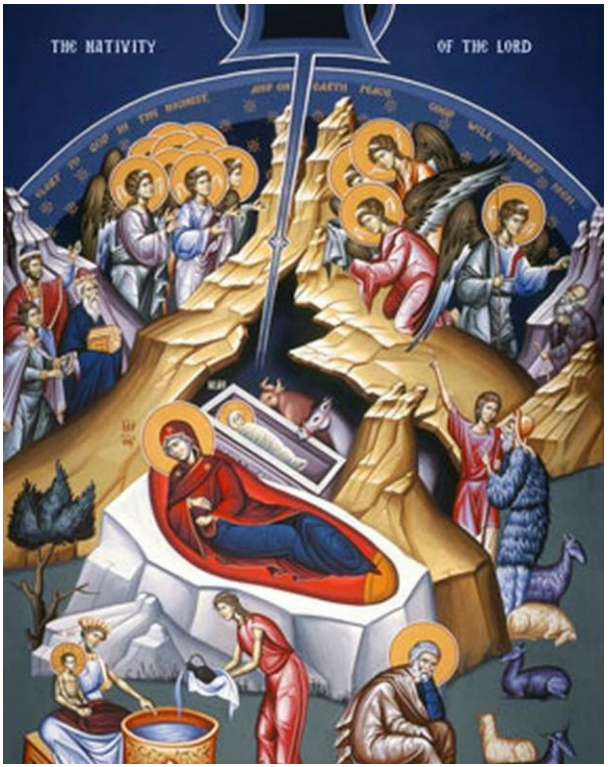
(d) And how is it possible that our good Shepherd, Who for three years went in search of sheep that had gone astray, calling so loudly that His throat became parched, and following ways so hard and thorny that He shed all His blood and gave up His life; how is it possible, I

repeat, that now, if His sheep follow Him, turn to Him with love and call for His help with hope, He should fail to turn His eyes to the lost sheep, take it into His divine arms and, placing it among the heavenly angels, make a welcoming feast for its sake? If our God never ceases to search diligently and lovingly for the blind and deaf sinner (like the woman for the piece of silver in the Gospels), how is it possible to suppose that He would abandon him now when, like a lost sheep, he cries out calling for his Shepherd? And who will ever believe that God, Who, according to the Revelation, constantly stands at the door of a man's heart, and knocks, wishing to come in and sup with him (Rev. iii. 20), and bestow His gifts upon him, who will believe that this same God should remain deaf and refuse to enter if a man opens to Him the door of his heart and invites Him in?

(e) And the fourth method of maintaining a lively trust in God and of attracting His speedy help is to review in our memory all I the instances of speedy divine help described in the Scriptures. These instances, which are so numerous, show us clearly that no one, who put his trust in God, was ever left confounded and without help. 'Look at the generations of old", says the wise Sirach, 'and see; did ever any trust in the Lord, and was confounded?" (Ecclesiasticus ii. 10).

Armed with these four weapons, enter the battle with courage, my brother, and wage war watchfully with the full conviction that victory will be granted you. For with their help, you will most certainly acquire perfect trust in God, and this trust will never fail to attract God's help and invest you with unconquerable power. These two together will in the end make complete distrust of yourself deeply rooted in you. I omit no occasion in this chapter of reminding you to distrust yourself, for I know no one who has no need to be reminded of it. Self-esteem is so deeply rooted in us and so firmly enmeshed in us, making us think that we are some- thing, and something not unimportant, that it always hides in our heart as a subtle and imperceptible movement, even when we are sure that we do not trust ourselves and are, on the contrary, filled I / with complete trust in God alone. In order to avoid this conceit of the heart and act without any self-reliance, led only by your, trust in God, take care always to preserve an attitude in which the consciousness and feeling of your weakness always precede in you the contemplation of God's omnipotence, and let both alike precede your every action.

- **Saint Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain. *Unseen Warfare*.**



The Nativity Fast

On Fasting

Saint Ignatius (Brianchaninov)

Ascetical Experiences, Volume I

Prayer is the chief of virtues; their foundation is fasting.

Fasting is constant moderation in food, accompanied by prudent discrimination in its selection.

O proud man! You imagine so much and think so highly of your mind, while it remains in complete and continual dependence upon your stomach.

The law of fasting, though outwardly a law for the stomach, is essentially a law for the mind.

The mind, this king within man, if it desires to enter into the rights of its sovereign authority and preserve them, must first submit itself to the law of fasting. Only then will it remain constantly vigilant and enlightened; only then will it be able to govern the desires of the heart and body; only through constant sobriety will it be able to study the commandments of the Gospel and follow them. **The foundation of virtues is fasting.**

To the newly created man, who was placed in Paradise, a single commandment was given—the commandment of fasting. Certainly, only one commandment was given because it was sufficient to preserve the first-created man in his innocence.

The commandment did not speak of the quantity of food but prohibited only a particular kind of food. Let those, therefore, be silent who recognize fasting only in the quantity of food and not in its kind. By entering deeply into the experiential study of fasting, they will perceive the significance of the kind of food consumed.

So important was the commandment of fasting proclaimed by God to man in Paradise that, together with the commandment, a punishment was announced for its violation. This punishment consisted in mankind being stricken with eternal death.

Even now, the death of sin continues to strike those who violate the holy commandment of fasting. He who does not observe moderation and proper discernment in food cannot preserve either virginity or chastity; he cannot restrain his anger; he gives himself over to sloth, despondency, and sorrow; he becomes a slave of vainglory and a habitation of pride, which enters man through his carnal condition—a condition arising especially from luxurious and abundant meals.

The commandment of fasting was renewed, or rather confirmed, by the Gospel:

"But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life" (Luke 21:34), commanded the Lord.

Gluttony and drunkenness bring heaviness not only to the body but also to the mind and heart; that is, they bring man, both in soul and body, into a carnal condition.

Fasting, on the contrary, leads the Christian into a spiritual condition. He who has been purified by fasting is humble in spirit, chaste, modest, silent, refined in the feelings of his heart and in his thoughts, light in body, capable of spiritual struggles and contemplation, and capable of receiving Divine Grace.

....**The daily bread of Christians is Christ.** To be insatiably filled with this Bread—this is the saving fullness and delight to which all Christians are invited.