



HOLY TRINITY

ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH



723 N BODINE ST PHILADELPHIA, PA 19123

CHURCH BULLETIN

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The 13th Sunday after Pentecost

Gospel Reading Matthew 21: 33 - 44

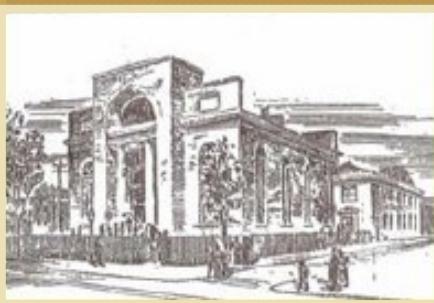
The Lord said this parable, "There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it, and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to tenants, and went into another country. When the season of fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants, to get his fruit; and the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first; and they did the same to them. Afterward he sent his son to them, saying 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is

the heir; come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.' And they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons." Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures: 'The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?'"

Apostle Reading 1 Corinthians 16: 13 - 24

Brethren, Brethren, be watchful, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love. Now, brethren, you know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints; I urge you to be subject to such men and to every fellow worker and laborer. I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicos, because they have made up for your absence; for they refreshed my spirit as well as yours.

Give recognition to such men. The churches of Asia send greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord. All the brethren send greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss. I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. If any one has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed. Our Lord, come! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.



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Homily on the Authority of the Church

"Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong. Let all that you do be done with love." So St. Paul admonishes us through today's Epistle from I Corinthians. This passage, which introduces the subject of authority in the Church and our need to submit to it, is framed in the context which St. Paul first introduces it, "love." In this way, St. Paul echoes Christ's call to those who minister, His bishops and priests, that theirs is a servant leadership, not of this world.

Christ says, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. 26 Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. 27 And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave— 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Matt. 20:26-28)

This teaching on servant leadership in the Church also forms the basis for the life of all Orthodox Christians. It's set in the context of Christ's admonition, that, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me" (Mark 8:34).

This admonition forms the basis for understanding St. Paul's words that „all be done with love." Love is an often misunderstood word in our culture. But God is the Author of love and so love really means desiring for others that which God desires for them. If we truly love others, we desire that they come to know Christ God Himself, the Author and Sustainer of life, and grow in their knowledge and love of Him.

And so here we realize another truth about love: love must be reciprocated if it is to have its full, healthful, and salvific affect. God loves us but He cannot force us to love Him and follow Him in return. No one can command another person to return love; such is not love. No, love must be freely given to be authentic.

The same is true in the Church, Christ's Body, the place where, by the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ's love is manifest in revealed to us with the reality of the Kingdom of Heaven opened to us through the Sacraments, the Divine and deifying Services, the Communion of the Saints, and the opportunity to love



God and our neighbor, that is, first, our brothers and sisters in Christ. It is from that encounter that we can venture forth to love those in the world.

But like God's love, the bishops and priests cannot force anyone to do that which is good for their soul's healing and growth. We remember the old saying, „You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink." God shows His love for us through His Church: He offers us the life-giving participation in the Sacraments, discipline, accountability through Confession, but we have to be willing to submit ourselves to receive it: our fasting, prayer, preparation, Confession, is all part of that desire to love God more and be in His near presence, that is, in Communion with Him. The Eucharist is the pinnacle of that participation.

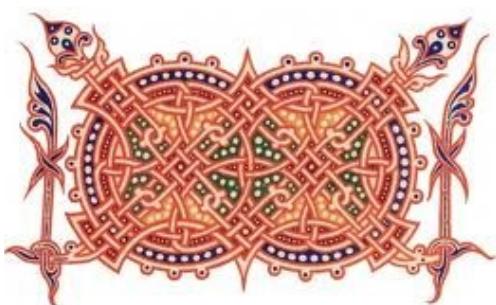
But without accountability in the Church, we're left to our own devises, our own self-delusions, our own opinions of what is sin and what isn't. And this subjectivity of the one, true faith, that is: the one, true life in Christ, is not Orthodox Christianity. This is where our submission comes in: All of us, from the Bishop and priest to every parishioner of every church is called to submit himself in Christ, to love in a sacrificial manner, just as St. Paul says, "that you also submit to such, and to everyone who works and labors with us."

The priest isn't here to give you what you want; true love, God's love, demands an account of him, as Christ assures us, that he impart to you what you and I need: the timeless truth of Christ and the sure path of deification and salvation "once delivered to the Saints." The recipe for this path hasn't changed in 2,000 years of Christian witness in the Church. Why? Because it's the truth of Christ revealed through the Church, through Him who is the "Way, the Truth, and the Life." (John 14:6). And He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. When we submit ourselves to the teaching, disciples, and accountability in the Church, what we are really saying is, "Yes, I desire to take Christ's yoke upon me." Christ reassures us, saying, "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." This is the recipe that Christ God has entrusted to us that we may have peace in our

lives. We cannot have peace apart from Christ for He is the „Prince of Peace.” He is the One who alone can give rest to our souls and in whose hands we entrust in return our present and our future. He alone is our hope. The Churh truly is a spiritual hospital for our souls. We speak of sin in Orthodox Christianity as ‚sickness’ because we see its sad affect on us, on our relationships, and on the world around us. Christ offers us healing through growth in Him, through godly submission to Him and His Church. This is His great love for us. He offers us freedom from our sinful passions and true enlightenment through the illumination of our souls, through our growth in the knowledge and love of Him.

It remains for us to decide how much we allow God into our lives, how much we allow Him to work in us and through us. The calling is clear. The choice is clear. We have been led to the living water of Chrsit in His holy Church. May we readily drink from it, in humility and godly submission and love. Stand fast in the Faith, be brave, be strong, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ will be with you.

Fr. Robert Miclean



HOLY TRINITY’S Liturgical Schedule from **September 6 to 13, 2020**

Sunday September 6 (13th Sunday after Pentecost):

9:00 am - Matins
10:00 am - Divine Liturgy
11:00 am - Sunday School
11:30 am - Memorial Service
for the Marmaliuc Family
12:00 pm - Coffee Hour

Tuesday September 6 - Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos:

9:00 am - Matins
10:00 am - Divine Liturgy
11:30 am - Memorial service
for the Kraiter Family
12:00 pm - Coffee Hour

Sunday September 13 (Sunday before the Elevation of the Holy Cross):

9:00 am - Matins
10:00 am - Divine Liturgy
11:00 am - Sunday School
12:00 pm - Coffee Hour

On the Feast of the Nativity of the Most Pure Theotokos

In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

I should like to say a few words about the greatness of this feast. When a man surveys this world in which we live, which is so vast, seemingly boundless, and looks at himself in it, he feels very small and insignificant. And if he adds to this the hardness and coldness of men, he may sometimes feel extremely vulnerable, helpless and unprotected both before people and before the terrifying vastness of the world.

Yet at the same time if a man looks at himself not in relation to his surroundings, but goes deep into himself, he will there discover such an expanse, such depths, that the whole created world is too small to fill it. Man sees the beauty of the world — and the vision does not completely satisfy him; he learns an enormous amount about God's creation — and the knowledge does not fill him to the brim. Neither human joy nor even human sorrow can completely fill a man, because in him is a depth that exceeds everything created; because God made man so vast, so deep, so limitless in his spiritual being, that nothing in the world can finally satisfy him except God Himself.

Today's feast of the Mother of God demonstrates this fact with particular beauty and splendour. She so believed in God, She gave herself to Him with such a pure mind and pure heart, with an unwavering will, with the purity of her virginity and life, such that she was granted to say the name of God perfectly, with such love that the Word became flesh and God was made man in her.

Through this we are shown that not only is the soul, the inner being and spirit of man, so created by God that it can contain the mystery of a meeting with the living God, but that even the body is so made that in an unfathomable way it can be united with the living God. Indeed, according to St. Peter we are called to become partakers of the divine nature; according to St. Paul our vocation is to become temples of the Holy Spirit. The whole of the New Testament teaches us that we are the Body, the living tremulous Body of Christ, through baptism and through Holy Communion. How wonderful



this is, and therefore with what reverence must we regard not only our immortal soul, but this body of ours which is called to rise again, to enter the Kingdom of God and be glorified, like the body of Christ.

In the XI century Saint Simeon the New Theologian, one of the greatest saints of Mount Athos, wrote one day when he had returned to his humble cell after receiving Holy Com-

munion, words to this effect, "I look upon this corruptible body, upon this frail flesh, and I tremble, because by partaking of the Holy Mysteries it has been permeated by God, it has been united with Christ, it is overflowing with the Holy Spirit... these powerless hands have become the hands of God, this body has become a body that God has taken possession of."

Consider what has been given us not only by our faith, but by the sacraments of the Church; the immersion in the blessed waters of baptism makes us particles, living members of Christ's Body, the anointing with holy chrism is not only the visible seal of the Holy Spirit, but makes us the temples in which He dwells. When the bread and wine which are offered by our faith and love to God are consecrated, they become incomprehensibly and mysteriously the Body and Blood of Christ, and this created matter partakes of Christ and imparts to us, who are incapable of soaring to God in spirit, the divinity of Christ, which saves and transfigures us in soul and body.

This feast of Nativity of the Mother of God is the time when, we remember the birth of the one who for the sake of us all, for the whole human race, was able to show such faith, to surrender so absolutely to God, that He could become Man through Her, and bring us these manifold, unfathomable gifts. Glory to her humility, glory to her faith, glory to her love, glory to God Who was incarnate and to the Virgin Mother of God, the worthy vessel of the incarnation of the Son of God, Christ our God!

Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh
(Source: <http://www.pravmir.com/birth-mother-god/>)

