

Kostoff con't

being made that the following are a “top ten” of such questions, I do believe that they are an “honest ten.”

- 1) Were the excuses of the parable enough to justify a broken relationship with God?
- 2) What convinces me that the excuse of being busy should satisfy God’s “demands” upon me?
- 3) Can it be spiritually dangerous to be so busy?
- 4) Am I free of any moral responsibility to change the ordering of my life so as to respond to God and neighbor without any excuses to relieve me from doing so?
- 5) What are the implications of being “too busy” within the context of my relationship with God?
- 6) Is it possible that I have become overly dependent upon the excuse of always being busy?
- 7) What does it mean when we come to the “supper”—the Liturgy—but fail in partaking of the “food” freely-offered—the Eucharist?
- 8) What excuses do I offer for refusing the Master’s hospitality?
- 9) If the excuse is being unprepared, what am I doing to change that pattern?
- 10) How do I understand the last words of the parable spoken by Christ: “For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper?” [14:24].

The Parable of the Great Supper becomes quite challenging when given some attention and thought. Although meant to reveal the foolishness of inexcusable excuse-making, it nevertheless reveals what God intends for those who respond to His gracious invitation: the unending joy of the Kingdom of God best characterized as a great and joyous supper where “**all is now ready**” [14:17]. This hospitality is so great that no one is excluded, except through self-exclusion posed in the form of unconvincing excuses not to attend. There is always room. Having been invited, and having accepted this invitation, our task is to overcome the universal propensity of making excuses in order to preserve our self-autonomy and self-regard. We may then join the elect “where the voice of those who feast is unceasing, and the gladness of those who behold the goodness of Thy countenance is unending. For Thou art the true desire and the ineffable joy of those who love Thee, O Christ our God, and all creation sings Thy praise forever. Amen” [First Prayer of Thanksgiving After Communion].

CARSON’S DAY FUNDRAISER

Thursday February 23-25. Please see Matushka Susan for more details.

Diocesan chancellors, treasurers meet, review proportional giving

Chancellors and treasurers representing the Orthodox Church in America’s dioceses held their annual gathering at the Chancery on Tuesday, January 24, 2017.

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon opened the meeting by addressing the participants, who had earlier attended the Divine Liturgy, celebrated by Archpriest John Jillions, OCA Chancellor, in Saint Sergius of Radonezh Chapel.

Father Jillions and Priest Nathan Preston, Administrator of the Department of Pastoral Life, led a discussion on Clergy Compensation Guidelines and the Clergy Peer Group project, being piloted in the Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania.

Archpriest Eric G. Tosi, OCA Secretary, reviewed the new on-line 2017 diocesan form for statistical information and also updated the group on a variety of matters associated with the 19th All-American Council, slated to convene in Saint Louis, MO in July 2018.

Turning their attention to financial matters, the chancellors and treasurers reviewed proportional giving by diocese for 2016 versus the original projections, as this was the first year in which the new funding method was used. Actual results were very close to the projections. Diocesan representatives then shared how their respective dioceses are handling the transition. It was noted that many dioceses have already transitioned to proportional giving or are working towards a transition within the next two years. Participants also discussed the possibility of establishing assessments for the [19th All-American Council](#) on a proportional basis, not unlike that employed for the annual OCA funding, and began looking at the level of funding that will form the basis for a resolution at that Council.

The chancellors and treasurers agreed that a major benefit of their meetings is the practical exchange of ideas and the ability to benefit from work accomplished by other dioceses in their transition to proportional giving.

The meeting concluded with words of gratitude from Metropolitan Tikhon.

In addition to Metropolitan Tikhon and Fathers John, Eric and Nathan, participants included Melanie Ringa, OCA Treasurer; Archpriest Matthew Tate, Chancellor of the Diocese of the West; Archpriest Marcus Burch, Chancellor of the Diocese of the South; Archpriest Raymond Martin Browne and Joseph Tosca, Chancellor and Treasurer respectively of the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania; Archpriest John Zdinak, Chancellor of the Diocese of the Midwest; Archpriest John Kreta, Chancellor of the Diocese of New England; Archpriest Joseph

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Proportional giving continued

Lickwar, Archpriest David Cowan and Matushka Mary Buletza, Chancellor, Assistant Chancellor and Treasurer respectively of the Diocese of New York and New Jersey; Archpriest William Evansky, Chancellor of the Diocese of Western Pennsylvania; Archpriest John Vitko and Matthew Matyuf, Chancellor and Treasurer respectively of the Diocese of Washington; Archpriest Don Freude and Steve Timofeev, Chancellor and Treasurer respectively of the Bulgarian Diocese; and Archpriest Thomas Andrew, Chancellor of the Diocese of Alaska. Also present was Archpriest John Dresko, who chairs the Metropolitan Council Finance/Investment Committee.

OCMC announces opening for Development Officer

The [Orthodox Christian Mission Center](#) [OCMC] is now accepting resumes for the position of Development Officer. The Development Officer represents the Orthodox Christian Mission Center in all aspects of its fundraising, but particularly among its constituencies in the West and Mid-West. This person will work with and assist all staff members in the identification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship of individuals who may or should have an interest in supporting the mission of OCMC and its programs.

A Bachelor's Degree is required. A proven record of success in the field is highly desirable. Interviews are slated to begin in February.

Resumes and cover letters that include a brief statement of fundraising qualifications may be sent to Father Martin Ritsi, Executive Director, Orthodox Christian Mission Center, 220 Mason Manatee Way, St. Augustine, FL 32086 or by e-mail to missions@ocmc.org.

OCMC is a pan-Orthodox agency of the [Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the USA](#). Its Board includes members of several jurisdictions, including the Orthodox Church in America. Currently, several OCA clergy and laity serve as OCMC missionaries, following the lead of many who have served on mission teams during OCMC's three decades of ministry.

OCMC Mission Team Chicago to host benefit dinner February 23

Archpriest Michael Oleksa, a priest of the OCA Diocese of Alaska, professor and expert on Alaskan Native cultures and history, will be the guest speaker at Mission Team Chicago's annual Benefit Dinner on Thursday, February 23, 2017.

"The Missionary Importance of the Alaskan Saints Today" will be Father Michael's topic. The fundraiser, which will benefit the work of the Orthodox Christian Mission Center in Alaska and elsewhere, will be held at Saint John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church, 2350 East Dempster Street, Des Plaines, IL. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m.

Tickets may be ordered on-line or by contacting MTCBenefit@yahoo.com or 317-709-0168, at \$35.00 per person.

Sunday of Zacchaeus

Commemorated on [January 29](#)

The paschal season of the Church is preceded by the season of Great Lent, which is also preceded by its own liturgical preparation. The first sign of the approach of Great Lent comes 5 Sunday's 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 changed simply because he "sought to see who Jesus was" (Luke 19:3). The desire and effort to see Jesus begins the entire movement through Lent towards Pascha. It is the first movement of salvation.

Our lenten journey begins with a recognition of our own sinfulness, just as Zacchaeus recognized his. He promised to make restitution by giving half of his wealth to the poor, and by paying to those he had falsely accused four times as much as they had lost. In this, he went beyond the requirements of the Law (Ex. 22:3-12).

The example of Zacchaeus teaches us that we should turn away from our sins, and atone for them. The real proof of our sorrow and repentance is not just a verbal apology, but when we correct ourselves and try to make amends for the consequences of our evil actions.

We are also assured of God's mercy and compassion by Christ's words to Zacchaeus, "Today salvation is come to this house" (Luke 19:9). After the Great Doxology at Sunday Matins (when the Tone of the week is Tone 1, 3, 5, 7) we sing the Dismissal Hymn of the Resurrection "Today salvation has come to the world," which echoes the Lord's words to Zacchaeus.

Zacchaeus was short, so he climbed a tree in order to see the Lord. All of us have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). We are also short in our spiritual stature, therefore we must climb the ladder of the virtues. In other words, we must prepare for spiritual effort and growth.

St Zacchaeus is also commemorated on April 20.

His Grace, Bp. Paul's Visit *** January 14-15, 2017



During Divine Liturgy altar server, Braydon, holds the book for the Bishop as he prays.



During the Great Entrance at Divine Liturgy



"O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth....."

Bishop praying during the Great Vespers



His Grace, Bishop Paul blesses the entrance during Great Vespers



His Grace, Bishop Paul gives the Divine Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ to the Faithful!



After Great Vespers, Fr. Andrew welcomes His Grace to St. Panteleimon.

Kid's Corner

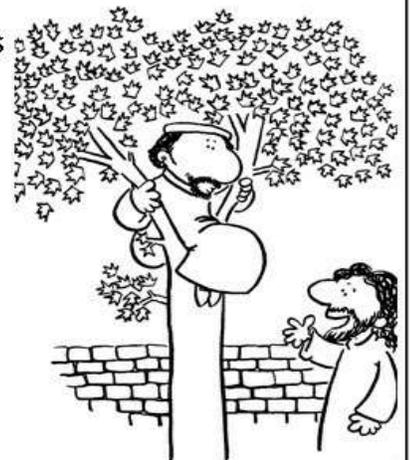
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Zacchaeus was a wee little man, a wee little man was he. He climbed up into a sycamore tree for the Lord he wanted to see!

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- JERICHO
- ZACCHAEUS
- SENIOR
- WEALTHY
- SHORT
- SYCAMORE
- TREE
- HOUSE
- GROUND
- PROPERTY
- POOR
- SALVATION



8th RUSSIAN WINTER FESTIVAL

Sunday, February 13 from Noon-5:00 pm

Holy Virgin Protection Russian Orthodox Cathedral
1800 Lee St., Des Plaines, IL

Sweet & Savory Russian Treats / Vodka tasting / Russian Tea / Russian dancers, singers & musicians / Folk & Craft Bazaar / Snow Maiden's Castle & Kids Krafts / Raffle

Donation: \$2 Kids under 12: Free
Donations to benefit the completion of the parish school.



UTILITY BILL CLINIC

Hosted by State Representative Silvana Tabares
When: Monday, January 30
Time: 11:00 am-Noon
Where: 5700 S Archer Rd., Summit, IL

Bring in your latest gas, electric & phone bill and receive suggestions about how to save on your utility bills.
RSVP @ 773-522-1315 or email
Rep.Tabares@gmail.com.

1 Timothy 4:9-15 (Epistle)

This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance. For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe. These things command and teach. Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all.

CHICAGO DEANERY WINTER YOUTH CAMP 2017

for all youth ages 11 through 18
11 AM Saturday, February 18 – 2 PM Monday, February 20, 2017
Edwards YMCA Camp, N8901 Army Lake Rd., East Troy, WI

Bundle up! It's time for our annual winter weekend of sledding, skating, tubing, cross-country skiing, hiking, team building, snow sculpture, art projects, worship, camp fire, Vespers and Sunday Liturgy, and more... all for just \$105.00, which includes two nights lodging, all meals, all fees and activities!

REGISTER NOW!
A completed registration form must accompany all registrations!
Questions? Call Fr. Tom Mueller at 414-671-5819.

Registration Form – Deadline is Monday, February 13

Please return to Father Tom Mueller, 2515 South 30 Street, Milwaukee, WI 53215-2829 or by e-mail to crankypriest@gmail.com. No registrations will be accepted without ALL info below. Youth from non-Deanery parishes will be invited to participate with the approval of Father Tom. Please attach check for \$105.00 per camper, payable to the "Chicago Deanery."

Name _____ Age _____ Grade _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____ Phone _____
E-mail _____ Parish _____

Luke 19:1-10 (Gospel)

Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house." So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner." Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.