

The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Matthew 22:35-46

Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked Him a question, tempting Him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer Him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask Him any more questions. (KJV)

The Sunday after the Exaltation of the Precious and Life-giving Cross

Mk.8:34-9:1

For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power. (KJV)

Believers gather today in God's Holy Church to worship and glorify God. Believers come to church in search of salvation and personal peace. Healing of soul and body are of interest to believers in attendance.

Personal relationships in the home, at work or in the community will be on the minds and in the hearts of believers. God's Holy Church is where to come in search of peace and salvation.

The Gospel for the Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost describes the relationships expected with God and with neighbor. God is to be loved with all the heart, mind and soul.

A believer's neighbor is to be loved as the believer love's him or herself. The Church is where to figure out how to bring into daily reality complete love of God and love of neighbor.

Every person commits sins in the relationship with God. Every person commits sins against his or her neighbor, family member or friend. Learning to drive sin from the self is a life-long undertaking.

Being nourished by God's teachings, the Holy Scriptures and the wisdom proclaimed in the experience of the Church helps believers to improve the relationship with God, neighbors, family members and friends.

Actively attending the Divine services of the Church leads to transformation of believers. Being serious about the Holy Mysteries of the Church leads to growth in Christ and actions pleasing to Christ.

Honesty with the self through personal examination will lead to repentance and personal change. Strong faith and trust in God's goodness and mercy makes a difference in personal life.

Inwardly, the believer must be firmly committed to loving God and desiring to please God for change and growth to occur. The world is full of temptations, perils and attractions that will devastate the soul and relationships.

Guarding the heart, mind and soul is essential at all times for purity in life to be achieved. Being a God-pleasing Christian takes work throughout life. Enjoying the fullness of the life in Christ requires initiative and on-going effort.

Believers need to reject thoughts of sin and temptations. Perilous attractions need to be avoided. Forgiveness in personal relationships has a place at all times and in all circumstances.

Love is the paramount guide in the relationship with God, neighbors, family members and friends. Love takes work. Love involves being humble and considerate.

To grow in Christ, believers need to look to Christ for direction and guidance, nourishment and hope. Only with the help of Christ does personal life become pleasing to Christ.

Help from Christ is required to combat sin. Christ's help is needed for healthy relationships with family members, friends and neighbors. A heart, mind and soul firmly dedicated to God will yield love of God.

Believers are expected to grow and mature in Christ with the passage of time. The Church commonly baptizes infants. As a person matures in age, the person is to mature in relationships with God, neighbor, family member and friend.

Life's journey from birth to death involves the relationships with God and with the humans as part of daily life. The Holy Gospel guides believers in forming and developing these relationships.

Gratitude has a place with God and in daily personal relationships. Grateful believers take time to thank God and the people in daily life. Greed, hate and selfishness have no place in the Christian life.

The Gospel lessons for today are challenging. The Cross of Christ and Resurrection of Christ give hope and direction for believers. Always remain hopeful in Christ and in personal relationships. Communicate love and hope.

The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost. The Sunday after the Exaltation of the Cross. Holy Great Martyr Eustatius. September 20/October 3, 2021. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic