

## The Sunday of the Holy Forefathers

Luke 14:16-24

Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper. (KJV)

God's Holy Church is moving with certainty toward the Feast of the Nativity. The Lord Jesus Christ desires all to participate in His Life. The Lord invites individuals at every moment of time to be united with Him.

Each Divine Liturgy is Christ's Banquet. Believers have the opportunity to be united with Christ at every Divine Liturgy, Jesus Christ is Life and offers Life Eternal. (Jn.6:53-54)

The Precious Body and Blood of Christ are available at each Divine Liturgy. The invitation goes out to all believers to partake. The Lord's invitation to come to the Divine Liturgy comes to mind in today's Gospel.

Only a small number of individuals baptized into Christ attend the Divine Liturgy regularly. A number of baptized individuals attending the Divine Liturgy do not partake of the Precious Body and Blood.

The Lord Jesus Christ said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." Jesus Christ offers life. He offers life eternal. (Jn.6:53-54)

Today's Gospel has a compelling message for attentive believers. Accepting the invitation to partake of the Precious Body and Blood of Christ is a step toward life eternal.

Believers begin the journey to life eternal at Holy Baptism. Partaking of the Precious Body and Blood of Christ nourishes and keeps the believer on the path to the Kingdom of God and life eternal.

Believers unite with Christ when partaking of the Precious Body and Blood of Christ. Jesus Christ enters the believer and the believer is in Christ when partaking occurs.

The Nativity Fast is part of each Liturgical Year in order for believers to remain on the path to God's Kingdom and life eternal. Believers are encouraged to honestly assess their lives and repent as necessary to ensure unity with Christ.

The Feast of Christ's Nativity inspires believers to ensure their relationship with Jesus Christ is consistent with the commitment made at Holy Baptism. Repentance is necessary to be rid of life's aspects not pleasing to Christ.

Fasting, repentance and Holy Confession restore unity with Christ. Holy Communion solidifies the unity with Christ. The present Gospel is a firm lesson for believers to partake of the Precious Body and Blood of Christ.

Believers are expected to continuously grow in Christ from the time of Baptism. Growth in Jesus Christ is possible while the mind functions well and strong faith exists,

Today is the day to take the step for growth in Christ. Now is the time to focus on repentance, God's Kingdom and life eternal. The invitation to partake of Jesus' Body and Blood is proclaimed at each Divine Liturgy.

The earthly time of life comes only once and is to be used wisely. Believers are blessed with the opportunity to realize the fullness of life in Christ. Eternal life is possible.

Remaining totally focused on Christ in each aspect of life keeps the believer on the narrow path of life. Guarding the heart, mind and soul ensures living in Christ-pleasing ways.

Accepting Christ's invitations is possible. Christ is ever-present to assist, guide and strengthen the believer on life's journey. God's Holy Church offers the wisdom and direction for believers to follow.

The saints and martyrs through the centuries have defined the roads to follow to God's Kingdom and eternal life. The Church offers the road map and the nourishment for life's journey.

Declining Christ's invitations puts the soul in peril and eternal life can become out of reach. The Holy Gospel offers the wisdom and words of Christ for the benefit of those willing to follow Christ and say "yes" to Christ.

Each person makes decisions daily. Saying "yes" to Jesus Christ's invitations to follow Him offers peace and joy in the heart, mind and soul. Avoiding earthly perils and temptations is possible with Christ.

Be grateful for Christ's constant invitations as evidence of His love for each person. Give thanks to Christ for His patience with each person struggling with daily decision-making.

The opportunity to repent and say "yes" to Christ exists now. The joy of the life in Christ is here today. Thank God for the constant opportunity to say "yes." Thank God for the opportunity to repent and be renewed in Christ.

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The Twenty Eighth Sunday after Pentecost. The Sunday of the Holy Forefathers. St. Spyridon. Serbian Mothers' Day. December 12/25, 2022. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic