

Zacchaeus Sunday

Luke 19:1-10

And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner. And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord: Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.
(KJV)

The arrival of Zacchaeus Sunday each year signals the approach of Great Lent and the journey to Pascha. The Church prepares believers gradually to participate in the Lenten journey.

This is a day to begin to orient the heart, mind and soul toward the coming of Great Lent and Pascha. Now is the time to increase interest in the Lord Jesus Christ and to draw closer to Christ.

Zacchaeus was a sinner with interest in seeing the Lord Jesus Christ. He exhibited a readiness to change his ways. Zacchaeus was a rich man of action. He put forth the effort to climb the sycamore tree so that he could see Jesus.

To demonstrate his good faith Zacchaeus was willing to give half of his goods to the poor and to restore fourfold to anyone he deceived. Everyone attentive to the Gospel can learn from Zacchaeus and take action to repent.

The journey to Pascha and to eternal life can feel very long. Repentance is expected of believers. The Gospel lessons guide believers on the journey to Pascha, to the heavenly Kingdom and to eternal life.

Jesus Christ noticed Zacchaeus in the sycamore tree and called Zacchaeus to come closer. Jesus wanted to bring salvation to Zacchaeus' house. The Gospel makes clear that Jesus came to save the lost.

When sinners take action to draw closer to Jesus, Jesus invites and draws the person closer. Today is a day to draw closer to Jesus Christ as did Zacchaeus. Now is the time to experience salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Gospel intends change in believers. The Gospel enriches and nourishes the believer's soul for beneficial change to occur. God's Church proclaims the Gospel at each Divine Liturgy with wisdom rooted in the ages.

Believers are expected to grow in Christ from the time of Baptism until departure from this life. The cycle of liturgical life in the Church offers a proven structured experience for the life in Jesus Christ.

Believers benefit by ordering personal life in the liturgical life of the Church.

Heeding the opportunities for nourishment and repentance keep the believer on the narrow path to the Heavenly Kingdom and eternal life.

Every believer is expected to prepare for Jesus's Second Coming and the Final Judgment. Daily actions create the record for the final judgment. Willingness to reject sin and repent determines whether eternal life is experienced.

Today is a turning point in direction in God's Holy Church. The movement toward Great Lent is small and subtle. The Church moves as a whole around the world toward the approach of Pascha.

The journey to Pascha is deeply rooted in the Church. Interest and use of the believer's mind determines the value ascribed to salvation of the soul and interest in eternal life.

Events in daily life can cloud personal judgment. Daily stresses of life can consume the believer's attention. Jesus Christ is the bright light to guide the believer through all of life's struggles and challenges.

Hunger in the soul will draw the believer toward Christ. Daily decisions determine whether the person will put forth the effort as did Zacchaeus to get a close look at Christ and to become more visible to Christ.

Zacchaeus Sunday is about a small man whose stature in Christ was elevated by Christ entering his house. Believers learn from Zacchaeus that when effort is made to draw near to Jesus, life improves dramatically.

Each person can take action to correct personal wrongs in relationships and transactions. Zacchaeus is an inspiring example for beneficial change in life. The Lord Jesus Christ brings unexpected joy to sinners seeking to repent.

Zacchaeus Sunday has an impact around the world and through the centuries. Zacchaeus Sunday is the Lord Jesus Christ at work through the Church to transform believers.

Zacchaeus Sunday merits serious attention. The present time is important in life. The present is the time of life guaranteed. Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow is not for certain.

Jesus Christ welcomes sinners today. Today is the day to reject sin. Today is the day to repent. Today is the day to exert the effort to draw closer to Jesus Christ. Welcoming Jesus Christ into the home today opens the opportunity for great joy.

Zacchaeus Sunday. Venerable Mother Xenia of Rome. Holy Martyr Bablyas of Sicily. January 24/February 6, 2022. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania.

Father Rodney Torbic