

The Sunday of the Last Judgment

Matthew 25:31-46

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.(KJV)

The Church has arrived today at Meatfare Sunday also known as the Sunday of the Last Judgment. This is a day of transition for the believer's body, mind and soul in preparation for the Lenten Journey.

Today is the last day for believers to eat meat until Pascha. Conscious awareness of the Lenten Journey is to increase at this time. Purification and care of the soul are to be at the forefront of the mind.

This Sunday focuses on daily personal relationships. Daily relationships and encounters with others determine where a believer will experience eternity. The Lord Jesus Christ is identified with each person met in daily life.

Today's Gospel examines our experiences with strangers, the sick, the suffering and the imprisoned. Christ's Second Coming and the Final Judgement will consider the way we treat strangers, the sick, needy and the imprisoned.

Today is a time for honest personal assessment of our relationship with Jesus Christ. If we say we love Christ, we will demonstrate Christ's love in the way we live in the Church and the way we treat others in daily life.

Honoring the Lenten Journey enables believers to become more like Christ and to treat others in ways pleasing to Christ. Honoring the Great Fast is a conscious effort of rejecting sin in life and living in ways pleasing to Christ.

Honoring Great Lent intends to fill the believer's heart, mind and soul with Christ. The food we eat, the thoughts we entertain and the activities we engage in will determine if we are serious about loving and living in Jesus Christ.

The way we treat others determines how we will spend eternity. Now is the time to begin anew in Jesus Christ. Now is the time to treat others we meet in daily life with Christian love.

Today is the day to reject sin, repent and center life in Christ. Today is the day to see Jesus Christ in each person we meet. God's goodness and mercy give the believer the constant ability to repent and to begin anew.

The Church offers Jesus Christ's welcoming embrace to persons rejecting the way of sin and seeking to repent. Great Lent fosters and encourages repentance, increased prayer and fasting.

The Church provides nourishment and teachings to guide the believer from repentance to the Heavenly Kingdom. The Church is the foretaste of and is the centuries-old -well-travelled road to the Kingdom.

Each day believers have the ability to live in Jesus Christ. Each relationship is an experience with Christ. Conscious use of the mind, heart and soul determine the degree each moment of life focuses on Christ.

Great Lent has a specific structure each year to benefit believers in Christ. This Sunday and each of the forthcoming days until Pascha will enrich, renew and strengthen participating believers in Christ.

Each moment offers renewal in Christ. Serious decision making is necessary to pray and to embrace Christ. Each individual chooses the use and direction of the heart, mind and soul.

Today is an important day in the Church. The Second Coming of Christ and the Final Judgment are realities facing each person. Each person determines the outcome of the final judgment by the way he or she lives.

The way a person lives creates the record for the Great and Final Judgment. The Church teaches, illuminates and offers the pathway to eternal life and God's Heavenly Kingdom.

Embracing the way of Christ in the Church is completely voluntary. Honoring Great Lent is completely voluntary. Wise believers choose to invest in Great Lent and in the Kingdom of God which are experienced through the Church.

Meatfare Sunday-The Sunday of the Last Judgment. Afterfeast of the Meeting of Our Lord. St. Photius of Constantinople; St. Boucolus, Bishop of Smyrna.

Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic