

The Sunday of Orthodoxy

John 1:43-51

The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these. And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man (KJV)

God's Holy Church is celebrating the Sunday of Orthodoxy. Orthodox believers join together in Divine services around the world. The restoration of icons is a major part of the celebration.

Each person is an icon. Each person is created in the image and likeness of God.(Gen.1:26). The Lord Jesus Christ took on human flesh. The Church depicts images of Jesus, the Mother of God and the Saints in Holy Icons.

Today the hunger of the soul is nourished in the Divine Liturgy. Today believers hear the Holy Gospel and partake of the Precious Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Divine services are enriched with the presence of icons. Believers' souls shine forth the Light of Christ. Believers' hearts, minds and souls benefit from the presence of Holy Icons in the Church.

The Holy Gospel reading for today reveals the Lord Jesus Christ's ability to see all things in ways beyond comprehension. Jesus saw Nathaniel in advance of their meeting.

The Gospel verifies the value of Moses and the Prophets foretelling the coming of Jesus. Nathaniel recognized Jesus and identified Jesus as the "Son of God and King of Israel."

At Holy Baptism, believers profess belief in Jesus Christ as King and as God. Believers begin officially following Jesus Christ at Baptism just as Philip and Nathaniel began following Jesus.

Jesus made a profound impression on Philip and Nathaniel. Jesus makes a profound impression on believers at the time of Holy Baptism. At Baptism believers assume and accept the responsibility of following Jesus Christ.

The Gospel is to be taken to heart by believers. The Gospel message leads to the transformation of believers. Believers are to continue to embrace the way of Christ and be renewed in Christ with each reading of the Gospel.

The Gospel readings nourish believers' souls. The Gospel guides and directs believers along the narrow path to God's Kingdom. Believers learn the value of repentance from the Gospel.

Believers learn forgiveness and love from the Gospel. Jesus Christ's love for each person is proclaimed in the Gospel. Jesus' complete love is verified with His Death on the Cross and His Resurrection.

During Great Lent believers unite and reunite with Jesus Christ. Increased prayer, fasting and almsgiving facilitate the unification and reunification with Christ.

Repentance, Holy Confession and Communion result in the forgiveness of sins and the presence of joy in the heart, mind and soul. Jesus welcomes believers choosing to repent.

God's Holy Church throughout the world participates in Great Lent. Great Lent has a profound effect on the world. Great Lent changes the world. Great Lent directs the world's attention to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Each believer seriously adhering to the journey to Pascha has an impact. The collective impact of believers throughout the world journeying to Pascha creates great change.

Communities improve when believers fast and pray. Parishes become stronger when believers actively participate in Great Lent. Family members are enriched when each member fasts and prays during Great Lent.

The hunger in the soul is nourished at the Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts and the Divine Liturgies during Great Lent. The daily content in the Church services during Great Lent which focus on repentance strengthens serious believers.

Great Lent leads to joy in the hearts, minds and souls of believers. Christ's joy exceeds all joy. Repentance gives peace to the heart, mind and soul. Relationships improve with the increase of forgiveness in homes and parishes.

Jesus Christ is the pathway to peace. Jesus Christ is the personification of peace. May this Sunday of Orthodoxy be the doorway for believers into the joy and peace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Sunday of Orthodoxy. St. Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem.. March 18/31, 2024. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic