

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)

The miraculous Virgin Birth of the Lord Jesus Christ merits being firmly implanted deep in the heart, mind and soul of the believer. The Church celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ each year.

The Nativity Fast is prescribed by the Church for believers to seriously prepare for the Feast of the Nativity. The Nativity Fast is an opportunity to invest in the Kingdom of God.

Preparing for and celebrating the Feast according to the teachings of the Church will transform the believer. Believers seriously participating in the Nativity Fast greet and receive the New Born Christ Child in the heart, mind and soul.

Peace, love and joy are associated with the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Church leads believers on the path to Peace, Love and Joy.

The Gospel for today is part of the preparation for the Feast of the Nativity. The Lord Jesus Christ invites believers to participate in the Divine Banquet at the Divine Liturgy.

Serious believers accept the invitation to experience the Living Christ. Attentive believers heed the invitation of the Lord to draw near in faith and in love. The Precious Body and Blood unite the believer with the Living Jesus Christ.

The world attempts to draw the believer away from living and growing in Christ. The world offers the path of material accumulation or various forms of idol worship.

Theaters, the stadiums and political forums draw believers' attention away from Jesus Christ. Work and social demands compete with the believer's attention. Intrusive and unwanted thoughts seek to derail efforts to heal and nourish the soul.

The Lord God is present, lovingly extending the invitation to draw near. The Lord is ever-present speaking in the small, quiet voice expressing and offering Divine Love.

Repentance is not always easy. Accepting and drawing near to Jesus Christ requires moving away from sin and perils to the soul. Saying “yes” to the invitation to come to Christ requires courage and firm faith.

Rejecting the ways of the world that fail to nourish the soul is necessary to live fully in Christ. Evil is always present, often disguised as good, to detract and weaken the believer.

Constant vigilance is necessary to remain with Christ from Holy Baptism until departure from this world. The Kingdom of God and Eternal Life await those who remain faithful to Christ.

Each Feast of the Nativity of Christ serves to direct believers to God’s Kingdom and Eternal Life. The Birth of Jesus Christ makes all things new! Jesus’ birth is celebrated in the present each year.

Choirs sing “God is with us!” Believers feel the Living, Loving God in heart, mind and soul on the Feast of the Nativity. Today’s Gospel helps the believer to move forward toward the Feast of the Nativity.

Today’s Gospel puts the Lord’s invitation to the Divine Banquet in perspective. The present Gospel is a reminder of the one thing needful that Mary chose when she sat at Jesus feet and Martha was busy. (Lk.10:38-42, 11:27-28)

Keeping the focus on Jesus Christ has a place in each day of the believer’s life. Traveling the narrow path to God’s Kingdom and Eternal Life is the bountiful way chosen at Holy Baptism,

The present Gospel describes those refusing and declining the invitation to attend the banquet. Too often individuals decline the Banquet of Love at the Divine Liturgy.

Individuals and families strengthen and nourish their souls when saying “yes” to the Lord’s Invitation to draw near. The Lord speaks to each heart, mind and soul with gentleness and reassuring love.

Being a believer in Jesus Christ is completely voluntary. Believers serious in following Christ do so in complete freedom. The Lord Jesus Christ shines in the lives of believers drawing near in faith and love.

The Twenty Seventh Sunday after Pentecost. The Sunday of the Holy Forefathers. Holy Prophet Haggai. St. Theophania the Empress. Serbian Mothers’ Day. December 16;29, 2024. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic