

## 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 on the Church's calendar is a wake-up call for believers to ready themselves for the approach of Great Lent. Now is the time to turn attention to the condition of the soul.

Today is a moment to think about the need for repentance throughout earthly life. Great Lent offers the structure, inspiration and guidance for complete honest and sincere repentance.

Believers exit the Baptismal font united with the Lord Jesus Christ. The journey to the Kingdom of God can be very long. The journey to the Kingdom is filled with dangers, temptations and perils to the soul.

The Church offers the nourishment and guidance for believers to travel the narrow path to the Kingdom. Repentance is essential throughout life. Believers are constantly challenged to remain faithfully on the road to the Kingdom.

Repentance enables the believer to unite and reunite with Jesus Christ when wayward paths are taken. Immeasurable joy in Jesus Christ is experienced at Baptism. Immeasurable joy occurs when a believer repents.

Zacchaeus is an excellent example of repentance. He put forth considerable effort to see and approach Christ. He gave of his wealth to the poor. He restored bountifully to those he deceived.

Jesus' love, care and forgiveness are evident in the life of Zacchaeus. Jesus Visited Zacchaeus' house. Jesus plainly said salvation came to the house. The Gospel states clearly Jesus came to seek and to save the lost.

Each believer is lost to a certain degree. Personal knowledge about Jesus Christ falls short of the full nature and glory of Christ. Personal efforts to follow Jesus Christ always entails a certain amount of sin that needs removed.

The Gospel account of Zacchaeus assures believers of Jesus' love for sinners willing to repent. Zacchaeus's actions open an avenue of hope for believers seeking to unite and reunite with Christ.

Each person has issues in life. Each person discovers personal sins when honest assessments are made of the heart, mind and soul. Keeping the condition of the soul in focus throughout life is of utmost importance.

The soul's importance cannot be overestimated. Only through Jesus Christ can purity come to the soul. Only through forgiveness and the love of Christ can the believer travel the path to God's Kingdom and eternal life.

Daily life in the home and in the community challenges the believer to live in purity. Perils to the soul occur in relationships in the home and in the community. Temptations occur everywhere.

Greed, anger, and ungodly thoughts arise and affect the heart, mind and soul. God's Holy Church offers the teachings and nourishment to address temptations, dangers and perils to the soul.

Zacchaeus is one example of repentance. The Church offers countless examples of repentance in the lives of the saints and martyrs through the centuries.

Being attentive to the teachings of the Church strengthens believers' faithfulness.

Faithfulness to Christ inspires believers to ward off and repel dangers to the soul. Zacchaeus showed by his climbing of the tree the willingness to put forth effort to draw near to Christ.

Living in Jesus Christ requires effort throughout life. Effort is needed to go to church regularly during the year. Expending energy is essential to live according to the teachings of the Church.

Praying daily takes unyielding commitment. Welcoming that which is good for the heart, mind and soul to enter the self takes vigilance and attentiveness. Temptations and perils are repelled only with firm resolve.

Jesus Christ responded to Zacchaeus' initiative to draw near. Jesus Christ welcomes believers drawing near in faith. Serious believers view the arrival of Zacchaeus Sunday with great anticipation.

The approach of Great Lent bodes well for the future. Great Lent opens the door wide for hope in the heart, mind and soul. Opportunities to address personal sin deep in the heart, mind and soul exist throughout Great Lent.

No greater joy exists than unity with Jesus Christ. Repentance makes the joy in Jesus Christ a reality. Thank God for Zacchaeus' example. Thank God for Jesus' Christ's forgiveness, goodness and love.

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Zacchaeus Sunday. Venerable and God-bearing Father Euthymius the Great.  
January 20/February 2, 2025. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic