

The Beheading of Saint John the Baptist August 29



As forerunner of our Lord's birth, preaching and death, the blessed John showed in his struggle goodness worthy of the sight of heaven. In the words of Scripture: "Though in the sight of men he suffered torments, his hope is full of immortality." We justly commemorate the day of his birth with a joyful celebration, a day which he himself made festive for us through his suffering and which he adorned with the crimson splendor of his own blood. We do rightly revere his memory with joyful hearts, for he stamped with the seal of martyrdom the testimony which he delivered on behalf of our Lord...Through his birth, preaching and baptizing, he bore witness to the coming birth, preaching and baptism of Christ, and by his own suffering he showed that Christ also would suffer.

In Matthew 14:1-12 we read about the cruel death of John the Baptist. John had publicly reprimanded King Herod for taking his brother's wife as his own, so Herod had him imprisoned. Although Herod really wanted John dead, he feared the many people who believed John to be a prophet. Indeed, we consider him to be the last of the Old Testament prophets. During his riotous birthday party, Herod was so pleased with the dancing of his wife's daughter Salome that he promised her anything she wanted. Her mother prompted her to say, "The head of John the Baptist on a platter." Even though Herod regretted his promise, he had to abide by it because his guests had heard him. So he commanded that John be beheaded and that the head be given to Salome, who in turn, gave it to her mother.

In the Eastern Church we keep this day as a strict fast day, (i.e. no meat, fish, dairy, wine or olive oil) as reminders that we are to live a different style of life that Herod. In memory of this event, it is a pious custom amongst our faithful to not use dishes on this day, since John's head was served on a dish/platter. Instead, only bowls are used. Also, the food that is served on this day should not require the use of a knife, since a sharp instrument was used to behead him.

Thus, we are given three ways to remember St. John's beheading: a strict fast, using bowls, eating food that is not cut. This year, incorporate at least one, if not all, of these customs to help you (your family) learn the meaning of this feast day.



August 23, 2020

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost, Tone 3; Leavetaking of the Feast of the Holy Dormition; Holy Martyr Luppus; Holy Priest-Martyr Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons (193-211)

<u>Changeable Part:</u> Pages 22-25 In the Booklet of Changeable Parts (Small white book)

Announcements:

Next Saturday: Beheading of St. John

Next Saturday, August 29th, we will commemorate the Beheading of St. John the Baptist. We will have a service of Vigil Divine Liturgy on Friday, August 28 at St. George parish at 7:00pm. According to the Pastoral Guide of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the USA a strict fast is prescribed on this day (Art. 475) Also works of mercy are strongly recommended to commemorate the strict life of St. John the Baptist and his martyrdom.

Parish Picnic at St. George

We hope and planning that our Parish Picnic will take place on Sunday, September 13th following the Divine Liturgy. The picnic will be held on the parish grounds in front of the parish house. Please, if you are interesting put your name see sign-up sheet available in the vestibule. As we did in the past years, the Church will provide the hamburgers and hot dogs. **We ask that you provide side dishes and desserts.** Sign-up sheets are provided for this purpose in the Church vestibule. The set-up of the tables, chairs and all the food preparations for the picnic will take place on Saturday, September 12th, at 10:00 a.m. Please be part of these preparations for a happy and successful parish picnic. Thank you.

St. George Prayer List:

Make a point of praying for everyone on the prayer list. If you don't have one, contact the office and we'll send you one. In a special way, at this time, remember the following members of our parish family: Alice Hooge, Barbara Fedora, Patricia Della-Regione, Alice Mcilwane, Meghan Fossaceca, Bryan Madeya, Arlene Grzybowski, Rose Shedno and Kethryn Shabla.

Collection- May God bless you...

The grand total for Sunday of August 9, 2020 was \$**710.00** (Collection: \$710.00)

The grand total for Sunday of August 16, 2020 was **\$946.00** (Collection: \$905.00, loose & candles: \$41.00)

Sincere thanks to all for your kindness and generosity to our Holy Church!



...that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. - COLOSSIANS 2:2,3 NIV

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

And Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly, I say to you, it will be hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

In today's Gospel reading Our Lord warns us of how difficult it is for a man who is rich to enter the Kingdom of God. Does it mean that the Kingdom of God is open only to the destitute, to those who are materially poor, who lack everything on earth? No. The Kingdom of God is open to all who are not enslaved by possessions. When we read the first Beatitude, "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven", we are given a key to this saying: the poor in spirit are those who have understood that they



possess nothing which is their own. We have been created as an act of God, loved into existence; we are offered by God communion with Him to which we have no rights. All we are, all we possess is not our own in the sense that we have not made ourselves, we did not create what is seemingly ours - every thing which we are and which we have is love, the love of God and the love of people, and we cannot possess anything because everything is a gift that escapes us the moment we want to have possession of it and say, "It is mine".

On the other hand, the Kingdom of God is really the kingdom of those who are aware that they are infinitely rich because we can expect everything from love divine and from human love. We are rich because we possess nothing, we are rich because we are given all things; and so, it is difficult for one who imagines that he is rich in his own right to belong to that kingdom in which everything is a sign of love, and nothing can be possessed, as it were - taken away from others; because the moment we say that we possess something which is not given us either by God or by human care, we subtract it from the mystery of love.

So, let us reflect on that; poverty does not mean destitution; it means freedom from enslavement to an illusion that we are self-sufficient, self-contained, the creator of what we are and what we possess. And also free from enslavement to what is given us to make us true servants of God.