



The Holy Cross

“For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?

For what can a man give in return for his life?” Mark 8:34-38; 9:1

On Friday, at the gospel reflection, one of the volunteers thought that Jesus was very concerned with the human soul and wanted to make us attentive to it. We tend to neglect it, or even worse, we don’t even believe we have one. The volunteer thought that we come to the full realisation of the existence of our soul at the moment of our death.

However, the loss of life can be comprehended only within the reality of the gospel that tells us that the whole world cannot pay back for the loss of one human soul. There is nothing that can replace it, not the morality or superiority of culture, not the purity

of ideas, not the history of the world and so on. Victories that sacrifice even one soul to death are an abomination to God. If we could contemplate only once the kind attentiveness of God for one human soul, His mercy would overflow our heart and bring us to tears of joy.

The gospel of today is touching on the whole flawed logic of the world where there are always winners and losers. The one that says we have to win over in order to prevail. The personal success, the community success or the success of a given civilization over another one is the logic that prevails today. The world demands a comparison of one with the other, in a condescending way, where God is absent. And Him being absent, we measure out among each other instead of measuring ourselves up to God. That’s what Jesus asks us to do “be perfect as Your Father in heaven is perfect.” Matthew 5:48.

Living within the reality of the world, the only path in the gospel for saving our soul has nothing to do with winning but rather with losing. The time when we experienced loss in our life is a time when the mercy of God came closer to our soul. The volunteer is true, dying brings us to the realisation of our own soul. Dying every day to the logic of the world is the path of the cross. We enter thus within the logic of mercy. We can lose our life for the sake of the gospel because by losing our life we find God instead, the mercy of God who “desires to share with us in the victory of the cross” (Friday at Orthros).

“For whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation ...”

How can one be ashamed of God Who is perfect? It is because we are broken and poor and He is the perfect One, the most beautiful One?

Eliana thought that the One who is poor is God. He lived among the sinners, tax collectors and prostitutes. He is naked on the cross and mocked by the authorities. Not to be ashamed it means to become like Him. Not to be ashamed of poverty and of your own brokenness. Your own unworthiness. To embrace the poverty of your own sinful life and to offer it to Christ. Not to be ashamed of our offering which is not perfect and without blemish. To trust He would receive it from us with thanksgiving. Not to be ashamed of the garment that wore off on us. To dare presenting it to Him with love.

But how could the poor who live in poverty not be ashamed? How can the naked and the one who has been humiliated in line for food forget the shame in his heart? How can the one whose innocence was harmed, break out from this shame without anger, when the memory of it reoccurs again and again and again? How can the one who is forgotten leave behind the shame of not being desired? How can he offer up to Him without shame, when the shame is the matrix where all his emotions mingle in? The cloth of poverty is shame that covers no weakness but magnifies the humiliation within the soul.

Because the shame of oneself is longing for the One who restores one's beauty. And he welcomes him with all his heart. Within the brokenness of our heart is the place where the Bridegroom enters in who is not ashamed of us.

Community question: What is the value of the human soul?

Invaluable, without price... 30 silvers... From the gospel, higher than the whole world and yet less than the mercy of God (*Ps 63:3 The mercy of God is better than life*)

Fioretti from Scarborough at Good Neighbours

She walked in and everybody in the room felt tense. There would be trouble. People had watched her dancing across a four-lane street, here in the heart of Scarborough and she appeared out of her mind, ready to defy any car that stood in her way. Thus she entered our door and sat down. Quickly she accepted a generous offer of coffee and ice cream. We were all expecting some kind of fireworks, as it often happens when people come in early in the morning, having spent the night wondering the streets. In the meantime, two very challenged adults, brothers, one in a dilapidated wheelchair, both very apparently struggling just to move, also came in and wanted to sit down. There were no empty seats. This woman then got up and made room for them and spent the rest of her time waiting on them. Feeding them, speaking to them with care and love. She had found a way to be a mother, to give of herself. When she had finished her breakfast she left, calm, and the whole room sent her off with a warm embrace. She walked now straight and with purpose.

It is always better to give than to receive. Something that we tend to forget when we try to help other people, their need to be able also to give.



Memory Eternal Satigah !

On Saturday April 6 2024, Satigah, a regular friend of Good Neighbours Drop in, died suddenly at Kennedy subway station.

He leaves behind a wife and 3 children.

We are sorrowful of this loss of our friend who was part of our life for several years and commend his soul to God's Mercy. Satigah had explored on different occasion the Christian faith.

Announcements:

Wednesday at 6:30 pm – Presanctified Liturgy

Friday at 6:30 pm – Presanctified Liturgy

Followed by silent soup meal, accompanied by readings. If you would like to volunteer bringing the soup, please let starosta Miroslava know.

There is a vigil until midnight every Friday during Lent. Why not do something for the world that really matters? Don't curse the darkness, instead come, and light a candle in prayer for peace.

Keeping Vigils is one of those basic ascetical practices that we are mostly neglecting.

Lent goes by fast and there is grace during this time, don't deprive yourself of it.



If you are interested in visiting the sick, please speak to father Nicolaie.

St. Mary of Egypt refuge is hosting a Project Rachel week-end retreat in two weeks time. Please pray for those who will attend this retreat. Project Rachel is a retreat for women who have experienced abortion. Some of the women who have attended in the past were in their seventies and they had been carrying a very heavy burden all their lives. The retreat is such a powerful moment in their lives and the lives of their lost child.

April 8 - 14

Monday 5pm – Vespers Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Annunciation

Tuesday	8:30 am 6:30 pm	Morning Prayer Great Compline & Canon of St And.	Wednesday	4:00 pm 6:30 pm	Vespers Presanctified Liturgy
Thursday	8:30 am 12:30 pm 2:00 pm	Morning Prayer Noon Hours Jesus Prayer	Friday	7:00 am 12:30pm 6:30pm	Orthros Noon Hours Presanctified Liturgy, Silent Meal, Vigil until midnight with confessions
Saturday	9:00am	Morning Prayer	Sunday	7:00am 8:30am	Orthros Divine Liturgy

	<p>St Silouan Chapel at St John's Mission 155 Broadview Ave. Toronto, ON M4M 2E9 T: 416-466-1357 E: info@stjohnsmission.org W: stjohnsmission.org</p> <p>St Zoticos Orthodox Church at Good Neighbours Mission 193 Markham Rd Scarborough, ON M1J 3C3 T: 647-358-4105</p> <p>We are an apostolate of the ecumenical patriarchate "Mother Church of Christ's poor" under the Omophorion of Metropolitan Gregory of Nyssa</p>	
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St. Silouan Chapel, April 7, 2024

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