

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 sycomore 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)

Zacchaeus Sunday has arrived on the calendar of God's Holy Church. Zacchaeus Sunday signals Great Lent is approaching and the need exists for serious repentance.

Zacchaeus was a rich man who tried to make right his past wrongs. Zacchaeus had compassion on the poor and shared his wealth with the poor. He restored fourfold to those he had taken from falsely,

Zacchaeus was not consumed by greed. He was not so attached to his possessions that he would avoid a close relationship with Jesus Christ. Zacchaeus sensed he needed more in life than acquiring material wealth.

By his behavior and initiative, Zacchaeus showed he valued the Lord Jesus Christ. He exerted great effort to see Jesus. He wanted to draw close to Jesus. Zacchaeus welcomed Jesus into his home.

Each of us is wealthy in ways we may not realize. Zacchaeus teaches us to be compassionate to the poor and to make right our past wrongs. Zacchaeus teaches us to make the effort to draw near to Jesus Christ and to welcome Jesus.

Jesus came to Zacchaeus' home. Jesus will enter our hearts, homes and minds if we do not block him out by our thoughts and behavior. Jesus will bring salvation to our homes if we welcome Him as did Zacchaeus.

The hunger in our souls seeks the authentic joy, love and nourishment found in Jesus Christ. With all of his wealth, Zacchaeus knew that he needed more in life. He turned to Jesus to satisfy the soul's need.

Zacchaeus applied his wealth in useful and compassionate ways to set his life aright. Each believer has the responsibility to use personal wealth to make right past wrongs and to seek peace in Jesus Christ.

The current Gospel challenges our daily personal daily way of life. The Gospel spurs attentive believers to seek growth in Christ. Stagnancy has no place in the Christian life. Prayer and focusing on Christ bring peace and joy,

The Church structures the liturgical year for growth in Christ to take place. Gospel readings enrich the soul and address the hunger of the soul. Individuals separated from Christ are encouraged to return.

Jesus notices initiatives among those seeking Him. Even small efforts bring a response from Jesus. Zacchaeus climbed a tree to see Jesus and Jesus acknowledged Zacchaeus' presence,

Jesus visiting Zacchaeus' house has become a lasting lesson for succeeding centuries. Jesus reaches out to the lost. Each person is lost to sin to a certain degree. Only the Lord Jesus Christ is without sin.

Taking strong steps against personal sin is expected with each hearing of the Gospel. Repentance is the expected action expressed by St. John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus Christ. (Mt.3:1-2, Mt. 4:17)

Now is the time to take a strong personal look at the self and determine the personal action necessary to live in ways more pleasing to the Lord Jesus Christ. Today is the day to learn from Zacchaeus' example to take corrective steps.

Zacchaeus was blessed to personally experience the Lord Jesus Christ and to have Jesus come to his house. The Epistle to the Hebrews says:

“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.” (Heb.13:8)

Believers taking the initiative to draw closer to Jesus today will not be disappointed. Believers showing compassion to the poor and making the effort to make right past wrongs will find peace with Jesus Christ.

Now is the time to turn the mind to repentance and to seriously seek complete unity with the Lord Jesus Christ. Today is the day to ensure Jesus Christ is welcome in the heart, the mind and the soul.

Each home welcoming Jesus Christ is a home built upon a rock. The Psalmist said: “Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.” (Ps.126/127:1)

Life emanates from the Lord Jesus Christ, is nourished by Christ and is to be lived in Christ. Efforts that do not include Christ are in vain. Zacchaeus teaches the value of repentance and seeking Jesus Christ.

During the remaining time of life, let our lives be united with and immersed in Jesus Christ. Let nothing separate us from Christ. Let only unity with Christ prevail and sin be repelled.

With God's help, may we learn from Zacchaeus to make things right in life. With God's help, may we follow Zacchaeus's example and draw closer to Jesus Christ.

Zacchaeus Sunday. February 14/2021. Forefeast of the Meeting of the Lord. Holy Martyr Tryphon. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic