

## February 18 – St. Leo I the Great, Pope of Rome

Saint Leo I the Great, Pope of Rome (440-461), received a fine and diverse education, which opened for him the possibility of an excellent worldly career. He yearned for the spiritual life, however, and so he chose the path of becoming an archdeacon under holy Pope Sixtus III (432-440), after whose death Saint Leo was chosen as Bishop of Rome in September 440.

These were difficult times for the Church, when heretics assaulted Orthodoxy with their false teachings. Saint Leo combined pastoral solicitude and goodness with an unshakable firmness in the confession of the Faith. He was in particular one of the basic defenders of Orthodoxy against the heresies of Eutyches and Dioscorus, who taught that there was only one nature in the Lord Jesus Christ. He was also a defender against the heresy of Nestorius.

He exerted all his influence to put an end to the unrest by the heretics in the Church, and by his letters to the holy emperors Theodosius II (408-450) and Marcian (450-457), he actively promoted the convening of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, at Chalcedon in 451, to condemn the heresy of the Monophysites.

At the Council at Chalcedon, at which 630 bishops were present, a letter of Saint Leo to the deceased Saint Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople (447-449) was read. Saint Flavian had suffered for Orthodoxy under the “Robber Council” of Ephesus in the year 449. In the letter of Saint Leo the Orthodox teaching about the two natures [the divine and the human] in the Lord Jesus Christ was set forth. All the bishops present at the Council were in agreement with this teaching, and so the heretics Eutyches and Dioscorus were excommunicated from the Church.

Saint Leo was also a defender of his country against the incursions of barbarians. In 452, by the persuasive power of his words, he stopped Attila the Hun from pillaging Italy. Again in the year 455, when the leader of the Vandals [a Germanic tribe], Henzerich, turned towards Rome, he persuaded him not to pillage the city, burn buildings, nor to spill blood.

He knew the time of his death beforehand, and he prepared himself, with forty days of fasting and prayer, to pass from this world into eternity.

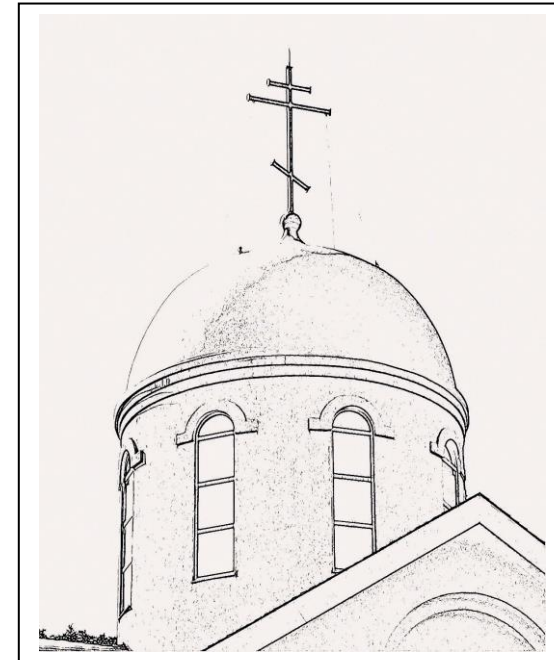
He died in the year 461 and was buried at Rome. His literary and theological legacy is comprised of 96 sermons and 143 letters, of which the best known is his Epistle to Saint Flavian.

Thou wast the Church's instrument  
in strengthening the teaching of true doctrine;  
thou didst shine forth from the West like a sun  
dispelling the errors of heretics.//

Righteous Leo, entreat Christ God to grant us His great mercy!

*Great Vespers – Aposticha Verse*

WEEKLY



BULLETIN

*Today is the beginning of our salvation, the revelation of the eternal mystery. The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin as Gabriel announces the coming of Grace. Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos: Rejoice O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you!*

*Troparion of the Annunciation to the Theotokos*

## ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION

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Very Rev. Fr. Paul Kucynda, *Retired Attached Priest*

Rev. Fr. Michael Pejovic, *Attached Priest*

Matthew Petrides, *Senior Warden*

Matushka Mary Buletza-Breton, *Choir Director*

# Annunciations

February 18, 2024

## THIRTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

### Sunday of Zacchaeus

*Tone 4. St. Leo the Great, Pope of Rome (461). Ven Cosmas of Yakhromsk (1492). St. Agapitos the Confessor and Wonderworker, Bishop of Synnada in Phrygia (4th c.). St. Flavian the Confessor, Patriarch of Constantinople (449-450).*

#### Today's Readings:

*Epistle:* 1 Timothy 4:9-15

*Gospel:* Luke 19:1-10

#### Upcoming Service Schedule:

Today – 9:00am Divine Liturgy

Saturday – 5:15 Panikhida (*Billy Washenko Iyr.*)

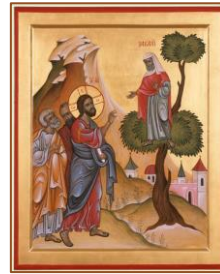
Saturday – 6:00pm Great Vespers

Sunday – 9:00am Divine Liturgy

#### Next Sunday's Readings:

*Epistle:* 2 Timothy 3:10-15

*Gospel:* Luke 18:10-14



*Sunday of  
Zacchaeus*

*The Distinguished Diocesan Benefactors program is an essential vehicle for funding the activities and programs of our diocese. As you plan your year-end giving, please consider participating in this program. More information is available at the diocesan website at [www.nynjoca.org](http://www.nynjoca.org).*

### Special Prayers

We pray for all our parish family members, but we pray especially for those who are ill and afflicted. Among them are **Mary Herelick, Zoran Pejovic, Betty James, Manya Shark, Deryl Tczap, Mary Tczap, George Stavrou, Margaret Makara, Dennis & Ann Marie Gahr, Michael Getmanov, Alan Diaz, Mary Ann Sivilic, Ellen Norman, and Lori Ratushnuk.**

We are happy that you have joined us for worship today. Our Annual Parish meeting takes place today, so Coffee Hour is delayed until after the meeting. All are welcome to stay. **The reception of the Holy Eucharist** is only for baptized members of the Orthodox Church who have prepared with prayer, fasting, and periodic confession. You are encouraged to receive the blessed bread that is offered at the end of the service and which may also be offered to you by one of your neighbors during Communion.

**TODAY** – Our **Parish Annual Meeting** takes place today immediately after the Divine Liturgy. Reports have been sent out electronically to members of the parish. A limited number of hard copy reports are available for reference during the meeting. Please join us for **Coffee Hour** in the Parish Hall after the meeting. **Team #2** is in charge.

**TODAY** – **NO Church School** class will be held.

If you wish to **have your home blessed**, please sign up on the sheet located in the narthex. Alternatively, requests can be made by contacting Father Gary by email, text, or phone.

### THE SUNDAY OF ZACCHAEUS

The paschal season of the Church is preceded by the season of Great Lent, which is also preceded by its own liturgical preparation. The first sign of the approach of Great Lent comes five Sundays before its beginning. On this Sunday the Gospel reading is about Zacchaeus the tax-collector. It tells how Christ brought salvation to the sinful man, and how his life was changed simply because he “sought to see who Jesus was” (Luke 19:3). The desire and effort to see Jesus begins the entire movement through Lent towards Pascha. It is the first movement of salvation.

Our lenten journey begins with a recognition of our own sinfulness, just as Zacchaeus recognized his. He promised to make restitution by giving half of his wealth to the poor, and by paying to those he had falsely accused four times as much as they had lost. In this, he went beyond the requirements of the Law (Ex. 22:3-12).

The example of Zacchaeus teaches us that we should turn away from our sins, and atone for them. The real proof of our sorrow and repentance is not just a verbal apology, but when we correct ourselves and try to make amends for the consequences of our evil actions.

Zacchaeus was short, so he climbed a tree in order to see the Lord. All of us have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). We are also short in our spiritual stature, therefore we must climb the ladder of the virtues. In other words, we must prepare for spiritual effort and growth.

*Please pray for vocations to  
the Holy Priesthood!*

**MANY YEARS**

Birthdays this week:

Saturday – June Farkouh

*Keep up on OCA news by  
visiting [www.oca.org](http://www.oca.org),  
diocesan news by visiting  
[www.nynjoca.org](http://www.nynjoca.org), and  
parish news by visiting  
[www.occa-brick.org](http://www.occa-brick.org).*