Mutual love is the prerequisite for the Liturgy and for all our activity as Church

In many churches there are a host of parish-dividing issues which drive people away. Some of them are critical issues which must be dealt with. Today conflicting attitudes toward moral issues such as abortion or same-sex "marriages" have split many Protestant congregations and have no doubt affected many Catholic and Orthodox communities as well.

More common causes for division in our parishes are centered on far less crucial concerns: issues which suggest that we have yet to become a Church at all! Many parishes are split over who "controls" the parish. Is it the sons and daughters of the original founders who saved to build and adorn the temple? Is it the wave of recent immigrants who have breathed new life into an older community? Is it the different families competing for social prominence in the local community? In each of these circumstances the parish has become more of a club than a church, subject to worldly politics rather than the dynamics of faith.

Another parish-dividing issue is frequently the location of the parish facilities. An older congregation is divided over whether or where to relocate when the bulk of the parishioners live elsewhere or when the neighborhood of the church had deteriorated. A new parish is divided over where and when to buy or build their own temple. Those who live further from a chosen site resent the families who live nearer and accuse them of trying to take over the church.

Another frequently divisive question is the liturgical language to be used. Some prefer the older liturgical language, such as Greek or Slavonic. Others want the spoken language of the old country to be used primarily, if not exclusively. Another element in the congregation sees no need for any other language than English.

Sometime the secular politics of the parish's countries of origin intrude themselves into parish life here. Even opinions on American politics – which often have moral overtones – can divert the attention of parishioners from the life of the Gospel and divide a congregation. "I won't go back there – they're Fascists, Communists, Democrats, Republicans, etc."

Parish activities themselves can foster their own brand of political rivalries. Those who side with having a parish festival line up against those who do not. Whether stuffed cabbage for the feast day dinner is prepared "our way" or "their way" has prompted resentments and splits in many a community.

How are we to act out our mutual love in practice? There are certainly no precise rubrics for this in the Scriptures but there are principles which are appropriately applied. We would do well to reflect on them and consider how they may be relevant to our relationships in the Church.

"Let everyone be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath, for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God" (Jas 1:19-20). Please check: (Rom 14: 19), (Rom 15:1-2), (1 Cor 10:24), (1 Cor 16:14), and (Gal 6:2).

Rev. Fred Saato Pamphlets - Modified

Do not forget the hungry! (Collection Basket at the door)

OCTOBER 30, 2011

5TH SUNDAY AFTER THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS - THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

LK 16:19-31 GAL 1:11-19 TONE 3

St. John of the Desert Calendar

Sunday, November 6	*9:00 AM*	*Children Religious Education*
	10:20 AM	*Doxology*
	10:30 AM	*Divine Liturgy Followed by the Social Hour*

(+) Jay Jabour, (+) Nellie O'Connor, John Skaff

Today's Intentions:

- For the Health and Salvation of Mk. Basil on the anniversary of his tonsure by Mk. Brendan
- For the Health and Salvation of John Skaff by Jim, Pauline & Denise Hamra; Paul, Emily, Jeff & Sophia Hamra; Teresa & Alexander Malkoon
- For the Repose of the Soul of Gloria Herro by Alan Herro and Family (Memorial)
- For the Repose of the Soul of Jay Jabour by Mary Herro
- For the Repose of the Soul of Rose Petersen by Joseph Davis
- For the Repose of the Soul of Nellie O'Connor by Paul & Shirley Davis
- For the Repose of the Soul of Kevin Mulvihill by Joseph Davis

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Fr. Stephen Washko, Eric Rimmer, Mary Kostisak, Andre and Osama Eid, Lynn Hume, Linda Herro, Kafa Dababneh, Camille Holt, Pilar Alonso, Refga Sayegh, Bo Bolinaga and Pauline Hamra.

Some of the advertisers in our Sunday Bulletin are not renewing their ads as we are not patronizing their businesses. However, if you do patronize their businesses, please be sure to let them know that you saw their ad in our bulletin, so when the time to renew comes, they will continue to advertise with us. By the same token, please try to get new ads from any of the people you patronize: hairdressers, lawyers, etc. A business card size is $100 for a whole year and $200 for double the size. These ads help us pay for the Sunday Bulletin.

Come, plunge and swim in the Deep Water of the Liturgy

On Sunday, November 13, 20, and 27 at 1:00 pm

Each session (about two hours with a ten minutes break) will include a presentation, a group discussion and Q/A sessions. (What is the Divine Liturgy? Why we do what we do at the Divine Liturgy? How one participates in the Divine Liturgy?)

PLEASE SIGN THE LIST IF YOU ARE COMING

As you already know, the donation basket for our coffee hour is to collect funds to build some very much needed classrooms for the Children Religious Education. Well, our children are have a **Bake Sale Today** after the Divine Liturgy to speed-up the process. Be sure to stop by their table in the hall and check-out all the goodies they made. Please support their efforts. Thank you and God bless you!

THE BISHOP'S APPEAL BEGINS: In the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus in today's Gospel, Our Lord warns us that the time to act with mercy and generosity is NOW—before it is too late. Let us open our hearts and hands to the needs of our Melkite brothers and sisters across the country. Now is the time to respond generosity to Christ's call by giving a gift today to the Bishop's Appeal. Give joyfully from the heart for "God loves a cheerful giver." Thank you for your generous response!

Baby-sitting will be provided