

God, along the lines of what we learn in psalm 51 about what is pleasing and what sacrifice is not pleasing to God.

And finally, to get us back into the Divine Liturgy, the right here and right now of our own lives. We are cleansed, we who are temples of the Holy Spirit. Isaiah 6 that Scott read speaks about hesitancy to be in God's presence because of sin and unworthiness, and being cleansed with the white hot coal brought to Isaiah's lips with tongs by the Seraphim.

Our body, our temple, is cleansed by the lamb who is both the new temple and the lamb of the sacrifice, because only Christ satisfies what is variously called a hunger or a longing to experience life as something more than a mere animal existence, physical, temporal. Ironically, our present culture, law, education, and medicine deny anything but the life of the physical reality.

We are body and spirit, and Christ as our great defender, shows us a brilliant criticism of satan when he says, "Get behind me, you are not setting your mind on the things of God but of men." Satan is self absorbed with all these aspirations of being a competitor to God in the spiritual world, and Jesus ends that back and forth of times of temptation over the course of his ministry by deflating the other's ego.

The Head and Father of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, Sviatoslav, has used this reference to describe the recent meeting of Pope Francis and the the Moscow representative, Kirill. The first is interested in the spiritual life, the second, in the political life. "If we don't enter into the spiritual reality of the Holy Father and do not discern together with him the action of the Holy Spirit, we shall remain imprisoned by the prince of this world and his followers," Patriarch Sviatoslav Shevchuk said in an interview. A seething criticism for the political damage a spiritual leader has caused by supporting the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Back to the Divine Liturgy, then, and like Mary, ponder these things in our hearts; and to prepare to receive Holy Communion, where the prayer by the Seraphim in Isaiah, "This has touched your lips and removed your wickedness and purged your sins" meets the prayer at distribution of the Holy Eucharist, our precious pearl of great price. "The servant of God receives the precious and holy, body and blood of our Lord and God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of your sins and life everlasting."

Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon

www.skeparchy.org

Wynyard Pastoral District

Father Jeffrey D. Stephaniuk

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Sunday, February 21, 2016 Funeral Prayers Adoph Karakochuk
7 pm Funeral Divine Liturgy Monday, February 22 at 10 am
Sacred Heart parish, Wynyard

Monday, February 21: Wynyard 4:30 pm Lenten devotions
4th Degree Assembly Meeting Sacred Heart 7:30 pm

Tuesday, February 22, Wed Feb 23 and Thurs Feb 24 Divine
Liturgy 9 am Wynyard

Wednesday, February 23 Foam Lake 4:30 pm Lenten Devotions

Saturday, February 27 Wynyard 5 pm

Sunday, February 28 Wishart 9 am Foam Lake 11 Kuroki 1 pm

March 2016

Sat March 5 Wishart at 5 pm

March 6 Foam Lake 9 am Wynyard 11 am

March 13 Wynyard 9 am Foam Lake 11

Sat March 19 Foam Lake 5 pm

March 20 Wishart 9 Wynyard 11

Easter Tea and Bake Sale

March 24 Foam Lake 5 pm Wynyard 7:30 pm

Good Friday Foam Lake 10 am Wishart 11:30 Wynyard 7 pm

Sat March 26 Kuroki 12 Holar 5 Krasne 8 pm

Easter Sunday Foam Lake 7:15 am

Wishart 9:30 am Wynyard 11:30 am

Pearl of Great Price: Jesus, the Eucharist, and Every Human Being

By Fr. Jeffrey D. Stephaniuk

“Having suffered for us the Passion, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us.”

St. Therese Institute at Bruno organized its annual Lenten Conference, February 12-14, 2016. The speaker was Scott Powell, a doctoral candidate in scripture, a professor, and director of a Christian outreach at the University of Colorado in Boulder. His six talks were particularly focused on the Gospel of Mark.

In the context of worship, the Divine Liturgy, I would like to revisit some of the insights presented by Scott Powell last weekend. Worship and theology are complimentary, not in opposition. For example, during the vespers and matins prayers for Epiphany, the Baptism of Jesus by John in the Jordan, we have prayers that put into words the same theme that Scott mentioned, that it is not the waters that sanctify Christ, by it is Christ who sanctifies the waters. Worship is theology by another means.

I found a short commentary on St. Mark by one of our Ukrainian priests who had translated scripture into Ukrainian after the Second Vatican Council, and would like to share them together with Scott's. The first comment this priest makes is that Mark had a very good relationship with his mother. See how Ukrainians think! We were Freudian before Freud himself ever was! But of course in a totally wholesome way. The first question Ukrainians want answered is what's your relationship with your mother! Actually, a common thread in vocation stories of priests is their relationship with their mother.

Mark has some very Marian aspects, and some very masculine aspects, such as his frequent use of “immediately”, which we heard from Scott. Applied to Mary, she goes “with haste” to her cousin Elizabeth after the Annunciation, part of the zeal for the kingdom, opposite to the spiritual sloth that we call a deadly sin. Action is also a very masculine trait, and Jesus show this in his intent to get to Jerusalem, not content to wander aimlessly like a modern guru, to be, as it were, a flowing river and not a standing pool of water. The very first word prayed by the priest at the side altar of preparation is an action verb, something Jesus has done, that he has ransomed us from the snares of the evil one “through your precious blood when you were pierced by a lance on the cross, granting us eternal life.” The lamb of the sacrifice of the new Passover is also the new Adam from whom

comes forth the new Eve. There is a Marian aspect as well to the life of action, a feminine counter-part, as Scott pointed out, “He chose 12 to be with him”; that primacy of being over doing, which of course both men and women learn as they mature, learning to be Mary while we are being Martha.

Mark is described as being a careful scribe, faithful to what Peter is dictating. His one principle as a writer is this accuracy, as my Ukrainian commentator mentioned, a vigilance to tell the truth and not allow anything untrue to slip by him into his writings. He is “watching” in that sense of Jesus' last word to his disciples in Mark.

For example, take what Scott mentioned on Saturday evening, about the woman with the alabaster jar of pure nard, and what he referred to as Mark wanting to get the memory of her recorded accurately. She is remembered for her kindness, from generation to generation. So she becomes like another Mary, part of the group of “blessed are you among women,” showing to be true what Jesus said in answer to his own question, “Who are my mother and my brothers? Those who do the will of God.” She is doing the will of God, pouring the value of her dowry on Jesus.

The colour of alabaster looks very similar to that of a pearl, so here is her pearl of great price. There used to be an icon of Mary, before it was destroyed by the iconoclasts, depicting Mary as pregnant with Jesus, “with child” in that simple and remarkable description of pregnancy from the ancient world that the modern world has not been able to surpass. In other words, the parable of the kingdom of God being like a pearl of great price, precious pearls that evokes from someone the desire and action to sell everything and give one's entire being to purchase, is spoken by Jesus but applies with reference to Jesus.

We use this description, “precious,” to refer to the Eucharist, “precious and holy,” almost seeming like a Lord of the Rings singularity of commitment to something precious, doesn't it? The woman does not covet this valuable asset, but pours the ointment on his head, like a crown; this crown comes before Jesus' experience of the crown of thorns. Scott mentioned that possibly this was her dowry. In that context, it is like she is marrying Jesus. This gospel, then, would be very appropriate for the consecration of female religious, wouldn't it? Offering one's whole being for Christ. The woman with the alabaster jar brings an offering that is pleasing to Jesus, pleasing to