





**“Come and See...” (continue)  
A Reflection on John 1:43-51**

Finally, Jesus tells Nathanael, “You will see greater things than these.” Jesus is promising a deeper revelation of Himself – not just as the Son of God, but as the one who will do wonders, miracles, and ultimately, who will lay down His life for the salvation of all.

This is an invitation to all of us. Following Jesus is not just about accepting an initial call to discipleship, but about entering into a lifelong journey of discovery. Jesus

promises that as we follow Him, we will witness greater things – not just in the world, but in our own hearts. The more we grow in relationship with Him, the more we see His presence in our lives, and the more we experience His transforming power.

"Come and see!" These simple yet profound words echo through the centuries, calling us to step into a deeper relationship with the living God. In the Gospel reading, we hear this invitation extended to us, just as it was to Philip and Nathanael. It is a call to encounter Christ personally, to come into His presence and to experience the fullness of His love and grace.

The Church invites us to step beyond the limitations of this world and enter into the beauty and mystery of God's Kingdom. In the liturgical life of the Church, in the Sacraments, and in the communion of believers, we find a foretaste of Heaven—a glimpse of the deep joy and peace that comes from knowing Christ intimately.

To "come and see" means to open your heart to the transformative power of God's love. It means saying “Yes” to His invitation to walk with Him, to hear His voice, and to follow His lead. It means recognizing that the Church is not just a place, but the Ark of Salvation—the very Body of Christ, where we find healing, forgiveness, and unity. It is in this sacred community that we encounter the mystery of God’s love, and in this encounter, we are transformed.

Today’s Gospel invites us to reflect on our own response to Jesus’ call. Are we like Philip, ready to follow and share the Good News with others? Are we like Nathanael, sometimes skeptical, but open to encountering Jesus more deeply?

Jesus calls us to “Come and see”, to witness His love and truth, and to invite others to do the same. The journey of discipleship is not just about believing, but about encountering, experiencing, and sharing the love of Christ with the world.

As we leave this Divine Liturgy today, let us ask ourselves: How can I follow Jesus more closely? How can I be a witness to His love and invite others to come and see? May we have the courage to respond to His call, knowing that He sees us, loves us, and invites us to follow Him into the fullness of life.

Extract of Gospel Homily by the Most Reverend Archbishop Stephen, Primate of the Italo-Greek Byzantine Catholic Orthodox Church



**March 22, 2026**

First Sunday in Great Lent – Sunday of Orthodoxy, The Discovery of the Relics of the Holy Martyrs at Eugenius (345-408)

Octoechos Tone 4

**Changeable Parts** See the special insert available in the church vestibule.

**Announcements:**

**Today: 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the Great Fast**

Today we celebrate the First Sunday of the Great Fast which is also called the Sunday of Orthodoxy in commemoration of the victory of orthodoxy-true faith in the controversy over Holy Icons in the year 843. As part of this commemoration, the blessing of Icons will take place at the end of the Divine Liturgy. If you have any Icons, Crosses, religious items you would like to have blessed, please place them on the Tetrapod in the center of the Church.

**Coffee Social and Exhibit this Sunday:**

We hope you can stay for the Coffee Social and Exhibit on the life of St. Carlo Acutis.

**Our Lenten project** has started. This week we have delicious vegetable soup and halushki for sale at \$10 per quart. If you are able to make a pot of home-made soup to support our Lenten mission, there is a sign-up sheet in the vestibule. Any help you can provide is much appreciated.

### **Pyrohy Project:**

Since Lent has begun, we can use your help! Pyrohy production starts at 9 a.m. If you have time to volunteer, we would love to have you join this ministry which is our main fundraiser. This week, we have fresh potato/cheese and sauerkraut pyrohy. We also have frozen potato/cheese and loaded baked potato pyrohy available.

### **Pyrohy Support:**

We know our pyrohy are the best in the 'burg and a good value. We are once again selling our pyrohy every Friday at the Assumption Parish Fish Fry. We are looking for ways to be creative on selling our delicious pyrohy. If you know of an event coming up or an organization that may be interested in purchasing our pyrohy, please see Fr. Igor or Debbie Label.

**Mark your calendar:** Our next Adult Religious education class is scheduled for Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup>. The title is "The Desire to Be Loved & The Desire to Love." A special thank you to Don Fontana for leading these classes.

### **Pittsburgh For Ukraine:**

On Tuesday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, there will be a presentation at the Schenley Plaza and Panakhyda at Heinz Chapel commemorating the 4<sup>th</sup> Year of the War in Ukraine. Please see the poster in the lobby for the complete schedule.

### **RaiseRight – Gift Cards with a Purpose:**

We have raised about \$450 so far with only 6 active users. This is a good start but we can do better if we can get another 6 individuals to buy gift cards through RaiseRight and build on this momentum. You can set up an account at: <https://www.raiseright.com/> The St. George code is: M2MGCVH7NH2P. This is very easy to do and only takes a few minutes. Please see Vicki Senko with any questions.

### **Collection- May God bless you...**

The grand total for Sunday of February 15, 2026 was **\$857.00 + \$920.00**  
(Collection: \$575.00, Loose: \$82.00, donation from Mary & Richard Pietroantonio: \$200.00)

***Sincere thanks to all of you for your kindness and generosity!***

**Upcoming Ukrainian Youth Events:** Please see Fr. Igor or Michael Spak if you have any questions.

### **Lock-In Retreat**

**March 7, 2026 (9 am - 7:30 pm)**  
Pokrova Ukrainian Catholic Church  
6812 Broadview Rd.  
Parma, OH 44134



### **“Come and See...” A Reflection on John 1:43-51**

In today's Gospel, we hear the story of Jesus calling Philip and Nathanael to follow Him. At first glance, it may seem like a simple invitation, but there is a deeper significance in this encounter that speaks to us personally, calling us to examine how we respond to the invitation of Jesus in our own lives.

Jesus begins by calling Philip, saying, “Follow me.”

This is a direct command, yet it's wrapped in love and an invitation to a relationship. Philip doesn't hesitate; he immediately follows. And what does he do next? He seeks out Nathanael and tells him about Jesus. Philip's response is not just to follow, but also to share the Good News with someone else.

It's important to pause and reflect on Philip's example. Discipleship is not just about following Christ; it's also about inviting others to come and see. Philip doesn't wait for Nathanael to come to him. He actively seeks him out and offers an invitation to encounter Jesus. How often do we, like Philip, share our experience of Christ with others? Our own witness can be the spark that leads someone to encounter Jesus.

When Nathanael first hears about Jesus, he expresses doubt: “Can anything good come from Nazareth?” It's a valid question from a human perspective. Nazareth was a small, insignificant town, and for someone to claim greatness from such a place was unheard of. Nathanael's reaction is one that many of us may relate to – we have our doubts, we question, and we wonder how God can work through the ordinary, the humble, and the unexpected.

But notice Philip's response: he doesn't try to argue or defend Jesus. Instead, he says simply, “Come and see.” This invitation is the heart of evangelization. It's not about having all the answers or convincing someone through logic alone. It's about inviting them into a personal experience, to see for themselves who Jesus is and what He can do in their lives. Sometimes, the best way to lead someone to Christ is not through our words, but through our actions and our willingness to invite them into a deeper encounter with Him.

When Nathanael meets Jesus, he's surprised by Jesus' words: “Here is a true Israelite in whom there is no deceit.” Nathanael, confused, asks, “How do you know me?” And Jesus answers, “Before Philip called you, I saw you under the fig tree.”

Jesus sees Nathanael, not just in the physical sense, but with a deeper knowledge that touches the heart. He sees Nathanael's soul, his character, his truth. And it's in this moment that Nathanael realizes that Jesus is no ordinary man. He recognizes Jesus as the Son of God, the King of Israel.

What does this tell us? It shows us that Jesus knows us intimately. He sees beyond our surface, beyond our doubts and questions, and knows us at the core of who we are. And just as Jesus revealed Himself to Nathanael, He also reveals Himself to each one of us. Jesus invites us into a personal relationship, one where He sees us fully and loves us unconditionally, calling us to follow Him and to live as His disciples.