

HOLY SPIRIT BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

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Cantor: Julia Revilak and Family
Altar Servers: Sdn . Raphael Ruggiero
Angelino and Emanuel Revilak

SUNDAY, JULY 24, 2022

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

Sunday, July 24: 8am Confessions

9am Divine Liturgy for Joseph Bacasa on his birthday by Theresa Carr

Monday, July 25: 9am 1st and 3rd Hour

4:30 Confessions, 5:30 Daily Vespers

Friday, July 29: 9am 1st and 3rd Hour

5pm Confessions, 6pm Divine Liturgy for the Intentions of the Parish

Saturday, July 30: 8am Confessions, 9am Divine Liturgy

Sunday, July 31: 8am Confessions

9am Divine Liturgy for Judith Mackin and her birthday by Priscilla Fello

Confessions are available before Divine Liturgy. All divine liturgies are open for intentions. Call the office or fill out the request form in the back of church and leave it in the sacristy.

BLESSING OF CARS..... The last formal opportunity to have cars (or other modes of transportation) blessed will be today after the Divine Liturgy.

AT THE DIVINE LITURGY TODAY... Our theme for this Seventh Sunday emphasizes the ASSISTANCE that Jesus gave by way of performing aid can be given in a Christ-like manner when it is based upon patience and self-denial. In emulation of His example, we also must extend help to our neighbor. Paul tells the Romans that such be transmitted correctly to our posterity in future generations.

THE HOLY PROPHET ELIJAH... On Wednesday of this past week, July 20th, the Byzantine Catholic Church paid special tribute to one of the greatest prophets of the Old Testament by observing The Feast of the Holy, Glorious Prophet ELIJAH, the Tishbite. Elijah also is known as Elias, which is simply the Greek form of his Hebraic name. Elijah was an outstanding prophetic figure in Israel during the ninth century before Christ, and he proved himself to be an exemplar of faithfulness to Yahweh, the name used for God in the Hebrew language. Ahab, the seventh king of Israel, influenced by his pagan wife Jezebel, had forgotten Yahweh, Israel's true God, and had reverted to paganism. Elijah was raised-up by God from his town of Tishbe in the province of Gilead and was singled-out to be His prophet in order to reproach King Ahab for his idolatry and for his faith in the pagan god Baal. The end of Elijah's earthly life came quite mysteriously. As he was conversing with his disciple Elisha, "...a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven." (II Kings 2: 11) The gospel accounts record that Elijah and Moses appeared at Jesus' transfiguration on Mount Tabor and attested to His divinity. Moses was symbolic of the Law of the Jews, while Elijah represented all of the old testament prophets. The Holy Prophet Malachi, referring to the Second Coming of Jesus at the end of the world, prophesied that God said: "I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes. And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers." (Malachi 3: 23-24) This passage thus indicates that Elijah, who mysteriously was taken from the earth up into heaven, will appear again at the dawning of the end of time, before Christ comes as the just Judge at the end of the world. The Holy Prophet Elijah is not only honored by Christians, but he is revered by Jews and Muslims as well. All of the ancient old testament prophets were designated by God to call His people back to Him from sin and idolatry. Let us emulate St. Elijah by engendering within ourselves and in our lives this very same attitude of fidelity to God.

EPISTLE: Romans 15: 1-7 (Section 116)

Brethren: We who are strong in faith should be patient with the scruples of those whose faith is weak; we must not be selfish. Each should please his neighbor so as to do him good by building up his spirit. Thus, in accord with Scripture, Christ did not please himself: "The reproaches they uttered against you fell on me." Everything written before our time was written for our instruction, that we might derive hope from the lessons of patience and the words of encouragement in the Scriptures. May God, the source of all patience and encouragement, enable you to live in perfect harmony with one another according to the spirit of Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and voice you may glorify God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Accept one another, then, as Christ accepted you, for the glory of God.

~~~~~The Holy Apostle Paul writes to the Romans about how genuine Christian behavior should be expressed in interpersonal relations. To render true Christian assistance to our neighbor means to concern ourselves with the personal development of our fellow human beings – any and all people. We thus concern ourselves with the spiritual and physical well-being of all people whom we might encounter. It is from the Lord Jesus that we derive the spiritual strength necessary to show such Christ-like assistance to others, performing good deeds just as our Divine Savior did.

**GOSPEL: Matthew 9: 27-35 (Section 33)**

And as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed [him], crying out, "Son of David, have pity on us!" When he entered the house, the blind men approached him and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I can do this?" "Yes, Lord," they said to him.

Then he touched their eyes and said, "Let it be done for you according to your faith." And their eyes were opened. Jesus warned them sternly, "See that no one knows about this." But they went out and spread word of him through all that land.

As they were going out, a demoniac who could not speak was brought to him, and when the demon was driven out the mute person spoke. The crowds were amazed and said, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel." But the Pharisees said, "He drives out demons by the prince of demons."

Jesus went around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness.

~~~~~In this fourth presentation of our gospel series of seven miracle accounts during the summer months, the Holy Evangelist Matthew describes how Jesus proceeded through the province of Galilee. As He traveled throughout this territory, our Lord was teaching in the synagogues; He was proclaiming the Good News (Gospel) of salvation; and Jesus was healing all sorts of diseases. The blind received their sight; the crippled walked; deaf people had their hearing restored; and those who were possessed by evil spirits were made well again. In today's pericope, we learn that Jesus cured two blind men and a mute demoniac. As our Lord performed these miracles, people everywhere sought His ASSISTANCE, imploring His compassion. Jesus forgave their sins, and He cured their physical infirmities. The Jews who beheld these happenings were absolutely amazed. They hadn't ever seen anything like this before, for Jesus taught and acted with authority. Christ is yet among us, even today. And He continues to perform His healing miracles as He cures the sickness of our souls through the sacramental mysteries of the Church. To the truly repentant, Jesus will give the full measure of His divine assistance as He remits their sins, pardons their transgressions, and restores their souls to pristine spiritual health. Jesus always provides His assistance when He is asked for it with sincere faith.

PRAYER FOR SEMINARIANS: Saints Cyril and Methodius, Venerable Apostles of the Slavs and Patrons of our Byzantine Catholic Seminary, we place our Seminarians in your loving care. Help them to grow in humility, meekness and prudence. Enkindle in them a burning zeal for souls. May their hearts be filled with the gifts of the Holy Spirit and may they learn to know and love the church so that they may always and everywhere think, speak and act with Her, the Glorious Spouse of Christ. May they become exemplars of generosity and detachment from the things of this world. But above all, O Venerable Patrons, help them to truly know, love and serve the Eternal High Priest, Our Lord Jesus Christ, Whose priests they aspire to be. Amen. St. Michael the Archangel, Defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the Devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray. And do thou, O Prince of the heavenly hosts, By the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits, who prowl throughout the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen

THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – THE HEALING OF THE BLIND MAN AND THE MUTE

Helennane Hochendoner, MAT

The gathered crowd gives our Lord two different reactions. First, he is "questioned" in the hearts of some (the Pharisees and scribes) who are thinking, "He is blaspheming! Who but God can forgive sins?" The other reaction is those who were afraid and amazed and went away glorifying God.

For reflection, let us first look at the reaction of the Pharisees and scribes. An awe me event has occurred before their eyes. A group of men have gone to great lengths to bring their infirmed friend to Jesus for healing. This shows a deeply sincere trust that Jesus has the power and authority to help their friend. But instead of pondering this, they focus on the words (your sins are forgiven) and not the healing they have witnessed. They do not ask themselves who this person might be and why might he say this. They only think, "This man is blaspheming." What we can reflect on is, can I be like the Pharisees and scribes? When I see others who are receiving God's blessings and mercy, do I focus on something other than seeing God's will and glorifying him and his works?

But then another incredible event occurs. Jesus knows their thoughts of heart and mind. He not only tells them what they are thinking but goes on to show his power and authority on earth to forgive sins. He tells the paralytic to get up and walk. This man, who entered the room through the ceiling on a pallet walks through the front door to go home. He has had both his spiritual and physical life e restored to him. Why? He and his friends have a great amount of faith in Jesus and Jesus responds to this faith with healing of soul and body. God's mercy and kindness is manifested before their very eyes.

The Pharisees and scribes have missed the point, but other members of the crowd did not.

When they saw what happened, "they were afraid and glorified God." Now what does this mean? In the Old Testament, to be afraid of the Lord means to "fear" God. But the English words fear and afraid do not properly translate what the Hebrew is trying to say. This fear is awe and reverence, kneeling in worship and understanding how insignificant we are compared to the Lord. In addition, is also love for the mercy and graciousness God extends to us when he deals with our sins, weaknesses and frailties. That is why the crowd and we "glorify" God, giving the love, worship, and reverence that is his due because of his love for humankind. They can't quite explain who Jesus might be, but they know for sure God is with him in some very special way.

There is one last point to make. This is about intercessory acts and prayers. The paralytic man did not participate in any part of his journey to Jesus nor did Jesus speak to him when he was placed in front of the him. What Scripture does tell us is this, "when he saw their faith" Jesus healed the paralytic. Whose faith is Jesus acknowledging and acting on? Well, one perspective can be the paralytic's friends. So, what does this mean to us? Scripture is telling us our prayers and actions for others are heard and seen by God. God will respond to this faith with his graciousness and mercy.

PARISH DIRECTORY..... We're looking to update the parish directory. Please remember to fill out the directory information form found in the back (narthex) of the church. You can submit forms to Fr. Michael or Pani Janine.

UKRAINIAN MARKETPLACE:

Saturday, July 30, 10am-4pm

Hilton Double Tree Hotel, 500 Mansfield Ave, Pittsburgh PA 15205, Salon D

Sponsored by Sts. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Carnegie

For more info: 412-527-5359 or orthodoxcarnegie.com