

HOLY SPIRIT BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

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SUNDAY, MAY 22, 2022

SUNDAY OF THE MAN BORN BLIND

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

Sunday, May 22: 11am Divine Liturgy for deceased Daniel Fello by Priscilla Fello

Monday, May 23: 9am, 1st and 3rd hour ~ 4:30pm Confessions, 5:30pm Vespers

Wednesday, May 25: 4:30 Confessions, 5:30 Divine Liturgy for the Ascension (obligation)

Thursday, May 26: 4:30 Confessions, 5:30 Divine Liturgy for the Ascension (**obligation**)

for Joseph and Delores Bacasa on their 60th Wedding Anniversary, by Theresa Carr

Friday, May 27: 9am, 1st and 3rd hour ~ 5pm Confessions, 6pm Divine Liturgy

for the deceased Fr. Robert Jones, by Michael Meharra

Saturday, May 28: 9am Divine Liturgy for Alexandria Bacasa, by Theresa Carr

Sunday, May 29: 11am Divine Liturgy for the Intentions of the Parish

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

1ST READING: Acts 16: 16-34

In those days, while Paul and Luke were on their way to the place of prayer they met a slave girl who had a clairvoyant spirit. She used to bring substantial profit to her masters by fortunetelling. The girl began to follow Paul and the rest of them shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God; they will make known to you a way of salvation." She did this for several days until finally Paul became annoyed, turned around, and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you, come out of her!" Then and there the spirit left her.

When her masters saw that their source of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the main square before the local authorities. They turned them over to the magistrates with this complaint, "These men are agitators disturbing the peace of our city! Furthermore, they are Jews, which means they advocate customs which are not lawful for us Romans to adopt or practice." The crowd joined in the attack on them, and the magistrates stripped them and ordered them to be flogged. After receiving many lashes they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was given instructions to guard them well. Upon receipt of these instructions he put them in maximum security, going so far as to chain their feet to a stake.

About midnight, while Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God as their fellow prisoners listened, a severe earthquake suddenly shook the place, rocking the prison to its foundations. Immediately all the doors flew open and everyone's chains were pulled loose. The jailer woke up to see the prison gates wide open. Thinking that the prisoner had escaped, he drew his sword to kill himself; but Paul shouted to him, "Do not harm yourself! We are all still here." The jailer called for a light, then rushed in and fell trembling at the feet of Paul and Silas. After a brief interval he led them out and said, "Men, what must I do to be saved?" Their answer was, "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, and all your household." They proceeded to announce the word of God to him and to everyone in his house. At that late hour of the night he took them in and bathed their wounds; then he and his whole household were baptized. He led them up into his house, spread a table before them, and joyfully celebrated with his whole family his newfound faith in God.

~~~~~In this passage from the *Acts of the Holy Apostles*, the Holy Evangelist Luke relates how Paul and Silas were arrested for preaching about Jesus at Philippi in Macedonia. The gospel message was spreading westward and now had reached Europe. Although Paul and Silas were in the abject darkness of their prison cell, the Light of the risen Savior continued to shine brightly within them. At midnight while they were praying and singing hymns to God, there was an earthquake which shook the foundations of the prison. All of the prison's doors flew open, and everyone's chains fell off. The Lord Jesus had provided for the deliverance of His faithful ministers. After this event, the jailer and his whole household were converted and baptized by Paul who preached the Good News to them. The splendid, radiant Light of the risen Jesus thus was made to shine brightly with divine grace within these first newly converted disciples in Europe.

**GOSPEL: John 9: 1-38**

As he passed by he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither he nor his parents sinned; it is so that the works of God might be made visible through him. We have to do the works of the one who sent me while it is day. Night is coming when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva, and smeared the clay on his eyes, and said to him, "Go wash in the Pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed, and came back able to see.

His neighbors and those who had seen him earlier as a beggar said, "Isn't this the one who used to sit and beg?" Some said, "It is," but others said, "No, he just looks like him." He said, "I am." So they said to him, "[So] how were your eyes opened?" He replied, "The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and told me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went there and washed and was able to see." And they said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I don't know." They brought the one who was once blind to the Pharisees.

Now Jesus had made clay and opened his eyes on a sabbath. So then the Pharisees also asked him how he was able to see. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and now I can see." So some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, because he does not keep the sabbath." [But] others said, "How can a sinful man do such signs?" And there was a division among them. So they said to the blind man again, "What do you have to say about him, since he opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet." Now the Jews did not believe that he had been blind and gained his sight until they summoned the parents of the one who had gained his sight. They asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How does he now see?" His parents answered and said, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. We do not know how he sees now, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him, he is of age; he can speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone acknowledged him as the Messiah, he would be expelled from the synagogue. For this reason his parents said, "He is of age; question him."

So a second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, "Give God the praise! We know that this man is a sinner." He replied, "If he is a sinner, I do not know. One thing I do know is that I was blind and now I see." So they said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?" They ridiculed him and said, "You are that man's disciple; we are disciples of Moses! We know that God spoke to Moses, but we do not know where this one is from." The man answered and said to them, "This is what is so amazing, that you do not know where he is from, yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if one is devout and does his will, he listens to him. It is unheard of that anyone ever opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he would not be able to do anything." They answered and said to him, "You were born totally in sin, and are you trying to teach us?" Then they threw him out.

When Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, he found him and said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered and said, "Who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?" Jesus said to him, "You have seen him and the one speaking with you is he." He said, "I do believe, Lord," and he worshiped him.

~~~~~The Holy Evangelist John tells us how Jesus healed a man blind since birth. After performing this miracle, Jesus proclaimed Himself to be the Light of the world. He told His listeners to work for entrance into God's Kingdom while they have the Light of Life (Jesus) within themselves; for night (death) will come when no one will be able to work for salvation. Our Lord not only cured the man's physical blindness, but He also healed the spiritual blindness of his soul. We, likewise, need the Light of Jesus to shine within us. Through baptism, we participate in the Lord's new passover and His resurrection, and we become the recipients of His infinite Light which dispels our own "spiritual blindness" and guides us through this shadowy world to an eternal New Life. Each of us truly can be enlightened and affected by His magnificent, refulgent Light which was emitted intensely from the tomb that once held His lifeless body.

AT THE DIVINE LITURGY TODAY..... Just as Jesus healed the blind man and gave him light through physical sight, so Jesus' LIGHT must shine within our souls to give us spiritual life. Through the brilliant light of His resurrection, grace is made available to us all. With Paul's missionary endeavors, Christ's light now was spreading into Europe. The light of His grace, bestowed through the sacramental mysteries, gives spiritual life to our immortal souls.

THURSDAY IS THE MAGNIFICENT FEAST OF THE GLORIOUS ASCENSION.....

On **Thursday** of this week, **May 26th**, forty days after the passover-resurrection event, we shall celebrate solemnly **The Feast of the Awesome ASCENSION of the Lord JESUS CHRIST** as we observe the triumphant return of the victorious Savior to heaven where He now is glorified at the right hand of His Father. The Ascension Feast signifies a day of total and complete triumph for Jesus, a day that He fully merited because of His redemptive acts completed in our behalf. The Son is assumed into heaven and is "taken-up" to the Father, by Whom He was sent and Whose will He so perfectly fulfilled, in order that God the Father might glorify Him for having secured the world's redemption. **After the ascension event, Jesus our Brother entered heaven in human form and thereby elevated our fallen human nature. The theme of this holy day of obligation is the glorification of the Son (Jesus) by His divine Father for all that He accomplished here on earth for our salvation.** Thus, we also can expect that same type of glorification from God our Father after our own individual resurrection from death and then our ascension into an eternal New Life. Some day we likewise will share in this glorified Life with Jesus and God, His almighty Father, in the eternal Kingdom of Heaven.

CHRISTIAN GREETING DURING ASCENSIONTIDE.....

As we now prepare for the glorious conclusion of the radiant resurrectional season, we anticipate the forthcoming splendorous ascensional holiday season. For our Christian greeting that we shall use throughout ascensiontide, we are called upon to proclaim the sublime reality that following the ascension event, ***"Christ is glorified!"*** As we joyously render the response to this festive greeting, we affirm to all people everywhere that we must ***"Exalt Him forever!"***

THE SIXTH PASCHAL SUNDAY – THE SUNDAY OF THE BLIND MAN.....

The Sunday of the Blind Man is the final Sunday of the resurrectional period, and at today's Divine Liturgy we are given for our consideration yet another aspect of the passover-resurrection mystery. The theme of **light**—something so very elemental to our existence—is the topic accentuated by our Byzantine Catholic Church. The triumphant Christ rose from the dead and burst forth from the tomb with the full radiance of His eternal Light, and our own lives always must reflect the brilliant resurrectional Light of the risen Jesus. He thus has become the unfading Light of the world Who will continue to shine brightly, thereby overpowering the darkness of evil and illuminating those held captive under the bondage of sin. The effulgent glow emanating from His empty and glorified sepulcher serves as a beacon drawing all of humanity to a full participation in His glorious resurrection event. Jesus, our divine Savior, has passed-over from the darkness of death and sin into the Light of an eternal New Life with God. We confirm this fact when we sing in the Divine Liturgy: *"We have seen the true Light..."* The Light of Christ illuminates our souls and revivifies them with the energy of grace. This results in our spiritual rebirth and renewal in the sight of God. Through the mysteries of the Church—the holy sacraments—may the Light of the risen Lord ever shine brilliantly in each of us!

THE SACRED RESURRECTIONAL FEAST CONCLUDES ON WEDNESDAY.....This **Wednesday, May 25th**, is the **Conclusion of the Feast of the Holy Pasch and the Radiant Resurrection**. On this thirty-ninth day of the magnificent Resurrection's post-festive period, we have our leave-taking from the *Feast of feasts* as we relinquish our observance of this *Solemnity of solemnities*. The festive joy of this *Glory of glories* that was initiated on the **Greatday—the King and Lord of all Sabbaths**—now is brought to a proper conclusion prior to the ascension event. In concluding this *Triumph of triumphs*, the venerable burial shroud, the *plašćanica*, will be taken from the holy table of the main altar; the resplendent empty tomb is removed from public display; and we no longer sing the joyous resurrectional anthem *"Christ is risen from the dead..."* Liturgically, we then initiate the ascensional period which will last for ten days until Holy Pentecost Sunday. There is still **no kneeling** until Pentecost, and we shall continue to stand as we have been during the resurrectional season. After holy communion, we are to **stand** for the ascension anthem: *"Be exalted above the heavens..."*, for this is the hymn of Jesus' glorification. The season of kneeling will begin on Pentecost Sunday when we all kneel down to invoke the divine assistance of the Holy Spirit.

PARISH ANNIVERSARY – Don't forget! Holy Spirit Parish will be celebrating its 115th anniversary on Pentecost Sunday, June 5th. Please contact Fr. Michael if you're interested in helping. There is an RSVP form on the website, sign up in the back of the church, or contact Fr. Michael or Pani Janine.

Saturday June 4th: 5:30 PM Great Vespers

Sunday June 5th: 10:00 AM Matins for Pentecost

11:00 AM Divine Liturgy

1:00 PM Events in the Parish Hall begin.

1:30 PM Blessing and serving of lunch (Buffet Style).

4:00 PM Concluding Remarks

Contact us at (412)-687-1220 or at frmichaelkunitz@gmail.com

Please RSVP by Sunday May 29th

SUMMER SERVICES – Please remember we will change to 9am Sunday Divine Liturgy starting June 12, the Sunday after Pentecost.

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