

Saint Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church

971 St. Clair Rd, Johnstown, PA 15905

Rev. Presbyter Dragan Vukovic

(814) 244-4063

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

(10.30.2022.)

Luke 7:11-16

And it came to pass the day after, that He went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and much people. Now when He came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And He came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And He said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And He delivered him to his mother. And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited His people. (KJV)

The Lord's Jesus Christ's Resurrection from the dead is a theme every Sunday in the Divine Liturgy. Christ's Resurrection is of paramount importance in the Christian life.

Belief in the Resurrection influences the way a person lives. Jesus Christ's convincing power over death was established at His Resurrection. The current Gospel preceded Jesus' Resurrection but offers proof of Jesus' power over death.

The widow of Nain was faced with a great loss in her personal life. Her only son had died. The widow's deep sense of grief can only be imagined. The Lord Jesus Christ intervened in the widow's life and changed it dramatically.

When the widow's son's death seemed certain, Jesus' restored life to the son. The widow's present and future were changed. The son's present and future were changed.

Persons embracing the life in the Resurrected Jesus Christ find their lives changed dramatically. Jesus Christ brings hope where there is despair. Jesus Christ brings renewal where there is failure.

When the Resurrected Jesus Christ thrives in the heart, the person's demeanor and personal relationships change for the better. When resurrection dominates the mind and the way of life, gloom and depression are cast aside.

Death takes on devastating proportions if the mind gives way to it. The Apostle Paul gave perspective to death in his Epistle to the Corinthians. Paul said: “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.” (I Cor. 15:19)

The Resurrected Jesus Christ changes the boundaries for believers. Eternal life is opened to believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus changed life’s boundaries for the son of the widow of Nain.

Personal relationships change when the Resurrection is at the foundation of life. Families have reason to think differently when death is replaced with the thought of eternal life.

The present Gospel about the death of the son of the widow of Nain presses believers to think more seriously about Pascha and the celebration of Jesus Christ’s Resurrection from the dead.

The raising of Lazarus is yet another example of Jesus’ power over death. (Jn.11:44) Believers in today’s world have reason to have confidence and faith in the Resurrected Christ.

Hope and joy have a place in the lives of believers even in the darkest circumstances. Hope triumphs when the Resurrected Christ is the Goal, the Guide and Guardian of life.

The Church proclaims the Gospel reading of the death of the son of the widow of Nain to reassure believers to hold firm to hope. The Holy Apostle Paul reassured the Corinthians of Jesus Christ’s Resurrection.

Holy Apostle Paul told the Corinthians: “But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.: (I Cor. 15:20) Christ entering the life of the widow and her dead son replaced death with life.

Believers of every generation until the glorious Second Coming of Christ have the opportunity to live with life founded in and guided by the Resurrection. God’s Holy Church proclaims and celebrates the Resurrection throughout the year.

The proclamation of the Gospel and the celebration of the Divine Liturgy enables lives to be enriched and changed with assurance of the existence of life eternal.

Jesus destroyed the barrier of death for the son of the widow of Nain in the current Gospel. Attentive listeners to the present Gospel have the opportunity to assess the contents of the heart, mind and soul.

Believers mindful of the current Gospel are encouraged to make sure the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is the framework and foundation for living and for seeking life eternal.

When the Resurrected Christ dominates the heart, mind and soul, Christ’s teachings are paramount in the way life is lived. Christ’s words are cherished and followed.

Joy springs from the Resurrected Christ. The widow of Nain and her son tasted of the joy that comes from the Christ with the power over death. Jesus Christ’s power over death is celebrated each Sunday in the Divine Liturgy.

The Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost. Holy Prophet Hosea. Holy Monk-martyr Andrew of Crete. October 17/30, 2022. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic

The Prologue from Ochrid St Nikolai of Zhicha

1. THE HOLY APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST LUKE

Luke was born in Antioch. In his youth, he excelled in his studies of Greek philosophy, medicine and art. During the ministry of the Lord Jesus on earth, Luke came to Jerusalem, where he saw the Savior face to face, heard His saving teaching and was witness to His miraculous works. Coming to belief in the Lord, St. Luke was numbered among the Seventy Apostles, and was sent out to preach. With Cleopas, he saw the resurrected Lord on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24). After the descent of the Holy Spirit, Luke returned to Antioch and there became a fellow worker of the Apostle Paul and traveled to Rome with him, converting Jews and pagans to the Christian Faith. *Luke, the beloved physician, ... greets you*, writes the Apostle Paul to the Colossians (Colossians 4:14). At the request of Christians, he wrote his Gospel in about the year 60 A.D. Following the martyrdom of the great Apostle Paul, St. Luke preached the Gospel throughout Italy, Dalmatia, Macedonia and other regions. He painted icons of the Most-holy Theotokos--not just one, but three--and icons of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul. Hence, St. Luke is considered to be the founder of Christian iconography. In old age, he visited Libya and Upper Egypt. From Egypt he returned to Greece, where he continued to preach and convert many with great zeal despite his old age. In addition to his Gospel, St. Luke wrote the Acts and dedicated both works to Theophilus, the governor of Achaia. Luke was eighty-four years old when the wicked idolaters tortured him for the sake of Christ and hanged him from an olive tree in the town of Thebes, in Boethia. The miracle-working relics of this wonderful saint were transported to Constantinople in the reign of Emperor Constantius, the son of Constantine.

2. SAINT PETER OF CETINJE, METROPOLITAN OF MONTENEGRO

Peter was born on April 1, 1749 A.D., in the village of Njeguš. He entered the monastic order at the age of twelve. Following the death of Metropolitan Sava in 1782 A.D., Peter became the Metropolitan and ruler of Montenegro. This glorious man dedicated his entire holy life to his people. He worked with all his strength to reconcile the quarreling clans of Montenegro, and strove mightily to defend the land and people from greedy aggressors. He succeeded in both tasks. He is especially glorified for his victory over Napoleon's army in Boka and Dalmatia. He was very strict with himself, and with everyone else he was just and condescending. Peter lived in a small cell like a simple monk even though he was a prince over the people. He reposed on October 18, 1830 A.D. His miracle-working relics repose, incorrupt, in the Monastery of

Cetinje. The Lord glorified him in the heavens and on earth as His faithful and long-suffering servant.

3. SAINTS JULIAN AND DIDYMUS THE BLIND

St. Julian, called the "Hermit," was a Persian and an unlearned peasant, but because of the purity of his heart he was a vessel of the grace of the Holy Spirit. He lived a life of asceticism beside the Euphrates River in Mesopotamia, and possessed the gift of clairvoyance. In the same moment that Julian the Apostate perished, St. Julian discerned this in the spirit, and declared it to his disciples. St. Didymus the Blind was his contemporary. He lived in Alexandria, and also perceived in the spirit the death of Julian. St. Didymus was at prayer during the night when a voice came to him from heaven, saying: "Today the Emperor Julian is no more; inform Patriarch Athanasius of this." St. Anthony the Great greatly respected this wondrous blind saint who had the spirit of discernment. He stayed with him and prayed to God with him whenever he came to Alexandria from the desert. Both St. Julian and St. Didymus, wonderful servants of God, entered into rest some time after the year 362 A.D.

HYMN OF PRAISE

SAINT LUKE THE APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST

The divine Luke, both wise and learned,
Was tortured willingly for the Lord.
He could have avoided mockery and torture,
But the world would not have had the great Luke.
The young Luke beheld God's truth
And surrendered his heart to the Son of God.
He hearkened to the Teacher, beheld the Wonderworker,
And in Him he recognized the Immortal Creator.
He beheld the Resurrected One, and spoke with Him,
And worked miracles in His name.
Christ became his only joy,
And Luke sacrificed his mind, wealth and youth to Him.
When Luke became old, he was young in Christ,
And gave to the world what he received from the Lord.
And when he had given the world all he could give,
Then the world, fulfilling the Scripture, repaid him with contempt.
From an old olive tree the aged Luke hung,
With a smile on his face and his arms folded crosswise.
And the hand of Christ came down from heaven

And received the soul of His Evangelist.

Now, in radiant Paradise with the other apostles,

St. Luke prays for the Holy Church.

REFLECTION

Can a sinner repent of his sins in ten days? According to the immeasurable compassion of God he can. During the reign of Emperor Maurice, there was a well-known bandit in the vicinity of Constantinople. He inspired fear and trembling both within the capital and without. One day, the Emperor Maurice himself sent the robber a cross as a sign of faith that he would do him no harm if he surrendered. The robber took the cross and surrendered. Arriving in Constantinople, he fell before the feet of the emperor and begged for forgiveness. The emperor kept his word, had mercy on him and released him. Immediately after that, the robber became gravely ill and sensed that death was drawing near. He bitterly repented of all his sins and tearfully prayed to God that He forgive him, as the emperor had forgiven him. He shed so many tears at prayer that his handkerchief was completely soaked. After ten days of weeping and praying, the repentant man reposed. The same night he passed away, his physician saw a wondrous vision in a dream: when the robber had given up his soul, there gathered around him black, manlike demons with pieces of paper on which were written all his sins. Two radiant angels also appeared. The angels set a scale between them, and the joyful demons placed all those papers on it, weighing down their side of the scale; but the other side was empty. The angels held counsel: "What shall we place on it? Let us seek something good in his life!" And then that handkerchief soaked with tears of repentance appeared in the hands of one angel. The angels quickly placed it on their side of the scale and it outweighed all the demons' papers. Then the black demons fled, howling sorrowfully, and the angels took the soul of the repentant thief and carried it to Paradise, glorifying the man-loving God.

CONTEMPLATION

Contemplate the miracle of the Apostle Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8):

1. How an angel guided Philip from Samaria to the road into Gaza;
2. How Philip saw the eunuch of Queen Candace, explained to him the prophecy of Isaiah, and baptized him;
3. How an angel made Philip invisible to the eunuch, and transported him instantly to the town of Azotus.

HOMILY

on the sins of the tongue

I said, I will guard my ways, lest I sin with my tongue (Psalm 39:1).

The sin of the tongue is the most common and most frequent sin. *If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man*, says the Apostle James (James 3:2). When a penitent sets out on God's path--when he begins to live according to God's commandments--he should first strive to avoid sin with the tongue. That was the rule that the penitent David laid down for himself. He vowed especially to remain silent before his adversaries: *I will restrain my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked are before me* (Psalm 39:1). Behold a most wonderful rule for one who is being healed of sin. When he is accused, he does not reply; when he is slandered, he remains silent. In truth, what does it help to speak with an enraged, unrighteous man who does not love God more than himself? If you speak to him of evil, you will enrage him even more. If you speak to him of good, you will make him a mocker of holy things. Before Pilate Christ remained silent. Pilate said: *Answerest Thou nothing?* (Mark 15:4). What can He reply to you, when you do not have ears to hear or a mind to understand? Behold, the silence of the righteous one before the unrighteous one can still have the best influence on the unrighteous one. Left to interpret the silence of the righteous one by himself, the unrighteous one can interpret it for the benefit of his soul; while any other answer, good or bad, will be interpreted for evil, to the condemnation of others and to the justification of himself. Blessed is he who learns to govern his tongue.

O Lord Jesus Christ our God, Thou Who hast shown us by example how and when to speak, Thou hast shown us by example how and when we should be silent. Help us, by Thy Holy Spirit, that we not sin with the tongue.

To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.

Services this Week

- ❖ **Monday – 10.31. '22. –Holy Ap. and Evangelist Luke; St Peter I, Metrop. And Wonderworker of Cetinje– 09:30 AM Divine Liturgy**
- ❖ **Friday – 11.04. '22. – PARACLESIS - THE OFFICE OF SUPPLICATION TO SAINT NECTARIOS -05:00 PM – Confession**
- ❖ **Saturday – 11.05. '22. Holy Apostle James, First Bishop of Jerusalem – Memorial Saturday – 09:30 Holy Liturgy for Repose**
- ❖ **21st Sunday after Pentecost– November 6th – 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy**

Donations October 23, 2022

Offering - \$ 615.00

Candles - \$50.00

Dues - \$150.00

Large Candles

In Memory of Julie Lambrinos from Dan & Dyne Tomak
In Memory of Steve & Stella Baich from Kathy & Gerry Szmyd
In Memory of Connie Bartis from Rick Kondas
In Memory of Father, Mike Tumbas from Milica Knepp
In Memory of Linda Zedlar Griffiths from Milica Knepp
In Memory of Christine and Charles from Olga Bulich

NEXT FISH FRY

FRIDAY DECEMBER 9, 2022

Please see Donna Zimmerman or Suzette if you can help!

NUT ROLLS

FOR SALE - \$10

Anyone interested in running for and/or remaining on the St Nicholas Church Council for 2023 must submit their name and intent in writing to a member of the nominating committee

(Carole McAllister, Joseph Golden and Helene Gleason) You may also leave this information in the Candle Room to the attention of the Committee.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE!!!!

<https://stnicholasjohnstown.org>

Thanks Brady (Malichi) Doyle for the Great update!