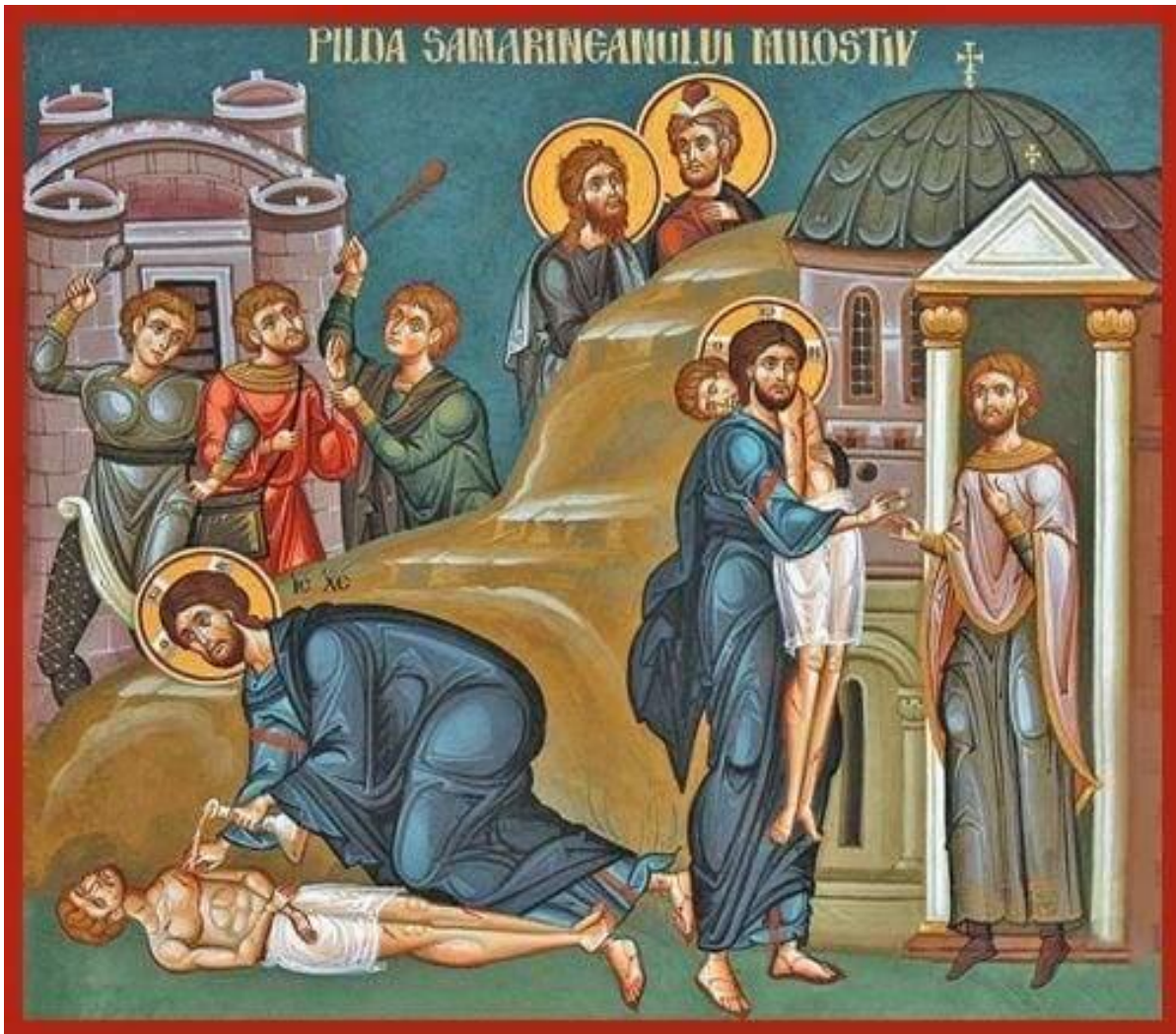


SUNDAY BULLETIN

Saint Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church, 971 St. Clair Rd, Johnstown, PA 15905
Rev. Presbyter Milan Dragovic; Cell 385 228 4725
stnicholasitown@gmail.com

25TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
(November 29th, 2020)

Holy Apostle Matthew



BLESSED FEAST!
GOD BLESS YOU AND YOUR BELOVED!

Liturgical Readings:

PROKEIMENON IN TONE VIII:

Pray and make your vows before the Lord, our God! (Ps 75/76:11)

Verse: *In Judah God is known; His name is great in Israel. (Ps 75/76:1)*

EPHESIANS 4: 1-6

Brethren, I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

Alleluia Verses

v: Come, let us rejoice in the Lord! Let us make a joyful noise to God our Savior! (Ps 94/95:1)

v: Let us come before His face with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to Him with songs of praise! (Ps 94/95:2)

LUKE 10: 25-37

At that time, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Jesus, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" So he answered and said, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind', and 'your neighbor as yourself.'" And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Then Jesus answered and said, "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.' So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

RESURRECTIONAL TROPARION - TONE EIGHT:

Thou didst descend from on high, O Merciful One! Thou didst accept the three day burial to free us from our sufferings! O Lord, our Life and Resurrection: Glory to Thee!

TROPARION -THE TRANSFER OF THE RELICS OF SAINT NICHOLAS - TONE IV:

The day of splendid solemnity hath arrived; * and the city of Bari doth rejoice, * and with it the whole world exulteth * with hymns and spiritual odes. * For today we celebrate the sacred feast * of the translation of the precious and much-healing relics * of the hierarch Nicholas the wonder-worker. * For like the never-setting Sun, * he shineth with brilliant beams of light, * driving away the darkness of temptations and misfortunes * from those who with faith cry aloud: * Save us, O Nicholas, ** for thou art our intercessor.

TROPARION TO THE HOLY APOSTLE MATTHEW – TONE THREE:

With zeal, you followed Christ the Master, who in His goodness, appeared on earth to mankind. Summoning you from the custom house, He revealed you as a chosen apostle: the proclaimer of the Gospel to the whole world! Therefore, divinely eloquent Matthew, we honor your precious memory! Entreat merciful God that He may grant our souls remission of transgressions.

RESURRECTIONAL KONTAKION - TONE EIGHT:

By rising from the tomb You raised the dead and resurrected Adam. Eve exults in Your Resurrection, and the world celebrates Your rising from the dead, O greatly Merciful One!

KONTAKION TO SAINT NICHOLAS – TONE III

Thy relics have moved like a star, from the East unto the West, * O holy hierarch Nicholas; * and the sea hath been sanctified by thy passage. * The city of Bari receiveth grace through thee, * for thou hast been shown forth for us * as a wonderworker: ** illustrious, most wondrous and merciful!

GLORY... KONTAKION TO THE HOLY APOSTLE MATTHEW – TONE FOUR:

Casting aside the bonds of the custom house for the yoke of justice, you were revealed as an excellent merchant, rich in wisdom from on high. You proclaimed the word of truth and roused the souls of the slothful by writing of the hour of Judgment.

NOW AND EVER... HYMN TO THE MOTHER OF GOD - TONE SIX:

Steadfast Protectress of Christians and constant advocate before the Creator, do not despise the cry of us sinners; but in your goodness come speedily to help us who call on you in faith. Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, O Theotokos, for you always protect those who honor you!

Homily by Fr Rodney Torbic

God's Holy Church has begun the preparations for the Feast of the Nativity. The Nativity Fast has started (Nov.15/28) and continues until the Feast of the Nativity (Dec.25/Jan.7). The Nativity Fast is a gift to believers to benefit the self and others.

The Gospel reading for today emphasizes the importance of showing goodness and mercy to our neighbors. Changes within ourselves are necessary for our lives to fully conform to the Gospel.

Too often we are like the priest or the Levite in the current Gospel. Too often we do not want to see the suffering occurring nearby. We are not enough like the Samaritan who took time show mercy on the suffering victim along the road.

Honest self-examination of the heart, mind and soul are required to bring about personal change. Repentance of hardness of heart and the elimination of selective vision are necessary for personal change.

To become merciful like the Samaritan we have to be willing to acknowledge suffering exists in people known to us. A willingness is required from us to act on this understanding.

Helping suffering individuals in our neighborhoods and communities is not always easy. We have to move from the comfort zones of our lives and reach out in faith and love.

Parish leaders and organizations have the opportunities to set the examples During this time of the coronavirus, hardships have multiplied and reach across the populace of every community.

Individuals and families are suffering from job losses and reduction of wages. Mental stress has produced extensive pain and difficult working conditions for individuals in numerous work places.

Parish churches can be community leaders in giving voice and support for the individuals and groups suffering. Merciful acts of outreach and kindness can make a difference in human lives.

Providing food to the hungry, financial support to the needy and love for the stressed will address vital needs. Small efforts will lead to big results. Providing a meal, a financial donation or making a phone call or visit can spur healing for others.

The Christian life of love of God is fully connected with love of neighbor. Today's Gospel makes the connection clear. The Epistle of St. John is very explicit about loving God and neighbor.

St. John wrote: "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his **brother** have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the **love** of God in him?" (Jn. 3:17)

The Nativity Fast is a period given by the Church for believers to increase personal love for God and for neighbor. As the Feast of the Nativity draws closer by the day, believers' lives are to be transformed and become more Christ-like.

Each day is a day of action. Each moment is a moment of reflection leading to increased love and manifestation of love. God is ever-present to help believers in the transformation.

The Lord Jesus Christ makes change possible in each person, each parish and each community. Strong faith will move mountains. The Samaritan in the current Gospel is a lasting example of love and mercy in action.

Each believer and each parish can choose to make a difference in today's world as part of God's Holy Church. More action can be taken to manifest love of God and love of neighbor throughout the Nativity Fast and throughout the year.

Increase the healing today and strike at the heart of existing pain and despair. Christ's radiance is the brightness necessary in these days of gloom and hardship. Christ's love is the remedy for all ills and negative conditions.

The victim in the current Gospel experienced love taught by Jesus Christ. We are blessed to have Christ's teaching for us today. The responsibility to put the lesson into action rests on each believer and within each parish.

DONATIONS RECEIVED ON NOVEMBER 22ND

Thank you for your continuing financial support! Please, remember that without our fund raisers and fish fries that we cannot hold at this time, your contributions are more important than ever.

Offering \$1027.00; Candles \$40.00; Dues \$50.00; Donations \$150.00; Donation of \$100 in memory of Master Srgt. George Nestor's 1 year passing from Irene Nestor; Thanksgiving Donations for \$10 from Linda & Tony Freidhoff and \$30 from Kristina Marinkovich

Building Fund donation for \$15 in memory of George Nestor from Irene Nestor

BELL TOWER FUND - \$20,403.88

Large Candle Donations

Stella Nikolenic in memory of Kata & Stanko Villa

Richard Kondask in memory of parents Amelia & Joe Kondash

Cam Palmer in memory of Eva Visnich Johnson

Peter & Joanne Todorich in memory of Nokola & Milka, Nick Jr. Todorich

Suzette & Richard Gardenhour in memory of the Grisin & Gardenhour families

WE ARE ACCEPTING DONATIONS FOR THE LARGE CANDLES (\$25) - THANK YOU!

UPCOMING EVENTS

***MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY at 7:45 PM – Evening Prayer through the Conference call
(339) 207-6529***

SUNDAY (December 6th) – 26th Sunday after Pentecost

10:00 AM – Divine Liturgy

Liturgical Readings: Epistle (Eph. 5, 8-19); Gospel (Lk. 12-16)

FISH FRY, tentative December 11th

Dear ones,

Please, keep in your hearted prayers our beloved brothers and sisters in Christ

- who suffer of cancer: Jenifer, Linda
- who pray the God for the restoration of health: Irine (Martinovich), Grace (Vuckovich), Ranka (Banda), Edward (Gartell), George (Momcilovic), Nektarios

The Holy Apostle Matthew the Evangelist

Matthew, son of Alphaeus, was a tax collector when the Lord saw him in Capernaum and said: Follow Me. And he arose, and followed Him (Matt 9:9). After that, Matthew prepared a reception for the Lord in his home and thus provided the occasion for the Lord to express several great truths about His coming to earth. After receiving the Holy Spirit, Matthew preached the Gospel to the Parthians, Medes and Ethiopians. In Ethiopia he appointed his follower Plato as bishop, and withdrew to prayerful solitude on a mountain, where the Lord appeared to him. Matthew baptized the wife and the son of the prince of Ethiopia, at which the prince became greatly enraged and dispatched a guard to bring Matthew to him for trial. The soldiers returned to the prince saying that they had heard Matthew's voice, but could not see him with their eyes. The prince then sent a second guard. When this guard approached the apostle, he shone with a heavenly light so powerful that the soldiers could not look at him; filled with fear, they threw down their weapons and returned. The prince then went himself. Matthew radiated such light that the prince was instantly blinded. However, the holy apostle had a compassionate heart; he prayed to God, and the prince was given back his sight. Unfortunately, he saw only with physical eyes and not spiritual eyes. He arrested Matthew and subjected him to cruel tortures. Twice, a large fire was lighted on his chest, but the power of God preserved him alive and unharmed. Then the apostle prayed to God and gave up his spirit. The prince commanded that the martyr's body be placed in a lead coffin and thrown into the sea. The saint appeared to Bishop Plato and told him where the coffin bearing his body could be found. The bishop retrieved the coffin with Matthew's body from the sea. Witnessing this new miracle, the prince was baptized and received the name Matthew. After that, the prince left all the vanity of the world and became a presbyter and served the Church in a God-pleasing way. When Plato died, the Apostle Matthew appeared to the presbyter Matthew and counseled him to accept the episcopacy. He accepted the bishopric and, for many years, was a good shepherd until the Lord called him to His Immortal Kingdom. St. Matthew the Apostle wrote his Gospel in the Aramaic language. It was soon after translated into Greek and the Greek text has come down to us, while the Aramaic text has been lost. It is said of this evangelist that he never ate meat, but only vegetables and fruit.