

Saint Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church

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The Sunday of the Blind Man

(05.29.2022)

John 9:1-38

And as Jesus passed by, He saw a man which was blind from his birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. When He had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing. The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged? Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he. Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened? He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight. Then said they unto him, Where is He? He said, I know not. They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind. And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see. Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This Man is not of God, because He keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them. They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of Him, that He hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet. But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind,

and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight. And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see? His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind: But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself. These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that He was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him. Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this Man is a sinner. He answered and said, Whether He be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. Then said they to him again, What did He to thee? how opened He thine eyes? He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be His disciples? Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art His disciple; but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence He is. The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence He is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes. Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this Man were not of God, He could do nothing. They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out. Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen Him, and it is He that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped Him. (KJV)

Hristos Voskrese! Vaistinu Voskrese!
Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!
Hristos a inviat! Adevarat a inviat

The Sunday of the Blind Man

God's Holy Church proclaims the Gospel reading of the man born blind each year on this designated Sunday following Pascha. Attentive listeners of the Gospel learn that Jesus is the Light of the world.

Jesus brings light to the darkness in the world and to personal life. Residents of the world and individuals experiencing darkness in life will find light that heals in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The blind man experienced darkness in his life from the time of his birth. When Jesus entered the man's life, the man's darkness was removed and the man experienced the light of day.

The Lord Jesus Christ was the defining difference in the blind man's life. Not all the people meeting the man born blind after he was healed were convinced and appreciative of Jesus Christ.

In today's world there are many who are skeptical of the Lord Jesus Christ. Skeptics do not place value in Jesus Christ's healing power. Proof of Jesus Christ's healing power comes through living in Christ.

The man born blind experienced Jesus' healing powers and his life changed forever. The man confessed Jesus give him sight. Evidence of miracles attributed to Jesus Christ have been documented through the centuries.

Today is the opportunity to embrace the evidence and confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God, the Light of the world. Much darkness exists in today's world. It is very easy to get overwhelmed by the darkness.

Today's Gospel proclaims Jesus Christ as the Son of God, the Light of the world. Jesus Christ shines the way forward for the world and for daily life. Tragedies occurring daily reveal the deep darkness present in this world.

The Lord Jesus Christ offers hope, love and peace in times of darkness, mourning and violence. The Lord Jesus Christ offers light, healing and comfort to parents and to their sons and daughters.

The world's darkness and darkness in personal life can seem overwhelming at times. Darkness on that Great and Holy Friday centuries ago affected all those present as Jesus hung on the Cross. (Lk.23:44)

Jesus Christ eradicated the darkness of the Crucifixion by His Resurrection. The Light of Christ replaced the darkness of death. The Resurrected Christ is the answer to the darkness in today's world and in personal life as He has always been.

Now is the time to embrace life in the Resurrected Christ. Today is the day to see life through the lens of the Resurrection. Experience the joy possible emanating from Jesus Christ's Resurrection and overcome challenges of darkness.

The Sunday of the Blind Man. St. Theodore, Hieromartyr. Theodore of Vrshac, Holy Vukashin, St. Vikentije and Martyr of Surdulica. May 16/29, 2022. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic

THE SUNDAY OF THE BLIND MAN



And as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, Master, who sinned, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

1. *And as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth.* Being full of love for us and caring for our salvation, and desiring to stop the mouths of the ungrateful, He overlooks nothing that is His to do, even if there's no one to pay attention. The [Prophet](#) knew this when he said: *That Thou might be justified in Thy words and prevail Thou art judged* (Ps. 50). So here, too, when they wouldn't accept the sublime meaning of His words, but said that He had a devil, and attempted to kill Him, He left the Temple and healed a blind man, placating their anger by His absence, and, through the miracle, softening their hardness and cruelty, making them believers in His words. And He performed a sign which was not adventitious, but one which took place then for the first time: *Never since the world began has it been heard that someone opened the eyes of a person born blind.* Someone may, perhaps, have

opened the eyes of a blind person, but not of anyone blind from birth. And that He fully intended to do this when He left the Temple is clear from the following: it was He who saw the blind man, not the blind man who came to Him. And He looked at him so pointedly that His disciples noticed. And they came to question Him, because when they saw Him regarding the man so earnestly, they asked Him, “Who sinned, this man, or his parents?” Wrong question. How could he sin before he was born? And why, if his parents had sinned, would he have been punished? Why, then, did they put this question? Before, when He healed the paralytic, He said, “Look, you’ve been made well, sin no more.” Now they understood this to mean that he was paralyzed through sins and said, “Well, that man was paralyzed because of his sins; but what would you say about this one? Has he sinned? You can’t say that, since he’s been blind from birth. Did his parents sin? You can’t say that either, because a child doesn’t suffer punishment for its father.” Just as, when we see a child that’s been badly treated, we might say, “What can you say? What’s the child done?” It’s not so much a question as bafflement. The same is true of the disciples here: they weren’t asking for information, but rather they were perplexed. What then does Christ say? Neither this man has sinned, nor his parents.

He doesn’t say this as if He’s acquitting them of sins, (because He doesn’t say simply, *Neither has this man sinned, nor his parents*, but adds, *for him to have been born blind*) but so that *the Son of God should be glorified in him*. Both this man and his parents had sinned, but this wasn’t the cause of his blindness. Now he said this not merely to show that this man was not such a case nor that others had been made blind for such a reason (the sins of their parents), but to demonstrate that it can’t be the case that when one person sins another should be punished. If we allow this, we must, of necessity, concede that he sinned before he was born. So when He said, “neither this man has sinned,” He means that it’s not possible to sin from birth and be punished for it; and when He said, “nor his parents,” He meant that a person can’t be punished because of their parents. He removes any suspicion of this through [Ezekiel](#): “As I live,” says the Lord, “This proverb shall not be used, ‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge’.” And [Moses](#) says: *The father shall not die for the child*. And of a certain king Scripture says, that, for this very reason, he didn’t do this thing, but observed the law of Moses. But if anyone says, “Why is it said, then, ‘Who visits the sins of the parents upon the children unto the third and fourth generation?’” we should answer, that the assertion isn’t universal, but that it was spoken with reference to some of those who came out of Egypt. And what it means is that, since those who came out of Egypt,

after signs and wonders [had been given], were actually worse than their forefathers who hadn't seen any of these things, they would also suffer what their forebears did, because they dared to commit the same crimes. And if you pay attention to that passage you'll see that it was certainly written about those people in particular. Why then was he born blind? That the glory of God should be made manifest.

Here we have another difficulty: was it not possible for the glory of God to be shown except through this man's punishment? Certainly it's not said that it was impossible, because it would have been, but *that it might be manifested in this man*. You might say, "So did he suffer wrong for the glory of God?" What wrong, tell me? What if God had never willed him into existence at all? But I would say that he even received benefit from his blindness, since he saw with his inner eyes. How did the Jews profit from their eyes? They incurred heavier punishment, since they were blind even while they saw. How did he suffer from his blindness? Because of it he recovered his sight. The evils of the present life aren't evils (and neither are the good things good); sin alone is evil, but blindness isn't an evil. And He who had brought this man from not being into being, also had the power to leave him as he was.

But there are those who say that this phrase [That the glory of God should be made manifest] isn't causative, but expresses the consequence of the miracle; as when He says, *I came into this world for judgment, so that they who do not see may see, and that they who see might be made blind*. Yet it wasn't for this that He came—that those who saw might be made blind. Again Paul says, *Because that which may be known of God is manifested in them, that they may be without excuse*. But He didn't show them in order to deprive them of an excuse, but so that they might obtain an excuse. And again, in another place, he says, *The Law entered, so that the offence might abound*; but it wasn't for this that it entered, but that sin might be checked. Do you see that in all these cases the proposition defines the outcome? Just as an excellent builder might construct part of a house, and leave the rest unfinished so that he can prove to doubters that he really was creator of the whole, so God also joins together and completes our body, as if it were a dilapidated house: healing the withered hand, bracing paralyzed limbs, straightening the lame, cleansing the lepers, raising up the sick, making cripples well, recalling the dead from death, opening eyes that were closed, or adding them for those who had none. By correcting all of these things, which are blemishes arising from the infirmity of our nature, He showed His power.

St. John Chrysostom

The Prologue from Ochrid
St Nikolai of Zhicha
(06.21.2022)

1. THE HOLY EMPEROR CONSTANTINE AND EMPRESS HELENA

Constantine's parents were Emperor Constantius Chlorus and Empress Helena. Chlorus had other children by another wife, but from Helena he had only Constantine. After his coronation Constantine fought three great battles: the first against Maxentius, a Roman tyrant; the second against the Scythians on the Danube; and the third against the Byzantines. Before the battle with Maxentius, while Constantine was greatly concerned and doubtful of his success, a brilliant Cross appeared to him in the sky during the day, adorned with stars. Written on the Cross were the words: "By this Sign Conquer." Astonished, the emperor ordered a large cross to be forged, like the one that had appeared, and that it be carried before the army into battle. By the power of the Cross he achieved a glorious victory over the enemy, which was greatly superior in number. Maxentius drowned in the Tiber River. Immediately after this, in the year 313 A.D., Constantine issued the famous Edict of Milan to halt the persecution of Christians. Defeating the Byzantines, Constantine built a beautiful capital on the Bosphorus, which from that time was called Constantinople. Before this, however, Constantine fell ill with the dreaded disease of leprosy. As a cure, the pagan priests and physicians counseled him to bathe in the blood of slaughtered children. However, he rejected that. Then the Apostles Peter and Paul appeared to him and told him to seek out Bishop Sylvester, who would cure him of this dreaded disease. The bishop instructed him in the Christian Faith and baptized him, and the disease of leprosy vanished from the emperor's body. When a discord began in the Church because of the mutinous heretic Arius, the emperor convened the First Ecumenical Council in Nicaea in 325 A.D., at which the Arian heresy was condemned and Orthodoxy confirmed. St. Helena, the pious mother of the emperor, was very zealous for the Faith of Christ. She visited Jerusalem, discovered the Honorable Cross of the Lord, and built the Church of the Resurrection on Golgotha, as well as many other churches throughout the Holy Land. This holy woman presented herself to the Lord in her eightieth year,

in 327 A.D. Emperor Constantine outlived his mother by ten years. He reposed in Nicomedia in his sixty-fifth year, in 337 A.D. His body was interred in the Church of the Twelve Apostles in Constantinople.

2. THE VENERABLE MARTYR PACHOMIUS

Pachomius was born in Little Russia. The Tartars captured him in his youth and sold him to a Turkish tanner as a slave. He spent twenty-seven years in slavery in the town of Usaki in Asia Minor. He was forced to become a Moslem. Then, he went to Mount Athos, was tonsured a monk, and spent twelve years in the Monastery of St. Paul. He decided to suffer for Christ. His spiritual father, the Elder Joseph, accompanied him to Usaki, where Pachomius presented himself to his former master as a Christian in the monastic habit. The Turks subjected him to torture, threw him into prison and beheaded him on the Feast Day of the Ascension, May 8, 1730 A.D. Many miracles were wrought by his blood and relics. Pachomius was buried on the island of Patmos in the Church of St. John the Theologian. Thus this Little Russian peasant became a martyr and wreath-bearer in the Kingdom of Christ.

HYMN OF PRAISE **SAINT CONSTANTINE**

To Constantine, the shining Cross appeared;
Constantine saw it and glorified God.
It was a sign from the Son of God;
There is nothing more beautiful than this sign:
The sign of suffering and temporary trouble,
But also the sign of final victory.
By this sign which worked wonders,
Constantine set out and conquered everywhere.
In the midst of pagan Rome, which persecuted the Cross,
He raised the Cross on high, to the glory of the Savior.
That which for three centuries had been broken and cursed,
Now, for Rome, became great and holy!

For three centuries the Cross had been spat upon;
The earth had been bathed in the blood of the saints.
Empires and emperors, arrogant and odious,
Were destroyed one by one, like weak reeds,
But the sign of the Cross remained upright;
Miraculously and gloriously it shone on the world.
Constantine recognized it and raised it even higher;
That is why, in the calendar, his name is written.

REFLECTION

We see that vice is something shameful and sinful, in that it always hides and always takes upon itself the appearance of good works. St. John Chrysostom beautifully says: "Vice does not have its own particular face, but borrows the face of good works." This is why the Savior said: *They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves* (Matthew 7:15). Call a liar a liar, a thief a thief, a murderer a murderer, an adulterer an adulterer, a slanderer a slanderer, and you will infuriate them. But if you want to call a man honest, honorable, unselfish, truthful, just, conscientious, you will make him light up with joy and please him. Again, I quote Chrysostom: "Good works are something natural in man, while vice is something unnatural and false." If a man is caught in a vice, he quickly justifies his vice by some good works; he clothes it in the garment of good works. Indeed, vice does not possess its own particular face. The same is true of the devil, the father of vice!

CONTEMPLATION

Contemplate God the Holy Spirit as the Inspirer of justice, peace and joy:

1. How He inspired with justice, peace and joy all the lovers of Christ's justice;
2. How He inspired--and even today inspires--with justice, peace and joy all the sufferers for Christ's justice.

HOMILY

on the children of God

"The Spirit Itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Romans 8:16).

Only he who has the Spirit of God in himself has the witness that he is a child of God. Without the Spirit of God there is no such witness. Not even the whole universe can give this witness. The universe by itself, without the Spirit of God-- what else does it witness to us other than the fact that we are its slaves, its victims, whom it unmercifully swallows? In essence, the pagans thought that also. Do not the opponents of God today think likewise? They do think so. For, indeed, it is difficult to take that thought away from those who do not recognize the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of God, the Witness of Heaven. The same apostle says: *For ye have not received the spirit of bondage* (Romans 8:15). What is this spirit of bondage? It is every spirit except the Spirit of God, Whom Christ the Lord sends to those who love Him. The spirit of bondage is the spirit of materialism, the spirit of fortune-telling, the spirit of naturalism, the spirit of pessimism, the spirit of despair, the spirit of vice. Only the Spirit of God is the All-holy Spirit of adoption and freedom.

Oh, what happiness; oh, what peace; oh, what joy when the Spirit of God nestles in the cleansed heart of man as a sparrow does in its nest! Then our hope opens hundreds of doors in the prison of the universe; and our embrace, wider than the universe, stretches out to the One Who is greater and more merciful than the universe. To Whom? To the Father! And then we cry out: *Abba, Father!* (Romans 8:15).

The witness of God that comes through sight can lead us to doubt that we are the children of God. But the witness that comes to us from the heart, from the Spirit of God, does not leave even the slightest doubt. God witnesses about God. What doubt can there be? God the Holy Spirit caresses us in the heart of our very being. Can there be any doubt there? No, for then we know and feel completely confident that God is the Father and that we are the children of God. No one's servants, no one's slaves, but rather the children of God.

O Lord God, Holy Spirit, come abide in us and remain with us as a Witness of the Trinity and the Kingdom, as a Witness of the immortal paradise.

To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.

Services this Week

- ❖ *Thursday 06.02.'22-The Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ
- 09:00 AM Divine Liturgy*
- ❖ *Fryday 06.03.'22 – Holy Equal-to-the-Apostles Emperor
Constantine and Helen - 09:00 AM Divine Liturgy*
- ❖ *Fryday 06.03.'22 – PARACLESIS - THE OFFICE OF
SUPPLICATION TO SAINT NECTARIOS -05:00 PM
- Confession*
- ❖ *The 7th Sunday of Pasha – Holy Fathers of 1st Council - June 5th
– 09:00 AM Divine Liturgy*

Donations May 15, 2022

*Offering - \$1,065.00 Candles - \$60.00 Dues - \$100.00 Donations -
\$150.00*

Slava Donations

Kumovi, Gojko, Rose & Kristina Marinkovich - \$300

Joe Bartis, In Memory of Connie Bartis - \$200

Doug Svitchen - \$100

Eli Cvijanovich to the Cemetery Fund - \$100

Kathleen McDowell - \$50

Dan & Dyne Tomak - \$25

Richard & Suzette Gardenhour - \$25

Jonathan Gleason - \$20

Carol McAllister - \$20

Mary Kelly - \$20

Patricia Niel - \$10

St. Nicholas Kolo - \$500

St. Nicholas Men's Club - \$250

St. Nicholas Choir - \$100

Large Candles

In Memory of Julie Lambrinos from Kumovi Dan & Dyne Tomak

***In Memory of Parents, Mike & Mildred Tumbas from Robert & Milica
Knepp***

In Memory of Ranka Marinkovich from Richard Kondas

In Memory of Ed Gartrell from Steve Purich

In Memory of Linda (Locher) Leckrone from Dorothy Podolak

Change in church time

***Beginning Sunday, June 5, 2022. Divine Liturgy will begin at 9:00 AM
and continue to Sunday, September 4, 2022.***

MEMORIAL SERVICES 2022

Memorial services at the Church cemeteries will be held as follows:

***BENSHOF HILL CEMETERY - Saturday, June 11, 2022 – 9:30 AM
(Begin at Top)***

***GRANDVIEW CEMETERY - Saturday, June 11, 2022 – Beginning at
2:00 PM***

***OLD ST. NICHOLAS CEMETERY - Saturday, June 18, 2022 – 9:30
AM***

***ST. PETKA CEMETERY - Saturday, June 18, 2022– 10:30 AM –
(Begin at Top)***

***President of the Kolo, Pat Niel will be accepting monetary donations to
purchase flowers for our outdoor planters. All donations are appreciated***

SAVE THESE DATES!!!!



*Sign-up to help! Everyone's assistance is appreciated.
Sign-up list is located in the Lobby
June 3-5, 2022*

JOIN US FOR



TO GO

Saturday, August 13th, 2022