

Saint Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church

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The Sunday of the Blind Man (05.21.2023.)

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! Christ is Risen!

The Sunday of the Blind Man

The Sunday of the Blind Man has arrived in God's Holy Church. Resurrection joy continues to abound. Jesus Christ's ability to create new life continues to be manifested.

The man born blind lived in a tomb of darkness. He was unable to perceive the light of day. When Jesus Christ entered the man's life, his whole being was transformed.

The Lord Jesus Christ brought the Light of Christ into the blind man's world. Jesus gave the man the ability to see the bright new world in a way that he never had seen it.

Jesus Christ' Resurrection gives a new and bright vision of life to Christian believers. Jesus Christ's defeat of death enables believer to see and understand the world, death and life in a new and different way.

Jesus' Resurrection from the dead gives believers the vision to see beyond the darkness of human death to the brightness of eternal life. The new vision of life created by the Resurrection provides for believers to live each day with great joy.

No earthly darkness can stifle the Light of the Resurrected Christ. The Darkness of that First and Great and Holy Friday when Jesus was on the Cross was replaced by the brightness of the Resurrected Christ and the Empty Tomb.

No earthly events of darkness succeed in destroying the resounding joyful message that "Christ is Risen from the dead, trampling down death by death and upon those in the tombs bestowing life."

Christian saints and martyrs have lost their lives through the centuries in witness to and defense of the Christian faith. Their deaths in Christ shine forth the Light of Christ and brighten the path to the Heavenly Kingdom.

Deep in the hearts of fervent believers the baptismal Light of Christ burns and enlightens the path to the Heavenly Kingdom. God's Holy Church protects and enables the flame of Christ in the heart to burn brightly throughout earthly life.

Each day reveals the Presence, Glory and Light of the Resurrected Christ. Each day Christ's miracles are revealed and verified for those with eyes of faith to see.

Today and each day are valued opportunities to remind the self that: **“Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen! Hristos Voskrese! Vaistinu Voskrese! Christos Anesti! Alithos Anesti!**

**The Sunday of the Blind Man. Holy Apostle and Evangelist John the Theologian.
May 8/21, 2023. 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

Services this Week

- ❖ **Monday – 05.22.2023. – Transfer of the Relics of St Nicholas the Wonderworker; *Prophet Isaiah, Mart. Christopher* – 09:30 AM Divine Liturgy**
- ❖ **Wednesday – 05.24.2023. - *Sts Gyril and Methodius, Enlighteners of the Slavs (Apodosia of Pascha)* – 09:30 AM Divine Liturgy**
- ❖ **Thursday – 05.25.2023. – *The Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ; St Nikodim of Pech* – 09:30 AM Divine Liturgy**
- ❖ **Friday - 05.26.2023. – PARAGLISIS - THE OFFICE OF SUPPLICATION TO SAINT NEGTARIOS -05:00 PM – Confession**
- ❖ **Sunday – 05.28.2023. - *7th of Sunday of Pascha – Holy Fathers of 1st Council – Venerable Pachomius the Great; Venerable Achilles Bishop of Larissa* - 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy**

Donations May 14, 2023

Offering - \$ 767.00 Candles - \$54.00

Building Fund

In Memory of Linda Palmer

Gary, Rose & Kristina Marinkovich – \$50

Deborah Fleck donated the flowers that are decorating the church for the Anniversary celebration In Memory of Robert and Lillian Fleck

Large Candles

- In Memory of Mike & Mildred Tumbas from Kathleen McDowell
- In Memory of Bosiljka & Lazo Vuckovich from Dan & Dyne Tomak
- In Memory of Julia & Demetrias Lambrinos from Dan & Dyne Tomak
- In Memory of Andrew Grisin from Richard Kondas
- In Memory of Damenja & Lazo Gjurich from Diane and Dan Tomak
- In Memory of Connie Bartis from Bartis & Pavich Family

We are now taking donations for large candles in the Candle Room

Sunday, May 21st – Anniversary Celebration

Please join your Parish Family for this annual celebration.

Banquet to follow Divine Liturgy

(Adults \$20 – Sunday School Children Free)

Honored Kumovi, Richard & Suzette Gardenhour and honored guests, recent High School and College Graduates.

REMINDER

Change in church time – Beginning Sunday, **June 4, 2023**. Divine Liturgy will begin at **9:30 AM** and continue to Sunday, September 2, 2023.

Our recent graduate, Ben Ribaric, son of Casey and Danielle Ribaric, would like to invite everyone to his High School Graduation party!! Please respond to Danielle Ribaric at 814-418-1577 (call or text) no later than June 1, 2023.

- Place: ACRP Rec Park – 34 Knox St. Johnstown, PA 15906
- Date: Saturday, June 10, 2023
- Time: 1:00 PM

UPCOMING EVENTS Polka-Fest June 2-4, 2023

Please see Suzette Gardenhour to secure your time to work to help make this event a success for us.

MEMORIAL SERVICES 2023

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

BENSHOF HILL CEMETERY - Saturday, June 10, 2023 – 9:30 AM (Begin at Bottom)

GRANDVIEW CEMETERY - Saturday, June 10, 2023 – Beginning at 2:00 PM

OLD ST. NICHOLAS CEMETERY - Saturday, June 17, 2023 – 9:30 AM

ST. PETKA CEMETERY - Saturday, June 17, 2023– 10:30 AM – (Begin at Bottom)

Band of Brothers – July 13-15 & 19-22, 2023



Taste of Serbia – August 12, 2023



Slavic Festival – September 15-16, 2023