

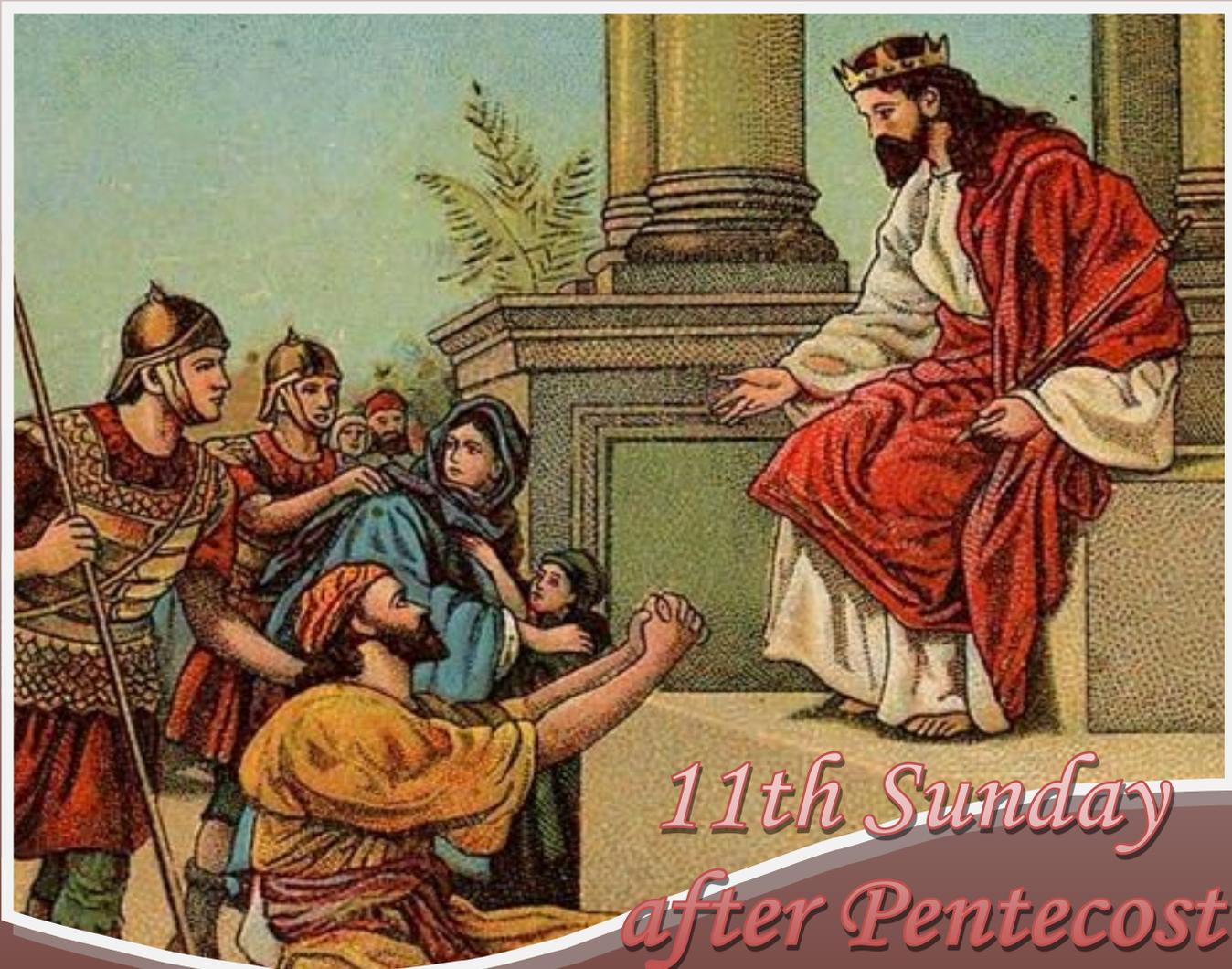
If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain... 1 Corint. 15:14



# ST. NICHOLAS

Serbian Orthodox Church

971 St. Clair Road, Johnstown, PA 15905 ■ 814-255-1853; Parish Priest :*Rev. Dragan Zaric*



*11th Sunday  
after Pentecost*

*We Must Be Merciful If We Expect God to Be Merciful*

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*Weekly Bulletin - Sunday August 20, 2017*

**Sunday, August 7/20, 2017. 11th Sunday after Pentecost;  
Holy Monk-martyr Dometius; Venerable Father Or**

- **Liturgical Readings: Gospel St. Matt. (18, 23-35)**  
***Epistle: 1 Cor. (9, 2-12).***

- **Donations Received Sunday August 13, 2017**

Offering \$829.00 Candles \$26.00 Dues \$45,00 Sunday School \$10.00

Donations to the Building Fund in memory of Lillian Fleck

For \$10 Susan Kaseler, Joe & Connie Bartis and Gloria Cernic.

For \$20 from Jack & Kay Blough, Tony & Linda Freidoff, Sylvester  
Gjurich, Dan & Karen Lovrich and Dan & Dianne Tomak. For \$25  
from Steve & Carol Purich and Susan & David Seitz

Donations to the Beautification Fund in memory of Lillian Fleck for \$20

from Henry & Romaine Laichek and \$20 anonymous.

Donations to the Choir in memory of Lillian Fleck for \$10 from Nancy Gula.

For \$20 from Bill & Mary Kelly and \$25 from Nick & Emma Saula

- Church Liturgy will begin at 10:00am starting September 10<sup>th</sup>

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- ***The Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost (Mt.18:23-35)***

Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow servants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. -

And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me and I will pay thee all. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses(KJV)

• **Homily by V. Rev. Stav. Rodney Torbich**-The wicked servant in the present Gospel received a new beginning in life when he was initially forgiven by the king. Christians receive a new beginning in life when they receive forgiveness by God in Holy Confession.

Christians appreciating the forgiveness of sins act responsibly by showing appreciation to God and kindness towards others. The servant in the Gospel did not demonstrate forgiveness as he received. Apostle Peter said: "For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them..." (2 Peter 20) When God has forgiven our sins and we consciously return to sinful ways, we face a more difficult judgment. We default on God's forgiveness when we fail to handle the forgiveness responsibly and with gratitude.

The Lord Jesus Christ's mercy and forgiveness facilitate healing relationships.. By prayerfully seeking from Christ the strength and the determination we need, we are able to attempt to follow Christ's ways. The Lord forgives believers as the king forgave his servant.. While there is time, let us heed Christ's words: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Mt.4:17) Let us practice genuine forgiveness in our relationships.

The king probed his forgiven servant with a question. We will benefit if we examine ourselves. Do we live in ways that are truly Christ pleasing? Do our thoughts, actions and words meet the standards set by Christ? Do we use our God-given talents and abilities for God's glory? Do we have good intentions but poor actions in following through on promises to God?

When God has forgiven us at Holy Confession, are we serious in honoring God in our daily lives? When we pray to God and make promises to God, are we faithful in following through on those promises? When God has answered our prayers and spared us from our fears, do we show appreciation to God? When we pray for a safe trip to a destination, on arrival do we take time to thank God?The forgiven servant had the initial choice to be compassionate to his own servant. Had he chosen wisely, he would have been appreciated by the king as well as the servant he forgave. When we fail to adhere to the teachings of Christ, we subject ourselves to the consequences. When the forgiven servant was unforgiving of his own servant he was acting in a way contrary to the example set by his master..

The unforgiving servant was subject to punishment he could have avoided. Believers make daily choices. Personal decisions determine whether believers are going toward the kingdom of God or eternal punishment. Vigilance, Christ-pleasing action and love of God are necessary. -

Sincere repentance is always necessary. Sincere repentance and prayer keep God at the forefront of our minds and as the Guide for every action. The unforgiving servant was completely absolved of his debt until he became punitive of his own servant. The Crucified and Risen Lord Jesus Christ forgives believers that repent of their sins and desire unity with Him. Repentance provides for a new beginning. Wise believers make use of new beginnings in Christ. A changed heart and mind are necessary for new beginnings in Christ. Sins and unpleasing actions before God are to be repelled. The servant had the opportunity for a new beginning. He simply was required to practice forgiveness as he received it. Forgiven believers have the opportunity to be forgiving in their daily personal relationships. Life improves daily when Christ's forgiveness is generously practiced with love in personal relationships. Each day is a day closer to the end of daily life and the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. Wise individuals are lovingly generous in forgiving when having received God's forgiveness. Amen!

### ●THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

In the third year of His preaching, the Lord Jesus often spoke to His disciples of His approaching passion but at the same time of His glory following His suffering on the Cross. So that His impending passion would not totally weaken His disciples and that no one would fall away from Him, He, the All-wise, wanted to partially show them His divine glory before His passion. For that reason, He took Peter, James and John with Him and, with them, went out at night to Mt. Tabor and there was transfigured before them: "And His face shone as the sun and His garments became white as snow" (St. Matthew 17:2). There appeared along side Him, Moses and Elijah, the great Old Testament prophets. And, seeing this, His disciples were amazed. Peter said: "Lord, it is good for us to be here: if You will, let us make here three tabernacles; one for You, one for Moses and one for Elijah" (St. Matthew 17:4). While Peter still spoke, Moses and Elijah departed and a bright cloud overshadowed the Lord and His disciples and there came a voice from the cloud saying: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear Him" (St. Matthew 17:5). Hearing the voice, the disciples fell to the ground on their faces as though dead and remained that way, lying in fear, until the Lord came near to them and said: "Arise and be not afraid" (St. Matthew 17:7). Why did the Lord take only three disciples on Tabor and not all? Because Judas was not worthy to behold the divine glory of the Teacher, Whom he will betray and the Lord did not want to leave him [Judas] alone at the foot of the mountain so that the betrayer would not, by that, justify his betrayal. Why was our Lord transfigured on a mountain and not in a valley? So as to teach us two virtues: love of labor and godly-thoughts. For, climbing to the heights required labor and height represents the heights of our thoughts, i.e., godly-thoughts. Why was our Lord transfigured at night? Because, the night rather than the day is more suitable for prayer and godly-thoughts and because the night, by its darkness, conceals all the beauty of the earth and reveals the beauty of the starry heavens. Why did Moses and Elijah appear? In order to destroy the error of the Jews, as though Christ is one of the prophets; Elijah or Jeremiah or some other that is why He appears as a King above the prophets and that is why Moses and Elijah appear as His servants. Until then, our Lord manifested His divine power many times to the disciples but, on Mt. Tabor, He manifested His divine nature. This vision of His Divinity and the hearing of the heavenly witness about Him as the Son of God, should serve the disciples in the days of the Lord's passion, in strengthening of an unwavering faith in Him and His final victory. (*Prologue*)

**INVITATION TO THE PATRONAL FEAST  
OF THE FEDERATION OF THE CIRCLES OF SERBIAN SISTERS  
OF THE DIOCESE OF EASTERN AMERICA  
THE DORMITION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS**

**ST. NICHOLAS SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH, MONROEVILLE, PA  
MONDAY, AUGUST 28<sup>TH</sup>, 2017**

Beloved Clergy, Monastics and Faithful of the Eastern American Diocese,

It is with great paternal joy, that we invite you on behalf of our dedicated Sisters to participate, on the day of Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos, on **Monday, August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017**, in the Patronal Feast and Agape—*Slava* of the Federation of the Circles of Serbian Sisters, at St. Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church in Monroeville, Pennsylvania.

The Hierarchical Divine Liturgy will begin at 10:00 AM, followed by a Festal Banquet.

On this occasion, we express our most heartfelt appreciation to this year's hosts, for their demonstrated love toward our Federation of the Circles of Serbian Sisters, and in so doing to the Lord of Hosts Himself and His Most Holy Mother, our most fervent intercessor.  
**WELCOME, INDEED – OUR JOY!**

With Archpastoral blessings and Paternal love,

**+IRINEJ** BISHOP OF EASTERN AMERICA

