



# ST. NICHOLAS

Serbian Orthodox Church

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



**THE ASSEMBLY [SYNAXIS] OF THE SEVENTY HOLY APOSTLES**  
*O Holy Apostles, intercede to our merciful God,  
that He may grant our souls forgiveness of sins.*

*Weekly Bulletin - Sunday January 17, 2016*

**Sunday, Jan. 4/17, 2016. Sunday before the Theophany**  
*Synaxis of the 70 Apostles; St. Eustathius 1, Archbishop of Serbia.*

*Liturgical Readings: Gospel St. Mark (1, 1-8); Epistle: 2 Tim. 4, 5-8.*

*Donations Received Sunday, Jan. 6-7-10, 2016*

Offering \$5396.00 Candles \$139.00 Dues \$540.00 Donations \$50 Charity \$15.00

Sunday School \$20.00 Men's Club Donation \$200.00 Choir Donation \$250.00

Donation to the Sunday School in memory of Mike Podolak for \$20 from John & Patricia Pavich

There will be Hamburgers/Hot Dogs & Fries after liturgy today

Sunday the 24<sup>th</sup> will be St. Sava celebration and lunch

On February 7, the men's club will have their Anniversary dinner, Serbian Steak beginning at after liturgy until 1:30. Take outs are available. Cost is \$10. Tickets can be purchased in the Candle Room starting today.

Fish Frys begin February 12<sup>th</sup>. There is an attendance sheet on the bulletin board in the Hall

For those to check off Days that you know you will not be able to help.

---

*Liturgical reading (Mark 1,1-8)-The Sunday before the Theophany*

**The Proclamation of John the Baptist**—1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.<sup>2</sup> As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, “Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way; <sup>3</sup> the voice of one crying in the wilderness:

Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight—”

<sup>4</sup> John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup> And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. <sup>6</sup> Now John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leather girdle around his waist, and ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup> And he preached, saying, “After me comes he who is mightier than I, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. <sup>8</sup> I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

■ St. John the Baptist holds a unique place in history. He had direct personal contact with the Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh. St. John had an awareness of his place in relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ.

St. John saw the Lord Jesus Christ as much greater than himself. Self-awareness is important. We know of our sins if we are honest and self-aware. We know of the greatness of God if we are honest and self-aware. St. John the Baptist preached repentance. Repentance always has a place in life.. Repentance is the way to redirect life on the path to the Kingdom of God. Repentance requires personal honesty and the desire to be right with God. Believers engage in sin voluntarily

or by being less than vigilant and disciplined. The desire for Christ always must be greater than the desire for sin. The attraction to Christ must exceed the attraction to sin. The days of life can be many. Vigilance is necessary at every moment of life from the time of Holy Baptism until the time of departure from this life. When life expectancy can be up to hundred years, believers face a constant challenge. Faithfulness to Christ is to increase over time as a person matures. With more knowledge about Christ comes the greater responsibility to live according to Christ's teachings and expectations. Personal abilities and decision-making capabilities have a part in the degree a person is responsible for his or her actions. God is good and merciful. Each person living or departed will face the final judgment. Christ's Second Coming remains before each person. Each day is a day closer to the Second Coming. Wise use of each moment of life is the best preparation.

Constant repentance keeps a person united with Christ. Turning to Christ for wisdom strengthens a person. Prostrating the self before Christ and being remorseful for sins is beneficial. Seeking forgiveness is the path for newness in Christ. Recognizing Christ as the source of personal strength leads to a healthier life. Holy Communion is divine nourishment uniting the believer with Christ.

Frequent Communion with preparation and reverence keeps the believer united with Christ. Believers making conscientious use of Holy Confession grow in Christ. Holy Confession is active combat against sin. The joy of Christ's birth and baptism are in the minds of believers at this time. Joy in Christ exceeds all other joy. There are many paths available to walk in life. Christ calls believers to walk the narrow path. (Mt. 7:13-14) Paths other than the narrow way hold peril for the soul. Christ's words are enduring and full of wisdom and truth. Peter made the importance of following Christ very clear. Peter said: "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." (Jn. 6:68) In this tumultuous world, following Christ is the wisest course of action.

Christ is the best place to look for the answers for life. Christ is where to find lasting nourishment. Christ is where to find refuge from the trials and tribulations of daily life. In the peace of God's Holy Church, attentive listeners hear the important instructions from God. In the quietness of God's Holy Church, believers find the path leading to the Kingdom of God. Anxieties and burdens of life can be turned over to God when entering God's Holy Church. Peace of mind, heart and soul are experienced in God's Holy Church. Fears are eradicated in God's Holy Church. The love of God becomes apparent in church. The love of the Mother of God becomes evident in God's Holy Church. The wisdom and examples of the saints are manifest in God's Holy Church. Order for life is available in God's Holy Church. Coming to church regularly is the wisest investment of the time of life. The busiest of persons benefit from regularly coming to church. The most academically educated persons improve their education by coming to church. The most materially wealthy individuals increase their wealth when humbling themselves before God in church.

St. John the Baptist realized his place in life in relationship to Christ. It is for each person to work out his or her salvation in personal relationship with Christ. Working out personal salvation occurs best in God's Holy Church. Amen! *(By Fr. Rodney Torbic)*

**THE ASSEMBLY [SYNAXIS] OF THE SEVENTY HOLY APOSTLES** - Besides the Twelve Greater Apostles, the Lord chose Seventy Lesser Apostles and sent them to preach the Gospel, "After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place He intended to visit, He said to them, 'The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest.' Go on your way: behold, I am sending you like lambs among wolves. Carry no money bag, no sack, no sandals; and greet no one along the way. Into whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this household'" (St. Luke 10:1-5). But, as Judas, one of the Twelve, fell away from the Lord, so it was with some of the Seventy who abandoned the Lord not with the intention of betrayal but because of human weakness and faintheartedness. "As a result of this, many of His disciples returned to their former way of life and no longer accompanied Him" (St. John 6:66). As Judas' place was filled by another apostle, "So they [The Apostles] proposed two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also known as Justus, and Matthias. Then they prayed, 'You, Lord, Who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two You have chosen to take the place in this apostolic ministry from which Judas turned away to go to his own place'. Then they gave lots to them, and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was counted with the eleven apostles" (Acts of the Apostles 1:23-26); so also were the places of these lesser apostles filled by others that were chosen. These Seventy Lesser Apostles labored at the same work as did the Twelve Great Apostles; they were co-workers with the Twelve in spreading and establishing the Church of God in the world. They endured many sufferings and malevolent acts from men and demons, but their strong faith and fervent love for the resurrected Lord made them victors over the world and inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven.

#### **HOMILY About the citizens of the other world**

"They do not belong to the world anymore than I belong to the world" (St. John 17:16).

Christ the Lord is not of this world rather only in the vesture of this world. That is the Commander [Christ] clad in the clothing of a slave to save the captive enslaved by sin, matter and Satan. As is the commander, so are his soldiers. Even they, according to the spirit, are not of this world: They are not captives but free, they are not slaves but masters; they are not corruptible but immortal; they are not fallen but are saved. Such are all those who Christ recruited and who tasted immortal life willingly, rejected the world and united themselves with Him and remained faithful to Him until the end of their lives on earth. Abba Moses said, "No one can enter the army of Christ if he were not totally as fire; if he does not abhor honors and comfort, if he does not sever all bodily desires; and if he does not keep all of God's commandments." Judas was recruited but he fell away and loved prison more than the royal court, slavery more than freedom, corruption more than immortality, and destruction more than salvation. But the other apostolic recruits, great and small, remained faithful to Him [Christ] to the end, achieved victory for which they are glorified on earth among men and in heaven among the angels. That is why they are glorified and blessed both on earth and in heaven. All who are glorified by the world perish with the world, but those who are glorified by Christ are saved by Christ. The glory of the world is death, but the glory of Christ is life, life eternal and without death.

O Immortal Lord, even though we are of the world according to the body and sin, recruit us into Your army, the army according to the spirit, power, wisdom and love which is not of this world. So, even when we die to the world, we may live in Your immortal kingdom with the angels, apostles and saints because of the love and prayers of Your holy apostles. Amen. (By St. Nikolaj V)