

# *Saint Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church*

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## *The Twenty Fourth Sunday after Pentecost (11.27.2022.)*

### *Luke 8:41-56*

And, behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house: For he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as he went the people thronged him. And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any, Came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanch'd. And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me. And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately. And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace. While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master. But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole. And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden. And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise. And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat. And her parents were astonished: but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done. (*KJV*)

The Holy Gospel is proclaimed in each Divine Liturgy to nourish and unite believers with Jesus Christ. The Gospel reaches into the depths of receptive hearts, minds and souls.

God's Holy Church exists for believers to continuously experience the Lord Jesus Christ. Experiences will vary according to the degree of the person's faith and interest.

The present Gospel gives two vivid examples of the possibilities when strong faith and interest in Jesus Christ exist. Today's Gospel verifies the value of reaching out in faith to Jesus Christ.

The woman with the issue of blood for twelve years had spent her living seeking a cure from physicians. Her experience in seeking a cure without Jesus Christ was to no avail.

When the woman approached Jesus in faith, she was healed immediately. Jesus recognized and verified the value of the woman's faith. Persons hearing today's Gospel are challenged to honestly examine their degree of faith in Jesus Christ.

Jairus appealed to Jesus for the healing of his young daughter who was dying. Jairus was a person of authority in the synagogue. In his demeanor, Jairus demonstrated humility before Jesus by falling down before Him.

Time elapsed from the time Jairus left his house to go to see Jesus, His daughter died during that time. The devastating news of the daughter's death was not a deterrent to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is the Conqueror of Death. Jesus Christ is the Giver and Restorer of Life. When the news of the girl's death arrived, Jesus told Jairus not to fear. Jesus told Jairus to believe.

Jesus went to Jairus' house and restored life to the young girl. The Holy Apostles Peter, James and John, Jairus and his wife were known witnesses recorded in the Gospel of this great life-giving miracle.

The present Gospel has been preserved down through the centuries in God's Holy Church. The healing of the woman with the issue of blood and the restoring of life to Jairus' daughter are intended to build up believers' lives in Jesus Christ.

The Church offers the life in Christ to all in the world willing to move away from sin and choose the way of Christ. The Church offers the nourishment, instruction and the Holy Mysteries to experience the life in Christ and to sustain it.

Humility and repentance are essential in the life in Jesus Christ. Firm faith and belief in Christ are required. Jesus Christ offers hope and the avenue to the Kingdom of God at all times even when devastating news is received.

Twelve years of affliction did not deter the woman with the issue of blood from turning to Jesus. She reached out in faith. The woman's initiative and strong faith in Jesus Christ proved worthwhile.

Jairus did not turn away from Jesus when he heard his daughter had died. Jairus accompanied Jesus to his home in faith. Jesus Christ brought lasting joy to Jairus, his wife and daughter when the daughter was restored to life.

Listeners to the present Gospel choose whether to take the Gospel to heart and make it a part of their lives. The Divine Liturgy unites believers with Jesus Christ. The Gospel reading is an integral part of the unifying experience.

Each moment is an opportunity to live in Jesus Christ. During every element of time a person can be united with Jesus Christ. Each person chooses whether to unite the heart, mind and soul with Christ at each moment of life.

The world and evil challenge the believer at every instance. Temptations and perils exist to tarnish the soul and corrupt the heart and mind. Persons of strong and resolute faith turn to Jesus Christ for life-sustaining help.

Jairus and the woman with the issue of blood are two enduring examples for believers today to remain united with Jesus Christ. God's Holy Church proclaims this Gospel message each year because of the life-giving and life-sustaining value.

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*The Twenty Fourth Sunday after Pentecost. Holy and All-praised Apostle Philip.  
November 14/27, 2022. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic*

## *The Prologue from Ochrid* *St Nikolai of Zhicha*

### **1. 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* (Matthew 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.

## **2. THE VENERABLE SERGIUS OF MALOPINEGA**

Sergius was a Russian parish priest who lived a God-pleasing life and served for sixty-two years in the province of Vologda. He peacefully entered into rest in the Lord on November 16, 1585 A.D., at the age of ninety-two.

### **HYMN OF PRAISE**

#### **THE HOLY APOSTLE MATTHEW THE EVANGELIST**

To His Holy Apostle Matthew,  
The Lord appeared in the land of the blacks,  
Giving great comfort to the tortured warrior,  
And great strength to his heroic soul.  
The Lord gave him a staff from His hand,  
And told Matthew to plant it in front of the church.  
He told him that it would grow green with life and blossom with various colors,  
And bear sweet fruit for everyone to enjoy.  
A spring would flow from beneath its roots--  
A spring of cool water for those who thirst.  
The face of whomever would partake of it with thanksgiving  
Would shine with a wondrous light.  
The apostle did as the Lord said,  
And the wood budded forth, and was adorned with blossoms,  
And living water flowed from its roots,  
And the church was filled with a multitude of people.  
Whoever was sick, was healed;  
Whoever was healthy, became healthier still.  
The blacks were blessed, their faces radiant,  
And this fierce people became God's vineyard.  
O wondrous tree, would that we could have it!  
But we do have it, brethren; all of us have it!  
It is Christ the Lord, the Lord of Hosts--  
He is the Tree of Life; by Him we are saved.

## REFLECTION

Does the Lord's command about ceaseless prayer, *that men ought always to pray* (Luke 18:1), apply only to monks or to all Christians in general? If it applied only to monks, the Apostle Paul would not have written to the Christians in Thessalonica to *pray without ceasing* (I Thessalonians 5:17). The Apostle repeats the Lord's command, word for word, and issues it to all Christians without distinction, whether monks or laymen. St. Gregory Palamas lived a life of asceticism for some time as a young hieromonk in a monastery in Beroea. The elder Job, a well-known ascetic whom everyone respected, lived in that monastery. It happened that, in elder Job's presence, St. Gregory quoted the Apostle's words, asserting that ceaseless prayer is the obligation of every Christian and not just for monks. However, elder Job replied that ceaseless prayer is the obligation of the monk only, and not for every Christian. Gregory, as the younger of the two, yielded and withdrew in silence. When Job returned to his cell and stood at prayer, an angel in great heavenly glory appeared to him and said: "O Elder, do not doubt the truthfulness of Gregory's words; he spoke correctly and you should think likewise and pass it on to others." Thus, both the Apostle and the angel confirmed the commandment that all Christians must pray to God *without ceasing*. Not only *without ceasing* in church, but also *without ceasing* in every place and at all times, and especially in your heart. For if God does not for a moment tire of giving us good things, how can we tire of thanking Him for these good things? When He thinks of us *without ceasing*, why do we not think of Him *without ceasing*?

## CONTEMPLATION

Contemplate the creation of the world (Genesis 1):

1. How on the third day God divided the dry land from the water;
2. How He commanded the earth to bring forth grass and fruit-bearing trees;
3. How this was according to the Word of God, and *it was good*.

## HOMILY

**on Christ's dwelling in the hearts of the faithful**

... that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye [may be] rooted and grounded in love (Ephesians 3:17).

With faith, Christ comes into the heart, and with Christ comes love. Thus man is rooted and grounded in love. First then, there is faith; then with faith comes Christ's presence in the heart; then with Christ's presence, the presence of love; and with love, all ineffable goodness. In a few

words, the Apostle delineates the whole ladder of perfection. The beginning is faith and the end is love; and faith and love are joined in a living, undivided unity by the Living Lord Jesus Christ's presence in the heart. By strengthening faith, we further abolish the distance between ourselves and the Lord Jesus Christ. The stronger one's faith, the closer one is to Christ. Ultimately, one's heart is filled with Christ and cannot be separated from Christ, just as one's lung cannot be separated from the air. Then a man may, with tears of joy, communicate with Christ by the prayer of the heart--"Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me a sinner"--and the heart is imperceptibly filled with light and ardent love. In this way, love is united with faith and hope; and when they are united, the boundaries between them are lost, so that man cannot even think of determining of how far faith goes, and where hope and love begin. When the living Christ dwells in a man, then he no longer perceives faith, hope or love in himself, nor does he name them. Instead, he sees only Christ and names only Him. This is just like a fruit-grower in autumn who considers the ripe fruit on the tree, and speaks no more of blossoms and leaves but of fruit, ripe fruit.

O Lord Jesus Christ, supreme height of all our endeavors and the destination of all our travels, draw near to us and save us.

**To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.**

## *Services this Week*

- ❖ *Tuesday, 11.29.'22 – Holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew - 09:30 AM Divine Liturgy*
- ❖ **Friday – 12.02.'22. – PARACLESIS - THE OFFICE OF SUPPLICATION TO SAINT NECTARIOS -05:00 PM – Confession**
- ❖ *The 25<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost, The Entry into The Temple of the Most Holy Theotokos – December 04<sup>th</sup> – 09:30 AM Divine Liturgy*

**Donations November 20, 2022**

Offering - \$ 475.00   Candles - \$92.00   Dues - \$200.00

**Building Fund**

In Memory of Andrew Grisin

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|--|---|
| Eli Cvijanovich - \$100                  | Sylvester Gjurich - \$25                    |
| The Fougere Family - \$100               | Lazo & Debbie Gjurich - \$25                |
| Gojko, Rose, & Kristina Marinkovich \$50 | Milica Knepp - \$25                         |
| Michael & Mary Raich - \$50              | Richard Kondash - \$20                      |
| Joe Bartis - \$50                        | John & Patricia Pavich - \$20               |
| Donna Zimmerman - \$50                   | Dan Lovrich - \$20                          |
| Heather Hall - \$50                      | Tony & Linda Freidhoff & Joanne Uzelac \$20 |
| Pete & Joanne Todorich - \$25            | Bob Stramanak - \$10                        |
| Nick & Emma Saula - \$25                 | Stella Nitkulinec - \$10                    |
| Mary Kelly - \$25                        |   |

**Large Candles**

- In Memory of Julie Lambrinos from Dan & Dyne Tomak
- In Memory of Steve & Stella Baich from Kathy & Gerry Szmyd
- In Memory of Connie Bartis from Rick Kondas
- In Memory of Father, Mike Tumbas from Milica Knepp
- In Memory of Linda Zedlar Griffiths from Milica Knepp
- In Memory of Christine and Charles from Olga Bulich

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NEXT FISH FRY

FRIDAY DECEMBER 9, 2022

Please see Donna Zimmerman or Suzette if you can help!

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**The Sunday School will be hosting a breakfast following Divine Liturgy today, Sunday November 27<sup>th</sup>. PLEASE join us!**

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**VISIT OUR WEBSITE!!!!**

**<https://stnicholasjohnstown.org>**

**Thanks Brady (Malichi) Doyle for the Great update!**