

Saint Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church

971 St. Clair Rd, Johnstown, PA 15905

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The Fifth Sunday after Pentecost (07.09.2023.)

Matthew 8:28-9:1

And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way. And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time? And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding. So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters. And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told everything, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils. And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought him that he would depart out of their coasts. And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city. **(KJV)**

Jesus Christ's power over devils is verified in the present Gospel. Jesus opened the roadway blocked by those possessed by devils. Christ will open the roadways for believers seeking the Kingdom of God.

Believers encounter roadways in life that appear impassable. Those possessed by the devil may be preventing passage. Jesus Christ has the power to open the passage way.

Faith in Christ opens paths to the Kingdom of God. Prayer reveals to believers the God-pleasing paths in life to follow. When roadways are blocked, believers do well to focus on Jesus Christ for direction.

A person may find him or herself in a work situation or a relationship in which the devil is preventing growth. Impatience and frustration are not the solution. Turning to Jesus Christ in prayer is the solution.

The present Gospel is prescribed by the Church each year. The Gospel assures believers of Christ's powers over devils blocking passages in life.

Jesus' power is to be embraced for great benefit to life.

Each breath, each heartbeat, and each moment of life are due to Jesus Christ. Life exists to be lived in glory to Christ. God's Kingdom is the goal embraced at Holy Baptism.

Devils seek to frighten believers journeying to God's Kingdom. Luke warm faith when encountering devils prevents believers from growth in Christ and continuing the journey to the Kingdom.

Fervent faith in Jesus Christ is necessary when encountering devils in daily life. The Gospel fortifies believers. The Gospel assures believers to have hope in life.

Presently the Church is in the Apostles Fast. The Fast is a period for self-examination and assessment. The Fast is a time to look at the heart and mind to determine if fear of devils is blocking growth in Christ and in life.

Fears arise in the heart and mind often unintentionally and without notice. Devils delight in causing fear in the heart and mind. Jesus Christ is the antidote to fear in the heart and mind.

Jesus Christ is the cure for despair and depression. Jesus Christ is the Light when darkness overtakes life. Jesus Christ is pure peace and joy when the heart and mind need peace and joy.

Daily news reports often fill the air with bleak happenings. Fears can arise in the mind that keep people from traveling or undertaking certain plans that will lead to God's Kingdom.

The Gospel provides assurances to attentive believers. The Church stands as a witness for hope in the community. The Risen Christ defeated the barriers to death. Jesus destroyed the fear of death by rising from the dead.

Jesus Christ offers life with peace and joy. Jesus Christ offers safe passage to the heavenly Kingdom. Eternal life awaits those choosing to ardently follow Christ.

The Fast is a time to uncover the manifold blessings of the life in Christ and to embrace them. The Fast culminates in the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul. Peter and Paul are primary witnesses to the glory of the life in Christ

Following Jesus Christ is not for the weak of heart. Devils take glee in attacking followers of Christ. Jesus provides strength for believers to confront the devils that arise. Jesus is the path to victory over devils.

The Church nourishes and educates believers in the way to confront and overcome the devils that arise in life. The Church is the beacon of hope in life.

Thank God for the Holy Gospel offering hope. Jesus Christ is due gratitude for His' power over the devils. The roadways are open today to pursue the Kingdom of God.

**The Fifth Sunday after Pentecost. Venerable Father David of Thessalonica.
June 26/July 9, 2023. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic.**

INSTRUCTION ON THE FEASTS OF THE SAINTS

St. Clement of Ohrid

St. Clement of Ohrid (†916), the disciple and co-struggler of the enlighteners of the Slavs Sts. Cyril and Methodius, labored greatly together with them in the field of Slavic enlightenment and defense of Orthodoxy in the Moravian land. Exiled from there, he came to Bulgaria, where he organized numerous schools in which Slavonic literacy was taught to both children and adults. A translator, preacher, and spiritual writer, he became the first bishop to serve in the Slavonic language, and his literary works were the first examples of Slavic spiritual literature. The Church commemorates the bishop of Ohrid, Clement, together with his co-laborers—Sts. Angelar, Naum, Savva, and Gorazd. Today on the Sunday of All Saints we present a few of his teachings on the veneration of saints.



Holy Hierarch Clement of Ohrid

O Lord, bless!

Know, brothers, that today is the feast of Saint [name]. And we need to gather in church for prayer, as it says in the Holy Gospel: *Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them* (Matt. 18:20). Here, brothers, amidst the worshippers, is the Lord Himself, in accordance with His promise. Therefore it is needful for us to go to Church with a pure heart, that we may pray without anger and wrath, first of all asking for cleansing of all sins. For it is said: *all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive* (Matt. 21:22). And, *when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking* (Matt. 6:7). This is idle talk, when from God people seek riches, honor, victory over an enemy, or something earthly. *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you* (Matt. 6:33).

And when you celebrate the memory of the saints, you do this: First of all, let us emulate their purity, their good life, and faithful service. Pleasing to God is he who unhypocritically celebrates the [Church] feasts, and not as the man-pleasers, who expect to receive praise for the table [he's laid]. It is better for us to emulate the saints in their actions. And let us always be attentive that our souls be pure, and our hearts holy. These are the feasts that God wants: when we receive wanderers, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit prisoners with alms; when we give some help to the poor and sick; when we somehow help the offended, when we honor each other without hypocrisy, but with humility and sincere love. Thus did God say: *According to your faith be it unto you* (Matt. 9:29). Then our prayers will be accepted— prayer united with acts of mercy will truly be heard. Such sacrifices, as the apostle Paul said, are pleasing to God (cf. Heb. 13:16). And the prophet [David] said, *A sacrifice unto God is a contrite spirit: the heart that is broken and humbled, God will not despise* (Ps. 50:19). And the Lord says the words: *For I desire mercy, and not sacrifice* (Hos. 6:6).

Brothers, having heard this, write it all in your hearts, for we need to always learn from these [words] and [in the proper manner] honor the feasts of those who pleased God. Therefore did God give power in heaven and on earth to forgive sins, and through them He gives healing to those who worthily honor Him. Worthily honoring their lives and sufferings, let us ourselves labor to work a good struggle and preserve the right faith. Let us always abide in God's commandments and let us learn from them. Let us render to God's Church due glory: We will pray for forgiveness of sins [in it] with fear, and not only refrain from idle talk, but also cast out evil thoughts from our hearts, and penetrate the reading and hymns. And let us glorify with pure lips the Most Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, always, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

St. Clement of Ohrid

Services this Week

- ❖ **Wednesday – 07.12.2023. – The Holy Glorious and All-praised Leaders of the Apostles Peter and Paul 09:30 AM Divine Liturgy**
- ❖ **Friday – 07.14.2023. – Holy and Wonderworker Unmerc. Gosmas and Damian, Martyrs - 09:30 AM Divine Liturgy**
- ❖ **6th Sunday after Pentecost– 07.16.2023. - 09:30 AM Divine Liturgy**

Donations July 2, 2023

Offering - \$ 738.00

Candles - \$60.00

Building Fund
In Memory of Irene Martinovich

Carole & Tom McAllister \$20, Sylvester Gjurich \$25, Eli Cvijanovich \$25,
Lazo & Debbie Gjurich \$20, John & Patty Pavich \$20, Dan Lovrich \$20,
Bob Stramanak \$20, Dyne & Dan Tomak \$25, Gary, Rose & Katrina
Marinkovich \$40, Kathy & Ed Urban \$100.

Large Candles

In Memory of Linda Palmer from Rick Kondas
In Memory of Connie Bartis from Joe Bartis
In Memory of Mike & Mildred Tumbas from Milica Knepp
In Memory of Pani Patrica Ward from Dorothy Podolak
In Memory of Susan Krenisky from Dan & Dyne Tomak
The Malich Family

Please visit our St. Nicholas Web Page

<https://stnicholasjohnstown.org>

We have now added a "DONATE" button to make it easier for you to
send your donations. Please take a look.

BAND OF BROTHERS
(Shakespeare in Stack House Park)

July 13-15 & 19-22, 2023

PLEASE

see Suzette or Carole McAllister to sign up to work!!!

UPCOMING EVENTS

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



Taste of Serbia – August 12, 2023



Slavic Festival – September 15-16, 2023