

# Saint Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church

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## The Sixth Sunday after Pentecost (07.16.2023.)

### Matthew 9:1-8

And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city. And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. And he arose, and departed to his house. But when the multitudes saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men. **(KJV)**

The Lord Jesus Christ wanted the scribes in the present Gospel to know He had the power to forgive sins. Jesus healed the man of his paralysis as the convincing demonstration of His healing power.

In order to have hope in their lives, sinners need to believe and know for certain Jesus has the power to forgive sins. Hope for forgiveness gives sinner the courage to repent and to begin life anew in Jesus Christ.

Forgiveness opens the path to the Kingdom of God for believers paralyzed by sin. The present Gospel identifies Jesus Christ as the Forgiver of sins.

The paralyzed man experienced new found freedom due to his healing by Jesus Christ. The present Gospel opens the pathway to hope for attentive listeners to the present Gospel.

Sin is a very paralyzing force capable of preventing progress and growth in the life in Christ. Sin can lead to depression and despair when paralysis occurs and continues.

The people bringing the paralyzed man to Jesus in the Gospel had strong faith. Jesus acknowledged their faith. Jesus is perceptive of the faith in believers.

Faith is an important element in healing. Strong faith makes a difference. The Holy Gospel teaches the importance of faith. Believers have the responsibility to embrace and develop strong personal faith.

Familiarity with the lessons of the Gospel makes a difference. The Church in wisdom proclaims the value of faith throughout the year. Wise believers heed and cherish the wisdom.

The hunger in the soul recognizes the relationship between faith and hope in the healing process. Jesus Christ is essential if healing is to occur.

Jesus, hope and faith are the strong combination for healing.

The paralyzed man had support from those bringing him to Jesus. External support from family and friends is beneficial for persons seeking to begin anew in Christ.

Sinners need to overcome the inertia created from paralysis. The faithful bringing the paralyzed man to Jesus were helpful. Jesus completed the healing process.

The man when healed of his paralysis was given the opportunity for new life. He went home when he was healed. Observers of the healing glorified God.

Healings occur regularly. Observers of healings have opportunities to glorify God. Persons of faith heeding the lesson of the present Gospel are encouraged to bring paralyzed sinners to Jesus Christ for healing.

God's Holy Church is the primary hospital caring for and treating individuals paralyzed by sin. Persons suffering from the paralysis of sin learn of and experience Christ's forgiveness available in the Church.

Holy Confession makes a difference. God's healing power is manifested in confession. God's healing power changes human lives for the better. God is glorified through the person's healing as a result of forgiveness of sins.

Going to Church and being a member of the Church are serious undertakings. Becoming a Christian entails great responsibilities. Believers are expected to live in Christ and to be faithful to Christ.

Believers sin often. Repentance is the expectation when a person sins. Failure to repent creates new problems for the believer. Forgiveness brings joy and freedom.

Jesus Christ's love is manifested when healing occurs through forgiveness of sins. Jesus Christ's love and the forgiveness of sins are associated with Jesus being upon the Cross.

Jesus' death on the Cross transformed the world. Jesus' Resurrection brought Light out of the darkness of the Tomb. Hope rose from the Tomb.

Healing from sin's paralysis is new life in the Resurrected Christ.

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**The Sixth Sunday after Pentecost. July 3/16, 2023. Holy Martyr Hyacinth; St. Anatolius, Patriarch of Constantinople. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania.**

**Father Rodney Torbic**

# THE TWELVE APOSTLES: TIMID MEN WHO WON THE WORLD

An excerpt from a homily by St. John Chrysostom (Hom. 4, 3.4: PG 61, 34-36).



It became clear through unlearned men that the cross was persuasive; in fact, it persuaded the whole world. Their discourse was not of unimportant matters but of God and true religion, of the Gospel way of life and future judgment, and yet it turned ordinary, uneducated men into philosophers. See how the foolishness of God is wiser than people, and his weakness stronger than people!

In what way is it stronger? It made its way throughout the world and overcame everyone; countless people sought to eradicate the very name of Christ, but that name flourished and grew ever mightier. Its enemies lost and perished; the living, who waged a war on a dead man, were shown to be helpless. Therefore, when a Greek tells me I am dead, he shows only that he is really

the foolish one, for I, whom he thinks a fool, prove to be wiser than those reputed to be wise. So, also, in calling me weak, he merely shows that he is even weaker. For the good deeds which tax-collectors and fishermen were able to accomplish by God's grace, are beyond the imagination of philosophers, rulers, and the countless multitudes.

Paul had this in mind when he said: The weakness of God is stronger than people. That the preaching of these men was indeed divine is brought home to us in the same way. For how otherwise could twelve uneducated men, who lived on lakes and rivers and wastelands, conceive the idea for such an immense enterprise? How could men who perhaps had never been in a city or a public square think of setting out to do battle with the whole world? That they were fearful, timid men, the evangelist makes clear; he did not reject the fact or try to hide their weaknesses. Indeed he turned these into a proof of the truth. What did he say of them? That when Christ was arrested, the others fled, despite all the miracles they had seen, while Peter, who was leader of the others, denied him.

How then do we account for the fact that these men, who in Christ's lifetime did not stand up to the attacks by the Jews, set forth to do battle with the whole world once Christ was dead – if, as you claim, Christ did not rise and speak to them and rouse their courage? Did they perhaps say to themselves: "What is this? He could not save himself but he will protect us? He did not help himself when he was alive, but now that he is dead he will extend a helping hand to us? In his lifetime he brought no nation under his banner, but by uttering his name we will win over the whole world?" Would it not be wholly irrational even to think such thoughts, much less to act upon them?

It is evident, then, that if they had not seen him risen and had proof of his power, they would not have risked so much.

*St. John Chrysostom*

## Services this Week

- ❖ **Friday – 07.21.2023. – Holy Greatmartyr Procopius -  
09:30 AM Divine Liturgy**
- ❖ **7<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost – 07.23.2023. - 09:30 AM  
Divine Liturgy**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

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



Taste of Serbia – August 12, 2023



Slavic Festival – September 15-16, 2023