



Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

Sun, July 12th, 2020 - The Gergesene Demoniac

5th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 4. Martyrs Proclus and Hilary of Ancyra (2nd c.).



Hymns for Today

When the women disciples of the Lord learned from the angel the joyous message of Thy Resurrection, they cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the apostles: "Death is overthrown! Christ God is risen, granting the world great mercy!"

The image of God was truly preserved in thee, O Father, for thou didst take up the Cross and follow Christ. By so doing, thou taughtest us to disregard the flesh for it passes away; but to care instead for the soul, for it is immortal. Therefore thy spirit, O holy Father Michael, rejoices with the angels.

Thy holy martyrs Proclus and Hilary, O Lord, through their sufferings have received incorruptible crowns from Thee, our God. For having Thy strength, they laid low their adversaries, and shattered the powerless boldness of demons. Through their intercessions, save our souls!

My Savior and Redeemer as God rose from the tomb and delivered the earth-born from their chains. He has shattered the gates of hell, and as Master, He has risen on the third day!

Like the morning star, your glorious sufferings enlighten us with holy miracles. We celebrate your memory, O Proclus and Hilary; pray to Christ our God for us that He will save our souls!

By thy deeds thou didst wither the arrogance of the flesh; and through enlightenment thou gavest wings to thine agility of spirit. Thou wast revealed as a dwelling-place of the Trinity, Whom now thou dost clearly behold. O blessed Michael, unceasingly pray for us all!

Epistle Reading - Romans 10:1-10

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "The man who does those things shall live by them." But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down from above) or, 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Gospel Reading - Matthew 8:28-9:1

When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. And suddenly they cried out, saying, "What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?" Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding. So the demons begged Him, saying, "If You cast us out, permit us to go away into the herd of swine." And He said to them, "Go." So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the

DEAR GUESTS AND FRIENDS: *A most sincere and heartfelt welcome to you from Holy Trinity Orthodox Church. According to the ancient traditions of the Orthodox Church, the Sacrament of Holy Communion is to be administered only to Orthodox Christians who have prepared to receive the Holy Sacrament through prayer and fasting.*

steep place into the sea, and perished in the water. Then those who kept them fled; and they went away into the city and told everything, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men. And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw Him, they begged Him to depart from their region. So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city.

THIS WEEK'S SERVICE SCHEDULE

(Sat Vespers & Sun Liturgy livestreamed on Facebook)

TODAY: 8:40 AM Hours, Divine Liturgy @ 9:00 AM

WED, July 15: Divine Liturgy for Great Prince Vladimir

Wed, July 15 @ 9 AM

WED, July 15: 1 PM Bible Study - NOTE Time Change

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Baptism of Abaigeal Mahaffey

Saturday July 18 @ 11 AM

You are all invited to celebrate the baptism of Sterry and Cassandra Mahaffey's latest addition, Abaigeal! His Eminence Archbishop David will also be with us to perform the baptism.

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SAT, July 18: 5:00 PM Great Vespers

SUN, July 19: 8:40 AM Hours, 9 AM Divine Liturgy

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THANK YOU! CHURCH BEAUTIFICATION & CLEANUP DETAIL - Thank you to all who came out to help with our church beautification and cleanup detail yesterday. We cleaned up the shrubs and installed window well covers around the church. The pavilion kitchen and dining area were also cleaned. God bless you for your sacrifices to help support the work of the Church.

+ 2020 HOLY TRINITY FOODFEST +

July 24 & 25, 4 PM-8 PM

Dear Fellow Parishioners,

It is that time of the summer where we would be preparing for our annual bazaar. Due to the Covid 19

Pandemic, we need to keep our church family, volunteers and community as safe as possible. And so it has been decided that in place of our traditional church bazaar, we plan to hold a "curbside pickup" ethnic Food Festival.

There has been a great deal of preliminary planning and changes instituted to have the most lucrative and safe event for all to enjoy. All of our favorite ethnic foods will be available for online orders and phone orders. Patrons will not even have to leave their vehicles to purchase these delicious items. Beginning July 20th-23rd you will be able to place orders at our website, Facebook page or by phone at 570 825-6540. Spread the word that only pre-orders can be accepted. No onsite orders.

The Food Festival will be held July 24 and 25 from 4:00- 8:00 PM. As you know, parishioner support is what leads to its ultimate success. Since only food will be available we are kindly asking you to consider a donation to cover the cost of the ingredients. Perhaps one or two families can combine their donations to sponsor an item available at the Food Festival. This event will also require those who are able to help in person before, during and after the Festival. Anytime you can volunteer to help will be greatly appreciated! Social distancing and use of PPE and masks will be required. You will receive a letter in the mail with our current needs.

A special thanks in advance to all parishioners who will be donating their time, talents and treasure. Any small contribution is important to the success of the Food Festival.

Please keep us in your prayers for warm and sunny weather with rain beginning at midnight and ending in the early hours of the morning. (We can't forget our gardens!)

Sincerely,
Sandy Serafin
Parish Council President

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Living: Cynthia Dulsky, Theodore & Elenor Sovryda, Valletta Family, Nadine Breisch, Luke Austin, Rosalie Bagenski, Denise Meck, Sonja & Leanne Kay, Stephen & Mary Krill, Anna Hutz Lahr, Madaline, Brian Cawley,

Josie Bissett, Lisa Harvey, Daniel & Shannon Bissett, Johnny Soucek, Rebecca King, Ray Zavada, Connie Padrezas, Delores Karas, Antonette Terry, Archpriest Daniel & Matushka Myra Kovalak, Mary DeBenedetto, Violet Filipi, Karl Pfeiffenberger, Lisa Vallone, Christopher Polk, Emma St. Romain & Infant, Catherine, Diane Welgus, Danny Gobish, Lorraine Pace, Gregory Gobish, Anastasia Homick **Departed:** Barbara Clark, Frank Emil Timko Maddox, Janice George, Mitred Archpriest Nicholas Timpko, Thomas Podalak, Martin Taylor, Dimitrios L.

Altar Server Schedule

Sunday, July 12

Alex Holoviak, Tommy Donlick, Andrew Neal

Sunday, July 19th

Christopher Dutko, Symeon Clark, Ephraim Neal

Sunday, July 25th

Vladimir Holoviak, Caleb Dutko, Andrew Conklin

On Afflictions

"Afflictions are a great teacher; afflictions show us our weaknesses, passions, and the need of repentance; afflictions cleanse the soul, they make it sober, as from drunkenness, they bring down grace into the soul, they soften the heart, they inspire us with a loathing for sin, and strengthen us in faith, hope, and virtue."

St. John of Kronstadt

LIVESTREAM INITIATIVE UPDATE

We have raised \$225 of our \$600 Goal for Livestreaming Equipment. We need \$375 to meet our goal! Thank you to all who have made contributions!

Below is a list of the equipment we need to have a basic setup to broadcast our services to both Facebook and Youtube (currently we are only able to broadcast to Facebook).

Mevo Start Livestreaming Camera (\$399)

Mevo Camera Stand (\$79) COVERED

Castr Multistreaming Platform (\$99 Annually) COVERED

If you would like to make a donation or purchase one of these items please respond to this email or give Fr. Innocent a call. Thanks so much!

Image of a True Disciple: The Gadarene Demonic



One of the most challenging narratives in the Gospels is the healing of the Gadarene (Gergasene) demoniac [Mark 5:1-20; Matthew 8:28-34; Luke 8:26-39]. This dramatic event, which reveals the power of Christ over the demons, will appear to the 21st century mind as either archaic or even primitive. We may listen with respect and sing "Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee!" upon the completion of the reading, but "wrapping our minds" around such a narrative may leave us baffled, if not shaking our heads. The spectacle of a man possessed by many demons, homeless and naked, living among the tombs, chained so as to contain his self-destructive behavior, is not exactly a sight that we encounter with any regularity, to state the obvious. (Although we should acknowledge that behind the walls of certain institutions, we could witness to this day some horrible scenes of irrational and frightening behavior from profoundly troubled and suffering human beings). Add to this a herd of swine blindly rushing over a steep bank and into a lake to be drowned, and we must further recognize the strangeness of this event. This is altogether not a part of our world!

Yet, there is no reason to doubt the veracity of the narrated event, which does appear in three of the Gospels, though with different emphases and details—in fact there are two demoniacs in Saint Matthew’s telling of the story! It is always instructive to compare the written account of a particular event or body of teaching when found in more than one Gospel. This will cure us of the illusion of a wooden literalism as we will discover how the four evangelists will present their gathered material from the ministry of Jesus in somewhat different forms. As to the Gadarene demoniac, here was an event within the ministry of Christ that must have left a very strong impression upon the early Church as it was shaping its oral traditions into written traditions that would eventually come together in the canonical Gospels. This event was a powerful confirmation of the Lord’s encounter and conflict with, and victory over, the “evil one.” The final and ultimate consequence of that victory will be revealed in the Cross and Resurrection.

Whatever our immediate reaction to this passage, I believe that we can recognize behind the dramatic details the disintegration of a human personality under the influence of the evil one, and the reintegration of the same man’s personhood when healed by Christ. Here was a man that was losing his identity to a process that was undermining the integrity of his humanity and leading to physical harm and psychic fragmentation. I am not in the process of offering a psychological analysis of the Gadarene demoniac because I am ill-equipped to do so and I do not believe that we can “reduce” his horrible condition to psychological analysis. We are dealing with the mysterious presence of personified evil and the horrific effects of that demonic presence which we accept as an essential element of the authentic Gospel Tradition. The final detail that indicates this possessed man’s loss of personhood is revealed in the dialogue between himself and Jesus.

“Jesus then asked him, ‘What is your name?’ And he said, ‘Legion,’ for many demons had entered him” [8:30].

To be named in the Bible is to receive a definite and irreducible identity as a person. It is to be “someone” created in the “image and likeness of God.” It is the role of the evil one to be a force of disintegration. The “legion” inhabiting the man reveals the loss of his uniqueness and the fragmentation of his personality. Such a distorted personality can no longer have a

“home,” which is indicative of our relational capacity as human beings, as it is indicative of stability and a “groundedness” in everyday reality. The poor man is driven into the desert, biblically the abode of demons. Once again, we may stress the dramatic quality of this presentation of a person driven to such a state, but would we argue against this very presentation as false when we think of the level of distortion that accompanies any form of an “alliance” with evil—whether “voluntary or involuntary?” Does anyone remain whole and well-balanced under the influence of evil? Or do we rather not experience or witness a drift toward the “abyss”?

Then we hear a splendid description of the man when he is healed by Christ! For we hear the following once the demons left him and entered into the herd of swine and self-destructed (the ultimate end of all personal manifestations of evil?).

“Then the people went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had gone, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind; and they were afraid” [8:35].

“Sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind.” This is clearly one of the most beautiful descriptions of a Christian who remains as a true disciple of the Master. This is the baptized person who is clothed in a “garment of salvation” and who is reoriented toward Christ, the “Sun of Righteousness.” The image here is of total reintegration, of the establishment of a relationship with Christ that restores integrity and wholeness to human life. It is also an image of peacefulness and contentment. Our goal in life is to “get our mind right,” which describes repentance or that “change of mind” that heals all internal divisions of the mind and heart as it restores our relationship with others. Jesus commands the man “to return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you” [8:39]. We, too, have been freed from the evil one “and all his angels and all his pride” in baptism. In our own way, perhaps we too can also proclaim just how much Jesus has done for us [cf. 8:39].

(source: oca.org)