

CHURCH BULLETIN	V. Rev. Fr. George Veselinovic, Parish Priest Monroeville, Pennsylvania 15146 412.622.4714 (cell) 412.856.8166 (office) dj.veselinovic@yahoo.com www.stnicholasmonroeville.org stnicholasmonroeville@gmail.com	SUNDAY February 10, 2019
--------------------	---	-----------------------------

THIRTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Epistle: Timothy (4: 9-15)

This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance. For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe. These things command and teach. Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all.

Gospel: Luke (19: 1-10)

Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house." So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner." Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

TROPARION TONE IV

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

TRANSFER OF THE RELICS OF ST. NICHOLAS, WONDERWORKER

TROPARION TONE IV

The day of the joyous celebration has come; the city of Bari rejoices and with it the whole universe leaps from joy, singing the spiritual songs and psalms. For today, the holy feast, on the occasion of the transfer of the honorable and exceedingly healing relics of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker, has shone forth with the radiant rays, like the sun that does not set, driving

away the darkness of temptations and calamities from those who faithfully exclaim to thee: "Save us, as our protector, O great Nicholas!"

KONTAKION TONE IV

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

KONTAKION TONE III

TRANSFER OF THE HOLY RELICS OF ST. NICHOLAS, WONDERWORKER

Your relics, O Saint Nicholas, came out as a star from the east to the west. The sea was sanctified by your journey, and the city of Bari, through you, has received the grace. For working for us, you have appeared as an excellent, wonderful and merciful Wonderworker.

KONTAKION OF THE THEOTOKOS - TONE VI

Steadfast protectress of Christians, constant advocate before the Creator: do not despise the cry of us sinners, but in your goodness come speedily to help us who call on you in faith. Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, O Theotokos, for you do always protect those who honor you.

SAINTS WE COMMEMORATE TODAY – *Venerable Ephraim the Syrian; Venerable Isaac the Syrian*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today – Parastos for +Martha Mrkich Dawson and +Myra Visnick Bryant. Vjecnaja pamjat! Memory eternal!

House Blessings ó Father George has begun blessing homes. Please understand that with the preparations for the Diocesan Assembly as well as other church services, Father has a very busy schedule. He will contact you with his availability.

Matthew Shaffer, son of Melissa Karas Shaffer needs our prayers, love, and support. Matthew is a wonderful, faithful young man and a member of our parish family. We are appealing for your compassion and help. Please see Father George and/or Nick Jokola. Make your checks payable to Melissa Karas Shaffer.

Thank you from the Tammies - for the overwhelming support of the pizza fundraiser! A very generous donation of \$2000 will be given to the Matthew Shaffer family to help with medical and travel expenses. It was heartwarming to see so many parishioners come together to help a child in need. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts. Please continue to pray for Matthew and his family.

Purse Bash – A planning meeting will be held **tomorrow** at 6:00 p.m. in the church hall. The Purse Bash is scheduled for March 2, 2019. Ladies, it is not too late to join the group to help make this event a successful fundraiser. If you have any questions, please contact Sondra Deaunovich at Sondra7890@comcast.net or 412-760-5796.

Tuesday, February 12th – Synaxis of the Three Holy Hierarchs ó Liturgy at 10:00 a.m.

Friday, February 15th – The Meeting of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ in the Temple ó Liturgy at 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, February 17th – The Tammies will be having a winter soup sale! Stock up on some warm, comfort food! Eat in or take out \$8/quart.

Friday, February 22nd and Saturday, February 23rd – Our parish will host the Annual Diocesan Assembly. Vesper service 5:00 p.m. on Friday evening, and Hierarchical Divine Liturgy 8:00 a.m. Saturday morning. Please plan on attending!

The Committee for the 2019 SNF Summer Golf Tournament has met and is excited to begin planning for this big event for our church and local SNF lodges. To be successful, we will need everyone's help! There will be many opportunities for you to contribute. The Committee will keep you informed of our progress over the coming months. Pam Matejevich will be coordinating volunteers for the event which will take place August 7-11, 2019. Reach out to Pam or to Chairman Dushan Markoff to offer your help or ask any questions!

REMINDERS

Adult Bible Study – Classes cancelled until further notice.

Vespers ó Saturday evening 6:00 p.m.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT:

How to Respond Like Zacchaeus When Salvation Comes to Your House

One of the reasons some do not take the Christian faith seriously today is that those who profess to be Christians do not always live out their faith with integrity. For example, many people who identify themselves as followers of Christ in our society give more time, energy, and attention to their favorite athletic teams, politicians, pastimes, entertainment, and self-centered desires of whatever kind than to living faithfully in how they treat other people. When Christians appear to live in ways that are no more virtuous than those of people without any religious faith at all, it is no wonder that some have little interest in or respect for our faith. That is precisely why we all have a lot to learn from Zacchaeus, whose life was changed so profoundly by his encounter with Jesus Christ. No one would have had any illusions about what kind of person Zacchaeus was before the Lord entered His home. He was a traitor to his fellow Jews because he collected taxes for the Romans, who were occupying his country. He was a chief tax collector and quite wealthy because he took even more than was required from his own people. He lived in luxury from what he stole in the name of a hated foreign power. Though his way of life was about as far from God's requirements as one could get, Zacchaeus wanted to see the Lord as He passed by. A short little man, he had to climb a sycamore tree in

order to be above the crowd and get a decent view. There were probably some people in the crowd that day who would have liked to see him fall out of the tree and break his neck. Zacchaeus certainly knew what people thought of him. So just imagine how shocked everyone must have been when the Messiah of Israel called out to this wicked man: "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house." Then that little tax-collector quickly went home and got ready to welcome Christ. He received Him joyfully, but others grumbled about what was happening. How could any righteous Jew, let alone the Messiah, become a guest in the home of a notorious traitor and criminal? Christ would be defiled by going into the home of such a person and presumably eating with him. He would appear to endorse theft, greed, and even the oppression of the Romans. That would be a terrible scandal that would call into question the integrity of His ministry. In that very stressful moment, just when the crowd was seething in anger at Christ and at Zacchaeus, the tax-collector did the unthinkable: He repented of his own free will. Yes, before Christ said or did anything else, Zacchaeus repented. He accepted the truth about himself, that he was a criminal exploiter of the needy. To make things right, he gave half of what he owned to the poor and restored four-fold what he had stolen from others. In that moment, this despised and miserable man began to turn his life around. And Jesus Christ accepted the sincere repentance of this sinner, proclaiming that salvation had come to this son of Abraham, for He came to seek and to save the lost.

If we ever wanted a sign of the difference that it should make in the life of a human being to encounter Christ, this is it. Though it may be hard to see, Zacchaeus's story is the story of us all. The Savior has appeared in our world, born and baptized for our salvation. He enters not only our world and our humanity in general, but wants to commune personally with everyone created in His image and likeness, even though we all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. (Rom. 3:23) As He says elsewhere, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me." (Rev. 3:20) He comes to fulfill the purposes for which He created food and fellowship to begin with, namely, to share Himself with us, to make us participants in His eternal, blessed, and holy life that conquers all forms of human corruption and even death itself. That is His intention for each and every human being.

Even as our lives are about far more than emotion, the life which Christ shares with us is not simply about how we feel. Even as our lives are about far more than the few hours a week we spend at church, the life which Christ shares with us is not simply about what we do in time set aside for prayer. He comes to bring salvation, to bring healing and fulfillment, to every dimension of the lives of His sons and daughters. That is why the Savior became fully one of us so that we could participate fully in the life of God by grace.

Notice that Zacchaeus did not repent by saying that he had a certain kind of religious experience or would change his habits about what he did one day a week. No, he took some very practical and visible steps that required him to sacrifice what he loved most, his money and comfort. He did what justice required for the victims of his crimes and then some, returning four times as much as he had taken. And he gave half of what he had to the poor,

regardless of whether he had stolen from them personally. In response to the Savior's overwhelming mercy toward him, Zacchaeus showed that same abundant grace toward others. He not only received the Lord into his house, but into his life—from the depths of his soul to how he made his living and treated other people on a daily basis.

Could the same be said of you and me? We commune with Christ in the Eucharist in every Divine Liturgy. We personally take His Body and Blood such that He dwells in our hearts by the power of the Holy Spirit. We dine at His heavenly banquet and receive Him into our bodies, souls, and spirits—for the forgiveness of sins and life everlasting. If we think for one moment that communing with Christ is simply an ancient religious ritual or something that has merely an emotional or invisible significance, then we must think again. For to be united intimately with Christ, to be nourished by Him for the healing of our souls, must impact every dimension of who we are in this world. Salvation is not an escape from life as we know it, but its complete fulfillment. Salvation must come to our houses just as tangibly as it did to Zacchaeus.

One way of applying these lessons to our lives is to ask in what ways we need to open ourselves to fuller communion with Christ, to a deeper and healthier relationship with Him. Since how we treat our neighbors is also how we treat the Lord, we should ask with whom we need to make things right according to justice and then do even more for them. If we have denied our spouses, children, and other family members the fullness of our love, we must make up for that also. We should consider what we have taken by selfishness from our neighbors, whether money, time, attention, or something else, and give it back in abundance. Like Zacchaeus, we should look for opportunities to help the poor as much as possible, regardless of whether their poverty is one of friendship, encouragement, or the resources necessary to buy food, clothing, and shelter.

We need to prayerfully consider what change is in order in our lives because of Jesus Christ's gracious entrance in our souls. Zacchaeus is such a wonderful example of a sinner who received the Lord and became a shining beacon of holiness. He did so by deep, genuine, personal repentance that went to the heart of who he was before God and changed how he related to other people in practical ways. If we will follow his example, then we will be in intimate communion with Christ each day of our lives, always celebrating the liturgy of offering ourselves to Him in every thought, word, and deed. We will become a channel of blessing to others, and even skeptics will notice that salvation has come to our house. And then they may be so curious about what has happened that they will even climb a sycamore tree in order to get a better view.

