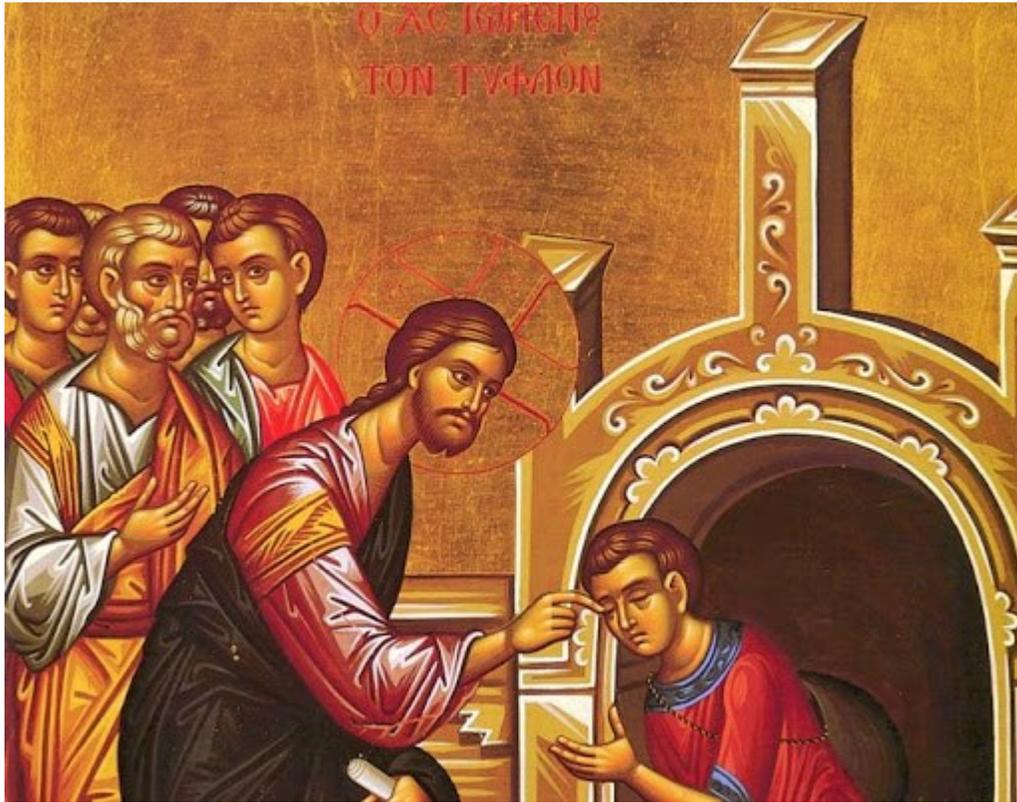


Sunday of the Blind Man

Sunday, May 24, 2020

St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church



SYNAXARION: Symeon the Stylite of the Mountain; Saint Vincent of Lerins; Meletios the Commander & his Companion Martyrs; Gregory, Archbishop of Novgorod

Ressurrectional Apolytikion: Co-eternal with the Father and Spirit is the Word Who of a Virgin was begotten for our salvation we the faithful both praise and worship Him. For in the flesh did He consent to ascend unto the cross and death did He endure and He raised unto life the dead by His all Glorious Resurrection.

Apolytikion of St. John: The memory of the just is observed with hymns of praise; for you O Forerunner the witness of the Lord is sufficient. You have proved to be truly more venerable than the prophets. Since you were granted to baptize in the river, the One Whom they proclaimed. Therefore, you strove for truth, proclaiming with joy the Good News, even to those in Hades: that God was manifested in the flesh, and takes away the sins of the world, and grants to us His great mercy.

Kontakion of Pascha: Even though You descended into the grave You destroyed the Power of Hades and You rose as a Victor, O Christ our God, saying to the myrrh bearing women: Rejoice! And to Your Apostles granting peace and to the fallen, You also grant Resurrection.

Prayer List: Lord Jesus Christ, Physician of our Souls and Bodies, visit and heal your servants: George and Toula Tsaros, Fr. Pat Legato, Nellie Pringle, Robert Calbi, Yolanda Webb, Angela Bougas, Tony Ekonomou, Ron, Jason Vickers, Rex Garrison, Tina Chakonas, Ann Demas, Alex Martinez, Adriana Martinez, Aaron Martinez, Christina Noel Kouzes Houck, Evangeline Xeroteris, Nichole Ross, Daniel Ross, Daniella Ross, Ashley Henderson, Natalie Henderson, Chris, Debbie, James, Avery, Lily, Jacob, Jesse, Ann, Rosario, Antonia Caffentzis, Alissa, John, Angela, Joey, Christine Scourtes, Steven, Matthew & Family, Phyllis, John Zelatis, Reagan, Peter Zaharis, Alexandra Ferrarolis, Leon & Despina Botham, Cindy Xenick, Mary Ellen Evdemon, Marie Sofia Panagopou-los, Maria Hursey, Chris Vamvakias, Effie Sorolis, John Myer, Mike Trimis, Robert and Alice Stoccardo, John Alexander, Michael Romero, George Hambos, Dean Kondilis and Family, Bill and Nancy Manikas, Patricia Costello, Anastasia Smyrnakis, Ekaterina & Anna Shushaalykova, Dora Koudouna, Ana Mourer, Debbie Phelps, Mary Voykin, David Voykin, Anne Sakellaris, Denise Badrane, Sia Blankenship, Don Payne, Zhana Temelkova, Stanislava Terzieva, James, Jude and all victims of war, terrorism, crime, natural disaster, and all of whom we are unaware.

Readings for Sunday of the Blind Man

Epistle Reading is from Acts of the Apostles 16:16-34

IN THOSE DAYS, as we apostles were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by soothsaying. She followed Paul and us, crying, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." And this she did for many days. But Paul was annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, "I charge you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour. But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market place before the rulers; and when they had brought them to the magistrates they said, "These men are Jews and they are disturbing our city. They advocate customs which it is not lawful for us Romans to accept or practice." The crowd joined in attacking them; and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely. Having received this charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and every one's fetters were unfastened. When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried with a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here." And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out and said, "Men, what must I do to be saved?" And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their wounds, and he was baptized at once, with all his family. Then he brought them up into his house, and set food before them; and he rejoiced with all his household that he had believed in God.

Gospel Reading is from John 9:1-38

At that time, as Jesus passed by, he saw a man blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be made manifest in him. We must work the works of him who sent me, while it is day; night comes, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." As he said this, he spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle and anointed the man's eyes with the clay, saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar, said, "Is not this the man who used to sit and beg?" Some said, "It is he"; others said, "No, but he is like him." He said, "I am the man." They said to him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash'; so I went and washed and received my sight." They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know." They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. The Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, "He put clay on my eyes and I washed, and I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" There was a division among them. So they again said to the blind man, "What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet." The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight, and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age, he will speak for himself." His parents said this because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess him to be Christ he was to be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age, ask him." So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and said to him, "Give God the praise; we know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "Whether he is a sinner, I do not know; one thing I know, that though I was blind, now I see." They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I have told you already and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you too want to become his disciples?" And they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." The man answered, "Why, this is a marvel! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." They answered him, "You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?" And they cast him out. Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?" Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and it is he who speaks to you." He said, "Lord, I believe"; and he worshiped him.

Upcoming Services & Announcements

Sunday, May 24	Sunday of the Blind Man (via livestream) Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Monday, May 25	Memorial Day—Office Closed
Tuesday, May 26	Women's Bible Study 10:00 a.m. via zoom Apodosis (leave-taking) of Pascha (Evening Liturgy via Livestream) Orthros 5:15 p.m. Divine Liturgy 6:00 p.m. Meeting of Ministry Heads 7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, May 27	9th Hour of Apodosis—Paraklesis Service 6:00 p.m. (via livestream)
Thursday, May 28	Ascension (via livestream) Orthros 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Town Hall Meeting with Fr. Stavros via zoom 7:00 p.m.
Friday, May 29	Town Hall Meeting with Fr. Stavros via zoom 12:00 p.m.
Sunday, May 31	Sunday of the Holy Fathers (via Live-stream, and via reservation with Sign-up genius) Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

LITURGICAL NOTES

Sunday, May 24 - Sunday of the Blind Man The theme of LIGHT! Commemoration of the healing of the blind man which leads us to the reality of the healing of our own spiritual blindness.

9th Hour of Apodosis—Paraklesis—Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. We will keep our Wednesday Paraklesis service this coming Wednesday, May 27. At the beginning of the service, we will pray the 9th hour of the Apodosis, which is the last time that Christos Anesti is sung in the liturgical year. This brief service will add about 10 minutes to the Paraklesis but is a beautiful tradition that we've never done at St. John.

Tuesday, May 26 - Apodosis (Leave-Taking) of Pascha -This marks the end of the Paschal Season. It is a repeat of the Resurrection Service and Liturgy of Pascha and is the last time of the Liturgical year that we sing Χριστὸς Ανέστη. We will celebrate this feast on Tuesday, June 4, with an evening Liturgy at 6:00 p.m. (Orthros will begin at 5:15 p.m. and is a replication of the Resurrection Service from Pascha).

Thursday, May 28 - Ascension This marks the feast where Christ ascended to heaven, 40 days after the Resurrection, thus completing His earthly ministry.

The Sunday school lesson for adults and teens is [HERE](#).

Fifty-Two Verses in Fifty-Two Weeks: The Bible Project

May 24-30

I My help comes from the Lord, Who made heaven and earth. Psalm 121:2 In this time of crisis, people are looking for help from various sources.

Some are glued to the TV news cycle. Others are looking for financial assistance from the government. Everyone has an opinion on how everything is going. Many of us are entrenched in camps as either we are over-reacting, or under-reacting or not sure how to react. Many of us wonder how long the crisis is going to last and what society will look like on the other side. Many are sad at how quickly our normal lives just fell apart. This Psalm verse reminds us that our best source, our most consistent source, and our never wavering source of help is from the Lord. Many of us are quick to turn on the news each day. May we be as quick to get on our knees and pray for divine help.

IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS FOR RETURNING TO CHURCH

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

The come-back plan—The members of our church will be able to begin to attend services on Sunday, May 31, in small groups, 60 parishioners in addition to those who will be “working” at the service (priest, chanters, choir, altar servers, ushers, nursing ministry rep, welcome ministry rep) so a total of 75 people can be in attendance as long as there is mandated social distancing. Father Stavros has written an extensive come back letter that can be viewed [HERE](#).

In order to attend a service, you **MUST** register on sign-up genius, unless you are one of the workers. Please take time to digest the information so we can be safe in coming back.

Meeting of ministry heads—Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. via zoom. Father Stavros will meet via zoom with all ministry heads on Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. to discuss the come-back plan. Ministry heads will receive a zoom invitation.

Town hall meetings—Thursday at 7:00 p.m. and Friday at noon—Father Stavros will facilitate a zoom town hall meeting on Thursday at 7:00 p.m. and Friday at noon, in order to answer any questions you may have about the come-back to church plan. The zoom link for Thursday is [HERE](#) and the link for Friday is [HERE](#).

Announcing the Parish Assistance Program (PAP)

St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church is excited to share that, beginning May 1st, we will be offering a Parish Assistance Program, PAP, with BayCare Behavioral Health. The PAP program will provide our parishioners access to free and confidential counseling services - offering additional support when life's challenges become overwhelming. The PAP utilizes a network of faith-based providers and are sensitive to the values and beliefs of those they serve and provide compassionate care to children, adults, parents, and seniors. Parishioners can contact BayCare to request up to three free and confidential counseling sessions from a licensed mental health professional. The BayCare helpline, 800-878-5470, is answered 24/7 by mental health professionals. Many BayCare therapists are also offering telephonic and virtual counseling sessions to help parishioners maintain their emotional wellbeing during these trying times.