

SOBORNOST

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American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese

*ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
OF CONSTANTINOPLE*

SERVICES

Wed: Reader Vespers 6:30 PM

Saturday: Confession 4:30 PM
Vespers 5 PM

Sunday: Matins 8:45 AM

Sunday School 9:30 AM

Divine Liturgy 10 AM

**October 27, 2024 – 18th Sunday After Pentecost (6th Sunday
of Luke) | Martyr Nestor of Thessalonica**

By Protopresbyter Fr. George Papavarnavas



The martyr Nestor lived in the third century during the reigns of Diocletian and Maximian. He came from Thessaloniki and was connected with a genuine spiritual friendship with the great martyr Demetrios the Myrrhgusher. He was martyred at a young age, about eighteen years old. In that difficult period of persecution, the Church was to show forth an innumerable number of martyrs, and among them Nestor holds a prominent position.

At that time there was a giant barbarian named Lyaivos, who was considered a common murderer, having killed many innocent people. However, Emperor Maximian rejoiced in him, bragged about him and boasted of his bravery and victories. For this reason, the arrogance of Lyaivos had no limits, and he turned against everything, especially against the members of the Church. He said that Christians are weak, just like the God they worship, and that none of them dares to stand before him. Nestor, who loved Christ very much, wanted to battle with him,

the arrogant one, and humiliate him with the power of Christ and the blessing of Saint Demetrios. So he went to the prison where Saint Demetrios was being held and confessed his thoughts to him. Saint Demetrios encouraged him and told him that he would defeat Lyaivos and shed his blood for Christ. Then he entered the stadium without fear, shouted "God of Demetrios, help me!" and defeated Lyaivos. Maximian, full of anger, ordered him to be killed, and the enraged crowd of idolaters shouted "death to the victor" instead of "crown to the victor", as was usually the case. Nestor, however, received the unfading crown of victory from the prize-giver Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

His life and conduct gives us the opportunity to highlight the following:

First, the Triune God of the Church is the true God "who alone does wonders". He is not a God that is an abstract impersonal force, but He is "the God of our Fathers". He is known by those who love Him and He knows them, and a personal communion develops between them. He is a Triune God, that is, one God, but three Persons, intermingled, and each of them has its own existential unique feature, namely, the Father is unbegotten, the Son is begotten, and the Holy Spirit proceeds. There are Three Persons-Hypostases, but one God, "one nature, one divinity, one power", or as we chant during Matins for the feast of Pentecost, "one power, one order, one worship."

The Triune God therefore is not impersonal, but is a personal God, Who is revealed to those who invoke Him, and have the ability to see Him, that is, they have a pure heart and an illumined nous. They see Him and converse with Him, as one converses with one's friend. They see Him in Light and their whole existence is illuminated, both their soul and their body.

All the appearances of God in the Old Testament are appearances of the Son and Word of God. However, where the Son is, there also is the Father and the Holy Spirit, which reveals the Holy Trinity. In the Old Testament the Son and Word of God is pre-incarnate and is revealed and converses with the Prophets, the Patriarchs and the Righteous, while in the New Testament there is the incarnate Christ, who heals. Those who come to Him in faith are healed of physical and mental ailments, are born again spiritually, and become "children of God."

Throughout the ages well-meaning people believed in Christ, and depending on their receptivity, they each receive His Grace. The "words of Grace" that emanate from His mouth and His presence within them change their existence into the Kingdom of God. And then their heart is sweetened, comforted, receives strength, is altered internally, rejoices, is gladdened and feels a joy that is changeless, inexpressible, internal, which no one can take away from them, according to His word: "And this joy will not be taken away from you."

Secondly, man as a rational being naturally thinks, which is something that does not take place with irrational animals. However, his various thoughts and decisions before realization should be put to the judgment of qualified and experienced people, who have knowledge and experience related to the issue that concerns him, as well as prudence and discernment, in order to advise, but also confirm his thoughts and decisions. This would avoid big and serious mistakes. And if this should be done in matters related to human knowledge, that is, with letters, arts, sciences, sports, etc., much more should it be done in the spiritual life. That is, when it comes to spiritual matters on which salvation depends, that is, our eternal future, then man should pray, ask his spiritual father questions, and obey his first words, because according to the Holy Fathers the first words of a spiritual father are the words of God. His second words, given after judgments, objections and negotiations, are human words, which is why mistakes are made. Spiritual errors, however, are "paid for" very expensively, because spiritual laws are at work, and therefore great care is needed. In other words, just as in the matter of the learning of human knowledge a wise teacher is needed and in sports an experienced coach is required, so in spiritual matters an experienced and discreet spiritual guide is required, which can be done by anyone who can discern the truth from error, the divine from the demonic, and thus he will guide his spiritual children.

May we know the God of our Fathers empirically, feel His presence within us and taste the sweetness of His love. (*from johnsanidopoulos.com*)

Today's Epistle Lesson – St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 9:6-11 EOB

Brethren, whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly. Whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Let everyone give according to what he has determined in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that by having what is needed in everything, you may overflow in every good work. As it is written: He has scattered abroad, he has given to the poor. His righteousness remains forever. Now, may he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food also supply and multiply your seed for sowing, and increase the fruits of your righteousness. Thus, may you be enriched in everything, so that you may be generous in all things, and through us, this brings thanksgiving to God.

Today's Gospel Lesson – Saint Luke 8:26-39 EOB

At that time, they sailed to the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee. When Jesus stepped ashore, a man from the town who had had demons for a long time came to meet him. This man wore no clothes, and he did not live in a house, but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him. With a loud voice, he said, "What do I have to do with you, Jesus, you Son of the Most

High God? I beg you, do not torment me!” (For Jesus was commanding the unclean spirit to come out of the man). The unclean spirit had often seized the man and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and fetters. [But he had been] breaking the chains and was driven by the demon into deserted places. Jesus asked him, “What is your name?” He replied, “Legion,” for many demons had entered into him. And they begged him not to command them to go into the abyss. Now, there was a large herd of swine feeding on the mountain, and the demons begged him that he would allow them to enter into those [pigs]; and Jesus allowed them. The demons came out from the man and entered into the pigs. Then the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and [the swine] were drowned. When the people who fed the pigs saw what had happened, they fled and told the story in the city and in the countryside. Then, people went out to see what had happened. They came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone out. He was sitting at Jesus’ feet, clothed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. Those who had seen it told the people how the demon-possessed man had been delivered. All the people of the surrounding country of the Gadarenes asked Jesus to depart from them, because they were extremely afraid. So he got into the boat and went back. The man from whom the demons had gone out begged to go with Jesus, but Jesus sent him away, saying: “Return to your house and proclaim what great things God has done for you.” So the man went on his way, proclaiming throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.

Homily on the Gospel for the Sixth Sunday of Luke

By St. Luke, Metropolitan of Simferopol

The Lord Jesus Christ sailed with His disciples on the Sea of Tiberias, sailed to the eastern shore of this lake. On the way, He performed a great miracle of calming the storm by one command of His: He ordered the wind and waves to calm down - and they calmed down. We went ashore in the country of the Gadarenes, and look what happened there.

“And when He got out of the boat, immediately a man who came out of the tombs met Him, possessed by an unclean spirit, he had a dwelling in the tombs, and no one could bind him even with chains ... he tore the chains and broke the shackles, and no one was able to tame him; always, night and day, in mountains and graves, he shouted and cut himself with stones; but when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshiped Him...” (Mark 5:1-6).

From tombs... From what? Certainly not one of those cemeteries in which we bury our dead. The ancient Jews buried the bodies of the dead in the rocks, in caves carved into the rocky mountains. And in these tombs lived an unfortunate man, possessed by a whole legion of demons. What is a legion? The legion is an integral part of the Roman army - about 6000 people.

And a whole legion of demons moved into the soul of this unfortunate man. How, perhaps unbelievers will ask, how can unclean spirits enter the soul and heart of a person; how can a legion of demons fit in one person? They can, they can enter, they can fit in innumerable numbers, for these are incorporeal spirits, occupying no space, they can fit in a huge amount in the smallest space.

So this unfortunate man was possessed by a whole legion of demons. He was so terribly rampant, he was so violent that people were afraid to pass by the place where he lived in tombs. They tried to tame him, fettered him with iron chains, but he tore apart the iron fetters with an unimaginable power for us. He lived naked, did not wear clothes; naked, he ran out to meet the Lord Jesus. This unfortunate man screamed furiously for days and nights, cut himself with stones and was driven by demons into the desert. And then, when he saw Jesus, he, like a meek lamb, ran up and bowed to Him on the ground.

Did he bow to someone? He attacked everyone, and everyone ran away from him in fear, and then he ran to Jesus and bowed, "and crying out in a loud voice, he said: 'What have you to do with me, Jesus, the Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me!'" (Mk. 5:7).

Who said it? Could he, being a man, say such words? Could he call Jesus, whom he saw for the first time, the Son of the Most High God? Could he ask: do not torment me? Didn't he want to be freed from his torment?

Who spoke in his language? And who prompted him to worship Jesus? This was said by the demons who had taken possession of him, they asked Christ: "Do not torment, do not torment until the time!" They knew that the time of eternal torment would come for them, and now they asked: leave, leave! Don't torment us, don't torment us for the time being!

The Lord Jesus Christ, of course, knew who was speaking: He knew that it was the demons who were speaking. And He commanded them to come out of this unfortunate man. That is why the demons asked Him: do not torment, do not torment us ahead of time!

What was their torment? It was torment for them to leave the soul of this unfortunate person in peace, torment for them is when they cannot do evil, and evil for them is like air for us. Torment for them is when they cannot torment a person, but they torment us all; remember, all of us.

Unbelievers laugh at our belief in demons. And how can we not believe when our Lord Jesus Christ Himself spoke about demons, when He cast them out by His command, when He healed the possessed - not this one, but many others. And what prevents us from believing? After all, our soul was created similar to

incorporeal spirits, and therefore it can have direct communication with them, for it is itself similar to them in its spirituality.

You know from your own experience that we often perceive with our heart, with our soul, the thoughts and desires of the people we love, who live with us as one soul. In this way we can perceive the suggestions of angels and demons.

Why then reject the possibility that incorporeal spirits can inhabit our souls? Very, very infused! They move in, because we often go berserk, we are often possessed by the gravest spiritual filth, and this is obsession. I think there is nothing to convince you of the existence of demons and the possibility of their attacks on you. See what happened next.

The demons, knowing that Christ would cast them out of this unfortunate man, asked not to torment them, asked to be allowed to enter the herd of swine, which was grazing right there on the shore, upon leaving the demoniac. The Lord allowed it. And the demons entered into the herd of swine. And the herd was huge - about two thousand. And the pigs went mad, and rushed to the shore, and they all jumped into the deep lake, and they all drowned.

Why did our Lord Jesus Christ allow demons to enter pigs? Some daring thoughts do not like this, and they condemn: why, why did the poor animals die? I will not answer in my own words, I will give the answer of the great Saint John Chrysostom.

This was necessary, firstly, in order to manifest the omnipotence of God, for it was one of the great miracles of Christ. He also intended to show people - and there were many spectators - how great, how immeasurable the malice of demons, to show in practice that demons cannot but do evil. The third reason was to show that demons without God's permission, without God's permission, do not dare to do evil to people.

Only when God Himself finds it necessary to use them as executioners, when it is necessary to punish, severely punish someone who is hopeless for truth, for good, can they do their disastrous deeds. So He punished the Egyptian pharaoh, all the people of Egypt, because the pharaoh showed disobedience to the requirements of Moses, for this is what the prophet David says about this: "And he sent upon them the wrath of his indignation: indignation and wrath and trouble, which he sent by evil angels" (Ps. 77:49). He Himself sent it, it was His embassy: He used here "evil angels" - demons, as executioners.

We also read in another place in Holy Scripture about the same thing: the king of Israel, Ahab, was stubborn in sins. It was necessary to punish him, like the Egyptians. It was necessary to punish him for his stubbornness, for his

disobedience. "...and the Lord said to the host of heaven standing by him: Who would persuade Ahab to go and fall in Ramoth of Gilead? And one said so, the other said differently. And one spirit stepped forward, stood before the Lord, and said, 'I will entice him.' And the Lord said to him: 'With what?' He said, 'I will go out and be made a deceiving spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.'" It was a demonic spirit, for the angel of light could not become a lying one. "'You will succeed in enticing him,' said the Lord" (1 Kings 22:20-22). You see, again this is the intervention of the unclean spirit to draw Ahab, full of sins, into destruction.

In order to teach us and show us that incorporeal spirits can do evil, since the Lord allows it, Jesus allowed demons to enter the swine herd. He showed their malice, and showed the dependence of their actions on the permission of God.

Do not think that demons have equal power over all of us. They have tremendous, immeasurable power over people who are like pigs in their spirit and deeds. These are destroyed by demons as easily as they destroyed a herd of pigs in the Gadarene country. But they do not dare to approach the saints: they are afraid of the saints, they are afraid of the cross of Christ, they are afraid of their prayers.

In the third century there was the Hieromartyr Babylas, Bishop of Antioch. Many years after his martyrdom, Emperor Constantius transferred his holy relics to a small temple, specially built near the temple of the pagan god Apollo, in which the idol of his demonic power prophesied the future through his priests. And what? Near the holy relics of Babylas, the demons did not dare to dwell, and the broadcasting of the idol ceased.

This is how the demons fear the the saints, and this is how they will fear you if you are holy and blameless before God, if you protect yourself from their power with the cross and constant prayer. This is what this event in the country of Gadarene teaches us.

"The pig-herders ran and told stories in the city and villages. And the residents came out to see what happened. They come to Jesus to see that the demon-possessed one, in whom the legion was, is sitting and clothed, and in his right mind; and were afraid. Those who saw it spoke about what had happened to the demon-possessed man and about the pigs. And they began to ask Him to depart from their borders" (Mark 5:14-17).

It seems strange why they asked Him: Go away, go away! Why didn't they ask on the contrary: Come, come, in order to sanctify us with Your coming? Do not think that they did it because they were wicked, because they were saddened by the death of the swine.

Not like that, not like that! They did not deserve this condemnation, for Saint Luke, speaking about this, says: "...because they were seized with great fear" (Lk. 8.37). They were shocked, they trembled with fear, seeing an extraordinary miracle, they trembled before the One who cast out demons. Their trembling was so great that they could not endure the presence of Jesus, and they asked Him: Go away, go away! We are unworthy, we cannot bear Your presence.

We will not ask like that, we will ask: Do not leave us, do not leave us ever. Don't go, Lord, Lord! (*trans. John Sanidopoulos*)

Homilies on the Lord's Prayer, also Known as the "Our Father"

by Metropolitan Hierotheos of Nafpaktos and Agiou Vlasiou

(*continued from last week*) "Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread"

Christ, my beloved brethren, knows that we are human and have need of physical food. He also had flesh and ate, although in Christ hunger and thirst were not a necessity to be acted upon, but He did so voluntarily and willingly. But humans have a need for physical food, although this is not the case with the angels in heaven who do not have a body and therefore have no need for physical food. Thus, while in the previous request of the Lord's Prayer Christ spoke about the need for us to live like angels, He now comes, with this other request we will now interpret, to lower Himself to our illness and teaches us that we must pray to God our Father for our daily bread as well. Humans are not identical in all respects with the angels, since we have a body and must be fed. This is why He taught us to supplicate God to give us our daily bread.

First, Christ speaks of "bread" and not money, a self-indulgent life, luxurious clothing and all those things man is overly interested in. With this request He teaches us to ask from God what is necessary and not care about accumulating much material goods. Besides, this excludes the fact that our prayer is to our common Father, and this means that there are other children of the Father, and we have other brethren. Hence, all of God's children have the same rights to our patrimony and it is not possible for one to act against the other siblings.

Then, this bread is called "daily", which means that it is necessary for the maintenance of the body, necessary for our essential biological life, and it is "ephemeral" since the bread is for that day, or daily. Indeed, bread is necessary for our sustenance, and it is important that we ask God to give it to us, for many and various reasons. One is because, as the Holy Fathers teach, the energy of God is within creation and the earth, and this contributes to fruition. If the weather is not suitable, if it does not rain, if the necessary ingredients in the earth do not exist, then the seed in the earth cannot increase and be brought to fruition. Then we must have the health to work in order to make what is necessary for life. And, of course,

we can feed ourselves and live not because we eat physical food, but because the Grace of God sustains us through the food. Proof of this is that no matter how much a person may eat, if something is "eating" them within, they cannot be healthy. Also, in an organism that is dying, any food that is given cannot maintain its biological life.

With this request Christ teaches us to expel our many and great worries. This is what "this day" means. Christians must not accumulate many material possessions, like the foolish rich man did in the Parable that was spoken by Christ, because by this we firstly show that we do not have brotherly love, and secondly it shows that we do not have trust in the Providence of God, thus overly trusting ourselves. And in actuality this is a practical form of unbelief.

When we speak of "daily bread" we must have in mind that with this prayer we not only refer to physical bread, but also to two other spiritual breads, the first being the word of God and the second being the Body of Christ. Besides, these two spiritual breads are literally "daily", as they contribute to the sustenance of our essence.

The word of God is the commandments of God, that we should keep in our daily lives and in this way we receive the Grace of God, which is hidden within the commandments. The response of Christ to the first temptation in the desert is known, when after being hungry the devil suggested that He turn the stones into bread. Christ responded: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). So man does not only live by bread, but by the words that come from the mouth of God. If the folk saying "your word has satisfied me and your bread eat" applies to human matters, this happens much more with the word of God which is the Grace of God.

The other spiritual bread is the Eucharistic Bread, the Body and Blood of Christ. Christ called Himself the bread that came down from heaven (Jn. 6:41), and that He was higher than the manna the Jews ate in the desert. That the Church has established the "Our Father" to be recited during the Divine Liturgy and even before the reception of the Divine Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ, indicates that this request refers to the heavenly and spiritual bread that sustains us and sanctifies us, which is the Body and Blood of Christ.

This is why every time we are going to savor physical bread - in the morning, afternoon and night - and spiritual bread - when we study Holy Scripture and especially when we commune of the Body and Blood of Christ - we should recite the Lord's Prayer with attention and devotion, and we should rely on this request that we commented on today to ask for our spiritual bread, Christ Himself, Who will satisfy our spiritual hunger. *(to be continued next week) (Translated by John Sanidopoulos)*

A Word From the Holy Fathers

Many and various are the demons' plots against humans. However, the help God provides to humans is incomparably greater. Indeed! If God did not defend us with His divine protection, the entire human race would have ceased to exist a long time ago due to the demons' onslaughts. Truly! When have the demons ever allowed an opportunity to pass without creating temptations for man? When did they ever pause preparing traps for human beings or planning calamities for us?

Of course, the devil is not evil by nature, but he chose to incline toward wickedness. The Creator had appointed him to rule over the air, as St. Paul, the beholder of heavenly mysteries revealed to us: "According to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2). However, when he desired to rise above his appointed position, and, when he subsequently lost his honorary distinction and was displaced from his throne on account of his high-minded arrogance, he turned his malice toward human beings, in order to manifest his vengefulness toward the Creator. Since he was unable to strike back at God directly, he devised a different plan of attack: he decided to instruct God's creations to revolt against Him. Thus, as soon as the first man was created in the image of the Creator, the devil advised him to oppose God: "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will open and you will become gods, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3:5). In following, when the human race began to multiply, he imparted thoughts of idolatry to man, who became so darkened that he began to worship the creation instead of the Creator. However, the demons were not content with deceiving humans in this way or even with receiving worship from them. They proceeded to harm and forcefully take up residence within people.

Even so, God did not leave his creature helpless. He ceaselessly used various methods to heal man, and ultimately set in motion His wise plan of Dispensation in Christ to trigger the down fall of the demons. This is clearly seen in the Gospel, where Christ censures the oppression of the demons and makes manifest God's help to people. "And when He stepped out on the land, there met Him a certain man from the city who had demons for a long time. And he wore no clothes, nor did he live in a house, but in the tombs" (Lk. 8:27). This is the hostility the demons have toward humans. They desire to destroy everyone, but they are deeply distressed since they cannot harm everyone.

"And when Jesus had come out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no one could bind him, not even with chains, because he had often been bound with shackles and chains. And the chains had been pulled apart by him, and the shackles

broken in pieces; neither could anyone tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying out and cutting himself with stones” (Mk. 5:2-5).

Even though the devil had bound this person with so many afflictions, he was unable to prevent him from meeting up with the Lord. The demons, unable to endure the brilliance of Him Who was standing before them, cried out, “What have we to do with You, Jesus?” (Mt. 8:29). They react in the presence of the person who is visible to them, not knowing that God is concealed within this body. Otherwise, how could a slave yell to his Master, “What have I to do with You?” They belittle the person whom they see because they do not see Him Who scourges them.

“What do we have to do with You?” asked the demons. “We have encountered many righteous men, but we have never experienced such a lashing from them! ‘What do we have to do with You?’ From the moment You came to the earth, You proclaimed war against us. When You were born, the Magi came to see You, they worshiped You, and they broke away from us. The tax collectors heard You preaching, and they fled from our own toll booths. You ensnared our prey, the harlots, with repentance. Our only consolation remaining was human suffering, but You also deprived us of this enjoyment. You made paralyzed people stand on their feet; You granted hearing to deaf people; You bestowed light to the blind; You freed the dead from their graves. Every time You healed someone, You simultaneously punished us.”

“What have we to do with you, Jesus, Son of God?” They called Him the Son of God; however, they did not realize that the Son is God [Himself]. Because people who have drawn near to God through their great virtue are also referred to as “sons of God.” It is with this meaning that God states, “Israel is My firstborn son” (Ex. 4:22). And elsewhere, “I said, ‘you are gods, and you are all sons of the Most High’” (Ps. 82:6). And another scriptural verse says, “When the sons of God saw the daughters of men” (Gen. 6:2). In other words, this name [son of God] is not indicative of kinship with the Divinity by nature only but through affiliation as well.

The devil showed the same ignorance during the time of Christ’s baptism in the Jordan River. After he heard the voice coming from the heavens, “This is My beloved Son” (Mt. 3:17), he said to Christ, “If you are the Son of God, throw Yourself down” (Mt. 4:6). If the devil had known that he was speaking to God, he would not have attempted to scare Him by ordering Him to fall down [from the roof of the Temple]; because for God there is no height or depth.

St. Mark the Evangelist relates that the demons spoke in this manner: “What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth?” (Mk. 1:24). He does not address Christ as

the Creator of man but as a citizen of Nazareth. “Since you are a visible being,” says the devil, “you should act accordingly. We see a human, but we feel as if we are being expelled by God. The lashes we are receiving do not seem to be coming from an inhabitant of Nazareth but rather from someone who has descended from Heaven. Reveal to us your nature through your works.”

“What have we to do with You, Jesus, Son of God?” (Mt. 8:29). What are you saying, O devil? You have the audacity to question, “You have come now?” Him Who created time and appointed the day of Judgment? Alas! The devil is unaware that He Who has come is the eternal God, Who confirms His arrival in the form of a servant. He is unaware that the Lord and God of all is wearing the [human] cloak, which he received from David. The devil belittles Christ based on what he sees, but he is simultaneously invisibly thrashed by the power of Christ’s Divinity. This is why he rants using phrases containing both impudence and supplication. “What have we to do with You, Jesus? I implore You, do not torment me” (Mk. 5:7).

The demons suffer prior to the Last Judgment because they are commanded to stop afflicting human beings: “For He ordered the unclean spirit, ‘come out of the man’” (Mk. 5:8). Furthermore, Christ the Master, desiring to demonstrate to everyone present His incomprehensible Divine Providence for people even when they are immersed in terrible suffering, asks, “What is your name? And he [the demon] answered saying, ‘My name is Legion: for we are many’” (Mk. 5:9). Christ did not ask because He was unaware of his name, but rather to reveal to us how many murderous demons had taken hold of the human body, and that—despite all this—they were never able to put him to death. A multitude of demons that launched an onslaught on a single person, with the intention of putting him to death, were incapable of vanquishing him.

The demons were unable to throw him over the cliffs, they were incapable of cutting him to pieces, and they failed to mutilate him using the very chains that bound him. The possessed man was able to endure the demons’ sustained barrage, protected throughout the duration of this ordeal by the hand of God. St. Luke the Evangelist details something significant and noteworthy: “For it had taken hold of him for many years” (Lk. 8:29). What awesome protection! The demons felt no less torment than the person they were torturing — for they wanted to murder him for many years, but God did not allow them to fulfill their desire. Things remained this way until the moment Christ the King decided to arrive and grant freedom to this person who had suffered so much.

“Now a herd of many swine was feeding there on the mountain. So they begged Him that He may permit them to enter the swine. And He permitted them. Then the demons went out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the lake and drowned” (Lk. 8:32-33). Why do you permit

the demons to do this, O Lord? You are aware of their malice and wickedness. Why then did You consent to their request? He did this, dear reader, in order for us to learn that the demons are weaker than even pigs, when God stands in their way. Moreover, Christ wants to point out to us that the demons rejoice with the demise of human beings, and that they celebrate when they see us suffering. Indeed, they have no sympathy at all for human beings. For, if they exhibited such malice even for the swine, what would they proceed to do to humans, if God permitted them?

If we consider all the above, we will perceive the demons' hostility, we will be prompted to despise enmity and malice, and we will want to avoid carrying out the advice of the demons, who cause us unbearable distress and suffering.

This Gospel passage also reveals to us God's care and concern for human beings. Indeed, everything would have been annihilated in a moment and no person would have been left standing; everyone would have been devoured by the demons' fury, if it weren't for the protection of God's invisible and invincible hand. He allowed the swine to be harmed in order for us to comprehend His providence for man.

Therefore, let us confess and proclaim God's divine providence, which we all experience and enjoy. Let us thank Him for His help, which preserves us. Let us acknowledge and declare that God's assistance is what safeguards us. Let us ceaselessly keep sight of God's help and always exclaim, "You, O Lord, are our helper and protector!"

– Basil, Bishop of Seleucia, *Homily on the Demon Possessed Man* (5th c.)

Holy Martyrs Capitolina and Erotheis of Cappadocia

Servant and mistress are beheaded by the sword, servants of the Trinity, the true Lord.

Capitolina (Kapetolina) was a woman of high rank in Cappadocia during the reign of Emperor Diocletian. At around the year 304 she was brought to trial as a Christian, and was asked her name, country, and parentage. She answered, "I am a Christian, my country is the heavenly Jerusalem, my parents are the teachers of Christianity, and chiefly the great Firmilian, bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia." When she had resisted all the persuasions and threats used by Zilikinthus, the governor, to induce her to renounce her faith and worship the gods — particularly Serapis — she was sent to prison.

A person who had been present at the trial ran to her house and told her handmaiden Erotheis (Erotis, Eroteida), who was baking, and was just going to put loaves in the oven. She left her work, and ran to the prison and kissed the fetters that bound her mistress; she congratulated her on the prospect of martyrdom, and begged her to pray that she also might be found worthy to share her fate. Capitolina told her not to fear, but be present on the morrow and witness her execution. Erotheis went home, finished her cooking, and took the bread to the

prison. Capitolina bade her give it to the poor, and then sell all her mistress's things and distribute the money to the poor. Erotheis obeyed the order. The next day, when Capitolina was brought before the judge, her zealous servant assailed him with stones and abuse. When she had seen her mistress beheaded with a sword, she was asked how a person of her low station could dare to behave in this manner. She replied by reviling the judge and his gods; and was put to horrible tortures, under which she ceased not to thank God. Her wounds were miraculously healed, and she came unscorched out of a furnace into which she was cast. At length she was beheaded, the day after Saint Capitolina suffered the same. (*from johnsanidopoulos.com*)

Also Commemorated Today

Commemoration of the [Conversion](#) of Iberia (Georgia) by St. Nina (332)
New Hieromartyr [Sergius](#) Chernukhin, Abbot of Danilov Monastery (1942).
Ner Hieroconfessor [Nectarius](#), Archimandrite of Pokrov Devichi in Voronezh (1929)
Venerable [Nestor](#) the Chronicler of the Kiev Caves (1114).
Ven. [Nestor](#) the Unlettered of the Far Kiev Caves (unk)
St. [Cyriacus](#) I, patriarch of Constantinople (230).
St. [Cyriacus](#) II, patriarch of Constantinople (606)
St. [Procla](#), wife of Pontius Pilate (1st c.).
Blessed Prince [Andrei](#) Smolensky of Preryaslavl-Zalessky (1539)
St. [Demetrius](#) the [New](#) of [Basarabov](#) in Bulgaria (12th-13th c.).
St. [Odran](#), abbot of Iona. (Otteran) (563)
Sts. [Ia](#) and Breacha, virgins of Cornwall.
Hierarch [Alexander](#), Bishop of Guria and Samegrelo (1907) (Georgia)
St. [Abban](#) of [Magh-Armuidhe](#), Abbot of Wexford (6th c.)
St. [Colman](#) of [Senboth-Fola](#), Abbot (632)
St. [Athelstan](#), King of England
St. [Desiderius](#), bishop of Auxerre (625)(Burgundy)
Martyr [Florentius](#) of Trois-Chateaux (3rd c.)(Burgundy)
St. [Gaudiosus](#), bishop of Abitina in Africa Proconsularis(455)
St. [Namatius](#) (Namace), bishop of Clermont (c. 462) (France)
Martyrs [Vincent](#), Sabina, and Christeta of Avila (c. 310) (Spain)

No Social Team for November 3 - Light Fare Only

Feel free to bring something to share. Thank you!

Parish News

Fr. Joseph will be out of town next Sunday celebrating Pani Stacey's birthday. May God grant her many years! In his stead, Fr. Carl Kish will be celebrating the Divine Liturgy with us. Consequently, there will be no Vespers service on Saturday and no Matins service on Sunday.

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In Your Prayers – Please Remember... His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch BARTHOLOMEW, His Eminence Metropolitan GREGORY, Fr. Joseph & Family, His Grace Bishop Neofitos of Nyeri & Mt. Kenya, Bennett family, Tatyana & Slava Chumak & family, Luke & Marlena Cooper, Roberta Corson, Tina Crull, Marlene Doukas, Linda A. Georgiev, Sandi Hebel, Howl family, Helen P. Janowiak, John M. Janowiak, Johnson family, Andrew Kinn, Kopan family, Helen, Brian, Luke and Mia Mahony, Valentina Makowelski, Susan Matula, David & Kathryn Newman, Bobby Nutter & family, Nicholas Pavlik, Weston Perry & family, John Reece, Mary Reed, Marge Rusnak, Rose Song, Fr. Nectaros & Ia, Mother Virginia Marie & the Carmelite Nuns of Port Tobacco, the suffering people of Ukraine & the Holy Land, and those in need of our prayers. (Please advise Fr. Joseph of changes.)