

August 6, 2017: The 9th Sunday after Pentecost (Jesus walks on the water)

Epistle: I Cor. 3:9-17:

For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building. By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work. If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames. Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for God's temple is sacred, and you together are that temple.

Gospel: Matthew 14:22-34:



Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there. But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary. Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God." When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret.

Having fed more than 5000 people in the wilderness with only five loaves and two fish, the Lord sent the disciples to the other side of the sea and He went up into the mountain to pray. His prayer was intense and long, until the fourth watch of the night. While their Master was praying, the disciples were trying to survive, being caught in a terrible storm: *But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary.* As if this wasn't a bad enough predicament, the disciples see a ghost-like appearance coming toward them, which magnified their fear: *And they cried out for fear.*

To their surprise and joy, they hear the calming voice of their Master: *"Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid."* Peter wanted to verify the reality of Christ's presence and said: *"Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water."* Shortly thereafter, Peter himself was part of this miraculous walking on the sea, at the invitation of Christ: *"Come."*

As long as his faith was unwavering, Peter had no problem defying the "natural" laws. However, when he began to doubt, he started to sink into the sea and he reacted like any one of us in time of peril, crying out for help: *"Lord, save me!"* Not only was he saved by the mighty hand of Christ, but the other

disciples were also spared a certain death when He calmed the sea: *And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.*

The gospel reading of this Sunday teaches us a valuable life lesson: stay steadfast in your faith when the tide of the sea of life and the winds are threatening our life, believing wholeheartedly in Christ our Savior who is inviting us to Him ("*Come!*") and is only one prayer away from extending His saving arm to pull us from sinking into despair and doubt.

Fr. George Bazgan

SUMMER SCHEDULE OF CHURCH SERVICES

Due to the fact that Fr. George will be away between July 10 - August 25, there will be some changes regarding our Church services.

The church will be open every Sunday and Fr. Deacon Severian will serve the Akathist at 10:00 AM.

The Divine Liturgy will be celebrated by Fr. Mircea on the following Sundays:

July 30 and August 13 (with Vespers on August 12 and confession).

For any emergency, please call Fr. Mircea at 780-456-7737.

Have a pleasant Summer!

MEMBERSHIP

The Board of Directors extends a warm appeal to all supporters of our parish, asking them to pay their membership as soon as possible.

This way we can ensure that we have the necessary funds to fulfill our financial obligations during the Summer months and for the rest of the year as well.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!