

Sept. 1, 2013: The 10th Sunday after Pentecost (The healing of the epileptic)

Epistle: I Cor. 4:9-16:

For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men condemned to death; for we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are distinguished, but we are dishonored! To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless. And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now. I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you. For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me.

Gospel: Matthew 17:14-23:

And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying, "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him." Then Jesus answered and said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me." And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting." Now while they were staying in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up." And they were exceedingly sorrowful.

The healing of the epileptic from this Sunday's gospel reading took place right after the Lord's Transfiguration on Mount Tabor. The father of the young man who was an epileptic had come first to the apostles, hoping to gain his son's healing. When the apostles failed, the man came and knelt before the Lord and praying: "*Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely*"; We can only imagine the suffering of this heart-broken father, who is describing in details the severity of his son's fight with the evil spirits: *for he often falls into the fire and often into the water*.

When the young man is brought before Christ, He *rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour*. One should conclude that this evil spirit was reluctant to come out of the young man. However, when the maker of heaven and earth, the Lord of the visible and invisible powers wills, they submit to His command.

Responding to His disciples' question *“Why could we not cast it out?”*, the Savior tells them (and us) what is needed in order to be victorious in the daily spiritual warfare with the evil spirits: **Faith, Prayer** and **Fasting**: *“Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.”*

Let us acquire these weapons so that we also, with unwavering Faith, persistent Prayer and genuine Fasting, may be victorious over the evil forces!

Fr. George Bazgan

**Ecclesiastical Year:
Eastern Orthodox Christians begin new year**

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1 marks the beginning of the Orthodox Ecclesiastical Year. The year-long cycle of feasts, fasts and holidays describes in detail the lives of central figures in the Church, along with significant events. According to Orthodox teaching, this is not a nostalgic memory of a distant past. Church leaders describe the liturgical year as “living” and a “work in progress” to serve the Church and the world. Each generation adds its own events, martyrs and witnesses to the calendar; the Church year dictates appropriate times to fast, to be joyous and to mourn.

Two types of feasts punctuate the Eastern Orthodox Liturgical Calendar: fixed feasts and moveable feasts. While fixed feasts remain on a set date each year, moveable feasts change in accordance with the date of Pascha (Easter). Most Eastern Christians consider Pascha the “center” of the entire year, from which the rest flows.

Ancient roots brought the Orthodox calendar to start in September, with Constantine spearheading the movement in the fourth century. The Eastern practice of beginning on September 1 differs with the Western practice - followed in Catholic and Protestant churches—of declaring the beginning of Advent as the start of the Christian year.

Sunday Fellowship

The following families are scheduled to look after this Sunday (September 1st) fellowship:

**Robert & Anamaria Pandi
Petrică & Gina Lăcătușu
Costel & Vasilica Ionescu**

Thank you all very much!

THE NEW SUNDAY SCHOOL YEAR

On September 15, 2013, the New Sunday School season will begin. Following the Divine Liturgy, a special service of invocation will take place for the students and their teachers.

We are very blessed and thankful to have highly qualified teachers who are dedicated to provide the best religious education for our children.

The parents are warmly advised to bring their children on a regular basis to the Sunday School Program.

The Harvest Festival

The second edition of the Harvest Festival will be held on September 28, 2013, at the Romanian Center. This is a fundraising for two major projects: a new roof over the main Hall and the kitchen renovation.

We extend our invitation to all of our members and supporters to participate in this event!

Tickets are \$50.00/adults and \$15.00/children (7-14 years)

Please call Viorel Ciocan at (780-994-2304) for tickets!

Thank you for your support!