

Oct. 20, 2019: The 23rd Sunday after Pentecost (The healing of the demoniac of Gadarenes)

Epistle: Ephesians 2:4-10:

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Gospel: Luke 8:26-39:



Then they sailed to the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee. 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. When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, “What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me!” For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had often seized him, and he was kept under guard, bound with chains

and shackles; and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness. Jesus asked him, saying, “What is your name?” And he said, “Legion,” because many demons had entered him. And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss. Now a herd of many swine was feeding there on the mountain. So they begged Him that He would permit them to enter them. 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. When those who fed them saw what had happened, they fled and told it in the city and in the country. Then they went out to see what had happened, and came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. They also who had seen it told them by what means he who had been demon-possessed was healed. Then the whole multitude of the surrounding region of the Gadarenes asked Him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. And He got into the boat and returned. Now the man from whom the demons had departed begged Him that he might be with Him. But Jesus sent him away, saying, “Return to your own house, and tell what great things God has done for you.” And he went his way and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.

The gospel reading of this Sunday describes the sad situation of man when Christ came into the world. Not only spiritually but physically, man was in dire need of divine intervention. The demoniac from Gadara is representative of this terrible situation: he *"had demons for a long time. And he wore no clothes, nor did he live in a house but in the tombs."* He was no longer a sociable human being, interacting with his fellow human beings; he was living among the dead: *"he lived not in a house but in the tombs."* This man's identity had been stolen by the evil spirits, who now had total control over him: *"What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," because many demons had entered him."* It is not the man who responds to Christ's question, but the evil spirits. His daily life was a continuous torture, a living hell: *"he was kept under guard, bound with chains and shackles; and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness."*

By granting the evil spirits their wish, to enter the herd of swine, Christ our Savior liberates the demoniac from the captivity of the "legion," and restores his dignity and his sanity both spiritual and physical. Instead of finding a fierce and evil tormented person, the people from the city found him *"sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind."*

This is the place for a normal person: at the feet of Jesus, clothed in the garment of forgiveness, physically and mentally healed and restored.

Fr. George Bazgan

Altar boys for this Sunday:

**Corbu Arkin Gabriel
Alexander Ștefănescu**

Sunday Fellowship

**The following families are scheduled to look after
this Sunday's fellowship:**

**Chiosa Neculae
Cojocariu Cristian & Otilia
Gheorghe Eugen & Floarea**

Thank you all very much!

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

**On November 2, 2019,
a Volunteer Appreciation Dinner will be offered
by our parish in honor of all volunteers who worked in
different capacities during the past year.**

Supper will be served at 7:00 PM.

Please bring your family!

MEMBERSHIP / PLEDGE

**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 for the rest of the year.**

**We also encourage you to renew your financial pledge
and be as generous as you can.**

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

A Christian's conduct in Church

Before I begin to address the topic of „church conduct,” it is important to address the question „Why do we come to church?”

We come to church on Sundays (the Day of the Lord) in order to reaffirm our vocation as liturgical beings, to continue our spiritual growth and to strengthen our communion with Christ and His Church which began when we were accepted into the community of the faithful through the Sacraments of Christian Initiation: Baptism, Chrismation and Holy Eucharist (Communion).

For an Orthodox Christian, attending the Divine Liturgy is not only a privilege but an obligation as well. It is a privilege in as much as we, as members of the visible Church are called to bring the Eucharistic elements (bread and wine), be part of their transformation into the Body and Blood of Christ and then, partake of them in the form of the Holy Eucharist, all this in the context of the Divine Liturgy, the highest form of prayer we can offer to God. It is also our obligation to attend the Divine Liturgy, obeying thus one of the commandments of the Church.

In order to benefit the most from our presence in Church we must keep in mind a few rules:

1. Come to Church on time (before 10:00) in order to participate in the entire Divine Liturgy.
2. If the service is already in progress, you must stop and see what is going on. If you came in during the Scripture readings (Epistle or the Gospel), you should wait at the back of the church until the reading is over and then, quietly, take your seat.
3. Pick up the liturgical book and follow closely the service, reading all of the prayers.
4. During the Divine Liturgy you are not allowed to talk to other people.
You can do that at the end, during the fellowship.