

August 9, 2020: 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

Sunday Service Attendance

Due to the continuing State of Emergency, which limits the number of people attending Church services, we are asking our members to make sure that, for time being, only 1 (one) person from each family attend our Sunday Divine Liturgy.

We apologize for this inconvenience and hope that the restrictions will continue to be relaxed in the near future.

Those who attend, are kindly asked to observe the recommendations of the experts, such as: washing their hands, social distancing, etc.

Thank you all and may God keep us safe!

Holy Virgin's Dormition Fast

Between August 1-15, the Orthodox Church observes the Dormition Fast.

Special services:

Vespers at 6:00 PM on: August 1, 8 and 14.

-Divine Liturgy: August 6 and 15.

Those who want to have their confession heard, can do so after the Vespers services.

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!

CHURCH DIRECTORY PICK UP

The 2019 Church Directory is now available for those who participated in this project. If your family came to the Hall for a photography appointment or submitted your own family picture (for \$15), then you will receive a Directory.

Have a happy and safe Summer!

Prayer at the time of pandemic

O Lord, our God, who are rich in mercy and, with Your wise care, guard our lives, listen to our prayer, receive our repentance for our sins, stop this pandemic, as You have ceased the punishment of the people in the days of King David. You who are the Physician of our souls and our bodies, give healing to those contaminated with this disease, hastily raising them from their bed of suffering, to glorify You, the Most Merciful Savior, and protect those who are healthy from any disease.

Bless, strengthen and shield, O Lord, with Your grace, all those who, with love of people and sacrifice, care for the sick at their homes or in hospitals. Remove all disease and suffering from the people and teach us to value life and health as gifts coming from You.

Grant us, O God, Your peace, and fill our hearts with unwavering faith in Your protection, with hope in Your help, and with love towards You and our neighbor.

For Yours is to show mercy and to save us, O our God, and to You we give glorify: Father and Son and Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen!