

Francine O'Leary, Russell Plasha, Patricia Delfine, Rev. Joseph Jagan, Jim Bacigalupi, Katherine Sikoryak, Margaret Hospodar, John Ryaby III, Guillermina Donalson, Steve Smith, and Caleb Joseph Lugo, child of extended Kotula family.

Prayers for our Parishioners. The particular law of the Byzantine Ruthenian Metropolitan Church directs all parishioners is "For the Intention of Parishioners." The faithful who attend the Divine Liturgy for the parishioners who participate, according to their state, in praying for that intention. We can continue this prayer for one another during the week by remembering several parishioners' families each week. Please pray for these parishioners, Michael and Melissa Paul, Marjorie Pavliscak, Nora Peabody & family, Deacon Elmer & Sally Pekarik, Brian and Mary Elizabeth Phillips, Stephen Plishka, Dennis and Catherine Pluchinsky, and from the Mission, Nancy Sesok & family.

Public Liturgies. The Governor of Virginia has issued the seventh revised Executive Order Seventy-two and Executive Order Seventy-Nine. In these orders the governor has lifted most restrictions according to recent guidelines issued by the Center for Disease Control. Bishop Kurt Burnette issued new directives May 26, 2021, effective May 28, 2021. The Bishop directs observing state laws. Bishop Kurt directs the following: Parishioners are not required to wear a mask as long as it is in compliance with state directives. People may continue to wear a mask for personal protection or as a courtesy to the vulnerable. No one should ask if someone has been vaccinated in order to be admitted. People are still encouraged to practice safe distancing in pews. Clergy and anyone assisting must wear a mask when distributing Holy Communion. Ushers when assisting people to receive Holy Communion must wear a mask. Individual spoons must continue to be used when distributing Holy Communion. Priest and deacon must continue to receive from separate chalices from the one used to distribute Holy Communion to the Faithful. The priest, and deacon, must continue to exercise caution in handing the offered and prepared Gifts before they are consecrated and handling, speaking, or singing near the Gifts or the metal ware (chalice, discos, asterisk, zeon) and continue to sanitize hands. The Bishop has not changed the directive on distributing the bulletins or replacing the People's Molitvennik or Bibles in the pew racks yet. The Bishop will revoke the dispensation regarding the

Sunday precept or obligation to assist at Divine Liturgy on June 6th. From that date, watching the live stream does not fulfill the obligation to assist at Divine Liturgy. However, the Bishop reminds everyone that "just as before the pandemic, anyone is relieved of the obligation for serious reason such as sickness, immobility, fear, caring for someone else, to protect your own health or the health of others."

Adjustments to Plan. As a response to the governor's amended executive order and Bishop Kurt Burnette's guidelines of May 26, 2021 Epiphany will have certain adjustments in public worship and assembly. Please continue to follow the directions of the ushers. The sanitizing stations will still be at the same places and all are asked to avail themselves of their use. The collection will continue to be taken by the basket in the narthex for the present. Please note that adjustments to pew seating are being made to accommodate the Faithful since the Bishop's dispensation from the Sunday obligation has been revoked. The Bishop has not made any changes to allow the distribution of bulletins or replacing the books in the pew racks. However, the ushers will have Divine Liturgy books available if you desire. If you ask for a book, please take it home with you and bring it back for use each time you come to church. The sacristans will continue to sanitize surfaces and doors in church after each Divine Liturgy. The chapel will remain closed at present. When the chapel will be opened, the sacristans will have to sanitize it after each use and our sacristans have more work already without adding to their labors. Parishioners do not have to wear masks. Ushers are asked to continue to wear masks and gloves. Please observe the new marks on the carpet when in the Communion procession. Please maintain a sense of social distance.

Praying at Home Together. If you are remaining safe at home, you may consider praying the Divine Liturgy in your homes so that we can be united in praying the same prayers. These are available on the web site of the Metropolitan Cantor Institute of the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh, <https://mci.archpitt.org>.

Prayerbook in church. The entire People's Molitvennik is available at the <https://mci.archpitt.org> web site under Publications tab to use on your smart phone when participating in the Liturgy.

Blessing of Vehicles. July 20 is the feast of St. Elias who ascended to heaven in a fiery chariot. Vehicles

will be blessed on the holyday as well as the Divine Liturgies for Saturday, July 24th and Sunday, July 25th.

Two Divine Liturgies. We will begin two Divine Liturgies, one a Vigil Liturgy Saturdays at 5:00 PM and one Divine Liturgy on Sunday at 9:00 AM. This is being planned from July 24th to include the festival weekend. Almost all needed staffing is in place. After the festival weekend, the Divine Liturgy schedule will be reviewed to determine how to accommodate ECF-SOR classes and the mission.

Messages from the Pastor. Father John has been sending email messages to the parishioners whose email addresses we have on our roster. If you have not been receiving these email messages, it might be because we do not have your email address, or you have changed it and we do not have it. We would like to have your email address to keep contact with you during this time when some parishioners are remaining safe at home. Simply email the parish office.

Liturgy Intentions to be Rescheduled. If you have offered a Divine Liturgy for an intention to be celebrated during the suspension, you will be contacted to reschedule. Jamie has been rescheduling weekday liturgy requests according to the date of the request. If you have scheduled a weekday liturgy, that liturgy will remain on the date requested. However, if you scheduled a liturgy on a Sunday, the intention can be rescheduled on a weekday or Saturday or until Bishop Kurt is able to assign a second priest to be able to celebrate two Sunday liturgies. There is no pre-scheduled Divine Liturgy intention for the Seventh Sunday after Pentecost, July 11, 2021.

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

On-line Giving. Bishop Kurt directed that all parishes have online giving service in place with www.tithe.ly.com by August 31, 2020. Both the parish and the mission have online accounts with tithe.ly and these can be accessed at the church or mission web sites. To make an online contribution, go to the church web site. On the home page is a link that says [Epiphany of our Lord online donation](#). Click on that and you will be directed to Epiphany's tithe.ly account. Please note that where you see Offertory, that is a drop-down menu that allows the donor to

specify what the donation is for: Sunday offertory, Building Fund, St. Nicholas Fund, or eparchial collections. Please show care in the category Recurring Giving. If it is not a donation to be given each week or month, please make that adjustment that this is a one-time donation.

Parish Financial Report. The financial reports for the year ended December 31, 2020 are available upon request in the church office. The events of 2020 had a significant effect on the church community and certainly our church finances. Even with the uncertainty, we were able to maintain a strong financial situation by being prudent with the expenses we needed to incur. We were able to eliminate some regular outdoor seasonal grounds upkeep expenses, and defer on some repairs to a future period, but we will be unable to continue this strategy going forward. If we do not resume some of our regular events such as bingo, the festival, Lenten dinners, we will need to look to other means to maintain our church campus. We thank you as we have seen an increase in online giving, however, we would like to suggest another option also. For those of you currently taking required minimum distributions from your IRA, consider making Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD) to Epiphany Church directly from your IRA. This will not only benefit our church, but it reduces your taxable income even if you do not itemize. Contact the parish office for more information.

EMC Bingo. New legislation went into effect July 1, 2021 that changes aspects of Bingo in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The new legislation has been forwarded to the eparchial attorney for review to determine how this will impact EMC Bingo. We will continue to monitor and assess health and scientific information as it is released to guide the determination of opening safely for our parishioners and Bingo patrons.

Festival Meeting. Meeting of Activity Chairs for the Slavic American Festival will be Tuesday, July 13th at 7:00 PM at the parish center.

Festival Baking. Saturday, August 7 will be our next nut roll baking day in preparation for the Slavic-American Festival. Volunteers are needed for a variety of tasks (rolling dough, dough prep/weighing, cooling/bagging rolls, dishwashing, cleanup) and at various times they can assist. We thank everyone in advance for their time and

dedication to making sure we continue to celebrate and share our Slavic culinary traditions! Kyra Gerardi and Nancy Soyka.

Epiphany ECF-SOR. There are a few classes that still need catechists. If you would be willing to serve as catechist, please see Gayle Dietrich or email at gayledietrich@gmail.com.

Parish Bulletin. The parish bulletin will continue to be posted weekly on the Epiphany website: www.eolbcc.org. It will also be posted on the bulletin board in the narthex and photograph of the bulletin can be taken.

Parish Office Schedule and Safety Protocols. Parish Office hours remain: Monday, Wednesday, Friday-10:00 AM - 2:00 PM The hand sanitizer station remains for your use and safety. You may practice the courtesy of social distancing for safety.

Mission Development. Jack McLaurin and Father John met at the Mission Estate Friday, July 2nd, to review the Scope of Work to bid for contractors. We have to pay final fees to DPS although that is based on cost of construction and we do not have a contractor yet, so we do not have a cost of construction. We hope that Eikona Studios, the wood craftsman Jim Dillon, and the contractors for site work and building construction can complete work in time for the twenty-fifth anniversary in October.

Book Store. The Bookstore is open Sunday by appointment. Please contact a Bookstore manager.

Restroom Availability FYI. Please note that the church restrooms are open for the use of our parishioners on Sundays and weekday Divine Liturgies. Rest rooms will continue to be sanitized.

Thank You. Thank you to all who sent cards, prayers, and remembrances through my time of recovery. Your kind thoughtfulness is most appreciated.

- Deacon Peter

EPARCHIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS & OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bishop's Appeal Recent Update. The Bishop's Appeal 2020 began October 1st. Pledges and payments were accepted through June 1, 2021. Any

contributions received after December 31, 2020, must be attributed to the 2021 tax year. The goal for this year's campaign was the same as last year, \$19,800 for the church and \$6,000 for the mission. The parishioners at the church have pledged or given \$22,325. The parishioners at the mission have pledged or given \$4,225. This is an incredible response in this difficult time. May God bless you for your sacrificial offerings to our eparchy and for our eparchy's donations to European eparchies. As the church reached our goal, we will receive a 40% refund of the total received.

Master of Theology. The Byzantine Catholic Seminary is preparing for the Fall 2021 semester. You can earn your Master's in Theology (MaT) from the seminary in four concentrations: chaplaincy, dogmatics, liturgy, sacred scripture. Online courses are available. Senior students over 55 can audit classes as 50% reduction. Fall 2021 semester begins August 30, 2021. Registration closes July 20, 2021. For more information please visit www.bcs.edu.

Uniontown Pilgrimage. The Sisters of St. Basil the Great have announced that the 87th Annual Pilgrimage to Our Lady of Perpetual Help at Mt. St. Macrina, Uniontown, PA will be held Sunday, September 5th. After consulting with the CDC, the Sisters will have the in-person pilgrimage with certain limitations. They request those with compromised immune systems and those unvaccinated to participate by live-stream. Since some people with illness and needs go to the Lady of Perpetual Help asking for a cure, possibly these petitioners could have someone go in their place to pray before her icon.

Prime Time Catholics (PTSC) serves single Catholics 40 and over. Meet us for: Pie and Ice Cream Social at Wakefield Park (July 10); visit to Hillwood Estate, Museum, and Gardens (July 17); Ghana Community Mass at Queen of Apostles Church (July 25); walk at Glade Pool Recreation Area in Reston (July 31). For details, visit our website: bit.ly/ptsc. With questions or to RSVP, email Tom ptscnva@gmail.com

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

COMING EVENTS

- Byzantine Spirituality
- On Line Contributions
- Amended Safety Protocols
- Parish Financial Reports
- Mission Development
- Festival Meeting
- Bishop's Appeal
- Byzantine News
- Uniontown Pilgrimage
- Festival Baking
- SOR - Teachers Needed
- Prime Time Catholics

EMC BINGO

Bingo will be suspended for the foreseeable future.

<http://EMCBINGO.com>

July 11, 2021

TITHING & GIVING

Adults	\$7,575.00
Building Fund	\$1,880.00
Holy Days	\$220.00
Candles	\$254.50
SOR	\$327.00
Holy Water Bottles	\$30.00
Peter's Pence	\$245.00
St. Nicholas Fund	\$397.05
	<u>\$10,937.55</u>

Tithing & Giving. This report represents donations made in person during the weeks 6/20/21 and 6/27/21, it does not include online donations. The next report will reflect offertory for 07/04/21 and 07/11/21. "Online Donation" represents donations for Epiphany contributed by parishioners online and sent to Epiphany from our online giving account. Our online giving can be accessed through the parish or mission web sites. Thank you for continuing to use your giving envelopes.

Summation of the online giving from 1/1/21 through 6/30/21.

General Offertory	\$15,976.94
Building Fund	\$3,208.29
Holy Days	\$184.31
Candles/Flowers	\$78.91
Eparchial Collections	\$96.68
Eastern Catholic Life	\$42.70
Total	\$19,587.83

"Remember then, it is the Lord, your God, who gives you the power to acquire wealth." (Dt. 8:18)

LITURGY AND LIFE

Prayer Intentions. Please remember in prayer: Msgr. George Dobs, David Sayen, Mary McDonnell, Justine Ferrari, Louis Shanks, Caroline Zurun, Mary Beth Vieira, Irene Markovich, Mary Gaydos, Betty Markovchick, John Vernoski, Marge Rusnak, Tim Ryan, Fr. Lee Gross, Rand Bass, and Greta Koehl. Please pray for these relatives and friends of our parishioners: Eileen Gray, James Seman, Mike Shuster, Greg Starr, Florence Kunder, Kelly Kunder,



Byzantine Catholic Church
3410 Woodburn Road, Annandale, VA 22003
Phone: 703-573-3986--- Fax: 703-573-0344
Very Rev. John G. Basarab – Pastor

Glory to Jesus Christ!	July 11, 2021	Slava Isusu Christ!
Glory forever!		Slava na v'iki!

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Sun. July 11 10:30 AM Intention of our Parishioners
Eighth Week after Pentecost

Tues. July 13 10:00 AM +Bishop Milan Sasak and +Rev. Richard Rohrer
 by Marlene McCracken

Sat July 17 10:00 AM *Bishop-martyr Paul Gojdich*
 +Matthew Pecorino by Andrew Nowakowski

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Sun. July 18 10:30 AM Intention of Parishioners

ALTAR SERVER SCHEDULE – July 18, 2021

Sun. July 18 One server and a sacristan will be assigned.

USHER SCHEDULE – July 18, 2021

Sun. July 18 Ushers check with Bob Wargo for assignments next Sunday.

People in attendance can wear masks but do not have to do so if vaccinated. No one will be asked to provide proof. People are requested to maintain social distancing.

EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD Byzantine Catholic Church

The Sacraments – Our Life in Christ

Mysteries (Sacraments) of Initiation - (Baptism, Chrismation, Holy Eucharist). We follow the command of the Lord to baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). Chrismation (Confirmation) and Holy Eucharist (First Holy Communion) is imparted at the same time immediately following baptism.

Mysteries (Sacraments) of Initiation of Infants – is scheduled at the Divine Liturgy on Saturdays or Sundays during the year except certain fast periods. Sponsors must be Catholics in good standing and supply a sponsor card attesting to that from their parish. While two Catholics in good standing is usual, one baptized non-Catholic can function as a Christian Witness with the Catholic sponsor. Both must be at least sixteen years of age. Details are available at the parish office.

Mysteries (Sacraments) of Initiation of Adults – follows a period of catechumenate. This is a period of spiritual formation. Please see the priest or deacon.

Mystery (Sacrament) of Crowning in Marriage – According to the Pastoral Policy and Guidelines for Marriage Preparation for the Catholic Church in New Jersey, couples wishing to marry must inform the pastor one year before the date of the wedding and be free to marry in the Catholic Church. Couples will meet with the priest and deacon in four sessions – to begin the pre-nuptial investigation, to take FOCCUS, a communications, values and religious inventory approved for use in the Catholic dioceses/eparchies, to complete the pre-nuptial investigation and for a session on the theology of the mystery (sacrament). They are also required to attend Pre-Cana or Engaged Encounter.

Mystery (Sacrament) of Repentance – The Mystery (Sacrament) of Repentance is regularly available each Saturday 11:30 AM – 12:00 Noon. In addition, confessions are heard during the Christmas Fast (Advent) and the Great Fast (Lent) at other scheduled times. Visiting confessors are also scheduled at special times during the Great Fast. Confessions are also heard on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of Great and Holy Parishioners who are seriously ill and those with life endangering medical conditions as well as those who are to undergo surgery should avail themselves Week to prepare for the observance of the Lord’s Resurrection.

Anointing of the Sick – Parishioners who are seriously ill and those with life-threatening medical conditions as well as those who are to undergo surgery should avail themselves of the sacrament of penance and anointing of the sick. If surgery is scheduled, please consider confession and anointing at the church before entering the hospital since there is more privacy for confession and less chance of interruption for confession and anointing. If you are unable to come to church, please call the rectory. Families of parishioners who have a medical emergency should contact the rectory office so one of the priests can go to the hospital.

Holy Communion and Visitation of the Sick – Holy Communion is brought to our parishioners who are ill at the hospital or at home by the deacon on Sundays and at other times by arrangement. Please contact the deacon or the rectory office by Friday prior to the Sunday communion visitation.

Funeral Services – The Office of Christian Burial is offered in ways to accommodate the needs of the family. The Epiphany Ladies Guild as part of their charity offers a Mercy Meal for families at the Parish Center following the interment. Epiphany of our Lord cemetery is a portion of Fairfax Memorial Park. Parishioners who are interested in purchasing cemetery plots should see the deacon.

Byzantine Catholic Mission of Montgomery County - Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM; Religious Education & Social Hour 11:15-12:15: 20501 Goshen Road, Gaithersburg, MD; (301) 482-0282.

Parish Administration

"The Church is not an organization with sacraments but a sacrament with organization."

Parish Clergy	Parish Office Staff
Very Rev. John G. Basarab, Pastor	Jamie Bacigalupi, Administrative Assistant
Deacon Elmer Pekarik, Deacon Peter Turko	Lucie Cantsilieris, Financial Assistant
Parish Council of Administration	Parish Office Hours: 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM Monday- Friday
Emil Koval, Greg Puhak, Sally Green	9:30 AM - 12:30 PM Sunday

School of Religion - School of Religion classes meet on Sundays between Liturgies (9:20 AM - 10:20 AM) throughout the school year (September - June). Classes are offered for children grades Preschool & Kindergarten - High School
 Announcements may be dropped off in the Parish Office, faxed to the office (703-573-1088) or email to epiphanyofourlord@verizon.net.

Registration - Individuals who wish to register in the Parish should stop by the Parish Office and complete a census form.

<p>Epiphany of our Lord Church, Annandale, VA http://www.eolbcc.org Epiphany of our Lord does not conduct business on the website email.</p>
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PARISH USTAV

The Order for the Divine Liturgy
for

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

PLACE RIBBONS AT:

BLUE p. 11 Mark and Follow Ordinary Parts of the Divine Liturgy

GREEN p. 152 Resurrection Tone 6

ALL MELODIES FOR THIS SUNDAY ARE:

ALL B

1. The Divine Liturgy begins on p. 11 BLUE
2. Sunday Antiphons pp. 14, 16 BLUE
3. At the Troparia
Troparion of Resurrection Tone 6 p. 152 GREEN
Kontakion of Resurrection Tone 6 p. 152-153 GREEN
4. Scripture readings:
Prokeimenon of the Resurrection Tone 6 p. 153 GREEN
Epistle: Romans 15:1-7
Alleluia: of Resurrection Tone 6 p.153 GREEN
Gospel: Matthew 9:27-35
5. Communion Hymn of Resurrection p. 78 BLUE

ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON – JEDINORODNYJ SYNE

Slava Otcu i Synu i Svjatomu Duchu, i nyňi i prisno, i vo v'iki v'ikov. Amiň. Jedinorodnyj Syne, i Slove Božij, bezsmerten syj, i izvolivyj spasenija našeho radi voplotitisja ot svjatyja Bohorodicy i prisno-d'ivy Mariji, nepreložno vočelov'ičivysja, raspnysja že, Christe Bože, smertiju smert' popravjy, jedin syj Svjatyja Trojcy, sproslavl'ajemyj Otcu i Svjatomu Duchu, spasi nas.

SVJATYJ BOŽE – HOLY GOD

Svjatyj Bože, svjatyj kr'ipkij, svjatyj bezsmertnyj, pomiluj nas. Slava Otcu i Synu, i Svjatomu Duchu, i nyňi i 4n a4i, 4n a v'iki v'ikov. Amin.

IŽE CHERUVIMY – LET US WHO MYSTICALLY

Iže Cheruvimy tajno obrazujušče, i životvorjasšče Trojc'i trisvjatuju p'isň prinosjasšče, vsjakuju nyňi zitejskoje otveržim pečal'.

Amiň. Jako da Carja vs'ich podimem, anhel'skimi nevidimo dorinosima činmi. Alliluaia. Alliluaia. Alliluaia.

SVJAT, SVJAT, SVJAT – HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Svjat, svjat, svjat, Hospod' savaoth, ispol n ai zeml'a slavy Tvojeja: osanna vo vyšnich, blahosloven hrjadyj vo imja Hospodne, osanna vo vyšnich.

TEBE POJEM – WE PRAISE YOU

Tebe pojem, Tebe blahoslovim, Teb'i blahodarim, Hospodi, i molimtisja Bože naš.

DOSTOJNO JEST' – IT IS TRULY PROPER

Dostojno jest' jako voistinnu blažiti t'a Bororodicu, prisnoblaženuju i preneporočnuju i Mater' Boha našeho. Čestnišuju Cheruvim i slavnišuju bez sravnenija Serafim, bez istl'inija Boha Slova roždšuju, suščuju Bohorodicu, t'a veličajem.

OTČE NAŠ – OUR FATHER

Otče naš, iže jesi na nebes'ich, da svjatitsja imja Tvoje. Da prijedet carstvije Tvoje, da budet vol'a Tvoja, jako na nebesi, i na zeml'i. Chl'ib naš nasuščnyj dažd nam dnes'. I ostavi nam dolhi naša, jakože i my ostavl'aje dolžnikom našim. I ne vvedi nas vo iskušenje, no izbavi nas ot lukavaho.

VID'ICHOM SV'IT ISTINNYJ – WE HAVE SEEN THE TRUE LIGHT

Vid'ichom sv'it istinnyj, i prijachom Ducha nebesnaho, obr'itocom v'iru istinnuju nerazd'ilnij Svjat'ij Trojc'i poklaňajemsja, Ta bo nas spasla jest'.

DA ISPOLŇATSJA – MAY OUR MOUTH BE FILLED

Da ispolňatsja usta naša chvalenija tvojeho Hospodi, jako da pojem slavu tvoju, jako spodobil jesi nas pričastitsja svjatym tvojim, božestvennym, bezsmertnym, i životvor'aščim Tajnam; utverdi nas Bože vo Tvojej svjatyni vsja dni poučatisja pravd'i Tvojej. Alliluaia!

Meditation on Today's Readings

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost



"...Jesus said to them, 'Do you believe that I can do this?' 'Yes, Lord, they said to Him.'...The crowds were amazed and said, 'Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel.'"
Matthew 9:27-35

The gospel passage the holy fathers have appointed for the Seventh Sunday after Pentecost is the restoration of sight by Jesus to the two blind men because of their faith and the exorcism of the mute man that makes it possible for the man to hear and speak. The

response to these acts is rejoicing although that sentiment is not universal—the Pharisees articulate their disapproval.

Seven centuries before these events the prophet Isaiah was inspired by God the Holy Spirit to predict what would be the signs that the Messiah had come. "Here is your God, He comes with vindication;... then will the eyes of the blind be opened, the ears of the deaf be cleared...then the tongue of the dumb will sing" (Isaiah 35:4-6). Fulfilling this prophesy, Jesus gives sight to the blind men and hearing and speech to the deaf.

As if knowing that Jesus is the one the Holy Spirit revealed to Isaiah, the blind men, even before they can see for themselves, call Jesus "Son of David, have pity on us." God told King David that the Messiah would be David's descendent, so the blind men are calling Jesus Messiah and calling on Him to do what the Messiah is supposed to do—give sight to the blind.

All this is too much for the Pharisees. They cannot dispute what they see. Jesus really cured the blind and drove out the demons so the deaf and dumb possessed man could hear and speak so the Pharisees cannot deny it. But, the Pharisees blaspheme Him claiming that Jesus is Himself possessed and that is how He controls evil spirits.

The controversy will have Jesus warn that whoever speaks against Jesus can be forgiven but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven on earth or in the *parousia* (Matthew 12:12:32) so their blasphemy is very deadly. This statement about Jesus is also found in some literature of the time so it is evident that this was the approach those who were against Jesus employed.

The evangelist Matthew relates that Jesus called the Twelve, revealed the teaching about the Kingdom of God in the Sermon on the Mount, and then set out to put into operation the principles of the Kingdom from the Sermon by miracles. Faith is the prerequisite virtue that is required by humans to receive God's miraculous grace. All humans are infused with the virtue of faith. But since a relationship of love cannot be forced, some humans reject the Lover of humankind, the *Philanthropos* or Čelovikol'ubeč, and put their faith in someone or something lesser despite the clear evidence of the Beloved's love. Those who direct their faith, hope and love toward God must not treat those who reject God with belligerence because those antagonistic toward God are already punishing themselves by their antagonism. Instead, we are called to increase our prayers for them and our witness and preaching to them in hopes of the cure of salvation. While there is life there is still hope.

"We who are strong ought to put up with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves; let each of us please our neighbor for the good, for building up...May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to think in harmony with one another, in keeping with Christ Jesus...Welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God." Romans 15:1-7

The gospel appointed for today is the healing by the Lord Jesus of two blind men and the healing of a mute man. The epistle appointed is from the epistle of Saint Paul to the Romans. The holy fathers have appointed the readings from the Word of God this day that are (1) in the epistle a teaching how to act toward others in the one

Body of Christ to Whom all were joined in baptism, and (2) in the gospel, concrete examples offered by the Lord Jesus of that concern for those in need.

The Apostolic reading appointed is from the epistle of Saint Paul to the Romans. The Christian community in Rome was composed of Jews and Gentiles, and St. Paul felt it was important to explain the effects of salvation given by Christ for both of these groups.

Saint Paul reminds the Roman Christians and us about the extreme humility of Christ who, although God by nature, became man, and in a further abnegation, although without sin He bore our sins in His body and "by His wounds we are healed" (1 Peter 2:24). Our charitable behavior to all, especially the weak and their failings, should be inspired not by a general humanitarian feeling but by the example of the God-Man Jesus Christ, for we have become incorporated into Him by baptism and by the grace He gives us we become Christ-like.

The Apostle enjoins all Christians to strive not only to put up with the weak but to work toward a "harmony or unity of thought." This does not mean a rigid uniformity of thought but rather a thoughtful consideration of others' views. This is possible because baptized Christians have "put on Christ" and become more and more guided in their thoughts by His teaching by reading the Sacred Scripture – the reference in verse 3 includes the Old Testament – and by receiving God's grace through the reception of the Sacraments. This leads to a Church that has unanimity of belief "to the glory of God."

Children's Corner

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...	10	18	8	12	2	13	11	6		
"	7	23	8	5	21	26				
"	22	23	9	9	21	26	20	17		
"	3	19	15							

	19	14	20	25	14	19	6	4	24	16
...	10	18	8	12	2	13	11	6		
"	7	23	8	5	21	26				
"	22	23	9	9	21	26	20	17		
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	19	14	20	25	14	19	6	4	24	16
...	10	18	8	12	2	13	11	6		
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	19	14	20	25	14	19	6	4	24	16
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"	22	23	9	9	21	26	20	17		
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Paul said that we who are strong in faith ought to show patience with the failings of those whose faith is weaker.
Use the letters to find Paul's wise rule.