

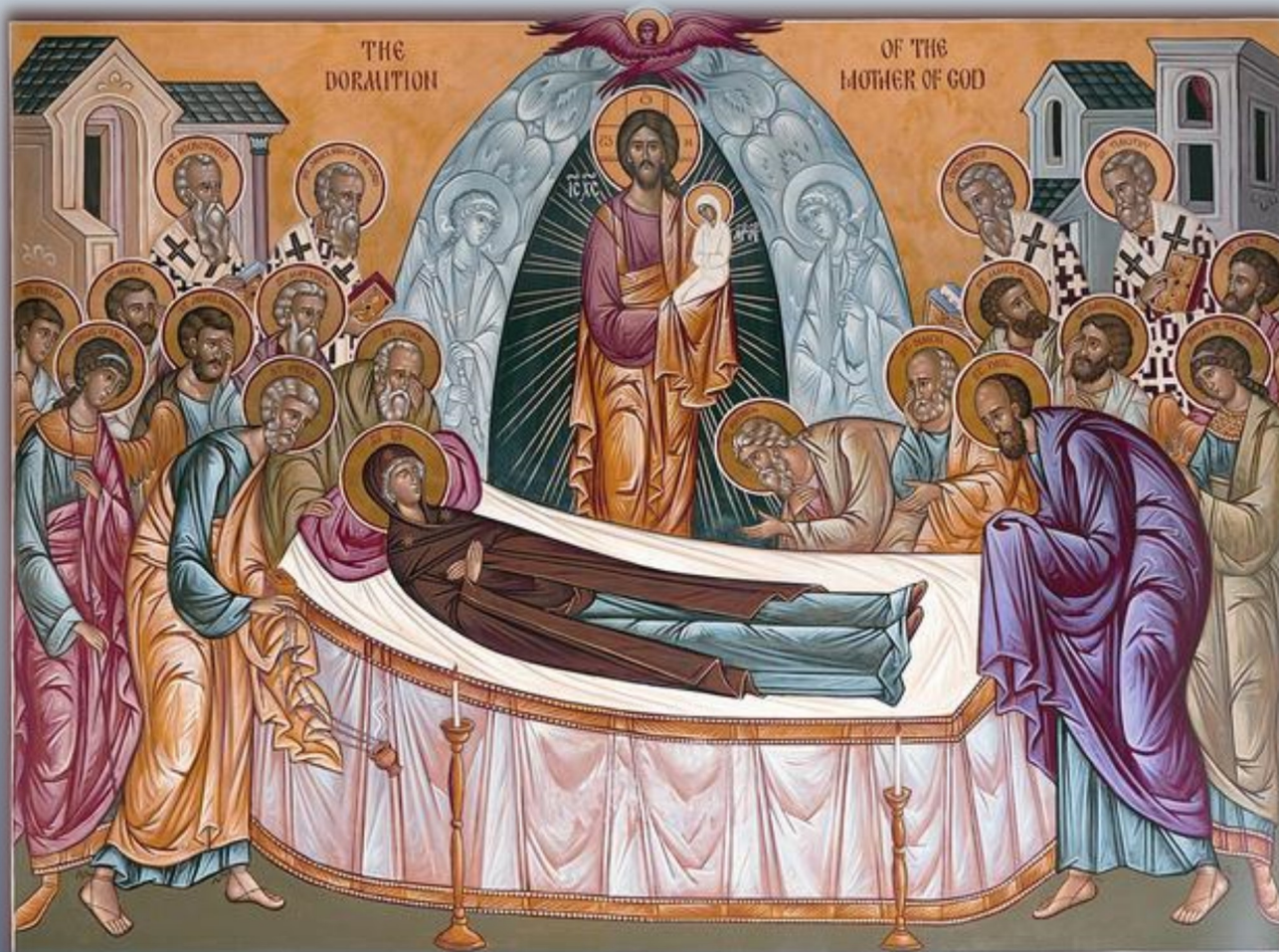
If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain... 1 Corint. 15:14



# ST. NICHOLAS

Serbian Orthodox Church

971 St. Clair Road, Johnstown, PA 15905 ■ 814-255-1853; Parish Priest : *Rev. Dragan Zaric*



**The Dormition fast** was established as preceding the great feasts of the Transfiguration of the Lord and of the Dormition of the Mother of God. It lasts two weeks—from August 14–27.

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*Weekly Bulletin - Sunday August 13, 2017*

**Sunday, July 31/ August 13, 2017. 10th Sunday after Pentecost;  
Holy and Righteous Eudocimus; Holy Martyr Julitta**

- **Liturgical Readings: Epistle: 1 Cor. (4, 9-16).**  
**Gospel St. Matt. (17, 14-23)**

- **Donations Received Sunday July 30 & August 6, 2017**

**7/30/17** Offering \$613.00 Candles \$50.00 Parastos \$15.00 Dues \$135.00 Donations \$75.00

**8/6/17** Offering \$1002.00 Candles \$45.00 Dues \$135.00 Charity \$37.00 Donations \$200.00

Funeral \$150.00 Sunday School \$120.00

Donations for \$100 in memory of George R. Sewak from wife Delores and children.

Donation for \$100 in memory of Lillian Fleck from Kathleen Dreisbach

Donation to the Sunday School in memory of Lillian Fleck for \$20 from Patricia and John Pavich and \$100 from Cameron & Linda Palmer

Donations to the Building Fund in memory of Sylvester Saula for \$100 from Tom & Ann Luy

In memory of Pete Povich for \$20 from Mike and Mary Raich and \$15 from Suzette and Richard Gardenhour

In memory of Lillian Fleck for \$25 from Charles & Olga Bulich, for \$20 from Chris Maggs, Chris McAllister, Lazo Gjurich, and Mike & Mary Raich. For \$10 from Bob Stramanak

Donations to the Choir in memory of Lillian Fleck for \$100 from Debra Carpenter, \$100 from Kathleen Dreisbach and \$25 from Suzette & Richard Gardenhour

- Church Liturgy will begin at 10:00am starting September 10<sup>th</sup>

• **1 Corinthians 4:9-16 (NKJV)** <sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> 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! <sup>11</sup> To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless. <sup>12</sup> And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; <sup>13</sup> being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now. <sup>14</sup> I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn *you*. <sup>15</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> Therefore I urge you, imitate me.

### ● **The Gospel According to Matthew 17:14-23**

At that time, a man came up to Jesus and kneeling before him said, "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and he suffers terribly; for often he falls into the fire, and often into the water. And I brought him to your disciples, and they could not heal him." And Jesus answered, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him here to me." And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured instantly. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" He said to them, "Because of your little faith. For truly I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move hence to yonder place,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you. But this kind never comes out except by prayer and fasting." As they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of man is to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him, and he will be raised on the third day."

**Homily by V. Rev. Stav. Rodney Torbich** -The father brought his son to the disciples for curing. The father was persistent in seeking a solution to his son's problems. He was not content when learning the problem was beyond the capabilities of the disciples.

Jesus put the disciples into perspective for the father. Jesus educated the disciples and succeeding generations of believers. Jesus' words are recorded in the Holy Gospel and are proclaimed in churches throughout the world. Jesus wanted to make clear why the disciples could not cure the son. Jesus' words are a lasting source of instruction for solving serious problems like the son had. Individuals in the current century do well to heed the words of Christ and think carefully about the father's effort to turn to Christ. Individuals in the helping professions do well to be attentive Christ's words in the current Gospel. Professionals trained in helping professions often face serious problems with clients and patients. The current Gospel attests to the value of turning to Christ for help. Jesus called the generation at the time "faithless and perverse." What words would Jesus apply to the generation of today? If the generation cited in the Gospel was faithless and perverse, today's generation would not seem much different. Jesus was direct and took the problem into His own hands. The healing power of Christ was needed. Individuals are created in the image and likeness of God.(Gen.1:26) Is it not best to turn to God for help first for healing.? Jesus' patience appeared to be wearing thin. He had higher expectations of the people. Jesus challenged the people with His questions. Jesus addressed their inadequacies. Disciples of Christ need to heed the words of Christ. Followers of Christ are expected to be attentive to Christ's teachings and make them part of the lives. Followers of Christ have a responsibility not to test Jesus' patience. Jesus has no countenance for the lukewarm.(Rev.3:15-16) Words in Revelation are clear: ""Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world."(Rev.3:10) Heeding the present Gospel is a



way of preparing for the Second Coming of Christ. Learning from the present Gospel is a way to benefit greatly in Christ. Jesus took action quickly and directly. Jesus rebuked the demon and demonstrated His power over the demon. The demon was expelled and the child was cured. Individuals will waste their life following paths that lead to other than the Kingdom of God. Following Christ leads to the Kingdom of God. Following Christ provides an outcome that is most desirable. The Holy Gospel provides an education for individuals seeking to enrich their minds, hearts and souls. The Church is the best university for individuals seeking the highest form of education. The problems of life are put in perspective when individuals are faithful to Christ. Following Christ is the path cleared by the Cross of Christ and illuminated by the Resurrection. Christ transfigured on Mt. Tabor summons individuals to look up from the mire in which they are steeped in sin and seek purity of the life in Christ. The Mother of God is a model of purity for believers to consider and think carefully about. Self-evaluation is healthy when it leads to redirecting life towards Christ and away from paths of sin. The disciples knew their efforts were insufficient. They sought an answer from Christ. The disciples wanted to know the reason for their shortcomings. The disciples tried to help the father with his son without turning to Christ. Individuals are powerless without Christ. Individuals are strengthened in Christ.

The Holy Apostle Paul told the Philippians: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." (Phil. 4:13) When Christ is dominant in the hearts, minds and lives of individuals, the empowerment of Christ is obvious. The peace of Christ is obvious. The assurance of Christ is evident. The disciples were seeking improvement when they turned to Christ with their question: "Why could we not cast it out?" Turning to Christ with sincere questions in prayer leads to the necessary answers for a better life. Sincere questions uncover desirable solutions. The disciples turned to Christ in a time of privacy. Their sincerity was evident. Their hunger for an answer was revealed. Jesus was attentive.

Studying the words of Jesus, questions asked of Him and His answers increase knowledge and understanding. The soul benefits when the words of Christ are placed carefully into the heart and mind. Amen!

## *The Dormition Fast*

The Dormition fast was established as preceding the great feasts of the Transfiguration of the Lord and of the Dormition of the Mother of God. It lasts two weeks—from August 1/14–August 14/27 (old style/new style).

The Dormition fast comes down to us from the early days of Christianity.

We find a clear reference to the Dormition fast in a conversation of Leo the Great from around the year 450 A.D. “The Church fasts are situated in the year in such a way that a special abstinence is prescribed for each time. Thus, for spring there is the spring fast ]—the Forty Days[Great Lent; for summer there is the summer fast... [the Apostles’ fast]; for autumn there is the autumn fast, in the seventh month [Dormition fast]; for winter there is the winter fast [Nativity fast].”

St. Symeon of Thessalonica writes that, “The fast in August [Dormition fast] was established in honor of the Mother of God the Word; Who, foreknowing Her repose, ascetically labored and fasted for us as always, although She was holy and immaculate, and had no need for fasting. Thus, She especially prayed for us in preparation for being transported from this life to the future life, when Her blessed soul would be united through the Divine spirit with Her Son. Therefore, we also should fast and praise Her, emulating Her life, urging Her thereby to pray for us. Some, by the way, say that this fast was instituted on the occasion of two feasts—the Transfiguration and the Dormition. I also consider it necessary to remember these two feasts—one which gives us light, and the other which is merciful to us and intercedes for us.”

The Dormition fast is not as strict as the Great Fast, but it is stricter than the Apostle’s and Nativity fasts.

On Monday, Wednesdays and Fridays of the Dormition fast, the Church rubrics prescribe *xerophagy*, that is, the strictest fast of uncooked food (without oil); on Tuesdays and Thursdays, “with cooked food, but with no oil”; on Saturdays and Sundays wine and oil are allowed.

Until the feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord, when grapes and apples are blessed in the churches, the Church requires that we abstain from these fruits. According to the tradition of the holy fathers, “If one of the brethren should eat the grapes before the feast, then let him be forbidden for obedience’s sake to taste of the grapes during the entire month of August.”

On the feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord, the Church rubrics allow fish. After that day, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, the fruits of the new harvest would always be included in the meals.

The spiritual fast is closely united with the bodily, just as our soul is united with the body, penetrates it, enlivens it, and makes one united whole with it, as the soul and body make one living human being. Therefore, in fasting bodily we must at the same time fast spiritually: “Brothers, in fasting bodily let us also fast spiritually, severing all union with unrighteousness,” the Holy Church enjoins us.

The main thing In fasting bodily is restraint from abundant, tasty and sweet foods; the main thing in fasting spiritually is restraint from passionate, sinful movements that indulge our sensual inclinations and vices. The former is renunciation of the more nourishing foods for fasting food, which is less nourishing; the latter is the renunciation of our favorite sins for exercise in the virtues which oppose them.

The essence of the fast is expressed in the following Church hymn: “If you fast from food, my soul, but are not purified of the passions, in vain do we comfort ourselves by not eating. For if the fast does not bring correction, then it will be hateful to God as false, and you will be like unto the evil demons, who never eat.”

The Great fast and the Dormition fast are particularly strict with regard to entertainment—in Imperial Russia even civil law forbade public masquerades and shows during these fasts.

Source: Orthodox Christian Network, via pravoslavie.ru

**INVITATION TO THE PATRONAL FEAST  
OF THE FEDERATION OF THE CIRCLES OF SERBIAN SISTERS  
OF THE DIOCESE OF EASTERN AMERICA  
THE DORMITION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS**

**ST. NICHOLAS SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH, MONROEVILLE, PA  
MONDAY, AUGUST 28<sup>TH</sup>, 2017**

Beloved Clergy, Monastics and Faithful of the Eastern American Diocese,

It is with great paternal joy, that we invite you on behalf of our dedicated Sisters to participate, on the day of Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos, on **Monday, August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017**, in the Patronal Feast and Agape—*Slava* of the Federation of the Circles of Serbian Sisters, at St. Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church in Monroeville, Pennsylvania.

The Hierarchical Divine Liturgy will begin at 10:00 AM, followed by a Festal Banquet.

On this occasion, we express our most heartfelt appreciation to this year's hosts, for their demonstrated love toward our Federation of the Circles of Serbian Sisters, and in so doing to the Lord of Hosts Himself and His Most Holy Mother, our most fervent intercessor.

**WELCOME, INDEED – OUR JOY!**

With Archpastoral blessings and Paternal love,

**+IRINEJ** BISHOP OF EASTERN AMERICA

