

The Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

Matthew 17:14-23

And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him to thy disciples, and 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 suffer you? bring him hither to me. And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting. And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry. (KJV)

Being a parent is a great blessing and great responsibility. Having a son or daughter afflicted by the devil tests the parents' depth of faith. The Lord Jesus Christ is the way for parents to meet their responsibilities with assurance and hope.

The Lord Jesus Christ's power over the devil as is made clear in the present Gospel. Jesus Christ expelled the devil and the afflicted child was cured. The present Gospel offers firm and lasting hope for parents.

Strong faith is clearly emphasized in the Gospel. Mothers and fathers having a son or daughter afflicted by the devil benefit by placing firm faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Gospel demonstrates healing is possible through Jesus Christ. Jesus told His disciples that prayer and fasting were important in addressing and overcoming afflictions. The Church encourages prayer and fasting throughout the year.

Believers living a serious Christian life will pray and fast as encouraged by the Church. Prayer and fasting prepare believers for difficulties arising in life. Prayer and fasting keep the believer united with Christ.

The Church has a rich treasury of prayers. Believers increase in knowledge by turning to the priest to learn of the wide range of prayers existing in the Church. Believers sharpen their focus on Christ by honoring the fast days of the Church.

Each Sunday Gospel is a guide post for believers. The Sunday Gospel offers the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Gospel is always relevant and carries a message to incorporate into personal life.

Each Sunday Gospel is an opportunity for life to be enriched and changed for the better. During the course of the Divine Liturgy, believers have the opportunity to unite with Jesus Christ in partaking of the Precious Body and Blood.

Parents do well to come to the Divine Liturgy with firm hope in learning to raise their children well. The Living God instructs and reveals to believers in the Divine Liturgy the necessary steps to take to the Heavenly Kingdom.

Parental responsibility is not to be taken lightly. The father in the present Gospel turned to the Lord Jesus Christ in faith. The father was rewarded for his faith.

Jesus healed the afflicted son.

Parents should never lose hope that a son or daughter can be cured of personal afflictions. Jesus has the power to bring healing. When parents have hope in the Lord, this hope is communicated to the son or daughter.

Mental, emotional and behavioral afflictions are challenging. The Church enables parents the opportunity to put problems into perspective. The Church offers love and support to deal with the challenges of parenting.

Parents can turn to the treasury of knowledge in the Church in search of the solid answers for difficult situations. Attending the Divine Liturgy every Sunday, keeps parents strong and hopeful.

The Lord God will not disappoint parents. Hope firmly exists in the Epistle to the Romans. The Holy Apostle Paul wrote: “All things work together for good to them that love God.” (Rom. 8:28)

When a son or daughter has a severe behavioral, emotional or mental affliction, patience and strong faith in the Lord are required. The Lord provides parents with the nourishment and guidance necessary to address these afflictions.

The Holy Scriptures and lives of the saints offer lasting wisdom for parents. Prayer and fasting bring enlightenment. The current Gospel makes clear that mountains can be moved by faith.

The current Gospel concludes with references to Jesus’ death and resurrection. Having a son or daughter with an affliction can be viewed as a personal cross. Jesus demonstrated the way to deal with the Cross.

Jesus revealed the Cross is the pathway to the joy of the Resurrection. Parents can experience the joy of Christ through the Cross and Resurrection. Parents will find wisdom in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

The Epistle to the Hebrews states: “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Heb. 12:2)

Being a parent is never easy. The world has daily challenges. Mothers and fathers are never alone. The Lord Jesus Christ is always present. Attentive parents look to Christ in faith for wisdom, guidance and nourishment.

God’s Holy Church triumphs through the centuries due to Christ. Hope, joy and light always shine through the darkness in Christ’s Holy Church. The present Gospel reaffirms and proclaims Jesus Christ’s divinity and life-saving powers.

The Tenth Sunday after Pentecost. The Image Not Made By Hands of Our Lord. St. Eustatius. St. Roman. St. Rafael of Banat. August 16/29, 2021. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic