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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 ofttimes 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)

Today's Gospel is about the healing power of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the current Gospel the Lord Jesus Christ healed the child afflicted by the devil.

The healing power of Jesus Christ being central to today's Gospel is very timely and appropriate. Today God's Holy Church also celebrates the Holy Great Marty and Healer St. Panteleimon.

Today is a day of hope for individuals and families suffering from afflictions of various sorts. Individuals and families having afflictions of the devil have particular reasons to have increased hope.

Jesus spoke in the present Gospel of the value of strong faith accompanied with prayer and fasting. Believers benefit by taking note and heeding Jesus' teaching of the value of these practices of faith.

Turning to Jesus Christ in strong faith is essential when a family member or friend is harmed by the devil. Prayer and fasting are to accompany and be hallmarks of strong faith.

Jesus expelled the devil from the tormented child in the current Gospel. Jesus removed the barrier to health the child was experiencing. Jesus brought joy to the father concerned about his child.

Parents today having children suffering from possession by the devil do well to pray fervently and to fast. Turning to Jesus Christ for direction and hope is a constructive step for parents.

God's Holy Church offers nourishment and hope for all persons suffering in this world. St. Panteleimon is a great intercessor for individuals and families suffering each day.

Jesus' love for the suffering child and the father in the Gospel was clearly evident. Jesus' disciples learned a great lesson about prayer and fasting. The Church teaches the value of prayer and fasting to benefit believers.

Suffering can result in drawing a person closer to Jesus Christ. Persons suffering and turning to Christ develop a new perspective on life. Jesus Christ helps people suffering to assess what is most valuable in life.

Life's values need to continue to be refined throughout life to ensure continued harmony with Jesus Christ. All that is not of Christ is to be removed from life.

Personal self-examination and repentance lead to renewed unity with Christ. The present Gospel provides proof of Jesus' healing powers. Jesus' healing powers are evident throughout the Gospel.

The Church attests to St. Panteleimon as a great healer. Believers' lives are enriched by using the prayers available and the Akathist to St. Panteleimon. Hope increases when sufferers turn to St. Panteleimon in faith.

Earthly life is limited in duration. God's Kingdom and eternal life are the goals believers embrace at Baptism. Challenges arise during life including encounters with the devil.

Today's Gospel demonstrates that Jesus has power over the devil. Individuals choose whether to turn to Jesus when being confronted by the devil.

Jesus helps believers to understand and address suffering. Jesus is the path to joy when suffering occurs in life. Depression and suffering need not dominate a person's outlook.

The world became dark when Jesus died on the Cross. Brightness came when Jesus rose from the Tomb. Jesus helps believers move beyond personal suffering to brightness in life.

The Paschal greeting "Christ is Risen!" helps to keep life in perspective at every moment of life. The Church celebrates the Resurrection throughout the year.

The joy of the Resurrection is beyond being stifled. The brightness of the Resurrected Christ triumphs over all suffering. Embrace the indomitable hope in Jesus Christ and cling to it throughout life.