



The Saint Sava Serbian Orthodox Church Of McKeesport & Duquesne, Pa
901 Hartman Street, McKeesport, Pa. 15132 **Our Web-site:** stsavapa.org*

*(PLEASE VISIT OUR Newly-designed Website, and We're On Facebook & Twitter!)

Very Rev. (Stavrophor) Stevan Rocknage, Parish Priest

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JULY 8th – 6th Sunday After PENTECOST – Tone 5

(Commemorating the Holy Martyrs, Leontius, Theodulos, and Hypatius)

Today's Epistle Reading:

EPISTLE: Romans 12: 6-14

Today's Gospel Readings:

LITURGY: Matthew 9: 1-8

Troparion: "Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit; born for our salvation from the Virgin; for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, to endure death, and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection! "

Kontakion: "Thou didst descend into hell, O my Savior, shattering its gates as almighty, resurrecting the dead as Creator, and destroying the sting of death. Thou hast delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of Man, and we all cry to Thee: 'O Lord, save us!'"

Spiritual Food: I have been asked by quite a few parishioners to explain the details behind the Orthodox Natural Church Development Program that we have started, and I am glad to do so. **In the first place**, this program has been in existence (in America) for 25 years, but in Europe for over 40 years. **Secondly**, this program is NOT designed to be a "quick-fix" for whatever 'ails' a parish, or in helping a parish grow. Through the use of specific resources (surveys, focus groups, workbooks and demographic tools, etc.), this ONCD Program will help our parish discover what our unique strengths are as a Body of Christ, but also what areas we need to improve upon in doing GOD's WILL (and Ministries) rather than our own. **Third**, this Program is geared to move a parish from a point of decline and zero-growth, to one of ascension and gradual growth as the key components of it are actualized and implemented in our Parish Life – a process that could take anywhere from 20-24 months, give or take time. The **KEY**, as I mentioned last week, is that **ALL of us** take the time to pray and reflect on what each of us can do to insure that we are doing our part in helping maximize the objectives set forth as the Body of Christ, in moving forward in the future. This means that **ALL** of us must ask for the strength and the Grace to be as positive as we can be in allowing the Program's Process to develop and bear the fruit it can within our ranks – and to respond when we are called upon to do our parts. **ONLY** then, will we be able to step back and say that we have done the Lord's Work in this endeavor, and have successfully put aside our own prejudices in what this Program can, or cannot achieve!

Today's Special Announcements and Upcoming Events For Our Parish:

- (1) **DIOCESAN PLEA:** To celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the end of WW I, the Diocese is asking IF anyone has souvenirs (medals, trinkets, symbols, uniform parts, etc.) from that time (1914-1918) to please let Fr. Stevo know, as the Diocese wants to hold a Traveling Exhibit that will go around the Diocesan parishes beginning in September of this year!
- (1-A) One of our dear parishioners, **+Martha Zivkovich**, fell asleep in the Lord – pomen tonight at 7PM at Alfieri's in Wall, and Funeral tomorrow morning at 11AM at the Church – Memory Eternal!
- (2) **TUESDAY: Come help – making palachinke for Int. Village 9 AM!**
ALSO: Our Women's Support Group meets at Twin Oaks at 7 PM – JOIN US!
- (2-A) **THURSDAY:** Sts. Peter/Paul Feast-Day – 9:30AM Divine Liturgy!
- (3) **Please pray for the health and well-being of our following loved ones within our parish:**
Katie Repasky Nick Trbovic Donna/Nick Moss-NH Lucy Pcholinski
Stella Stipanovich -NH Ann Vunovic-NH Beverly Stipanovich Keith Bedell
Margaret Ivkovich Melva Buzzelli-NH V. Rev. Adam Yonitch
V. Rev. Paul Lazor Wayne Eremic John Walker
- (4) **Also pray for the souls of those fallen asleep in the Lord:**
+ Martha Zivkovich- +Ann Cervo +Helen Lia +Alex Stipanovich +Dan Ikach
+Sophie Vranesevic +Louise Zivkovich +Mimi Pavlovich +Ann Vranesevic
+Nick Pilipovich +Jovan Vujatovich +Kh. Stefanie Yazge +Stoyanka Vranesevich
+Mel Trkula +Mika Rocknage +Sharon Young +Betty Perich +Dorothy Shumkaroff
+AP Stevan Stepanov/+Rastko Trbuhovich,+Vasilije Sokolovic +George Medich
+Arlene Crnkovich +Amy Pacura
- (5) **GROUPS Ministry:** Our Support Group dates for July : TUESDAY, the 10th – **WOMEN;** 24th – **MEN!**
- (6) **Don't forget: you can help out at the St. Cyril Food Pantry** – any Thursday at 4:30pm!
- (7) **Baptism** of Marko Andres Villa is this coming Month – July 22nd – after Holy Liturgy!
- (8) **Shadeland Diocesan Day** is Saturday, August 4th – Make your plans to celebrate with us!
(See the Flyer both downstairs and upstairs!)
- (9) **NEXT Church Health Advisory Team meeting** – NEXT Sunday, July 15th, right after Church!

THE EARLY DAYS OF THE CHURCH

Down through the centuries of the Church, believing Christians have risked life and death to gather together to worship Christ. But what was it like to go to church in the year 150 A.D.? This is an interesting question. There has been preserved an ancient Christian document that provides an answer to this query. It was written by SAINT JUSTIN THE PHILOSOPHER who became a martyr for Christ in the year 166. He described a worship service in his church on the Lord's day in this way:

"On Sunday there is a gathering of all those who are from the city or the fields in the same place. The memoirs of the Apostles or the writings of the Prophets are read as long as time permits. When the reading stops, the presiding leader (presbyter) admonishes us with a word and calls upon us to imitate these good things. Then we all rise with common accord and offer prayers, and exchange the kiss of peace."

"When we have closed the prayer, bread and wine are brought and the presiding leader offers up prayers and thanksgiving with all his might; and the people answer joyously, "Amen." The deacons distribute the bread and wine among all who are present and carry it to those who are absent. Only those who believe in the truth of our teaching take part in the Eucharist, for we do not receive it as simple food and drink. Then those who have the means and are willing each gives what he wishes after his choice, and that which is collected is placed with the presiding leader, who assists orphans and widows, and those who are needy because of sickness or another reason."

What a beautiful account this is of the early Christian Church! Let us remember the words of Christ: "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I amongst them." This is the very essence of our Christian way of life. We will continue this practice until the end of time.