

SS. PETER & PAUL

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Rev. Joseph McCartney, Rector

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Gospel Reading ~ Matthew 8:28-9:1
Epistle Reading ~ Romans 10:1-10
Prophet Ezekiel

This Week at a Glance

Sat, July 27th

6:00 pm - Great Vespers

Sun, July 28th

9:00 am - 3rd & 6th

Hours

9:30 am - Divine Liturgy

Festival Supplies

Please pick an envelope on the bulletin board to donate items for the Food Festival. The more we can get donated the more profit the festival makes. As always, thank you for your generous support!

Grave Blessings

Weather permitting will take place Sunday, August 4th after Liturgy.

Gospel Meditation

Matthew's version of this strange story is quite different from and much shorter than Mark's. It is usual for Matthew to pare down stories just to the essential details while Mark tends to give a more dramatic presentation. In Matthew's version, too, there are two possessed people instead of just one.

In the previous story about the calming of the storm we saw that Jesus and disciples were crossing the lake. They now come to their destination, a place known as the Gadarenes. It got its name from the town of Gadara on the south-east side of the lake.

Here Jesus was met by two people possessed by demons who completely controlled them. Unlike many of the ordinary people, the demons in these two men have an insight into Jesus' identity although they may not recognize it fully. "What do you want with us, Son of God?" Jesus usually refers to himself as Son of Man and never as Son of God. "Have you come here to torture us before the time?"

There was a belief that demons would be free to roam the earth until the Judgment Day came. They did this by taking possession of people. This possession was often associated with disease, because disease was the consequence of sin and a sign of being in Satan's power. That is why when Jesus expels a demon there is often a cure as well. By driving out these spirits Jesus inaugurates the Messianic age which many of the people do not recognize but which the demons do. Later Jesus will hand over this exorcising power together with the ability to effect cures to his disciples.

The demons then begged Jesus to let them go into a nearby herd of pigs. Jesus consented to this. The townspeople immediately came out in search of Jesus and, not surprisingly, begged him to go somewhere else. The purpose of the story, of course, is to focus on Jesus' power to liberate people from evil influences which were destroying their lives. What these men were suffering could not be compared to the loss of the pigs' lives and these would have ended up in a cooking pot anyway.

We, too, need to ask Jesus to liberate us from any evil influences or addictions which enslave us and prevent us from being the kind of persons he wants us to be.

Pierogi

Thank you so much for all who helped with pierogi making this week! It is such a huge help to the success of our parish festival! Looking ahead, we will be making buffalo and jalapeño pierogi's on August 13th. Please try to keep that date available to help out.

