

JOAN SKINTA AT CARE CENTER

Woodhaven Care Ceeter, c/o Joan Skinta Room 226, 2400 McGinley Rd., Monroeville Pa 15146

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Fr. Vitalii is accepting requests for 2020 Divine Liturgy's on a first come first serve basis. Please submit your requests in writing with the intention and date requested to St Peter and Paul attention with your offering and place on Sunday collection basket.

2020 ENVELOPES

Please pick up your box of 2020 envelopes in the social hall. If you know someone who will be unable to pick up their 2020 envelopes, please take their box to them. If there is no box for you, please contact Father Vitalii.

THIS WEEK'S USHER TEAM - Team C

OUR GIFTS TO GOD AND OUR CHURCH, NOVEMBER 24, 2019:

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|-------------------------|------------------|
| SUNDAY OFFERING | \$ 656.00 |
| CANDLES | 30.00 |
| HOLY DAY | 93.00 |
| ARCHDIOCESAN COLLECTION | 35.00 |
| TOTAL | \$ 814.00 |

CATHOLIC TEACHING

III. THE MYSTERIES OF JESUS' PUBLIC LIFE

The signs of the kingdom of God

Jesus accompanies his words with many "mighty works and wonders and signs", which manifest that the kingdom is present in him and attest that he was the promised Messiah.

The signs worked by Jesus attest that the Father has sent him. They invite belief in him. To those who turn to him in faith, he grants what they ask. So miracles strengthen faith in the One who does his Father's works; they bear witness that he is the Son of God. But his miracles can also be occasions for "offence"; they are not intended to satisfy people's curiosity or desire for magic. Despite his evident miracles some people reject Jesus; he is even accused of acting by the power of demons.

By freeing some individuals from the earthly evils of hunger, injustice, illness and death, Jesus performed messianic signs. Nevertheless, he did not come to abolish all evils here below, but to free men from the gravest slavery, sin, which thwarts them in their vocation as God's sons and causes all forms of human bondage.

The coming of God's kingdom means the defeat of Satan's: "If it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you." Jesus' exorcisms free some individuals from the domination of demons. They anticipate Jesus' great victory over "the ruler of this world". The kingdom of God will be definitively established through Christ's cross: "God reigned from the wood."

"The keys of the kingdom"

From the beginning of his public life Jesus chose certain men, twelve in number, to be with him and to participate in his mission. He gives the Twelve a share in his authority and 'sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal." They remain associated forever with Christ's kingdom, for through them he directs the Church:

As my Father appointed a kingdom for me, so do I appoint for you that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Simon Peter holds the first place in the college of the Twelve; Jesus entrusted a unique mission to him. Through a revelation from the Father, Peter had confessed: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Our Lord then declared to him: "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it." Christ, the "living Stone", thus assures his Church, built on Peter, of victory over the powers of death. Because of the faith he confessed Peter will remain the unshakeable rock of the Church. His mission will be to keep this faith from every lapse and to strengthen his brothers in it.

Jesus entrusted a specific authority to Peter: "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." The "power of the keys" designates authority to govern the house of God, which is the Church. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, confirmed this mandate after his Resurrection: "Feed my sheep." The power to "bind and loose" connotes the authority to absolve sins, to pronounce doctrinal judgements, and to make disciplinary decisions in the Church. Jesus entrusted this authority to the Church through the ministry of the apostles and in particular through the ministry of Peter, the only one to whom he specifically entrusted the keys of the kingdom.

To be continued...

(Catechism of the Catholic Church, THE MYSTERIES OF CHRIST'S LIFE.)

PIROHI SALE

Holy Ghost, 225 Olivia Street, McKees Rocks PA. To order call 412-331-5155 9 am to noon Wednesday prior to sale. Pick-up 10 am to 2 pm, Fridays November 1st to December 13th. Handmade, fully cooked, made fresh and ready to eat. Potato, sauerkraut and cheese. Voted no. 1 for second year in a row at Kennywood Pirohi Fest.

INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT:



Author: Unknown, Date Written: 848-517 BC, Date of Narrative: 848-586 BC

2 Kings narrates the final decline and collapse of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. The capture of Israel by the Assyrians (17) and the exile of Judah to Babylon (24) complete the undoing of the kingdoms because of their disobedience to the covenant.

2 Kings concludes the spiritual history of Joshua-1 Kings (often called the Deuteronomistic History) so it is mainly concerned with the covenant loyalty of the kings not political and military feats. Jeroboam, who had set up golden calves in Bethel, is the archetypal evil king while David is the standard of a good king. All the kings of Israel follow the ways of Jeroboam. Only Jehu attempts to do the Lord's will, but even he fails. In Judah, a few kings make attempts to return the nation to fidelity to the Lord. Joash, Amaziah, Azariah and Jotham do some righteous acts like David. Only Hezekiah and Josiah destroy the places of pagan worship in Judah and call the people back to covenant faithfulness. Each good king is rewarded for his efforts, but God's judgment has already been fixed: the nation will fall.

In 722 BC, the Assyrians under Sennacherib conquer Israel and take the people out of the land, causing them to intermarry with other peoples. These Israelites are often referred to as the "Lost 10 Tribes" of Israel. They were never able to return to the land of Israel because they intermarried with other people groups and lost their ethnic identity as Israelites.

Soon after the Assyrians conquer Israel, they attack Judah. But the Lord saves Jerusalem through the prayers of Hezekiah and the Assyrians flee without a fight. A few generations later, Josiah's wholehearted obedience to the Law of Moses is not enough to ward off impending judgment. The Lord answers Judah's continual infidelity with the ultimate curse of Deuteronomy: exile (Deut 29). The Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar overwhelm Jerusalem and take many of the people captive, destroy the temple and tear down the city walls.

In the midst of this dark story, the prophets shine brightly. Elijah again calls down fire from heaven. Elisha works many miracles and prophesies a few key messages to the king of Israel. The ministries of Elijah and Elisha which include healings and other miracles, prefigure the ministry of Jesus. Isaiah, the same prophet who wrote the book of Isaiah, advises and aids King Hezekiah.

The book of 2 Kings continually points to the predictability of the nation's fate. Faithfulness to the Lord's covenant leads to blessing, unity and abundance in the land, but unfaithfulness to the covenant leads to curse, division and exile from the land (Deut 28-29).

The Lord shows his patience with his people by continually bearing with their weaknesses, by holding off his judgment and giving them many chances to repent. But the people's obstinate disobedience causes them to suffer defeat and exile. The story of the people in the land from the time of Joshua to the time of the last kings has a sad ending. The northern 10 tribes are forever lost in Assyria. Judah and Benjamin are exiled to Babylon. The glorious kingdom of David and Solomon has come to ruins because of sin.

2 Kings shows us that even the best situations are subject to human weakness and that our only real hope rests on the Lord. In the time of 2 Kings, the Lord was faithful and patient with his sinful people. Now that Jesus has come, his mercy is even more extensive.

VISITATION OF THE SICK

The parishioners confined to their homes or nursing homes due to health reasons are visited monthly. Also, person who are hospitalized are visited when Fr. Vitalii is notified. It especially is important that a family member contact Fr. Vitalii whenever a loved-one is hospitalized.

OBLATION TABLE



As we face the altar area the table of oblation on which the bread and wine are prepared for the liturgy stands on the left side of the altar table. The chalice—the cup for the wine—and the diskos—the round plate, elevated on a stand, for the bread—are kept on this table. These vessels are normally decorated with iconographic engravings, Christian symbols, and the sign of the cross.

On this table there is also a special liturgical knife—symbolically called the spear—which is used for cutting the eucharistic bread, and a liturgical spoon for administering holy communion to the people. There are also special covers for the chalice and diskos and a cruciform piece of metal called the star which holds the cover over the eucharistic bread on the diskos. A sponge and cloths for drying the chalice after the liturgy are also usually kept here. The oblation table is decorated in a manner similar to that of the altar table.



Above the table of oblation (the table on which the gifts for holy communion are prepared), which stands in the altar area to the left of the altar table, one might find various icons. A favorite one is that of Christ praying in Gethsemene: ‘Let this cup pass...’ Another is that of the Nativity, although this is due to a symbolical interpretation of the Divine Liturgy which is not indicative of the fundamental liturgical tradition of the Church.

ST. NICHOLAS



St. Nicholas Day, feast day (December 6) of St. Nicholas, the 4th-century bishop of Myra. St. Nicholas is the patron saint of a number of cities, and of sailors and children, among many other groups, and was noted for his generosity.

After the Reformation, St. Nicholas was largely forgotten in Protestant Europe, although his memory was kept alive in Holland as Sinterklaas. There St. Nicholas is said to arrive on horseback on his feast day, dressed in a bishop’s red robe and mitre and accompanied by Black Peter (Zwarte Piet), variously described as a freed slave or a Moor, to help him distribute sweets and presents to good children or lumps of coal, potatoes, or switches to bad ones. The Dutch took the tradition to New Amsterdam (now New York City) in the American colonies, where he was transformed into Santa Claus by the English-speaking majority. His legend of a kindly old man was united with old Nordic folktales of a magician who punished naughty children and rewarded good children with presents. The resulting image of Santa

Claus in the United States crystallized in the 19th century, and he has ever since remained the patron of the gift-giving festival of Christmas. In Britain he was largely replaced with Father Christmas.

In parts of northern Europe, particularly the Low Countries and some German-speaking areas, St. Nicholas Day has remained a time when children are given special cookies, candies, and gifts. In many places, children leave letters for St. Nicholas and carrots or grass for his donkey or horse. In the morning, they find small presents under their pillows or in the shoes, stockings, or plates they have set out for him. Oranges and chocolate coins are common treats that represent St. Nicholas’s legendary rescue of three impoverished girls by paying their marriage dowries with gold. Candy canes, which have the shape of a bishop’s crosier, are also given.

It is thought that over the centuries the legendary St. Nicholas was merged with similar cultural and religious figures. Significant among these were the pagan Knecht Ruprecht and the Roman figure of Befana, as well as the Christ Child (Christkind, or Kris Kringle). A number of countries have traditions in which a malevolent character accompanies St. Nicholas. In France, Père Fouettard, who legend holds tried to cook three boys in a barrel of brine, is said to whip naughty children or give them coal. In Germany, Knecht Ruprecht serves as St. Nicholas’s servant and gives children who do not know their prayers sticks, stones, or coal. The terrifying devil-like Krampus is common in many central European counties and carries chains, bells, and sometimes a large basket with which to threaten naughty children.



“Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life.” Are worldly cares dragging you down? Be a follower of the Master.” If you think God is calling you to be a priest, religious or deacon, **contact Fr. Vitalii Stashkevych.**

PRAY FOR VOCATIONS



The **Byzantine Catholic Serra Club of Pittsburgh** is an organization that fosters and promotes priesthood and religious vocations in the Byzantine Catholic Church. They also support Seminarians, Priests and Religious Sisters in their sacred ministry. The Byzantine Serra Club meets monthly. If you would like to join, call William Kress 412-761-1499 or email kb.kress@gmail.com

Join the Serrans in their work to ensure the future of our Church.

25th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.
Luke 18: 24-25

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| HARD | FOR | THOSE |
| HAVE | WEALTH | ENTER |
| KINGDOM | GOD | EASIER |
| CAMEL | PASS | THROUGH |
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 N A K I N G D O M P G Y N E E D L E Y X

TIME TO READ THE HOLY BIBLE

Old Testament

1 The whole world spoke the same language, using the same words. 2 While men were migrating in the east, they came upon a valley in the land of Shinar and settled there. 3 They said to one another, "Come, let us mold bricks and harden them with fire." They used bricks for stone, and bitumen for mortar. 4 Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the sky, and so make a name for ourselves; otherwise we shall be scattered all over the earth." 5 LORD came down to see the city and the tower that the men had built. 6 Then the LORD said: "If now, while they are one people, all speaking the same language, they have started to do this, nothing will later stop them from doing whatever they presume to do. 7 Let us then go down and there confuse their language, so that one will not understand what another says." 8 Thus the LORD scattered them from there all over the earth, and they stopped building the city. 9 That is why it was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the speech of all the world. It was from that place that he scattered them all over the earth. 10 This is the record of the descendants of Shem. When Shem was one hundred years old, he became the father of Arpachshad, two years after the flood. 11 Shem lived five hundred years after the birth of Arpachshad, and he had other sons and daughters. 12 When Arpachshad was thirty-five years old, he became the father of Shelah. 13 Arpachshad lived four hundred and three years after the birth of Shelah, and he had other sons and daughters. 14 When Shelah was thirty years old, he became the father of Eber. 15 Shelah lived four hundred and three years after the birth of Eber, and he had other sons and daughters. 16 When Eber was thirty-four years old, he became the father of Peleg. 17 Eber lived four hundred and thirty years after the birth of Peleg, and he had other sons and daughters. 18 When Peleg was thirty years old, he became the father of Reu. 19 Peleg lived two hundred and nine years after the birth of Reu, and he had other sons and daughters. 20 When Reu was thirty-two years old, he became the father of Serug. 21 Reu lived two hundred and seven years after the birth of Serug, and he had other sons and daughters. 22 When Serug was thirty years old, he became the father of Nahor. 23 Serug lived two hundred years after the birth of Nahor, and he had other sons and daughters. 24 When Nahor was twenty-nine years old, he became the father of Terah. 25 Nahor lived one hundred and nineteen years after the birth of Terah, and he had other sons and daughters. 26 When Terah was seventy years old, he became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran. 27 This is the record of the descendants of Terah. Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran, and Haran became the father of Lot. 28 Haran died before his father Terah, in his native land, in Ur of the Chaldeans. 29 Abram and Nahor took wives; the name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah, daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah and Iscah. 30 Sarai was barren; she had no child. 31 Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot, son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, the wife of his son Abram, and brought them out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to go to the land of Canaan. But when they reached Haran, they settled there. 32 The lifetime of Terah was two hundred and five years; then Terah died in Haran.

Book of Genesis 11:1-32

CHRISTMAS CHURCH DECORATING



All parishioners are asked and encouraged to stay today, December 1st, after liturgy to help decorate and prepare the church for the Holy Season, the Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Hope to see you there!

New Testament

1 When Jesus finished giving these commands to his twelve disciples, he went away from that place to teach and to preach in their towns. 2 When John heard in prison of the works of the Messiah, he sent his disciples to him 3 with this question, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?" 4 Jesus said to them in reply, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: 5 the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. 6 And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me." 7 As they were going off, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John, "What did you go out to the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? 8 Then what did you go out to see? Someone dressed in fine clothing? Those who wear fine clothing are in royal palaces. 9 Then why did you go out? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. 10 This is the one about whom it is written: 'Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way before you.' 11 Amen, I say to you, among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. 12 From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent are taking it by force. 13 All the prophets and the law prophesied up to the time of John. 14 And if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah, the one who is to come. 15 Whoever has ears ought to hear. 16 "To what shall I compare this generation? It is like children who sit in marketplaces and call to one another, 17 'We played the flute for you, but you did not dance, we sang a dirge but you did not mourn.' 18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they said, 'He is possessed by a demon.' 19 The Son of Man came eating and drinking and they said, 'Look, he is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.' But wisdom is vindicated by her works." 20 Then he began to reproach the towns where most of his mighty deeds had been done, since they had not repented. 21 "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty deeds done in your midst had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would long ago have repented in sackcloth and ashes. 22 But I tell you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you. 23 And as for you, Capernaum: 'Will you be exalted to heaven? You will go down to the netherworld.' For if the mighty deeds done in your midst had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. 24 But I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom on the day of judgment than for you." 25 At that time Jesus said in reply, "I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike. 26 Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will. 27 All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him. 28 "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, 16 and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for your selves. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden light."

The Gospel According to Matthew 11:1-30

CHRISTMAS KIELBASA



The Duquesne Men's club of Saints Peter and Paul is selling Christmas Kielbasa (\$5.00/Lb.). Order by December 15th. Delivery to the Church will be Sunday December 22nd. **The order sheet will be in the vestibule if you are interested.** Thank You.

The rich young ruler who asked Jesus Christ what he had to do in order to find eternal life thought in terms of lists. So when the Lord told him to keep the commandments of the Old Testament, the man said that he had checked them all off, that he had kept them his entire life.

This is where the story gets really interesting, for the Lord then gives him a commandment that had never been on the man's list and that he couldn't imagine following: Sell all that you have, give to the poor, and come follow me. This fellow was rich and powerful and loved his possessions, so he became very sad and apparently walked away. The Lord knew how hard it was for people who have it all in this life to enter the kingdom of heaven, for they are tempted strongly to love their possessions and status more than God and neighbor. Still, as the Lord said His disciples, "the things which are impossible with men are possible with God."

What did Christ mean by speaking in this way? He certainly wasn't simply adding another law to a list of requirements to be checked off. Instead, he challenged this man to stop thinking about his relationship with God as a matter of law, a set of behaviors, which he could master. Someone who responds to the Old Testament laws by saying, "Oh, I've always followed them since I was a child" has a very shallow understanding of what God requires of us. That would be like someone saying, "Oh, I've always been a perfectly faithful Christian since childhood." The problem is that it's not quite that simple. In the Sermon on the Mount, Christ showed us the true meaning of God's requirements. He said that we are guilty of murder if we are angry with others, if we hate and insult them. And if we do not love God with every ounce of our being and our neighbors as ourselves, we have broken the greatest of the commandments.

If we have any spiritual insight at all, we will see that none of us has mastered God's requirements, none of us may stand before the Lord bragging that we have it all down. The truth is that we have all fallen short and need God's mercy and healing in our lives.

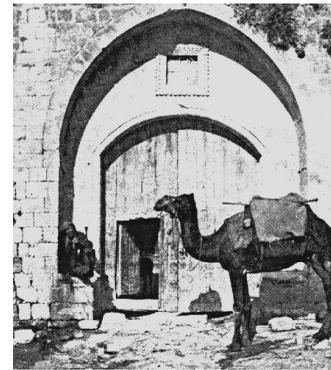
Christ jolted this man out of his delusion, of his false self-confidence, by giving him a commandment that He knew he could not keep: giving away all his beloved money, possessions, and power. Perhaps for the first time, this fellow was challenged to see that eternal life is not a matter of checking off a list, not something that we can accomplish by our own ability. If we can't give up that which we love most in this life for God, then we obviously have not fulfilled all that the Lord expects of us. And since Christ came to unite our fallen humanity with divinity and to trample sin and death, it's pretty clear that even the most law-abiding person still needs the mercy, grace, and love of our Lord in order to inherit eternal life. By our own power, it's not possible to share in the life of heaven, but with Jesus Christ, all things are possible.

As we continue to prepare for the coming of Christ at Christmas, we do well to remember that this great feast is not about the birth of a mere teacher, law-giver, or example. Were our Lord simply another prophet with a strict teaching, we would not rejoice at His coming. Instead, we would, like the rich young ruler, become sad and dejected, for the last thing we need is another law to fail to obey and make us feel guilty.

The Son of God was not born at Christmas to add to the burden of the law or to give us the impression that all will be well if we obey a new set of teachings. To the contrary, He became a human being to do what a mere law never could, to bring us into His holiness, to make us partakers of the divine nature, to heal and fulfill our fallen, corrupt humanity, to make it possible for us mortals to put on immortality.

St. Paul reminded the Galatians that the Old Testament law was preparatory to the coming of the Savior. All who put on Christ in baptism are God's sons and daughters who inherit the promise made to Abraham to bless those with faith in the Lord. We are slaves neither to a law nor to the ways of the world, but beloved children of our Heavenly Father Who wants nothing more than to bring us into the glory of His eternal life.

Let this Nativity Fast be marked by humility, repentance, and spiritual disciplines for us all, not because we have broken a law, but because we have room to grow in our relationship with Jesus Christ.



Jesus' somewhat humorous comparison of a 'camel through the eye of the needle' is mentioned in three of the gospel accounts (Matthew 19:23 - 26, Mark 10:23 - 27, Luke 18:24 - 27). He gave it shortly before his final Passover and death.

The context of the comparison is that a rich young man approached Jesus and asked what it took to have eternal life. Christ delineated several of the Ten Commandments and the man answered that he had kept them from the time he was a boy. Jesus then told him if he wanted to be "perfect" to sell all he owned, give the proceeds to the poor, and follow him! After hearing these words, the rich man went away sad. The Bible then gives us the camel phrase of your question.

There are a few possible explanations for what Jesus meant by his analogy using a camel. Some claim there existed somewhere in Jerusalem's city wall a narrow gate known as the "eye of the needle." The explanation is that such a small gate made it impossible for a fully loaded camel to pass through it. The animal would have either to be fully unloaded or walk on its knees in order to traverse the opening.

The major problem with the above explanation is that archaeologists and other scholars have never found evidence of such an opening used by camels or reference to a gate referred to as the eye of the needle.

Several Bible commentators have noted the Aramaic word for camel is nearly identical to the word used for rope. Some believe that when the New Testament's original scrolls were translated into Greek an error in translation may have occurred. The correct translation, based on such an assumption, would be "it is easier for a ROPE to pass through . . ."

Additionally, it is stated the words "eye of a needle" refers to the small opening of the tool used to sew clothes and other things together. Trying to pass rope through such a small opening would certainly prove difficult!

A third possible, and likely, explanation is that Jesus was simply using a commonly used saying to underscore the spiritual situation of those who are rich. It is as difficult for the wealthy to do what it takes to be saved as it is for an animal the size of a camel to pass through a very small needle opening.

Note that in his comparison Jesus states it was "extremely difficult" or "hard", but not impossible, for a rich man to enter God's Kingdom. If it were impossible, then wealthy and faithful men like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Job and many others would be shut out of eternal life. The Bible teaches, however, that they will certainly be in the first resurrection and enter the Kingdom.

When the disciples heard Jesus' analogy of a "camel through the eye of the needle," they responded with astonishment and wondered about its meaning. They then asked, "Who then is able to be saved?". Why would they be amazed it was hard for a rich person to enter the Kingdom? The Pharisees believed God gave wealth to those he loves. One Bible commentary suggests the disciples may have been influenced by some of their beliefs and therefore responded accordingly.



GENERAL INFORMATION

For security reasons, during 11:00 AM Sunday Liturgy, **the back door will be locked at 11:15 AM.** Also, please remember during the Weekly Liturgy, the back door will be locked. Please park your car in front of the church.