**Epistle: Rom. 15, 1-7; Heb. 13, 7-16; Gospel: Mt. 9, 27-35; Jn. 17, 1-13;**

TODAY'S READINGS:

St. Elijah Serbian Orthodox Church
Invites you to join us for our 101st Church Slava Anniversary Celebration
Honored Slava Kumovi — Eli & Sam Rebich
Vespers 5:00 p.m. Saturday, August 1, 2015
cocktail reception to follow in the Center

****Holy Hierarchical Divine Liturgy will begin at 9:45 a.m. Sunday August 2, 2015 followed by the Procession and cutting of the kolach

Our Annual Banquet to follow

Our 2015 Graduates are: Kylie Chichester and Demitri Loncar

Reservations must be made no later than Wednesday July 29th
Donation $25.00 Adults - Students $10
Menu: Beef, Chicken, Potatoes, Vegetables, Salad, Rolls, Dessert, Coffee
Please call 724-175-9894
or see Kathy Loverich or Seya Mabee following Divine Liturgy today!!!

**TODAY WE CELEBRATE:**

**VENIERABLE SISOES THE GREAT**

Sisoes was an Egyptian by birth and a disciple of St. Anthony. Following the death of his great teacher, St. Anthony's Mount where Anthony lived a life of asceticism earlier. Imposing himself on a mountain in the wilderness for sixty years and was a source of living wisdom for all monks and laymen who came to him for counsel and advice. Before death, his face shone as the sun. The monks stood around him and were astonished at this manifestation. When this saint gave up his soul, the entire room was filled with a sweet-smelling savor. Sisoes died in extreme old age in the year 429 A.D. St. Sisoes taught the monks: “Regardless in what way temptation comes to man, a man should give himself to the will of God and to recognize that temptation occurred because of his sins. If something good happens, it should be said that it happened according to God’s Providence.” One monk asked Sisoes: “How can I please God and be saved?” The saint answered: “If you wish to please God, withdraw from the world, separate yourself from the earth, put aside creation, draw near to the Creator, unite yourself to God with prayers and tears and then you will find rest in this time and in the future.” The monk asked Sisoes: “How can I attain humility?” The saint replied: “When a person learns to recognize every man as being better than himself, with that he attains humility.” Ammon complained to Sisoes that he could not memorize the wise sayings that he read in order to repeat them in conversation with men. The saint replied to him: “That is not necessary. It is necessary to attain purity of mind and speak from that purity placing your hope in God.”

**HOMILY**

**About the terrible prince of redemption**

“For as much as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers. But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Peter 1: 18-19).

Brethren, could anyone have purchased a cure against sin with silver and gold? Never and by no one.

Brethren, could anyone forge arms against the devil with silver and gold? Never and by no one.

Brethren, could anyone have been redeemed from death with the help of silver and gold? Never and by no one.

Something far more precious than silver and gold was needed to be a cure, a weapon and ransom. The Precious Blood of the Son of God was needed to be applied on the sinful wounds in order to be healed. The Precious Blood of the Son of God was needed in order to be directed against evil spirits and by its power to burn them and to drive them away from man. The Precious Blood of the Son of God was needed to sprinkle the earthly graves in order to subdue death and to raise the dead.

As a Lamb without blemish and without spot,” the Lamb of God was slain for us to pull us out from the three-fold jaws of the beast. A pitiful but life-giving banquet. God arranged this costly banquet to manifest freedom to man. Sin, the devil and death charged with all their might against the Lamb of God, the pure “Lamb of God without blemish and without spot.” They killed Him but they were poisoned by His blood.

This blood was shed in order to be poison for them but for mankind, life and salvation. O my brethren, if you do not know how consuming sin is and how wicked the devil is and how bitter death is, judge this by the greatness of redemption by which we are redeemed from their bondage. The Precious Blood of Christ, that is our deliverance from bondage! Remember, brethren, that if we are again willing, by recklessness and evil to offer ourselves up to that terrible three-fold bondage, then no one on earth or in heaven who could give a ransom for us. For the precious ransom is one and it was given once and for ever.

O merciful Lord, strengthen us so that we may be sustained in freedom which You have gifted to us. To You be glory and thanks always. Amen.

**VISIT**

**July 14th** - Home - George Vula (Conf.& Comm.)
**July 14th** - Sewickley Hospital - Slavka Nikolic (Conf.& Comm.)
**July 17th** - West Hills - Radmila Mrkal, Joseph Mrkonja

**YOU are richer today if you have laughed, given and forgiven.**
A BLANKET OF PURITY

For centuries, the veneration of relics has been an important part of Christian spirituality. Through the ages, great reverence has been shown to the bodies of the saints. Even articles of their clothing and other items that may have belonged to them are viewed as being sacred.

A beautiful story is told concerning one of the early Church’s most revered relics. The Robe of the Theotokos. Tradition tells us that in the year 438 A.D., two men of noble rank from Constantinople - Galbius and Candidus - made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. They visited all of the many sites to which the Christian Church attached significance, travelling to Bethlehem, Jerusalem, and the region of Galilee, where much of our Lord’s public ministry unfolded. While in the town of Nazareth, they stopped for the night at the home of a young girl. Imagine their surprise when they learned that in that very house was the robe of the Virgin Mary! Galbius and Candidus heard wonderful tales of miraculous healing that had occurred when the sick touched this sacred garment and offered prayers before it. It was decided that this precious relic should be shared with others and given a more prominent place for display.

With great spiritual rejoicing, Galbius and Candidus took the robe of the Mother of God back to Constantinople. There in the capital of the Byzantine Empire, it was solemnly taken to the Church of Blachernae, where faithful from throughout the Christian world came to give it proper veneration.