



74th Year

July 5, 2026

Pamphlet #27 (3814)

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL (Matthew 8:28-34, 9:1)

The two demon-possessed men

At that time, when Jesus came to the country of the Gergesenes, two demoniacs met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one would pass that way. And behold, they cried out, "What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?" Now a herd of many swine was feeding at some distance from them. And the demons begged him, "If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of swine." And he said to them, "Go." So they came out and went into the swine; and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea, and perished in the waters. The herdsmen fled, and going into the city they told everything, and what had happened to the demoniacs. And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus; and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their neighborhood. And getting into a boat he crossed over and came to his own city.

THE LIBERATION OF MAN

The main purpose of the Gospel passage that has been read, is to proclaim the faith that Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ, Who came into the world to free us from the works of Satan, as the Apostle Paul also says: "that through death He might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil" (Hebrews 2:14). The presence and activity of Christ in the world, His

teaching and the miracles He performed, His Crucifixion and Resurrection, and the founding of His Church liberate man from the domination of demonic powers and offer him the possibility to partake in the life of God, to become sharers in His incorruption and immortality and members of the blessed Kingdom of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, which the faithful already taste from the historical present.

Fundamental contrasts

In our attempt to describe the two demon-possessed men in the passage, we could note the following: These people were tormented by demons in a terrible way. They had lost their freedom, their ability to control themselves according to their own will. They had been isolated from society; no one dared to meet them. They were aggressive and very dangerous and had become the fear and terror of the whole region. And yet, as soon as they sensed the presence of Christ, everything changed for them and for the inhabitants of the Gergesenes.

“What have we to do with You, Jesus, Son of God?” cried the infernal powers of darkness when they saw the Lord. In other words, what relationship is there between us and You, Jesus, Son of God? Have You come here before the universal Judgment in order to torment us? Indeed, what relationship exists between falsehood and truth, light and darkness, life and death, holiness and sin, the God of love and the spirits of hatred and wickedness? As the Evangelist John says, although the tempter is a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44), he is here compelled to confess that Jesus is the Son of God, that is, true God from true God, and that He is the Lord of History and the Judge of all, who at His Second Coming will render to each person “according to his works” (Romans 2:6).

A foretaste of the Kingdom of God

The Lord acts in a healing way. He frees these two tormented men from their pain of soul and body, inaugurating

the new world of God – the establishment of His Kingdom among people. In this sense, the miracle of healing the demon-possessed men constitutes a first indication of the future, of the complete abolition of the influence and power that the devil now exercises over man.

The spiritual power of the Church

Living within the Church, the believer feels overshadowed by the Grace of the Holy Spirit of God, which protects him from the malice of demons. Through Holy Baptism, he is clothed with Christ as light and as grace; through Divine Communion, he becomes a bearer of God and a bearer of Christ; through repentance and confession, he entrusts his weakness and his falls to God. Through prayer, humble-mindedness, love, and, in general, the cultivation of the Gospel commandments, he demonstrates his trust in the love and the word of God. In this way, he puts on the spiritual armor that God gives, so that he may be able to confront the schemes of the devil (see Eph. 6:10–20).

A holy ascetic, John of Bostra, said that evil spirits fear more than anything else Baptism, Holy Communion, and the Cross that Christians wear. We, for our part, ought to preserve well these three Mysteries of God's love. In this way, we express our gratitude to Him and remain united with Him.

Archimandrite N. K.

July 5, 2026: 5th Sunday of Matthew
Athanasius of Mount Athos († 1000) and the Venerable Lampados.

4th Tone – Eothinon: 5 – Epistle: Galatians 5:22-6:2
– Gospel: Matthew 8:28-9:1

NEXT SUNDAY: July 12, 6th Sunday of Matthew
Epistle: Romans 12:6-14 – Gospel: Matthew 9:1-8

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