

News from St. Nick's

Sunday, October 10, 2021

The Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

Apostolic Reading: Galatians 1:11-19

Gospel: Luke 7:11-19

(Jesus Raises the Son of the Widow of Nain)

Tone 7 • Resurrection Gospel 5

➔ **For Live Streaming Link, [click here](#)**

([Click here for a PDF version of this week's news](#))

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A PITA BAKING session is set for **Tuesday, October 12th at 9:00 am**. All help welcomed and needed. Questions? Contact [Betty Anderson](#).

OUR NEXT MUSTARD SEED MEAL is **NEXT Friday, October 15th**, for 80 visitors. Given the virus, the meals are now pre-packaged and ready to be distributed by their regular staff of volunteers. We are grateful to **Lisa Demake** who is sponsoring this month's meal for the health and well-being of her family members, and in memory of those fallen asleep. If you or your family would like to sponsor a meal or help with meal preparations, the team is gathering at 1pm on Friday. Please contact [Deb Sedares](#) — by e-mail or phone: 508-509-6678, if you'd like to help.

THANKS TO THE FOOD PANTRY VOLUNTEERS for working the Orthodox Food Center on behalf of our parish this past Saturday. It is a great blessing to help those who could use the help. So, if you're open to sharing a small part of your Saturday morning, please e-mail Nicole Apostola at nicole.apostola@gmail.com. She can give you more details. You'll see what a difference it makes.

DONATE TO THOSE WHO ARE SUFFERING! The news is filled with reports of people throughout the world who are suffering from the effects of all kinds of natural disasters and calamities. You can help. The International Orthodox Christian Charities is working in places across the globe. Check out the website, at: www.iocc.org. The IOCC is one of the top ranked relief organizations in the world, especially noted for its low overhead, directing most of the donations toward those in need. ***Help those who are in need through our Orthodox Christian relief organization!***

THE CDC HAS REVISED ITS MASKING GUIDELINES due to the increase in infections because of the highly contagious Delta variant. It recommends that **people vaccinated against the coronavirus resume wearing masks** in public indoor spaces and schools where the virus is surging, and that **unvaccinated persons seek a vaccine** as soon as possible. Following this recommendation, we are now asking that all persons attending the Divine Services wear masks until the numbers are more favorable.

TODAY WE CELEBRATE A 40-DAY MEMORIAL for the servant of God **Kamal Attallah Shaheen**, the father of **Daniel Shaheen**. We extend our sympathies to the Shaheen family and pray that our loving Lord will rest him among his beloved. ***May his memory be eternal!***

OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY to **Ana Stefania Seith** on the falling asleep of her grandfather **Constantin Pană** this past week. ***May our loving Lord accept him in the courts of his righteous!***

YOUTH EVENTS UPDATE

ATTENTION: Young Adults, Teens, Tweens, and younger; (and, of course, parents)

***We're planning a few events for this fall: get-togethers, retreats, and more.
Please take a look at the list below and save the time and dates on your calendar!***

► **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23 — Pumpkin Carving and Painting event.** **DETAILS:** **Location:** St. Nicholas. **Time:** 2:30 - 5:30pm. It is a fun filled outdoor event for school-aged kids (grades k-12). Masks required. **Questions or RSVP's:** please contact: [Gina](#) (508-873-9600), [Fadi](#), or [Cristina](#). **Looking forward to being together!**

BEE-TREATS FOR TEENS. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6th. Target age group: Grades 7-12. Teens from around Central Mass are all invited. Place: [Sts. Constantine and Helen](#) in Webster. **Steven Christoforou** is leading the retreat. Many of you know him from the "Be the Bee" videos. [Click here for the flier](#) with more information.

That same evening at 6:00 pm there will be a **Young Adult Coffee House/"Theology on Tap"** — and evening of fellowship and sharing. [Click here for the flier](#) with more information.

A FALL RETREAT is planned for **Thursday, November 11th** (Veteran's Day — it's a school holiday). The theme is: **"Who Is The Holy Spirit."** Details will be available soon!

CHRISTMAS IS COMING (as the saying goes). We're going to dedicate a couple of the **Saturdays in December to PAGEANT REHEARSALS** and some more enjoyable activities for the kids. Dates and times will be forthcoming.

COMMUNITY NEWS

ALL THINGS ORTHODOX is a weekly show hosted by Fr. Christopher Stamas of St. Spyridon Cathedral. Fr. Chris interviews people active in the life of the Church on questions of faith and action. It is aired on the **Worcester Cable channel 194** on **Mondays** at 7 pm, **Saturdays** at 8 pm and **Sundays** at 9 pm. Also look for it on the Cable website: [wccatv.com](#), or the **Worcester TV** Roku app.

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

REHABILITATION. Our short-term rehabilitation and post-hospital care includes orthopedic, cardiovascular, neurological, and post-surgical recovery and rehabilitation, to name a few. Our ultimate goal is to safely return patients to their homes, or other appropriate levels of care. We offer physical, occupational and speech therapies, with a commitment to the highest level of quality care, a focus on customer service and providing a nurturing environment for both patients and families. If you have questions or would like more information, please contact our Director of Rehab, [Heather Walsh](#).

WELLNESS TIP OF THE WEEK. Although the days may not be as hot and sunny, it's just as important to keep your body hydrated in the cooler weather. Drink plenty of water, moisturize your skin daily (including those with SPF or sunblock), and dress in layers to adjust to the fluctuating fall temperatures.

ADMISSIONS. Our census is the highest it's been this year, and we have limited long-term care beds available. If you are choosing from a group of nursing centers, we encourage you to review the ratings of each facility for potential short term rehabilitative care or long-term placement. We are happy to answer any questions you have along the way and would welcome the opportunity to give you a tour of our nursing center. Please contact Director of Admissions [Karen Barry](#) or call (508) 852-1000, ext. 213.

JOB OPENINGS. We are seeking an Activities Assistant for a FT 32 hrs/week position. Must have experience in working in activities at a long-term senior care facility and be available every other weekend and some holidays. [Click here](#) for a full listing of our openings with detailed job descriptions, including nursing, reception, and dietary. Recent grads and people familiar with the languages and cultures of our Orthodox communities are encouraged to apply.

STAY CONNECTED. Be sure to like our [Facebook page](#) for frequent updates and photos. We are actively seeking volunteers, especially those able to assist with bingo, 1:1 visits, Men's club, events, and specialty hobbies, including knitting, crocheting, and quilting. All volunteers must be fully vaccinated. If your parish, social group, or family is interested in sponsoring an activity or funding a specific need for our residents, please contact our Director of Development & Communications, [Mackenzie Koch](#).

You can now find us at www.holytrinityrehab.org!

Orthodox Links

[Romanian Orthodox Metropolia](#) of the Americas
[Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North and Central America](#) (Assembly of Bishops)
[International Orthodox Christian Charities](#) (IOCC)
[Orthodox Christian Mission Center](#) (OCMC)
[Orthodox Christian Radio Network](#) (OCN)

A Prayer of Fr. Laurence

Let us pray to the Lord

Lord, God of invincible power and might: Grace us with discernment, with keen vision and refined perception. But when it comes to judging others, make us blind and disinterested, totally oblivious to all their faults and failings. Let us look, rather, at our own mistakes and refrain from condemning others for what we see as the mistakes they make and the evils they commit.

For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, Father, Son and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles

The Epistle reading this week resumes our study of St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians (1:11-19). St. Paul had founded this community. After he left Galatia, a group of Jewish Christians (Judaizers) came there and began to undermine St. Paul's teachings among the members of that Church by shaking their confidence in his 'apostleship.' St. Paul feels the need to confirm the authenticity of his direct experience of our Lord Jesus Christ in order to defend what he has taught them.

In the very first verse of this Letter St. Paul lays out the basis of his authority by stating: "Paul an apostle—not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead." (Galatians 1:1) After he expresses to the Galatians his deep concern regarding what he has heard concerning them, he relates in greater detail how exactly it was that God had called him.

"For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not man's. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ." (v. 11-12) Sometimes we read over these words quickly, not stopping to think about what he is actually saying. He is telling us that all his knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ came to him directly through revelation or even revelations! This is the meaning of the words: "I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it." He didn't learn about Jesus in the way we have, by reading, listening, and worshiping. Jesus came to him directly.

In order to drive home the point he reminds them of the details of his conversion. "For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it; and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers." (v. 13-14) Paul, or Saul as he was known before his conversion, terrorized the early Christians. Saul was present at the stoning of St. Stephen (Acts 8:1). He "was ravaging the church, and entering house after house; he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison" (Acts 8:3). He received a commission from the authorities in Jerusalem to go to Damascus and root out Christians there and bring them back to Jerusalem for trial and imprisonment (Acts 9:1). He was "extremely zealous."

It was on his way to Damascus that the Lord appeared to him in a vision of blinding light. (Read the entire account of the vision and his conversion in Acts 9:3-31.) It is this experience that Paul reminds the Galatians of when he says, "he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles" (v. 15-16). St. Paul received this vision and was given a commission.

In order to emphasize both the power and the uniqueness of his vision, he says that God the Father was pleased to reveal his Son in me." St. John Chrysostom hones in on this preposition "in." He says, why does he say, "to reveal His Son in me," and not "to me?" It is to signify, that he had not only been instructed in the faith by words, but that he was richly endowed with the Spirit; that the revelation had enlightened his whole soul, and that he had Christ speaking within him. He experienced the Lord directly, and he was told specifically what he was to do: preach and convert the Gentiles.

Accentuating the fullness of this revelation he tells them, "I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus" (v. 16-17). By "flesh and blood" he is referring physically to the other Apostles, but in a deeper sense he means that he wasn't "taught" by any human person.

After this experience he went into Arabia. There is a difference of opinion among Biblical scholars as to what he was doing in Arabia (Arabia here means the desert of eastern and southeastern Syria). Some believe that he went into the desert to pray and reflect on what God had called him to. St. John Chrysostom is of the opinion that he went to preach to the tribes there; using this as an opportunity to sharpen his message. Both of these views are possible, and not mutually exclusive. What we do know is that when he came back to Damascus he had become a powerful witness to the Gospel.

It might be helpful to remind ourselves what the word "Gospel" means. The Greek word is "Evangelion" (εὐαγγέλιον), and it literally means: "Good News." It was oftentimes associated with the accession to the throne of a new emperor, or the birth of an heir. To use this word about Jesus Christ was already to make a claim as to whom He was.

"Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days," St. Paul tells them. "But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother" (v. 18-19). He wants to show the Galatians that he is of one mind with the other Apostles; he respects them as older brothers and friends. He went to "visit" Peter and spent two weeks with him. He shows his respect to James, the Lord's brother, who is clearly in charge of the Jerusalem Church; much beloved and held in high-regard by all, Christians and Jews.

In these few verses we catch a glimpse into the man whom God called to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, to us. We see how God was preparing him for this mission even before he was born. We stand in awe of what God accomplished through him. And, we are humbled by the deep sacrifices he suffered for the sake of the Gospel.

— Fr. Nicholas Apostola

DATES TO REMEMBER

Tues, Oct 12 Pita Baking, 9am-noon
Fri, Oct 15 Mustard Seed Meal
Thurs, Oct 21 Parish Council 7pm
Sat, Oct 23 Children's Retreat
Sat, Nov 6 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-noon
[Be the Bee](#) Teen Retreat
Thurs, Nov 11 Children's Retreat

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Sunday Services: Matins at 9:00 am and Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am