

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN JULY 12, 2015

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

THE PARISH COUNCIL will hold its regular monthly meeting this **Monday, July 20th at 6:30 pm**. Parish Council Members, please let Deb Sedares know if you are unable to attend.

PITA BAKING THE NEXT TWO THURSDAYS. We're up and running. **THIS Thursday, July 23 and next, July 30.** Any and all help appreciated. Questions? See Chris Toda, 508-832-6271.

THE LATEST FAITH/CREDINȚA Magazine is now available at the candles. Please take a copy home with you.

WE CELEBRATE TWO MEMORIALS TODAY, for **Mary Symock Tanacea**, fallen asleep one year; and **Katherine Stamoulis Pappas**, fallen asleep ten years. *May our loving Lord rest their souls with the just!*

TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR is sponsored by Mary's family in her memory.

COMMUNITY NEWS

SUMMER PICNICS/FESTIVALS

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST parish in Woonsocket will hold their annual Festival, Saturday and Sunday July 25-26 on the Church grounds.

GREETERS TEAM 2:

ARTIC GAVALA AND CĂLIN GALERIU

COFFEE HOUR PREP/CLEAN-UP:

NEED SOME VOLUNTEERS THIS WEEK

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

FATHERS OF THE FOURTH ŒCUMENICAL COUNCIL

† APOSTOLIC READING: ROMANS 15:1-7 † GOSPEL: MATTHEW 9:27-35

(JESUS HEALS TWO BLIND MEN AND A MAN MUTE & POSSESSED)

† TONE 6 † MATINS GOSPEL 7

ST. MICHAEL parish in Southbridge will hold their annual Picnic, Sunday August 16 on the Church grounds.

UPCOMING

OUR NEXT MUSTARD SEED MEAL is on Friday, August 21st. We'll need help cooking and serving. If you'd like to help, please talk to Fr. Nick.

AN ELECTRONICS/WHITE GOODS, ETC. RECYCLING day is set for **Saturday, August 29th**. If you're able and willing to help, please speak with Gerry Belba.

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

Holy Trinity Nursing & Rehabilitation Center & Holy Trinity Hospice are Orthodox Charities and rely on your donations to continue the mission of providing the best care possible.

FINANCIAL FACT

"Burning the Mortgage"

We have received \$117,000 in pledges (over 3 years) towards our Burn The Mortgage Campaign, which is 23% of our outstanding principal balance of \$513,015.

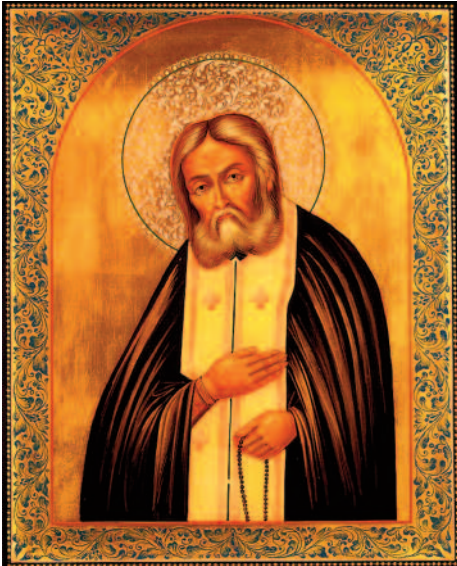
DATES TO REMEMBER

Mon, July 20 Parish Council, 6:30 pm
Thurs, July 23 Pita Baking, 9 am
Jul 25-26 Woonsocket Festival, Sat-Sun
Thurs, July 30 Pita Baking, 9 am
Sat, Aug 1 Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-12pm
Sun, Aug 16 St Michael Southbridge Picnic
Fri, Aug 21 Mustard Seed Meal, 5pm
Sat, Aug 29 e-Recycling, 9am-2pm
Sun, Sept 20 stART on the Street

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas



**UNCOVERING OF THE RELICS OF
SAINT SERAPHIM,
WONDERWORKER OF SAROV
(July 19th)**

The glorification of St Seraphim of Sarov (January 2), took place in 1903, seventy years after his repose. On July 3, 1903 Metropolitan Anthony of St Petersburg, assisted by Bishop Nazarius of Nizhni-Novgorod and Bishop Innocent of Tambov, transferred the saint's relics from their original burial place to the church of Sts Zosimus and Sabbatius. Tsar Nicholas II and Tsarina Alexandra provided a new cypress coffin to receive the relics.

At noon on July 16, the first day of the festivities, Metropolitan Anthony offered a Memorial Service for the ever-memorable Hieromonk Seraphim in the Dormition Cathedral. Services also took place in the monastery's other churches.

The next day Metropolitan Anthony and Bishop Nazarius served a Memorial Liturgy in the Dormition Cathedral. At 5:00 that afternoon, the bells of Sarov began to ring, announcing the arrival of Tsar Nicholas and his family.

The royal family attended the early Liturgy on July 18th and received the Holy Mysteries. Later that morning, the final Memorial Service for the repose of

Hieromonk Seraphim's soul was offered in the Cathedral. These would be the last prayers offered for him as a departed servant of God. From that time forward, prayers would be addressed to him as a saint. At 6 P.M. the bells rang for Vigil, the first service with hymns honoring St Seraphim, and during which his relics would be exposed for public veneration.

At the time of the Litia during Vespers, the saint's coffin was carried from the church of Sts Zosimus and Sabbatius and into the Dormition Cathedral. Several people were healed of various illnesses during this procession. During Matins, as "Praise ye the Name of the Lord" was sung, the coffin was opened. After the Gospel, Metropolitan Anthony and the other hierarchs kissed the holy relics. They were followed by the royal family, the officiating clergy, and all the people in the cathedral.

On July 19, the saint's birthday, the late Liturgy began at 8 o'clock. At the Lit-

NAMEDAYS

July 16

The Holy Martyr Julia of Carthage

Julia Donabed

July 17

The Holy Great Martyr Marina (Margareta) of Antioch in Pisidia

Margareta Gikas
Margarite Landry
Lindsey Marina Sparages
Marina Sparages

July 20

The Holy Prophet Elijah (Elias)

Louis P. Belba
Elias James Christo
Irli Ilie Durmillari
Louis P. Messier
Louis Rucho
Louis Evan Stamoulis

July 24

The Holy Great Martyr Christina

Christine Masterjohn

tle Entrance, twelve Archimandrites lifted the coffin from the middle of the church, carried it around the altar, then placed it into a special shrine. The long awaited event was accompanied by numerous miraculous healings of the sick, who had gathered at Sarov in large numbers. More than 200,000 people came to Sarov from all across Russia.

The festivities at Sarov came to an end with the dedication of the first two churches to St Seraphim. The first church to be consecrated was over his monastic cell in Sarov. The second church was consecrated on July 22 at the Diveyevo convent.

In 1991, St Seraphim's relics were re-discovered after being hidden in a Soviet anti-religious museum for seventy years. Widely esteemed in his lifetime, St Seraphim is one of the most beloved saints of the Orthodox Church.

A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

LORD, ETERNAL GOD AND FATHER: When your Christ took on our flesh, your righteousness became man in him, and an adequate response to this mysterious fact is necessary not only in the church as a whole, but in each of us as individuals. Unfortunately, we do not know how to grasp the mysteries of faith, let alone know how to implement them. Give us true understanding — more and more of it day after day — as well as consciousness, and teach us how to fulfill your will in all these matters.

By the grace and mercies and love for us of your only Son, with whom you are blest, together with your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

ACCORDING TO YOUR FAITH ...

THIS week's Gospel lesson, for the seventh Sunday after Pentecost, is taken from St. Matthew (9:27-35). It is a brief passage that recounts two separate healings. The first is the healing of two blind men and the second is of a person who was mute on account of a demon.

Prior to this event, the Lord had raised Jairus' daughter from the dead (Matthew 9:18-26), and continued traveling and teaching throughout the area. It was then that two blind men approach him, crying loudly, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!" (v. 27) There are three things we should take note of in this encounter. First, they are very open about their need. Second, they don't ask for a healing outright, rather they ask for "mercy." And third, they call him by the Messianic title: "Son of David."

When they had entered into a house, the Lord asks them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" (v. 28) They respond, "Yes, Lord," then Jesus says, "According to your faith let it be done to you." (v. 29) Jesus doesn't heal them out in the open where there are crowds and the healing could become a spectacle. Rather, like with the raising of Jairus' daughter, he does it privately.

He also begins to lead them to a higher understanding of who he is when he asks them whether they believe that he can do this. Jesus doesn't ask if they believe that He will pray to his Father for this to be done, but rather, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" This time they respond not with the Messianic title "Son of David," but with, "Yes, Lord." In this small turn of phrase, they acknowledge that this is the Son of God who is standing before them.

When he heals them he says, "According to your faith let it be done to you." He often grants a healing with a similar expression. There are two reasons. One is that he doesn't want it to

appear as though he is "rushing" to heal people, looking for self-glorification. The other is that he wants the person to confess their faith aloud, to show that they are participating in the good work done them. So, he doesn't say, "Let your eyes be opened," but rather, "According



to your faith."

He charges them to tell no one of what has happened, but as you might imagine it is impossible for a wonder such as this to be kept a secret. (v. 30-31) These men became preachers and evangelist of the Lord.

When the blind men had left the house, people then brought him a mute man who could not speak and possessed by a demon. In this case, the Lord asks nothing of him, but immediately casts out the demon and then the man begins to speak.

St. John Chrysostom informs our understanding by carefully pointing out that this man's inability to speak was not a "natural," or physiological condition, but rather the result of the evil spirit afflicting him. Because of the demon, this man was unable to seek out the Lord himself, so others brought him to Jesus. St. Matthew says that when the man spoke, "The crowds were amazed and said, 'Never has anything like this been seen in Israel'" (v. 33).

This Gospel reading ends with a comment by the Pharisees: "By the ruler

of demons he casts out the demons." (v. 34) Even though they had witnessed this miracle, they still tried to discredit it. In another place the Lord answers this charge when he says, "If a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand," (Mark 3:25) showing how illogical it is to suggest that a demon would seek to destroy another demon. Moreover, the Lord did not just cast out demons; he did many other signs and wonders: cleansing lepers, raising the dead, and preaching the Kingdom.

In the response of the Pharisees, we see an all too familiar pattern of rejecting the love and mercy of God. What causes a person to deny the good work that they see with their own eyes? Even more than that, why would someone attribute the good that is done to the devil? This is what the Lord means when he says that every sin will be for-



given except blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (cf. Luke 12:10). To call that which is good evil is to deny even the possibility of God's action among us. It is to deny the very essence of who God is.

Simply stated, this passage teaches us that we are all called to recognize the goodness of God, to not be afraid or shy to ask for His help, and to openly declare to others the loving kindness and mercy He has shown us.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA