

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN AUGUST 5, 2018

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

QUESTIONS FOR SUNDAY SERMONS. Fr. Nick's is continuing his summer sermon series on the Divine Liturgy. This Sunday he'll be talking about the first part of the Anaphora — the prayers and hymns we offer asking that God send his Holy Spirit upon us and the Gifts (From just after the Creed to just before the "Holy, Holy, Holy" hymn). If you have any questions about the Liturgy — why we do what we do — please write them down and either hand them in or e-mail him at: FrNick@StNicholasChurch.org.

THE DORMITION FAST BEGAN ON WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 1st. We will have special services during the fourteen day fast. **There's a listing below of all of the times and places.**

VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL will be held **THIS Monday through Wednesday, August 6-8.** We will again be holding it in conjunction with Sts. Anargyroi in Marlborough. Parents, if you haven't signed your child up yet, or have questions, immediately contact: **Valarie Stamoulis** (valarie@focused-intention.com); cell: 617-803-3798. Flier available at the candles.

GREETERS TEAM 2:
ARTIC GAVALA AND V. GERALD BELBA

COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP:
HELP NEEDED

PICK UP A CUP - LEND A HAND

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



THE TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

FOREFEAST OF THE TRANSFIGURATION

EPISTLE: 1 CORINTHIANS 4:9-16 ☩ GOSPEL: MATTHEW 17:14-23

(JESUS HEALS THE BOY WITH AN EPILEPTIC DEMON)

TONE 1 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL: 10

OUR NEXT MUSTARD SEED MEAL is Friday, August 17th. We'll need help cooking and serving. **Prep** help needed (3 persons), Thursday. **Prep** help needed (2 persons), noon Friday. **Serving** help needed (5 persons), 5:30pm Friday. **Joanne Prizio and family are generously donating the cost of this meal. God bless them!** If you'd like to help, please talk to Fr. Nick.

THANKS TO THE FOOD PANTRY VOLUNTEERS for working the Orthodox Food Center on behalf of our parish yesterday. Our regular commitment is the first Saturday of the month from 9am to noon. About 4 people are needed. If you can help in this worthwhile ministry, please speak with Lisa Mielnicki or Nicole Apostola. Our next Saturday is **September 1st.**

A SIX MONTH MEMORIAL is held today for the servant of God **Dimitraq Lolo. May his**

memory be eternal!

THIS SUNDAY'S COFFEE HOUR is sponsored by the **Sedares family.**

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

A CORAL CONCERT OF SPANISH SONGS was offered by members of the Choir from **St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church** in Worcester after supper on

DATES TO REMEMBER

- Wed, Aug 1 Dormition Fast Began
- Fri, Aug 3 Supplication to Theotokos, 6:00 pm
- Sat, Aug 4 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-noon
Pita Dough Rolling, 9am-noon
- Mon, Aug 6 Transfiguration, Lit - Marlboro, 8:30am
- Aug 6-8 Vacation Church School
- Tues, Aug 7 Supplication to Theotokos, 6:00 pm
- Thurs, Aug 9 Supplication to Theotokos, 6:00 pm
- Tues, Aug 14 Dormition Vespers, St. Mary's 6:00 pm
- Wed, Aug 15 Dormition Lit, St. Mary's 9:00 am
- Fri, Aug 17 Mustard Seed Meal, 5 pm

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas

Wednesday, July 25th. A family member, who is also a member of the choir, was instrumental in coordinating this event along with our Activities Director, Dana Spinney. *It was a wonderful!*

ERIC ABOAGYE, a certified nursing assistant, had a **showing of his artwork at Holy Trinity on July 25th**. Eric was born in Ghana, West Africa. He was raised by his grandmother and started his career in drawing at the age of 9. "People in my village encouraged me to develop my gift," Eric said. "Through art I can show my dreams to the world, dreams I cannot express in words." **Eric will be starting art classes for interested residents in the coming weeks, many of who have already expressed a desire to learn to paint.**

SOME THINGS TO THINK ABOUT:

— **Most emergency room visits** occur during the warmer months of the year.

— **At least 70% of people over 65** will need long-term care services and support at some point in their lives.

DIVINE LITURGY is celebrated every Wednesday morning at 9:30am. Everyone is welcome. Come and spend some time with the residents; they would really appreciate it!

REMEMBER: Holy Trinity Nursing and Rehabilitation Center is an Orthodox Charity and relies on your donations to continue its mission of providing the best care possible.

GLOBAL NEEDS

THE INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES (IOCC) is responding to the **fast-moving wildfires in Greece** that have devastated parts of East Attica, including port city Rafina and nearby village Mati, along the Aegean coast. IOCC is working closely with Apostoli to meet the most basic needs of those who have lost their only homes.

In addition, IOCC is supporting immediate basic needs like access to food. Through partner **Apostoli**, (an arm of the Church of Greece), IOCC will distribute prepaid grocery cards to families affected by the fires, allowing them to purchase essential items like Greek-grown produce, dairy, and meat, as well as personal hygiene items, including soap and shampoo.

Please make a gift today to support these efforts. **Contact: www.iocc.org**

THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN MISSION CENTER IS ORGANIZING MISSION

WORK IN KENYA AND ALBANIA. Help the Orthodox mission work in Kenya and Albania with focused outreaches to women and youth. The OCMC is organizing teams of clergy wives and women lay leaders to Albania (Sep 17-27) and Kenya (Nov 19-28) to offer encouragement, education and guidance to women in their roles to strengthen the church's witness. Team opportunities in Kenya – Nairobi (Nov 28-Dec 8) and Kisumu (Nov 28-Dec 8) – to participate in the church's outreach to youth and young adults. Participate in the unending work of Orthodox missions. Apply today to serve on an Orthodox Mission Team at www.ocmc.org!



NAMEDAYS

August 8

**The Holy New Martyr
Triandaphyllos**

Rose Armida Salerno

August 15

**The Falling Asleep of the
Most Holy Theotokos**

Maria Blanchard

Mary Cocaine

Maria Dumitriu

Monika Maria Durmillari

Maria Kalpidou

Maria Prelipcean

Nancy Maria Tsongalis

Marietta Zaruha

AUGUST LITURGICAL CYCLE

Dormition Fast Period (Aug 1-15)

- ◆ **Supplication Service** to the Theotokos at St. Nick's, Friday, August 3, 6:00 pm
- ◆ **Divine Liturgy for the Transfiguration at Sts, Anargyroi, Marlborough,** Monday, August 6, 8:30 am
- ◆ **Supplication Service** to the Theotokos at St. Nick's, Tuesday, August 7, 6:00 pm
- ◆ **Supplication Service** to the Theotokos at St. Nick's, Thursday, August 9, 6:00 pm
- ◆ **Dormition Vespers at St. Mary's, Worcester,** Tuesday, August 14, 6:00 pm
- ◆ **Divine Liturgy at St. Mary's Worcester,** Wednesday, August 15, 9:00 am



7 HOLY MACCABEE MARTYRS

August 1

The seven holy Maccabee martyrs Abim, Antonius, Gurias, Eleazar, Eusebonus, Alimus and Marcellus, their mother Solomon and their teacher Eleazar suffered in the year 166 before Christ under the impious Syrian king Antiochus IV Epiphanes. This foolish ruler loved pagan and Hellenistic customs, and held Jewish customs in contempt. He did everything possible to turn people from the Law of Moses and from their covenant with God. He desecrated the Temple of the Lord, placed a statue of the pagan god Zeus there, and forced the Jews to worship it. Many people abandoned the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but there were also those who continued to believe that the Savior would come.

A ninety-year-old elder, the scribe and teacher Eleazar, was brought to trial for his faithfulness to the Mosaic Law. He suffered tortures and died at Jerusalem.

The disciples of Saint Eleazar, the seven Maccabee brothers and their mother Solomon, also displayed great courage. They were brought to trial in Antioch by King Antiochus Epiphanes. They fearlessly acknowledged them-

A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

O source and origin of the sun and the moon and the stars, of heaven and earth and all that is, O designer and creator of all things, visible and tangible, as well as hidden from our mind and our senses: Your wisdom and love inspire your church to celebrate the feast of the transfiguration of your Son. On Tabor, in a wondrous and unfathomable way, he gave his friends an insight into who he really is. Now, during this feast, we entreat you to open our minds and our hearts to the mystery of his person, that, by ever contemplating his passion, death, and resurrection, we may portray this understanding in our lives and abide in a lasting fellowship with him and with each other.

By the grace and mercy 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.



THE TRANSFIGURATION

selves as followers of the True God, and refused to eat pig's flesh, which was forbidden by the Law.

The eldest brother acted as spokesman for the rest, saying that they preferred to die rather than break the Law. He was subjected to fierce tortures in sight of his brothers and their mother. His tongue was cut out, he was scalped, and his hands and feet were cut off. Then a cauldron and a large frying pan were heated, and the first brother was thrown into the frying pan, and he died.

The next five brothers were tortured one after the other. The seventh and youngest brother was the last one left alive. Antiochus suggested to Saint Solomon to persuade the boy to obey him, so that her last son at least would be spared. Instead, the brave mother

told him to imitate the courage of his brothers.

The child upbraided the king and was tortured even more cruelly than his brothers had been. After all her seven children had died, Saint Solomon, stood over their bodies, raised up her hands in prayer to God and died.

The martyric death of the Maccabee brothers inspired Judas Maccabeus, and he led a revolt against Antiochus Epiphanes. With God's help, he gained the victory, and then purified the Temple at Jerusalem. He also threw down the altars which the pagans had set up in the streets. All these events are related in the Second Book of Maccabees (Ch. 8-10).

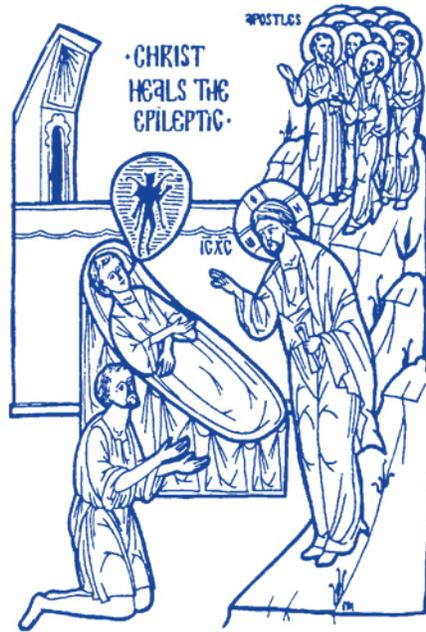
FAITH AS TINY AS A MUSTARD SEED

THE Gospel reading for this tenth Sunday after Pentecost is the healing of the epileptic boy (Matthew 17:14-23). St. Matthew tells us that this healing happened as the Lord and his disciples were coming down from the mountain where He had been transfigured. There was a crowd there waiting, and a man came up to him begging him to heal his son. A dramatic moment, and there are many players. There is the father and his son; the disciples; the demons; and of course, the crowd. For each, this encounter provokes a dilemma. For some a crisis, of faith. The father of the boy, the disciples, and even the members of the crowd will find the nature and depth of their faith tested. The demons will foresee their time of reckoning.

It is clear from the way the boy's father approaches Jesus that he was not a faithful man. He had come to Jesus out of desperation, not necessarily with the conviction that the Lord could do this. He had first brought the child to the disciples, but when they were unable to cast out the demon he decided to seek out the "higher source."

Jesus rebukes the father, but he doesn't do it directly. Rather, he addresses the rebuke more generally to all those present, saying: "You faithless and perverse generation, how much longer must I be with you? How much longer must I put up with you?" (v. 17) The truth is that even after seeing so many of the signs and wonders he has worked, it is not just the father, but the crowds gathered around him who still have a hard time believing. Finally, he says to the father: "Bring him here to me."

The Evangelist Mark adds a few more details to this story. He says that when the spirit saw Jesus he convulsed the boy (cf. Mark 9:20). Even if the boy's father did not know who Jesus was and what he could do, the demon did. Jesus then asked the boy's father how long he had been afflicted with this condition, to which the father replies "from child-



hood." He then adds: "If you are able to do anything, have pity on us and help us" (Mark 9:22).

Jesus immediately turns his question around telling him: "If you are able! — All things can be done for the one who believes" (Mark 9:23). Again, St. Mark records the father as saying: "I believe; help my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24). Confronted with his own doubt and consumed with love for his child, the father at last comes to a sense of what it means to believe. He needed to learn to trust in God and ask for God's help especially when his trust was weakest.

What Jesus is saying to the man — and, of course to us as well — is that if we believe we will be given the power to heal, or work even greater things. But still, he does not wait for the father's faith, or that of the disciples; rather, in his compassion for the boy he heals him directly and immediately.

The disciples' dilemma is different. The Lord had given them "authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness" (Matthew 10:1). After everyone had left, they came to Jesus privately asking why they could not cast out this spirit. They were probably anxious and afraid they had lost the grace that had

been entrusted to them. Even Peter, James and John, who had seen the Lord transfigured in all his glory on Mount Tabor, were shaken (cf. Matthew 17:1-8). Jesus gives them a similar answer to that which he gave the boy's father: "Because of your little faith. For truly I tell you, if you have faith as a grain of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you" (v. 20). And then he adds: "But this kind does not come out except by prayer and fasting" (v. 21).

Having given them this great power to heal, the Lord now instructs them on principles that support this power, this gift. He says that genuine faith, even as small as a mustard seed, has limitless power. But, this faith has to be strengthened, nurtured, and supported by prayer and fasting. Prayer brings us into God's presence and teaches us to listen to Him. Fasting helps us to distance ourselves from the excesses of this physical existence, making us lighter, and more spiritual.

Just a couple of words about the demons or evil spirits. The Biblical worldview sees the struggle between good and evil, sickness and health, as a cosmic battle between God and those who pretend to be god. We have a scientific worldview, but I would hasten to add this doesn't mean that the ancient world was without science, far from it. But, they saw evil and good in personal terms. If you've ever struggled with a debilitating illness, physical or psychological, I'm sure that there were times that you felt that there was a malevolent force behind your suffering.

However, we are not abandoned in our struggles. God is with us. Each of us has the capacity to believe. God gave us this 'mustard seed' when He created us. The key to faith is trust. Trust is the fertile soil in which the seed of faith is planted, and it will grow into a magnificent and glorious tree.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA