

News from St. Nick's

Sunday, August 2, 2020

The Eighth Sunday After Pentecost

Apostolic Reading: I Corinthians 1, 10-17

Gospel: Matthew 14, 14-22

"Multiplying the Five Loaves and the Two Fish "

Tone 7 • Matins Gospel 8

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PARTICIPATING IN SERVICES. As a reminder, we are able to welcome parishioners to attend Liturgy on Sundays at church. Here are the [Guidelines](#) for attending Church services. Everyone **must wear a mask** while present, and **at this time we can comfortably accommodate approximately 50 people**. Please follow the directions of Parish Council members at all times as they will ensure it is controlled and safe for all.

THANKS TO THOSE WHO HELPED WITH THE ELECTRONICS/WHITE GOODS, ETC. RECYCLING event last Saturday. It turned into the largest one of these events we've ever held. (At least two to three times as big!) The team was coordinated by Gerry Belba, and included: George Belba and Chris Seith. They endured the heat and managed the number of people and cars with grace. Thank you!

THE LIVE-STREAMING OF THE LITURGY WILL CONTINUE. If you are not able or ready to return to church, you will still be able to access the live-stream of Divine Services. Go to: www.stnicholaschurch.org and click on **"Live Streaming of Services"**. ***To view previous Services*** on our YouTube Channel, [click here](#).

ORTHODOX FOOD PANTRY UPDATE. **Our Parish's responsibility to staff the Food Pantry will be Saturday, August 1 from 9:00 AM to NOON.** The Food Pantry continues to serve the community with volunteers using PPE (masks and gloves) and following social distancing procedures. For more information, contact [Lisa Demake](#) or [Nicole Apostola](#) at 508-797-9482.

PASTRY FOR SALE. “St. Nick’s Kitchen” has scrumptious **Baklava, Koulourakia, & Kouroubia** available for you to enjoy! purchase. Please consider a purchase to support your Church and help us reduce our inventory. To order, email/call [Christ Toda](#) at 1-774-272-2773 or [Betty Anderson](#) at 508-353-9449.

MUSTARD SEED MEAL. **We are scheduled to provide a meal for the Mustard Seed on August 21.** Observing social distancing measures here at the Church, we will prepare 150 meals that will be pre-packaged and dropped off, ready to be distributed by their regular staff of volunteers. If you/your family would like to help with this, please call or contact **Betty Anderson by email** (bettya16@verizon.net) or by phone 508-353-9449.

USHERS NEEDED. The Parish Council is **seeking volunteers to assist with ushering** on Sunday mornings on a rotating schedule. You would need to be at Church from 9 AM to 11:30 AM on Sundays. If you can help, please email Christopher Seith at cbseith@gmail.com.

THE FAITH / CREDINTA MAGAZINE. The **April-June issue** of our Metropolia's quarterly magazine is now available. Please download and read it by [clicking here](#).

STEWARDSHIP. This is a difficult time for everyone, on so many levels. One is economic. But if you are able, please continue to send what stewardship offering that you feel you can afford. Keep in mind that **the Church is also in the same situation**. There are on-going expenses. You may mail any contributions to the Church address, or you may give on-line, at the parish website by [clicking here](#). God bless you and keep you safe!

WE HAVE A COVID FUND. There are people both in our parish and in the larger community who are in need during this time. **If you need help**, whatever it might be, including financial assistance, please contact Fr. Nick. We'll find a way to assist you. **ALSO**, we are asking the faithful in our parish **WHO ARE ABLE**, to perhaps contribute toward this fund. We've set up a small committee, headed by Fr. Nick, to administer this fund, and distribute what we're able to give as equitably as possible. **May God keep us all!**

NEW EMAIL ADDRESSES FOR THE CHURCH. If you have information or a notice to share in the Church bulletin, please send that to Bulletin@stnicholaschurch.org. Likewise, questions or information for the Parish Council may be addressed to ParishCouncil@stnicholaschurch.org

AUGUST LENTEN SERVICES

Dormition Fast Period - August 1 - 15

We will have special services during the fourteen day fast. Here's the schedule:

- ❖ Supplication Service to the Theotokos at St. Nick's, **Tuesday, August 4, 6:00 pm**
- ❖ Divine Liturgy for Transfiguration at St. Nick's, **Thursday, August 6, 9:00 am**
- ❖ Supplication Service to the Theotokos at St. Nick's, **Tuesday, August 11, 6:00 pm**

- ❖ Supplication Service to the Theotokos at St. Nick's, **Thursday, August 13, 6:00 pm**
- ❖ Dormition Vespers at **St. Mary's, Friday, August 14, 6:00 pm**
- ❖ Divine Liturgy at **St. Mary's, Saturday, August 15, 9:30 am**

VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL 2020

“Metamorphosis & Prayer”

The Sunday School programs of Sts. Anargyroi & St. Nicholas invite you to join a one-day event on the Feast of the Metamorphosis or Transfiguration of our Lord. [Here is a Flier](#) with all the details.

WHO: Youth, **grades K - 8**

WHEN: **THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 9 AM - 2 PM**

Liturgy- 9 AM

Sessions & Lunch (provided) - 10 AM - 2 PM

(1:15 pick-up for those not staying for lunch)

WHERE:

RAIN Location - Sts. Anargyroi Church, 9 Central Street, Marlboro, MA

SUNNY Location - St. Nicholas Church, 34 Gold Street, Shrewsbury, MA

RSVP: By AUG 1st! - [Valarie Stamoulis](#) OR [Presbytera Eleni Christakos](#)

***NOTE: All CDC Guidelines for Covid will be followed.
All participants and leaders are required to wear masks.***

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

Updated 7.14.20

COVID-19 Update – Holy Trinity is extremely proud to say there are NO Covid-19 positive residents at this time. Holy Trinity continues accepting new residents and rehabilitation patients who are Covid-19 positive, however there have been NO cases of Covid-19 acquired from the facility in weeks. The staff have performed admirably and the results prove their hard work and dedication!

Visitations – Since June 3, 2020 Holy Trinity is providing in person outside visits and we have expanded the days and times visits are possible. If you are looking for more information on visiting a loved one please click [here](#). The residents are so happy they can once again interact with their loved ones and the smiles on their faces say it all!

Job Openings – Please click [here](#) to view the latest job openings. Become part of an amazing team!

Resident Activities – Resident activities have recently changed to include small group activities for those who are fully recovered! It has been over 3 months and residents are thrilled to return to some semblance of the way things “use to be”. We are accepting donations to go towards increased resident activities. Please click [here](#) if you would like to contribute. Thank You!

“Is Christ Divided?”

This is the eighth Sunday after Pentecost, and we begin reading from St. Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians. Corinth is a city located on the southern end of a narrow isthmus that connects the Peloponnesus to central Greece. It has easy access to both the Adriatic on the west and the Aegean on the east. It was a major city in the Ancient world because of its location. In St. Paul’s day it had a cosmopolitan population; people from all over the Roman Empire were drawn to it.

In the Roman world, Corinth had a reputation for debauchery and licentiousness; when you said that someone was “living like a Corinthian,” it meant that they were living a rather dissolute life. It was a vibrant city, very much like many of our own cities today; a place of ideas and opportunities, as well as great temptations.

St. Paul founded the Church in Corinth in 51 ad, and when he departed after eighteen months, he left behind a flourishing community of Jewish and Gentile converts. While in Ephesus he received reports from Chloe’s family of dissensions and scandals in the community. In this Letter he also takes up a number of questions addressed to him by members of the community sent in a different letter delivered by other messengers.

Our reading today is 1 Corinthians 1:10-17. After a short introduction, St. Paul quickly addresses his major concern. He starts out gently, not with an accusation, but with a request. “I appeal to you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree and that there be no dissensions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment” (v. 10). He appeals to them not in his name, but in Christ’s, in order to get them to focus on the fundamentals of the issue. He wants to emphasize that those who believe in Christ need to remain united in Him. St. Paul uses a strong word here; the word translated as “dissensions” is, in the original Greek, “schisms.” It sounded even stronger to the Corinthians than it does to us. He wanted them to appreciate that they were ripping the fabric of the Church into pieces.

Then he tells them what unity in Christ should look like: “the same mind and the same judgment.” Agreement formulated in only words is not the same as harmony of sentiment. Agreeing to a common definition of faith is not the same as being joined together in love. He

tells the Corinthians to be of the same mind and judgment, not to think that true unity can be accomplished by negotiating an accord.

St. Paul tells them what he has heard and identifies his source without singling out an individual (“reported to me by Chloe’s people”). He wants to bolster his argument without creating further recriminations and divisions. The charge is that factions have emerged in the Corinthian Church. “Each one of you says, ‘I belong to Paul,’ or ‘I belong to Apollos,’ or ‘I belong to Cephas,’ or ‘I belong to Christ’” (v. 12).

He doesn’t want to inflate his own importance so he starts with himself and then mentions the other Apostles: Apollos (cf. Acts 18:24) and Cephas (Peter). He ends with Christ, but it is doubtful that there was actually a “Christ” party. Rather, he adds this to emphasize the scandal of their division.

He drives home the point: “Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?” (v. 13) Factionalism based around attraction to any single person’s teaching is a kind of idolatry. Paul is highlighting the danger of this sort of behavior by reminding them of the basics. Who died for you? In whose name were you baptized?

There is no evidence whatsoever that either Apollos or Peter had any responsibility for the creation or encouragement of these factions (cf. 1 Corinthians 16:24). They were the creation of individuals within the community itself.

He mentions that in reality he baptized very few people in Corinth (v. 14-16) ending with this: “For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power” (v. 17). He does not mean to diminish the great Mystery that is Baptism, but rather he wants to shame them into remembering in whose name they were baptized. It is the saving power of Christ’s sacrifice that should be our focus. The person who baptizes or preaches is the minister of this Mystery. They do not (or should not) be baptizing and preaching in their own name.

In our time we are not very far from the problems of the Corinthian Church. Factionalism and schism can and does plague our local parish communities as well as the whole Church. These divisions usually begin when we lose our focus on the Gospel; when we allow some person or some idea to supplant the centrality of Christ’s sacrifice on the Cross.

Since the end of the Second World War many of the Christian Churches have been engaged in the difficult conversation of how to heal the division among those who call Jesus Lord and Savior. While many issues have been resolved in writing, finding the “same mind and same judgment” has been much more elusive. Tragically, other newer issues have presented themselves to cause more and even deeper divisions.

Within our own Church and communities, self-righteousness and self-centeredness often disrupts the harmony of Christ’s Body.

Each of us must learn to focus our love on Christ alone; to leave the vanities of our egos. We, like Paul, “need to know nothing ... except Jesus Christ, and him crucified” (1 Corinthian 2:2).

—Fr. Nicholas Apostola

A Prayer of Fr. Laurence

Let us pray to the Lord,

Almighty Lord and God: We desire to be true disciples of yours, not only in words, but in our actions, that in our own person we may glorify your divine grace. We realize that this implies, first and foremost, the practice of fraternal charity in every-day living. Yet, our weakness and stubbornness frequently prevent us from achieving this, and, without your help, our efforts are fruitless. In your love for us, enable us to love each other truly, no matter — and this is the core of the problem! — who the other is.

For you alone can do all things, and for this we give you glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

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)
[Council of Eastern Orthodox Churches of Central Mass.](#) (CEOC)

Dates To Remember

August 1 thru 14 - Dormition Fast
Aug 1 - Food Pantry - 9 AM - NOON
August 4 - Paraklesis - 6:30 PM
Aug 6 - Vacation Church School - 9 AM - 2 PM
August 15 - Feast of The Dormition
Aug 21 - Mustard Seed
Aug 29 - Food Pantry - 9 AM - NOON
Sept 5 - Food Pantry - 9 AM - NOON

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