

News from St. Nick's

Sunday, August 9, 2020

The Ninth Sunday After Pentecost

Apostolic Reading: 1 Corinthians 3, 9-17

Gospel: Matthew 14, 22-34

"Jesus Walks on the Sea - Calming the Storm "

Tone 8 • Matins Gospel 9

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.

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](#).

THANKS TO THOSE WHO HELPED STAFF THE FOOD PANTRY last Saturday. This is a long standing and important ministry of our Church, and we are so grateful to our committed volunteers. **Our next scheduled dates are August 29th and September 5th.**

OUR ANNUAL VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL this past Thursday, August 6, was a real success. Together with our sister parish of Sts. Anargyroi in Marlboro, we enjoyed a blessed day outside learning about The Transfiguration and Prayer. There were sixteen students together with our organizers, Valarie Stamoulis and Pres. Eleni Christakos, as well as our student volunteers, Maria, Victoria and Damon. A big **'THANK YOU'** to all.

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

MUSTARD SEED MEAL PREPARATIONS. **We are scheduled to provide a meal for the Mustard Seed on August 21.** Observing COVID 19 protocols and social distancing measures here at the Church, we will prepare 150 meals to be distributed by their regular staff of volunteers. We will be meeting at the church on **Friday, August 21 to prepare the meal.** The meal will be packaged to go for patrons of the Mustard Seed to enjoy off premises. If you/your family would like to help with preparing and packaging the meals or transporting them to the Mustard Seed, 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 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**

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!

“You Are God’s Temple”

This is the ninth Sunday after Pentecost, and we continue reading from St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians. This week the selected verses are 3:9-17. St. Paul is dealing with reports of scandal and division (including some immoral behavior) within the Corinthian Church. In last week's reading we listened to him directly address the attitudes that were fostering factionalism. In the subsequent verses (v. 1:18-3:5) he severely reprimands them for their childish behavior. He knows that they see themselves as “spiritually mature” because some in the community have been graced with the charismatic gifts of the Spirit. Yet he (Paul) sees them as spiritually immature, even as children.

He says, “I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but rather as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for solid food. Even

now you are still not ready, for you are still of the flesh. For as long as there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving according to human inclinations?" (v. 3:1-3) He uses two metaphors to help them understand the path to spiritual growth. The first is an agricultural image: Paul plants, Apollos waters, and God gives the growth (cf. 3:6). The second is the image of constructing a building. This is where today's reading begins, as St. Paul moves from the first metaphor to the second.

In order to soften the edge of his rebuke, St. Paul invites the Corinthians to see the spiritual project of the Church as a building on which we all work collaboratively, as God's servants, and according to our talents and the grace given us. He says: "According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building on it. Each builder must choose with care how to build on it. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ" (v. 3:10-11).

Paul is saying three things here: First, as Apostle and founder of the community—the master builder—he provided them with the spiritual foundation on which to build. Second, this foundation not only provides support for the building to be built upon it, but also determines its shape and parameters. And three, the foundation for the Church is Christ Himself; one must be wary if something or someone else is being preached.

He continues, "Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw—the work of each builder will become visible, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each has done" (v. 12-13). There are two possible interpretations as to whom St. Paul might be referring. The "anyone" in verse 12 could refer to other preachers or ministers; people charged with building up the community through teaching and example. Or, he could be referring to us, the members of the Church. St. John Chrysostom leans toward the second understanding.

St. John Chrysostom says that clearly Paul is not speaking of a physical building, because people do not use gold, silver and precious stones for this purpose. Rather these "building materials" represent the quality of our actions. The ways in which we internalize and then incorporate the Gospel reflected through our deeds and habits become like spiritual gold or wood or straw. Our works will become visible on the Day, that is, the Day of the Lord, when He comes in judgment. Everything will be revealed—tested—by fire.

Fire has this quality: it can either consume or it can purify. Materials such as wood, hay and straw are consumed, leaving only blackened ash. Gold and silver, on the other hand, are purified and made more brilliant.

And so, "If what has been built on the foundation survives, the builder will receive a reward. If the work is burned up, the builder will suffer loss; the builder will be saved, but only as through fire" (v. 14-15). For the person whose works are like precious metals and stones, the fire on the Day of Judgment is a refining fire. For the person whose works cannot withstand the fires of judgment, they will escape with their lives, but with nothing to show for it. Like someone

standing on the street watching all of their life's work and memories being reduced to smoldering ash, so will it be for us if we are not willing and ready to put into practice the Good News that we've heard.

This is the heart of St. Paul's argument: "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple" (v. 16-17). We are the "building" with which he is concerned. We are God's dwelling place. St. Paul echoes the Lord's words when he said: "Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them" (John 14:23).

By the way we live we either build up or destroy God's temple. Even in this secular age people are still outraged when a holy place—church, synagogue, or mosque—is desecrated. To the Corinthians these words were even more powerful. Whether you were a pagan or a Jew the desecration of a temple invited God's wrath. This is St. Paul's admonishment for us: to remember that we are responsible for keeping holy God's dwelling place, our very selves.

—Fr. Nicholas Apostola

A Prayer of Fr. Laurence

Let us pray to the Lord,

Lord Jesus, radiant light of the eternal Father: Reveal your light to us as you revealed it to your friends on Tabor's heights. Do not cast us away nor allow the darkness to overcome us in our wretchedness. Rather, lead us through life to our true homeland illumined not by the sun, nor by the moon, nor the stars, nor the flash of lightning, nor the brightness of any earthly fire, but only by your uncreated light. Hear us and let us bear your radiance in plain sight before all the world.

For you are indeed our God, and we give you glory, together with your eternal Father and your all-holy, good, and life-giving 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 11 - Supplication to the Theotokos, 6:00 PM

Aug 13 - Supplication to the Theotokos, 6:00 PM

Aug 14 - Dormition Vespers @ St. Mary's, 6:00 PM

Aug 15 - Divine Liturgy @ St. Mary's, 9:30 AM

Aug 21 - Mustard Seed Prep

Aug 29 - Food Pantry - 9 AM - NOON

Sept 5 - Food Pantry - 9 AM - NOON

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www.StNicholasChurch.org
Sunday Services: Matins at 9:00 am and Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am