

# ***News from St. Nick's***

**Sunday, August 16, 2020**

**The Tenth Sunday After Pentecost**

***Apostolic Reading: 1 Corinthians 4, 9-16***

***Gospel: Matthew 17, 14-23***

***"Jesus Heals a Demon-Possessed Boy"***

***Tone 1 • Matins Gospel 10***

## **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](http://www.stnicholaschurch.org) and click on "**Live Streaming of Services**". **To view previous Services** on our YouTube Channel, [click here](#).

***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 at **1:00 pm 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](mailto:bettya16@verizon.net)) or by phone 508-353-9449.

***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.

**AN ELECTRONICS/WHITE GOODS, ETC. RECYCLING** day is set for **Saturday, September 26, from 9 - 2**. This is an opportunity for our parish to serve our local community while caring for the environment. If you're able and willing to help, please call **Gerry Belba** at **508-868-1569** or email him at [vgbelba@msn.com](mailto:vgbelba@msn.com)

**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](mailto:cbseith@gmail.com).

**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](mailto:Bulletin@stnicholaschurch.org). Likewise, questions or information for the Parish Council may be addressed to [ParishCouncil@stnicholaschurch.org](mailto: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:

- ❖ Dormition Vespers at **St. Mary's, Friday, August 14, 6:00 pm**
- ❖ Divine Liturgy at **St. Mary's, Saturday, August 15, 9:30 am**

## **ST. MICHAEL'S GOLF TOURNAMENT**

Our sister parish, **St. Michael's Romanian Orthodox Church** is hosting the **13th Annual Romanian Open in memory of George Nasto** at the **Cohasse Country Club in Southbridge**.

- Date: **Saturday September 12th, 2020**

- Time: **12:30 pm** Shotgun Start
- Format: **18 Hole** 4 Man Scramble
- Cost: **\$120/golfer** (dinner included)  
**\$480/foursome** (dinner included)

Immediately following the tournament, we will have a meal, raffle, and presentation of the prizes at Saint Michael's Church Hall. Other opportunities to participate are by sponsoring a hole at \$100/hole or purchasing a ticket for the dinner only (if not playing) at \$25/person. For more information, to register your team, or to donate, contact: Luke Yanka @ 508-958-4144 or [email](#).

## **IOCC URGENT NEED: LEBANON NEEDS YOUR HELP!**

The International Orthodox Christian Charities team in Beirut has reported on the heartbreaking impact of this tragedy and is planning how to best help the people of Lebanon. **Short-term assistance will include hygiene parcels, expansion of community kitchens, and building rehabilitation. Given the continuing danger posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, all activities will incorporate measures to prevent the further spread of the virus.** Your support of IOCC's work through their International emergency response effort will allow them to respond quickly and effectively in Lebanon. [Click on this link](#) to access the online donation form.

## **HOLY TRINITY NEWS**

**Updated 8.10.20**

**COVID-19 Update** – We are pleased to announce that at this time we have no patients or staff testing positive! We are conducting bi-weekly testing of 30% of staff, per state directive. We are so grateful to all staff, patients and family members who are adhering to the safety guidelines.

**Visitations** – We continue to offer multiple ways for families and residents to connect. There are outside in-person visits with social distancing measures — Understandably residents and loved ones are very happy to see each other. Family members can schedule Facetime or Skype visits through our website. Window visits are still an option too, and families may call the main number: 508-852-1000, ext. 282 and leave a voicemail; they could also contact the receptionist or social worker. For more information go to <https://www.htnr.net/coronavirus>

**Job Openings** – The newest job opportunity that we are excited to announce is a part-time activities assistant. But there are many other job openings. Click here <https://www.htnr.net/careers> to view the latest ones. We are very proud of our team. Our staff is dedicated to the highest standards of a team-oriented care program. Residents are treated with compassion, understanding and personalized care. Each person deserves dignity and respect.

**Resident Activities** – We are excited to announce that we are starting to hold entertainment and small group activities which is great news for our vibrant and active community Our

residents are thrilled that our activities are back including: bingo, exercise, baking, virtual museum tours, gardening, trivia, movies and more. Food socials such as gelato, ice cream, lemonade and popsicle carts are back as well. These activities really help lift the residents' spirits. The Main Dining room and unit dining rooms are open for meals. On August 2nd entertainment with T.J. was held outside. And later in the month activities including a magic show and cookout will take place. Stay tuned for dates and be sure to follow us on Facebook.

Many of the residents are very pleased that the celebration of the **Divine Liturgy on Wednesdays** has resumed. There is a restriction on numbers allowed to attend at one time, so a rotation has been adopted. But the Live-Streaming to resident rooms has been a real spiritual comfort.

**General Assembly Meeting** – Holy Trinity will be holding its annual General Assembly Meeting on **Tuesday, September 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm**. For the first time we will be holding the General Assembly Virtually. This meeting is open to anyone from the parishes that would like to attend, and of course, will be held via Zoom. Please contact Steve Fotos ([stevefotos82@gmail.com](mailto:stevefotos82@gmail.com)) to obtain the meeting information.

## **“Be Imitators of Me”**

This is the tenth Sunday after Pentecost, and we resume our reading from St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians. We begin almost where we left off last week, at chapter 4:9-16. After reprimanding the Corinthians for their factionalism and childish behavior, St. Paul now uses sarcasm and irony to shock them into repentance. Even though babes in Christ, many in the Corinthian community have come to see themselves as more spiritually advanced than the Apostles themselves. He is looking for a way to put them back on the correct path.

The first thing he does is set the stage. “For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to men” (v. 9). St. Paul tells them that in his opinion God is giving the world the Apostles as an example of what it means to be a Christian — not just on earth, but in heaven as well. God has made them like the lowliest of persons — as last of all; like men sentenced to death, in order to show how followers of His Son should behave.

“We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute” (v. 10). St. Paul's sarcasm rings true to the Corinthians. Here he echoes what he said earlier in the letter: “For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men” (v. 1:25). The fool for Christ is the one who returns good for evil and a blessing for a curse. This kind of real strength only appears to be weakness. It is incomprehensible to people who only know the ways of this world.

He now changes his tone. He is no longer being sharp, but rather descriptive of what he and the other Apostles endure in order to preach the Gospel. “To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are ill-clad and buffeted and homeless, and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we try to conciliate; we have

become, and are now, as the refuse of the world, the offscouring of all things” (v. 11-13). We should stop and ponder this image of a Christian that St. Paul is presenting us. Just as in first century Corinth, there are people today who understand Jesus and the path toward Him very differently than the picture St. Paul is painting.

In our day there are those preaching a “Gospel of Prosperity” — God wants us to be rich; or a “muscular Jesus” — Jesus and Christians are not wimps; or a gleeful, smiling Jesus — personal happiness is what the Faith is all about. These as well as many other perversions of the Gospel corrupted Corinth and corrupt our time as well. Paul wanted to open the eyes of the Corinthian Christians to really see these preachers who were distorting the Gospel for what they were. He wanted to protect the people that he had nurtured and formed. He wanted them to appreciate how a true minister of the Gospel lives.

Our own experience matters. Many of us have had the experience of a true disciple of the Lord. We have known and experienced humble priests, monks, and nuns who have given their whole lives to the Lord’s Gospel: the bishop or the lay person who is nothing, or lower than nothing in the eyes of the world, but shines with God’s brightness to those with eyes to see. Some may dress shabbily or appear unlearned, but radiate with God’s wisdom and love to those who care to look beyond surface appearances. There are many who claim to understand the Lord’s teachings, but very few who really do.

Having said things that St. Paul knew would cut the Corinthians to their heart, he tries to comfort them. “I do not write this to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel” (v. 14-15). Rather than use his status as Apostle and founder of their Church, or to speak condescendingly to them, as might a teacher to students, he calls them his “children.” He says that he considers himself to be their “father,” in Christ Jesus. In this one word he expresses the depth of his concern and love in such a way as to encourage them to open their hearts toward him.

He tells them that he has spoken so openly about the “price” of preaching the Gospel not to make them ashamed of him and themselves, but rather to admonish them, to correct them, as a loving father would to his own children.

Notice how careful he is not to speak disparagingly of the other preachers who have been working in the Corinthian community. He distinguishes himself without impugning them. He says to them, “though you have countless guides [or teachers] in Christ, you do not have many fathers.” He points to the qualitative difference in their relationship, without directly challenging their authority.

In order to strengthen what he is saying, he tells them: “I urge you, then, be imitators of me” (v. 16). St. John Chrysostom seems to have a text that adds the words: “as I also am of Christ.” The text we have does not contain this phrase, but St. John’s reading is echoed later on in the Letter where St. Paul tells them: “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ” (v. 11:1).

St. Paul isn't being conceited; he's being truthful. He's offering himself as an example to them in order to encourage them. For if Paul is able to follow Christ — and that is how we should understand what he said in verses 11-13 — then surely the Corinthian Christians, and we too, will be able to follow our Lord's example and his life.

—Fr. Nicholas Apostola

## A Prayer of Fr. Laurence

Let us pray to the Lord,

Blessed are you, Lord God of tenderness and mercy, for the gift of this new day and for bringing to us the fulness of grace in the person of your only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. These days fill us with special joy and confidence because of the Theotokos, whose dormition we celebrate. As we set out, once again, to work out our salvation with the help of your Christ, give us all we need to serve you in our brothers and sisters, not only during this coming day, but throughout our lives. And let the holy virgin's prayers for us be a pledge of our eternal salvation.

For you deserve all glory, honor, and worship, 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 14 - Dormition Vespers at St. Mary's, 6:00 PM

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

Aug 21 - Mustard Seed Prep - 1:00 PM

Aug 29 - Food Pantry - 9 AM - NOON

Sept 5 - Food Pantry - 9 AM - NOON

Sept 15 - Holy Trinity Annual Mtg. - 6 PM

Sept 26 - Electronics Recycling - 9 AM - 2 PM

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[www.StNicholasChurch.org](http://www.StNicholasChurch.org)  
*Sunday Services: Matins at 9:00 am and Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am*