

News from St. Nick's

Sunday, January 17, 2021

Twenty-ninth Sunday After Pentecost

Apostolic Reading: Colossians 1:12-18

Gospel: Luke 17:12-19

(Jesus Heals the Ten Lepers)

Tone 7 • Matins Gospel 10

➔ For COVID Guidelines, [click here](#)

➔ For Live Streaming Link, [click here](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE CELEBRATED THE FEAST OF THEOPHANY this past week. We remembered the great self-revelation of God at the Baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Jordan by the hand of St. John the Baptist. It is our custom to take Holy Water and bless everything at this time of year, especially our homes — usually. But these are not usual times. ***Because of the Virus, it is neither prudent nor safe to bless homes as we normally do.*** Hopefully we can bless houses later this year. However, there is a solution. ***Each one of us can take the water sanctified at the Great Blessing of Water and bless our own homes.*** This is an ancient and beautiful practice of our Church. [You may download this simple service here.](#) Never forget, God is always with us!

PLEASE RETURN YOUR EXTRA HOLY WATER BOTTLES! Many of you have Holy Water bottles at home. Please return the ones you're finished using by bringing them to Church on Sunday.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY of our Parish will be held on Sunday, January 31st. The election of the new Parish Council for its two-year term will take place then. If you don't feel comfortable in attending Liturgy and the Assembly on that day, the Parish Council is discussing ways for everyone to be able to participate electronically.

A NEW PARISH COUNCIL ELECTION WILL BE HELD IN JANUARY. Following Archdiocesan procedures, the Parish Council has formed a Nominating Committee to propose a slate of candidates. George Demake is the Chair of that Committee. If you would like to serve, or if you would like to nominate someone for the Parish Council, please [e-mail](#) him.

THE 2021 CHURCH CALENDARS are here, in both [English and Romanian](#). Pick them up at the candles. Please consider a small donation to cover the costs. If you know someone who is unable to come to Church but would like a calendar, please pick one up for them.

The latest issue of the Metropolitan quarterly **CREDINȚA / THE FAITH** is now available. [Please click here to download it.](#)

DON'T FORGET to send in your **2020 Stewardship contribution**. If you haven't done so already, please send it in as soon as possible.

EVERYONE IS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN SERVICES. You may attend Liturgy on Sundays at church. **Of course the usual COVID rules apply.** Here are the [Guidelines](#) for attending Church services. Please follow the directions of ushers for everyone's safety.

WE ARE LIVE-STREAMING THE LITURGY. If you can not physically attend church, you may 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.](#)

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!**

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

COVID-19 UPDATE - All staff and residents continue to be tested every 3 days. There is still an admission freeze. At this time there are 3 employees out with Covid, and 3 residents on the Covid wing.

VACCINATIONS - All of the staff and residents were offered Covid vaccines on January 12th (provided from Walgreens Pharmacy). There was a high percentage of acceptance. Hopefully this will begin a move forward from Covid by decreasing the risk of transmission, and a return back to a more normal way of living for our residents.

VISITATIONS - There are no changes in the visitation policy. For the protection of residents and family members, all in-person visits are suspended.

JOB OPENINGS - Holy Trinity is hiring, and the staff is excellent to work with. At present, there is an opening for a **Director of Maintenance**. Also, openings for entry level housekeepers for multiple shifts; nurses and CNAs all shifts. [Click here](#) for a full listing with detailed job descriptions. People familiar with the languages and cultures of our Orthodox communities are encouraged to apply.

THE ACTIVITIES DEPARTMENT has the following events planned for the coming days: Doorway trivia, Brain buster games, and Elvis Presley Day which includes Elvis music and Elvis trivia.

TREASURED GENERATIONS ANNUAL APPEAL - This past year has been a difficult one for Holy Trinity's staff and residents. Now, more than ever, we need your help. If you wish to donate to the Treasured Generations fund please click [here](#). Every gift helps. And, we thank you for your support!

DIVINE LITURGY celebrations have been suspended until the current Covid surge has been contained.

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)

A Prayer of Fr. Laurence

Let us pray to the Lord,

Blessed are you, Lord Jesus, light of lights, who enlighten all creation with your resplendent brilliance! By coming into our midst, you enable us to pursue a new way of life, free of the burdens of the old law, for, in your infinite wisdom, you give us the marvelous mystery of your holy church wherein we work out our salvation with your divine help. In your great compassion pardon us of all our faults and failings, and purify us of all that displeases you. Fill our minds with understanding, help us to grow in love as well as wisdom, and deepen our faithfulness to you with every new day.

For you are indeed our God, and we give you glory, together with your Father, who is without beginning, and your all-holy, good, and life-giving Spirit now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Get Up, Your Faith Has Made You Well

This week's Gospel reading is the account of the healing of the ten lepers (Luke 17:12-19). While it is written very much in the form of a parable, it is, in fact, a true story. The use of the parable style is most likely meant to be a teaching tool. And, without a doubt, there is a lot to learn in this story, especially because it recounts an actual event.

Ten men were afflicted with leprosy. They happened upon Jesus, begged for mercy and were healed. To be stricken with leprosy was like being given a living death sentence. You were seen as cursed and unclean. As with Ebola, someone who had contracted leprosy was driven from family and friends. And like AIDS, especially in the early days, you were forced to hide yourself and live apart, sometimes in a colony, but often alone. In many ways, it was worse than being dead. We are now in the throes of another plague and are being asked to adopt all sorts of measures to contain it. In spite of what people may feel, ours is not a new experience.

When Jesus entered this particular village the ten of them recognized him, and, while keeping their distance, called to him saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" (v. 12-13) It is clear from the way they address him that they understood who he was. They most likely had heard of his healing power. Jesus answers them simply: "Go and show yourselves to the priests" (v. 14).

The priests were the only ones authorized to attest to a healing. Today we understand that what people called "leprosy" in Biblical times could have been other skin ailments as well, not necessarily what is known today as Hansen's Disease. Nonetheless, neither Hansen's nor conditions such as eczema are easily cured. For Jesus to have told those afflicted to present themselves to the priests meant that they were healed.

As they were traveling on their way to the priests, the ten looked and saw that they had indeed been made whole. But, only one of them, when he realized he had been healed, turned back and fell at the feet of Jesus to thank him. It is at this point that we realize this man is different from the other nine, not only because of his feeling of gratitude, but also because of his nationality. He is a Samaritan (v. 15-16).

Jesus then says something he usually doesn't say after he has healed someone. He asks, "Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" (v. 17-18) There are some subtleties here. In the way Jesus asks the question, he is telling us that the other nine were Jews. Since this one man is acting alone, no in concert with the other nine, we can surmise that even in their common affliction the others were ostracizing this Samaritan. And yet, Jesus tells us that there is something special about this man, apart from the fact that he is a Samaritan. Jesus gives us an insight into his character.

We know that there was a tension between Jews and Samaritans (cf. John 4:5ff). However, apart from ethnic and religious differences — his social standing — we are drawn to the look at his character. We see that he possesses a depth of heart that seems to be missing from the other nine. Having been healed of such a grievous illness, could you imagine not running back to thank the person who had healed you? Yet as we see in this passage, 90% of this small sampling of humanity did not. And, from experience, I might hazard the guess that this is probably the rule, not the exception. It is a hard reality, and difficult to accept. Can it really be that most people would not stop to give thanks, neither to the person who healed them nor to God? Would you?

Many of the Patristic commentators use this passage as a way to emphasize the ingratitude of the Jews and the gratitude of the Gentiles. I truly do not think this is the point of this story. As I have seen it, many people are quick to call on God and promise anything when they are suffering, but few remember their promises when they have become well. When our need has

passed and we become comfortable again, we resume our normal behavior. If we were grateful and attentive before, we very likely will be grateful and attentive afterward. If not, then not.

In the final verse of this story Jesus tells the Samaritan: "Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well" (v. 19). But what of the other nine who were cured as well? If it was this man's faith that cured him, how were these other nine cured? God's Grace falls as rain on each and every one of us. More often than not we are totally oblivious of that gift, or even worse, ungrateful. God nonetheless continues to pour His love down, hoping that we will turn to fall at His feet and give thanks (v. 16).⁴ This shows the degree to which he loves us.

Fr. Nicholas Apostola

Dates To Remember

Saturday, January 30 — Food Pantry, 9:00 am-noon

Sunday, January 31 — GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Saturday, February 6 — Food Pantry, 9:00 am-noon

Monday, March 15 — Great Lent Begins

Sunday, May 2 — Great and Holy Pascha

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