

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

## **Sunday, June 20, 2021**

**The Descent of the Holy Spirit**  
**(The Eighth Sunday of Pascha)**

### **Happy Father's Day**

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**Apostolic Reading: Acts Acts 2:1-11**

**Gospel: John 7:37-53; 8:12**

**Everything According to the Feast of Pentecost**

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

**[\(Click here for a PDF version of this week's news\)](#)**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**THIS SUNDAY is the Feast of PENTECOST, the Descent of the Holy Spirit!** This is a beautiful and spiritually uplifting holiday. Please be sure to join us for Divine Liturgy.

**SATURDAY OF THE SOULS** before Pentecost is **THIS Saturday, June 19th**. Liturgy will be at 10:00 am.

**THE RELIGIOUS ED STUDENTS WILL PRESENT A PASCHA PAGEANT** that they have been working very hard on, at the end of Liturgy on **Sunday, June 27th**. Please mark your calendars. **It will be something you'll remember!**

**THE PARISH COUNCIL** will hold its regular monthly meeting on **Thursday, June 24th at 7:00pm**. Parish Council Members, please let [Chris Seith](#) know if you are unable to attend

**TRANSITIONING TOWARD "NORMAL"**: The Parish Council has been soliciting parishioners' opinions on the best ways to move forward. There is a general consensus that keeping everyone as safe as possible was the first priority, as well as making people feel comfortable that attending Liturgy would not put them at risk. The current thinking is that for at least the next few weeks the mask policy will remain in effect. Other CDC recommendations such as hand-washing and physical distancing are strongly encouraged (but these are common sense, and people have been very conscientious about following these). Other procedures that no longer seem necessary are being lifted. In addition, measured return to pre-pandemic activities will be tried, such as limited baking. We will soon be looking to set up a "coffee hour" committee to organize regular working teams. If you have any ideas or concerns, please talk to one or more of the Parish Council members.

**MUSTARD SEED MEAL**. We want to thank those who helped with the Mustard Seed meal this Friday. Also, we want to thank the family of **Bill and Katina Cocavessis** for sponsoring this meal. If you or your family would like to help with meal preparations, or would like to sponsor a future meal, please contact **Deb Sedares** — by [e-mail](#) or phone: 508-509-6678.

**ALL THINGS ORTHODOX** is a weekly show hosted by Fr. Christopher Stamas of St. Spyridon Cathedral. Fr. Chris interviews people active in the life of the Church on questions of faith and action. It is aired on the **Worcester Cable channel 194** on **Mondays** at 7 pm, **Saturdays** at 8 pm and **Sundays** at 9 pm. Also look for it on the Cable website: [wccatv.com](#), or the **Worcester TV** Roku app.

**THE ASSEMBLY OF BISHOPS NEEDS YOUR INPUT!** The **Mental Health Needs Assessment Survey**, designed by experts on the Assembly's Mental Health Task Forces, takes only 15 minutes and consists of approximately 30 questions. All information you provide is completely anonymous and the aggregate data will help the Task Force better understand the mental health needs and experiences of the faithful in order to develop resources and programs for enhanced ministry in your community. [Click here](#) to go directly to the web page to complete the survey.

## UPCOMING

**PARENTS PLEASE TAKE NOTE!** Vacation Church School this summer will be **August 4-6**. We will again be holding it in conjunction with Sts. Anargyroi in Marlborough. Please keep these date in mind when scheduling other summer activities for your children. Details will be forthcoming.

**ELECTRONICS RECYCLING** is **Saturday, July 10th** from 9 am to 2 pm. Gerry Belba is coordinating, and we need about 3 people to help with traffic and coordination. Please contact him: [vgbelba@msn.com](mailto:vgbelba@msn.com).

## 2021 Graduates

*"He has filled them with the spirit of God,  
with skill, intelligence, and knowledge in every kind of craft." (Exodus 35:31)*

We want to acknowledge and recognize the achievements of the members of our parish community who are celebrating a graduation.

### HIGH SCHOOL

— **Elizabeta Florica Galeriu**, daughter of Elena and Călin Garleriu, graduated from St Paul's Diocesan Jr./Sr. High School. She will be attending the College of the Holy Cross with a double major in Accounting and Economics.

— **Robert Daniel Salerno**, son of Rob & Dina Salerno, grandson of Joanne Prizio, graduated from Tahanto Regional High School where he played baseball all four years. He will attend Quinsigamond Community College to study business and play on the baseball team.

— **James Stamoulis**, son of Evan & Valarie Stamoulis, grandson of Jim & Argie Vlamis, graduated from Algonquin Regional High School and will attend the University of New Hampshire in the fall.

### COLLEGE

— **Noah Peter Christo**, son of James & Lea Christo, grandson of Joan Christo, will graduate from Assumption University in August with a BA in Business & concentration in Digital Marketing.

— **Sarah Moore**, daughter of Charles & Sharon Moore, granddaughter of Janice Samara, graduated from the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth with a BA in Political Science & minor in Data Analytics.

*May our loving Lord continue to bless their efforts and grant them a long life, health, prosperity, and many, many years!*

## HOLY TRINITY NEWS

**HOLY TRINITY ANNOUNCES NEW CEO/ADMINISTRATOR.** Holy Trinity Nursing & Rehabilitation Center is pleased to announce that Rodolfo Parra will be joining the organization as the permanent CEO and Administrator.

Mr. Parra will provide leadership in the management of the day-to-day operations of the facility, keeping it on track to meet its strategic, operational, quality and financial goals. He will have direct oversight of clinical and administrative affairs, financial matters, human resources, facilities, medical equipment, and other duties related to 24/7 health care delivery. He will also serve as the primary liaison for residents, families, community parishes and the general public.

Rodolfo Parra, LNHA, has been a Licensed Nursing Home Administrator for about 12 years and has held various leadership positions, such as CEO, Regional Director of Operations, Executive Director, and Consultant. His experience in the senior living industry has involved oversight of Skilled Nursing Facilities, Independent, Assisted Living and Memory Care communities in multiple states including Massachusetts. He has experience working in privately owned facilities, large for-profit companies, as well as non-profit communities.

Mr. Parra holds a bachelor's degree from Lake Forest College, Lake Forest, Illinois and a long-term health care management graduate certificate from the University of Connecticut, School of Business, Hartford, CT. His broad experience in the senior living industry, ability to balance strategic decisions and financial discipline with a hands-on approach to management are assets that will contribute to his success in this position. His ability to build positive and productive relationships with staff, residents and their families also make him an exceptional choice to bring Holy Trinity forward in accomplishing its mission.

Mr. Parra's official start date is July 6, and he will be working with interim CEO Dan Burns to ensure a smooth transition.

## 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*

**O only true God**, known by reason to be one and by faith to be three, one God in three Persons; O eternal Father, who sent your only Son for our salvation, without ever being diminished by your love; O only Son, who came and took on our nature to save us, without ever being diminished by your self-sacrifice; and you, O all-holy Spirit, consoler, who share your gifts with us, without ever being diminished by your generosity! O divine Trinity: As we celebrate this feast of Pentecost, we beseech you to manifest your power in our lives by the growth that always heralds your presence. Undo and uproot all that is wrong with us. Refashion our minds and hearts with your wisdom and love, and enable us to labor unceasingly to banish all evil from our lives. By your gentleness make our minds and hearts supple and pliant, open and responsive to you in every moment that confronts us, and perfect and enrich our lives moment by moment, that we may reach the glory of eternal life.

For yours it is to have mercy on us and save us, O God, and we give you glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

## The Rush of Wind and Tongues of Fire

**This is the eighth Sunday of Pascha, the day of Pentecost.** It is also the Fiftieth Day after Pascha. In Biblical imagery infinity is usually described as seven times seven, because seven is considered the number of perfection. Seven times seven is perfection squared. Fifty is beyond perfection; it is God's time.

The Holy Spirit comes to us in God's time not only as a sign, but as the actual reality of the promised Kingdom. He comes as wind and fire (cf. Act 2:2,3). His presence fills the space, while also resting on each one individually. He makes God known to us and enables us to proclaim Him to the world.

The principle text for the Feast is Acts 2:1-11. Even though the Pentecost event is, in a sense, the final chapter in the whole story of God's economy (His plan of salvation), St. Luke places it at the beginning of the second volume of his Gospel (i.e. Acts). What began with the birth of the Savior, now climaxes with the coming of the Holy Spirit. It is placed at the beginning of the second volume because even though it may be the final chapter of one story, it is also the beginning of another. The coming of the Holy Spirit to 'rest' on us (v. 3) is the birth of the Church. The Apostles' missionary activity described in the Book of Acts requires the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Just as the Christian Feast of Pascha has roots in the Old Testament Feast of Passover, so too the Christian Feast of Pentecost has a Jewish antecedent. It was approximately fifty days after the Children of Israel had left Egypt that they arrived at Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:1ff). There Moses ascended to God who revealed Himself by fire and smoke and wind (cf. Exodus 19:18; also Isaiah 66:15ff). Moses ascends the mountain to meet God and descends with the Tablets of the Law.

God fulfills His Law in the New Covenant with the outpouring of the Spirit. When the people ran and gathered to find out what was causing the sound of rushing wind, St. Peter answered them with words from the Prophet Joel: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. ... And I will give portents in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke" (Joel 2:28-30; Acts 2:14-20).

When the Holy Spirit descended on those assembled in the upper room, tongues of fire appeared and were distributed and rested on each one there (v. 3), not just the Apostles, but everyone. As the Prophet Joel said, "Even upon the menservants and maidservants in those days, I will pour out my spirit" (Joel 2:29). The Holy Spirit is a gift to the whole Church. The gifts of the Spirit are distributed to each one (cf. Ephesians 4:11) for the building up of the Body of Christ. We have been given these gifts in Baptism and Holy Anointing (Chrismation).

When the Spirit had been given to them they all began to speak in tongues. Some commentators think this might have been *glossolalia* (cf. 1 Corinthians 12:1ff), — what Pentecostal Christians call 'speaking in tongues'— but St. Luke says, "other tongues," and records how Jews from all over the world who were in Jerusalem at the time were amazed and said, "how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language?" (v. 8) So, while some may have been 'speaking in tongues,' the Spirit had also given them the power to speak and be understood in languages that each one could understand.

The Church has always understood the Pentecost event as a remedy to the division of humanity into languages and nations following the sin of Babel. In Genesis (11:1-9) we read that in the beginning everyone spoke one language. This enabled people to begin to build a tower "with its top in the heavens." They said that they wanted to "make a name" for themselves. The problem was not that they were coöperating; it was how they were coöperating. Their coöperation led them to believe arrogantly that they could challenge God. Seeing how their arrogance was bringing them to evil purpose, God "confused their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." Unable to communicate with one another, they scattered throughout the world abandoning their Tower.

The Tower of Babel divided humanity. The Holy Spirit restored that unity on the day of Pentecost. However, the unity we have in the Holy Spirit is different than the pre-Babel unity in one very important respect. The unity of Babel was predicated on a uniformity of language and, one can presume, culture. The unity that the Holy Spirit brings preserves our particular and distinctive characteristics. It is unity in diversity and diversity in unity. The Church sees the Pentecost event as a way to understand how diverse peoples can be one in Christ. Historically, unity of faith has not necessitated one language or even one uniform practice throughout the Church. We can share one faith and be one Church even as we acknowledge our ethnic and cultural diversity, our individuality.

When St. Peter had finished speaking to the assembled crowd on Pentecost day, people asked him what they should do. He said, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children and to all that are far off, every one whom the Lord our God calls to him" (Acts 2:38-39).

"And it shall be that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Acts 2:21).

— Fr. Nicholas Apostola

## **DATES TO REMEMBER**

**Fri, June 18 Mustard Seed Meal, 5:00pm**  
**Sat, June 19 Saturday of Souls, Liturgy, 10:00am**  
**Sun, June 20 PENTECOST**  
**Thurs, June 24 Parish Council Meeting, 7pm**  
**Sun, June 27 Religious Ed, Pascha Pageant**  
**Mon, June 28 Apostles Fast Begins**  
**Tues, June 29 Feast of Ss Peter and Paul**  
**Sat, July 4 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-noon**  
**Sat, July 10 e-Recycling and more 9am-2pm**  
**Aug 4-6 Vacation Church School**  
**Sat, Aug 7 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-noon**

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