

News from St. Nick's **Sunday, July 18, 2021**

The Fourth Sunday after Pentecost **The Fathers of the Fourth Œcumenical Council**

Apostolic Reading: Romans 6:18-23
Gospel: Matthew 8:5-13
(Jesus Heals the Centurion's Servant)

Tone 3 • Resurrection Gospel 4

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

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BAKING. We have decided to gently ease back into baking. This will mean a measured approach to baking teams and dates. We have to keep in mind that we don't have the same amount of working space. And we are need to reconfirm our pool of baking volunteers. **If you are willing and able to help with the baking,** please either [e-mail](#), or call (508-756-4848) **Betty Anderson.**

The April-June issue of the Archdiocesan quarterly **CREDINȚA / THE FAITH** is available [for download here](#). It is full of spiritually uplifting articles, as well as the Pascha Pastoral Letters of His Eminence Metropolitan Nicolae and His Grace Bishop Ioan Casian. **Please take advantage of this beautiful opportunity.**

THE 2021 CREDINȚA ALMANAC has arrived and is available at the candles. **Please take a copy home with you!**

THANKS TO THE e-RECYCLING TEAM. **Gerry Belba** along with George Belba, Peter Vessio, and Deb Sedares worked the event last Saturday. It was a real success. Thank You!

This past Saturday, July 16th, marked the **20th Anniversary of the falling-asleep in the Lord** of His Eminence Archbishop **Victorin**. His Eminence served our Archdiocese with love and sacrifice for thirty-five years. He also served for a period of time, before being elected Archbishop, as the parish priest of our parish in the early 1960s. **May our good and loving Lord rest his soul among the righteous in His Kingdom.**

IN KEEPING WITH CDC GUIDELINES, masks are required for people who have **NOT** been fully vaccinated. If you are fully vaccinated, mask-wearing is optional. Hand-washing and physical distancing are strongly encouraged. We all need to remember the goal is to keep everyone as safe as possible so that each one of us feels comfortable attending Liturgy.

VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL 2021

PARENTS PLEASE TAKE NOTE! Vacation Church School this summer will be held on **Thursday August 5th 9 - 12:15 (snacks provided), and Friday August 6th 9 - 2 (snacks and lunch provided).** We will again be holding it in conjunction with Sts. Anargyroi in Marlborough and the sessions both days will be held there. This year's theme is: **"Who is the Holy Spirit?"**

All ages welcomed. All activities will be held outdoors, weather permitting. In the case that activities move indoors, masks will be provided or may be brought from home. Hand sanitizer and soap and water will be readily available. **Please RSVP to [Valarie Stamoulis](#) as soon as possible.** Remember to include your child's name and grade.

We're looking forward to hosting your children for some summer fun in the name of Christ!

Just one other thing. If you can, we'd appreciate the help of 1-2 volunteers on one or both days. Please consider it.

COMMUNITY NEWS

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.

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

NEW ADMISSIONS. Come see for yourself what makes Holy Trinity a top choice for both long-term care and short-term rehab! To inquire about admissions or to schedule a tour, please call 508-852-1000.

VOLUNTEERS. Interested in sharing a special skill or interest with our residents? Those who are fully vaccinated may be considered to volunteer. Please call **Donna Benard**, with the Activities department, at 508-852-1000, or [e-mail her](#) to discuss one of the many ways you may lend a helping hand. We are especially excited to invite back our church groups who may be interested in hosting a luncheon, coffee social, or assisting with liturgy.

REHABILITATION. Short-term rehab isn't just for patients recovering from an acute illness or injury. Whether your loved one is experiencing gradual decreased cognitive function, loss of interest in hobbies or activities, or having trouble performing daily tasks, our short-term rehabilitation team works with both the patient and the family to provide individualized treatment plans to help prevent larger issues and hospitalization. If you have questions or would like more information, please contact our Director of Rehab, [Heather Walsh](#).

JOB OPENINGS. Looking for a job you love while helping others? Come join the Holy Trinity team! We have openings for nurses and CNAs for all shifts, including sign on bonuses and great benefits. [Click here](#) for a full listing with detailed job descriptions. If you have questions, please contact the Human Resources Generalist, [Kimberly Hescoock](#). Recent grads and people familiar with the languages and cultures of our Orthodox communities are encouraged to apply.

DIVINE LITURGY continues in-person for residents on Wednesday mornings. We welcome volunteers and visitors who would like to be involved.

STAY CONNECTED. Be sure to like our [Facebook page](#) for frequent updates and photos. The recent weather hasn't slowed our residents down. This week, they've been busy with baking demos, quilting, men's club, and an ice cream social.

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

As with the Israel of old, so also with us, the new Israel: We are always protesting how much we want to glorify you, Lord God, and praise the actions of your divine grace. Our protests, however, are rather flimsy. But oddly enough, the magnificent splendour of your majesty, when we can bring ourselves to focus on it, never frightens or repels us. Rather, we sense our love and reverence for you increase. Make us live ever conscious of your ineffable majesty, ever ready to embrace the power of this mystery.

By the grace and mercies and love for us of your only Son, with whom you are blest, together with your all-holy, good, and life-giving Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Only Say the Word ...

The Gospel lesson for this Sunday, the fourth after Pentecost, is the account of the healing of the Centurion's servant, taken from the Gospel according to St. Matthew (8:5-13). St. Luke tells of the same event (7:1-10), and adds a few other details.

The basic story is this. There is a Centurion, stationed in Palestine, whose servant has fallen seriously ill. (A centurion was a Roman soldier who commanded a regiment of 100 men.) He is obviously quite worried about this servant. From St. Luke we learn that the Centurion is very pious and had even built a synagogue in the locale. He approaches Jesus and asks him to heal his servant. Jesus offers to go, but the Centurion says, "Only say the word, and my servant will be healed" (v. 8). Jesus marvels at his faith and points this out to everyone. (Before proceeding, you might want to pick up your Bible and read both accounts.)

There are two aspects of this story I think would be important for us to focus on. The first is the most obvious: the immediate faith-response of the Centurion. The second is a bit more subtle: the way in which the Lord elicits the Centurion's faith response. Let me begin with the second.

The Centurion comes to the Lord with his request. In almost every other similar incident the Lord would have simply performed the request (miracle) and sent the person on his or her way. In this instance what does he do? He says to the Centurion: "I will come and heal him" (v. 7). This causes the Centurion to openly confess his confidence that the Lord's word alone is sufficient. He has faith in Jesus.

As we try to understand the immediate faith-response of the Centurion, St. John Chrysostom draws our attention to other similar instances where the Lord, by subtle provocation, tests the depth of the faith of the person requesting his help. One example he points to is the Canaanite women who approached the Lord asking him to heal her daughter (Matthew 15:22-28). At first he refuses to even speak to her. Then, in a startling response, likens her request to taking the children's bread and tossing it to the dogs. Rather than taking issue with the comparison, she rises to the challenge by embracing it, replying that even a dog under a table will feed off of the children's crumbs. Another example is the account of the healing of the ten lepers (Luke 17:12-19). Only one returns to thank Jesus, a Samaritan. Rather than praise him directly for this gratitude, the Lord asks after the other nine (who didn't return to thank him), and then calls the Samaritan a foreigner. But the Lord is testing his faith. He tells him, "Get up and go on your way, your faith has made you well" (v. 19). The contrast is clear. The 'foreigner' not only has faith, but also gratitude. The other nine were wanting of both.

And then there is the particularly powerful case of Martha after her brother Lazaros had died. The Lord finally arrives. She runs out of the house to the place where he and the disciples were resting. She says to him: "If you had been here, my brother would not have died ... even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you (John 11:21-22). Jesus questions her, again, testing her faith. He tells her: "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" (v. 25-26).

The faith of the Centurion, by contrast, is immediate and unwavering. It is brilliant in its purity. He uses his own military training to explain it. He tells the Lord that as a military officer he knows that if he gives an order it will be carried out. He doesn't need to see it to believe it. In the same way he knows that Jesus has the power to simply "order" the healing, and it will be done. He doesn't need to see it to believe it. This is the lesson of total faith we should draw from the Centurion's example.

Finally, there is one more verse worth reflecting on in this story. The Centurion is perhaps a little embarrassed to have such a holy person as Jesus come to his house. He doesn't want to presume too much. And so, he gently says: "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof" (v. 8). The liturgical tradition has taken this verse and applied it to our own unworthiness, especially as we approach the Holy Eucharist. In many of the prayers before Holy Communion we echo the Centurion's humility as we reflect on the amazing reality that by partaking of the Body and Blood of the Savior, God comes to dwell within us. What more appropriate words are there than: "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof"?

We should always strive to be as truly humble and grateful in our hearts, as are the words we speak with our lips. We should prepare a worthy place within us, a roof under which the Lord might find rest. Let us ask the Lord to give us the Centurion's remarkable faith, and especially his humility.

— Fr. Nicholas Apostola

DATES TO REMEMBER

Th/Fr, Aug 5-6 Vacation Church School
Sat, Aug 7 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-noon

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church
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508-845-0088 | fax: 508-845-8850 | email: info@StNicholasChurch.org
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Sunday Services: Matins at 9:00 am and Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am