

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

## **Sunday, September 19, 2021**

### **The Sunday after the Elevation of the Precious Cross**

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**Apostolic Reading: Galatians 2:16-20**

**Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1**

**(Taking up our Cross and Following Christ)**

**Tone 4 • Resurrection Gospel 2**

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

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

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION** began last **Sunday**. Parents, if you haven't registered your child, please contact either [Gina Skaff](#) or [Fadi Girgis](#).

**DONATE TO THOSE WHO ARE SUFFERING!** The news is filled with reports of people throughout the world who are suffering from the effects of all kinds of natural disasters and calamities. You can help. The International Orthodox Christian Charities is working in places across the globe. Check out the website, at: [www.iocc.org](http://www.iocc.org). The IOCC is one of the top ranked relief organizations in the world, especially noted for its low overhead, directing most of the donations toward those in need. **Help those who are in need through our Orthodox Christian relief organization!**

**THE PARISH COUNCIL** will be holding its regular monthly meeting on Thursday, September 23rd at 7:00 pm. Parish Council Members, please let [Chris Seith](#) know if you are unable to attend.

**THE CDC HAS REVISED ITS MASKING GUIDELINES** due to the increase in infections because of the highly contagious Delta variant. It recommends that **people vaccinated against the coronavirus resume wearing masks** in public indoor spaces and schools where the virus is surging, and that **unvaccinated persons seek a vaccine** as soon as possible. Following this recommendation, we are now asking that all persons attending the Divine Services wear masks until the numbers are more favorable.

## **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](http://wccatv.com), or the **Worcester TV** Roku app.

## **HOLY TRINITY NEWS**

**COVID UPDATE.** Per the new DPH guidelines, all visitors to the building will continue to be screened and offered a rapid Covid test. If a visitor is fully vaccinated and their loved one is fully vaccinated, as well as their roommate, you may visit in the room. Masks must be worn at all times, regardless of vaccination status. If you are not vaccinated, you may visit outside or in a designated space. We also continue to offer virtual and electronic communication.

**IN REMEMBRANCE.** It is with a heavy heart that we share the recent passing of Mary-Alice (Ali) Goodnow. Ali had been a valued member of our team for 14 years. Ali had a huge heart and loved the residents at Holy Trinity. Ali was an incredible part of the team, and we will dearly miss her brightness and positivity. Our thoughts and prayers are with her husband Bob at this time, whom she married last year.

**ADMISSIONS.** If you are choosing from a group of nursing centers, we encourage you to review the ratings of each facility for potential short term rehabilitative care or long-term placement. We are happy to answer any questions you have along the way and would welcome the opportunity to give you a tour of our nursing center. Whether moving into a nursing center has been planned well in advance or the transition is a sudden one, you will be confident in your decision if you choose Holy Trinity. To inquire about admissions or to schedule a tour, please e-mail Director of Admissions [Karen Barry](#) or call (508) 852-1000, ext. 213.

**ANNUAL MEETING ANNOUNCED.** The General Assembly for the Eastern Orthodox Management Corporation, which operates Holy Trinity, is scheduled for **Thursday, September 30th at 6:00 pm**. It will be held virtually, and is open to all CEOC parish members, who are encouraged to attend. Please [click here](#) for details, or e-mail [Steve Fotos](#) with any questions.

**HOLY TRINITY IS SEEKING NEW BOARD MEMBERS** as we have a few terms ending in September. If you are interested in learning more about the opportunity to volunteer for one of these positions, as we guide Holy Trinity into the future, please e-mail Board Chair, [Steve Fotos](#).

**REHABILITATION.** Did you know we offer more than long-term care services? Our short-term rehabilitation and post-hospital care includes orthopedic, cardiovascular, neurological, and post-surgical recovery and rehabilitation, to name a few. Our team also specialize in those with medically complex care. Our ultimate goal is to safely return patients to their homes, or other appropriate levels of care. We offer physical, occupational and speech therapies, with a commitment to the highest level of quality care, a focus on customer service and providing a nurturing environment for both patients and families. If you have questions or would like more information, please contact our Director of Rehab, [Heather Walsh](#).

**JOB OPENINGS.** The rehab team at Holy Trinity is growing! We are actively seeking per diem occupational therapists, certified occupational therapy assistants, and physical therapy assistants. [Click here](#) for a full listing of our openings with detailed job descriptions, including CNAs, nurses, dietary aides, and PT cook. If you have questions, please contact the Human Resources Generalist, [Kimberly Hescocock](#). 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. This week our residents enjoyed activities including a cooking demonstration, St. Mary's coffee social, and an ice cream truck social provided by the Greek Ladies Philoptochos Society. If your parish, social group, or family may be interested in sponsoring an activity or funding a specific need for our residents, please contact our Director of Development & Communications, [Mackenzie Koch](#).

**HOLY TRINITY HAS RECEIVED A DEFICIENCY-FREE SURVEY** result from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH). The deficiency-free rating is one of the top indicators of excellence for nursing and rehabilitation facilities.

## 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 creator and maker of this hour:** Another morning finds us here before you, celebrating the exaltation of the precious cross, that immortal and life-giving tree that bore the saviour's body in death. From barren wood and bitter death was that tree made, but its stark and naked limbs produced unfailing fruit and leaves that never fade. It was the very price that saved us from the law of old, a price paid not in gold or silver, but in the blood of that pure and spotless lamb. Enlighten us as we reflect on this mystery, O God and Father. Impress on our feeble minds how much we need to embrace the cross, in whose rough surface we see ourselves as we really are.

By the grace and mercy 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.

## ***How Much Is Your Life Worth?***

The Gospel lesson for the Sunday following the Feast of the Elevation of the Precious Cross adds the personal dimension to our understanding of what it means to call ourselves Christians. The Gospel lesson for the Sunday *before* the Feast of the Cross (taken from St. John, 3:13-17) spoke of what God, in the person of Jesus Christ, was doing for us through His sacrifice on the Cross. *This* Sunday's Gospel lesson found in St. Mark (8:34-9:1) speaks to how we should respond to God's great act of love.

The passage opens with an invitation. The Lord says: "If any want to become my followers ..." (v. 34). Even as we hear what it will mean to "become a follower," we shouldn't lose sight of this first important point: the Lord is *inviting* us. He doesn't command. He doesn't threaten. He asks. He says, "if."

The rest of the verse is where we find out what it means to follow Christ. It is a real challenge and often difficult to hear. The Lord tells us that if a person decides to accept His invitation, "... let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me." Usually we run through the verse quickly, treating it all as a single statement, but it actually contains three separate actions. Let's take a look at each, one at a time.

What does it mean to "deny" oneself? The Lord does not mean to simply refrain from doing something that we would like to do — although this may certainly be part of it. Jesus is talking about looking at ourselves in the same way we would look at another person whom we do not know at all. He is asking us to give ourselves the same sort of critique and spiritual scrutiny that we might give a perfect stranger as we look at them from a distance. The original Greek word that we translate as "deny" is actually much stronger. It has a meaning closer to "renounce" oneself than "deny."

We need to develop a certain distance from ourselves if we want to grow spiritually. For example, often we can clearly discern the issue or problem that another person is facing, while it remains unapparent to them. This is true on both the physical and spiritual planes. When a parent wants to help their child get the best education possible, they will select the tutor who will push the child to his or her limits. We know that a physical therapist can push someone with an injury beyond what they thought they were capable of. Only someone with distance and spiritual insight can encourage you to recognize and confront such things. We need to regulate and train ourselves like a drill sergeant would. This is what the Lord means when he says we must deny ourselves.

The second action is to take up our cross. We commonly describe some genuine difficulty or tragedy as our "cross," and properly so, because it is certainly a burden that we carry. However, here the Lord is talking about the cross that leads to death. In the passage just before this Jesus was talking to His disciples about His impending Crucifixion, but they didn't understand him. They wanted Him to save His own life. By speaking of the cross here He is explaining to His followers what the price of discipleship is. We must be prepared to die for the Gospel. We must be prepared to die to ourselves — to our passions, our self-interest, and our will. Sometimes this will also mean to offer our very life itself.

Finally, we are told to follow him. Even if we deny ourselves to the point of death, this alone will not "save our lives" if we do not follow Christ. Many misguided and perhaps evil people have lost themselves to a cause, even to the point of death. The self-denial and acceptance of one's cross, without following the ultimate truth, can lead to destruction. In our own day we have been afflicted with countless "suicide" terrorists who cause pain, suffering and death to innocent people, all the while considering themselves "martyrs." It is by following Christ, by learning from His example, that self-denial and the burden of the Cross find true meaning, become life-giving.

The Lord tells us to put our lives in proper and true perspective, and then to choose correctly. "What will it profit a person to gain the whole world and forfeit their life [soul]? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life?" (v. 36-37) Our Lord invites us to walk the path of life; but ultimately, it remains our choice.

— Fr. Nicholas Apostola

## **DATES TO REMEMBER**

**Sun, Sept 12** Religious Ed Classes Began  
**Thurs, Sept 23** Parish Council Meeting, 7pm  
**Thurs, Sept 30** Holy Trinity Gen Assembly, 6pm  
**Sat, Oct 2** Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-noon  
**Fri, Oct 15** Mustard Seed Meal

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