

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

## **Sunday, October 24, 2021**

### **The Twenty Third Sunday after Pentecost**

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**Apostolic Reading: Ephesians 2:4-10**  
**Gospel: Luke 8:26-39**  
**(Jesus Heals the Gerasene Demoniac)**

**Tone 1 • Resurrection Gospel 7**

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

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

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

► **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23 — Pumpkin Carving and Painting event.** **DETAILS:** **Location:** St. Nicholas. **Time:** 2:30 - 5:30pm. It is a fun filled outdoor event for school-aged kids (grades k-12). Masks required. **Questions or RSVP's:** please contact: [Gina](#) (508-873-9600), [Fadi](#), or [Cristina](#). **Looking forward to being together!**

**THE PITA BAKING** session set for this coming Tuesday **has been moved** to **Tuesday, November 2nd at 9:00 am.** All help welcomed and needed. Questions? Contact: [Betty Anderson](#).

The July-September issue of the **FAITH / CREDINȚA** magazine of our Metropolia is available, and may be [downloaded here](#). It is filled with a news from the Archdiocese and the parishes, as well as articles reflecting on the spiritual life. Please get a copy. You'll enjoy reading it.

**THANKS TO THE MUSTARD SEED VOLUNTEERS!** Those who prepared the meals, and distributed them last Friday! We are grateful to **Lisa Demake** who is sponsoring this month's meal. If you or your family would like to sponsor a meal or help with meal preparations, please contact **Deb Sedares** by [e-mail](#) or phone: 508-509-6678.

**OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY** is extended to **Fr. Chris Stamas** (of St. Spyridon), his family, and especially his mother Christine, on the falling asleep of his father **Harry (Harilaos)**. May our loving Lord rest him among the righteous and make his memory eternal!

**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.

## **YOUTH EVENTS UPDATE**

**ATTENTION: Young Adults, Teens, Tweens, and younger; (and, of course, parents)**

**We're planning a few events for this fall: get-togethers, retreats, and more.**  
**Please take a look at the list below and save the time and dates on your calendar!**

**BEE-TREATS FOR TEENS. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6th.** Target age group: Grades 7-12. Teens from around Central Mass are all invited. Place: [Sts. Constantine and Helen](#) in Webster. **Steven Christoforou** is leading the retreat. Many of you know him from the "Be the Bee" videos. [Click here for the flier](#) with more information.

That same evening at 6:00 pm there will be a **Young Adult Coffee House/"Theology on Tap"** — and evening of fellowship and sharing. [Click here for the flier](#) with more information.

**A FALL RETREAT** is planned for **Thursday, November 11th** (Veteran's Day — it's a school holiday). The theme is: *"Who Is The Holy Spirit."* Details will be available soon!

**CHRISTMAS IS COMING** (as the saying goes). We're going to dedicate a couple of the **Saturdays in December to PAGEANT REHEARSALS** and some more enjoyable activities for the kids. Dates and times will be forthcoming.

## 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

**NEW BOARD MEMBERS ANNOUNCED.** Holy Trinity is excited to welcome the following new Board members: Sam Bitar, Lea Christo, Gena Liacopulos, Joanne McMahan, Fr. Milad Selim, and Samir Tokatli. We greatly appreciate their time and talents in helping support our mission and guiding the direction of the organization.

**REHABILITATION.** When it comes to short-term rehabilitation, choose the experts in the field. 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 get in touch with our Director of Rehab, [Heather Walsh](#).

**TIP OF THE WEEK.** With the holiday season rapidly approaching, now is the time to start planning, should your family need respite care for a loved one. Whether you'll be traveling, busy with shopping, cooking, and prepping, or simply in need of self-care to relax and rejuvenate, Holy Trinity offers a short stay for those in need of temporary care. For more information, please contact our Director of Admissions, [Karen Barry](#) or call (508) 852-1000, ext. 213.

**ADMISSIONS.** Our census continues to climb, and we have limited long-term care beds available. 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. Please contact Director of Admissions [Karen Barry](#) or call (508) 852-1000, ext. 213.

**JOB OPENINGS.** We are currently seeking a Human Resources Manager to join our team. The ideal candidate enjoys working in a fast-paced environment, has experience in a nursing home, long-term care, or healthcare facility, and is proficient in recruiting. [Click here](#) for a full listing of our openings with detailed job descriptions, including including HR, rehab, nursing, reception, and dietary. Recent grads and people familiar with the languages and cultures of our Orthodox communities are encouraged to apply.

**STAY CONNECTED.** Be sure to like our [Facebook page](#) for frequent updates and photos. We are currently seeking donations for our monthly prize auction. If you would like to donate new items for our residents, including stuffed animals, accessories, and room décor, please contact our Director of Activities, [Donna Benard](#), to see what is most needed.

You can now find us at [www.holytrinityrehab.org](http://www.holytrinityrehab.org)!

## 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 you who are the source of all power and authority,** eternal Father: You yourself have given the throne over all things to

your Christ, and to him we have pledged our lives. In your divine loving kindness, strip us of everything that is ours and fill us with what is yours, that we may rise to genuine transcendence by winning access to our own true selves.

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.

## ***We Are God's Workmanship***

**This week we begin reading from St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians.** Ephesus was a large seaport on the western coast of Asia Minor (in present day Turkey) and the capital of the Roman province of Asia. Paul stayed in Ephesus twice, the second time for over three years. In the earliest manuscripts the title "to the Ephesians" is missing. This, together with the fact that he sends almost no personal greetings as he customarily did (even though he certainly knew scores of people in that community) has led many Biblical commentators to suggest that this may have been a general letter that St. Paul had sent out to be read in the many communities he had established.

In this letter Paul speaks about God's great plan for humanity, hidden up until now, but revealed fully in Jesus Christ. His intention is to create a single messianic people of God, uniting both Jew and Gentile. Social and religious barriers that had previously divided humanity are eliminated by faith in Jesus Christ. This is "Good News" for everyone. We have been redeemed, that is, liberated from bondage to the Evil One, bondage to sin and death.

Today's reading begins at Chapter 2, verse 4 and continues through verse 10. In the first Chapter of Ephesians he speaks of God's plan. Here he presents us with the challenge of responding to God's plan. He reminds us of God's love. "God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses ..." (v. 4-5). One of the most important 'rules' or 'truths' we can ever learn is this: we only know how to love because we ourselves have been loved by others. God is the first one who loves us. He has given us our parents and family who love us. He gives us children so that we can share this love. Even if our earthly relationships have fallen short of this, still our Heavenly Father never fails us.

Listen to the words that St. Paul uses to describe this. He doesn't simply say God is merciful and loving. He tells us He is rich in mercy. God loves us out of His great love. God is abundant in His affection for us. It is this love that God has for us that sustains us.

The passage continues, "... even when we were dead through our trespasses [He] made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus" (v. 5-7).

There are three points that I would like to highlight in this passage. The first is that we participate directly in our Lord's rising from the dead. Jesus died the death that awaits us because of our sin. But, in His sinless death we share in His life. Through our faith in Him, we are changed and risen. Our rising happens not only after our physical death, it happens now when we believe in God's love for us in Christ Jesus. Even while we are breathing, we were dead because of our sin. Jesus' sacrificial love changed this.

The second point is: "by grace you have been saved." St. Paul says this three times in the short passage we read today. Our salvation is a gift; we didn't earn it. We can't earn it. We could never earn it. God restores us because He loves us.

The third point is that God has not only restored us, but He allows us to share in the glory of His Son. He "raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus." When we say in the Creed that "He ascended into Heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father," we should understand that we have a place at the Father's right hand as well, because of Jesus.

This vision of God enthroned in Heaven is completed by St. Paul when he says: "that in the coming ages [God] might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." One of the common assumptions in the world in which St. Paul lived was that history had a number of ages (seven) and these were cyclical (they kept repeating). In our Liturgy we express the idea of eternity by saying God's glory is "now, forever, and to the ages of ages." St. Paul is expressing something similar when he tells us God's love and grace will be shown toward us in the "coming ages."

After telling us all of this St. Paul reminds us again, "by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God — not because of works, lest any man should boast" (v. 8-9). Then he adds something else: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (v. 10).

Here is another 'rule' or 'truth' that we need to remember and keep alive in our hearts. If we are able to be saved by faith it is because we are God's "workmanship." We were created in Christ Jesus, that is: the creative Word of God, His Son, shaped and formed us. Why? — for good works.

God in His great love created us good, to do good. We do good not to earn salvation, but to complete God's work in us. God prepared this path of good works "beforehand, that we should walk in them." What St. Paul means here is that the good we do one to another, and together for all, leads us back to God. This is how we "work out our own salvation" (Philippians 2:12). Doing good is how we communicate with God. In every good and kind thing we do we show ourselves to be God's handiwork. By growing in Him, we reveal the full glory that is within us. We do this by faith in Jesus Christ who loves us and saves us.

— Fr. Nicholas Apostola

## **DATES TO REMEMBER**

Sat, Oct 23 Children's Retreat  
Tues, Nov 2 Pita Baking, 9am-noon  
Sat, Nov 6 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-noon  
[Be the Bee](#) Teen Retreat  
Thurs, Nov 11 Children's Retreat

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