

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

## **Sunday, February 6, 2022**

### **The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost**

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***Apostolic Reading: 2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1***

***Gospel: Matthew 15:21-28***  
***(The Canaanite Woman)***

***Tone 8 • Resurrection Gospel 11***

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

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

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

***THE ANNUAL PARISH GENERAL ASSEMBLY*** will be held following the Divine Liturgy, on **THIS Sunday, February 6th**. Please plan on staying and participating.

***FOOD PANTRY THIS SATURDAY.*** Help is needed to staff our monthly responsibility at the Orthodox Food Center, **THIS Saturday, February 5th from 9 am - noon**. It is a great blessing to help those who could use the help. So, if you're open to sharing a small part of your Saturday morning, please e-mail Nicole Apostola at [nicole.apostola@gmail.com](mailto:nicole.apostola@gmail.com). She can give you more details. You'll see what a difference it makes.

***OUR NEXT MUSTARD SEED MEAL*** is **Friday, February February 18th**, for 80 visitors. Given the virus, the meals are now pre-packaged and ready to be distributed by their regular staff of volunteers. We are grateful to **Maria Dumitriu** who is sponsoring this month's meal in memory her husband Nița Dumitriu recently fallen asleep. If you or your family would like to help with meal preparations, the team is gathering at 1pm on Friday. Please contact **Deb Sedares** — by e-mail or phone: 508-509-6678.

***THE FALL 2021 CREDINȚA / THE FAITH*** magazine of our Metropolia is available for download. Take some time to look it over. [Just click here!](#)

***SUPPORT IOCC ON SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY!*** February 13th is Souper Bowl Sunday. Please come prepared to make a donation to support IOCC's work. If you'd like more information, go to [IOCC.ORG](http://IOCC.ORG).

***HOLY WATER AND HOUSE BLESSINGS.*** Because of Covid, Fr. Nick will not be making his usual house visits, but will come to your home if requested. You can and should bless your home together with the members of your family. We've prepared a sheet with simple instructions and a service to follow. [You may download it here.](#) If you would like Fr. Nick to come and bless your house, you may either [e-mail](#) him or call him at 508-335-7378, to set up a specific time.

***WE OBSERVE A MEMORIAL TODAY*** for the servant of God **Alexandru Bogorodia**, father of **Sandra Nedelescu**, as well as her grandmother **Ecaterina Slobozeanu** and great-aunt **Victoria Palos**. ***May God rest their souls among the righteous!***

***The Town of Shrewsbury has issued a MASKING ORDER.*** Masks are required in all indoor spaces, including Churches. We are now asking that all persons attending the Divine Services wear masks until is order is lifted.

### **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.

## **NOTES FROM HOLY TRINITY**

**Holy Trinity is committed to providing an exceptional Customer Experience** to our patients, residents, friends and family members, referral sources, and others. Our goal is to deliver “a Hospitality of Abraham Experience” that exceeds expectations. We welcome your feedback – be it questions, compliments or suggestions for improvement. Feel free to email us at [rparra@htnr.net](mailto:rparra@htnr.net) to share your thoughts.

**COVID UPDATE.** At this time, we have one positive employees. We continue to test every 3 days, of which all long-term care residents have continued to test negative.

**COVID-19 REHABILITATION UNIT.** We have a dedicated unit for COVID-19 Patients. In coordination with our medical director, we have a dedicated team of registered nurses and patient care technicians who care for COVID-19 patients.

**JOB OPENINGS.** Come work for an organization that walks the talk and cares about you and your well-being! We have openings for Physical and Occupational Therapists, Nurses, and CNAs for all shifts. [Click here](#) for a full listing of our openings with detailed job descriptions. 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.

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 Lord, teacher of humility:** Deflate our puffed up hearts and remove all arrogance from our bearing lest we succumb to thinking we really are something to be proud of. Imbue us with true humility. Grant us victory over all temptations to arrogance and unhealthy pride, and enable us to adhere strictly to what is good, rejecting every hint of perversity and idolatry in our lives. Bring us to worship you alone, in spirit and in truth, that we may attain the depth of life you desire for us.

For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

### **We Are God's Temple**

**This is the Sunday of the Canaanite Woman**, the seventeenth after Pentecost. Depending on the date of Pascha, this Sunday is often moved out of order to just before the start of the Lenten cycle called the Triodion. The prescribed Epistle lesson is taken from Second Corinthians starting at verse 6:16 through 7:1, however, for us to get a better sense of St. Paul's point we should begin at verse 14.

Remember, the Corinthian community was in turmoil. St. Paul is working to get them to reaffirm their Christian identity and commitment. He reminds them that as Christians they are now the new Israel — a people set apart. In verse 14 he uses an unusually strong word. He tells them: “Do not be mismatched with unbelievers.” In the Greek original the word “mismatched” is: ἐτεροζυγοῦντες. It literally means “yoking together two different kinds of animals,” like a horse and an ox. It just would not work.

The root word “yoked” is also used to describe the marital relationship, so those listening would have that image in their mind when St. Paul continues: “For what partnership is there between righteousness and lawlessness? Or what fellowship is there between light and darkness? What agreement does Christ have with Beliar? Or what does a believer share with an unbeliever?” (v. 14-15)

But you shouldn't get the wrong impression, St. Paul is not referring to ordinary relations with unbelievers, the kind that we have every day. Scriptural scholars both ancient and modern are in almost universal agreement on this. He is not saying we should isolate ourselves or not engage the world around us. Neither is he referring to marriage itself. But rather, he is saying we should not "marry" ourselves to forces and persons who do not have God in their hearts. Notice the words that he uses: partnership and fellowship, agreement and sharing. Today we might use an idiom such as, "getting in bed with." Christians need to remember who they are. They are a people dedicated to God.

St. Paul uses a word for the Devil in verse 15 that is common in Rabbinical commentaries and writing, even though it doesn't appear in the Scriptures. The name "Beliar" is a direct transliteration of the Hebrew and it means "worthlessness." In theological and philosophical writings, "evil" is often characterized as non-being. Worthlessness is another way of saying the same thing. It isn't that evil is not real. It is. Rather, unlike "good," it could not exist on its own. Evil is like a leech. It sucks the life out of things. It feeds on the blood of its victim. Think about it. When we do something good it stands on its own merits. When we do something bad, it is almost always at someone's expense.

This serves as an introduction to today's selected reading that begins: "What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God." St. Paul is urging us to understand our calling. By referring first to physical things (temples and idols), he wants us to imagine the possibilities available to us in God's promise: We are His dwelling place.

He used this same image — that we are God's temple — in his First Letter to them (1 Corinthians 3:16ff). There he was speaking of "building" and "laying foundations." Here he speaks of what we place in the Temple. Will it be God or some false idol? Will we honor God's Temple, or defile it?

To illustrate his point, St. Paul (in verse 16) freely joins a number of verses from the Old Testament to speak of God's promise. He reminds them that God said: "I will live in them and walk among them," (cf. Leviticus 26:12) and "I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (cf. Ezekiel 37:27). God's promise is real. God's word is true.

From the outset God's intention was to make us His dwelling place, for us to be the signs of His presence. Paul is telling the Corinthians that the ritual purity required in the Old Covenant was to prepare us for the kind of moral purity that could permit God to dwell in us. The images St. Paul uses of "mismatched" pairings are meant to help us see how incompatible sin is with the life to which God has called us. "Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you" (v. 17; cf. Isaiah 52:11 and Jeremiah 51:45). The first thing asked of us then was to keep our hands clean. St. Paul tells us that this was so we would learn to keep our hearts clean as well.

If we do this, "the Lord Almighty says: I will be your father and you shall be my sons and daughters" (v. 18). When God created us He created us for higher things. He invites us to become part of His family, to seek the things He seeks: In a word, to be like Him.

"Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and of spirit, making holiness perfect in the fear of God" (v. 7:1). We approach God first with fear and trembling. Out of faith we learn to trust all the things He has said to us, through holy men and women, and in the person of His very own Son. Finally, we learn to love Him as much as He loves us. Every time we celebrate the Holy Eucharist we hear this call to draw near to Him: with fear, with faith and with love.

We are called to be holy, like God is holy. We are called to prepare a place for Him in our hearts. Each of us can be God's Temple, if we invite Him in.

— Fr. Nicholas Apostola

## **DATES TO REMEMBER**

Sat, Feb 5	Staff Orthodox Food Pantry
Sun, Feb 6	General Assembly Meeting
Sun, Feb 13	Triodion Begins - Publican & Pharisee Souper Bowl Sunday (IOCC)
Week of Feb 13	Fast-free Week
Fri, Feb 18	Mustard Seed Meal
Sat, Feb 26	Saturday of the Dead, Liturgy 10 am
Sun, Feb 27	Last Judgment/Meatfare Sunday
Week of Feb 27	Fasting from Meat - Cheese/Dairy Allowed

Sun, March 6 Forgiveness Sunday/Cheesefare Sunday  
Mon, March 7 Great Lent Begins  
Sun, April 25 Great and Holy Pascha

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