

News from St. Nick's

Sunday, February 13, 2022

The Thirty Third Sunday after Pentecost

Parable of the Publican & the Pharisee
The Triodion Begins

Apostolic Reading: 2 Timothy 3:10-15
Gospel: Luke 18:10-14

Tone 1 • Resurrection Gospel 1

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

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE TRIODION BEGINS TODAY. The *Triodion* is the Church's hymnbook for the period from now, through Great Lent, until Pascha. The next three weeks are meant to prepare us for Great Lent that begins on Monday, March 7th.

This coming week is totally **FAST FREE**.

OUR NEXT MUSTARD SEED MEAL is **THIS Friday, February February 18th**. 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.

PITA DOUGH ROLLING SESSIONS are being scheduled for **Saturdays February 19th and March 5th**. If you'd like to help, please contact Betty Anderson by [e-mail](#) or phone: **508-353-9449**. Remember: There's a job for everyone!

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](#).

THE SATURDAY OF THE SOULS / SÂMBĂȚA MORȚILOR is **Saturday, February 26th**. Matins at 9:00am and Liturgy at 10:00 am.

THANKS TO THE FOOD PANTRY VOLUNTEERS for working the Orthodox Food Center on behalf of our parish last Saturday. Our regular commitment is the first Saturday of the month from 9am to noon. About 4 people are needed. 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. She can give you more details. You'll see what a difference it makes.

THE MOVIE MAN OF GOD on the [life of St. Nektarios](#) will be shone on **Monday, March 21st at 7:00pm**, at the Regal Cinema in Marlborough. We are buying a block of tickets. Please let [Fr. Nick](#) know if you would like to go and how many tickets you will need. **It's important that we have a count.** Before the showing that night, at 5:15pm, Fr. Greg will be holding a compline service at Sts. Anagyroi in Marlborough. The relics of St. Nektarios will be there for veneration. We've been given is a unique opportunity.

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.

LENTEN RESOURCES

We are beginning the journey toward Pascha, the Lord's Resurrection. To help along the way, each week we'll be posting

some resources and reflections aimed at assisting and informing.

THE SUNDAY OF THE PUBLICAN AND THE PHARISEE (Gospel reading: Luke 18:10–14). On this and the following two Sundays, the theme is repentance. Repentance is the door through which we enter Lent, the starting-point of our journey to Pascha. And to repent signifies far more than self-pity or futile regret over things done in the past. The Greek term *metanoia* means 'change of mind': to repent is to be renewed, to be transformed in our inward viewpoint, to attain a fresh way of looking at our relationship to God and to others. The fault of the Pharisee is that he has no desire to change his outlook; he is complacent, self-satisfied, and so he allows no place for God to act within him. The Publican, on the other hand, truly longs for a 'change of mind': he is self-dissatisfied, 'poor in spirit', and where there is this saving self-dissatisfaction there is room for God to act. Unless we learn the secret of the Publican's inward poverty, we shall not share in the Lenten springtime. The theme of the day can be summed up in a saying of the Desert Fathers: 'Better a man who has sinned, if he knows that he has sinned and repents, than a man who has not sinned and thinks of himself as righteous.'

FASTING RULES. One question that often comes up is: **What are the Fasting rules?** [We've linked here](#) one of the better explanations of the rules around fasting. It is taken from the *Lenten Triodion*, translated and edited by Metropolitan Kallistos Ware and Mother Mary. If you've never been exposed to the whole discipline of the Fast, reading the rules can seem very daunting. You should seek advice from your spiritual father; no one should try this without guidance.

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.

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 to share your thoughts.

SUBACUTE REHABILITATION SERVICES are delivered by a strong interdisciplinary team consisting of physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, nutritionists, nursing staff and physician consultants from our health care network who specialize in rehabilitation and long-term care. Members of the teamwork in collaboration with patients and their families to shape, coordinate and implement each step toward an aggressive recovery. Our interdisciplinary approach enables us to assist patients recovering from numerous conditions. Holy Trinity's specialty areas include, but are not limited to:

- Rehabilitation
- Orthopedic Care
- Post Stroke Recovery/Neurological Care
- Pain Management
- Postoperative Care
- Pulmonary/Respiratory Care
- Cardiac Recovery
- Medically Complex Care
- Hospice/Terminal Care
- Oncology/Cancer Care
- Intravenous Therapy Nursing Care
- Medication Management
- Patient Teaching

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!

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

Though we constantly provoke you, Lord God, in your boundless mercy you never abandon us. In your own mysterious ways, you ease the burdens of our life, giving us the strength to bear them, and you answer us, again in your own way, when we cry out to you in distress. Still, though we seldom hear or understand your response, by faith we try to remember that you are there and that you hear us. Teach us to live as you wish us to, and, in your loving kindness, increase and confirm our faith.

For you deserve all glory, honor, and worship, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Continue In What You Have Learned and Firmly Believed

This Sunday we begin the Triodion, the Church's hymn book for Great Lent leading to Pascha. While Lent is still a few weeks off, the Fathers decided to help us get ready for it by focusing our attention through Scripture readings and hymns. Today's Gospel lesson is the parable of the Publican (tax collector) and the Pharisee (Luke 18:10-14). The Epistle reading is from St. Paul's second letter to Timothy, 3:10-15.

Today's selected reading from St. Paul comes out of a portion of this second letter to Timothy concerned with the End-Times, that is, the Second Coming of Jesus. St. Paul is predicting what will happen to people as the time for the Lord's arrival draws near. He is trying particularly to encourage and strengthen his beloved disciple Timothy who, we learn from St. Paul's letters and in Acts, is a quiet and retiring person, not the kind of strong personality that St. Paul himself is.

The first advice St. Paul offers Timothy is his own example. He has done this in other situations as well, for example when he tells the Corinthians that they might have many teachers but not many fathers (1 Corinthians 4:15); or when he tells them to "be imitators of me as I am of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1). So, in a more gentle way, he says to Timothy: "You have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions, and my suffering the things that happened to me in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. What persecutions I endured! Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them" (v. 10-11). St. Paul had suffered in many places, but in this passage he only mentions those places that Timothy would personally remember, especially Lystra, where St. Timothy was born, raised, and first met St. Paul.

He then tells Timothy a sobering reality: "All who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted" (v. 12). He is speaking first and foremost out of his own personal experience. When Paul was a committed disciple of the Jewish leadership in Jerusalem, he persecuted the followers of Christ mercilessly. When Jesus appeared to him on the way to Damascus, and as a result became a follower of Jesus, he himself now became the one persecuted. In our own time Christian believers are being firebombed and killed even in their own Churches, in Nigeria, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Syria, the Philippines, and Indonesia — only to mention a few places. For these and others a choice to openly confess their faith in Jesus Christ may very well mean a choice to suffer and die. Not so many years ago the same was true in all of Russia and the Eastern Bloc.

This is not to say that people of other faiths do not also suffer persecution — sometimes at the hands of 'Christians' — but suffering because of faith in the person and teachings of Jesus the Christ has distinguished His followers throughout the centuries, from the very outset. Most of us have grown up in a political situation where we never have had to choose between our faith and our life. Unfortunately, from the beginning, many Christians have. Regardless, it is never easy to be Christian. And, while we might not be forced by others to put our lives on the lines, we are still asked by the Lord Himself to die to ourselves in order to truly live, in Christ.

The second point, a corollary, is that: "wicked people and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceivers and deceived" (v. 13). One of the titles of the devil is the "Deceiver." It was through his deception that Eve took the fruit in the Garden. It was she who naïvely deceived Adam to share in it (cf. Genesis 3:1ff). St. Paul speaks of this cycle of evil and wickedness. One feeds on the other. It becomes difficult, if not impossible, to stop. Only with God is it possible to break this cycle (cf. Matthew 19:25-26).

St. Paul offers Timothy this instruction, both to strengthen his resolve in the face of persecution, as well as to prepare him to

face the wickedness of the world. "Continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (v. 14-15).

Timothy's mother was a pious Jewish woman married to a pagan. Theirs was what we might call today a "mixed marriage." Nevertheless, she educated Timothy according to Jewish tradition; beginning from age five all Jewish children were to be instructed in the Sacred Writings. Yet even while recommending the study of Scripture, St. Paul also emphasizes the role of those people who taught him. We can infer that he meant first his mother. Just as he had offered himself as an example to follow, so too is he now reminding Timothy of his mother's example of faith. As parents we are the primary example our children look to for everything, but especially regarding our faith; the way we integrate and manifest what we say we believe in how we actually behave is what our children will remember and incorporate into their lives.

Finally he reiterates the power of Scripture to "instruct for salvation." Until recently it was common for children to memorize Scripture, and especially the Psalms. One requirement for ordination to the episcopacy is to be able to recite the entire Books of Psalms by heart. Verses of the Sacred Text that are engraved on our hearts come to our aid when we are struggling and in need of consolation. "Through our faith in Christ Jesus" the comforting words inspired by the Holy Spirit bring peace to our hearts and salvation to our souls.

Maranatha! ("Lord, come!")

— Fr. Nicholas Apostola

DATES TO REMEMBER

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 17	Western Easter
Sun, April 24	Great and Holy Pascha

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