



# WEEKLY BULLETIN

## St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church

*Sunday July 15, 2018*

### Placing of the Robe of the Mother of God

Epistle: **Romans 15:1-7**

Gospel: **Matthew 9:27-35**

### *Weekly Schedule of Services/Events*

#### **Sunday, July 15**

9:00AM Divine Liturgy

Epistle: Gregory Morrison

**Father David away this week.**

#### **Sunday, July 22**

9:00AM Divine Liturgy

Epistle: Jennifer Morrison



"But whosoever shall do and teach," said He, "shall be called great." For not to ourselves alone, should we be profitable, but to others also; since neither is the reward as great for him who guides himself aright, as for one who with himself adds also another.

Since he who cannot teach himself, yet attempts to set others right, will have many to ridicule him. Or rather such a one will have no power to teach at all, his actions uttering their voice against him.

### **St. John Chrysostom**

*Homily 29 on Matthew 5, 4th Century*

#### **Service Schedule**

Divine Liturgy 9am

Weekday Eve Service 7pm

#### **General Information**

[www.stjohnsmillhill.com](http://www.stjohnsmillhill.com)

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#### **Diocesan Resources**

**Diocesan Website:**

<http://www.acrod.org>

**Camp Nazareth:**

<http://www.campnazareth.org>

**Facebook:**

<https://www.facebook.com/acroddiocese>

**Twitter:**

<https://twitter.com/acrodnews>

**You Tube:**

<https://youtube.com/acroddiocese>

## ***Weekly Announcements***

**CAMP NAZARETH CAMPERS:** Please keep our campers and all those travelling to Camp Nazareth this week for a good week and safe return.

**FR. DAVID AWAY:** Fr. David will be away from the parish this week. If an emergency arises, please contact Fr. Michael Macura at 203-386-8888

**CHURCH PICNIC:** Our annual Church Picnic will take place on August 12. Donations can be made at any time. Please see the flyer in the bulletin for the wish list of donation items.

**LIBERATION PROJECT:** Funds are needed to continue THE Liberation Project. Please consider making a donation to help offset the cost of making the lunch. Each lunch costs about \$1 and we prepare 150+ each month. Your generosity will go a long way in helping the Church in its outreach efforts. God bless you.

## ***Placing of the Robe of the Mother of God***

During the reign of Leo the Great (457-474) two patricians and brethren on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land lodged with an old widow, a Christian of Jewish descent. Seeing the many miracles wrought at a small shrine in her house, they pressed her until she revealed to them that she had raiment of the most holy Theotokos kept in a small coffer. Our Lady had had two virgins in her lifetime who attended upon her; before her holy dormition, she gave each of them one of her divine garments as a blessing. This old widow was of the family of one of those two virgins, and it had come through the generations into her hands. With the permission of God, that this holy relic might be had for the profit of many, the two men took the garment by stealth and brought it to Blachernae near Constantinople, and building a church in honor of the Apostles Peter and Mark, they secretly enshrined the garment therein. But here again, because of the multitude of miracles that were worked, it became known to the Emperor Leo, and a magnificent church was built, as some say, by that same Leo, but according to others, by his predecessors Marcian and Pulcheria, and enlarged by Leo when the holy raiment was found. The Emperor Justin the Younger completed the church, which the Emperor Romanus IV Diogenes raised up immediately again after it had burned in 1070. It burned again in 1434, and from that time it remained a small house of prayer together with the renowned holy spring. After the seventh century, the name Blachernae was given to other churches and monasteries by their pious founders out of reverence for this famous church in Constantinople. In this church John Catacuzene was crowned in 1345; also, the Council against Acindynus, the follower of Barlaam, was convoked here (see the Second Sunday of the Great Fast).

## *Scripture Readings for Sunday*

### **Epistle Reading**

**The reading is from Romans Romans 15:1-7**

BRETHREN, we who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves; let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to edify him. For Christ did not please himself; but, as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached thee fell on me." For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of your Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome one another, therefore, as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

### **Gospel Reading**

**The Reading is from Matthew 9:27-35**

At that time, as Jesus passed by, two blind men followed him, crying aloud, "Have mercy on us, Son of David." When he entered the house, the blind men came to him; and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to him, "Yes, Lord." Then he touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith be it done to you." And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly charged them, "See that no one knows it." But they went away and spread his fame through all that district.

As they were going away, behold, a dumb demoniac was brought to him. And when the demon had been cast out, the dumb man spoke; and the crowds marveled, saying, "Never was anything like this seen in Israel." But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the prince of demons."

And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people.

## On Stewardship - We Cannot Forgive Enough

"Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?"(Matthew 18:21 RSV)

Our society is filled with numbers and statistics. Everything has a price, for example. Newspapers are filled with ads that reveal costs as well as pages of "economic" data that are in reality, just numbers. The sports pages are crammed with box scores and player statistics. Professional sports teams are now relying heavily on what they call "analytics" defined as, the discovery and communication of meaningful patterns in data, that is, in the statistics and numbers.

In an interesting exchange between the Apostle Peter and Our Lord in Matthew 18, numbers play an important part. The Apostle wants to know the answer to a question about "How many?" How many times should I forgive my brother for sinning against me? The Apostle suggests that it be seven times. Our Lord, however, replies with an obviously exaggerated expectation: seventy times seven is the number of times to forgive that brother.

Perhaps Jesus' reply caused some laughter among those listening to this exchange. Seventy times seven? The numbers are simple enough to figure out: 490 times! The laughter might come in the understanding that this figure is a suggestion that no one can ever run out of times to forgive someone else. Forgiveness here is essentially infinite – it never, ever runs out. Our Lord is saying in effect, "You don't need to bother counting. True forgiveness does not keep score."

We have all heard the saying "To err is human; to forgive divine." There is truth to that saying. Forgiveness is, to put it simply, God's way. God has devised a way to offer full and complete forgiveness for all of our sins. For those of us who live in the state of this forgiveness, we then offer our brothers and sisters that forgiveness. It is a rather simple stewardship: we have been fully forgiven, and we share that forgiveness with everyone else. Such forgiveness actually costs us nothing. It does not reduce the amount we are forgiven by God, nor do we need to find a store of materials to use in order to forgive.

Forgiveness does not keep score. Forgiveness is an opportunity to restore broken relationships. Forgiveness is an opportunity to begin again, from the start. The words of Jesus: *"...forgive, and you will be forgiven ...good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For the measure you give will be the measure you get back"* (Luke 6:37-38 RSV).

*This weekly series of brief thoughts on stewardship and Orthodox life is brought to you by your Diocesan Stewardship Commission.*