



Weekly Bulletin

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

A Community of the Orthodox Church in America

Witnessing to the Apostolic Faith in Lake County for over 45 Years

Father Andrew Clements, Pastor

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Sunday	May 23	<i>4th Sunday of Pascha / Tone 3 / The Paralytic</i>
		9:30 am Divine Liturgy Coffee Hour
Saturday	May 29	<i>Blessed John, Fool for Christ</i>
		5:30 pm Great Vespers
Sunday	May 30	<i>5th Sunday of Pascha / Tone 4 / The Samaritan Woman</i>
		Readings: Acts 11:19-26, 29-30 John 4:5-32
		9:30 am Divine Liturgy Coffee Hour

ATTENDANCE / STEWARDSHIP / May 16

Attendance	85
Operating	\$2,826.00
OCA Assessments	60.00
Maintenance	100.00
Icons	50.00
Uganda	127.00
Alms	50.00
Charities	122.00
Other	40.00

ADULT CLASS

Our Evening Class continues this week on Tuesday, May 25 at 6:30 pm, via ZOOM.

PRAYER CORNER ++++++

Perry (Capitan), Sbdcn Leonard, Ted Geletka, Julian, John Clements, Sarah Crivella, Joella (LuAnn D's dghtr), our Parish Faithful, the Furman family, Marie Gaydos (Maryann S' csn), Fred Bessel (Jean M's frnd), Dr Michael Soroka, Mike Nadolski (Gloria H's frnd), Tim Price, Francis James (Anna D's frnd), Kim H (Maryann S's friend), suffering Christians in the Middle East.

Anniversaries: David & Maria Kucmanic (5/26), George & Jaimie Hasenorhl (5/29).

Birthdays: Christina Lebedov (5/26), Dee Kurtz (5/28), Amy Wagner (5/29).

Expecting: Bobby & Juliana, Brian & Katya, Greg & Grace, John & Michelle.

Newborns: Alina (David & Maria), Lena (Patrick & Deanna), Reia (CJ & Iya).

Newly Departed: Michael Kochan (Greg's uncle, 5/12), Richard Mirauntz (5/2), Marsha (Maureen M's frnd, 4/29), Fr Peter Pawlack (Fr's friend 4/19).

Newly Illumined: Lisa Bowden (5/1).

Do You Want to be Healed?

by Fr Stephen Kostoff

In the fifth chapter of the Gospel of Saint John we find the account of the healing of the paralytic by the Pool of Bethesda near the Sheep Gate in Jerusalem and the profound discourse that follows. Archeologists have fairly recently discovered this pool, demonstrating the accuracy of Saint John's description. The paralytic had taken his place among a human throng of chronic misery, described by the evangelist as "a multitude of invalids, blind, lame, paralyzed" [verse 3]. Being there for 38 years and not being able to experience what were believed to be the healing capacities of the waters of the pool, the paralytic seemed resigned to his destiny. Then Jesus appeared. He saw the paralytic and He knew of his plight. And then Jesus asked the paralytic a very pointed

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Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

and even poignant question: “Do you want to be healed?” [verse 6]. Surprisingly, considering what must have been his own misery, the paralytic’s answer was less than direct and not exactly enthusiastic: “Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is troubled, and while I am going another steps down before me” [verse 7]. Nevertheless, and even though the paralytic does not commit himself to an act of faith in the healing power of Jesus, he receives the following directive from Jesus: “Rise, take up your pallet, and walk.” And then, in that somewhat laconic style of describing the healing power of Christ that characterizes the Gospel accounts, we read simply, “And at once the man was healed, and he took up his pallet and walked” [verse 9]. The “sign” is that Christ can restore wholeness to those in need.

I believe that we need to concentrate on the question Jesus posed to the paralytic, “Do you want to be healed?” (The King James version of the question is: “Wilt thou be made whole?”) For, if the various characters that Jesus encountered in the Gospels are also representatives or “types” of a particular human condition, dilemma, or state of being; then the question of Jesus remains alive in each generation and is thus posed to each of us today. If sin is a sickness, then we are “paralyzed” by that sin to one degree or another of intensity. But do we really want to be healed of the paralyzing effect of sin in our lives? The answer seems obvious, even a “no-brainer,” but is that truly the case? Or, are we more-or-less content with continuing as we are, satisfied that perhaps this is “as good as it gets” in terms of our relationship with God and our neighbors? Do we manage to politely deflect the probing question of Christ elsewhere, counterposing a reasonable excuse as to what prevents us from exerting the necessary energy from our side? Our teaching claims that we must also contribute

to the synergistic process of divine grace and human freedom that works together harmoniously for our healing. Perhaps it is easier and more comfortable to stay as we are – after all, it’s really not that bad - a position reflected in the non-committal response of the paralytic. For to be further healed of sin will mean that we will have to make some changes in our life, in our interior attitudes and in our relationships. It certainly means that we will have to confess our faith in Christ with a greater intensity, urgency and commitment. Are we up to that challenge?

Actually, we could more accurately say that we have already been healed. That happened when we were baptized into Christ. (There are baptismal allusions in the healing of the paralytic by the pool of water). Every human person is paralyzed by the consequences of sin, distorting the image of God in which we were initially created. Baptism was meant to put to death the sin that is within us. We were healed, in that baptism is the pledge to life everlasting, where death itself is swallowed up in the victory of Christ over death. For we are baptized into the Death and Resurrection of Christ. So, with a slight variation, the question of Christ could also imply: Do you rejoice in the fact that you have been healed, and does your way of life reflect the faith and joy that that great healing from sin and death has imparted to you? Are you willing to continue in the struggle that is necessary to keep that healing “alive” within you? Direct and simple questions can get complicated, often by the paralyzing effect of sin in our lives. We can then get confused as to how to respond to such essential questions. Every time we walk into the church we are being asked by Christ, “Do you want to be healed?” Responding with a resounding “yes!” would be a “sign” of the faith, hope and love that are within us by the grace of God.