



# Weekly Bulletin

St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church

A Community of the Orthodox Church in America

Witnessing to the Ancient Faith in Trumbull County for over 80 Years

**Father Brian Crivella**, Pastor

2021

Number 21

**The Friend of the Bridegroom: "He Must Increase and I Must Decrease."**

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>May 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	<i>4th Sun of Pascha / Tone 3 / Healing of the Paralytic</i> Readings: Acts 9:32-42      John 5:1-15 9:30 am      Divine Liturgy
<b>Monday</b>	<b>May 24<sup>th</sup></b>	<i>Finding of the Head of St. John the Baptist</i> Readings: 2 Corinthians 4:6-15    Matthew 11:2-15 6:00 pm      Vespertal Liturgy
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>May 26<sup>th</sup></b>	<i>St. Augustine of Canterbury, Evangelizer of England</i> 6:00pm      Molieben followed by Anointing
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>May 29<sup>th</sup></b>	<i>Virgin Martyr Theodosia of Tyre</i> 4:00 pm      Panakhida for Fr. Peter & Dr. John Hranitz 5:00 pm      Great Vespers
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>May 30<sup>th</sup></b>	<i>5th Sun of Pascha / Tone 4 / Samaritan Woman</i> Readings: Acts 11:19-26, 29-30    John 4:5-42 9:30 am      Divine Liturgy

**ATTENDANCE / STEWARDSHIP / May 16<sup>th</sup>**

Attendance: (Adults: 61, Children 11)	72
Weekly Offering	\$2654.00
Candle Offerings	\$54.00
Holy Trinity Orthodox Academy	\$530.00
Sausage Sales	\$4375.00

**\*\*\*COVID UPDATE\*\*\***

By the Grace of God Archbishop Paul has blessed our church to follow the state's directive on June 2<sup>nd</sup> that will make masks and social distancing at our parish optional. Communion will be offered in the normative manner from the one spoon only, and there will no longer be a limit of 80 parishioners at a service with a sign-up sheet. Refreshments at Coffee Hour and during events will still be served by individuals wearing masks and gloves as a continued precaution as per His Eminence's directive, and we'll continue our routine of cleaning and disinfecting surfaces.

**CHURCH CELEBRATION!**

To celebrate the end of the COVID restrictions that have weighed so heavily on us, we will be having a picnic with games and, God willing, a pig & lamb roast outside after the Divine Liturgy on Sunday June 6<sup>th</sup>! A sign up sheet is at the candle stand for everyone who would like to sign up to bring side-dishes or deserts.

**PRAYER CORNER + + + + +**

Fr. Dcn. John Tutoki / Jennifer Brainard / Michael, Catherine, & Zoe Stan / Art Cogar Sr. / Sandy Malsh / Dana Lutz / Ellen Marie / Trista Tutoki / Paul Bakich / Leslie / Joanne Kaschak / Lilian / Miles Cuckovich / Alice & Matthew / Brother Andrew / Magie & Kenny Sanders / Bill Paluch / Nina Lowry / Alyssa Angle / Josephine Grabko / Peter Bolock / James Livermore / Helen Skovan / Helen Bobosh / Sarah Crivella / The Faculty, Teachers, and Students of Holy Trinity Orthodox Academy / Juliana and her unborn child (Fr. Andrew's Daughter)

**Memory Eternal:** Archpriest Peter Pawlack (4/19) / John Hranitz (4/21) Patricia Rogers (5/10)

**Birthdays:** Ann Gyurek & Helen Koplín (Sun), Samuel Quick (Tues), William Grabko Jr. (Wed), Jacob Kaschak (Fri), & Joshua Settlemyre (Sat)

**Anneversaries:** Fr. Dcn. John & Peggy Tutoki (Sun), Denis & Mary Ann Skovran (Mon), & Jerry & Denise Higgins (Fri)

**Candle Commemorations**

**Theotokos** For the Health of the Bobosh Family  
**Altar** For the Birthday of Fr. Ted Bobosh  
**Christ** Mem. of Tony, Charlotte, Duane, & Gary Sabino

# The Paralytic and the Pool

*By Fr. Lawrence Farley*

One wonders sometimes about why the Gospel story of the healing of the paralytic was chosen for the Paschal season. One understands why the stories of Thomas and the Myrrh-bearers were chosen, but the paralytic? Perhaps our incomprehension is rooted in our modern separation of Pascha from baptism. In the early Church from at least the time of Tertullian (d. 220), Pascha was considered as *the* time for baptism, and the spectacle of many catechumens lining up to be baptized in the baptistery (a separate building in those days) and then processing with solemn joy into the church to be anointed with laying on of hands by the bishop forged an indelible link in people's minds between Pascha and baptism. Even now in our Pascha-night Liturgy, in place of the Trisagion hymn we sing "As many as have been baptized into Christ." In early tradition, Pascha meant baptism and baptism always had a paschal feel to it. The two were inextricably linked.

That might explain why all the Sunday Gospels in the Paschal season after the Sunday of the Myrrh-bearers focus upon water: the Samaritan woman finds Christ by the well, and the blind man finds salvation as he washes in the pool of Siloam. Similarly, the paralytic encounters Christ as he sat by the waters of Bethesda. In all these Gospels, we find water, a clear echo of baptism for those to whom baptism was linked with Pascha. As early as Tertullian (in his book *On Baptism*, chapter 5), the presumed descent of the angel into the Bethesda pool foreshadowed the spiritual and transformative power of Christian baptism.

As we examine the story of the paralytic in greater depth, it is important to see that in its original context the Bethesda pool was not a source of salvation for the paralytic, but a rival alternative to it, if not its positive impediment. Remember the details of the story: the paralytic sat languishing by the pool, thirty-eight years in his wretched condition, hoping for healing. When the pool's waters were stirred (by an angel, as everyone thought), he hoped to be the

first one into the pool to soak up the angel's divine power and be cured, but being paralyzed, he was too slow, and someone always beat him to the pool. So, he waited and waited, hoping to find salvation one day in the pool.

It was there that Jesus found him. When Jesus asked him, "Do you want to be healed?" (John 5:6), he didn't say, "Yes Lord, please heal me!" He was still hoping to get into the pool, and he answered, "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." But salvation wasn't in the pool. It was in Jesus. Jesus simply said, "Rise, take your pallet, and walk," and the man did. He didn't need the pool after all. All he needed was Jesus.

In John's subtext, the pool functions as an image of the Law and the man as an image of Israel hoping to find salvation in the Law. The paralytic had been long in his condition, even as Israel had long been waiting for divine salvation. The Bethesda pool was thought to have been stirred by an angel, even as the Law had been given by angels (Acts 7:53). The pool even had five porticoes (John 5:4), even as the Mosaic Law had five books—a detail noticed by Saint Augustine. Like the paralytic who had to stop relying on the pool for salvation and turn instead to Christ, so Israel had to stop relying upon the Law to save them, and also turn to Christ. The old was giving place to the new.

We see this contrast between the old and the new throughout John's Gospel: not Jewish water, but Christ's wine, not the old Temple, but Christ's body, not the manna in the wilderness, but Christ's flesh. Christian faith involved turning from the old ways to the new, as sacred Jewish history veered upward into the Kingdom and the eschaton. It was as Isaiah foretold long ago: "Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you know perceive it?" (Isaiah 43:18-19). This is the newness of Pascha, and the new life given to us in baptism. The paralytic found this life not in the old pool, but in the living Christ. Our Paschal season reminds us that this is where we find new life and constant renewal as well.