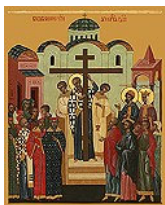


## ✠Bulletin✠

Week of July 27th to August 2nd



## Holy Cross Orthodox Church

V. Rev. Fr. Leonid Palceski  
2365 South Olga Drive  
Fort Myers, Florida 33905  
[www.HolyCrossFtMyers.org](http://www.HolyCrossFtMyers.org)  
Phone: 239-265-6562  
Cell: 239-699-3119  
[HolyCrossFtMyers@gmail.com](mailto:HolyCrossFtMyers@gmail.com)

**Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom**  
**7th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 6**

### **Holy Greatmartyr and Healer Panteleimon (305)**

Bl. Nikolai Kochanov, Fool-for-Christ, at Novgorod (1392). Ven. Anthousa (8th c.). Saint Clement of Ochrid, Equal of the Apostles, Bishop of Greater Macedonia, and his companions Nahum, Savva, Gorazd and Angelar.

### **Weekly Liturgical Service Schedule**

**Sunday July 27, 2025**

**9:10 am** - Hours

**9:30 am** - Divine Liturgy

### **Weekly Schedule**

**Sunday July 27, 2025**

- 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary church committees' meetings
- Choir Practice
- Inquirers & Catechism classes following Divine Liturgy

## **The Tongue: Asset or Curse?**

*By Fr George Dimopoulos*

*"But the Pharisee said, 'He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons.'"*  
(Matt 9:34)

St John Chrysostom says that nothing is worse than ingratitude. And indeed, dear brethren, nothing annoys man so much as the behavior of an ungrateful person. When someone gives you even so small a thing as a glass of water when you are thirsty, the rules of etiquette prescribe that you thank him. Even a simple person, who knows nothing of etiquette, says thank you out of common courtesy.

Today's Gospel Lesson, however, does not deal with material goods which, regardless of their value, remain lifeless matter; rather, the Gospel Lesson relates the healing by Jesus of three grievously afflicted people – two blind men, and one deaf and dumb. Both miracles are noteworthy.

Matthew does not describe for us the attitude, the behavior of the blind, deaf, and dumb after their healing. We presume that they were grateful to the Master, unlike the nine lepers of Luke 17. Matthew does describe for us, however, the attitude and behavior of the Pharisees. These leaders of the Jewish people, because they could neither deny nor doubt the reality of these miracles, instead launched a vicious accusation, not only against Christ, but against the Holy Spirit as well: "He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons".

Previously they had accused Him of violating the sacred character of the Sabbath. Once before they had accused Him of permitting His disciples to eat without washing their hands. Another time they accused Him of eating with tax-collectors and sinners. This accusation, however, was the worst of all. Why? Because there have always been (and still are) simple people who are all too ready to believe vicious slander about a person.

Because the people considered the Pharisees to be great and distinguished men, and because the Pharisees were incapable of duplicating the miracle of Jesus (and who among mortal men could?), they had to accuse Him, and their accusation was horrible: "The ruler of the devils helps Him drive out the devils". St John Chrysostom points out that, not only was the accusation brought about by envy, but it was also utterly foolish; for, the father of the Church continues, the healing ministry of Christ was not limited to casting out

demons: "And He cleansed lepers, raised the dead, calmed the stormy seas, forgave sin, proclaimed the Kingdom of Heaven, and much more".

Dearly beloved, very often the false accusers, drunk with the zeal of their envy, know not where to start nor where to stop. They have but to open their mouths, and outflow slander and calumny without logic and without limit. The evil becomes multiplied when the slander turns into an organized "smear campaign", as we see in today's Gospel Lesson, where all the Pharisees take their lying stand opposed to the Son of God.

An old legend relates that an Egyptian king once sent a dead animal to be used in sacrifice to the philosopher Pittokos, in order that the latter might determine which part of the dead animal was the most valuable, and which part the least value. The philosopher cut out the animal's tongue and returned it to the king with a short note: "This is both the most valuable and the most worthless part of the animal". Naturally, the philosopher was speaking metaphorically of the human tongue. St James writes, *"The tongue...is a little organ but can boast of great achievements...The tongue is a fire, and takes its place among the parts of our bodies as a world of evil; it soils the whole body and sets on fire the circle of world of evil; it soils the whole body and sets on fire the circle of man's nature; and itself is set on fire by hell...It is an evil incapable of being quieted, full of deadly poison. With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse men who are made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth flow blessing and cursing"* (James 3:5-10).

God gave us our tongues to use for good, not for false accusations. Out of the whole creation, man is the only creature that can slander, calumniate and lie. *"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor"* (Exodus 20:16). Let's remember that we do not possess a monopoly on virtues; our neighbors have some, too. And let us remember these awesome words of our Lord: *"But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."* (Matthew 12:36-37).

## Faith

By St. Theophan the Recluse

*"According to your faith let it be to you."* (Matt 9:29) said the Lord to the two blind men, and immediately their eyes were opened.

The greater the faith is, the greater is the influx of Divine power. Faith is the receiver, lips, and receptacle of grace. Just as one person's lungs are large while another person's are small, and the large take in more air, while the small take in less, so one person has a large degree of faith, and another a small degree, and one person's faith receives more gifts from the Lord, and another person's, fewer.

God is everywhere, encompasses everything and contains all, and loves to dwell in human souls. But He does not forcibly enter them, even though He is Almighty, but enters as if upon invitation; for He does not want to infringe upon the power which man has over himself or infringe upon man's right to rule his own house—a right which He has granted. Whosoever opens himself through faith, God fills, but whosoever closes himself through unbelief—God does not enter, though He is near.

Lord! Add to our faith, for faith too is Thy gift. Each of us should confess: "Poor and needy am I" (Ps. 69:6).

### Inquirers & Catechism Class

Classes will be on Sundays following Divine Liturgy. For those new to understanding orthodoxy or for those who want to expand your foundation, please join us for our classes. Please check the schedule for changes.

### Holy Cross 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – September 14<sup>th</sup>

In preparation for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Holy Cross and the visit of Bishop Gerasim, we will need to establish committees for this big event. We will have a short church meeting following Divine Liturgy to establish these committees and volunteers.

### [tithe.ly.com](https://tithe.ly.com)

Another way to "donate". This app can be downloaded to your phone and Holy Cross can be accessed via this app. Also, [tithe.ly](https://tithe.ly) can be accessed through the church website [www.HolyCrossFtMyers.org](http://www.HolyCrossFtMyers.org)

### Prayer Requests

Carolyn – Robert & Debra's Forster's daughter  
Anne and Scott Peatross  
Robert (John) Forster  
Robert Kozera  
Megan – David & Phyllis Bartos' daughter  
Rosemary – Friend of David & Phyllis Bartos

### Please pray for our families in Ukraine

Leonid, Nadiia, Andrii, Halyna,  
Volodymyr, Maryna, Dmytro, Bohdan,  
Nadiia, Oleksandr, Tetiana,  
Roman, Mykola  
Anatoly, Olga, Maria, Andrei

**Please let us know of anyone you would like to add to the Prayer Lists.**

## The Divine Liturgy

Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Variable Hymns and Readings

### **Tone 6 Troparion** (Resurrection)

The Angelic Powers were at Thy tomb;  
the guards became as dead men.  
Mary stood by Thy grave,  
seeking Thy most pure body.  
Thou didst capture hell not being tempted by it.  
Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life.  
O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead, //  
glory to Thee.

### **Tone 3 Troparion** (St. Panteleimon)

Holy Passion-bearer and healer Panteleimon,  
entreat the merciful God, //  
to grant our souls forgiveness of transgressions!

### **Tone 6 Kontakion** (Resurrection)

When Christ God, the Giver of Life,  
raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His mighty hand,  
He bestowed resurrection on the human race. //  
He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

### **Tone 5 Kontakion** (St. Panteleimon)

You emulated the Merciful One,  
receiving from Him the grace of healing,  
O Passion-bearer and healer Panteleimon;  
by your prayers, heal our spiritual diseases  
and continually drive away the temptations of the Enemy //  
from those who cry out in faith: "Save us, O Lord!"

### **Tone 6 Prokeimenon** (Resurrection)

O Lord, save Thy people, / and bless Thine inheritance! (Ps. 27:9a)  
*V. To Thee, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not silent to me!*  
(Ps. 27:1a)

### **Tone 4 Prokeimenon** (St. Panteleimon)

God is wondrous in His saints, / the God of Israel. (Ps. 67:35a)

### **Romans 15:1-7 (Epistle)**

Brethren, we then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification. For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me." For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.

### **2 Timothy 2:1-10 (Epistle, St. Panteleimon)**

Brethren, you therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier. And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. The hardworking farmer must be first to partake of the crops. Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things. Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel, for which I

suffer trouble as an evildoer, even to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained. Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

#### **Tone 6**

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

*V. He who dwelleth in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the heavenly God. (Ps. 90:1)*

*V. He will say to the Lord: "My Protector and my Refuge; my God, in Whom I trust." (Ps. 90:2)*

#### **Tone 4**

*V. The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree, and grow like a cedar in Lebanon. (Ps. 91:11)*

### **Matthew 9:27-35 (Gospel)**

When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, "Son of David, have mercy on us!" And when He had come into 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 let it be to you." And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, saying, "See that no one knows it." But when they had departed, they spread the news about Him in all that country. As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a man, mute and demon-possessed. And when the demon was cast out, the mute spoke. And the multitudes marveled, saying, "It was never seen like this in Israel!" But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons." Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

### **John 15:17-16:2 (Gospel, St. Panteleimon)**

These things I command you, that you love one another. If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake,

because they do not know Him who sent Me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. He who hates Me hates My Father also. If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father. But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause.' But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning. These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service.

### **Explanation of Today's Gospel Reading**

By Blessed Theophylact

Archbishop of Ochrid and Bulgaria

**27. When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, "Son of David, have mercy on us!"** The blind men addressed to God the words "Have mercy," but as to a man, "O Son of David." For it was well known among the Jews that the Messiah would come from the seed of David.

**28. And when He had come into 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."** He led the blind men along even as far as the house, to show their steadfast faith, and thus to condemn the Jews. He asks them if they believe, showing that faith can accomplish all things.

**29-30. Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it be to you." And their eyes were opened.** He healed within the house and in private, to show us how to avoid vainglory. In everything He did, He taught humility.

**30-31. And Jesus sternly warned them, saying, "See that no one knows it." But when they had departed, they spread the news about Him in all that country.** Do you see Christ's humility? They spread abroad His fame in thanksgiving, not out of disobedience. But if in another place Christ says, "Go and tell of the glory of God," there is nothing contradictory in this. For He wants them to say nothing about Himself, but to speak of the glory of God.

**32-33. As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a man, mute and demon-possessed. And when the demon was cast out, the mute spoke.** The disease was not a natural one, but from the demon. This is why others brought him forward. He himself was not able to call upon Jesus, as the demon had bound his tongue. Therefore, Jesus does not require faith of him but immediately heals him by casting out the demon which had prevented his speech. **And the multitudes marveled, saying, "It was never seen like this in Israel!"** The multitude marveled, placing Christ even above the prophets and the patriarchs. For He healed with authority, unlike those who first had to pray. But let us see what the Pharisees said.

**34. But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons."** These words are the height of stupidity. For no demon casts out other demons. But let us suppose that He cast out demons as one who served the prince of demons, that is, as a magician. How then did He heal diseases, forgive sins, and preach the kingdom? For the demon does just the opposite: he brings on diseases and separates man from God.

**35. Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.** As Lover of mankind, He did not wait for them to come to Him, but He Himself went all around. Therefore, they could not say as an excuse that "no one taught us." He draws them to Himself by word and deed, teaching and working wonders.

#### **Communion Hymn**

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! *(Ps. 148:1)*

The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance! He shall not fear evil tidings! *(Ps. 111:6)*

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!