

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN JANUARY 12, 2014

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

THE HOUSE BLESSING SCHEDULE is ready. Notices will be going in the mail, but we also have a list available for you to check. Sorry for the delay. If the date/time is not convenient, please contact Fr. Nick at: 508-335-7378.

THE PARISH COUNCIL will hold its regular monthly meeting on **Monday, January 13th at 6:30 pm.** Parish Council Members, please let Deb Sedares know if you are unable to attend.

THE 2014 CHURCH CALENDARS in both English and Romanian are in! They are available in the Narthex. A small donation toward their cost would be welcomed.

COFFEE HOUR SPONSORS ARE NEEDED for the coming weeks. Please speak with Presvytera Maria if you would like to sponsor one.

A MEMORIAL SERVICE is celebrated today for the servant of God, **Manoug Melichian**, who fell asleep in the Lord just these past days in Craiova, Romania. May his memory be eternal! *May our loving Lord rest him with the saints!*

TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR is spon-

GREETERS TEAM 4:
DEBORAH SEDARES &
EVAN STAMOULIS

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED

COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP CREW A:
MARGARITE LANDRY, CHRISTINE
MASTERJOHN & KATINA COCAVESSIS



THE SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY

APOSTOLIC READING: EPHESIANS 4:7-13

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 4:12-17

(THE LORD BEGINS HIS MINISTRY)



TONE 4 ⊕ MATINS GOSPEL 7

sored in memory of **Manoug Melichian** by Gabriel Melichian, Mary Davoudian, his cousins Alice Apostolou and her family, Simona Alenak and her family, and Vartus Varadian and her family.

BURN THE MORTGAGE CAMPAIGN

THE "BURN THE MORTGAGE CAMPAIGN" launched at our St.

Nicholas Feast Day luncheon is under-way. Our goal is to pay off our entire church building debt over the next three years! As we announced at the luncheon we already have over \$100,000 in pledges committed towards this goal! You may pick up a copy of the pamphlet which we distributed at the Feast Day Luncheon that explains this campaign at the candle stand. We have a number of people who have volunteered to work along side the other members of the Parish Council and Father Nick to assure the success of our efforts. This campaign committee members include: Gerry Belba, Jackie Cavanaugh, Tom Fitzpatrick, Margarite Landry, Bogdan Nedelescu, Tim Rucho, George Soter and Evans Tsoules. As we enter the New Year each of us will be asked to consider how we might participate in this campaign. Please take some time to prayerfully consider the work that is before us as a parish and how you might like to participate in it along with your fellow parishioners. May God Bless you and your loved ones with health, happiness and every good thing through the coming year!

COMMUNITY NEWS

MICHAEL CLEM is running in this year's Boston Marathon as part of the Spaulding Race for Rehab Team. He's set a personal goal of raising \$5,000 toward the total goal of \$500,000 of the



DATES TO REMEMBER

- Mon, Jan 13 Parish Council Meeting, 6:30 pm
- Sat, Feb 1 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry
- Sat, Feb 22 Saturday of the Souls, Liturgy 10am
- Mon, March 3 Great Lent begins
- Sun, April 13 Palm Sunday
- Sun, April 20 Great and Holy Pascha

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas

Spaulding team. He's asking for supporting donation. You can read more in a letter he wrote, along with ways to donate. Printed copies are also available at the candles.

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

Holy Trinity Nursing & Rehabilitation Center & Holy Trinity Hospice are Orthodox Charities and rely on your donations to continue the mission of providing the best care possible.

NURSING HOME ADMINISTRATOR SOUGHT: Please contact Dolores Schermer at dschermer@radiusexecutivesolutions.com

HOLY TRINITY HOSPICE ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR SOUGHT: Please contact Francis McGrath at fmcgrath@htnr.net.

ALSO, EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AT HOLY TRINITY are always posted on the website. Current positions include: Several CNA, LPN and RN positions available. For information on these positions and other openings, please visit: www.htnr.net.

A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

BLESSED ARE YOU, LORD JESUS, light of lights, who enlighten all creation with your resplendent brilliance! By coming into our midst, you enable us to pursue a new way of life, free of the burdens of the old law, for, in your infinite wisdom, you give us the marvelous mystery of your holy church wherein we work out our salvation with your divine help. As we prepare now for another day, in your great compassion pardon us of all our faults and failings, and purify us of all that displeases you. Fill our minds with understanding, help us to grow in love as well as wisdom, and deepen our faithfulness to you with every new day.

For you are indeed our God, and we give you glory, together with your eternal Father and your al-lholy, good, and life-giving Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

NAMEDAYS

January 6

The Holy Theophany of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

Francis Polymeros
Jordan Sparages

January 7

The Holy Prophet and Forerunner John the Baptist

John Banks-Binici
Joanna Boukalis
Rev. Fr. John Daly
Nita Dumitriu
Sean Fahey
Ian Mayer
Jonathan Paul Maynard
John Rucho
John David Thoren

January 12

St. Tatiana the Martyr of Rome

Tatiana Sofia Karadimitriou

January 17

St. Anthony the Great

Anthony Theodore Christo
Scott Anthony Maynard
Anthony Rucho
Tony Nicholas Trakadas

January 18

St. Athanasios Patriarch of Alexandria

Thanas Lolo
Arthur Peterson

January 22

The Holy Apostle Timothy

Rev. Fr. Timothy Lowe
Timothy Rucho

January 25

St. Gregory the Theologian

Rev. Fr. Gregory Christakos
Dr. Gregory Tsongalis

January 28

St. Ephraim the Syrian

Rev. Fr. Ephraim Peters



LISTEN TO THE WEEKLY NATIONAL ORTHODOX RADIO BROADCAST "COME RECEIVE THE LIGHT"

BY WEB OR PODCAST: WWW.RECEIVE.ORG

GROWING INTO OUR POTENTIAL

THE Lord's Epiphany at his baptism in the Jordan by John marks the beginning of his earthly ministry. Very soon after this, John will be imprisoned and put to death. Jesus will begin preaching and healing. Slowly people will recognize that Jesus is the Messiah. The Scripture readings for this Sunday following the Feast of Epiphany — the Gospel lesson is Matthew 4:12-17 and the Epistle lesson is Ephesians 4:7-13 — speak of the Lord's ministry, and the ministry given to those who have chosen to follow him.

The selected reading from Ephesians is taken from a section of St. Paul's Letter where he speaks of the unity of the Body of Christ and how each of us can contribute to building it up. He says, "each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift." (v. 7) In other words, each of us has been given something by Christ that is essential for the well-being of the whole Church. Christ shares his gifts with us. We are essential participants in Christ's work of salvation. No gift is better or more important than another. Each is needed; all are critical. Our task is to understand our gift and use it for the well-being of others.

In order to emphasize both the power and humility of the Lord Jesus he quotes Psalm 68:18 adding insights from both Jewish Biblical scholars of the time as well as his own. So he says: "When he ascended on high he made captivity [entrapment by the Evil One] itself a captive; he gave gifts to his people." (v. 8) Here is how St. Paul explains this verse: "When it says, 'He ascended,' what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is the same one who ascended far above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things". (v. 9-10)

St. Paul wants us to appreciate how the Second Person of the Holy Trinity,

God's Son, "descended" to the earth. He came and lived among us. Some Biblical scholars say that when St. Paul says he "descended into the lower parts of the earth" this is also a reference to his death and descent to Hades to liberate the souls of the righteous held captive there. St. Paul's central point is that by both descending and ascending Jesus defeated the Evil One. "He made captivity itself a captive." And, "he gave gifts."

What are these gifts that Christ gave us? "The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers." (v. 11) St. Paul gives us other lists of gifts given us, for example in Romans 12:3-8 and 1 Corinthians 12:1-31. However, the list he gives in Ephesians has to do with the Church, particularly offices in the Church. These are not 'personal' gifts. Rather, they are gifts "for building up the body of Christ;" and, "to equip the saints [that is us, average Christians] for the work of ministry." (v. 12)

When God gives us gifts they are always meant to be used for the well-being of others. They don't belong to us; for us to use narrowly or even selfishly. This is particularly evident in the four gifts that St. Paul names here: apostles, prophets, evangelists; and pastors/ teachers. Each of these gifts represents a position of responsibility within the Church. The apostles were those with a direct, first-hand experience of Jesus and given a commission to preach Him. A prophet is an inspired preacher who encourages, warns or stimulates the community. An evangelist is an itinerant preacher, proclaiming the Gospel from community to community. The pastor/teacher is the presbyter (priest) or bishop; the one responsible for ministering to and guiding the local community. These gifts, and the responsibilities that come with them,

have as their sole purpose the edification, the building-up, of the Body of Christ.

The gifts and offices are given, "until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ." (v. 13) You can see from what St. Paul says that these gifts are not intended to be permanent; that is to say, they are given to us for a purpose and toward an end. The end is that all of us should come to maturity, the full stature of Christ.

Let's look at some of the phrases St. Paul gives us. He tells us that we are expected to come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God. The "unity of the faith" means that we, each of us in the Church (that is, the whole Church) and each of us in the church (that is, our home parish), come to a common and correct faith. The "knowledge of the Son of God" does not mean to "know Jesus." Rather, it means to know what Jesus knows; to think and understand as Jesus does.

When we are able to take on "the mind of Christ," we become mature. We become fully human. When we say that Jesus became fully human, we are not only saying that the Son of God became like us; we are also saying that Christ became what we were intended to be — when He created us. He has come to give us the opportunity to become fully human — but, only if we want to.

God gives us gifts to help one another. He asks us to learn, grow, and fully develop into the kind of persons who look like Adam and Eve in Paradise. He invites us to live up to our full potential. He give us the gifts we need and the grace to realize it.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA

Stewardship in Action!

As you think about your stewardship offering for 2014, please consider making a commitment to help in one of the many ministry and parish administration opportunities here at St. Nick's. A few to consider are listed below:

Outreach Ministry: Caring and compassionate people are needed to spend time and assist some elderly or shut-ins in our community. Needs vary from person to person, but in general we seek individuals willing to make a once-per-week commitment to visit with members of our Parish family and provide support as needed (help with chores, take shopping, bring a hot lunch, run an errand, or just visit and socialize). Consistency and dependability are important qualities in this role.

Data Entry: An individual is needed to offer 2-4 hours per week at the Church doing basic data entry at the direction of the Priest / Treasurer. Knowledge of basic accounting and Microsoft Office programs is helpful, especially how databases work, and diligence and precision are needed qualities.

Parish Mailing Coordinator: A liaison is needed to learn the rules and procedures of non-profit bulk mail through the USPS, to train volunteers to assist, at the direction of the Priest / Parish Council to compile items to be included, and to schedule mailings.

Mustard Seed: Volunteers are needed to coordinate this ministry of our Church to respond to our Lord's command to "feed the hungry." The Mustard Seed is a Catholic Worker house providing dinner to about 150 people in need each day. Our Parish is committed to providing and serving that meal on a Friday evening six times per year. In particular, one person is needed to plan the menu and coordinate volunteers for cooking of the meal. Another person is needed to organize the delivery of the food to the Mustard Seed and to organize volunteers to serve the meal, and return pans/clean-up back at the Church.

Religious Education for Children: There are many opportunities if you are interested in teaching or assisting with Church School and/or working with the Youth of our parish on activities and programs geared to them.

Teen / Young Adult Programming: A particular need in our parish is one or two adult leaders or coordinators for teen / young adult programs and activities. The focus tasks would be outreach to teens, organize and schedule meetings, and assist and guide the group towards self-directed initiatives and programs.

"50-Something" Coordinator: A volunteer or two is needed to plan daytime activities for retirees solely for the purpose of fellowship and enjoyment. Responding to interests of participants, this person would plan and organize excursions, day trips, social gatherings or other types of activities as desired.

Marketing / Public Relations: A volunteer is needed to learn about and access free media opportunities to promote Parish events and fundraisers. Areas to research and explore include free public service announcements provided to non-profits by radio stations, newspapers, online community listings, local cable television, etc.

Coffee Hour Clean-Up Crews: We schedule 4-5 groups of people to take responsibility for cleanup following regular coffee hour on Sundays. We need more volunteers to add to existing groups. Rotating responsibilities mean that you'll be on-duty only once a month.

St. Nick's Kitchen: Throughout much of the year, baking occurs on Thursday mornings with prep work preceding on Wednesday evenings. Annually, sales of baked goods is our most successful fundraiser, and we are in dire need of some new volunteers to learn the skills and techniques, as well as to assist with general kitchen tasks.

Orthodox Food Center: Our regular commitment is the first Saturday of the month from 9am to noon. About 4 people are needed each week.

Greeters: We would like to schedule 4 - 5 groups of people (2 to 3) to take responsibility for greeting members and visitors to the church each Sunday during Liturgy and assisting with the candles, ushering and related duties. Rotating responsibilities mean that you'll be on duty only once a month.

Please speak with Fr. Nick or Deb Sedares to learn more about these opportunities to serve or to be directed to the appropriate contact person.