

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN

FEBRUARY 16, 2014

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

THE FOUNDERS DAY LUNCHEON POSTPONED and reschedule for next Sunday, February 23. We will commemorate the anniversary of our first celebration of the Divine Liturgy here on Gold Street. The Luncheon is sponsored in loving memory of Nick and Niki Demake, by Lisa Demake and George & Angela Demake. **Donation is \$20 per adult and \$5 per child. Reservations are required** by calling 508-845-0088 or by contacting Deb Sedares, or Mary Anna Dymek. Space is still available and all are welcome!

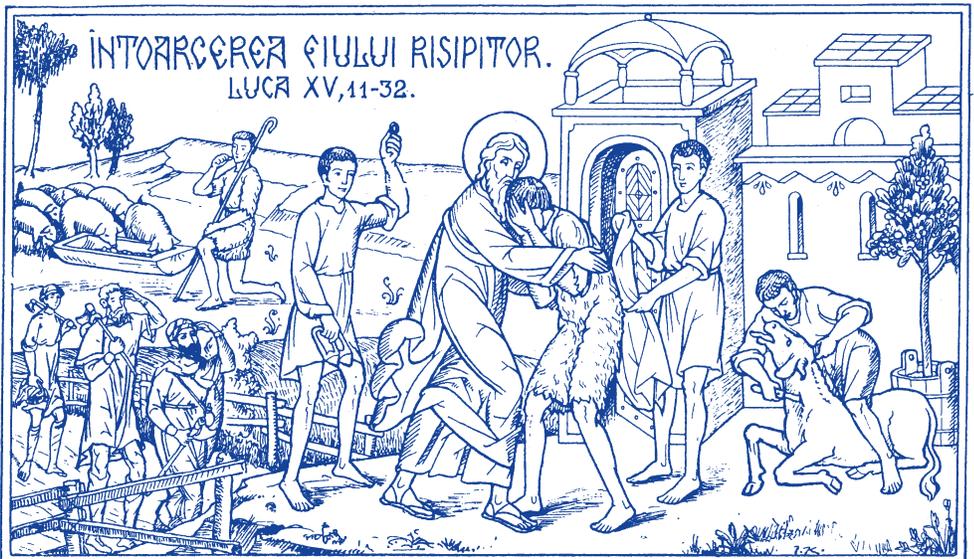
HELP IS NEEDED with setting the hall for the luncheon on Saturday, February 22, and with serving and after the luncheon with clearing the tables, resetting the hall, and clean-up of the kitchen and sink area. Please contact **Deb Sedares, Mary Anna Dymek and Christine Toda** if you can help. Many hands make light work!

UNCEASING PRAYERS AND BEST WISHES. Fr. Nick has been released from the hospital and is recuperating in the comfort of his own home. He is very grateful for all the love and concern that has been shown to him, and

GREETERS TEAM 3:
EVANS TSOULES AND
TOM FITZPATRICK

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED

COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP CREW B:
MARIA KALPIDOU, TATIANA
KARADIMITRIOU, ELIAS CHRISTO,
DIMITRI CHRISTO



THE THIRTY FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

APOSTOLIC READING: 1 CORINTHANS 6:12-20 ☩ GOSPEL: LUKE 15:11-32

(SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON)

TONE 1 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 1

appreciates the cards and “well-wished” sent his way. We continue to pray that our loving Lord will grant him a quick and complete recovery.

HOUSE BLESSINGS ARE TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED. Due to Fr. Nick's illness, the schedule for house blessing is on hold. When Fr. Nick has recovered, we will resume house blessings and set up a schedule. You will be notified when we'll be at your home when a new schedule is set. Thank you for your patience.

PITA BAKING, weather permitting, **this Thursday, February 20th** at 9:00 am. Everyone's help is welcome. Questions? Please see Chris Toda. No experience necessary!

THE MUSTARD SEED MEAL is scheduled for **Friday, February 21st.** The Mustard Seed is a Catholic Worker home providing dinner to about 150 people in need each day. Help is needed preparing, transporting and serving the

meal for the Mustard Seed. Because of illness, Fr. Nick will not be able to coordinate delivery and serving of the meal this month. As such, we need extra help to ensure that our commitment to provide this meal to the needy of our Worcester community is met. We will be preparing the meal at the church beginning at 12:00noon and will be transporting the meal to the Mustard Seed at 5:00pm. **Please see Deb Sedares during coffee hour or contact her** at: Dsedares@pinehills.com for details on how you can help. As the date falls during school vacation week, the youth of our parish are especially welcomed and

DATES TO REMEMBER

- Thurs, Feb 20 Pita Baking, 9 am
- Fri, Feb 21 Mustard Seed Meal
- Sat, Feb 22 Saturday of the Souls, Liturgy 10am
- Sun, Feb 23 Founders' Day Luncheon
- Sat, March 1 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry
- Mon, March 3 Great Lent begins
- Sun, March 9 Annual General Assembly
- Sun, April 13 Palm Sunday
- Sun, April 20 Great and Holy Pascha

34 GOLD STREET, SHREWSBURY, MA 01545-6238 ♦ VOICE: 508.845.0088 ♦ FAX: 508.845.8850

E-MAIL: FRNICK@STNICHOLASCHURCH.ORG ♦ WEB: WWW.STNICHOLASCHURCH.ORG

A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas

encouraged to participate in both preparations and serving the meal.

SATURDAY OF THE SOULS is **February 22nd**. Divine Liturgy will begin at 10:00 am. If you would like to make the Memorial Wheat (coliva), please contact Fr. Nick.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY has been rescheduled for **Sunday, March 9th** following the Divine Liturgy.

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

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

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF NURSING. Please contact Susan Benoit at sbenoit@htnr.net

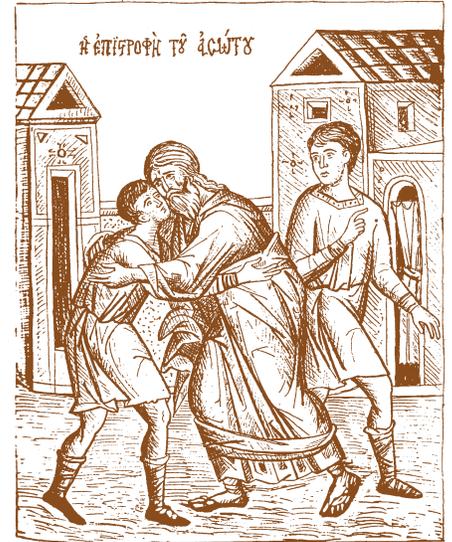
ALSO, EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AT HOLY TRINITY are always posted on the website. Current positions include: Several CNA, LPN and RN positions available. For information on these positions and other openings, please visit: www.htnr.net.

A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

O WONDROUS LORD, OUR GOD AND FATHER: The eyes of our faith enable us to perceive your glory and the light of your Son's life especially as it shone forth on the cross. Fill us with the grace we need in our deals with each other, so that always being honest, fair, and just, we, too, may reflect that light and glory. Permit us to be conscious of ourselves, only so that we may ever please you during our time on this earth.

By the grace and mercies and love for us of your only son, with whom you are blest, together with your all-holy, good, and life-giving Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.



Every day our Savior teaches us with His own voice: so let us listen to the Scriptures on the Prodigal Son who regained wisdom, and let us follow the good example of his repentance with faith, and with humility of heart cry out to Him who knows all secrets: We have sinned against You, merciful Father, and are not worthy ever again to be called Your children as before. But since by nature You are the Lover of mankind, receive me a penitent and make me as one of your hired servants.

—Ikos of the Prodigal Son



ALL THINGS MAY BE LAWFUL ... BUT ARE ALL THINGS HELPFUL?

THIS is the second preparatory week before Great Lent — the Sunday of the Prodigal Son. The Epistle lesson this week is from St. Paul First Letter to the Corinthians, 6:12-20. His major concern in this selection is about illicit sexual relations, but the underlying argument is something deeper and more universal: how are we to act in our present life and body? What is our responsibility to our Lord Jesus Christ and our fellow Christians in the way we behave in the here and now?

The opening verse of this reading is a quote, repeated twice: “All things are lawful for me; but not all things are helpful. ‘All things are lawful for me,’ but I will not be enslaved by anything.” (v. 12) There is a difference of opinion among Biblical scholars. Some say that this is something St. Paul said and is being used by others against him. Others scholars hold that it is a saying of a faction in the Corinthian Church that St. Paul is arguing against. Whichever the case, what we need to understand is that St. Paul, who argued against rigid adherence to the Jewish Law, now feels this argument is being used to open the door to all sorts of license. He offers two arguments against this way of thinking.

The first is that while one might be free from the narrow constraints of the Law — free because of the freedom given us through our Lord’s death and resurrection — it doesn’t necessarily follow that the constraints of the Law were not helpful. For example, just because one might be considered to be mature enough not to need posted speed limits, it does not follow that driving 90 mph down the road is safe. While it might be ‘legal,’ it is certainly not helpful to either the driver or any child or adult who might be in the path of the vehicle. We can all think of examples where written rules may not be necessary, because the prudent person already knows how they should act, but the rule helps nonetheless.

His second point is useful to us as

we undertake the self-examination required of us when we begin Great Lent. All things may be lawful (but, as St. Paul says), I will not be enslaved by anything. This is the essence of the Fast. Our Lord through His whole Economy has opened the path to freedom.

Here is a helpful image. When the children of Israel were subject to Pharaoh they were required to make mud bricks. Because we are subject to our passions, we are forced to make mud bricks out of our foolishness. Pharaoh is a symbol for the Devil. Israel’s forty years in the desert are a symbol of our forty-day fast. To be free from Pharaoh and our sins (mud bricks) we need to change our focus. If we have learned nothing else from the excesses of the past decade we should have learned that nothing is for free; what is ‘free’ comes with a heavy price — the mud bricks we’ll be making for quite some time. God’s ways offer us freedom; the Evil One will keep us making bricks without straw forever.

“Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food — and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power.” (v. 13-14) St. Paul is giving us an entirely new way of seeing our bodies and our selves. He is telling the persons who were using the beginning verse against him that they completely misunderstand God’s purpose. All natural impulses, such as eating to satisfy hunger, were designed for a finite purpose: to minister to our current existence. The life, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ manifests to us a new reality. Our present bodies will not be discarded when we die; they will be transfigured. Our call is not simply to purity, but to become the very vessels of holiness.

It is with this in mind that we read the next four verses. “Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I therefore take the mem-

bers of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that he who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, ‘The two shall become one flesh.’ But he who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Shun immorality. Every other sin which a man commits is outside the body; but the immoral man sins against his own body.” (v. 15-18)

Remember, in St. Paul’s day Corinth was a very free-wheeling place. All sorts of behavior was considered normal and acceptable. The philosophy of “if it feels good, do it” had many followers, including some members of the Corinthian Church. Many of these people felt that the body was a disposable vessel and a prison for the soul, not something holy and sacred. So, when St. Paul said, “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God?” (v. 19), this shocked and scandalized them. They wanted to be freed from their bodies.

For us Christians, our Lord’s resurrection from the dead changes the way we understand the relationship between our physical body and our soul; between the world around us — God’s creation — and the immaterial God who created it.

Finally, St. Paul uses the image of slavery to remind the Corinthians of what they committed themselves to when they decided to follow Christ. “You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.” (v. 19-20) In the Church we refer to ourselves as the “servant of God.” The word “servant” is more accurately translated as “slave.” It reminds us that while we may think we are free, we are always subject to something or someone, however, we still can decide. Shall we be slaves to our passions and subject to the Evil One? Or, shall we be slaves to the One who will set us free? That’s the choice.

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.