

# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN MARCH 23, 2014

## THIS WEEK'S NEWS

**HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN PHILIP**, Primate of the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese, fell asleep in the Lord this past Wednesday. We mourn his passing together with our Antiochian brothers and sisters, and extend to them our deepest sympathy. *May his memory be eternal!*

**THE VENERATION OF THE PRECIOUS CROSS** is today, the 3rd Sunday of Great Lent. **Donations are needed to cover the cost of the flowers that adorn the Holy Cross.** If you would like to contribute towards that, please see Fr. Nick or Tim Rucho.

**LITURGY FOR THE ANNUNCIATION** will be held together with and at our sister parish of Ss Anagyroi in Marlborough. The **Feast is THIS TUESDAY**, March 25th and Liturgy begins at 10:00 am. If you need a ride, contact Fr. Nick.

**THE PRE-SANCTIFIED LITURGY Wednesday, March 26th will be at St. St. Mary's Assumption. Liturgy and begins at 6:00 pm.** Persons wishing to receive Holy Communion must prepare themselves in the usual manner, including total fasting from at least noon.

**GREETERS TEAM 4:**  
DEBORAH SEDARES & EVAN STAMOULIS

**ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED**

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



### THIRD SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT VENERATION OF THE CROSS

APOSTOLIC READING: HEBREWS 4:14-5:6 ☩ GOSPEL: 8:34-9:1  
TONE 6 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 6

**FOOD PANTRY.** Help is needed for our special responsibility to staff the 5th Saturday at the Orthodox Food Center **THIS coming Saturday, March 29th, from 9 am - noon.** We are also responsible to staff the Pantry on our **regular Saturday, April 5th.** About 4 people are needed. Likewise, donations of food are always needed, and may be dropped off at the Food Pantry housed at St. Spyridon Cathedral. If you can help in this worthwhile ministry, please speak with **Nicole Peterson or Lisa Mielnicki.**

**BAKING ORDERS FOR EASTER** need to be in by **Sunday, April 6th.** If you have family or friends who would like pitas, pastry, or pastry platters for the holiday, please make sure we get the orders in time! Order forms are at the candles. **Any questions,**

**please contact Chris Toda.**

**PITA BAKING**, weather permitting, **this Thursday, March 27th** at 9:00 am. Everyone's help is welcome. Questions? Please see Chris Toda. No experience necessary!

**GOD BLESS THE NEWLY ILLUMINED Natalia Avery Stevens**, daughter of Paul Stevens and Amanda Sedares. Natalia was baptized last

### DATES TO REMEMBER

- Tues, March 25 Lit for Annunciation at Marlborough
- Wed, March 26 PreSanctified Lit, St. Mary's 6 pm
- Thurs, March 27 Pita Baking, 9 am
- Sat, March 29 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry  
Electronics Recycling, 9am-2pm
- Wed, April 2 Pre-Sanctified Lit at St. Spyridon 6pm
- Sat, April 5 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry
- Wed, April 9 Pre-Sanctified Lit at St. George 6pm
- Sun, April 13 Palm Sunday & Luncheon
- Fri, April 18 Great Friday Children's Retreat
- Sun, April 20 Great and Holy Pascha

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas

## A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**W**HOM SHALL WE GLORIFY? Whom shall we praise? And to whom shall we give thanks, if not to you, O God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for that terrible instrument of the cross on which your Son was put to death for love of us? Though it was a symbol of shame, he transformed it into a resplendent trophy of victory. As we venerate its triumph during these days, and contemplate the salvation it purchased for us, help us truly understand its meaning so that we may share in the resurrection it promises.

Through the same Lord Jesus Christ, with whom you are blest, together with your all-holy, good, and life-giving Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Saturday. Her sponsor is Deb Sedares. *Many years to all the family!*

**A HOLY THURSDAY/GREAT FRIDAY VIGIL** will be held following the Service of the 12 Gospels of our Lord's Passion (Matins of Great and Holy Friday). Teens and others interested in participating in the Vigil please speak with **Deb Sedares**.

**THE GREAT FRIDAY CHILDREN'S RETREAT** will be held on **Friday, April 18 starting at 10:30 am**, and concluding with a celebration of Great Ves-



pers at 2:00 pm. All children grades kindergarten through 8th are welcome to attend. Younger children are welcomed accompanied by a parent. A sign-up sheet will be posted at the candle stand. Please be sure to register your child to attend. Besides assisting with the children's lessons and activities, assistance is needed with lunch, snacks and other logistics. For additional information and offers to assist, please **contact Valarie Stamoulis or Mary Anna Dymek**.

**AN "E-WASTE RECYCLING DAY"** will be held on **Saturday, March 29th, from 9-2 here at the Church**. You can get rid of unwanted electronic appliances at a minimal cost and help protect the environment. A few folks are needed to help direct traffic into and out of the church parking lot. Please see Gerry Belba during coffee hour if you can help.

**TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR** is sponsored by **John Rucho**.

## PALM SUNDAY DINNER

Please join us for our annual **PALM SUNDAY DINNER** following the Divine Liturgy on **Sunday, April 13, 2014**. A traditional baked fish dinner will be served and homemade baked macaroni and cheese for children. **Tickets are \$20.00 for adults and \$5.00 for children**. Reservations can be made at church, by e-mail or by calling the church at 508-845-0088 and leaving a message.

**WE ALSO NEED HELP** with preparing the meal and setting the hall for the dinner following the liturgy on St. Lazarus Saturday, as well as assistance with serving the dinner and clean up following. **A sign-up sheet is posted on the Stewardship Bulletin Board** in the hall or you can e-mail Deb Sedares (dsedares@pinehills.com)

## HOLY TRINITY NEWS

**EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AT HOLY TRINITY** are always posted on the website. Current positions include: Several CNA, LPN and RN positions available. Also, LPN and CNA positions available at the Ichabod Washburn Hospice Residence. For information on these positions and other openings, please visit: [www.htnr.net](http://www.htnr.net).

**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.

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

BY WEB OR PODCAST: [WWW.RECEIVE.ORG](http://WWW.RECEIVE.ORG)

## THE HEAVENLY LITURGY

**W**E'VE NOW reached the third or mid-point Sunday of Great Lent, and are asked to pause and reflect on our Lord's Precious Cross. The Epistle lesson it taken from the Letter to the Hebrews 4:14-5:6. St. Paul continues to reflect on Jesus as the high priest who presents our case before the Throne of God. There are two major points that he highlights in this reading. The first is that Jesus is like us in every respect, except for sin, and so he can thoroughly identify with our struggles, and present our case before God sympathetically. The second is that because of Jesus and his sacrifice, we can have more confidence before God than would have previously been possible.

St. Paul says that, "We have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God" (v. 14). There is a subtle reference to Moses in this verse; a contrast made between Moses who was prevented from entering the Promised Land because of his sin in Sinai, with Jesus who was permitted to "pass through the heavens" because of his faithfulness. Hebrews is constantly drawing our attention to possibilities present in the Old Covenant now realized in the New Covenant.

"For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin" (v. 15). When St. Paul speaks of the ability of Jesus as high priest to "sympathize with our weaknesses" he is not just referring to the fact that he is human like us; he is also saying that unlike the high priests of the Jerusalem Temple, he lived the life of a common person, not insulated from the real worries and concerns of daily existence. He also says that in every respect

Jesus was tempted as we are, but without sin. There is a nuance to the Greek verb tense "has been tempted" that doesn't come across in English. It means that he was tempted not just once or only on a particular occasion, but continually. Jesus was tempted all the time to do this or that, in the same way we are; only he did not succumb. He experienced the allure, but he resisted. He can relate to our struggle. More importantly, we can gain courage from his example. He shows us that it is possible to weather the storm of temptations.

St. Paul says that we can, "With confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (v. 16). Christ's example and position before God gives us access to God.

This is an image that we might find hard to relate to in our more egalitarian society. We are a democratic society and consider access to power a right, not a privilege. Of course, we know that even in America some people are more equal than others, yet we see this as an abuse of the fundamental egalitarian principle. In order to appreciate what Jesus, our Lord, did, we need to do some reality-checking. Each of us, from the highest to the lowest, will find ourselves in serious need of help at sometime in our life, especially before God. Unfortunately, we usually realize this only when we've hit bottom.

The image of the heavenly temple and God's throne that St. Paul gives us is much closer to our actual circumstance. If we honestly examine our hearts and our actions, we will quickly realize that we have no way to access God's grace on our own. Most of us are like that poor man in the parable who shows up at the wedding dressed inap-

propriately (cf. Matthew 22:12). The king had him arrested, cuffed, and thrown into the outer darkness. This, brothers and sisters, is our plight without Jesus. He lends us proper attire so that we can confidently approach God's throne of mercy.

We Orthodox understand the Eucharistic celebration, the Divine Liturgy, as us approaching God's heavenly throne. The celebrant, usually our parish priest, is the icon of our Lord, who is Himself the only true celebrant. He continually presents Himself before His Father, for our sake. In the Divine Liturgy we are healed of our wounds and changed by grace. Jesus intercedes, presenting Himself as a sacrifice for our sins.

Listen to how St. Paul explains it: "Every high priest chosen from among mortals is put in charge of things pertaining to God on their behalf, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He is able to deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is subject to weakness; and because of this he must offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people. And one does not presume to take this honor, but takes it only when called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him, 'You are my Son, today I have begotten you'; as he says also in another place, 'You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek'" (5:1-6).

Next week I will speak more of Melchizedek. Today, I would like us to reflect on this glimpse that St. Paul gives of the Heavenly Liturgy. St. John in his Revelation (chapter 4) gives us a similar picture of the continual worship taking place in Heaven. Our Eucharist

## DONATIONS FOR HOLY WEEK

*General donations in any amount to defray the cost of decorations for the Paschal Feast are most appreciated. Some specific needs are:*

Flowers for Palm Sunday Icon .....	\$50.00
Palms .....	\$100.00
Flowers for Bridegroom Icon .....	\$50.00
Holy Thursday Gospel Candles .....	\$60.00
Wreaths for Cross (Great Friday) .....	\$50.00
(Resurrection) .....	\$100.00
Resurrection Icon .....	\$50.00
Bay Leaves for Holy Saturday .....	\$100.00
1 Gallon of Olive Oil .....	\$25.00
½ lb Incense .....	\$40.00
Priest's Paschal Candle .....	\$50.00
Rose Oil for Epitaphion .....	\$25.00

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Flowers for Epitaphion .....	\$500.00
Decorations for Pascha .....	\$350.00

*Please see Fr. Nick or Lillian Chachi to make a donation*

celebration is an image, an icon, of this Liturgy. In the Liturgy, just before the Lord's Prayer, we thank our loving God for the fact that the gifts of bread and wine we offered have been received "at His holy, heavenly, and spiritual altar as an offering of spiritual fragrance," and ask that he "may in return send upon us divine grace and the gift of the Holy Spirit." It is the heavenly Altar before almighty God that we are referring to.

Next Sunday when we wake up and are thinking about being late for Liturgy, or skipping it entirely, let us remember this image of the Heavenly Liturgy, and, hopefully, reconsider.

**FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA**



Six months after John the Forerunner's conception, the Archangel Gabriel was sent by God to Nazareth, a town of Galilee, to Mary the Virgin, who had come from the Temple a mature maiden. According to the tradition handed down by the Fathers, she had been betrothed to Joseph four months. On coming to Joseph's house, the Archangel declared: "Rejoice, Full of Grace, the Lord is with you: blessed are you among women." After some consideration, and turmoil of soul, and fear because of this greeting, the Virgin, when she had finally obtained full assurance concerning God's unsearchable condescension and the ineffable dispensation that was to take place through her, and believing that all things are possible to the Most High, answered in humility: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it to me according to thy word." And at this, the Holy Spirit came upon her, and the power of the Most High overshadowed her all-blameless womb, and the Son and Word of God, Who existed before the ages, was conceived past speech and understanding, and became flesh in her immaculate body (Luke 1:26-38).

# 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.

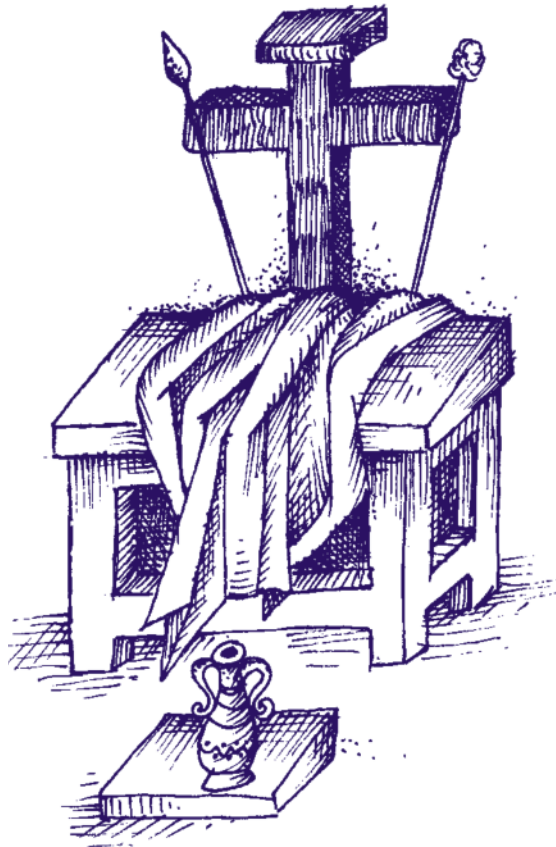
*Please speak with Fr. Nick or Deb Sedares to learn more about these opportunities to serve or to be directed to the appropriate contact person.*

# PRE-SANCTIFIED LITURGIES 2014

Wednesday, March 5, 2014  
St. Nicholas Church

Wednesday, March 12, 2014  
St. Spyridon Cathedral

Wednesday, March 19, 2014  
St. George Cathedral



Wednesday, March 26, 2014  
St. Mary's Assumption

Wednesday, April 2, 2014  
St. Spyridon Cathedral

Wednesday, April 9, 2014  
St. George Cathedral

Each Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts will begin at 6:00 p.m. The faithful should prepare themselves for Holy Communion in the usual way: prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and regular confession. There will be a modest 'pot-luck' lenten meal offered after the Liturgy. People are encouraged to bring something to share with others.