

# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN MAY 4, 2014

## THIS WEEK'S NEWS

**THANKS TO THE FOOD PANTRY VOLUNTEERS** for working the Orthodox Food Center on behalf of our parish yesterday. Our regular commitment is the first Saturday of the month from 9am to noon. About 4 people are needed. If you can help in this worthwhile ministry, please speak with Nicole Peterson or Lisa Mielnicki. Our next Saturday is July 5th.

**THANKS TO THE CLEANERS** who did a few "deep cleaning" sessions this week, scraping wax and the like. **MORE CLEANING SESSIONS** are being planned. If you'd like to help, talk to **Christine Masterjohn**.

**THE PARISH COUNCIL** will hold its regular monthly meeting on **Monday, May 5th at 6:30 pm**. Parish Council Members, please let Deb Sedares know if you are unable to attend.

**LOOKING FOR THIS YEAR'S HIGH SCHOOL OR COLLEGE GRADUATES** in our Parish so they can be recognized on Sunday, June 1st. If you know of a soon-to-be graduate, please inform Fr. Nick or Tim Rucho.

**GREETERS ARE NEEDED** to assist on

**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**



### THE THIRD SUNDAY OF PASCHA

THE MYRRHBEARING WOMEN  
JOSEPH OF ARAMATHEA & NIKODIMOS

APOSTOLIC READING: ACTS 6:1-7

GOSPEL: MARK 15:43-16:8

TONE 2 ☩ RESURRECTION GOSPEL 4

Sundays with various activities including: greeting parishioners and visitors, activity at the candle stand, seating, and directing participants during the Liturgy. We would like to have a minimum of two greeters each Sunday. A "job description" is posted on the Church Bulletin Board. Greeters are schedule to serve on a rotating basis, no more than once a month, except for special services such as during Holy Week. If you are interested in finding out more information, please see any member of the Parish Council. **All are welcomed. Thank You!**

**MEMORIAL DAY** is Monday, May 26th. Fr. Nick will be at Hope Cemetery from 10:00 am. The common Memorial Service will be at noon at the Altar in Hope. If you would like Fr. Nick to visit a grave in another cemetery, please contact him to make arrangements: 508-845-0088.

**CONGRATULATIONS** to **Stephania and Kostantinos Charalambides** on the birth of their son Maximos Nicholas on 25 April 2014. Congratulations also to the proud grandparents **Nicholas & Chrysanthi Charalambides. Many years to all!**

**THE LATEST ISSUE OF THE CRE-DINȚA**, the quarterly Archdiocesan magazine, is available at the candles. Please pick up a copy.

**We celebrate two Memorials today:**

**Vasil Rucho**, fallen asleep three years.

**Ion Constantin Pitigoi**, who fell asleep on 5 April 2014 in Romania, father of Liana Manescu.

May their memory be eternal!

**TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR** is sponsored in memory of both **Vasil Rucho and Ion Constantin Pitigoi** by their families.

### DATES TO REMEMBER

- Mon, May 5 Parish Council, 6:30 pm
- Tues, May 20 Holy Trinity Gen Assembly, 7 pm
- Mon, May 26 Memorial Day, Hope Cemetery, noon
- Thurs, May 29 The Lord's Ascension
- Sat, May 31 Electronics Recycling 9am-2pm
- Sun, June 1 Godparents & Grandparents Sunday  
Parish Cookout
- June 6-8 Grecian Festival
- Sat, June 7 Saturday of Souls, Lit 10 am
- Sun, June 8 Pentecost
- Fri, June 20 Mustard Seed Meal, 5 pm
- Sat, July 5 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry 9am-12pm

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas

## “LOOKING AHEAD”

**SUNDAY SCHOOL & “WELCOME SUMMER” PARISH COOKOUT:** The last day of classes for Sunday School will be Sunday, May 18. We will end the Sunday School year officially on Sunday, June 1 with our annual “Godparents and Grandparents Sunday”. That Sunday, the youth of our parish will be greeters and assist with the service. Children (and adults) are encouraged to **invite their godparent or grandparent to join them at Divine Liturgy, after which a special prayer will be offered to affirm those relationships.** In addition, we will recognize our parish graduates (high school, college and post graduates) and conclude with a Parish Cookout on the grounds! Picnic blankets and lawn chairs are encouraged! A back yard feast of hot dogs, hamburgers and sausages, with sides and all the fixings, will be served. Adults: \$15, Children: \$5. Thanks to the generosity of the Sedares Family who is sponsoring the Cookout, all proceeds from the day will benefit St. Nicholas Church. *All are welcome!*

## HOLY TRINITY NEWS

**THE HOLY TRINITY ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY** will be held on Tuesday, May 20th at 7:00 pm at Holy Trinity. Each parish of the Council is allowed up to 5 delegates. If you would like to represent our parish please speak with either Fr. Nick or Deb Sedares.

**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.

## NAMEDAYS

**April 27**

*The Holy Apostle Thomas*

Thomas Chachi  
Thomas Fitzpatrick  
Robert T. Sedares  
Thomas R. Sedares  
Thomas Spataro

**April 30**

*The Holy Apostle James,  
brother of John the Evangelist*

James Collins

**May 1**

*St. Isidora of Egypt*

Sydney Ellen Mountzouris

*The Holy Prophet Jeremiah*

Jeromy Grniet

**May 5**

*The Great Martyr Irene  
of Thessalonica*

Irena Dorogi  
Irene Mountzouris  
Irene Tsoules

**May 9**

*The Holy Martyr Christopher*

Christopher Masterjohn



## A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**GOD OUR FATHER:** As a new day is born and the light of early morning fills the world, we come before you once again, ready to anoint your Son with our praises as once the myrrhbearing women hoped to anoint him with their precious herbs and spices. Through your Christ, the great saviour of all creation, enable us ever to be mindful of the wondrous things you have done for us, that we may bring forth fruit worthy of your benevolence. Teach us how to hold fast to these mysteries we celebrate, and make us fit to join all your saints at the table of the eternal banquet.

For you deserve all glory, honor, and worship, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages, amen.

## Congratulations !!!

### ... Best of Worcester Awards

Three members of our Community have been named “Best of Worcester” in their category by *Worcester Magazine!*

**Bagel Time**, owned by Marietta and Chris Zarhua, for best Bagels in the city (194B Park Ave., Worcester — 508-798-0440)

**Regatta Deli**, owned by Joanne Prizio, for best Grinder in the city (28 Lake Ave., Worcester — 508-756-6916)

**Nicole Apostola**, for best local Blog at: [nicolecommawoo.wordpress.com](http://nicolecommawoo.wordpress.com)

LISTEN TO THE WEEKLY NATIONAL ORTHODOX RADIO BROADCAST “COME RECEIVE THE LIGHT”

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

# THE WOMEN DISCIPLES

**L**AST WEEK we remembered the witness of Thomas to the Lord's rising. This week we remember the witness of the Lord's women disciples, as well as that of Joseph of Aramathea and Nikodimos. These were the people who saw him die and then buried him. In the case of the women, they were the first ones to whom he appeared after he rose from the dead. In last week's reflection when I quoted St. Paul I noted that he had not mentioned the women's witness because he was making a "legal" argument. Holy Tradition, as reflected in both the Gospel accounts and in the hymnography, does not have this reticence. The faithfulness and courage of the women are featured prominently. We hear of it in the Matins hymns sung every Sunday morning.

Also, next Sunday is Mother's Day. I always find it a happy coincidence when the Sunday of the Myrrhbearers falls together with Mother's Day. It reminds us that many of these women were also mothers. It also reminds us that for most of us it was the women in our lives — mothers, grandmothers, and aunts — who guided us in our faith during our formative years. Without being overly sentimental about it, we should acknowledge the power of their witness.

The truth is that from the Church's beginning women have been among the primary teachers of the faith, to their children and others. We remember great men theologians for the sophistication and depth of their writings, but whom do they remember? In his funeral oration for his sister St. Macrina, St. Gregory of Nyssa credits her for teaching him and his brother St. Basil the Great, as well as the rest of their siblings, everything they knew about the faith. In his mind, she was the greatest theologian among them.

There were the many women whom the Church calls "Equal to the Apostles," such as Mary Magdalene,

Nina, Enlightener of Georgia and Helen, the Emperor Constantine's mother. Each of these, and many others, were strong and indomitable. They are models for all of us to emulate.

Then there is Mary, our Lord's mother. I didn't begin with her example because she is so often lifted up as the supreme model of both motherhood and virginity that I oftentimes feel she has become a cliché in many people's minds. Like all of these other women she was and is not only a paragon of tenderness, but also of strength and courage. As a way to visualize this, look at the way our Orthodox tradition has chosen to depict her. Unlike the Madonna artforms in the west, Orthodox iconography does not romanticize her. There are no rosy cheeks, no full-figured motherliness. Rather she is portrayed as a person of strength and resolve, even as she is a mother of tenderness and compassion.

While we have many references to Mary in the Gospels, perhaps none is so powerful as the Lord's words from the Cross. Seeing his mother below, weeping, he asks his beloved disciple John to look after her (cf. John 19:26-27). He would not leave this existence without ensuring for her care. Also, we know from Holy Tradition that the first person he appeared to after the Resurrection was his mother. There is perhaps no more powerful sign of our Lord's humanity than his love and devotion for his mother. Moreover, she is not only his mother, but through him, she becomes mother to us all.

A window into the way the Church has viewed this relationship between Jesus and his mother can be found in the Lamentations sung at the Lord's tomb during Great Saturday Matins (Great Friday evening). These hymns attached to the verses of Psalm 119 put poetry to the words spoken by Mary while she is holding her dead Son, and the words of comfort he offers her in

return. No one who can imagine what it would be like to hold the body of their dead child can remain unmoved.

The final observation I would like to offer relates to the movement within certain elements of conservative Christianity regarding the place of women, and especially wives, toward men and their husbands. Without even attempting to be diplomatic, let me say there is nothing further from the heart of Christ's Gospel than the notion that women are of a different "order" than men. This movement is more akin to the Taliban's idea of the place of women. Christianity has opposed all theories of class, all support for slavery, all notions of gender inequality or any other intrinsic division of humanity into lower and higher castes (cf. Galatians 3:28). We are all equal in Christ.

Having said this, God did create us male and female (Genesis 1:27). We should reflect on why God would create polarities within our one humanity, making the procreation of our kind dependent upon the loving cooperation of women and men. Without making too much of gender differences, it is hard to ignore them. Men and women often have a different take on the same issue; usually we don't find this out until this different "take" erupts in one way or another, funneling us (hopefully) toward a happy resolution.

Our mothers are different from our fathers. Motherhood and Fatherhood are not a matter of function (i.e., the services each provides), but states of being, extensions of our gendered personhood. Children always know who is mother and who is father. They don't need a script. They also know when one or the other is missing-in-action.

So, let us give thanks to God for our mothers. We'll hold off giving thanks for our fathers until June.

Christ is Risen!

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA