

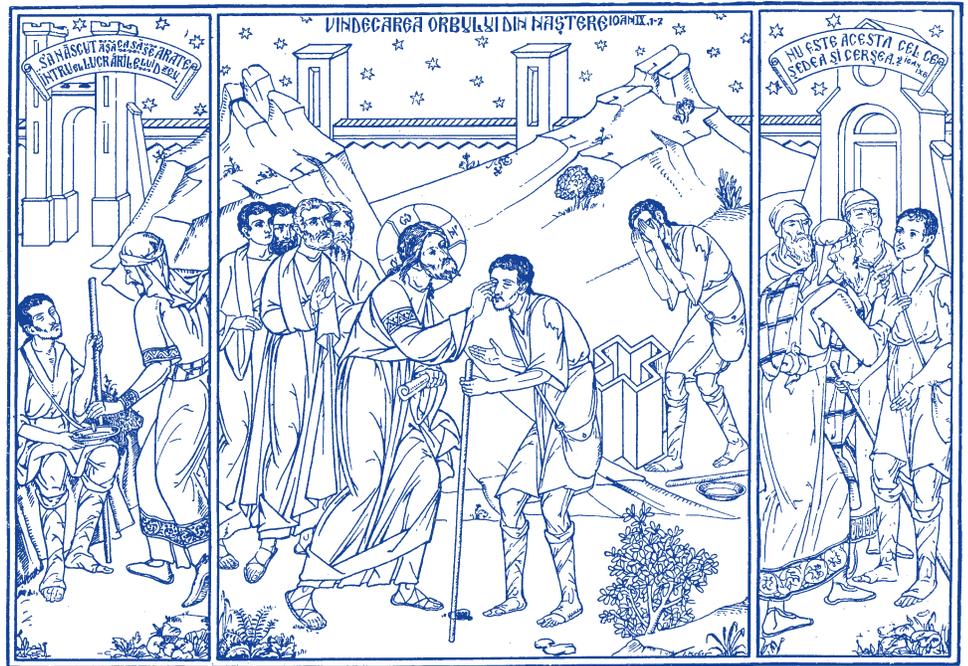
# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN MAY 25, 2014

## THIS WEEK'S NEWS

**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.

**PITA BAKING RESUMES**, this Thursday, May 29th at 9:00 am. Everyone's help is welcome. Questions? Please see Chris Toda. No experience necessary!

**RELIGIOUS ED & "WELCOME SUMMER" PARISH COOKOUT:** We will end the Religious Ed 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



### THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF PASCHA

THE SUNDAY OF THE MAN BLIND FROM BIRTH

THIRD FINDING OF THE HEAD OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

APOSTOLIC READING: ACTS 16:16-34 ☩ GOSPEL: JOHN 9:1-38

TONE 5 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 8

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. *As always, everyone is welcomed!* Please make your reservations at the candle stand or by contacting Deb Sedares or Fr. Nick.

**ASSISTANCE IS NEEDED** with setting up, cooking and serving for the Parish Cookout on June 1st. "Many hands make light work." If you can lend a hand that day, please contact Deb Sedares or Christine Toda during coffee hour or by e-mail. **Calling on our grill team who did such a great job last year — you**

**know who you are! THANK YOU!**

**AN "E-WASTE RECYCLING DAY"** will be held on **Saturday, May 31st, 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

**GREETERS TEAM 3:  
EVANS TSOULES AND  
TOM FITZPATRICK**

**ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED**

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

### DATES TO REMEMBER

- Mon, May 26 Memorial Day, Hope Cemetery, noon
- Thurs, May 29 The Lord's Ascension  
Pita Baking, 9 am
- Sat, May 31 Electronics Recycling 9am-2pm
- Sun, June 1 Godparents & Grandparents Cookout  
Close of Religious Ed for year
- 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

**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*

Gerry Belba during coffee hour if you can help.

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

**COFFEE HOUR** this week is sponsored by the Sedares family in honor of **Eleanor Sedares' 80th birthday. Many Years!**

## 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.



## NAMEDAYS

May 21

### **The Holy Equals-to-the-Apostles Constantine and Helen**

Constantine Apostol  
Elaine Apostola  
Konstantin Charalambides  
Presvytera Eleni Christakos  
Amalia Helene Collins  
Hannah Constance Datz  
Dina Entwistle  
Iliana Victoria Fahey  
Elena Galeriu  
Ileana A Nace  
V. Rev. Fr. Dean Paleologos  
Constanța Papit  
Eleni Polymeros  
Elena Prelipcean  
Elaine Rocheford  
Dina K. Salerno  
Eleanor Sedares  
Elaine Tanacea  
Dean Valoras



### A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**SWEET JESUS, OUR SAVIOUR:** We who enjoy the effulgence of the sun and who delight in the luminescence of the moon give thanks to you for the gifts of light and sight. In our good fortune, most of us have never actually known the meaning of being blind, and we cannot even begin to appreciate what a life of total darkness is. You, however, know all things, so your understanding and tenderness brought you to bestow a twofold enlightenment on that poor fellow who had been deprived of sight from his mother's womb. As we commemorate his healing during this paschal season, we entreat you to preserve us from all interior blindness that we may always see reality as it is in fact, and live accordingly.

For you are the healer of our souls and bodies, Christ our God, and we give you glory, together with your eternal Father and your all-holy, good, and lifegiving Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. amen.

## 2014 GRADUATES

*"He has filled them with the spirit of God,  
with skill, intelligence, and knowledge in every kind of craft." (Exodus 35:31)*

We want to acknowledge members of our Church community who are celebrating a graduation and recognize their achievement.

### HIGH SCHOOL

**Elias Christo** is graduating from Abby Kelly Foster Public Charter School in Worcester. He will attend Roger Williams University in Rhode Island to study Architecture.  
**Adam Donabed** is graduating from Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School having specialized in IT. He will attend The University of Maine to study New Media.  
**Nicholas Johnson** is graduating from Worcester Academy. He will attend the University of Rhode Island, where he will study and play baseball.  
**Peter Tsongalis** is graduating from Hartford High School, VT. He will attend Virginia Polytechnic Institute

### COLLEGE

**Michael Bourisk** graduated from Assumption College with a degree in Sociology/Criminal Justice.  
**Irl Durmillari** graduated from Assumption College with a degree in Accounting.  
**Krisida Treska** graduated from Worcester State University with a degree in Biology/Chemistry.

*May our loving Lord continue to bless their efforts and grant them a long life, health, prosperity, and many, many years!*

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

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

# GOD'S GENEROSITY

WHEN ONE CONTEMPLATES THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S LOVE FOR US, it is difficult not to be overwhelmed. Of course, love in and of itself is a mystery — sometimes we speak of it as chemistry, but I think mystery is still a more apt term. There is a dynamic to love that cannot be calculated by formulas. At the very least, it is unpredictable.

This past Wednesday while reading the appointed lesson for the day, I was once again struck by God's generosity and love. The reading was the story of the feeding of the five thousand with two fish and five loaves, this time told by the Evangelist John (6:1-15). It is a powerful story that captures the imagination. It at once satisfies our longing that no one should ever be found hungry or wanting, while at the same time reaffirms our faith in a generous and loving God.

We are in the middle of Spring and can feel and see the abundance of God's creation. It can be overwhelming. Everything is bursting with life. My car is covered with thousands of maple seeds. (How many does a tree need to produce in order to ensure its survival!?) Yet the cornucopia of seeds and weeds, flowers and shoots, are but an image given to us of God's Grace that rains down on us like a deluge.

At the same time, while there is an abundance and even deluge to God's love there is also a preciousness to it. After everything had been distributed and, "when they were satisfied, [Jesus] told his disciples, 'Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost'" (John 6:12). The left-over fragments are precious. Jesus does not subscribe to a "throw-away" culture. The creation is holy, every part of it.

From those five loaves and two fish they collected twelve baskets of left-overs. People thought they were going to go hungry, yet there was food to spare in spades. In our short-sighted

anxiety, we find it difficult to image that God might have a larger plan for us than we can expect when we look through the lens of our human limitedness.

Today we read the account of the "healing" of the man blind from birth. I put the word "healing" in quotes because in truth Jesus forms his eyes anew from the clay mud and his saliva. It is an act of creation no less than that of Adam and Eve. There were no eyes. Jesus literally molded them for him.

But the more interesting question for us is the one raised by the disciples who asked Jesus: "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him'" (John 9:2-3).

At first read this seems like a harsh statement. It would almost be easier to believe that his blindness was a result of someone's sin rather than the arbitrariness of God simply to make a spiritual point, but we need to think about it more deeply. God doesn't punish — at least not in the way we think (or perhaps wished) that he would. Nor does sickness or congenital illness occur to simply make us suffer. Suffering does not have any intrinsic positive value. Rather, illness happens as a result of any myriad of reasons. Regardless, God always calls us to salvation in whichever situation we might find ourselves. For the man born blind God comes to him as the Word himself. God's work will be revealed in him.

In the baptismal service, between the exorcisms and the baptism proper, the priest pronounces a blessing over the person coming to be baptized. It is a verse from 1 Timothy 2:4. He says: "Blessed is our God who desires that everyone be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth." I will tell you that every time I say this blessing I am

overcome with emotion. It is such a powerfully personal blessing. I think of what God has called this person who will soon be baptized to. I think about how God has called each of us and, of course, me. I never think of it as a general call ("all of humanity"), but each one of us individually. This is God's generosity in action.

So, the greater miracle for me is not the feeding of the five thousand with five loaves and two fish, rather it is in the twelve baskets of left-overs to be "kept in the fridge" for the next meal. Nothing is to be lost. Everything, everyone, is precious. Each of us needs to bide our time, be patient, and trust God's plan, His *o*economy.

I like to contrast the Paralytic, the story of whose healing we heard two weeks ago, with this Blind Man, the account of whose healing we heard in today's Gospel reading. Each had a long wait to encounter God's plan for them. Each was healed and completely restored. Yet, they processed this same experience of their encounter with Jesus differently. The Paralytic encounters God in the flesh, yet is unaffected; rather than being changed by the experience, he shows that he's totally capable of rejecting him. The Blind Man, in spite of the severe interrogation by the religious authorities, never once flinched from testifying to the Grace of God at work in him. God may desire that all come to the knowledge of the truth, but, the choice still remains ours.

Reflect on how the Lord orders that every fragment be gathered up so that nothing be lost. Then realize that *we* are those fragments he wants collected. Let's hope that we are not lost in that gathering.

*Christ is indeed Risen!*

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA