

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN JUNE 1, 2014

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

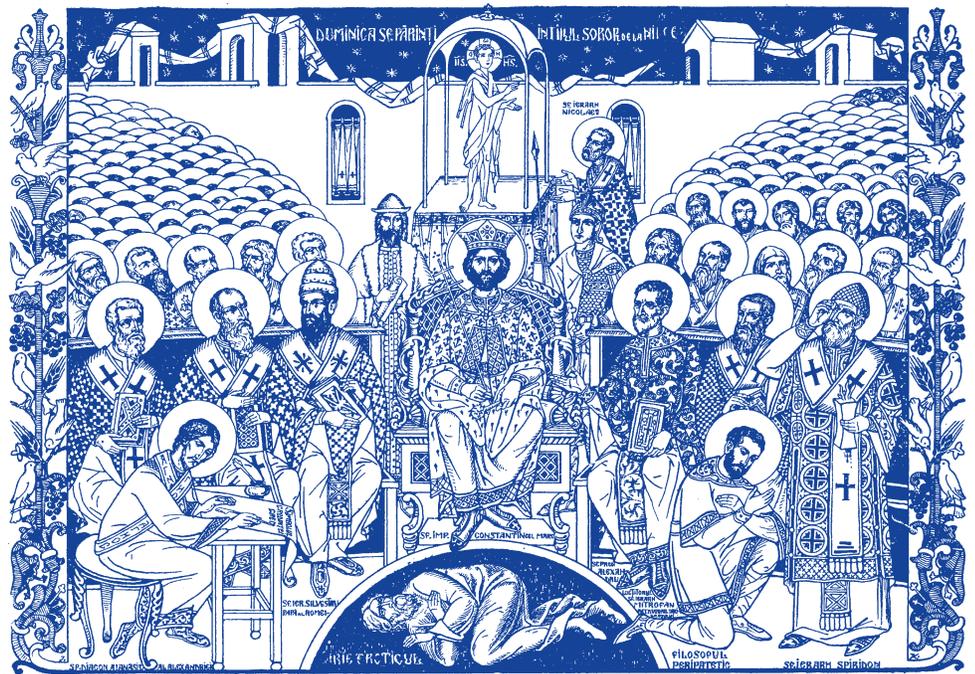
RELIGIOUS ED & "WELCOME SUMMER" PARISH COOKOUT: We will end the Religious Ed year officially **THIS** Sunday, June 1 with our annual "Godparents and Grandparents Sunday." Our youth will be greeters and assist with the service. Children (and adults) are encouraged to **invite their godparent or grandparent to join them at Divine Liturgy, after which a special prayer will be offered to affirm those relationships.** In addition, we will recognize graduates in our parish (high school, college, and post graduate) and conclude with a Parish Cookout on the grounds. Picnic blankets and lawn chairs are encouraged. A backyard 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, sponsors of 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

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

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED

**PARISH PICNIC:
ALL HANDS ON DECK**



THE SEVENTH SUNDAY OF PASCHA

THE SUNDAY OF THE FATHERS OF THE FIRST ŒCUMENICAL SYNOD
APOSTOLIC READING: ACTS 20:16-18; 28-36 ☩ **GOSPEL: JOHN 17:1-13**
TONE 6 ☩ **MATINS GOSPEL 10**

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!

SATURDAY OF THE SOULS before Pentecost is this coming Saturday, June 7th. Liturgy will begin at 10:00 am with Matins preceding at 9:00 am. We are asking for someone to volunteer to prepare the Memorial Wheat. Please speak with Fr. Nick.

PITA BAKING, this Thursday, June 5th at 9:00 am. Everyone's help is welcome. Questions? Please see Chris Toda. No experience necessary!

THE PARISH COUNCIL will hold its regular monthly meeting on **Monday, June 9th**

at 6:30 pm. Parish Council Members, please let Deb Sedares know if you are unable to attend.

THE MUSTARD SEED MEAL is scheduled for **Friday, June 20th.** The Mustard Seed is a Catholic Worker home providing dinner to about 150 people in need each day. **Help is needed Friday morning at 9:30 am** to cook and prepare food, and **at 5:00 on Friday evening** to transport and serve. There is a sign-up sheet on the Stewardship Board in the Hall or contact

DATES TO REMEMBER

- Sun, June 1 Godparents & Grandparents Cookout
Close of Religious Ed for year
- Thurs, June 5 Pita Baking, 9 am
- June 6-8 Grecian Festival
- Sat, June 7 Saturday of Souls, Lit 10 am
- Sun, June 8 Pentecost
- Mon, June 9 Parish Council, 6:30 pm
- 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

Deb Sedares if you can help with preparing the meal. Contact **Fr. Nick** if you have any questions.

THANKS TO THE “E-WASTE RECYCLING DAY” CREW, coordinated and organized by Gerry Belba. This is a not only a reliable fund-raiser for the parish it is also a service to the larger community and the environment!

COFFEE HOUR SPONSORS ARE NEEDED for the coming weeks. Please speak with Presvytera Maria if you'd 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.

NAMEDAYS

June 8

The Holy Martyr Kalliopi

Kaliopi Demma

June 15

The Sunday of All the Saints

Amalia Polymeros

June 27

The Holy Myrrh-bearer Joanna

Joanne V. Prizio

June 29

The Holy Apostles Peter and Paul

Patrick Disho

Petraq Dragoti

Paul Dymek

Petrika Lolo

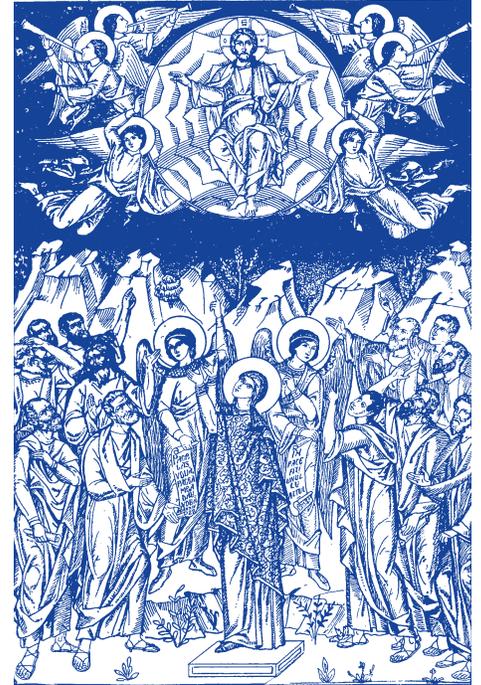
Kenneth Paul Maynard

Rev. Fr. Peter Michael Preble

Paul Soter

Peter Toda

Peter Demetri Tsongalis



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.

Irli 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!

A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

PRAISE TO YOU, ETERNAL, LOVING GOD AND FATHER, O you who loved us before we were even conceived: Today, the gates of heaven, the eternal portals, are lifted high, because your only Son, the king of glory, enters in. As we celebrate his glorious return to the right of your majesty, we pray that you will draw us ever closer to him, so that, faithful to him at all times, we may rise above the difficulties of this earthly life to enjoy the glory of eternal life. Receive our spiritual worship, and prepare us for the descent of your all-holy Spirit in the days to come.

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

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

BY WEB OR PODCAST: WWW.RECEIVE.ORG

THE COSMONAUTS DIDN'T FIND GOD

IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE LORD'S ASCENSION presents the modern believer with a few difficult questions, conceptually speaking. For example, for those of us who regularly fly — who regularly “ascend” — what exactly does the Lord's going up mean? For the last fifty-odd years we periodically send people up beyond earth's atmosphere. What does it mean then that the Lord was carried up into heaven? When the Soviet cosmonauts ascended into the heavens they proclaimed that they hadn't found God there, in this way claiming to prove the silliness of religious faith. For people of Jesus' time it was a marvel if someone ascended to the heavens. Today, we go to the airport and catch our flight. Nothing special.

A second question is perhaps more mystifying. How can the actions of one person effect all of humanity? How can Christ's Ascension (when He took His place at the right hand of God the Father, now also as a human), also impact us? How do we share in the Lord's Resurrection? Why are we living the consequences of what Adam and Eve did?

Even though we have other examples in Scripture of people either being taken up into the heavens or transported from one place to another, the way in which the Lord ascended differs in a number of important ways. His ascension is seen as a return to the Father, a completion of His mission to restore the relationship between God and humanity. It fulfills the promise implicit in the resurrection. He also will send the Holy Spirit to enliven His followers. Moreover, He says that He will return.

The closest example we have in the Bible of an ascension like the Lord's is with the Prophet Elijah (Elias). He had been told by God that he would be taken up and was preparing his disciple Elisha to take up his mantle. (A mantle is a large cloak.) Elijah's mantle is a sign of his prophetic power. For example,

Elijah and Elisha were able to cross the Jordan when Elijah had struck the water with it causing the river's flow to stop. As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven (2 Kings 2:11). As he was taken up his mantle dropped from the chariot and Elisha picked it up. As Elijah had promised him, Elisha received a double share of his spirit. This is where we get the expression to “take up the mantle.”

Unlike the Lord, Elijah is taken up before he tasted death. In one sense it was a prefiguring, a foreshadowing, of what was to come in Jesus. The way he was taken up also gave rise to the speculation in Israel that Elijah would return to proclaim the coming Messiah. It was John the Baptist, as the Lord said, who would be the “Elijah” announcing the Christ (cf. Mark 9:13).

Another example of this sort was in the days of Daniel, when he was held prisoner in the lion's den. The Prophet Habakkuk was in Judaea making a stew and breaking bread and an angel of the Lord took him up and brought him to Babylon to feed Daniel (cf. Daniel 14:31ff). There is also the Prophet Ezekiel, who was carried by the hand of the Lord into the middle of a valley where he was presented with the vision of the dry bones (cf. Ezekiel 37:1). These examples are not ascensions in the sense of Elijah's and certainly not like the Lord's, yet in these two instances we can see how time and space have a different meaning for God. The Lord ascended to the place He was before, but not a place we can get to without God's help and permission. So, the Soviet cosmonauts were not able to find God, even though they passed through earth's atmosphere.

I find the second question to be more interesting than the first. While we might find it engaging to speculate

where the Lord went when He ascended, the fact that His bodily ascent has an effect on us is more provoking. How is it that what Christ does changes me? This is not only true in the Ascension, but in every aspect of Christ's Incarnation. As the Church has always taught, through the sacraments we participate in our Lord's saving work. As St. Paul says, those of us who have been baptized have been joined with Christ in his death. “For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his” (Romans 6:5).

We've been nurtured in a culture that emphasizes our individualism and plays down our connectedness, to one another and the world around us. Yet our study of biology and other sciences has begun to tell us the same story that our theology has told us for millennia: we are all deeply connected one to another and to the whole of creation. St. Maximos the Confessor speaks of human beings as a “microcosm,” literally, a small world. He says that God created us in such a way that all of creation is summarized in us. We contain the world inside us.

The more we unpack and analyze our own DNA and the DNA of everything living, the more we realize how interconnected the creation is. We used to think that “people are different.” Now we know that we are all practically first cousins.

When the Second Person of the Holy Trinity assumed our nature, He changed our DNA. When Jesus dies and rises, death is destroyed for each of us. And, when the incarnate Word of God sits at the right-hand of the Father, we are all enthroned. God's promise to each of us is real and true.

Christ has Ascended! ...

He has Ascended in Glory!

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA