

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN

AUGUST 17, 2014
THIS WEEK'S NEWS

PITA BAKING, THIS Thursday, August 21st at 9:00 am. Will be working on inventory for the stART event. **Extra help is needed** and everyone's help is welcome. Questions? Please see Chris Toda. No experience necessary!

ALSO, we want to schedule a **Saturday dough making session** for either Saturday, September 6 *or* Saturday, September 13: 9am to 1pm. We need a crew of 10 -14 people, for 4 hours (probably less). Folks need to be there by 9 sharp to set up, as well as helping with the clean-up after. You will learn how to roll out the dough, and the other tasks of buttering/folding the dough, and packaging for freezing. We will need to setup the hall for Sunday services/coffee hour. Please speak with Chris Toda (thetodas@msn.com or 774-272-2773) — if you'd be able to assist and your preference for one day over the other. There is also a sign-up sheet at the candles.

ST NICHOLAS CHURCH SCHOOL AND OUR YOUTH are a central part of our parish. We need you! If you are interested in teaching or assisting with Church School this year and/or working with the Youth of our parish on activities and programs geared to them, please see **Preoteasa Maria**. **The first day of Church School is Sunday, Sep-**

GREETERS TEAM 2:
MARY ANNA DYMEK &
MARGARITE LANDRY

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED

COFFEE HOUR ON VACATION



THE TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

EPISTLE: 1 CORINTHIANS 4:9-16 ☩ GOSPEL: MATTHEW 17:14-23

(JESUS HEALS THE BOY WITH AN EPILEPTIC DEMON)

TONE 1 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL: 10

tember 28th. Everyone is welcome! Providing vibrant and meaningful opportunities for our Youth to learn about their Orthodox Faith and traditions, and work and play together is key to ensuring that our Orthodox Faith and the community of St. Nicholas remains vital for generations to come.

ARCHBISHOP NICOLAE's meditation at beginning of the Fast for the **Feast of the Dormition** is available at the candles. Please take a copy home with you.

WE RECEIVED A DONATION FOR THE HOLY WATER BOTTLES. May God bless them! Remember, if you have any empty Holy Water bottles, please bring them back to the Church.

PITA & PASTRY CONCESSION AT "START ON THE STREET:" SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21ST. (Rain Date – Sunday, September 28th). St. Nicholas is returning to this community art festival, held on Park Avenue in Worcester between Pleasant and Highland

Streets, which draws over 20,000 attendees each year. Our Church will again be one of the vendors in the Food Court selling pita and pastry. **This is a HUGE undertaking for us**, and requires your **"sweat stewardship"** to realize the fundraising potential of \$5,000. A detailed sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board for prep on Saturday the 20th as well as throughout the day on Sunday. Pita baking is also underway and help is needed with that part of the effort as well. **The venue is established and presents a great opportunity to showcase our goods to the larger community. The only variable is YOU!** St. Nicholas needs your commitment of time and effort to make this a success! The volun-

DATES TO REMEMBER

Wed, Aug 20 Holy Trinity Anniversary Lit, 9:30 am
Thurs, Aug 21 Pita Baking, 9:00 am
Fri, Aug 29 Beheading of John the Baptist
Strict Fast Day
Sat, Sept 6 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry 9am-12pm
Sun, Sept 21 stART on the Street Festival
Sun, Sept 28 First Day of Religious Education

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas

teering schedule needs are on the Bulletin Board. **For more info, speak with Deb Sedares or Chris Toda.**

THE QUARTERLY ISSUE of the Archdiocese's magazine *Credința/The Faith* is available at the candles. Pick up a copy and bring it home with you.

VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL

VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL will be held **August 18-21 at St. George Cathedral, Worcester.** This year, the theme for Vacation Church School will be "Champions & Defenders." Children will learn about the saints and martyrs who preserved our faith and how they can model their own lives after them today. The Flier for more information is available at the Candles. You may also contact Benjamin Daniel at: Benjamin.E.Daniel@gmail.com or 267-294-9793.

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

HOLY TRINITY CELEBRATES ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY on August 15th. On Wednesday, August 20th at 9:30 am, the Orthodox clergy of our area will concelebrate a Divine Liturgy with Bishop John of the Antiochian Archdiocese at Holy Trinity to mark this milestone. Please plan on attending!

SAVE THE DATE! October 9, 2014. Holy Trinity's 8th **FOOD and WINE FEST** in conjunction with Holy Trinity's 20th Anniversary promises to be a great evening! This year's event will be at St. George Orthodox Cathedral. Look for more details!

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.

A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

BLESSED ARE YOU, LORD GOD of tenderness and mercy, for the gift of this new day and for bringing to us the fulness of grace in the person of your only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. These days fill us with special joy and confidence because of the Theotokos, whose dormition we celebrate. As we set out, once again, to work out our salvation with the help of your Christ, give us all we need to serve you in our brothers and sisters, not only during this coming day, but throughout our lives. And let the holy virgin's prayers for us be a pledge of our eternal salvation.

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

COMMUNITY NEWS

THE 7TH ANNUAL ROMANIAN OPEN IN MEMORY OF GEORGE NASTO is being sponsored by the St. Michael Parish in Southbridge to be held on Saturday September 6th at 1 pm at Cohasse Country Club in Southbridge, MA. All foursome commitments, donations, and money must in by August 30th. For information call Luke Yanka at: 508-958-4144, or e-mail him at: lsyanka@yahoo.com.

WOMEN URGENTLY NEEDED TO SERVE ON A SHORT-TERM MISSION TO ALBANIA. The Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC) is seeking clergy wives and lay women leaders to serve on a short-term mission team that will plan and lead

NAMEDAYS

August 15

The Falling Asleep of the Most Holy Theotokos

Maria Blanchard
Mary Cocaine
Maria Dumitriu
Monika Maria Durmillari
Maria Kalpidou
Fr. Peter Mentis
Maria Prelipcean
Nancy Maria Tsongalis
Mary Tsoules
Marietta Zaruha

August 26

The Holy Martyrs Adrian and Natalia at Nicomedia

Natalia Grace Dorogi
Natalia Dimitra Karadimitriou
Natalia Avery Stevens
Natasha Zhaka

August 29

St. Theodora of Thessalonika

Gina Theodora Trakadas

August 30

St. Alexander, Patriarch of Constantinople

Alexander Charalambides
Emilia Alexandra Galeriu
Dr. Alexander Gouvelis
Alexandra Mazanitis
Alexandru Nace
Conner Alexander Polymeros
Alexanna Soter
Alexander James Trakadas



spiritual retreats for women in Albania. This team will serve from September 17th to the 29th. For more information or to volunteer please visit www.ocmc.org or contact Pres. Renee Ritsi by phone 1-877-463-6784 x. 141 or by e-mail at teams@ocmc.org. Only two or three volunteers are needed to make this much-needed ministry a reality!

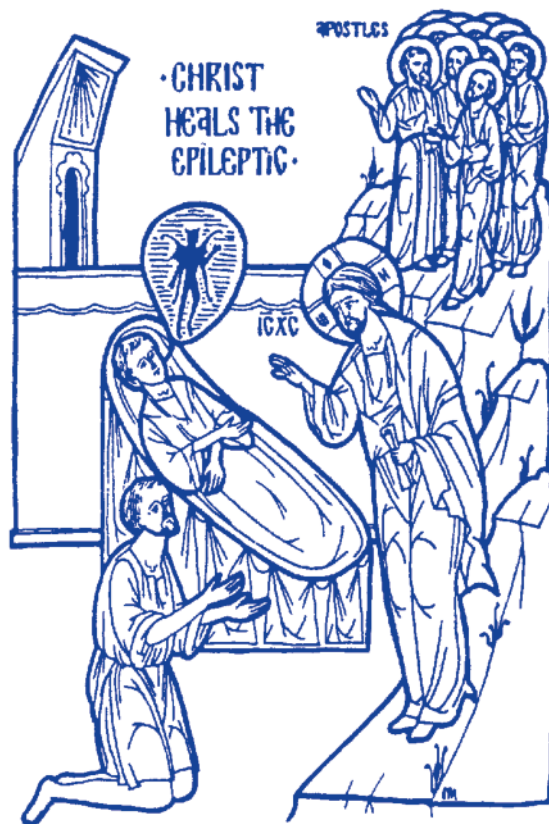
FAITH AS TINY AS A MUSTARD SEED

THE Gospel reading for this tenth Sunday after Pentecost is the healing of the epileptic boy (Matthew 17:14-23). St. Matthew tells us that this healing happened as the Lord and his disciples were coming down from the mountain where He had been transfigured. There was a crowd there waiting, and a man came up to him begging him to heal his son. A dramatic moment, and there are many players. There is the father and his son; the disciples, and of course, the crowd. For each, this encounter will provoke a dilemma, a crisis, of faith. The father of the boy, the disciples, and even the members of the crowd will find the nature and depth of their faith tested.

It is clear from the way the boy's father approaches Jesus that he was not a faithful man. He had come to Jesus out of desperation, not necessarily with the conviction that the Lord could do this. He had first brought the child to the disciples, but when they were unable to cast out the demon he decided to seek out the "higher source."

Jesus rebukes the father, but he doesn't do it directly. Rather, he addresses the rebuke more generally, to all those present, saying: "You faithless and perverse generation, how much longer must I be with you? How much longer must I put up with you?" (v. 17) The truth is that even after seeing so many of the signs and wonders he has worked, it is not just the father, but the crowds gathered around him who still have a hard time believing. Finally, he says to the father: "Bring him here to me."

The Evangelist Mark adds a few more details to this story. He says that when the spirit saw Jesus he convulsed the boy (Mark 9:20). Even if the boy's father did not know who Jesus was and what he could do, the demon did. Jesus



then asked the boy's father how long he had been afflicted with this condition, to which the father replies "from childhood." He then adds: "If you are able to do anything, have pity on us and help us" (Mark 9:22).

Jesus immediately turns his question around telling him: "If you are able! — All things can be done for the one who believes" (Mark 9:23). Again, St. Mark records the father as saying: "I believe; help my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24). Confronted with his own doubt and consumed with love for his child, the father at last comes to a sense of what it means to believe. He needed to learn to trust in God and ask for God's help especially when his trust was weakest.

What Jesus is saying to the man — and, of course to us as well — is: if we believe we will be given the power to heal, or work even greater things. But still, he does not wait for the father's faith, or that of the disciples, rather, in

his compassion for the boy He heals him directly and immediately.

The disciples' dilemma is different. The Lord had given them "authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness" (Matthew 10:1). After everyone had left, they came to Jesus privately asking why they could not cast out this spirit. They were probably anxious and afraid they had lost the grace that had been entrusted to them. Even Peter, James and John, who had seen the Lord transfigured in all his glory on Mount Tabor, were shaken (Matthew 17:1-8). Jesus gives them a similar answer to that which he gave the boy's father: "Because of your little faith. For truly I tell you, if you have faith as a grain of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be

impossible for you" (v. 20). And then he adds: "But this kind does not come out except by prayer and fasting" (v. 21).

Having given them this great power to heal, the Lord now instructs them on principles that support this power, this gift. He says that genuine faith, even as small as a mustard seed, has limitless power. But, this faith has to be strengthened, nurtured, and supported by prayer and fasting. Prayer brings us into God's presence and teaches us to listen to Him. Fasting helps us to distance ourselves from the excesses of this physical existence, making us lighter, and more spiritual.

Each of us has the capacity to believe. God gave us this 'mustard seed' when He created us. The key to faith is trust. Trust is the fertile soil in which the seed of Faith is planted, that will grow into a magnificent and glorious tree.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA