

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN AUGUST 24, 2014 THIS WEEK'S NEWS

PITA BAKING this Thursday, August 28th 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! Please note, for the next several weeks through and until stART, we will not be selling any large spinach or leek pitas from our existing or new inventory as we need to have sufficient supplies on hand for the event. Half sized pitas in inventory at the church are available for sale. Thank you!

ALSO, we have scheduled a **Saturday dough making session** for 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). It is important that we know who will be coming to help so please sign the sheet at the candle stand, even if you have spoken with Chris or Deb. Thank you!

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

GREETERS TEAM 3:
EVANS TSOULES AND TOM FITZPATRICK

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED

COFFEE HOUR ON VACATION



THE ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

EPISTLE: 1 CORINTHIANS 9:2-12 ☩ GOSPEL: MATTHEW 18:23-36

(THE PARABLE OF THE UNFORGIVING SERVANT)

TONE 2 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL: 11

September 15th at 6:30 pm. Parish Council Members, please let Deb Sedares know if you are unable to attend.

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, September 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.

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

DATES TO REMEMBER

- Thurs, Aug 28 Pita Baking, 9:00 am
- Fri, Aug 29 Beheading of John the Baptist *Strict Fast*
- Sat, Sept 6 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry 9am-12pm
- Sat, Sept 13 Pita Dough Making, 9am-1pm
- Sun, Sept 14 Exaltation of Cross *Strict Fast*
- Mon, Sept 15 Parish Council, 6:30 pm
- Sun, Sept 21 stART on the Street Festival
- Sun, Sept 28 First Day of Religious Education

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

COFFEE HOUR this week is sponsored by the **Zaruha Family** in memory of Marieta's mother **Veronica**. *May her memory be eternal!*

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

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.

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.

A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

All too often, Lord, we let our eyes look greedily at the success and prosperity of others. Then envy, jealousy, and resentment poison our lives because of our stupidity. Teach us to be done with all this and to leave everything in your hands, understanding that what little we might have is far better than all the possessions of others. Let us struggle to expel all evil thoughts from our hearts, wishing nothing but good for others.

For you are indeed our God, and we give you glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages, amen.

THE STS. ANARGYROI COMMUNITY in Marlborough is having their annual **Grecian Festival this Labor Day weekend** (Saturday August 30 through Monday September 1). There will be authentic ethnic food and dancing, vendors, live music, church tours, children's activities, and many other enjoyable offerings. For info: www.stsanargyroi.org.

STS CONSTANTINE & HELEN IN WEBSTER will be holding it's annual Greek Festival **Saturday and Sunday, September 6-7**. For info: www.schwebster.org/ministries/greek-festival

NOTRE DAME ACADEMY is holding an open house on **Thursday, Oct 2nd at 7:00 pm** for prospective students (young women grades 9-12). For info: www.nda-worc.org, or call: 508-757-6200 x229.



THE PROPHET SAMUEL
AUGUST 20TH



NAMEDAYS

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

FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS ...

THIS week's Gospel lesson is about sin, repentance, and forgiveness. The reading itself is the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant (Matthew 18:23-35), but we will get a better understanding of the parable if we place it in its context. Jesus is instructing his disciples on the nature of sin and how to respond when someone sins against us; the nature of repentance, and how we should cultivate it both in ourselves and in others. In the verses just before we hear this parable, Jesus talks to them about ways in which the community should correct a "brother" who has gone astray (cf. Matthew 18:15-20). He says that first the one who has been sin against should speak to the person privately. If he listens, then God be praised, he has been saved. But, if he doesn't listen then he should take one or two others to help reason with him. Finally, if he still doesn't listen, it should be presented before the whole Church. Once you've done all this, and if he still doesn't repent, then, and only then, should he be treated as an outsider, a non-believer.

Peter wants to explore just how many times one should forgive someone who has sinned. So he asks Jesus: "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?" (v. 21) Peter thinks he is being generous by suggesting seven times is enough. But Jesus says, not seven, "but seventy times seven" (v. 22), which of course means without limit. It was at this point that Jesus decides to illustrate the principles he's trying to teach in the form of a parable. This parable is the Gospel lesson for this eleventh Sunday after Pentecost.

Jesus says the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wants to settle accounts with his servants. He finds that one of



his servants owes him ten thousand talents (an astronomical amount of money). The king summons him and when he finds out the servant cannot pay, he threatens to sell him along with his wife and children into slavery, and take everything that he owns in order to pay the debt. The servant falls down at his feet and begs him to simply give him time to find a way to pay the amount. The king takes pity on him and in an amazing act of generosity, forgives him the whole amount.

Fresh from this experience the servant comes upon a fellow servant, a co-worker, who happens to owe him one hundred denarii (a paltry sum). He grabs the man by the throat and demands that he pay the money. Using the same words this servant himself had used to plead with the king, the unlucky fellow asks for time to pay the debt. The man refuses and has him thrown into prison until he pays the debt. When the other servants find out what happened they reported it to the king. In a rage the king withdraws his generosity and or-

ders this wicked servant to be tortured until he pay the whole amount of his debt.

Of course we understand that Jesus is using the parable to illustrate a deep spiritual truth. Money is a metaphor for sin. The king is God and we are the debtor. More often than not we give little regard to what we "owe" God, but are very quick to remember the miniscule "sum" other people owe us. Put differently, the minor offenses that we may suffer from our brothers and sisters cannot compare with the enormity of our sin before God. He, like the king, is not only ready to give us time to repent, but if we ask and repent from the depth of our hearts, He will forgive everything.

What does He expect of us in return? To learn compassion. To understand and appreciate His example. To treat others as He treats us.

When we call to mind and reflect on God's generosity toward us, it becomes easier to be generous toward others. Feeling the burden lifted off our shoulders, we can be empathetic toward our brothers and sisters who suffer under the same burden of sin.

This is the meaning of those words in the Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our debts (trespasses), as we forgive our debtors (those who trespass against us)." We become able to forgive because we know and experience God's forgiveness. Our debts will be forgiven us, insofar as we forgive the debts owed us. This is not only a great mystery, it is also a universal truth.

God calls us to be His children. He offers us examples to follow. He shares eternal love and life with us if we choose to open our hearts to His call.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA