

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN

AUGUST 31, 2014

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

PITA BAKING this Thursday, September 4th 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 only be selling half sized pitas. We need to reserve the full-sized for stART.

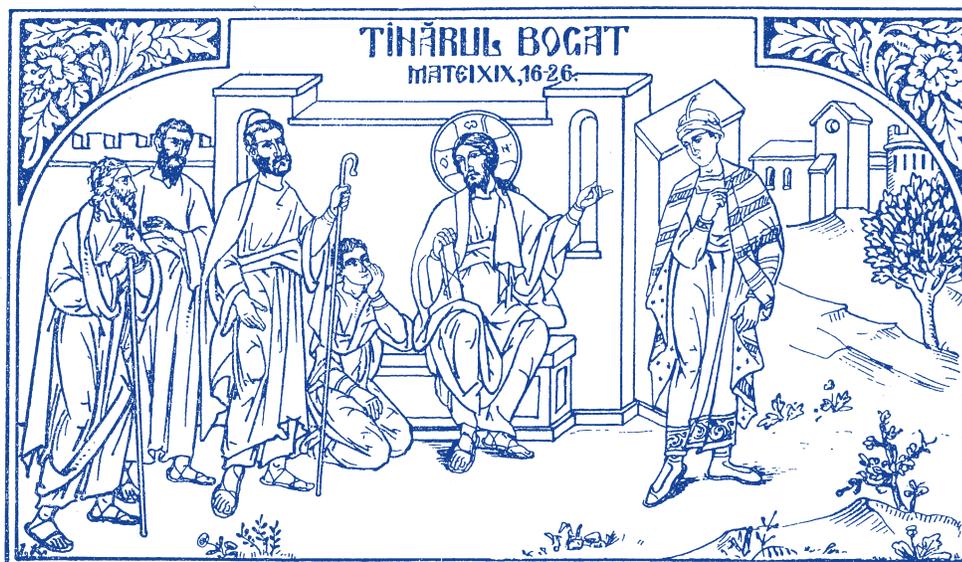
ALSO, we have scheduled a **Saturday dough making session** for September 13, 9am to 1pm. We need a crew of 10 - 14 people, for 4 hours (probably less) — we already have 10 people committed! No experience necessary. We'll teach you to roll out the dough, how to butter/fold the dough, and package it for freezing. Please speak with Chris Toda (thetodas@msn.com or 774-272-2773) and confirm your help by signing the sheet at the candle stand, after speaking with Chris or Deb.

FOOD PANTRY. Help is needed to staff our monthly responsibility at the Orthodox Food Center **next Saturday, September 6th, from 9 am - noon.** About 4 people are needed. Likewise, donations of food are always needed, and may be dropped off at the Food Pantry housed at St. Spyridon Cathedral. If you can help in this worthwhile ministry, please speak with **Nicole Pe-**

GREETERS TEAM 4:
DEBORAH SEDARES & EVAN STAMOULIS

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED

COFFEE HOUR ON VACATION



THE TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

EPISTLE: 1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-11 ☩ GOSPEL: MATTHEW 19:16-26

(JESUS AND THE RICH YOUNG MAN)

TONE 3 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL: 1

terson or Lisa Mielnicki.

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

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

DATES TO REMEMBER

Thurs, Sept 4 Pita Baking, 9:00 am
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

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

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.**

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.

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.



A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

ETERNAL LORD AND FATHER: We acknowledge the unfailing love you have shown us, and the wonders you have done for us. Yet, we are weak and fickle, so often untrue to our promises, and ready, at the drop of a hat, to excuse ourselves. We always attempt to escape retribution by conveniently forgetting that we did not behave as we should. Yes, as a matter of fact, our behavior shames us, so help us to reform our lives, with the help of your unfailing grace.

By the mercies and love for us of your only Son, with whom you are blest, together with your all-holy, good, and life-giving Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages, amen.

NAMEDAYS

August 26

The Holy Martyrs Adrian and Natalia at Nicomedia

Natalia Grace Dorogi
Natalia Dimitra Karadimitriou
Natalia Avery Stevens
Natasha Zhaka

August 29

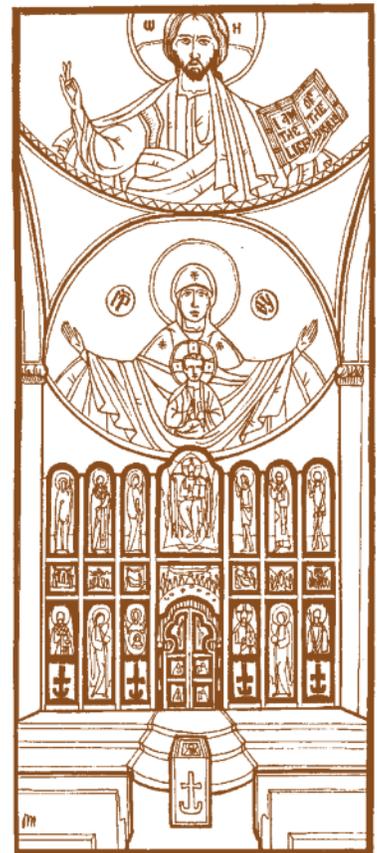
St. Theodora of Thessalonika

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



ONLY ONE IS GOOD

When my children were small I would play a little game with them. Whenever they would tell me that they were being “good,” I would quip back, “Only one is good.” At first I would get a confused look from them. Over time, when they began to understand the Gospel reference, I would get that special groan that children reserve for their parents. They knew I was teasing them, and enjoying it. They also knew that I was trying to teach them something.

This week’s Gospel lesson is the story of the Rich Young Man (Matthew 19:16-26) who comes to Jesus asking: “Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?” (v. 16) Jesus responds by asking back: “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good” (v. 17). This phrase sets the terms of the conversation between them. The young man comes to Jesus seeking knowledge about eternal life. Jesus gives him the answer he cannot bear to hear.

Some of the early Biblical commentators seem to suggest that the young man might have been coming to test Jesus with the question, as had the Scribes, the Pharisees and the Lawyers. But St. John Chrysostom reflecting on the character of this person says that if he were coming to tempt Jesus he would not have left grieving over what he had heard. He had not come with an evil heart, but rather one that was too feeble. He did indeed desire life, but, after Jesus’ advice, realized he was held captive by another stronger desire. He couldn’t let go.

Let’s go back to the beginning of the story. The young man comes to Jesus asking what good deed he must do. He comes to him not understanding who Jesus really is, but thinking him to be a “teacher.” He came for advice, albeit,

spiritual advice, about the path to eternal life. One can surmise that he had asked other “teachers” the same question, and was hoping Jesus would give him the answer he wanted to hear.

But Jesus responds in a way that compels him to reexamine and contemplate the question he had just asked. Jesus draws the man’s attention to the premise of the question, the basic underpinning: “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good,” he says to him. The young man thinks he is close to the path. He thinks that he has figured out this greatest of spiritual mysteries. Perhaps he is close. He is at least asking the right question. But here is the trap: too often we judge ourselves against other people and think, “in comparison to them, we’re really not that bad,” or perhaps even, “we are very good,” next to them. Jesus draws our attention to a different comparison, not with other people, but with God Himself.

Jesus tells him that first he should obey the Commandments. He cites the “Ten,” but they both understand he means the whole of the Law. The young man tells him that he’s followed them from his youth. In his account, St. Mark adds this powerful detail. He says: “Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, “You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in



heaven; then come, follow me” (Mark 10:21).

The young man was devastated. He was lost. He had come to Jesus thinking he was close to perfection, and Jesus, like a skillful physician, diagnoses the illness and with love prescribes the remedy. Only this remedy was too much for the young man. He was held prisoner by his passion for the things of this world, and he knew it. He was too comfortable.

Many of us think that we are good — or perhaps worse — do not even ponder the question of what it might mean to actually be good. When we decide to follow Christ, our Lord draws us directs our attention elsewhere, heavenward, to the Author of Good, and the Father of lights (cf James 1:17). We should always ask ourselves: “What good deed must I do to inherit eternal life?” And, prepare ourselves to hear the answer we need to hear.

— Fr. Nicholas Apostola



THE BEHEADING OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST AUGUST 29TH

The Beheading of the Prophet, Forerunner of the Lord, John the Baptist: The Evangelists Matthew (Matthew 14:1-12) and Mark (Mark 6:14-29) provide accounts about the martyric end of John the Baptist in the year 32 after the Birth of Christ.

Following the Baptism of the Lord, St John the Baptist was locked up in prison by Herod Antipas, the Tetrarch (ruler of one fourth of the Holy Land) and governor of Galilee. (After the death of king Herod the Great, the Romans divided the territory of Palestine into four parts, and put a governor in charge of each part. Herod Antipas received Galilee from the emperor Augustus).

The prophet of God John openly denounced Herod for having left his lawful wife, the daughter of the Arabian

king Aretas, and then instead cohabiting with Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip (Luke 3:19-20). On his birthday, Herod made a feast for dignitaries, the elders and a thousand chief citizens. Salome, the daughter of Herod, danced before the guests and charmed Herod. In gratitude to the girl, he swore to give her whatever she would ask, up to half his kingdom.

The vile girl on the advice of her wicked mother Herodias asked that she be given the head of John the Baptist on a platter. Herod became apprehensive, for he feared the wrath of God for the murder of a prophet, whom earlier he had heeded. He also

feared the people, who loved the holy Forerunner. But because of the guests and his careless oath, he gave orders to cut off the head of St John and to give it to Salome.

According to Tradition, the mouth of the dead preacher of repentance once more opened and proclaimed: "Herod, you should not have the wife of your brother Philip." Salome took the platter with the head of St John and gave it to her mother. The frenzied Herodias repeatedly stabbed the tongue of the prophet with a needle and buried his holy head in a unclean place. But the pious Joanna, wife of Herod's steward Chuza, buried the head of John the Baptist in an earthen vessel on the Mount of Olives, where Herod had a parcel of land. (The Uncovering of the Venerable Head is celebrated, February 24). The

holy body of John the Baptist was taken that night by his disciples and buried at Sebastia, there where the wicked deed had been done.

After the murder of St John the Baptist, Herod continued to govern for a certain time. Pontius Pilate, governor of Judea, later sent Jesus Christ to him, Whom he mocked (Luke 23:7-12).

The judgment of God came upon Herod, Herodias and Salome, even during their earthly life. Salome, crossing the River Sikoris in winter, fell through the ice. The ice gave way in such a way that her body was in the water, but her head was trapped above the ice. It was similar to how she once had danced with her feet upon the ground, but now she flailed helplessly in the icy water. Thus she was trapped until that time when the sharp ice cut through her neck.

Her corpse was not found, but they brought the head to Herod and Herodias, as once they had brought them the head of St John the Baptist. The Arab king Aretas, in revenge for the disrespect shown his daughter, made war against Herod. The defeated Herod suffered the wrath of the Roman emperor Caius Caligua (37-41) and was exiled with Herodias first to Gaul, and then to Spain.

The Beheading of St John the Baptist, a Feast day established by the Church, is also a strict fast day because of the grief of Christians at the violent death of the saint. In some Orthodox cultures pious people will not eat food from a flat plate, use a knife, or eat food that is round in shape on this day.