

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN DECEMBER 7, 2014 THIS WEEK'S NEWS

ST. NICHOLAS FEASTDAY & 65TH ANNIVERSARY

Our *Parish Feastday Celebration* is being held this weekend of December 5th - 7th to honor the patron Saint of our Community, the Holy Bishop Nicholas.

Today, we continue the festivities with **Divine Liturgy at 10:30 am**. After the Divine Liturgy, there will be a luncheon. A traditional baked fish dinner will be served as well as a children's meal. Thanks to the **generosity of the Tanacea, Saffron, Fahey and Shpira Family**, who are sponsoring our Feast Day Luncheon celebration, all proceeds from the luncheon will go to benefit St. Nicholas Church. May God Bless them!

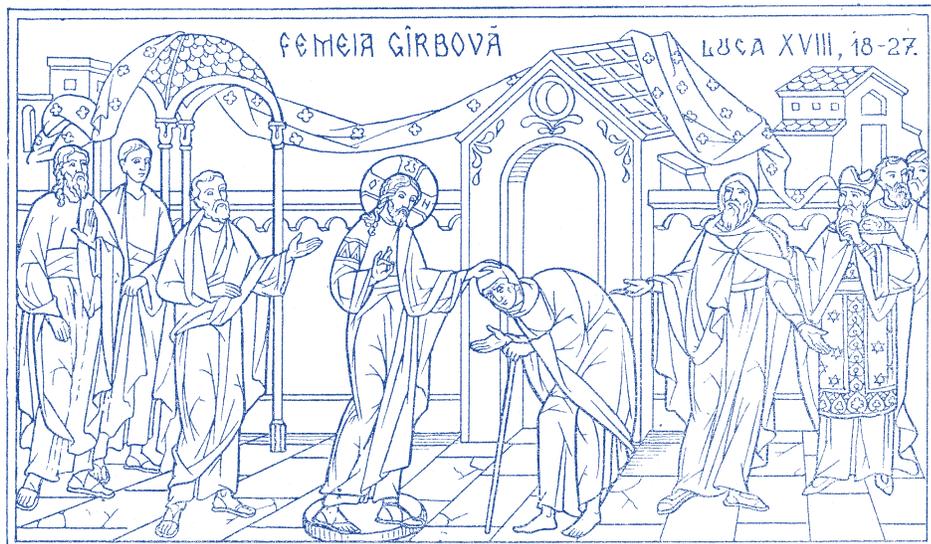
ALSO, we are holding the drawing for the **Annual Feastday Raffle**. There's still time to purchase tickets! **Dean Valoras is heading up this effort**. He and his team are available to help you buy them.

THE LIVING NATIVITY Youth Fellowship scheduled for yesterday evening was cancelled because of the rain. **It has been rescheduled for tonight**. If you are interested, please speak with Valarie Stamoulis.

GREETERS TEAM 2:
MARY ANNA DYMEK &
MARGARITE LANDRY

FEASTDAY CELEBRATION:
ALL HANDS ON DECK

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



THE TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

EPISTLE: EPHESIANS 6:10-17 ☩ GOSPEL: LUKE 13:10-17

(JESUS HEALS THE WOMAN WITH OSTEOPOROSIS)

TONE 1 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL: 4

THE PARISH CHRISTMAS CARD DEADLINE has been extended a week. There are forms available at the candles. **Please make sure you get them into the parish office by next Sunday**. Questions? Talk to Tim Rucho.

THANKS TO THE FOOD PANTRY VOLUNTEERS for working the Orthodox Food Center on behalf of our parish yesterday. Our regular commitment is the first Saturday of the month from 9am to noon. About 4 people are needed. If you can help in this worthwhile ministry, please speak with Nicole Apostola or Lisa Mielnicki. **Our next Saturday is January 3rd**.

A NEW PARISH COUNCIL WILL BE ELECTED IN JANUARY, (the two-year term of the Parish Council expires this year). Please consider offering a stewardship of your time in this important ministry. We also are asking for people to serve on other Parish committees, if you would like to focus your efforts in just one area. How-

ever you'd like to serve, please speak with **Fr. Nick**.

COMMUNITY NEWS

A HOLY LAND PILGRIMAGE is being organized by **Fr. Timothy Lowe**. The dates are **April 23 to May 10, 2015**. If you are interested, speak with **Fr. Nick** for more details.

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.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Fri, Nov 14 Nativity Lent Begins
Fri, Dec 19 Mustard Seed Meal, 5pm
Sat, Dec 20 Pageant Rehearsal
Sun, Dec 21 Children's Christmas Pageant

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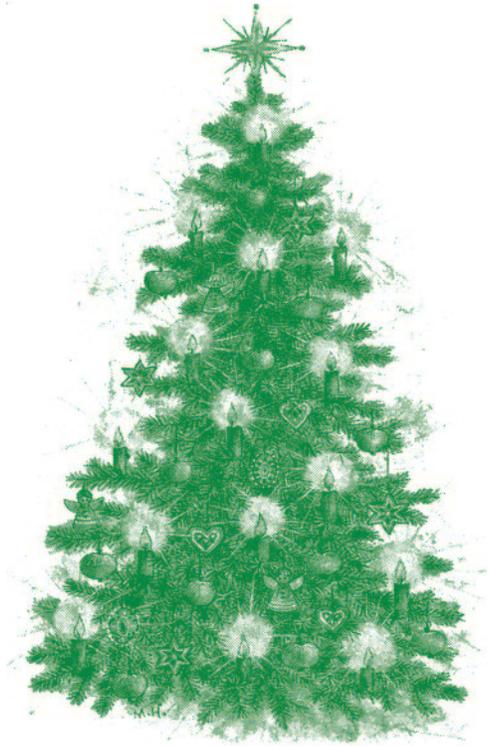
A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas

A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

BLESSED ARE YOU, LORD GOD OF OUR FATHERS, for giving us your only Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ, as our refuge and stronghold, that evil might never master our lives nor the enemy enslave us! Now, as we offer you these prayers in watchfulness and expectation, enable us to call on your holy name, filled with understanding and love. Prepare us for the celebration of your Son's birthday by renewing in us a spirit of true dedication and discipleship, and grant that we may always enjoy your saving power.

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



NAMEDAYS

December 4

*The Great-martyr Barbara and
St. John of Damascus*

Barbara Jean Grniet

December 6

*St. Nicholas the
Wonderworker of Myra in Lychia*

Archbishop NICOLAE

Rev. Nicholas Apostola

Nicole Soumela Apostola

Nicholas Belishta

Nicholas Charalambides

Robert A. Clem

Nicholas R. Demake

Nikolla Endriko

Frank W. Ford

Nicholas John Johnson

Nicole Amelia Karadimitriou

Nicholas Mazanitis

Nicholas Peter Mentis

Nicolae Nace

Rev. Fr. Nicolae Simion

Nicholas George Soter

Nicole Sparages

Nicholas Tonna

Nicole Marta Trakadas

Nicholas Valoras

Nikollaq Zhaka

December 12

*St. Spyridon
the Wonderworker of Tremithus*

Spiro Kelly

Spiro Spyrou

December 15

*The Hieromartyr Eleftherios,
Bishop of Illyria*

Lillian Chachi

December 17

*St. Dionysios of Zakynthos,
Bishop of Aegina*

Denise Sparages

The Holy Prophet Daniel

Dan Manescu

Dana Manescu

Dan Alexandru Nedelescu

Robert Daniel Salerno

SET FREE FROM OUR BONDAGE

THIS week's Gospel lesson is the story of how Jesus healed a woman who had been crippled for eighteen years (Luke 13:10-17). "She was bent over and quite unable to stand straight." (v. 11) Today we would say that she very likely had osteoporosis that led to curvature of the spine. Many of us know people who suffer in this way. Those of us who have had occasion to visit people in a nursing home have probably seen more than a few women like this. (It is something that afflicts women much more than men.) There was a woman in my neighborhood who was so bent over that it was impossible when seeing her, not to suffer with her. Needless to say, it is a debilitating illness, and this poor woman had been suffering like this for eighteen years.

This particular story is unique to the Gospel of St. Luke, which is in keeping with his habit of highlighting for us Jesus' attention toward the poor and the weak. Here, we are told, that while he was preaching in a synagogue on the Sabbath Jesus saw her and called her over to him. She didn't ask anything of him, but rather *He* reached out to *her*. From among all the people in the assembly, he noticed her and her suffering. He said to her, "Woman, you are set free from your ailment." (v.12) Laying his hand on her she stood up straight and began praising God (v. 13).

He was immediately criticized by the leader of the synagogue for having broken the rules around work on the Sabbath. Jesus is outraged at the hypocrisy. He says, "Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to give it water?" (v. 15) There were intricate rules around what could or could not be done on the Sabbath. In one commentary on the Law, tying and



untying knots was strictly forbidden, while in another certain kinds of knots were exempt. Similarly, it was forbidden to lead animals more than 2,000 yards to water. Jesus is intimating that these rules were regularly broken out of necessity. No one would not tie or untie a rope or not water thirsty animals if their well-being were at stake.

This is the power behind his point, when he says: "Ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, be set free from this bondage on the Sabbath day?" (v. 16) The congregants immediately understand the hypocrisy and the lack of compassion that Jesus is decrying. I would also draw your attention to a subtle point in this account. Jesus says that *Satan* had bound this woman. Often we think that illness is a punishment from God, or just a natural part of life. The Lord calls this bondage, not punishment. He certainly doesn't see

this as natural. He wanted her healthy and whole. Moverover, he wants us healthy and whole.

It is perhaps not too much to see in this crippled woman an image of humanity bound and held captive by the Evil One. It brings to mind the old Latin hymn that we sing at this time of year:

"O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here,
Until the Son of God appear."

We should — all of us — prepare for His coming. We should set aside time for prayer and fasting, withdrawing from the frenzied pace of life. We should make room in our hearts to welcome that young child who comes to us, in order to free us, He who is the pre-eternal God.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA