

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN DECEMBER 28, 2014 THIS WEEK'S NEWS

A DEEP DEBT OF GRATITUDE is extended to all the people who have been baking and working in a myriad of ways these past months to make our Holiday Baked Goods Sale an amazing success. Sales this year are up over 30% compared with last year. Many people helped, but we especially want to recognize: Chris Toda, Betty Anderson, Lillian Chachi, Flo Rucho, Natasha Zhaka, Eleanor Sedares, Ann Trakades, Irene Tsoules, Sandra Nedelescu, Lisa Mielnicki, Alysia Valoras, Carol Soter, Janice Samara, Eileen Favata, Ted Belba, Katina Cocavessis, Presvytera Maria, Deb Sedares and Tim Rucho.

A HUGE 'THANK YOU' FOR THOSE PARTICIPATING IN THE CHRISTMAS PAGEANT. This includes the teachers and parents who helped and coordinated, but especially the children and young people who participated by playing their roles excellently and narrating the story movingly. *God bless all of you!*

THE FULL CHRISTMAS/ EPIPHANY SCHEDULE is available and attached to the Bulletin.

FOOD PANTRY. Help is needed to staff our monthly responsibility at the Or-

GREETERS TEAM 1:

V. GERALD BELBA & CĂLIN GALERIU

COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP CREW D:

ILEANA & SEAN FAHEY, DIMITRI SAFFRON,
CHRISTOS & SPIRO SPYROU

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED

thodox Food Center **this coming Saturday, January 3rd, 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 Peterson or Lisa Mielnicki.**

THE COAT DRIVE CONTINUES for the rest of December into January at the Orthodox Food Pantry. There is particular need for men's large and extra large coats, but all kinds of coats, hats and gloves are needed. If you have good, clean and usable articles, please consider donating them. Bring them to the Church or **contact Lisa Mielnicki at:** lamielnicki@gmail.com or text her at 508-340-1547.

THE 2015 CHURCH CALENDARS in both English and



THE SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY

*THE PROPHET-KING DAVID; JOSEPH THE BETHROTHED; JAMES THE LORD'S BROTHER
THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT*

EPISTLE: GALATIANS 1:11-19 ☩ GOSPEL: MATTHEW 2:13-23

TONE 4 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 7

Romanian are in! They are available in the Narthex. A small donation toward their cost would be welcomed.

ARCHBISHOP NICOLAE'S PASTORAL LETTER on the occasion of the **Lord's Nativity** is available for you to read in English and Romanian available at the candles.

THE BLESSING OF HOMES AT THEOPHANY will begin on Wednesday, January 7th, and continue until all homes are blessed. As in the past, we will be setting times to bless your home.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Wed, Dec 31 Lit at Holy Trinity, 9:30 am
Thurs, Jan 1 New Year's Day Divine Liturgy, 10 am
Sat, Jan 3 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry
Mon, Jan 5 Vespertal Liturgy of Theophany, 6 pm
with Great Blessing of Water

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



If there is a specific time that is more convenient for you, please e-mail or call (508-845-0088) Fr. Nick to arrange it.

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

TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR is sponsored by **Sean & Ileana Fahey**.

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.

NAMEDAYS

December 25

The Holy Nativity of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ

Christy Belba
 Christopher Blanchard
 Chrysanthi Charalambides
 Cristina M. Culcea
 Christopher Demake
 Cristean Dumitriu
 Kristjan Endriko
 Cristina Gavala
 Cristian Ionete
 Christine Kelly
 Christian Andrew Polymeros
 Christopher Rucho
 Christina Soriano
 Christina Soter
 Christos Spyrou
 Christina Thoren
 Christine Toda
 Christina Marina Tonna
 Chris Zaruha
 Cristian Zaruha

December 26

The holy and righteous Joseph, the betrothed of the Virgin

Josephine Mbuthi
 Joseph Opio

The Holy Prophet and King David

David Zonia

December 27

The Holy Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen

Stephanie Keimig



A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

WE GLORIFY YOU, Lord Jesus Christ, for allowing us to know you. Everything we have belongs to you and we possess nothing of our own, for it is you who gave us all we have. By coming into our midst, you show us how to let go of everything, and by the poverty of your birth, you teach us to be attached to nothing. As we prepare for the celebration of your earthly birthday, O Christ, keep our hearts fixed only on you, so that we may always sing: Glory to God in the heights; on earth peace, and among all love and understanding.

For you are God and we give you glory together with your Father Who is without beginning, and your all-holy, good, and life-giving Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Stephen Keimig
 Stephanie Sparages
 Stephen Sparages
 Steven Thoren

December 31

St. Melania the Younger, of Rome

Melanie Mentis

OUT OF EGYPT HAVE I CALLED MY SON

THE SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY OF THE SAVIOR is dedicated to the relatives of Christ, especially David the King and Prophet, Joseph the betrothed of the Theotokos and “step-father” of our Lord, and James the Lord’s brother, Joseph’s son from his first marriage. In the Gospel lesson for this Sunday, St. Matthew (2:13-23) concludes his narrative of the Nativity. He recounts: the fury of Herod when he realized that the Magi had tricked him; the warning that Joseph received in a dream to flee to Egypt in order to save the baby Jesus and His mother; the massacre of the infants in and around Bethlehem; and finally the return from Egypt to Nazareth.

As you can see, there are a number of themes in this relatively short passage, many of which overlap. Let us look first at Herod. We know from other ancient sources that Herod was a ruthless and terrible tyrant. He was jealous of others and feared threats to his power. He killed a number of his own family when he thought they were plotting against him. And while there is no record outside of the Bible of the massacre mentioned by Matthew, it is quite in keeping with Herod’s personality. He often ordered indiscriminate massacres.

Matthew has also another purpose in telling us this story of the massacre of the innocents. He wants us to understand how the lives of many of the people whose stories are chronicled in the Old Testament should also be seen as pre-figuring Christ. Christians generally view the Old Testament as a preparation for the coming of Christ. Through and in the Children of Israel, God is readying the world to hear and receive God’s full revelation of Himself. This is partly what is meant by the phrase used to describe Christ’s coming as “the fullness of time.”

In his account of the Nativity, St. Matthew is drawing particular parallel to two persons in the history of Israel: the Patriarch Joseph (son of Jacob) and Moses. These men represent two “types” or foreshadowings of Christ. For example, just as Joseph was sold into slavery in Egypt, but

later found refuge there and became a savior to his family and nation (Genesis 37:1ff), so also the Christ child finds refuge in Egypt and becomes a Savior to the world. And, just as Moses was rescued from the massacre of Hebrew boys by the hand of Pharaoh (Exodus 2:1ff), so also was Jesus rescued from the massacre of the young boys in Bethlehem by the hand of Herod, who in this regard is like to Pharaoh. Matthew wants to prepare us to understand how Jesus will be an even greater Savior than these two great saviors of the people of Israel.

Another theme in this Gospel passage is the proclamation of the Good News to the pagan world. The Magi, who had been drawn by a star to worship Jesus, are now warned in a dream not to return to Herod, but rather to go home by another way (Matthew 2:12). They carry within themselves the profound experience God has revealed to them. They lay the foundation for the proclamation of the Gospel in Babylon and Persia — modern-day Iraq and Iran. At the same time Joseph the Betrothed takes Mary and the Child Jesus to Egypt, another sign of how Christianity will come to transform the faith of this ancient pagan civilization.



Finally, we see how Joseph himself has been changed by the events he has experienced. The angel comes again, this time to warn of the danger to the Child, not to Mary, but rather to Joseph. He says to him, “take the child and his mother” (v. 13) to Egypt. Notice, the angel doesn’t speak of “wife” or “son.” He knows that Joseph believes and no longer needs to be convinced of God’s hand in all that has happened. When Joseph sees the angel there is no doubt or questioning, just faith and action.

And, after Herod had died (a tortured death in prison), the same angel comes to Joseph again, telling him it was safe to go home. He took Mary and the Child Jesus to Nazareth, “calling him out from Egypt” (v. 22-23), and there He grows to manhood.

May each of us embrace the examples of the faith and perseverance of David and Moses had, as well as the courage and faithfulness found in the young Virgin Mary and Joseph her betrothed. May each of us be like they, listening to God’s call for us and willing to follow it.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA

CHRISTMAS & THEOPHANY SCHEDULE

SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2014

Matins 9:00 a.m.
 Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
 Children's Christmas Program after the Liturgy

CHRISTMAS EVE WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2014

Liturgy for the Vigil (at Holy Trinity) 9:30 a.m.
 Royal Hours 3:00 p.m.
 Great Vespers 6:00 p.m.

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2014

Matins 9:00 a.m.
 Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2014

Matins 9:00 a.m.
 Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

NEW YEAR'S DAY

CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD ✨ FEAST OF ST. BASIL THE GREAT THURSDAY, JANUARY 1, 2015

Matins 9:00 a.m.
 Divine Liturgy of St. Basil 10:00 a.m.

EVE OF HOLY THEOPHANY MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 2014

Royal Hours 9:30 a.m.
 Vespers Liturgy of St. Basil 6:00 p.m.
 Great Blessing of Water at end of Liturgy

SUNDAY AFTER HOLY THEOPHANY SUNDAY, JANUARY 11, 2015

Matins 9:00 a.m.
 Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.



HOUSE BLESSINGS. The blessing of homes at Theophany will begin on Wednesday, January 7, 2015, and continue until all homes are blessed. As in the past, we will be setting times when we will be coming to bless your home. If there is a specific time that is more convenient for you, please call Fr. Nick to arrange it (508.845.0088).

