

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN

JANUARY 11, 2015

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

THE BLESSING OF HOMES AT THEOPHANY begins on Monday, January 12th, and continue until all homes are blessed. As in the past, we will be setting times to bless your home. If there is a specific time that is more convenient for you, please e-mail or call (508-335-7378) 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'd like to focus your efforts in a particular area or project. However you'd like to serve, please speak with **Fr. Nick**.

CONGRATULATIONS to **Bardhyl and Monika Durmillari** and grandparents **Niko and Natasha Zhaka** on the engagement of their daughter, **Inva Gabriela to Ivi Katrigjini**. May God bless their life together with health, happiness, prosperity, and many years!

COFFEE HOUR SPONSORS ARE NEEDED for the coming weeks. Please speak with Presvytera Maria if you would like to sponsor one.

GREETERS TEAM 3:
EVANS TSOULES AND TOM FITZPATRICK

COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP CREW B:
KARADIMITRIOU/KALPIDO FAMILY

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



THE SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY

EPISTLE: EPHESIANS 4:7-13

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 4:12-17

(THE LORD BEGINS HIS MINISTRY)

TONE 6 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 9

TODAY WE CELEBRATE A MEMORIAL SERVICE for **Ion Constantin Pitigoi**, father of Liana Manescu, fallen asleep 9 months, and her grandparents **Maria and Constantin**. May their memory be eternal!

TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR is sponsored by **Dan and Liana Manescu** in memory of their departed loved-ones.

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.

A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

GLORY TO YOU, ETERNAL FATHER, FOR SENDING US YOUR

SON! Glory to you, coeternal Son, for being baptized by John! Glory to you, o life-giving Spirit, for pointing out the Son to all the world! As we celebrate these days of theophany, enable us to praise you with all your creatures, so that our lives may manifest your majesty and glory at all times, O you whose wisdom fashioned and created all things.

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.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Sat, Feb 7 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry
Sat, Feb 14 Sat of the Souls, Liturgy 10am
Fri, Feb 20 Mustard Seed Meal, 5 pm
Mon, Feb 23 Great Lent Begins
Sun, April 12 Great and Holy Pascha

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas



NAMEDAYS

January 1

St. Basil the Great

William Cocavessis
Bryan Donabed
William Keimig
Vasia Lolo
Vasilika Lolo
William Polymeros
Valarie Stamoulis
Vasilika Tanko
William Tsoules

January 6

The Holy Theophany of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

Francis Polymeros
Jordan Sparages

January 7

The Holy Prophet and Forerunner John the Baptist

Rev. Fr. John Daly
Nița Dumitriu
Sean Fahey
Ian Mayer
John Rucho
John David Thoren

January 12

St. Tatiana the Martyr of Rome

Tatiana Sofia Karadimitriou

January 17

St. Anthony the Great

Anthony Theodore Christo
Scott Anthony Maynard
Anthony Rucho
Tony Nicholas Trakadas

January 18

St. Athanasios Patriarch of Alexandria

Thanas Lolo
Arthur Peterson

January 22

The Holy Apostle Timothy

Rev. Fr. Timothy Lowe
Timothy Rucho

January 25

St. Gregory the Theologian

Rev. Fr. Gregory Christakos
Dr. Gregory Tsongalis

January 28

St. Ephraim the Syrian

Rev. Fr. Ephraim Peters

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU

JESUS begins his ministry upon hearing of the imprisonment of John the Baptist. So, we read in the Gospel lesson for the Sunday after Theophany (Matthew 4:12-17) that “when Jesus heard that John had been arrested ... he left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea” (v. 12-13). To emphasize the importance of this move, St. Matthew then quotes the Prophet Isaiah (9:1-2) who says that, “the people [of Galilee] who sat in darkness have seen a great light.” Then Matthew tells us that Jesus begins his ministry by proclaiming, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (v. 17).

After his Baptism in the Jordan River by John, the Lord was led by the Spirit into the wilderness for forty days and nights, and there He was tempted by the devil (Matthew 4:1-11). We see that He did not immediately begin to preach, but like the prophets before him, he withdrew to the desert to fast and pray. St. John Chrysostom adds that the Lord wanted to give us an example, that after our own baptism we should expect to be tempted and put to the test, and that private prayer and solitude, along with fasting were critical to the spiritual life.

Even after his trial in the desert, Jesus does not begin his ministry, but starts only once he hears that John has been arrested. Jesus will not begin preaching while John is still active. John’s prophetic ministry prepares the way for people to be receptive to Jesus’ call, but while he was still preaching and baptizing, most thought that John was the Messiah. John had a great following, including a number of disciples. Chrysostom says that the Lord was careful, in this way, not to divide and confuse the people. He waited for John to complete his ministry before beginning his.

The move from Nazareth to Capernaum was significant in a number of



ways. Practically speaking, Nazareth was a small village and Capernaum was one of a number of busy and prosperous small cities on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. If he wanted to reach a large and diverse population with his message, Capernaum was the logical place to go. There is another reason as well, a spiritual reason alluded to by St. Matthew when he quotes Isaiah. The original territory of the Tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali was the first to be separated from ancient Israel. The first part of Israel to experience the destructive wrath of God should be the first to hear the good news of salvation.

Jesus’ message is a little softer than John’s. John was the “voice crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight’” (Matthew 3:3). Yet, Jesus takes up the other central theme of John’s preaching: “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 3:1, 4:17).

The phrase “kingdom of heaven” is easy to misunderstand, especially in the English translation. The Greek word “*βασιλεία*” (*vasilia*) is usually translated as “kingdom,” but a much more accurate

translation would be “reign,” as in the reign of a ruler. “Kingdom” gives the sense of a place or a nation. “Reign” has to do with the way a ruler rules. When Jesus speaks of the Reign of God or the Reign of Heaven, he’s not talking about a place, but rather a way of understanding how God would rule our hearts. “Once Jesus was asked ... when the kingdom of God was coming, and he answered, ‘The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed; nor will they say, ‘Look, here it is!’ or ‘There it is!’ For, in fact, the kingdom of God is within you.” (Luke 17:20-21)

Perform this small exercise. Go back and read the passage above again, but this time substitute the word “reign” everywhere you read “kingdom.” Can you see how it changes your perspective on where to look for the “kingdom” of God? God reigns from the inside, not the outside. He wants us to change our hearts, and if we change our hearts, our actions will truly reflect the image of God that is within us.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA