

# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN JANUARY 18, 2015 THIS WEEK'S NEWS

**THE BLESSING OF HOMES AT THEOPHANY CONTINUES.** You should have received a notice with a specific date and time. If there is a more convenient time for you, or if you didn't receive a notice, please e-mail (FrNick@StNicholasChurch.org) or call (508-335-7378) Fr. Nick to arrange it.

**PITA DOUGH ROLLING.** It's that time again! We did so well with our sales for the holidays that we've depleted our inventory. Chris Toda is trying to organize a Saturday morning session that will work for most people. Possible dates include January 24th, January 31st and February 7th. We need 12-15 people, so that the work is evenly distributed and we can finish with prep and clean-up in 3-4 hours. Contact her at: [thetodas@msn.com](mailto:thetodas@msn.com), or 508-832-6271.

**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.

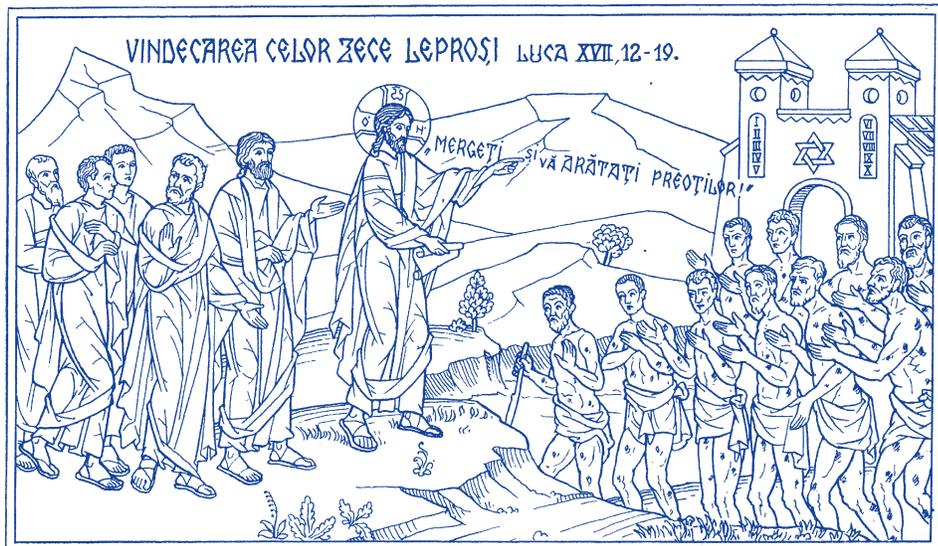
#### **GREETERS TEAM 4:**

DEBORAH SEDARES & EVAN STAMOULIS

#### **COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP CREW C:**

PRIZIO FAMILY

**ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED**



## THE TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

**Ss. ATHANASIOS AND CYRILL**

EPISTLE: COLOSSIANS 3:4-11 ☩ GOSPEL: LUKE 17:12-19

*(JESUS HEALS THE TEN LEPEERS)*

TONE 7 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 10

### **COFFEE HOUR SPONSORS**

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

### **TODAY WE CELEBRATE A MEMORIAL SERVICE**

for **Manoug Nucu Melichian** (fallen asleep one year), and **Eugenia Alenak**. *May their memory be eternal!*

**TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR** is sponsored by **Gabriel Melichian and Mary Davoudian** in memory of their departed loved-ones.

### 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



## 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.

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*A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas*

## NAMEDAYS

**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

### A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**L**ET WISDOME LIFE OUR HEARTS,  
O God of wisdom, and let prudence purify them. The workings of your divine providence, your just judgments, and the reasons for them defy our abilities to understand. Grant us, therefore, that we may learn self-discipline and arrive at some wisdom in this short life of ours.

For you can enable us to do what we must, O God, and we give you glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.



**ST. ATHANASIOS THE GREAT**  
**JANUARY 18TH**

**I**n the half-century after the First Ecumenical Council held in Nicea in 325, if there was one man whom the Arians feared and hated more intensely than any other, as being able to lay bare the whole error of their teaching, and to marshal, even from exile or hiding, the beleaguered forces of the Orthodox, it was Saint Athanasios the Great. This blazing lamp of Orthodoxy, which imperial power and heretics' plots could not quench when he shone upon the lampstand, nor find when he was hid by the people and monks of Egypt, was born in Alexandria about the year 296. He received an excellent training in Greek letters and especially in the sacred Scriptures, of which he shows an exceptional knowledge in his writings. Even as a young man he had a remarkable depth of theological understanding; he was only about twenty years old when he wrote his treatise "On the Incarnation." Saint Alexander, the Archbishop of Alexandria, brought him up in piety, ordained him his deacon, and after deposing Arius for his blasphemy against

the Divinity of the Son of God, took Athanasios to the First Council in Nicea in 325. Saint Athanasios was to spend the remainder of his life laboring in defense of this Holy Council. In 326, before his death, Alexander appointed Athanasios his successor.

The great Athanasios passed the remaining seven years of his life in peace. Of his fifty-seven years as Patriarch, he had spent some seventeen in exiles. Shining from the height of his throne like a radiant evening star, and enlightening the Orthodox with the brilliance of his words for yet a little while, this much-suffering champion inclined toward the sunset of his life, and in the year 373 took his rest from his lengthy sufferings, but not before another luminary of the truth — Basil the Great — had risen in the East, being consecrated Archbishop of Caesarea in 370. Besides all of his other achievements, Saint Athanasios wrote the life of Saint Anthony the Great, with whom he spent time in his youth; ordained Saint Frumentius first Bishop of Ethiopia; and in his Paschal Encyclical for the year 367 set forth the books of the Old and New Testaments accepted by the Church as canonical. Saint Gregory the Theologian, in his "Oration On the Great Athanasios", said that he was "Angelic in appearance, more angelic in mind; ... rebuking with the tenderness of a father, praising with the dignity of a ruler ... Everything was harmonious, as an air upon a single lyre, and in the same key; his life, his teaching, his struggles, his dangers, his return, and his conduct after his return ... he treated so mildly and gently those who had injured him, that even they themselves, if I may say so, did not find his restoration distasteful."

## GET UP, YOUR FAITH HAS MADE YOU WELL

**T**HIS week's Gospel reading, the account of the healing of the ten lepers (Luke 17:12-19) is written very much in the form of a parable, even as it recounts a true event, not simply a story told as a teaching tool. Ten men were afflicted by leprosy. They happen upon Jesus, beg for mercy and were healed. To be stricken with leprosy was like being given a living death sentence. You were seen as cursed and unclean. As with the Ebola epidemic, someone who had contracted leprosy was driven from family and friends. And like AIDS, especially in the early days of this epidemic, you were forced to hide yourself and live apart, sometimes in a colony, but often alone. In many ways, it was worse than being dead.

When Jesus entered this particular village the ten of them recognize him, and, while keeping their distance, called to him saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" (v. 12-13) It is clear from the way they address him that they understood who he was. They most likely had heard of his healing power. Jesus answers them simply: "Go and show yourselves to the priests." (v. 14)

The priests were the only ones authorized to attest to a healing. Today we understand that what people called "leprosy" in Biblical times could have been other skin ailments as well, not necessarily what is known today as Hansen's Disease. Nonetheless, neither Hansen's nor conditions such as eczema are easily cured. For Jesus to have told those afflicted to present themselves to the priests meant that they were healed.

As they were travelling on their way to the priests, the ten looked and saw that they had indeed been made whole. But, only one of them, when he realized he had been healed, turned back and fell at the feet of Jesus to thank him. It is at



this point that we realize this man is different from the other nine, not only for his act of gratitude, but also because of his nationality. He is a Samaritan. (v. 15-16)

Jesus then says something he usually doesn't say after he has healed someone. He asks, "Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" (v. 17-18) First, in the way Jesus asks the question, he is telling us that the other nine were Jews. Second, he tells us that there is something else special about this man, apart from the fact that he is a Samaritan. Jesus gives us and insight into the character of this individual.

We know that there was a tension between Jews and Samaritans (cf. John 4:5ff). However, apart from ethnic and religious differences — his social standing — we are drawn to look at his character. We see that he possesses a depth of heart that seems to be missing from the other nine. Having been healed of

such a grievous illness, could you imagine not running back to thank the person who had healed you? Yet as we see in this passage, 90% of this small sampling of humanity did not. And, from experience, I might hazard the guess that this is probably the rule, not the exception. This is a hard reality, and difficult to accept. Can it really be that most people would not stop to give thanks, neither to the person who healed them nor to God? Would you?

Many of the Patristic commentators use this passage as a way to emphasize the ingratitude of the Jews and the gratitude of the Gentiles. I truly do not think this is the point of this story. As I have seen it, many people are quick to call on God and promise anything when they are suffering, but few remember their promises when they have become well. When our need has passed and we become comfortable again, we resume our normal behavior. If we were grateful and attentive before, we very likely will be grateful and attentive afterward. If not, then not.

In the final verse of this story Jesus tells the Samaritan: "Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well." (v. 19) But what of the other nine who were cured as well? If it was this man's faith that cured him, how were these other nine cured? God's Grace falls as rain on each and every one of us. More often than not we are totally oblivious of that gift, or even worse, ungrateful. God nonetheless continues to pour His love down, hoping that we will turn to fall at His feet and give thanks. (v. 16) This is the degree to which he loves us.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA