

# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN MAY 24, 2015

## THIS WEEK'S NEWS

**MEMORIAL DAY** is Monday, May 25th. Fr. Nick will be at Hope Cemetery from 10:00 am. The common Memorial Service will be at noon at the Altar in Hope. If you would like Fr. Nick to visit a grave in another cemetery, please contact him to make arrangements: 508-335-7378.

**SATURDAY OF THE SOULS** before Pentecost is this coming Saturday, May 30th. Liturgy will begin at 10:00 am with Matins preceding at 9:00 am.

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES** will end next Sunday, May 31st for the Summer. We'll maintain the small coloring table in the hall for the toddlers.

**LOOKING FOR THIS YEAR'S HIGH SCHOOL OR COLLEGE GRADUATES** in our Parish so they can be recognized for their accomplishment! If you know of a soon-to-be graduate, please inform Fr. Nick or Tim Rucho.

**THE LATEST FAITH/CREDINȚA Magazine** is now available at the candles. Please take a copy home with you.

**THE 2015 ARCHDIOCESAN ALMANAC** is also available at the candles.

**A MEMORIAL** is celebrated today for



## THE SEVENTH SUNDAY OF PASCHA

THE SUNDAY OF THE FATHERS OF THE FIRST ŒCUMENICAL SYNOD  
APOSTOLIC READING: ACTS 20:16-18; 28-36 ☩ GOSPEL: JOHN 17:1-13  
TONE 6 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 10

the servant of God **Guchia Tandili**, fallen asleep six months.

**TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR** is sponsored in her memory by her family. *May our good and loving Lord rest her soul among the just!*

## COMMUNITY NEWS

**FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN.** St. George Orthodox Cathedral is hosting a MobilePack event where **500 volunteers will come together on June 27th to pack 100,000 life-saving meals** for starving children in developing countries. This will be the only location in the entire Commonwealth of Massachusetts to host this event. The goal is to raise \$22,000. Adults and children as young as 5 years of age will measure and scoop ingredients, seal bags, and prepare boxes for shipping. Registration will be live beginning May 16th; go to the

website to register. You may **donate online** at [www.stgeorgeworcester.org](http://www.stgeorgeworcester.org) or mail your check to: Feed My Starving Children; ATTN: MobilePack #1506-99AU; 401 93rd Avenue NW; Coon Rapids, MN 55433. Checks should be payable to: FMSC, memo line MobilePack #1506-99AU.

**THE 2015 ALBANIAN FESTIVAL** will be held the weekend of **June 5, 6, and 7 by St. Mary's Assumption Albanian Orthodox Church** on Salisbury Street in Worcester. Please plan on attending

## DATES TO REMEMBER

Mon, May 25 Memorial Day — Hope at 10 am  
Sat, May 30 Saturday of Souls, Liturgy 10 am  
Sun, May 31 Feast of Pentecost  
Close of Religious Ed for Summer  
June 5, 6, & 7 Albanian Festival at St. Mary's  
Sat, June 6 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry

### GREETERS TEAM 4:

DEBORAH SEDARES & EVAN STAMOULIS

### COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP CREW C:

PRIZIO FAMILY

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas

and supporting our sister parish! For more information go to: <http://albani-anfestival.org/>

## 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

May 21

*Saints Constantine and Helen, equals to the Apostles*

Constantine Apostol  
Elaine Apostola  
Konstantin Charalambides  
Presvytera Eleni Christakos  
Amalia Helene Collins  
Hannah Constance Datz  
Dina Entwistle  
Iliana Victoria Fahey  
Elena Galeriu  
Ileana A Nace  
Rev. Fr. Dean Paleologos  
Constanța Papit  
Eleni Polymeros  
Elena Prelipcean  
Elaine Rocheford  
Dina K. Salerno  
Eleanor Sedares  
Elaine Tanacea  
Dean Valoras



## A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**P**RAISE TO YOU, ETERNAL, LOVING GOD AND FATHER, O you who loved us before we were even conceived: Today, the gates of heaven, the eternal portals, are lifted high, because your only Son, the king of glory, enters in. As we celebrate his glorious return to the right of your majesty, we pray that you will draw us ever closer to him, so that, faithful to him at all times, we may rise above the difficulties of this earthly life to enjoy the glory of eternal life. Receive our spiritual worship, and prepare us for the descent of your all-holy Spirit in the days to come.

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

## FINANCIAL FACT

### *“Burning the Mortgage”*

*Our mortgage started on 10/8/2002 with a principal balance of \$794,500. As of 4/28/15, our balance is \$513,015.*

# THE COSMONAUTS DIDN'T FIND GOD

**I**T SEEMS TO ME THAT THE LORD'S ASCENSION presents the modern believer with a few difficult questions, conceptually speaking. For example, for those of us who regularly fly — who regularly “ascend” — what exactly does the Lord's going up mean? For the last fifty-odd years, we periodically send people up beyond earth's atmosphere. What does it mean then that the Lord was carried up into heaven? In the early days of the “space race,” when the Soviet cosmonauts ascended into the heavens they proclaimed that they hadn't found God there, in this way claiming to prove the silliness of religious faith. For people of Jesus' time it was a marvel if someone ascended to the heavens. Today, we go to the airport and catch our flight.

A second question is perhaps more mystifying. How can the actions of one person effect all of humanity? How can Christ's Ascension (when He took His place on the right hand of God the Father), also impact us? How do we share in the Lord's Resurrection? Why are we living the consequences of what Adam and Eve did?

Even though we have other examples in Scripture of people either being taken up into the heavens or transported from one place to another, the way in which the Lord ascended differs in a number of important ways. His ascension is seen as a return to the Father, a completion of His mission to restore the relationship between God and humanity. It fulfills the promise implicit in the resurrection. He also will send the Holy Spirit to enliven His followers. Moreover, He says that He will return.

The closest example we have in the Bible of an ascension like the Lord's is with the Prophet Elijah. He had been told by God that he would be taken up and was preparing his disciple Elisha to take up his mantle. (A mantle is a large cloak.) Elijah's mantle is a sign of his prophetic power. For example, Elijah

and Elisha were able to cross the Jordan when Elijah had struck the water with it causing the river's flow to stop. As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven (2 Kings 2:11). As he was taken up his mantle dropped from the chariot and Elisha picked it up. As Elijah had promised him, Elisha received a double share of his spirit. This is where we get the expression to “take up the mantle.”

Unlike the Lord, Elijah is taken up before he tasted death. In one sense it was a prefiguring, a foreshadowing, of what was to come in Jesus. The way he was taken up also gave rise to the speculation in Israel that Elijah would return to proclaim the coming Messiah. It was John the Baptist, as the Lord said, who would be the “Elijah” announcing the Christ (cf. Mark 9:13).

Another example of this sort was in the days of Daniel, when he was held prisoner in the lion's den. The Prophet Habakkuk was in Judaea making a stew and breaking bread and an angel of the Lord took him up and brought him to Babylon to feed Daniel (cf. Daniel 14:31ff). There is also the Prophet Ezekiel, who was carried by the hand of the Lord into the middle of a valley where he was presented with the vision of the dry bones (cf. Ezekiel 37:1). These examples are not ascensions in the sense of Elijah's and certainly not the Lord's, yet in these two instances we can see how time and space have a different meaning for God. The Lord ascended to the place He was before, but not a place we can get to without God's help and permission. So, the Soviet cosmonauts were not able to find God, even though they passed through earth's atmosphere.

I find the second question to be more interesting than the first. While we might find it engaging to speculate where the Lord went when He as-

ceded, the fact that His bodily ascent has an effect on us is more provoking. How is it that what Christ does changes me? This is not only true in the Ascension, but in every aspect of Christ's Incarnation. As the Church has always taught, through the sacraments we participate in our Lord's saving work. As St. Paul says, those of us who have been baptized have been joined with Christ in his death. “For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his” (Romans 6:5).

We've been nurtured in a culture that emphasizes our individualism and down-plays our connectedness — to one another and the world around us. Yet our study of biology and other sciences has begun to tell us the same story that our theology has told us for millennia: we are all deeply connected one to another and to the whole of creation. St. Maximos the Confessor speaks of human beings as a “microcosm,” literally, a small world. He says that God created us in such a way that all of creation is summarized in us. We contain the world inside us.

The more we unpack and analyze our own DNA and the DNA of everything living, the more we realize how interconnected the creation is. We used to think that “people are different.” Now we know that we are all practically first cousins, one to another.

When the Second Person of the Holy Trinity assumed our nature, He changed our DNA. When Jesus dies and rises, death is destroyed for each of us. And, when the incarnate Word of God sits at the right-hand of the Father, we are all enthroned. God's promise to each of us is real and true.

Christ has Ascended! ...

He has Ascended in Glory!

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA