

# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN

JUNE 28, 2015

## THIS WEEK'S NEWS

**THANKS TO THE PEOPLE WHO HELPED** with the Parish Cookout last Sunday: Dimitri Saffron who chaired the event, and all who set-up, cooked, and cleaned-up. *God bless you!*

**SUMMER BREAK FOR COFFEE HOUR** beginning on **Sunday, July 5 through September 6**. Regular coffee hour will not be held during the summer months to give our regular coffee hour crews a respite. If a family would like to host a coffee hour for a memorial during the summer months, please contact Fr. Nick or Maria. Please note that during the summer, families who are sponsoring a coffee hour will be asked to assist with cleaning following the coffee hour.

**THIS WEEK'S COFFEE HOUR** is sponsored by **Sean and Ileana Fahey**.

## 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.

### GREETERS TEAM 5:

DEBORAH SEDARES & EVAN STAMOULIS

### COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP CREW D:

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

**ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED**



## THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

APOSTOLIC READING: ROMANS 6:18-23 ☩ GOSPEL: MATTHEW 8:5-13

(JESUS HEALS THE CENTURION'S SERVANT)

TONE 3 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 4

## COMMUNITY NEWS

### FREE FUN FRIDAYS ARE BACK FOR THE SUMMER!

Free Fun Fridays is the annual summer program that opens doors at no cost to visitors to many of the most treasured cultural venues in Massachusetts. Free Fun Fridays shines a spotlight on the broad and diverse art and cultural offerings across Massachusetts. Whether you live in Boston or the Berkshires, Worcester or Cape Cod, the North Shore or the South Coast, you can take advantage of this free program. This year, 70 museums and cultural venues will participate in the program. Beginning June 26th through August 28th, seven cultural venues will be open free-of-charge every Friday for 10 weeks this summer. Keeping young people intellectually and socially engaged in the summer is very important — whether the children are in pre-school or all the way through high school. This

is a great program for families to take advantage of this summer. To see the whole program, and the sites that available each Friday, go to: [highland-street.org/freefunfridays.htm](http://highland-street.org/freefunfridays.htm) or pick up a hard copy flier at the Church. Free Fun Fridays are organized by the Highland Street Foundation and a number of other prominent organizations.



## DATES TO REMEMBER

Sat, July 4 NO Orthodox Food Pantry  
Sun, July 12 NO Liturgy at St. Nick's  
Sun, Sept 20 stART on the Street

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas



**NATIVITY OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST**  
**JUNE 24TH**

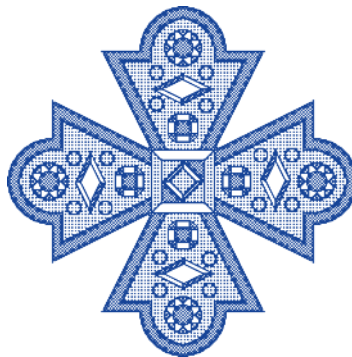
**H**e that was greater than all who are born of women, the Prophet who received God's testimony that he surpassed all the Prophets, was born of the aged and barren Elizabeth (Luke 1: 7) and filled all his kinsmen, and those that lived round about, with gladness and wonder. But even more wondrous was that which followed on the eighth day when he was circumcised, that is, the day on which a male child receives his name. Those present called him Zacharias, the name of his father. But the mother said, "Not so, but he shall be called John." Since the child's father was unable to speak, he was asked, by means of a sign, to indicate the child's name. He then asked for a tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And immediately Zacharias' mouth was opened, his tongue was loosed from its silence of nine months, and filled with the Holy Spirit, he blessed the God of Israel, Who had fulfilled the promises made to their fathers, and had visited them that were sitting in darkness and the shadow of

## FINANCIAL FACT

### "Burning the Mortgage"

**Our monthly mortgage payment is \$4,719.99.**  
**39% goes towards the principal.**  
**The remaining 61% is interest paid to the bank!**

death, and had sent to them the light of salvation. Zacharias prophesied concerning the child also, saying that he would be a Prophet of the Most High and Forerunner of Jesus Christ. And the child John, who was filled with grace, grew and waxed strong in the Spirit; and he was in the wilderness until the day of his showing to Israel (Luke 1:57-80). His name is a variation of the Hebrew "Johanan," which means "Yah is gracious."



## NAMEDAYS

**June 27**

*The Holy Myrrh-bearer Joanna*

Joanne V. Prizio

**June 29**

*The Holy Apostles Peter and Paul*

Patrick Disho

Petraq Dragoti

Paul Dymek

Petrika Lolo

Rev. Fr. Peter Michael Preble

Paul Soter

Peter Toda

Peter Demetri Tsongalis

## A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**Y**ES LORD, all things must come to an end. Still, as much as we have heard this, as well as we know it, we find it extremely difficult to imagine that death will indeed put an end to all our earthly concerns, that death is in fact a reality. Yes, we too easily and habitually go on, living life as if it would never end. Repentance and doing better lie comfortably sometime in the future, outside of our immediate concern, and there is therefore no hurry to get to them. So we think. Help us to realize that this life will not last forever and that we must therefore learn to live accordingly.

For to belongs all glory, honor, and worship, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

## ONLY SAY THE WORD ...

**T**HE Gospel lesson for this, the fourth Sunday after Pentecost, is the account of the healing of the Centurion's servant, taken from the Gospel according to St. Matthew (8:5-13). St. Luke tells of the same event (7:1-10) and adds a few other details.

The basic story is that there is a Centurion, stationed in Palestine, whose servant has fallen seriously ill. (A Centurion was a Roman soldier who commanded a regiment of 100 men.) He is obviously quite worried about this servant. From St. Luke we learn that the Centurion is very pious and had even built a synagogue in the locale. He approaches Jesus and asks him to heal his servant. Jesus offers to go, but the Centurion says, "Only say the word, and my servant will be healed" (v. 8). Jesus marvels at his faith and points this out to everyone. Before proceeding, you might want to pick up your Bible and read both accounts.

There are two aspects of this story I think are important for us to focus on. The first is the most obvious: the immediate faith-response of the Centurion. The second is a bit more subtle: the way the Lord elicits the Centurion's faith response. Let me begin with the second.

The Centurion comes to the Lord with his request. In almost every other similar incident the Lord would simply perform the request (miracle) and send the person on his or her way. In this instance what does he do? He says to the Centurion: "I will come and heal him" (v. 7). This leads to the Centurion to openly confess his faith.

St. John Chrysostom draws our attention to other similar instances where the Lord, by subtle provocation, tests the depth of the faith of the person requesting his help. One example is the Canaanite women who approached the Lord asking him to heal her daughter (Matthew 15:22-28). He at first refuses to



even speak to her and then, in a startling response, likens her request to taking the children's bread and tossing it to the dogs. Rather than taking issue with the comparison, she rises to the challenge by embracing it, replying that even a dog under a table will get the children's crumbs. Or, in the account of the healing of the ten lepers (Luke 17:12-19), only one returns to thank him, a Samaritan. Rather than praise him directly for this gratitude, he comments about the other nine and then calls the Samaritan a foreigner. But the Lord, having tested his faith tells him, "Get up and go on your way, your faith has made you well" (v. 19). It is clear from the context that the other nine lacked faith.

Finally there is the case of Martha after her brother Lazarus had died. She says to the Lord: "If you had been here, my brother would not have died ... even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you (John 11:21-22). Jesus questions her lack of faith. He tells her: "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" (v. 25-26).

By contrast, the faith of the Centurion is immediate and unwavering. He uses his own military training to explain it. He tells the Lord that as a military officer he knows that if he gives an order it will be carried out. He doesn't need to see it to believe it. In the same way he knows that Jesus has the power to simply "order" the healing and it will be done. He doesn't need to see it to believe it. This is the lesson of total faith we should draw from the Centurion's example.

Finally, there is one more verse worth noting in this story. The Centurion says: "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof" (v. 8). We repeat this verse in the prayers we say before Holy Communion, echoing the Centurion's humility. Let us strive to be as truly humble and grateful in our hearts, as the are the words we speak with our lips. Let us prepare a worthy place within us, a roof under which the Lord might find rest. Let us ask the Lord to give us the Centurion's remarkable faith, as well as his humility.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA



## REFLECTIONS ON SS PETER & PAUL

The divinely-blessed Peter was from Bethsaida of Galilee. He was the son of Jonas and the brother of Andrew the First-called. He was a fisherman by trade, unlearned and poor, and was called Simon; later he was renamed Peter by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, Who looked at him and said, “Thou art Simon the son of Jonas; thou shalt be called Cephas (which is by interpretation, Peter)” (John 1:42). On being raised by the Lord to the dignity of an Apostle and becoming inseparable from Him as His zealous disciple, he followed Him from the beginning of His preaching of salvation up until the very Passion, when, in the court of Caiaphas the high priest, he denied Him thrice because of his fear of the Jews and of the danger at hand. But again, after many bitter tears, he received complete for-

givenness of his transgression. After the Resurrection of Christ and the descent of the Holy Spirit, he preached in Judea, Antioch, and certain parts of Asia, and finally came to Rome, where he was crucified upside down by Nero, and thus he ascended to the eternal habitations about the year 66 or 68, leaving two Catholic (General) Epistles to the Church of Christ.

Paul, the chosen vessel of Christ, the glory of the Church, the Apostle of the Nations and teacher of the whole world, was a Jew by race, of the tribe of Benjamin, having Tarsus as his homeland. He was a Roman citizen, fluent in Greek, an expert in knowledge of the Law, a Pharisee, born of a Pharisee, and a disciple of Gamaliel, a Pharisee and notable teacher of the Law in Jerusalem. For this cause, from the beginning, Paul was a most fervent zealot for the traditions of the Jews and a great persecutor of the Church of Christ; at that time, his name was Saul (Acts 22:3-4).

In his great passion of rage and fury against the disciples of the Lord, he went to Damascus bearing letters of introduction from the high priest. His intention was to bring the disciples of Christ back to Jerusalem in bonds. As he was approaching Damascus, about midday there suddenly shone upon him a light from Heaven. Falling on the earth, he heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” And he asked, “Who art Thou, Lord?” And the Lord said, “I am Jesus Whom thou persecutest; it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.” And that heavenly voice and brilliance made him tremble, and he was blinded for a time. He was led by the hand into the city, and on account of a divine revelation to the Apostle Ananias, he was baptized by him, and both his bodily and spiritual eyes were opened to the knowledge of the Sun of Righteousness. And straightway— O wondrous transformation! —

beyond all expectation, he spoke with boldness in the synagogues, proclaiming that “Christ is the Son of God” (Acts 9:1-21).

As for his zeal in preaching the Gospel after these things had come to pass, as for his unabating labors and afflictions of diverse kinds, the wounds, the prisons, the bonds, the beatings, the stonings, the shipwrecks, the journeys, the perils on land, on sea, in cities, in wildernesses, the continual vigils, the daily fasting, the hunger, the thirst, the nakedness, and all those other things that he endured for the Name of Christ, and which he underwent before nations and kings and the Israelites, and above all, his care for all the churches, his fiery longing for the salvation of all, whereby he became all things to all men, that he might save them all if possible, and because of which, with his heart aflame, he continuously traveled throughout all parts, visiting them all, and like a bird of heaven flying from Asia and Europe, the West and East, neither staying nor abiding in any one place — all these things are related incident by incident in the Book of the Acts, and as he himself tells them in his Epistles. In all these things his teaching proved to be a spiritual trumpet, and his speech was seen to be more radiant than the sun, and by these means he clearly sounded forth the word of truth and illumined the ends of the world.

Having completed the work of his ministry, he likewise ended his life in martyrdom when he was beheaded in Rome during the reign of Nero, at the same time, some say, when Peter was crucified.

