

# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN SEPTEMBER 6, 2015 THIS WEEK'S NEWS

**ST NICHOLAS CHURCH SCHOOL** is a vital part of our parish. **We need you!** If you are interested in helping or teaching with Church School this year, please see **Deb Sedares or Preoteasa Maria**. The first day of Church School is **NEXT Sunday, September 13th**. *We need your help!*

**THANKS TO THE FOOD PANTRY VOLUNTEERS** for working the Orthodox Food Center on behalf of our parish yesterday. Our regular commitment is the first Saturday of the month from 9am to noon. About 4 people are needed. If you can help in this worthwhile ministry, please speak with **Lisa Mielnicki or Nicole Apostola**. Our next Saturday is **October 3rd**.

## stART on the Street

**PITA & PASTRY CONCESSION AT "START ON THE STREET:" Sunday, September 20th.** (Rain Date – Sunday, September 27th). St. Nicholas is returning to this community art festival, held on Park Avenue in Worcester between Pleasant and Highland Streets, **which draws over 20,000 attendees each year**. Our Church will again be one of the vendors in the Food Court selling pita

**GREETERS TEAM 4:**  
DIMITRI SAFFRON AND SEAN FAHEY

**COFFEE HOUR**  
RESUMES NEXT SUNDAY

**ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED**



### THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

APOSTOLIC READING: 2 CORINTHIANS 1:21-2:4 ☩ GOSPEL: MATTHEW 22:2-14  
(THE PARABLE OF THE WEDDING OF THE KING'S SON)

TONE 5 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL: 3

and pastry. This is a HUGE undertaking for us, and requires your "sweat stewardship" to realize the **fundraising potential of \$5,000**. Please watch the announcements and the Stewardship Bulletin Board in the Church Hall for additional information on how you can help with this event. Preparations for the event will be on Friday evening, September 18 and Saturday, September 19. And help will be needed as well as throughout the day on Sunday. Pita baking is also currently underway and help is needed with that part of the effort as well. The venue is established and presents a great opportunity to showcase our goods to the larger community. **The only variable is YOU!** St. Nicholas needs your commitment of time and effort to make this a success! **The volunteering schedule needs are posted on the Bulletin Board. For more info, speak with Deb Sedares or Chris Toda.**

### COMMUNITY NEWS

**SS. ANARGYROI PARISH IN MARLBOROUGH** will be holding its annual **Greek Festival, Labor Day weekend** (Saturday through Monday). For more information check their website: [www.stsanargyoi.org](http://www.stsanargyoi.org).

**SS. CONSTANTINE & HELEN**, Webster will hold its Greek Festival on **September 12** from 11am-10pm and **September 13** from 11am-5pm. Enjoy delicious Greek food and pastries, watch traditional dancers and have great fun!!! <http://schwebster.org>

**8TH ANNUAL ROMANIAN GOLF CLASSIC** will be hosted by St Michael Romanian Orthodox Church in Southbridge. It will be held on **Saturday Sep-**

### DATES TO REMEMBER

Sat, Sept 5 Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-12pm  
Sun, Sept 13 Religious Ed Classes Begin  
Sun, Sept 20 stART on the Street  
Sat, Oct 3 West Boylston Fall Festival

**34 GOLD STREET, SHREWSBURY, MA 01545-6238 ♦ VOICE: 508.845.0088 ♦ FAX: 508.845.8850**  
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*A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas*

**September 12, 2015** at 1pm and played at Cohasse Country Club in Southbridge. For more information, download the flier. **Questions?** contact Luke Yanka: 508-958-4144 or lsyanka@yahoo.com.

**HOLY TRINITY, FITCHBURG** is holding their Annual Greek Festival, Saturday, **September 19th**, 11 am - 10 pm. For more information: 978-342-1216.

**ST. MARY'S ASSUMPTION** Albanian Orthodox Church will be celebrating it's **100th Anniversary the weekend of September 26-27**. There will be a Grand Banquet Saturday night, September 26:

6:00 pm cocktail hour; dinner at 7:00 pm at St. George's Hall. Keep the date open. More details to follow.

## 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.

**SAVE THE DATE!** October 15, 2015. Holy Trinity's 9th **FOOD and WINE FEST**. This year's event will be at St. Spyridon Cathedral. Look for more details soon!

## NAMEDAYS

### September 5

**St. Elizabeth the mother of St. John the Baptist**

Elizabeth Anderson  
Elizabeth Florica Galeriu  
Lisa Mielnicki  
Karen Elizabeth Wilder

**The Holy Prophet Zachariah, father of St. John**

Zachary Spataro

### September 8

**The Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos**

Presvytera Maria Mossaides

### September 9

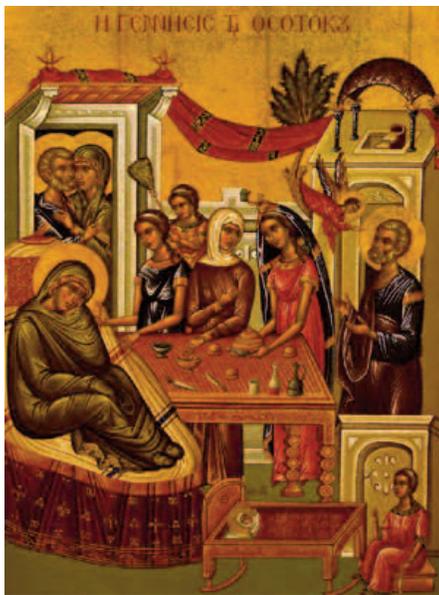
**The Holy Ancestors of God Joachim and Anna**

Ann Marie Chachi  
Ann Marie Clem  
Anna Maria Collins  
Ann Trakadas

## FINANCIAL FACT

**"Burning the Mortgage"**

**If we didn't have a mortgage, we would have saved almost \$90,000 over the last 3 years!**



### NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS

**September 8**

According to the ancient tradition of the Church, the Theotokos was born of barren and aged parents, Joachim and Anna, about the year 16 or

17 before the birth of Christ. Joachim was descended from the royal line of David, of the tribe of Judah. Anna was of the priestly tribe of Levi, a daughter of the priest Matthan and Mary, his wife.

### *Apolytikion of Nativity of the Theotokos in the Fourth Tone*

Your birth, O Theotokos, brought joy to the whole world, for from you dawned the sun of righteousness, Christ our God. Freeing us from the curse, He gave us His blessings. Abolishing death, He granted us eternal life.

### *Kontakion of Nativity of the Theotokos in the Fourth Tone*

In your holy birth, Immaculate One, Joachim and Anna were rid of the shame of childlessness; Adam and Eve of the corruption of death. And so your people, free of the guilt of their sins, celebrate crying: "The barren one gives birth to the Theotokos, who nourishes our life."

### A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**E**TERNAL GOD, ALMIGHTY FATHER: In your great love for us you gave us your only Son. Help us to show you our gratitude by struggling for true humility, humility like his, and by embracing the small sufferings of daily living gracefully. Furthermore, prevent us from trying to escape the endless deaths to ourselves that we must undergo for the sake of others, and enable us to open ourselves more and more to what authentic love asks of us.

For you are a merciful and loving God, and we give you glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

## BEHOLD! THE BRIDEGROOM COMES!

**T**HIS Sunday's Gospel lesson is the companion to last Sunday's parable of the Wicked Servants. This week we hear of the Wedding Banquet given by the King for his Son (Matthew 22:1-14). St. Matthew places these two parables one after the other to emphasize the images the Lord is giving us of what the Kingdom of God is like. In the first parable Jesus paints an image of a well-established vineyard. In the second he presents us with an image of a royal wedding feast. In both of these he wants us to get a sense of God's gracious generosity, as well as the consequences of being blind to what he is offering us.

Of course, there are differences between the two. The vineyard parable involves labor. There are agreements and expectations that a portion of the harvest is due as payment to the vineyard owner. (It's worth noting that as much as things have changed, so much remains very familiar. Here we find both a labor contract and a lease agreement.) In the Parable of the Wedding Feast, there is no labor or lease, only shared joy. But, even here something is still expected, and, as we will see, there are consequences for failing to comply.

The story is this: A king prepares a wedding banquet for his son. The guests had already long been invited. Now he sends out his servants to tell them to come since everything is prepared. One after another these invited guests decline, "making light of it," as St. Matthew says (v. 5). Each finds a shallow excuse. Some of them even mistreat and kill the messengers. In a rage the king orders his troops to destroy the murderers, and burns their cities.

He then turns to the servants and says that the wedding feast is prepared but those who had been invited were not worthy. He orders them to go out into the streets and invite everyone they can find to the wedding. So they gath-

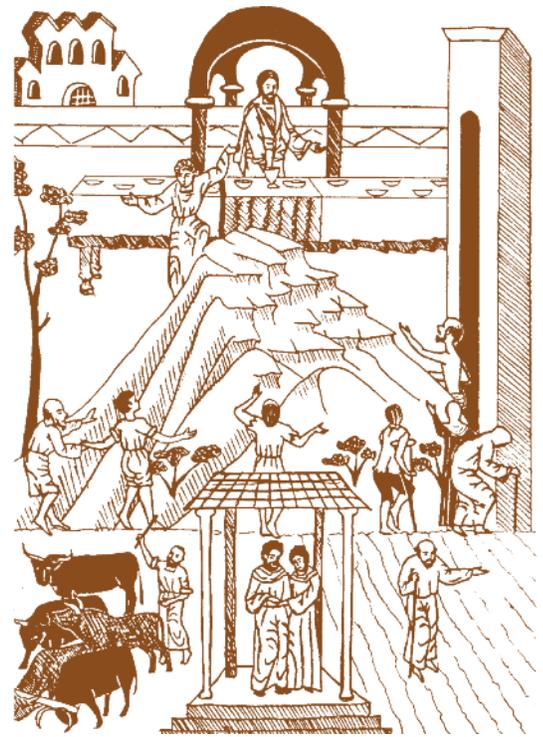
ered everyone they could, both good and bad, in order that the hall might be filled with guests.

When the king entered the hall to greet his guests. He notice one man was not wearing a wedding garment. He says to him: "Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?" (v. 12) The man was speechless. Then the king ordered him to be bound and thrown into the outer darkness. He then utters those bone-chilling words: "For many are called, but few are chosen" (v. 14).

You should know that there is another version of this parable related by St. Luke (14:15-24), which we usually hear closer to Christmas. The accounts overlap, but St. Matthew's version is where the Church takes much of the imagery used in the "Bridegroom" Matins Services that we hear during the first days of Holy Week. Nonetheless, both accounts tell a similar story.

There are two types of guests: those who had been invited for a long time, and those who were pulled off the streets. God has been preaching his message to some for a very long time; these should have been prepared to come when the word came to them that the Banquet was ready. Others were pulled off the street, without the same kind of preparation. What made the second group worthy to enter? Very simply, God's grace. What made the first group unworthy? Their arrogance and callous treatment of the great honor that had been given them.

And, then there's that poor wretch who enters the wedding hall not properly dressed. What can we say about him? Not appreciating the honor given him — *not responding to the grace given him* — he belittles his host by not re-



sponding to the invitation appropriately.

As with last week's parable, we find a powerful and even devastating message. So much of today's consciousness makes light of our sin and relies on God's mercy as a kind of insurance policy. These parables are meant as both an invitation to God's mercy and a wake-up call to our casual approach toward it.

If we look we can find ourselves in each of these characters in this parable. There are those of us who have heard the Gospel since childhood. Do we make lame excuses for not heeding God's call? Likewise, there are those of us who find ourselves recently drawn to the spiritual life. Do we take it lightly and not prepare the garment of our souls? Each of us, the good and bad who have been called into the wedding banquet, do we fully appreciate God's generosity toward us, and respond accordingly?

May our loving and generous Lord, always find us properly dressed and worthy of the joy of His Son's Wedding Feast.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA