

# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN

OCTOBER 18, 2015  
THE HOLY APOSTLE  
AND EVANGELIST LUKE  
THIS WEEK'S NEWS

OUR HOLIDAY BAKE SALE, LUNCHEON & MARKETPLACE will be held on **Saturday, November 21st**. Please look at the detailed announcements in the Bulletin.

**THANKS TO THE PITA BAKERS** who worked this past Saturday. We've schedule additional sessions for Saturday, October 31 and Saturday, November 14. Assistance is needed with setting the hall, the pita making and baking, cleaning the hall and kitchen and then resetting the hall for church on Sunday. Plenty to do for bakers and non-bakers, alike, and all to support our church. It is very important that we know we will have the support necessary to continue this effort so please see or contact **Chris Toda** and let her know if you will be able to participate. *No experience necessary!*

**THANKS TO THE MUSTARD SEED VOLUNTEERS!** Those who cooked and those who served the meal this past Friday! The Mustard Seed is a Catholic Worker home providing dinner to about 150 people in need each day. Our next scheduled meal is **December 18th**. Contact Fr. Nick if you'd like to help.

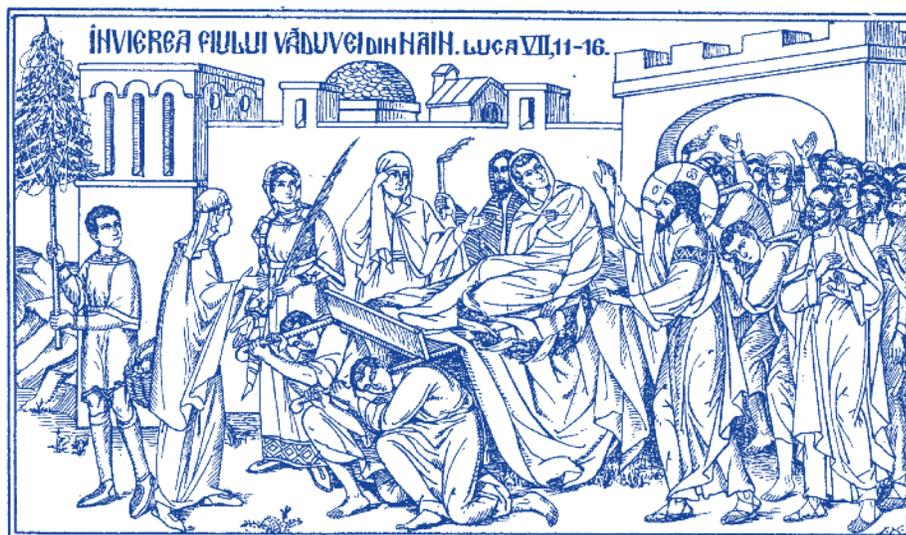
#### GREETERS TEAM 5:

DEBORAH SEDARES & EVAN STAMOULIS

#### COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP CREW B:

KARADIMITRIOU/KALPIDO FAMILY

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



### THE TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

APOSTOLIC READING: GALATIANS 1:11-19 ☩ GOSPEL: LUKE 7:11-19

(JESUS RAISES THE SON OF THE WIDOW OF NAIN)

TONE 3 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 9

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO SPONSOR A MUSTARD SEED MEAL?** Helping those in need is a central Christian principle, and was oftentimes done by families in memory of a departed loved one. We serve somewhere between 150-200 persons, and the overall cost is around \$400 (that just a little over \$2.00/plate!). Donations for all or a part of that would really help. God bless you!

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

**DETENTION POND WORK COMPLETED.** Dimitri Christo and his team worked, last Saturday and Sunday to plant a *rosa rugosa* border/barrier along the top of the detention pond. They did a great job and we thank them deeply! Also, thanks to all those who donated to cover the associated costs.

**COFFEE HOUR SPONSORS ARE NEEDED** for the coming weeks. Please speak with

Presvytera Maria if you would like to sponsor one.

### 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.

### COMMUNITY NEWS

**NOTRE DAME ACADEMY'S ENTRANCE EXAM** will be held on Saturday, November 7th at 8:30 am. Pre-registration is required for the exam. Please register for the exam on their website: [www.nda-worc.org](http://www.nda-worc.org) by October 26th, Also, all current eighth grade students are invited to

### DATES TO REMEMBER

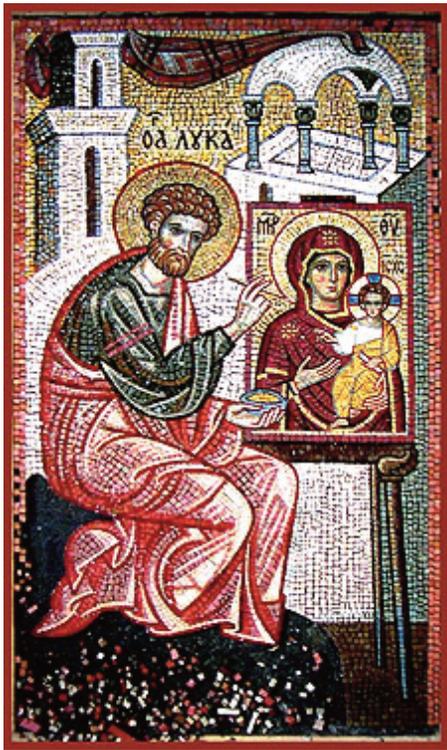
- Sat, Oct 31 Pita Baking, 9:00 am
- Sat, Nov 7 Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-12pm
- Sun, Nov 8 Thanksgiving Orders Deadline
- Sat, Nov 14 Pita Baking, 9:00 am
- Sat, Nov 21 Holiday Bake Sale, Luncheon & Marketplace

34 GOLD STREET, SHREWSBURY, MA 01545-6238 ♦ VOICE: 508.845.0088 ♦ FAX: 508.845.8850

E-MAIL: [FRNICK@STNICHOLASCHURCH.ORG](mailto:FRNICK@STNICHOLASCHURCH.ORG) ♦ WEB: [WWW.STNICHOLASCHURCH.ORG](http://WWW.STNICHOLASCHURCH.ORG)

A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas

Spend-A-Day at NDA. If you are interested in spending an academic day at NDA, please contact their Office of Admissions at 508-757-6200, Ext. 229 or email: [admissions@nda-worc.org](mailto:admissions@nda-worc.org). NDA is the only Catholic college preparatory school for young girls in grades 9-12 in Central Massachusetts.



## APOSTLE & EVANGELIST LUKE (October 18)

The Holy Apostle and Evangelist Luke, was a native of Syrian Antioch, a companion of the holy Apostle Paul (Phil.1:24, 2 Tim. 4:10-11), and a physician enlightened in the Greek medical arts. Hearing about Christ, Luke arrived in Palestine and fervently accepted the preaching of salvation from the Lord Himself. As one of the Seventy Apostles, St Luke was sent by the Lord with the others to preach the Kingdom of Heaven during the Savior's earthly life (Luke 10:1-3). After the Resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to Sts Luke and Cleopas on the road to Emmaus.

Luke accompanied St Paul on his second missionary journey, and from that time they were inseparable. When Paul's cowork-

ers had forsaken him, only Luke remained to assist him in his ministry (2 Tim. 4:10-11). After the martyric death of the First-Ranked Apostles Peter and Paul, St Luke left Rome to preach in Achaia, Libya, Egypt and the Thebaid. He ended his life by suffering martyrdom in the city of Thebes.

Tradition credits St Luke with painting the first icons of the Mother of God. "Let the grace of Him Who was born of Me and My mercy be with these Icons," said the All-Pure Virgin after seeing the icons. St Luke also painted icons of the Apostles Peter and Paul. St Luke's Gospel was written in the years 62-63 at Rome, under the guidance of the Apostle Paul. In the preliminary verses (1:1-3), St Luke precisely sets forth the purpose of his work. He proposes to record, in chronological order, everything known by Christians about Jesus Christ and His teachings. By doing this, he provided a firmer historical basis for Christian teaching (1:4). He carefully investigated the facts, and made generous use of the oral tradition of the Church and of what the All-Pure Virgin Mary Herself had told him (2:19, 51).

In St Luke's Gospel, the message of the salvation made possible by the Lord Jesus Christ, and the preaching of the Gospel, are of primary importance.

St Luke also wrote the Acts of the Holy Apostles at Rome around 62-63 A.D. The Book of Acts, which is a continuation of the four Gospels, speaks about the works and the fruits of the holy Apostles after the Ascension of the Savior. At the center of the narrative is the Council of the holy Apostles at Jerusalem in the year 51, a Church event of great significance, which resulted in the separation of Christianity from Judaism and its independent dissemination into the world (Acts 15:6-29). The theological focus of the Book of Acts is the coming of the Holy Spirit, Who will guide the Church "into all truth" (John 16:13) until the Second Coming of Christ.

The holy relics of St Luke were taken from Constantinople and brought to Padua, Italy at some point in history. Perhaps this was during the infamous Crusade of 1204. In 1992, Metropolitan Hieronymus (Jerome) of Thebes requested the Roman Catholic bishop in Thebes to obtain a portion of St Luke's relics for the saint's empty sepulchre

## A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**L**ORD, GOD OF INVINCIBLE POWER AND MIGHT: Grace us with discernment, with keen vision and refined perception. But when it comes to judging others, make us blind and disinterested, totally oblivious to all their faults and failings. Let us look, rather, at our own mistakes and refrain from condemning others for what we see as the mistakes they make and the evils they commit.

For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, Father, Son and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

in the Orthodox cathedral in Thebes.

The Roman Catholic bishop Antonio Mattiazzo of Padua, noting that Orthodox pilgrims came to Padua to venerate the relics while many Catholics did not even know that the relics were there, appointed a committee to investigate the relics in Padua, and the skull of St Luke in the Catholic Cathedral of St Vico in Prague.

The skeleton was determined to be that of an elderly man of strong build. In 2001, a tooth found in the coffin was judged to be consistent with the DNA of Syrians living near the area of Antioch dating from 72-416 A.D. The skull in Prague perfectly fit the neck bone of the skeleton. The tooth found in the coffin in Padua was also found to fit the jawbone of the skull.

Bishop Mattiazzo sent a rib from the relics to Metropolitan Hieronymus to be venerated in St Luke's original tomb in the Orthodox cathedral at Thebes.



## THE ARCHITECTS OF OUR DESTINY

**PEOPLE ARE FUNNY.** Have you ever noticed how when things are going wrong in our life we begin to look for scapegoats? We tend to place the blame for our successive low points on those around us: our enemies, our friends and even our family. Or we choose something more encompassing like fate or even God. Actually, when things are going really badly it is usually God who takes the blame. We often look everywhere else to find the source of our misfortune except where we should: ourselves.

There is a basic spiritual principle we might want to keep in mind: we are the masters of our own fate, the architects of our own destiny. How we ultimately assess our lives and its twists and turns does not depend on anyone other than ourselves. We can surrender ourselves to 'fate' or 'chance' or 'luck' or 'misfortunes,' but the truth is that no matter what manner of evil might befall us, we are still in control of how we receive what has been dealt us, and this will shape the kind of person we are.

Those of you who know me might begin to wonder what kind of water I've been drinking. You know that I think forces in the economy and the political environment have been working inexorably toward certain ends. Social forces exert great pressure. I haven't changed my understanding of how these externals impact us, but this is not the whole story. We all need to take some time to reflect spiritually on the difficulties of the economic and political challenges we have faced and will continue to face in the coming months and years. How will we shoulder these tests? What words of comfort and wisdom might we find in our Lord's Gospel?

St. John Chrysostom has a small (small, at least, by his standards) treatise

entitled: "No one can harm the person who does not injure him or herself." In this work he speaks of what it means to be a human being; what truly injures a person; what virtue is and what makes a person virtuous. I want to quote him at length. I usually avoid long quotes when writing these reflections, but I've come to think that one also should read more directly from the great spiritual tradition of our Faith. We should listen to those person we revere for the great wisdom in their own voice. When we



do, we'll find that our concerns were their concerns. The things we are feeling and suffering are not new, but have been experienced by human beings from the time of Adam and Eve. So, here's Chrysostom in his own words:

"Let us determine what the virtue of a person is, and let us regard that alone as an injury which is destructive to it. What then is the virtue of a person? Not riches that you should fear poverty; nor a healthy body, that you should dread sickness; nor public opinion, that you should view an evil reputation with alarm; nor life simply for its own sake, that death should be terrible to you; nor liberty, that you should avoid being enslaved: but carefulness in holding true doctrine, and rectitude in life. Of these things not even the devil himself will be

able to rob a person, if he or she who possess them guards them with needful carefulness. And, that most malicious and ferocious demon is aware of this. For this reason he robbed Job of everything, not to make him poor, but that he might force him into saying something against God. And, he tortured his body, not to make him sick, but to upset the virtue of his soul."

Let me caution you, St. John Chrysostom doesn't speak in short sentences. He was trained by the greatest pagan rhetorician of his day. Public speaking was both art and entertainment, and St. John was a master, hence the title: Chrysostom (Golden-mouth). So, be patient as you read, but be entertained as well. Notice the twists and turns of phrase and the subtle allusions he makes.

In the passage above Chrysostom points out that we often define who we are through the externals of our life. We judge ourselves through the eye of our neighbor, or at least what we think they might think of us. We want a nice house, beautiful possessions, a handsome body, great wealth, a good job so that we can gain people's respect. To our shame, we often use these externals of life to judge others, so, it is not unreasonable to think that other people use these same criteria to judge our worth. "Keeping up with the Joneses (or Kardashians)" is not a new phenomenon. To some degree, the current world-wide economic crisis was caused by people and nations wanting to live beyond their means in order to make a "good" impression. "Vanity of vanities" (Ecclesiastes 1:2), "all is vanity," as the saying goes.

Chrysostom introduces us to another word; he speaks of 'virtue,' an idea that has almost passed from our consciousness. He wants to explore the

question of how we measure a person's worth; how we measure our own worth. When he speaks of 'virtue' he's talking about a person's worth or integrity. He reminds us our worth is not in the externals, but in the very depth of who we are, how we behave and act.

We are also living in a time when our collective material wealth is on the decline, even while a very few continue to benefit. How long this decline will last is difficult to predict, but we all know people who have either lost a job or have had to take a cut in pay; it may even have been us. I am sure that we have all asked ourselves: what if all my possessions were taken away, as in the case of Job? Who am I then? How much do these 'things' really define who I am? Do I become less of a person because I am poor or sick, unemployed or underemployed? Where should I look for myself, in my 'things' or my soul's virtue?

A person is injured or harmed not when some evil happens to him or her, but when he or she allows that offense to touch their soul. At first this seems ridiculous. Each of us has felt the touch of evil and how it can effect us. But, St. John Chrysostom is not primarily concerned with the evil intent, but rather concentrates his gaze on how we either allow or resist an attempt by person or event to touch and effect us. He is telling us that it is up to us how we will respond.

St. John was himself a person who suffered many hardships at the hands of Christian rulers and Church authorities. He died during his second harsh exile while tortured and starved, but he never speaks of his own sufferings, rather he offers us St. Paul and his life as an example.

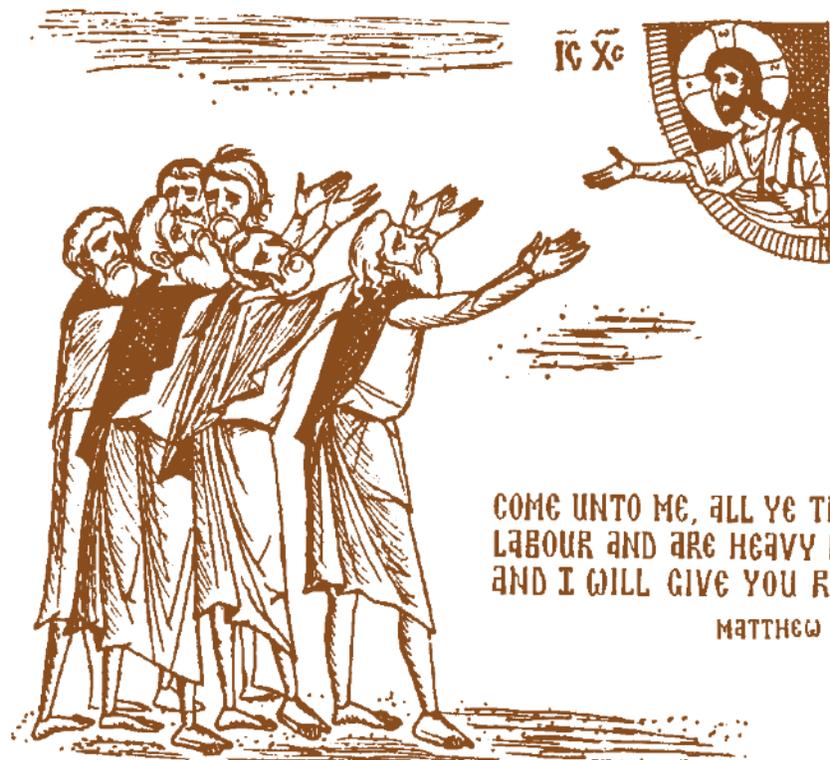
"Didn't [St. Paul] suffer so many distresses that even to make a list of them is no easy matter? He was put in prison, loaded with chains, dragged here and there, scourged by the Jews,

stoned, lacerated on the back not only by thongs, but also by rods, he was immersed in the sea, oftentimes beset by robbers, involved in strife with his own countrymen, continually assailed both by foes and by acquaintances, subjected to countless intrigues, struggling with hunger and nakedness, undergoing other frequent and lasting mischances and afflictions: and why do I have to mention all these? he was dying every day: but yet, although subject to so many and such grievous sufferings, he not only uttered no blasphemous word, but rejoiced over these things and gloried in them: and on one occasion he says "I rejoice in my sufferings," and another time "not only this but we also glory in afflictions." If then he rejoiced and gloried when suffering such great troubles, what excuse will you have, and what defense will you make if you blaspheme when you do not undergo even the smallest fraction of them."

Being the consummate preacher

that he is, Chrysostom answers the question that's taking shape in our minds, even before it reaches our lips.

"But some will say he was Paul, and called by Christ. Yet Judas also was one of the twelve, and he too was called by Christ; but neither his being of the twelve nor his call profited him, because he had not a mind disposed to virtue. But Paul although struggling with hunger, and at a loss to procure necessary food, and daily undergoing such great sufferings, pursued with great zeal the road which leads to heaven; whereas Judas although he had been called before [Paul], and enjoyed the same advantages as he did, and was initiated in the highest form of Christian life, and partook of the holy table and that most awful of sacred feasts, and received such grace as to be able to raise the dead, and cleanse lepers, and cast out devils, and often heard discourses concerning poverty, and spent so long a time in the company of Christ himself, and was en-



trusted with money of the poor, so that his passion might thereby be soothed, (for he was a thief) even then did he not become any better, although he had been favored with such great condescension. For since Christ knew that he was greedy and destined to perish on account of his love of money he not only did not demand punishment of him for this at that time, but with a view toward softening down his passion he was entrusted with the money of the poor, that having some means of appeasing his greed he might be saved from falling into that appalling gulf of sin, checking the greater evil beforehand by a lesser one.”

St. John places two powerful examples before us. Consider, two people with profound opportunities, and each with their own flaws. Paul (Saul) persecuted Christians zealously. Judas had light fingers. Christ embraces them both with mercy and pours out his grace over them. So, while different in personality, they are similar in opportunity.

Paul, who in spite of all that he suffers, or perhaps because of it, becomes a great missionary, and with God’s grace transforms human history.

Judas, who in spite of all the grace poured out on him, rejects this great love and loses everything, especially his soul.

What separates them is not the gift given, but how they responded to it and used it. Actually, if we looked at these two situations as the world looks at them, it is Paul who is the loser. He had the hard life: sickness, prison, exile, beatings, and finally execution. Judas, because he was greedy and ungrateful, even with the advantages he had and taking no care of his virtue, loses not only his physical existence but his spiritual one as well.

Each of us confronts hardships in our life; most of us never even approach the difficulties encountered by Paul and

the other Apostles, or Job and the other saints. But through their perseverance and faith they didn’t allowed those injuries to touch them. Rather each trial became an opportunity to glorify God. At the same time, as with Judas, no one is able to help persons who will not help themselves: by being temperate, mustering all their resources and placing their sights on heavenly things.

Chrysostom concludes this short reflection by repeating what he had said at the outset: if any person is harmed and injured it is because of what he or she suffers at his or her own hands, not at the hands of others even if there are countless numbers who injure and insult. “So if a person does not injure him or herself, not all the creatures who inhabit the whole earth and sea if they combined to attack would be able to hurt one who is vigilant and sober in the Lord. Let us then, I beseech you, be sober and vigilant at all times, and let us endure all painful things bravely that we may obtain those ever-lasting and pure blessings in Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom be glory and power, now and ever and through all ages. Amen.”

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA

## NAMEDAYS

October 18

*The Holy Apostle and Evangelist Luke*

Fr. Luke Veronis

October 20

*The Great-martyr Artemius of Antioch*

Artemie Gavala

Artemis Gouvelis

October 26

*The Holy Great-martyr Dimitrios of Thessalonika*

Dimitri Soterios Apostola

Dhimitra Belica

Dimitri Daniel Christo

James L. Christo

James Demake

Dhimitri Disho

Dimitraqi Lolo

Dimitraqi Lolo

Rev. Fr. Dimitri Moraitis

Dimitri Michael Saffron

James Seferi

James Evan Stamoulis

James Trakadas

James Vlamis



### FINANCIAL FACT

*“Burning the Mortgage”*

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



## *HOLIDAY BAKE SALE, LUNCHEON & MARKETPLACE*

**Saturday, November 21**

**9:00 am - 3:00 pm**

### **BAKE SALE & LUNCHEON**

- **We are asking for donations of home baked goods to sell.** We need to know in advance what you are bringing, and it must be brought to the church during the day on Friday, Nov. 20
- **We also need volunteers to help with set up and packaging of items for sale on Friday, Nov 20** and with the sale and luncheon on Saturday, Nov 21. If you have questions please speak to or email: Chris Toda or Deb Sedares.
- **There is a sign up sheet** on the bulletin board for donations and for volunteers to help with set up and with the sale.

### **PITA & PASTRY HOLIDAY ORDER DEADLINES**

- **Help is needed with the ongoing baking effort** of pitas and pastries here at the Church and for help with packaging pastries — For specifics, see **Chris Toda and Betty Anderson.**
- **We need everyone's to help to sell our pastries and pitas** to our family, friends, coworkers, and anyone else you can think of — for more information, see **Betty Anderson.**
- **Thanksgiving Orders** need to be in by November 8, for pick-up Sat/Sun November 21 & 22.
- **Christmas Orders** must be in by December 7, for pick-up Sat/Sun December 19 & 20. We are only able

to make a certain quantity of pitas and pastries. To ensure that we will be able to fill your orders do not wait until the last minute to get your orders in. ***Absolutely no orders will be accepted after the order deadline.***

- **You may download flyers** using the links in the e-mail Bulletin or pick up hard copies here.

### **HOLIDAY MARKET PLACE:**

- **A Holiday Market Place** will once again, be part of our annual Holiday Bake Sale and Luncheon. We are seeking Vendors to rent table space at a cost of \$25 per table. If you or a vendor you know is interested in participating, please contact **Tim Rucho.** We would like to include a variety of vendors and ensure there is no duplication of products or services.

### **GIFT BASKET RAFFLE:**

- **Gift-Basket Raffle:** A new feature at our Holiday Marketplace this year will be a raffle of specialty gift baskets to benefit our Church. Donations are welcome! You may be creative and design your own gift basket, contribute complimentary items and we will assemble them into a gift basket, or donate gift certificates, gift cards, or money to purchase needed items. For more information, speak with Tim Rucho.