

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN NOVEMBER 29, 2015 THIS WEEK'S NEWS

Our *Parish Feastday Celebration* is *this coming weekend* to honor the patron Saint of our Community, the holy Bishop St. Nicholas.

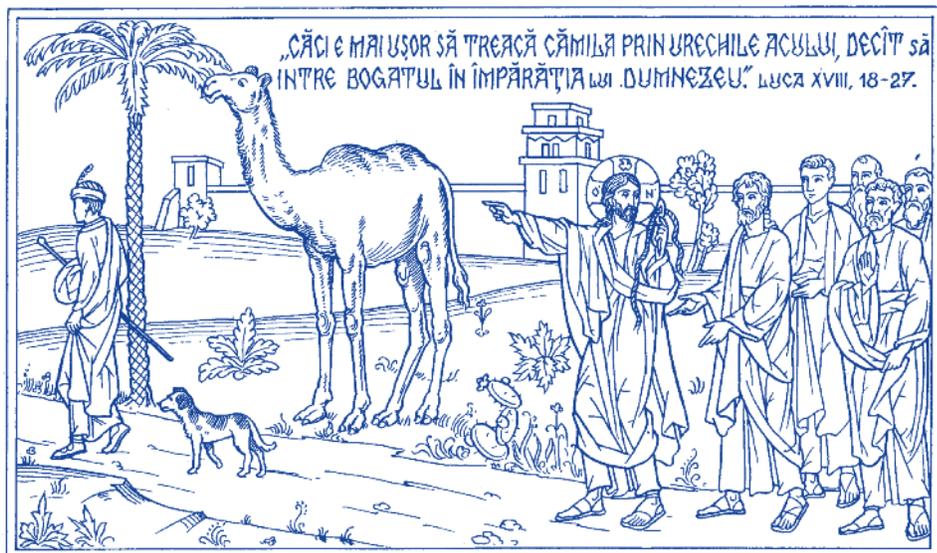
- **On Saturday evening, December 5,** we will have **Great Vespers at 6:00 pm.** Please make every effort to attend, so that our Church will be full to greet our guests from the larger Orthodox community.
- **On Sunday, December 6,** we will have a **FELLOWSHIP POTLUCK LUNCHEON,** following Liturgy. Please plan on it. Before we plunge into the frenzy of the holidays, let's pause for a moment and gather for a few hours to enjoy a relaxing potluck luncheon in honor of our Patron Saint Nicholas. This year's theme is: "Our Christmas Village ... Where All Gather As One." Please speak with Lisa Mielnicki or Chris Toda, who are organizing this luncheon, to find out what lenten specialty you might bring.

THE FEASTDAY RAFFLE IS UNDERWAY. In addition to those tickets that have been mailed, we still must sell more tickets as well to meet our goal. **Dean Valoras is heading up this effort,** please see him in Coffee Hour. *The*

GREETERS TEAM 1:
V. GERALD BELBA AND MARGARITE LANDRY

COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP CREW D:
ILIANA & SEAN FAHEY,
DIMITRI SAFFRON,
CHRISTOS & SPIRO SPYROU

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



THE THIRTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
APOSTOLIC READING: COLOSSIANS 3:12-16 ☩ GOSPEL: LUKE 18:18-27
(THE RICH RULER & KEEPING THE COMMANDMENTS)
TONE 1 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 4

drawing will be held at our St. Nicholas Feastday Luncheon.

THANKS to all who helped set up, prepare, cook, and served at the **Holiday Market Place, Bake Sale and Luncheon** last weekend. It was a great success! All the hard work, and fun, help the parish realize over \$5,000 for this event!

WE ARE IN THE NATIVITY FAST. Let us use this time to withdraw from the noise of the "Christmas Season," in order to reflect on the great mystery of Emmanuel: God-with-us!

THE 2016 CHURCH CALENDARS in both English and Romanian are available at the Candles. Please consider making a donation to cover the costs!

ONLY TWO WEEKS LEFT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CARD! The parish Christmas card is mailed to the entire membership of our St. Nicholas Family. The sign-up sheet is available at the Church. If you'd like more information,

please contact Tom FitzPatrick or Evans Tsoules in Coffee Hour. The last day to sign-up will be Sunday, December 6th. You will want to be a part of this festive Christmas greeting to our Church community.

FOOD PANTRY. Help is needed to staff our monthly responsibility at the Orthodox Food Center **this Saturday, December 5th, from 9 am - noon.** About 4 people are needed. Likewise, donations of food are always needed, and may be dropped off at the Food Pantry housed at St. Spyridon Cathedral. If you can help in this worthwhile ministry, please speak with **Lisa Mielnicki or Nicole Apostola.**

DATES TO REMEMBER

- Sat, Dec 5 Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-12pm
Great Vespers for St. Nicholas, 6pm
- Sun, Dec 6 St. Nicholas Feastday Celebration
- Fri, Dec 18 Mustard Seed Meal, 5pm
- Sun, Dec 20 Christmas Pageant

34 GOLD STREET, SHREWSBURY, MA 01545-6238 ♦ VOICE: 508.845.0088 ♦ FAX: 508.845.8850
E-MAIL: FRNICK@STNICHOLASCHURCH.ORG ♦ WEB: WWW.STNICHOLASCHURCH.ORG

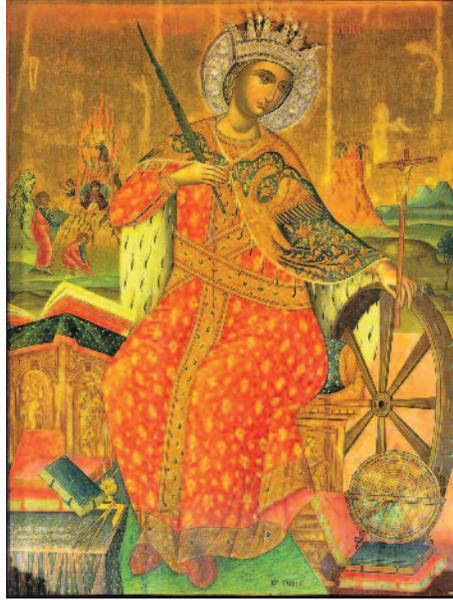
A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas

A MEMORIAL WILL BE HELD TODAY for the servant of God **Melika Mossaides**, fallen asleep three years. **May her memory be eternal!**

COFFEE HOUR THIS WEEK is sponsored by the **Mossaides family** in Melika's memory.

COMMUNITY NEWS

IMPORTANT HOPE CEMETERY NEWS. The Orthodox section of Hope Cemetery in Worcester is completely full. The Council of Eastern Orthodox Churches has been trying to get the City of Worcester to expand the Orthodox section for quite some time. The City of Worcester has scheduled **two public hearings to deal with the cemetery master plan.** The **first public hearing is Monday, November 30, 2015** at 6:30 pm in the Esther Howland Chamber in City Hall. The second public hearing is Monday, December 14, 2015 at 6:30 pm also in the Esther Howland Chamber in City Hall. This is the Orthodox community's chance to express our desire to have more plots earmarked for the Orthodox community. There is land available in the cemetery adjacent to the existing Orthodox section. In order to expand the Orthodox section the community should make its desire known at these hearings.



NAMEDAYS

November 25

The Great-martyr Katherine of Alexandria

Katina Vanthia Christo
Katherine Victoria Fahey
Kathryn Eleanor Sedares
Katina Spataro
Katherine Stamoulis
Emily Katherine Valoras

November 26

St. Stylianos of Paphlagonia

Steliana Naumescu

November 30

The Holy Apostle Andrew the First-called

Andrew Cavanaugh
Andrew John Demake
Andrew Opio
Andrew Tanacea



A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

LORD, OUR GOD: our Thanksgiving celebration makes us reflect on the riches of life. All too often, we take them for granted! We presume — if we really think about it at all! — that what we are and have is somehow all our own doing. As we prepare for the coming feast, help us to reach a better understanding of how things really are. Enable our minds and hearts to find inspiration and renewal by pondering the marvels life affords us at every turn. Show us how to receive everything and, indeed, every moment of life, as a gift. Cleanse our minds and hearts of the cynical and perverse desire to believe we simply have a right to everything that comes our way. Show us, rather, how indebted we are to everyone, beginning with you, and in all things lead us to yourself.

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

FINANCIAL FACT

"Burning the Mortgage"

**We have over \$42,000 in our brokerage account
There are great tax advantages
when donating your stock to the Church.**

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

CHRISTMAS GIFTS FROM THE ORTHODOX COMMUNITY are provided each year to each one of the residents of Holy Trinity Nursing and Rehab. Our Parish is responsible for providing some of those gifts. You will be asked to purchase and wrap the gift, and bring it to the Church on Sunday, December 13th. **Eleanor Sedares (508-753-3106) is coordinating this effort** for our parish and can offer suggestions if you need ideas of what to get.

MUSIC AND MEMORY PROGRAM.

Holy Trinity has rolled out the initial startup of its "Music and Memory" Program. This past year it was awarded a grant of \$5,000 from United Healthcare that was used to enhance quality of life for the residents. The Music and Memory program is a non-profit organization that brings personalized music into the lives of the elderly through digital

music technology. Holy Trinity's staff have been trained on how to create and provide personalized playlists using iPods that enable those struggling with Alzheimer's, dementia, and other cognitive and physical challenges to reconnect with the world through music-triggered memories.

Holy Trinity has been very fortunate to develop a partnership with Anna Maria College's Music Therapy Department allowing music therapy students to utilize this program to connect with the elderly. This is wonderful program that will bring positive results to the residents' quality of life! For more information Google: "Music and Memory Program" to view videos of residents using this program

A \$2.8 MILLION BEQUEST WAS RECEIVED by Holy Trinity as part of a nearly \$29 million total left to five Worcester-area organizations more than 60 years after the death of the benefac-

tor, a local entrepreneur and industrialist. Holy Trinity Nursing & Rehabilitation is extremely grateful to have received this bequest. As is usual in these kinds of bequests, the principal funds are permanently restricted by the donor, with only the interest able to be used to continue providing services to the elderly.

A GRANT OF \$49,500 was received by Holy Trinity to enable it to implement an electronic medical records system! Holy Trinity applied for this grant from MeHI (Massachusetts eHealth Institute) and its implementation will help to improve the efficiency of care it provides.

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.



INHERITING ETERNAL LIFE

THIS week's Gospel lesson (Luke 18:18-27) is the story of the Rich Ruler who asks Jesus, "Good Master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" (v. 19). It is St. Luke's account of the same story we heard earlier in the Liturgical year from St. Matthew (19:16-26), only he is identified there as the Rich Young Man. St. Mark (10:17-27) also tells us the same story, adding some informative details. When I commented on St. Matthew's account I focused on the phrase: "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone." (v. 19) Here, I would like to talk about question of wealth, because, at least on the surface, this seems to be at the heart of the story.

Clement of Alexandria, a Church father born around the year 150AD, wrote a commentary on this Gospel story entitled: "Who is the Rich Man that shall be Saved?" The first thing you might notice is how Clement invites us to think about the question differently. We can sense the way in which he will cause us to shift our preconceptions about the story even from the title of his treatise.

When we listen to the Evangelists' accounts we come away with the impression that it is impossible for someone with wealth to be saved. Isn't that what we usually presuppose when we hear the Lord say that, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God"? (v. 25) Clement asks us to focus on the next thing the Lord says: "What is impossible with men is possible with God." (v. 27)

What is central to this story is neither wealth nor poverty, but the pull these have on our hearts. We are being asked to examine where our priorities lay. Remember how the Lord says: "Where your treasure is, there you heart



will be also." (Luke 12:34) It is attachment to the things of this earthly existence that is the subject of the story. A wealthy person who views his or her possessions with detachment, using his or her resources for good, is better off spiritually than a poor person who clings in a greedy fashion to what little he or she might have.

The primary challenge of this Gospel story is to remain focused on this question of attachment to the things of this world, because when most of us hear the word "rich" we immediately exclude ourselves. I think that it fair to say that even given the current economic situation, most of us Americans are as wealthy as was this Rich Ruler. We more than likely are better housed, with more conveniences, than most very wealthy people in the ancient world.

This is not to minimize the reality of poverty here and in our own time — more and more people are barely making it, if even that. Volunteers at our Food Pantry or those who serve meals at the Mustard Seed get to see the growing numbers of "working poor." Yet even the poor of our country are wealthy in comparison to the very poor in most of

the world. Those of us who live an even modest middle-class existence are likely to be on a par with the Rich Ruler who is the subject of this story.

I offer you this spiritual principle: the "thing" is always in the middle. It is how we use it that makes it "good" or "bad." It is not the amount of possessions we might have, but our attachment to them.

What do we do with our wealth? Do we consider it as our own, for our own comfort? Or, do we see this as God's gift that we need to share with others? In the imagery that the Lord gives us, we could say that the attachment to the things of this world are "the camel." We need to decide what we are willing to let go of in order to fit through the "needle's eye," that is to say, the high-calling we have received from the Lord.

Our society has become not only materialistic, but also selfish. This was not always the case. America was known throughout the world for its altruism. Our nation was founded on the principle of caring for the "weakest among us." We see this principle at work during times of disasters and catastrophes, when charitable donations and acts of kindness abound. The challenge is to make this care for the other the normal everyday rule, not the exception.

Certainly our Orthodox Christian faith has always taught that we should value the love of the other — be it God or our neighbor — above all things. The Lord says that love of our neighbor is the very icon of love of God. He equates them. So, when the Rich Ruler asks Jesus "what must I do to inherit eternal life?", Jesus points him in the right direction. The Lord also invites us to follow this same path. May we find the courage to do so.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA