

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN

MAY 8, 2016
HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

ARCHBISHOP NICOLAE'S Pastoral Letter at Pascha is available at the candles in both English and Romanian.

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 July 2nd.

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

COFFEE HOUR this week is sponsored by the family of **Vasil Rucho** who fell asleep five years ago, today.

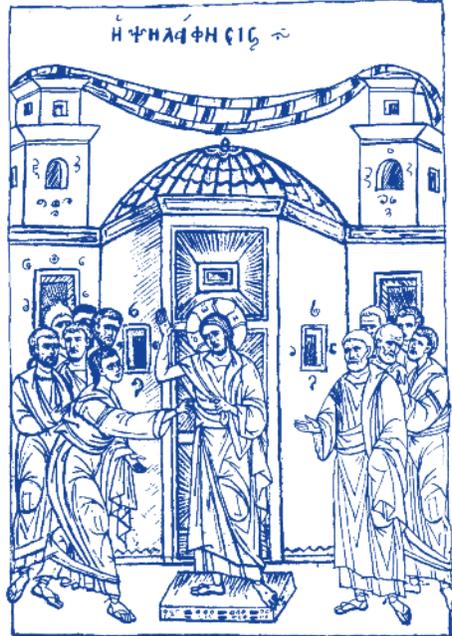
UP-COMING

ELECTRONICS RECYCLING is **Saturday, June 11th from 9 am to 2 pm**. Gerry Belba is coordinating, and we need about 3 people to help with traffic and coordination. Please contact him:

GREETERS TEAM 1:
V. GERALD BELBA & MARGARITE LANDRY

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

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



ANTIPASCHA:

ST. THOMAS SUNDAY

APOSTOLIC READING: ACTS 5:12-20

GOSPEL: JOHN 20:19-31

TONE 1 ☩ RESURRECTION GOSPEL 1

vgbelba@msn.com.

THE NEXT MUSTARD SEED MEAL is **Friday, June 17th**. The Mustard Seed is a Catholic Worker home providing dinner to about 150 people in need each day. **Help is needed Friday morning at 9:30 am** to cook and prepare food, and **at 5:00 on Friday evening** to transport and serve. If you'd like to help, contact **Fr. Nick**.

ST. SPYRIDON CATHEDRAL is holding its **Greek Festival** the weekend of June 3-5. Mark your calendars!



A NOTE OF THANKS ...

We want to thank the members of our Parish who helped especially through this Paschal season: those who planned and prepared the wonderful food from the first Lenten meal, to the Palm Sunday Luncheon, and through the Paschal Agape Meal; the ushers, the altar servers; those who set-up and cleaned the facility; the baking crew, who produced pitas and pastries that brightened the holiday tables throughout the region, as well as those who sold and bought those baked goods; the religious education instructors and those who coordinated the School Vacation Week Retreat, and the Great Friday children's retreat; those who picked up a broom and swept the floor or a wash cloth and wiped the tables, and of course our chanters: Tim Rucho and George Demake. There are so many who always help and contribute in ways small and large. Take a moment next time you see an act of kindness and service, and personally thank the individual.

Christ is Risen!
George Demake,
Parish Council President

DATES TO REMEMBER

Sat, May 7 Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-12pm
Mon, May 16 Parish Council Meeting
Mon, May 30 Memorial Day, Hope Cemetary
June 3, 4, 5 St. Spyridon Greek Festival
June 11 e-Recycling, 9am-2pm
Sat, June 18 Saturday of Souls, Lit, 10am
Sun, June 19 PENTECOST

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas

NAMEDAYS

April 30

The Holy Apostle James

James Collins

May 1

The Holy Prophet Jeremiah

Jeromy Grniet

May 5

*The Great Martyr Irene
of Thessalonica*

Irene Mountzouris

Irene Tsoules

May 6

The Life-giving Fountain

Zoica Nedelcu

Zoitza Tsongalis

May 8

The Holy Apostle Thomas

Thomas Cavanaugh

Thomas Chachi

Thomas Fitzpatrick

Robert T. Sedares

Thomas R. Sedares

Thomas Spataro

May 9

The Holy Martyr Christopher

Christopher Masterjohn

May 21

*The Holy Equals to the Apostles
Constantine and Helen*

Constantin Apostol

Elaine Apostola

Konstantin Charalambides

Presvytera Eleni Christakos

Amalia Helene Collins

Hannah Constance Datz

Dina Entwistle

Iliana Victoria Fahey

Elena Galeriu

Ileana A Nace

Constanța Papit

V. Rev. Fr. Dean Paleologos

Eleni Polymeros

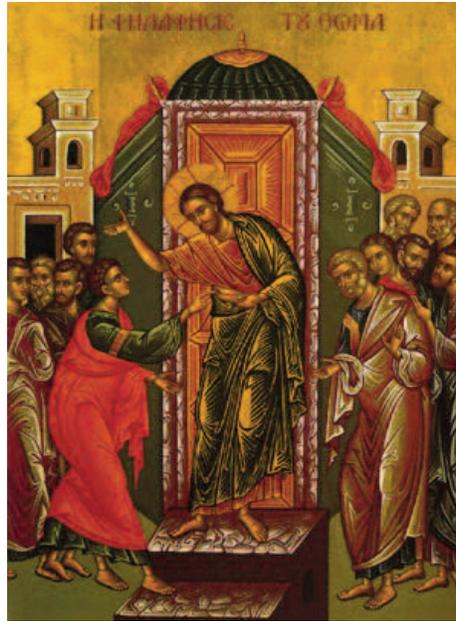
Elena Prelipcean

Dina K. Salerno

Eleanor Sedares

Elaine Tanacea

Dean Valoras



THOMAS SUNDAY

Though the doors were shut at the dwelling where the disciples were gathered for fear of the Jews on the evening of the Sunday after the Passover, our Saviour wondrously entered and stood in their midst, and greeted them with His customary words, "Peace be unto you." Then He showed unto them His hands and feet and side; furthermore, in their presence, He took some fish and a honeycomb and ate before them, and thus assured them of His bodily Resurrection. But Thomas, who was not then present with the others, did not believe their testimony concerning Christ's Resurrection, but said in a decisive manner, "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe." Wherefore after eight days, that is, on this day, when the disciples were again gathered together and Thomas was with them, the Lord Jesus came while the doors were shut, as He did formerly. Standing in their midst, He said, "Peace be unto you"; then He said to Thomas, "Bring hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and

A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

ETERNAL PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING TO YOU, O God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for this wondrous feast whereon you raised him to the glory of new life at your right! As we offer you our hymns and canticles in praise of his victory over death, we beseech you: Grant us the faith of the myrrh-bearing women, but not their fright; the hope of the apostles, but not their fear; the straightforward attitude of Thomas, but not his hesitation; and the openness of the Samaritan woman, but not her weakness. At all times and in all things enable us to please you, so that your mercy and compassion may rest on us in this world and in the next.

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

bring hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not unbelieving, but believing."

And Thomas, beholding and examining carefully the hands and side of the Master, cried out with faith, "My Lord and my God." Thus he clearly proclaimed the two natures - human and divine - of the God-man (Luke 24:36-49; John 20:19-29).

This day is called Antipascha (meaning "in the stead of Pascha," not "in opposition to Pascha") because with this day, the first Sunday after Pascha, the Church consecrates every Sunday of the year to the commemoration of Pascha, that is, the Resurrection.

THE WHOLE MESSAGE ABOUT THIS LIFE

WE are now in the Paschal Season, the period from Easter (Pascha) until the Lord's Ascension. The entire celebration culminates with the Feast of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles. At Pascha we also start the yearly cycle of Scripture readings. At the midnight Paschal Liturgy we hear the opening verses from both the Gospel of St. John and the Acts of the Apostles. For the coming year, starting today, the Second Sunday of Pascha, I will be focusing my weekly reflections on the Apostolic writings: The Acts of the Apostles and the Letters of St. Paul and the other Apostles. Along with the Gospels, these Apostolic writings form the New Testament. Together they form the inspired reflection and recollection of what our Lord did and said.

The Book of Acts has been called the fifth Gospel: the Gospel of the Holy Spirit. It was written by St. Luke. As we find out in the very first verses it is intended to be a continuation of the Gospel that bears his name. Luke wrote both to be a seamless whole. In Acts we see the Lord's disciples transformed by the Holy Spirit into His Apostles. In the Gospels the disciples are often confused, dull-witted, and even cowardly. In Acts and the Apostolic Letters (Epistles) we see something else entirely. Filled with the Holy Spirit, they confidently and courageously preach the Good News of Salvation through Jesus Christ.

Much has already happened in the life of the early Christian community by the time we come to the events described in this week's reading (Acts 5:12-20). Immediately after the Lord's Ascension, the Apostles chose a person to fill the empty twelfth place that had been vacated by Judas. When the Apostles cast lots to determine God's will, Matthias was chosen (Acts 1:26). Then on the day of Pentecost (fifty days after Passover/Pascha), the promised Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles in the form of tongues of fire (Acts 2:3). Filled

with the Holy Spirit, the Apostles address the great crowd from many nations that had gathered in Jerusalem for the Festival of Pentecost. Each person heard what Peter said to them in their own language (cf. v. 2:7). Thousands were added to the followers of Jesus that day.

The Apostles continued to pray each day in the Temple. On one of those occasions Peter and John passed a crippled beggar asking for alms. Instead of money they gave him the ability to walk again, in the name of Jesus (cf. v. 3:6ff). This caused such a commotion that Peter and John were arrested and called before Sanhedrin to explain what they had done (v. 4:3). Peter and John testified to the power of Jesus of Nazareth. The High Priest and the other members of the Sanhedrin threatened them both against preaching about Jesus, but decide to let them go.

In the meantime the early community continued to grow. These early Christians decide to hold all things in common and voluntarily give over their own possessions for the benefit of the whole community (cf. v. 4:34). Among these early believers were a husband and wife — Ananias and Sapphira — who decided to sell a piece of property and give it to the community, except that they secretly held a portion of the proceeds back for themselves. When they were separately confronted with their deception they were struck dead by the Holy Spirit (cf. v. 5:1-11) because of their lie. It is a powerful lesson of God's desire for honesty and truth from each of us.

This is the background for today's reading: Acts 5:12-20. The community continues to grow, and word of the Apostles' power to heal spreads. Signs and wonders were done among the people (v. 12). "They even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on cots and mats, in order that Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he came by" (v. 15).

The High Priest and others in au-

thority were not going to allow this to continue. They arrested the Apostles outright and imprisoned them in the public prison. "But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors, brought them out, and said, 'Go, stand in the Temple and tell the people the whole message about this life.'" (v. 19-20)

This is where the selected reading ends. It is worthwhile for us to contemplate the Angel's words: "tell the people the whole message about this life." The lives of the Apostles (and this group includes more than just the twelve) and the other followers of Jesus had changed forever. They not only saw the life and work of Jesus with their own eyes, they are now filled with the Holy Spirit in order to proclaim it. They are not simply called to be witnesses to Christ's coming; they are now preachers of the new life that God gives us through Him. They will suffer, but nonetheless continue to teach the Word and confess to the change in their own lives. As Peter and the other Apostles said to the Temple leadership: "We must obey God rather than any human authority." (v. 5:29)

Those of us who have heard the Word and believed in Jesus are heirs to this same responsibility. Down through the centuries people have witnessed to God's truth in their lives and through their works. We have come to believe through them. The Apostles speak to us through these good and holy people, our parents and our teachers. We must embrace this responsibility to live the Life in Christ, grounded in the Good News they shared with us. We too are called to be witnesses, that through our witness many others may and will believe.

Christ is Risen!

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA