

# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN MAY 15, 2016

## THIS WEEK'S NEWS

**THE PARISH COUNCIL** will hold its regular monthly meeting on **Monday, May 16th at 6:30 pm.** Parish Council Members, please let George Demake know if you are unable to attend.

**LOOKING FOR THIS YEAR'S HIGH SCHOOL OR COLLEGE GRADUATES** in our Parish so we can recognize them on their accomplishment. If you know of a soon-to-be graduate, please inform Fr. Nick or Tim Rucho.

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

**THANKS TO CLEANERS!** The dedicated souls who do the deep cleaning that keeps our Church looking new.

**WE WISH TO EXTEND OUR SYMPATHY** to **Ann Trakadas** and her family on the recent falling asleep of her mother **Lephcotheia Georgan.** *May her memory be eternal!*

**TODAY WE CELEBRATE A MEMORIAL** for family members of **Sergis and Anthi Eleftheriou:** Athni's mother Athina and Sergis' father Andreas; Anthi's agrandparents Eleni and Costas;

### GREETERS TEAM 2:

ARTIC GAVALA AND CĂLIN GALERIU

### COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP CREW A:

MARGARITE LANDRY,  
CHRISTINE MASTERJOHN

**ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED**



**THE THIRD SUNDAY OF PASCHA  
THE MYRRHBEARING WOMEN  
NIKODIMOS AND JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA**

APOSTOLIC READING: ACTS 6:1-7



GOSPEL: MARK 15:43-16:8

TONE 2 - MATINS GOSPEL 4

and her aunt Anthousa and uncle Neofytos.  
*May their memory be eternal!*

**COFFEE HOUR** this week is sponsored by the **Eleftheriou** family in memory of their departed loved-ones.

## UP-COMING

**MEMORIAL DAY** is Monday, May 27th. Fr. Nick will be at Hope Cemetery from 10:00 am. The common Memorial Service will be at noon at the Altar in Hope. If you would like Fr. Nick to visit a grave in another cemetery, please contact him to make arrangements: 508-845-0088.

**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: vg-belba@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!



## DATES TO REMEMBER

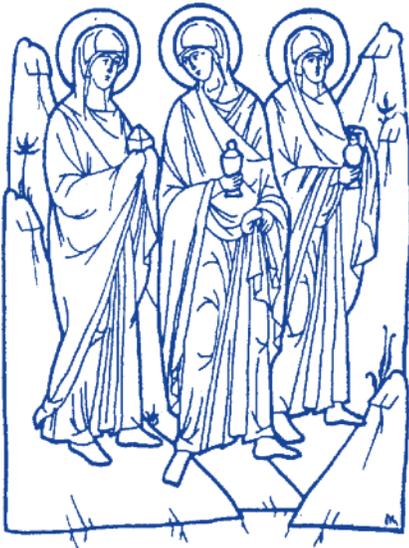
Mon, May 16 Parish Council Meeting, 6:30pm  
Mon, May 30 Memorial Day, Hope Cemetery  
June 3, 4, 5 St. Spyridon Greek Festival  
Sat, June 11 e-Recycling, 9am-2pm  
Sat, June 18 Saturday of Souls, Lit, 10am  
Sun, June 19 PENTECOST

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas

THE MYRRHBEARERS



SUNDAY OF THE MYRRHBEARING WOMEN

About the beginning of His thirty-second year, when the Lord Jesus was going throughout Galilee, preaching and working miracles, many women who had received of His beneficence left their own homeland and from then on followed after Him. They ministered unto Him out of their own possessions, even until His crucifixion and entombment; and afterwards, neither losing faith in Him after His death, nor fearing the wrath of the Jewish rulers, they came to the sepulchre, bearing the myrrh-oils they had prepared to anoint His body. It is because of the myrrh-oils, that these God-loving women brought to the tomb of Jesus that they are called the Myrrh-bearers. Of those whose names are known are the following: first of all, the most holy Virgin Mary, who in Matthew 27:56 and Mark 15:40 is called "the mother of James and Joses" (these are the sons of Joseph by a previous marriage, and she was therefore their step-mother); Mary Magdalene (celebrated July 22); Mary,

NAMEDAYS

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

the wife of Clopas; Joanna, wife of Chouza, a steward of Herod Antipas; Salome, the mother of the sons of Zebedee, Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus; and Susanna. As for the names of the rest of them, the evangelists have kept silence (Matt 27:55-56; 28:1-10. Mark 15:40-41. Luke 8:1-3; 23:55-24:11, 22-24. John 19:25; 20:11-18. Acts 1:14).

Together with them we celebrate also the secret disciples of the Saviour, Joseph and Nicodemus. Of these, Nicodemus was probably a Jerusalemite, a prominent leader among the Jews and of the order of the Pharisees, learned in the Law and instructed in the Holy Scriptures. He had believed in Christ when, at the beginning of our Saviour's preaching of salvation, he came to Him by night. Furthermore, he brought some

A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**O** GOD OUR FATHER: As a new day is born and the light of early morning fills the world, we come before you once again, ready to anoint your Son with our praises as once the myrrhbearing women hoped to anoint him with their precious herbs and spices. Through your Christ, the great saviour of all creation, enable us ever to be mindful of the wondrous things you have done for us, that we may bring forth fruit worthy of your benevolence. Teach us how to hold fast to these mysteries we celebrate, and make us fit to join all your saints at the table of the eternal banquet.

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

one hundred pounds of myrrh-oils and an aromatic mixture of aloes and spices out of reverence and love for the divine Teacher (John 19:39). Joseph, who was from the city of Arimathea, was a wealthy and noble man, and one of the counsellors who were in Jerusalem. He went boldly unto Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus, and together with Nicodemus he gave Him burial. Since time did not permit the preparation of another tomb, he placed the Lord's body in his own tomb which was hewn out of rock, as the Evangelist says (Matt. 27:60).



# THE DIACONATE IN CHRIST

**T**HIS is the third week of Pascha. It is when we remember the Myrrh-bearing women, as well as Nikodimos and Joseph of Arimathea. This Sunday's reading from the Apostolic writings is from Acts 6:1-7. In this passage we learn something about the beginnings of Church structure and order.

The early Christian community in Jerusalem was growing by leaps and bounds. It was becoming too large to be administered on an *ad hoc* basis by the Apostles, and tensions began to surface. In the Scripture we read: "Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists murmured against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. And the twelve summoned the body of the disciples and said, 'It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brethren, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.'" (Acts 6:1-4)

There are three important points raised in these verses. The first is that there are "Hellenists" who are complaining that their widows are being neglected. The second is that there is a hierarchy of gifts and responsibilities; should the Apostles give up preaching to serve the tables? (The 'table' referred to here is the dinner table *not* the Altar table.) The third is that in order to "serve the tables" you need to be a person of "good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom."

Let's begin with the "Hellenists." These are not Greeks, *per se*, but Jews from outside Palestine who spoke Greek as their first language. Given that they were feeling neglected in the daily distribution, it is likely that they spoke little if any Aramaic. It is also interesting to note that the widows were not receiving

'alms.' Rather, they received from the "daily distribution." This early community held things in common (Act 2:44). They distributed to all the members of the community according to need from what they had.

Let's move to the second point. In saying that it wasn't right for the Apostles to give up preaching to serve the tables, they were not saying that serving tables was beneath them, only that it was an inappropriate use of their time. They had a different responsibility, namely, prayer and ministry of the word (v. 4). Their prayers and preaching encouraged and strengthened this early community. Their proposal to appoint deacons is intended to ensure that the distribution was being properly administered, also a sacred task.

Here's the third point. We learn from this passage both the way leadership in the Church is chosen, as well as the qualifications. The Apostles asked the brethren to pick out from among the community persons of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom they might appoint to this duty (v. 3). The Apostles didn't simply name people to the positions; they asked the people themselves to choose persons who were qualified and worthy, both administratively and spiritually. The Apostles didn't relinquish their overall responsibility for the administration of the Church, but they did delegate and empower qualified persons with specific tasks. After the decision had been made, the Apostles prayed over these seven men and laid their hands on them. This is what ordination is: identifying persons who are both spiritually and physically up to the task. Then, God's Grace is prayed for to "complete that which is lacking" in the person ordained.

It is unfortunate that today we understand the role of "deacons" as almost exclusively liturgical. The root meaning of the word deacon is "to minister." In

the Liturgy when we pray for "the diaconate in Christ," the reference is not primarily to the ordained diaconate, but more importantly to what we might call today lay societies and organizations intended for ministry and service.

On the national level, we have living examples of these "diaconates in Christ" in the International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC), and the Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC), as well as many other Pan-Orthodox agencies and organizations chartered by the Assembly of Bishops. Closer to home we have our own Orthodox Food Center — the food pantry — and Holy Trinity Nursing and Rehab Center. Many of us cook and serve meals at the Mustard Seed — a diaconate, if there ever was one. Persons who serve on the parish council and various parish organizations minister to our own community and the whole society around us powerfully and in very real ways. And, so that we don't forget the other important aspect of the Apostolic criterion: in order to be effective, each one who serves in the name of Christ needs to be a person of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom.

Each of us is called to be a deacon, ministering to the members of Christ's Body and to all of the world. We are all called to be persons of good repute, filled with the Spirit and wisdom. We are all called to reach out to those in need, both physically and spiritually, lifting them up in our Lord's name. May God give us the strength and wisdom to fulfill this call.

Christ is Risen!

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA