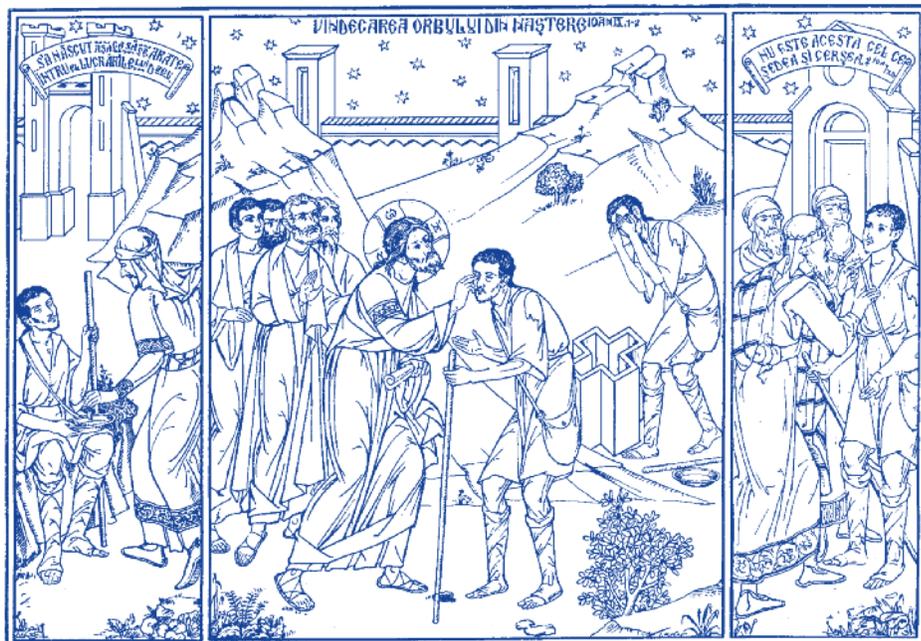


# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN

JUNE 5, 2016

## THIS WEEK'S NEWS

**GODPARENTS & GRANDPARENTS SUNDAY.** On Sunday, June 12th, together with the closing ceremonies for Religious Education, we will host "Godparents and Grandparents Sunday." Children (and adults) are encouraged to invite their godparent or grandparent to join them at Divine Liturgy, after which a special prayer will be offered to affirm those relationships. We will also be honoring graduates from our parish. A Parish Cookout will follow on the Church Grounds to kick off the summer with hot dogs, burgers, sausages and all the fixings. Lawn chairs and bats, balls, and other back yard games are welcomed. **If you would like to contribute to sponsoring the event, please see or contact Deb Sedares.** Adults: \$15.00 — Children: \$5.00. Reservations are needed by Sunday, June 5th. Sign up at the Candle Stand or see Eleanor Sedares during Coffee Hour or e-mail: info@StNicholasChurch.org. **Deb Sedares** (Dsedares@pinehills.com) and **Dimitri Saffron** (DSLandscape1@yahoo.com) are organizing the cookout. **Please let them know if you can help with the event.** A volunteer sign-up sheet is also posted on the Steward-



### THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF PASCHA

JESUS HEALS THE MAN BLIND FROM BIRTH

APOSTOLIC READING: ACTS 16:16-34 ☩ GOSPEL: JOHN 9:1-38

TONE 5 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 8

ship Bulletin Board in the church hall. **DOUGH ROLLING AND PITA BAKING SET FOR NEXT** Saturday, June 11th, 9:00am to noon and Saturday, June 25th, 9:00am to noon. We need 12-15 people, so that the work is evenly distributed and we can finish with prep and clean-up in 3 hours. All help appreciated. No experience necessary — there's a job for everyone. If you'd like to participate, contact Chris Toda at: **thetodas@msn.com**, or **508-832-6271**.

**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: **vgbelba@msn.com**.

**THE PARISH COUNCIL** will hold its regular monthly meeting on **Monday, June 13th at 6:30 pm**. Parish Council Members, please let George Demake know if you are unable to attend.

### DATES TO REMEMBER

- Thurs, June 9 The Lord's Ascension
- Sat, June 11 e-Recycling, 9am-2pm  
Pita Dough Rolling, 9am-12pm
- Sun, June 12 Godparents/Grandparents Sunday  
Parish Cookout
- Mon, June 13 Parish Council Meeting, 6:30pm
- Fri, June 17 Mustard Seed Meal, 5 pm
- Sat, June 18 Saturday of Souls, Lit, 10am
- Sun, June 19 PENTECOST
- Sat, June 25 Pita Dough Rolling, 9am-12pm
- Sat, July 2 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry
- Sun, July 3 NO LITURGY, Archdiocesan Congress
- Sun, July 31 St. Michael Southbridge Annual Picnic
- Sun, Sept 18 stART on the Street Festival
- Thurs, Oct 6 Holy Trinity Wine/Food Fest

**GREETERS TEAM 5:**  
DEBORAH SEDARES & EVAN STAMOULIS

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

**ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED**

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

*COFFEE HOUR* this week is sponsored by Ron and Betty Anderson and family.

## UP-COMING

*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 from noon** 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.

## COMMUNITY NEWS

*THE WEeping ICON* of the Theotokos "Kardiotissa" (Tender-Hearted) from the St. George Orthodox Church in Taylor, PA, will be coming to the Ss. Constantine & Helen Church in Webster on Friday, June 17th. You may venerate the Icon from the afternoon. There will be a Paraklesis Service at 6:00 pm with anointing with Myrrh from the Icon.

**FREE FUN FRIDAYS ARE BACK FOR THE SUMMER!** Free Fun Fridays is the annual summer program that opens doors at no cost to visitors to many of the most treasured cultural venues in Massachusetts. This year, the Highland Street Foundation is partnering with 80 cultural institutions to provide a summer of fun, educational and enriching experiences. **Every Friday from June 24 to August 26, eight sites will be open for free.** All are welcome! This is a great program for families to take advantage of this summer. **To see the whole program, and the sites that available each Friday, go to: <http://www.highlandstreet.org>** or pick up a hard copy flier at the Church. Free Fun Fridays are organized by the Highland Street Foundation and a number of other prominent organizations.



**W**hen You had fulfilled the dispensation for our sake, and united earth to heaven: You ascended in glory, O Christ our God, not being parted from those who love You, but remaining with them and crying: "I am with you and no one will be against you!"

### A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**SWEET JESUS, OUR SAVIOUR:** We who enjoy the effulgence of the sun and who delight in the luminescence of the moon give thanks to you for the gifts of light and sight. In our good fortune, most of us have never actually known the meaning of being blind, and we cannot even begin to appreciate what a life of total darkness is. You, however, know all things, so your understanding and tenderness brought you to bestow a twofold enlightenment on that poor fellow who had been deprived of sight from his mother's womb. As we commemorate his healing during this paschal season, we entreat you to preserve us from all interior blindness that we may always see reality as it is in fact, and live accordingly.

For you are the healer of our souls and bodies, Christ our God, and we give you glory, together with your eternal Father and your all-holy, good, and lifegiving Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

## THE WAY OF SALVATION

**T**HIS is the sixth Sunday of Pascha. Today's Gospel lesson is the Lord's healing of the man blind from birth (John 9:1-38). In the reading from Acts (16:16-34) St. Luke tells us of the start of St. Paul's missionary work in Europe. Paul had been visiting the coastal cities of Asia Minor with Silas and Timothy. One night "a vision appeared to Paul ... a man of Macedonia was standing beseeching him and saying, 'Come over to Macedonia and help us.'" (Acts 16:9) And so Paul and Silas sailed to Philippi, a large city in that province.

Today's reading begins with the encounter Paul and Silas had with a slave girl while they were going toward a place outside of Philippi where the Jews usually gathered to pray on the Sabbath. She had a "spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by soothsaying." (v. 16) In the original Greek the phrase a "spirit of divination" is actually a "Pythonic spirit," referring to the snake that the god Apollo was believed to have slain at Delphi. In Apollo's temple at Delphi, a priestess of Apollo called the 'Phythius' would prophesy in the god's name there. So rather than believe this spirit as something benign, we should understand the girl as possessed.

The girl followed Paul and Silas for a number of days crying out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." (v. 17) Finally Paul had reached his limit and "turned and said to the spirit, 'I charge you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.' And it came out that very hour." (v. 18)

St. Paul did this for two reasons. The first was to free this poor girl from the exploitation of both the demon and her masters. The second was because the spirit meant to deceive those people who came to believe in Jesus through the preaching of Paul and Silas. Paul and the other Apostles never drew attention to themselves when they preached. Their goal was to proclaim salvation in the name of Jesus Christ. The objective

of this demon was to gain credibility by correctly saying who and what these Apostles were, only then to later use this gained confidence for evil purposes. Paul knew this and this is the reason he cast out the demon.

We can see Paul's wisdom in what happened next. Her masters, instead of believing her words that Paul and Silas were indeed "servants of the Most High God, who proclaim the way of salvation," immediately seized them and brought them before the local magistrates complaining that, "these men are Jews and they are disturbing our city. They advocate customs which it is not lawful for us Romans to accept or practice." (v. 21-22) A riot began. The magistrates had Paul and Silas flogged and imprisoned.

During the night while Paul and Silas were singing hymns and praying in prison, an earthquake opens the jail doors and loosens the chains binding Paul and the other prisoners. The jailer woke up, thinking that everyone had escaped. He was ready to kill himself, when Paul cried out to stop him. He told him that no one had escaped. The jailer was so moved that he falls down before Paul and Silas and asks how he might be saved. Finally, he and his whole household believed and were all baptized.

There are at least three important lessons in this story. The first is that believing in Jesus Christ and proclaiming him to the world is not always popular. Sometimes it can lead to outright persecution. Paul and Silas were not doing anything wrong, yet they were seized, brought up on false charges, beaten, put in stocks, and put in prison. They were never even given the opportunity to defend themselves.

The second lesson is that when evil things befall us we should accept them without complaint. Paul and Silas were not sitting in the prison bemoaning their fate. They were not complaining to God: "Why me? I was doing your will! Why didn't you protect me?" Rather,

they were singing hymns and praying. We should understand that we grow when we are tested. Having to defend why we believe is like exercising — like exercising our soul. It brings growth. We know what happens to a body that sits all day in front of the TV. It gets fat and lethargic. Exercise strengthens. Comfort weakens. Through many of the difficulties we encounter God intends that we should be strengthened.

The third important lesson is that we should not try to gain advantage at the expense of others. Paul and Silas were unjustly imprisoned. They could easily have used the opportunity of the earthquake to escape. The result would have been: the suicide of the jailer, and the orphaning of his family; Paul and Silas would have been seen by many as indeed guilty, even if they managed to save themselves, and their preaching would have been in vain. Instead, by trusting in God and enduring their trials, the jailer and his family were saved, not only physically, but also spiritually. The truth of the Good News they preached spread throughout the whole city, even and especially to the pagans. Most importantly, Jesus was glorified.

I would like to emphasize this last point. We were and many still are living through a world-wide economic collapse caused by people, many of whom identify themselves as Christians, who thought nothing of taking advantage of opportunities without considering the consequences of their actions on others. We see this same sort of behavior in many different ways each and every day. Sadly, we ourselves often behave the same way. What might we learn if we allow ourselves to reflect on our own behavior and the impact it has on others? Can we be like Paul and Silas? Can we be witnesses to "the way of salvation"? Perhaps, if we can, many others will be saved.

Christ is Risen!

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA

## 2016 GRADUATES

*“He has filled them with the spirit of God, with skill, intelligence,  
and knowledge in every kind of craft.” (Exodus 35:31)*

We want to acknowledge members of our Church community who are celebrating a graduation and recognize their achievement.

### HIGH SCHOOL

**Dimitri Daniel Christo** is graduated from Abby Kelly Foster Public Charter School in Worcester. He will attend Assumption College in the fall.

**Mathew Collins** is graduated from Algonquin High School. He will be attending The Wentworth Institute of Technology in the fall.

**Tatiana Karadimitriou** is graduated from Shrewsbury High School. She earned a full scholarship to attend the University of Southern California and study neuroscience.

**Alex Trakadas** is graduated from Grafton High School. Over the summer he will be working with the Special Olympics program in the Marlborough offices and will attend Quinsigamond Community College in the fall to pursue a Business and Political Science Degree.

**Christian Polymeros** is graduated from Worcester Academy. He will be attending Massachusetts Maritime Academy in the fall.

**William Polymeros** is graduated from Algonquin High School. He will be attending Framingham State College in the fall.

**Zoe Tsongalis** is graduated from Kimball Union Academy in Meriden, NH. She will attend Providence College in the fall to study Education.

**Christian Wybieracki** (grandson of Janice and Randy Samara) is graduated from Boston College High School and will attend Bentley College in the fall.

### COLLEGE

**Christopher Bacon** is graduated from Worcester State University with a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration. He is planning to work in finance.

**Alex Johnson** is graduated from Worcester State University with a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice

**Stephen Keimig** is graduated from Franklin Pierce University with a Bachelor of Arts, *summa cum laude*, in journalism and production. He was recipient of the Fitzwater Center Medallion for contributions to the public discourse by a graduating senior, among his other achievements.

**Alexandra Murphy** is graduated from Coastal Carolina University with a Bachelor's Degree in Art and Design.

**Athena Polymeros** is graduated from University of Massachusetts at Amherst with a Bachelor's Degree in mathematics and a Master's in Education. She will be teaching high school math at Nashoba Regional High School in the fall.

**Matthew Rucho** is graduated from Wentworth Institute of Technology with a degree in Construction Management. He has accepted a position as an assistant Project Manager at Trinity Construction Co. in Wilmington, MA.

### OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

**Christine Masterjohn** has received a professional certificate in Health Care Advocacy from Assumption College.

*May our loving Lord continue to bless their efforts and grant them a long life, health, prosperity, and many, many years!*