

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN JUNE 26, 2016

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

There will be **NO Divine Liturgy** at our Church on **Sunday, July 3rd**, because Fr. Nick will be attending the Archdiocese Congress in Hamilton, Ontario. Please take this opportunity to visit one of our sister Orthodox Churches.

FOOD PANTRY. Help is needed to staff our monthly responsibility at the Orthodox Food Center **next Saturday, July 2nd, 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**.

THANKS TO THE DOUGH ROLLERS AND PITA BAKERS who worked yesterday. We're building up stock for the summer picnics and fall festivals. If you'd like to help, contact Chris Toda at: thetodas@msn.com, or 508-832-6271.

THIS WEEK'S COFFEE HOUR is sponsored by **Randy and Janice Samara**, for the health and well-being of our St. Nicholas family. God bless them!

GREETERS TEAM 3:
EVANS TSOULES AND TOM FITZPATRICK

COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP CREW C:
PRIZIO FAMILY

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



THE SUNDAY OF ALL-THE-SAINTS

EPISTLE: HEBREWS 11:33-12:2 ☩ GOSPEL: MATTHEW 10:32-35; 37-38; 19: 27-30
TONE 8 ☩ RESURRECTION GOSPEL 1

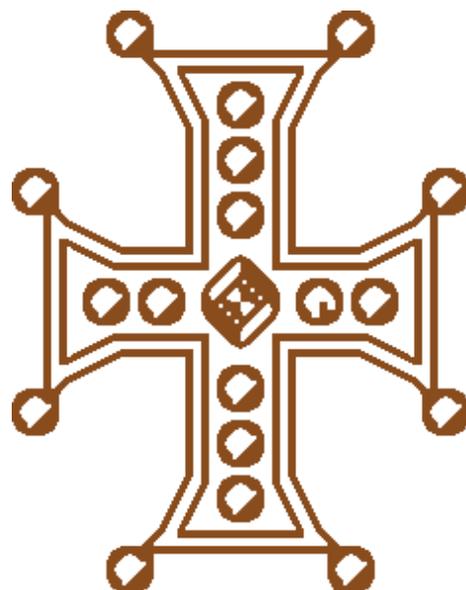
COMMUNITY NEWS

St. George Orthodox Cathedral will once again host the **FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN MOBILEPACK** event on **August 20th**. They look to raise \$22,000, sign up 500 volunteers and pack 100,000 meals. Meals are sent to one of 70 countries where children are actively starving to death. Within months of eating this food, children's health begins to improve. Each meal costs only 22 cents. Please consider making a donation today by visiting: www.stgeorgeworcester.org or by sending a check to:

Feed My Starving Children
Attn: MobilePack #1608-054MI
401 93rd Avenue NW
Coon Rapids, MN 55433

DATES TO REMEMBER

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



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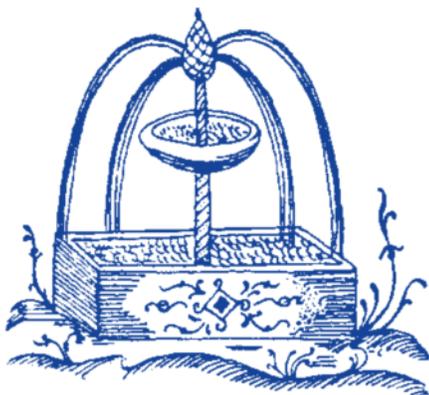
A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas

A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

ETHERNAL, SELF-SUBSISTENT GOD, FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT: The entire creation that surrounds and includes us glorifies your ineffable divinity: The rustling of the leaves in the breeze and the buzz of insects in the fields, the warmth of the sun and the chill of the frost, the beauty of a smile and the anguished expression of those in pain. The genius of your wisdom and goodness whispers to us, no matter where we turn, gently telling us that this wondrous creation is the arena of our struggle for holiness and wholeness. And what is this struggle, if not coming to know, love, and serve you in all our brothers and sisters, if not becoming like you, servants and lovers of all! Today, as we celebrate the memory of all those who engaged in this struggle before us, we ask you to help us do the same, so that, with them, we, too, may one day enjoy your presence in the eternal kingdom.

For you are indeed our God, and we give you glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.



A Missionary Appeal ...

Dear St. Nicholas Family,

I have some really exciting news to share with you. I have a special opportunity to take part in an incredible mission trip this summer with Sts. Constantine and Helen Church in Webster. We're traveling to Rosarito, Mexico and will participate in a short-term mission to Project Mexico and the St. Innocent Orphanage. (You can learn more about Project Mexico at: www.projectmexico.org.)



Our primary goal is to help construct a home for a needy family in Tijuana. This family presently lives in a home, often made up of scraps that can be found in junk yards. We will build a simple but secure 12' by 15' "home." We will also have the opportunity to spend time and share God's love with the teenage orphans who stay at the St. Innocent home, as well as with the local people we meet.

*In order for me to participate in this mission trip, I need to raise \$800, which pays for: the airfare to San Diego, the van we will use in Mexico, and the cost of materials to build the house. This means I will need a number of partners who will participate with me on this trip. **Would you prayerfully consider becoming a spiritual and financial partner with me?***

If you would like to like to help, please make a check payable to: "Sts Constantine and Helen Church" and write "Project Mexico" in the notation. All donations are tax-deductible, and may be mailed to:

*Aaron Christo
3 Twinbrooke Dr
Holden, MA 01520.*

Our deadline is June 26th.

Thank you so much for considering this and any support that you can offer.

With love,

Aaron Christo

NAMEDAYS

June 26

The Sunday of All the Saints

Amalia Polymeros

June 27

The Holy Myrrh-bearer Joanna

Joanne V. Prizio

June 29

The Holy Apostles Peter and Paul

Patrick Disho

Petraq Dragoti

Paul Dymek

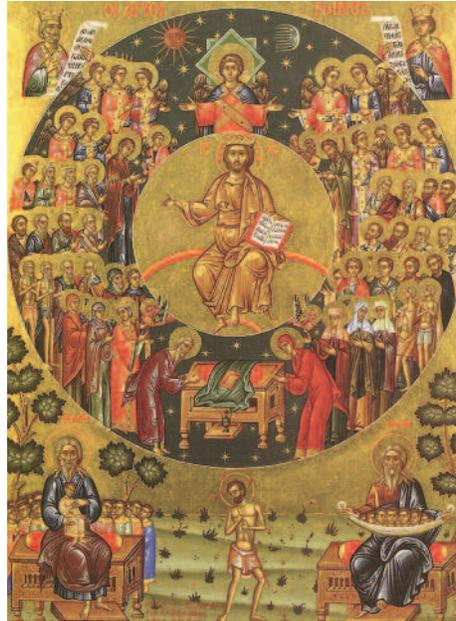
Petrika Lolo

Kenneth Paul Maynard

Paul Soter

Peter Toda

Peter Demetri Tsongalis



SYNAXIS OF ALL SAINTS

Honouring the friends of God with much reverence, the Prophet-King David says, “But to me, exceedingly honourable are Thy friends, O Lord” (Ps. 138:16). And the divine Apostle, recounting the achievements of the Saints, and setting forth their memorial as an example that we might turn away from earthly things and from sin, and emulate their patience and courage in the struggles for virtue, says, “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every burden, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us” (Heb. 12:1).

This commemoration began as the Sunday (Synaxis) of All Martyrs; to them were added all the ranks of Saints who bore witness (the meaning of “Martyr” in Greek) to Christ in manifold ways, even if occasion did not require the shedding of their blood.

Therefore, guided by the teaching of the Divine Scriptures and Apostolic Tradition, we the pious honour all the

Saints, the friends of God, for they are keepers of God’s commandments, shining examples of virtue, and benefactors of mankind. Of course, we honour the known Saints especially on their own day of the year, as is evident in the Menologion. But since many Saints are unknown, and their number has increased with time, and will continue to increase until the end of time, the Church has appointed that once a year a common commemoration be made of all the Saints. This is the feast that we celebrate today. It is the harvest of the coming of the Holy Spirit into the world; it is the “much fruit” brought forth by that “Grain of wheat that fell into the earth and died” (John 12:24); it is the glorification of the Saints as “the foundation of the Church, the perfection of the Gospel, they who fulfilled in deed the sayings of the Saviour” (Sunday of All Saints, Doxasticon of Vespers).

In this celebration, then, we reverently honour and call blessed all the Righteous, the Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, Shepherds, Teachers, and Holy Monastics, both men and women alike, known and unknown, who have been added to the choirs of the Saints and shall be added, from the time of Adam until the end of the world, who have been perfected in piety and have glorified God by their holy lives. All these, as well as the orders of the Angels, and especially our most holy Lady and Queen, the Ever-virgin Theotokos Mary, do we honour today, setting their life before us as an example of virtue, and entreating them to intercede in our behalf with God, Whose grace and boundless mercy be with us all. Amen.



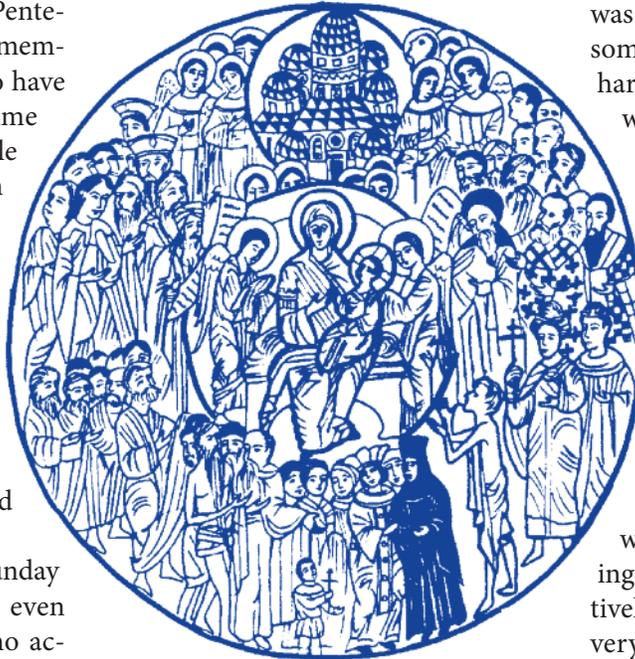
WHAT'S THE PRICE OF DISCIPLESHIP?

This is the first Sunday after Pentecost, the Sunday when we remember all of those holy persons who have lived from the beginning of time down through the present. People who lived the life in Christ with love and holiness, but may not have been formally recognized by the Church. These are the good men and women who, for the most part, lived their lives quietly, in an ordinary fashion, yet willingly took on the Christian yoke and in so doing influenced and perhaps even changed many of those around them.

The Gospel reading for this Sunday begins with these powerful and even terrifying words: "Every one who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32-33). The Lord is laying out in this passage what is expected of those of us who wish to follow him.

He expands the point. He says that he has not come to bring peace, but a sword, to set father against son, and daughter against mother. Finally he says: "He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it" (v. 38). He is speaking of confrontation and even violence, not ideas we normally associate with Jesus.

The Lord is giving us an insight into what the price of discipleship is. He shows us the choice, leaving the decision to us. In telling us that a choice for God is more valuable than following the conventions of society, Jesus introduces a revolutionary shift in human history. He phrases it dramatically. When he speaks of the choices that we may have to make, he illustrates it by using as examples family relationships. Our family relationships are "hard-wired" on so many levels. Even in our present-day social context we would be hard-pressed to violate these relationships,



but in the social and cultural context out of which the Lord is speaking, the boundaries of these relationships were almost never violated. A son never openly disobeyed his father. A daughter never openly disobeyed her mother. These sorts of things were simply not tolerated. And if they were violated, there was a heavy price to pay. Our Lord's words must have seemed unbelievable and even scandalous to those who first heard them.

If we can appreciate how revolutionary Jesus' words were to the first disciples, it will begin to make sense to us how He immediately turns to questions of life and death: "He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it" (v. 38). In order to be worthy of him we are asked to put everything on the line. Suddenly, every choice we make takes on a life and death quality, or rather, by understanding the true significance of the choices we make, we appreciate how precious those around us are. We can appreciate how precious we are to God. Following Christ and loving God and neighbor can change everything.

This is worth repeating: what the Lord was asking of his first followers

was not an easy thing. If we see this as something radically hard, it was even harder for the the first disciples. We who have been raised with a more individualist spirit might find it conceivable to leave family and friend, but still, choosing God over everything else that we hold dear, even those we love, even our very own life, is still not something one takes lightly.

However, most of us who have chosen to follow Christ will never be asked to make these great sacrifices. Most of us will have parents who also love God. Generally speaking, the society in which we live is relatively receptive to Christians. It is not very likely that we will be asked to be martyrs. But, this *has* been asked of many, and this ultimate sacrifice *has* been made by some, even in our own time. Look at the world around us. Look at the plight of Christians in Egypt or Syria. Here in America truly pious folk are seen as strange. How many of us pull back from practicing our faith because we want to be accepted? How many choose sporting events or shopping over Liturgy every Sunday morning? Even such a simple practice as fasting seems too much. If we were really prophetic, as Christ was prophetic; if we really lived our lives and interacted with others as He did, don't you think that people would be angry at us? And, while some might feel drawn to follow Christ's call, might not others hate us or even want to kill us?

Remember though, the transformation that our Lord asks of us in an internal one. Today, many who call themselves Christians demand transformations in others. Yet, our Lord tells us that we are to judge only ourselves. It is hard enough, near impossible, to change ourselves. However, if with God's grace we change ourselves, the Lord promises others will follow.