

# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN JULY 17, 2016

## THIS WEEK'S NEWS

**PITA BAKING** is scheduled for this coming **Saturday, July 23rd 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. **ALSO**, we'll be making the fillings for the pitas the night before, on **Friday, July 22nd at 7:00pm**, and we're looking for a few men to help with this. Direct questions on **FILLINGS to George Demake**. Any other questions, contact Chris Toda at: [thetodas@msn.com](mailto:thetodas@msn.com), or 508-832-6271. We are planning on baking sessions every other Saturday until September. We'll post the dates next week. *All help appreciated. No experience necessary — there's a job for everyone.*

The latest issue of the *Credința/The Faith* quarterly Archdiocesan publication is available at the candles. Please take a copy home with you.

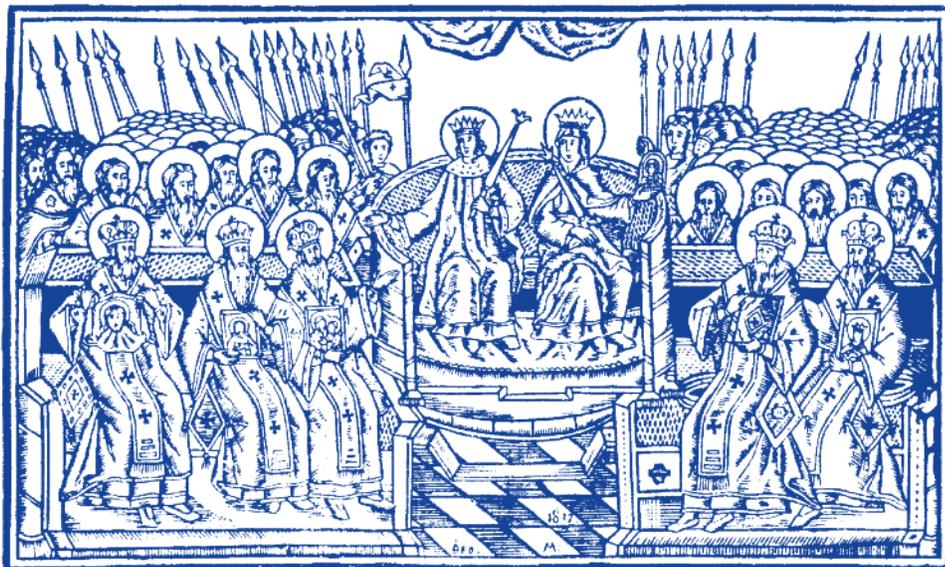
**WE'RE CELEBRATING TWO MEMORIALS TODAY.** We remember: **Mary Tanacea** fallen asleep two years, and **Archbishop Victorin** fallen asleep fifteen years.

**THE COFFEE HOUR** this week is sponsored in memory **Mary Tanacea** by her family

**GREETERS TEAM 2:**  
ARTIC GAVALA AND CĂLIN GALERIU

**COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP:**  
ALL HELP APPRECIATED THIS WEEK

**ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED**



## THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

(THE FATHERS OF THE FOURTH ECUMENICAL COUNCIL)

APOSTOLIC READING: ROMANS 6:18-23 ☩ GOSPEL: MATTHEW 8:5-13

(JESUS HEALS THE CENTURION'S SERVANT)

TONE 3 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 4

## UP-COMING

We'll be holding a **VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL** on **August 8, 9, & 10 (Monday – Wednesday)**, from 9am – noon each day, together with the our sister parish of Ss Anagyroi in Marlborough. The theme will be “*The Names of Jesus*.” There will be more information forthcoming along with a registration form. **Questions? contact Valarie Stamoulis: [valarie.stamoulis@gmail.com](mailto:valarie.stamoulis@gmail.com) or 508-393-3517**

## 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 100,00 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](http://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, July 23 Pita Baking, 9am-noon
- Sun, July 31 St. Michael Southbridge Annual Picnic
- Mon, Aug 1 Dormition Fast Begins
- Sat, Aug 6 Feast of Transfiguration  
Staff Orthodox Food Pantry
- Aug 8, 9, & 10 Vacation Bible School
- Sun, Aug 14 Vespers for Dormition at St. Mary's 6pm
- Mon, Aug 15 Feast of the Dormition
- Fri, Aug 19 Mustard Seed Meal
- Sun, Sept 18 stART on the Street Festival
- Thurs, Oct 6 Holy Trinity Wine/Food Fest

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

*ST. MICHAEL IN SOUTHBRIDGE* will be holding its **9th Annual Romanian Golf Open on Saturday, September 10th.** For more information and/or to register, call Luke Yanka at 508-958-4144 or e-mail: lsyanka@yahoo.com.

## NAMEDAYS

**July 16**

*The Holy Martyr Julia of Carthage*

Julia Donabed

**July 17**

*The Holy Great Martyr Marina (Margareta) of Antioch in Pisidia*

Margareta Gikas

Margarite Landry

Lindsey Marina Sparages

Marina Sparages

**July 20**

*The Holy Prophet Elijah*

Elias James Christo

Irlie Illie Durmillari

Louis Rucho

Louis Evan Stamoulis

**July 24**

*The Holy Great Martyr Christina*

Christine Masterjohn



**GREATMARTYR MARINA (MARGARET)  
OF ANTIOCH IN PISIDIA  
(JULY 17)**

**T**he Holy Great Martyr Marina was born in Asia Minor, in the city of Antioch of Pisidia (southern Asia Minor), into the family of a pagan priest. In infancy she lost her mother, and her father gave her into the care of a nursemaid, who raised Marina in the Orthodox Faith. Upon learning that his daughter had become a Christian, the father angrily disowned her. During the time of the persecution against Christians under the emperor Diocletian (284-305), when she was fifteen years old, St Marina was arrested and locked up in prison. With firm trust in the will of God and His help, the young prisoner

prepared for her impending fate.

The governor Olymbrios, charmed with the beautiful girl, tried to persuade her to renounce the Christian Faith and become his wife. But the saint, unswayed, refused his offers. The vexed governor gave the holy martyr over to torture. Having beaten her fiercely, they fastened the saint with nails to a board and tore at her body with tridents. The governor himself, unable to bear the horror of these tortures, hid his face in his hands. But the holy martyr remained unyielding. Thrown for the night into prison, she was granted heavenly aid and healed of her wounds. They stripped her and tied her to a tree, then burned the martyr with fire. Barely alive, the martyr prayed: "Lord, You have granted me to go through fire for Your Name, grant me also to go through the water of holy Baptism."

Hearing the word "water", the governor gave orders to drown the saint in a large cauldron. The martyr besought the Lord that this manner of execution should become for her holy Baptism. When they plunged her into the water, there suddenly shone a light, and a snow-white dove came down from Heaven, bearing in its beak a golden crown. The fetters put upon St Marina came apart by themselves. The martyr stood up in the fount of Baptism glorifying the Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. St Marina emerged from the fount completely healed, without any trace of burns. Amazed at this miracle, the people glorified the True God, and many came to believe. This brought the governor into a rage, and he gave orders to kill anyone who might confess the Name of Christ. 15,000 Christians perished there, and the holy Martyr Marina was beheaded. The sufferings of the Great Martyr Marina were described by an eyewitness of the event, named Theotimos.

Up until the taking of Constantinople by Western crusaders in the year 1204, the relics of the Great Martyr Marina were in the Panteponteia monastery. According to other sources, they were located in Antioch until the year 908 and from there transferred to Italy. Now they are in Athens, in a church dedicated to the holy Virgin Martyr. Her venerable hand was transferred to Mount Athos, to the Vatopedi monastery.

### A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**A**S WITH THE ISRAEL OF OLD, so also with us, the new Israel: We are always protesting how much we want to glorify you, Lord God, and praise the actions of your divine grace. Our protests, however, are rather flimsy. But oddly enough, the magnificent splendour of your majesty, when we can bring ourselves to focus on it, never frightens or repels us. Rather, we sense our love and reverence for you increase. Make us live ever conscious of your ineffable majesty, ever ready to embrace the power of this mystery.

By the grace and mercies and love for us of your only Son, with whom you are blest, together with your all-holy, good, and life-giving Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

## THE WAGES OF SIN

**T**HIS is the fourth Sunday after Pentecost. In today's reading from his Letter to the Romans (6:18-23), St. Paul explains the radical transformation Baptism brings to our lives. In fact, all of Chapter 6 draws out the relationship between Baptism and our participation in the Lord's death and resurrection. "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?" (v. 6:3 — This verse is read as part of the Epistle at the Baptism Service). In dying to our old selves in Baptism, we also share in Christ's resurrected life—our new life in Christ.

The whole of the Baptismal service dramatically expresses this change in our lives. Just before the Baptismal service proper begins, the priest reads prayers of exorcism over the catechumen. He then directs the person who is to be baptized to turn toward the west (where the sun sets and a symbol for darkness), and asks: "Do you renounce Satan, and all his works, and all his worship, and all his pride?" He repeats the question three times. Then he directs the catechumen to turn toward east (sunrise and the source of light), and asks: "Do you unite yourself with Christ?" This is probably the most important question we will ever be asked, and the answer to this question is the theme of today's Epistle lesson.

St. Paul says to the Romans, "having been set free from sin, we have become slaves of righteousness." (v. 18) He tells them that he is "speaking in human terms, because of [their] natural limitations." (v. 19) He is using an image that would be very real to those listening to his words. Slaves have masters. A slave has no life or will of his or her own; they do what their master wants. In baptism we are set free from our slavery to sin. In baptism we freely accept Jesus as our King and God. We trade being domi-

nated by sin (that rules over our lives seeking our destruction), for the true master who desires only our complete well-being. While we might think there are other choices, there really are only two.

St. Paul weaves his spiritual understanding of baptism with very real and practical examples. He says to us, "As once you surrendered yourselves as slaves to immorality and to a lawlessness which results in more lawlessness, now you have to surrender yourselves to uprightness which is to result in sanctification." (v. 19) He is talking about choices that take advantage of the fresh start that Christ gives us.

"When you were the slaves of sin, you felt no obligation to uprightness, and what did you gain from living like that? Experiences of which you are now ashamed, for that sort of behavior ends in death." (v. 20-21) It is only when we stand in the freedom that God gives us that we can look back on our previous behavior and see it for what it actually is: slavery. A life without a moral direction is a life wasted. What we thought was freedom was in fact license. This is what St. Paul means when he says (when translated more literally), "When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness." (v. 20) When the direction of our life points us toward selfishness, pleasure, and greed, we end up in a place where it is very difficult to see the ultimate consequences of our actions. We are blind to it.

We are presently living through a very difficult economic period that has and will cause many people to suffer. Pure and simple, this is the direct result of the kind of lifestyle of which St. Paul was speaking. People tend to think of sin in dramatic terms—the blatant and obvious sins that people commit such as murder, rape, bank robbery, and the like. But the path of sin is more subtle

than that. It is in the small lie, the little thievery, and the clever belittlement. When we are on the trajectory of sin—when we are facing west—it is difficult if not impossible for us to see the full consequences of our actions. We all share in what has befallen our nation and indeed the world because we were feeling "no obligation to uprightness." What did we gain from living like that?

St. Paul reminds us of what God's Baptismal gift to us was: "Now you are set free from sin and bound to the service of God, your gain will be sanctification and the end will be eternal life." (v. 22) Can you see the power in our choice to turn from west to east, from darkness to light? When we renounced and spat on the Devil and accepted Christ as our King and God we chose a new direction in our lives.

Of course for most of us this choice was made when we were infants, by our parents and godparents. They pledged to raise us and put on the right trajectory, on the path of righteousness. At some point, however, their promise needs to be our choice. We need to say for ourselves, "I unite myself with Christ!" The Grace given us in Baptism is neither static, nor is it magic. It is potential. Just as before our Baptism we were predisposed to a certain outlook and action, so in the free gift of God we are given the proclivity for goodness. We become members of Christ's Body and have Jesus as our guide and helper.

Finally, St. Paul sets the stakes before us in clear and stark terms. "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (v. 23) The parallel here is unequal, but so is the choice before us. What we 'earn' for sin is death. What God freely offers us is life. The choice is ours.

— FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA

2016 VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL

# NAMES OF JESUS

\*SNACKS WILL BE PROVIDED EACH DAY WITH LUNCH ON THE 10TH.

\*PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR CHILD'S NAME AND GRADE (FOR THE FALL) WHEN SIGNING UP TO EITHER FATHER GREG OR FATHER NICK BY AUGUST 1ST

## August 8th & 9th

Sts. Anargyroi Church  
Marlborough, MA

ST NICHOLAS CHURCH IS LOCATED AT 34 GOLD ST SHREWSBURY, MA.

## August 10th

St. Nicholas Church  
Shrewsbury, MA

ST. ANARGYROI CHURCH IS LOCATED AT 9 CENTRAL STREET, MARLBOROUGH, MA

## 9am - Noon

