

# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN SEPTEMBER 11, 2016

## THIS WEEK'S NEWS **stART** on the Street

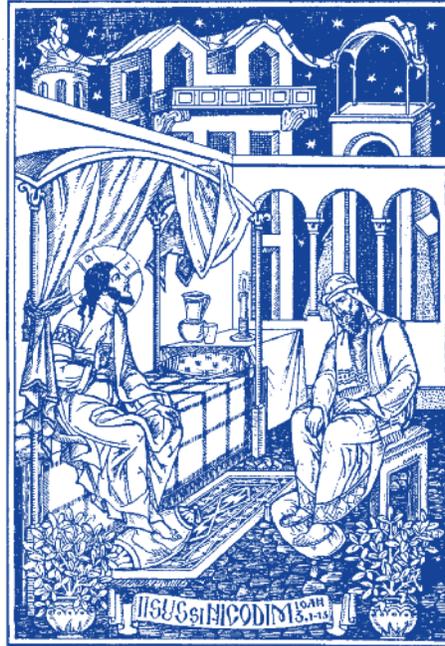
**START ON THE STREET** is **Sunday, September 18**. This is an important fundraiser for our community. Help is needed. A few hours from each of us will do the trick. Here's what you can do:

- **Friday, September 16**. Prep, packing and organizing supplies. At the Church from 12 noon through early evening. A couple of hours will make a difference.
- **Sunday, September 18**. We start early at the Church to transport tent, supplies and food items to the site.
- **All day Sunday** crews are needed to warm pitas at the AHEPA house and at the tent to sell.
- **At day's end** we need to transport everything back to the church, clean-up and stow the gear.

**All help is welcome!** We especially encourage our youth to lend their energy. While it is work, this is very much a fun event. Come and lend a hand. Enlist your kids, grandkids or a friend or two. Let us know when you can help by signing up in church on Sunday. You'll see

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

**ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED**



### THE SUNDAY BEFORE THE ELEVATION OF THE CROSS

APOSTOLIC READING: GALATIANS 6:11-18

GOSPEL: JOHN 3:13-17

(JESUS SPEAKS WITH NIKODIMOS)

TONE 3 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 1

the work is broken up into 2-4 hour blocks.

For more info, speak with Deb Sedares, Chris Toda or Betty Anderson.

**THE FEAST OF THE ELEVATION OF THE CROSS** is this **Wednesday, September 14th**. Liturgy for the Feast will be held at **Holy Trinity Nursing & Rehab Center at 9:30 am**. The Feast of the Cross is a strict Fast day.

**THANKS TO THE FOOD PANTRY VOLUNTEERS** for working the Orthodox Food Center on behalf of our parish this past Saturday. 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 October 1st.

**ST NICHOLAS CHURCH SCHOOL AND OUR YOUTH** are a central part of our parish. We need you! If you are interested in teaching or assisting with Church School this year and/or working with the Youth of our parish on activities and programs geared to them, please see **Valarie Stamoulis or Preoteasa Maria**. The **first day of Church School is Sunday, September 18th**. All are welcome! **PARENTS: please complete the REGISTRATION FORM found at the candle stand**. If you would like more information, speak with Valarie or Preoteasa Maria. **We are also in need of a person to teach the Pre-School class; see Valarie if you are able and interested**. Providing vibrant and meaningful opportunities for our Youth to learn about their Orthodox Faith and traditions, and work and play together is key to ensuring that our Orthodox Faith and the community of St. Nicholas remains vital for generations to come.

**AN E-RECYCLING EVENT** will be held on **Saturday, September 17th from 9am-2pm**. **Gerry Belba** is coordinating and will be looking for volunteers to help with traffic control. If you're interested and available, please talk to him.

### DATES TO REMEMBER

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Wed, Sept 14  | Elevation of the Precious Cross<br>Lit at Holy Trinity, 9:30am <b>Fast Day</b> |
| Fri, Sept 16  | Prep for stART, noon thru 5pm  |
| Sat, Sept 17  | e-Recycling, 9am-2pm   |
| Sun, Sept 18  | stART on the Street Festival<br>Opening of Religious Ed Classes                |
| Tues, Sept 20 | Holy Trinity General Assembly, 7pm   |
| Sept 23-24    | Greek Festival, Fitchburg Church   |
| Sat, Oct 1    | Staff Orthodox Food Pantry   |
| 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 ♦ WEB: WWW.STNICHOLASCHURCH.ORG

A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas

**THE IOCC** is engaged in relief efforts all over the globe, but in particular they are at work in **Louisiana and Syria**. Please consider a donation to help those who are in desperate need. Go to: [www.IOCC.org](http://www.IOCC.org) or call: 877-803-4622.

**CONGRATULATIONS** to **Ian Keefe and Cristina Galica** (daughter of George and Nina Galica) who were married this past Saturday, September 3rd at the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Boston. *Many Years!*

**GOD'S BLESSING** also on the newly baptized **Stone Themistoklis Suire**, son of **Efro (Nikolaides) and Sy Suire**. May God's blessing be little Stone and the whole family! *Many Years!*

**WE CELEBRATE TODAY A 1-YEAR MEMORIAL** for the servant of God **Victor Nace, brother of Ileana Nace**. *May his soul rest among the just!*

**TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR** is sponsored by **Ileana Nace** in memory of her brother Victor.

## HOLY TRINITY NEWS

**HOLY TRINITY** is holding its **annual General Assembly meeting on Tuesday, September 20th at 7:00pm**. Delegations from each of the Worcester area parishes are asked to attend. If you are interest please speak with either Fr. Nick or George Demake.

**HOLY TRINITY'S 10TH ANNIVERSARY ANNUAL FOOD AND WINE FEST ON OCTOBER 6TH**, 5:30-8:30pm at St. Spyridon Cathedral. Celebratory Champagne and Sparkling Wine Tasting & Seminar at 5:45pm! Live Music, Raffle Prizes, Great Food! You don't want to miss it! For tickets call Irene Tsoules at 774-239-9238 or Eleanor Sedares at 508-753-3106 'Like' on Facebook, "Annual Food and Wine Fest."

**Holy Trinity Nursing & Rehabilitation Center** has the following **EMPLOY-**



**MENT OPPORTUNITIES:** CNA's, RN's and Dietary Aides. Please contact Michelle Williamson, Dir. of Human Resources, (508) 852-1000 or e-mail: [mwilliamson@htnr.net](mailto:mwilliamson@htnr.net)

**Holy Trinity Nursing and Rehabilitation Center** is an Orthodox Charity and relies on your donations to continue their mission of providing the best care possible.

## COMMUNITY NEWS

**STS. CONSTANTINE AND HELEN IN WEBSTER** is holding its annual **Greek Festival on Saturday, September 10, 11:00-9:00pm and Sunday, September 11, 11:00am-5:00pm**. More information can be found at [www.schwebster.org](http://www.schwebster.org).

**HOLY TRINITY IN FITCHBURG** is holding its **Greek Festival Friday, September 23, 5-10pm and Saturday, September 24, 11am-10pm**. Rain or Shine. The Church is at: 1319 Main St, Fitchburg. There is Free Parking/Shuttle from Valley West Shopping Center, 134 River St. **Info: 978-342-1216**.



## A PRAYER IN TIME OF DROUGHT

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**L**ORD GOD ALMIGHTY, Who lifts the clouds from the ends of the earth, Who made lightning in the rains, Who brings up the winds from their storehouses, Who summons the waters of the sea and pours them upon the face of all the earth, we pray You, and we implore You, confessing our sins and entreating Your rich mercies: Command the clouds to rain, have compassion on all Your earth, show loving-kindness to old and young and infants sucking at the breast, to Your servants, sons and daughters, and all beasts of the earth, that it bring up for us bread for food and herb for the livestock. Accept the prayers of all Your people, and reject not the groans of the poor, neither rebuke us with Your anger, nor punish us with Your wrath, nor let Your thirsting people be despoiled by famine. For every eye hopes on You that they will receive drink from You in due season. We trust You, and knowing none other save You, we await from You rich mercies.

For You are a good and loving God, and to You we send up glory: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

## THE GLORY OF THE CROSS

**T**HIS is the Sunday before the Universal Exaltation of the Precious Cross. The Epistle Lesson is taken from St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians, 6:11-18. In this passage, as well as throughout the whole Letter, St. Paul's emphasis is on "the Cross of Christ." In part this explains why we read these verses today, in preparation for the Feast.

St. Paul was writing the Galatians about the negative influence a group of Jewish converts to Christ was having on their community. Galatia was a province located in north central Asia Minor, present-day Turkey. The larger cities of Galatia contained a mixed population of locals as well as Greeks and Romans. Greek and Latin were the languages there. In the more rural areas the population was largely Galatian; they were related to the Celts and spoke a language more akin to Celtic than the languages of their neighbors.

Today's reading is the close of St. Paul's Letter to them. It starts out: "See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand." (v. 11) St. John Chrysostom believes this indicates that St. Paul had written the whole Letter himself, rather than leave the task to a scribe. For him, this was an indication of the intense concern Paul had about the situation, and for the Galatians themselves. Modern scholars think that the first part of the Letter was given to a scribe to write and that St. Paul wrote this part by way of emphasis. Either way, St. Paul is clearly upset and concerned.

Here is the reason: "It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that would compel you to be circumcised, and only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. For even those who receive circumcision do not themselves keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may glory in your flesh." (v. 12-13)

It might seem odd to us that a practice done today for largely medical rea-

sons was a deeply religious question in the early Church. However, according to the Mosaic Law, the primary sign of the covenant between the Children of Israel and God was circumcision. It was, and still is, what defines Jews as a people set apart. For St. Paul, being required to accept circumcision as a condition of conversion was to subject yourself to the Old Covenant. It was a step backward.

St. Paul's contention was that these people had no interest in truly proclaiming the Good News of Christ's coming. Rather, they wanted these Galatians to undergo a ritual that was largely for show, while ignoring the true internal spiritual transformation that should occur in those who follow the Lord. These were fundamentalists. Rather than stand up for Christ — which would have probably subjected them to persecution — they took the 'zealous' route that would make them look devout, but really cost them nothing. This is what's behind the statement: "they desire to have you circumcised that they may glory in your flesh."

His answer to these 'missionaries' is: "But far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation." (v. 14-15) By the "cross" St. Paul means the whole 'economy' of our salvation; the whole of God's plan for us beginning with Adam and Eve, and culminating in the Lord's death and resurrection. He also means the cross that every Christian takes up when they decide to follow Christ. The 'world' that has been crucified to him is the world of sin and excess; the passions that lead away from God. This should be the cross that we ourselves pick up in choosing against sin and for the Lord.

St. Paul then offers a blessing: "Peace and mercy be upon all who walk by this rule, upon the Israel of God." (v.

16) He is sending two subtle messages in this blessing. He is saying that those who follow the 'rule,' that is, who choose the newness of Christ over the 'dead end' of the Law, will receive God's peace and mercy. And, by referencing the 'Israel of God' he is at once answering his critics — the Judaizers — that he is not 'Jewish' enough, as well as asserting that the 'Israel of God' is now the followers of Christ.

Expressing his exasperation with the Judaizers, he says: "Henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus." (v. 17) The word translated here as "marks" in Greek is "stigmata." Because of how we use 'stigmata' today, it has led some people to speculate that St. Paul had on his body the crucifixion wounds of Christ. However, in the ancient world this word meant something like "branding." It was used for the branding marks burned into slaves and cattle. It is more likely that St. Paul means the very real scars on his body that were the result of the multiple floggings he had received. Anyone who has seen photographs of the backs of slaves who had been flogged will immediately understand what he is talking about. His scars mark him as belonging to Christ.

He finishes this rather harsh Letter with a blessing: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen." (v. 18) He chooses words — and especially the very final word, the affectionate term 'brethren' (brothers and sisters) — that will soften whatever hurt they may be feeling, and to let them know that from his perspective all is healed.

As we reflect on St. Paul's words, hopefully with a softened heart, let us also recommit ourselves to take up our cross and follow the Lord as St. Paul himself did.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA

## NAMEDAYS

### September 5

*St. Elizabeth the mother  
of St. John the Baptist*

Elizabeth Anderson  
Elizabeth Grace Cavanaugh  
Elizabeth Florica Galeriu  
Lisa Mielnicki  
Karen Elizabeth Wilder  
*The Holy Prophet Zachariah,*  
Zachary Spataro

### September 8

*The Nativity of the Theotokos*  
Presvytera Maria Mossaides

### September 9

*The Holy Ancestors of God  
Joachim and Anna*

Ann Marie Clem  
Anna Maria Collins  
Ann Trakadas

### September 14

*The Exaltation of the  
Precious and Lifegiving Cross*  
Stavri Tanacea

### September 17

*The Holy Martyr Faith,  
Daughter of St. Sophia*

Faith Mayer  
*The Holy Martyr Sophia of Rome*  
Sofia Apostol  
Sophia Amyra Apostola  
Carol Fotos

### September 18

*The Holy Martyr Ariadna of Phrygia*  
Ariana Sparages



**Holy Trinity Nursing & Rehabilitation Center**

**10th Anniversary**

**Annual Food & Wine Fest**

Thursday, October 6, 2016

5:30pm - 8:30pm

5:15pm—Champagne & Sparkling Wine Tasting & Seminar  
at St. Spyridon Greek Orthodox Cathedral, Worcester, MA

**Advertise in our Program Book!**



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Let your Ad reach the  
Worcester Community at our  
annual Food and Wine Fest!

Ads must be received by  
September 9, 2016

**ARTWORK/AD REQUIREMENTS**

- Will Email Completed Artwork to [foodandwinefest@htnr.net](mailto:foodandwinefest@htnr.net)
- Need Ad Created? contact [foodandwinefest@htnr.net](mailto:foodandwinefest@htnr.net)
- Artwork Attached (high quality hard copy is attached, will be scanned)
- Message Attached

*Contributions are tax-deductible. Holy Trinity is a 501(c)3 non-profit charitable organization*

**PAYMENT INFORMATION**

AMOUNT: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Cash     Check     Credit Card (circle one)    MASTER CARD    VISA    AMEX

Credit Card NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ EXP DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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**Check payable to and Mail to:** Holy Trinity Nursing & Rehabilitation Center  
300 Barber Avenue, Worcester, MA 01606 [www.htnr.net](http://www.htnr.net)  
Call 508.852.1000 ext. 208 for information or email: [foodandwinefest@htnr.net](mailto:foodandwinefest@htnr.net)

## A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**WHOM SHALL WE GLORIFY?** Whom shall we praise? And to whom shall we give thanks, if not to you, a God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for that terrible instrument of the cross on which your Son was put to death for love of us? Though it was a symbol of shame, he transformed it into a resplendent trophy of victory. As we celebrate its triumph during these days, and contemplate the salvation it purchased for us, help us truly understand its meaning so that we may share in the resurrection it promises.

Through the same Lord Jesus Christ, with whom you are blest, together with your all-holy, good, and life-giving Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.