

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN NOVEMBER 27, 2016

ST. NICHOLAS FEASTDAY

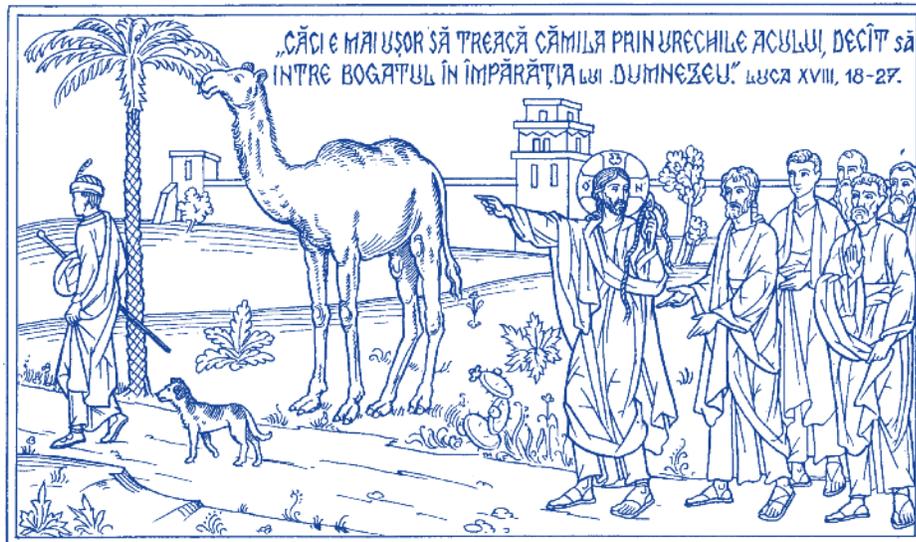
Our *Parish Feastday Dinner* will be held on **Sunday December 4th**. His Eminence Metropolitan Nicolae will be with us to honor the patron Saint of our Community, the holy Bishop Nicholas.

- **On Sunday, December 4**, His Eminence will celebrate the **Divine Liturgy beginning at 10:00 am**, preceded by Matins at 9 am.
- After the Divine Liturgy, there will be a catered luncheon. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$5 for children. **Reservation must be made by today, Sunday, November 27th if you wish to attend.** You may make a reservation today in coffee hour, by leaving a message on the Church phone at 508-845-0088, or e-mailing: tjrucho@verizon.net
- **On Monday, December 5**, we will celebrate **Great Vespers at 6:30 pm**. As is the custom, we will welcome many clergy and faithful from neighboring Orthodox parishes. Please make every effort to attend this beautiful service.
- **On Tuesday, December 6 at 9:30 am**, we will celebrate the **Divine Liturgy for the Feast**.

GREETERS TEAM 1:
V. GERALD BELBA AND MARGARITE LANDRY

COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP CREW A:
MARGARITE LANDRY,
CHRISTINE MASTERJOHN

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



THE THIRTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
EPISTLE: COLOSSIANS 3:12-16 ☩ GOSPEL: LUKE 18:18-27
(*THE RICH RULER — KEEPING THE COMMANDMENTS*)
TONE 6 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL: 1

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

THE FEASTDAY RAFFLE is in the works. People should have received the tickets we mailed. Please return them! **But, we also need to sell additional tickets.** If you have any questions, see **Dean Valoras** who is heading up this effort.

THE COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CARD is happening once again this year! The parish Christmas card is mailed to the entire membership of our St. Nicholas Family. The Christmas Card flier is available at the Church. If you'd like more information, please contact Tom FitzPatrick or Evans Tsoules in Coffee Hour or by e-mail, to tell us how to place your name. **We want our whole Community to be a part of this Christmas greeting!**

CHRISTMAS BAKING ORDERS must be in by next **Sunday, December 4th**.

THE 2017 CHURCH CALENDARS are here, in both English and Romanian. Pick them up at the candles. Please consider a small donation to cover the costs.

A HUGE THANK YOU to all who helped set up, prepared, cooked, served, and did all of the necessary tasks at the Holiday Market Place, Bake Sale and Luncheon last Saturday. It was a great success!

LAST SUNDAY WAS IOCC SUNDAY: A Day of Sharing. We still taking donations from our parish this Sunday as well. IOCC is the charitable arm of our

DATES TO REMEMBER

- Sat, Nov 26 e-Recycle 9am-2pm
- Sat, Dec 3 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry
- Sun, Dec 4 Feastday Celebration
- Mon, Dec 5 St. Nicholas Vespers, 6:30pm
- Tues, Dec 6 St. Nicholas Liturgy, 9:30am
- Fri, Dec 16 Mustard Seed Meal, 5:00 pm
- Sun, Dec 18 Children's Christmas Pageant
- Sun, Dec 25 Christmas, Liturgy 10:00 am

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

Orthodox Church. It does amazing work throughout the world and here at home. Find out how it serves our Lord in the person of the most vulnerable among us, visit: IOCC.org. Also, read Metropolitan Nicolae's Pastoral Letter for IOCC Sunday available at the candles. His Eminence is the Assembly of Bishops' Liaison to IOCC.

FOOD PANTRY. Help is needed to staff our monthly responsibility at the Orthodox Food Center **next Saturday, December 3rd, 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.**

WE CELEBRATE A 1-YEAR MEMORIAL today for the servant of God **Julia Sedares. May her memory be eternal.**

TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR is sponsored by **George Sedares** in memory of his wife Julia.

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

Holy Trinity Nursing & Rehabilitation Center has the following **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES: CNA's, RN's and Dietary Aides.** Please contact Michelle Williamson, Dir. of Human Resources at: 508-852-1000.



**GREAT MARTYR JAMES
THE PERSIAN
NOVEMBER 27**

The Holy Great Martyr James the Persian (the Sawn-Asunder) was born in the fourth century into a pious Christian family, both wealthy and illustrious. His wife was also a Christian, and the couple raised their children in piety, inspiring in them a love for prayer and the Holy Scriptures. James occupied a high position at the court of the Persian emperor Izdegerd (399-420) and his successor Barakhranes (420-438). But on one of the military campaigns James, seduced by the emperor's beneficence, was afraid to acknowledge himself a Christian, and so he offered sacrifice to idols with the emperor.

Learning of this, James' mother and wife wrote him a letter, in which they rebuked him and urged him to repent. Receiving the letter, James realized the gravity of his sin. Faced with the horror of being cut off not only from his family, but also from God Himself, he began to weep loudly, im-

NAMEDAYS

November 25

The Great-martyr

Katherine of Alexandria

Katina Vanthia Christo

Katina Cocavessis

Kathryn Eleanor Sedares

Katina Spataro

Katherine Stamoulis

Emily Katherine Valoras

November 26

St. Stylianos of Paphlagonia

Steliana Naumescu

November 30

The Holy Apostle

Andrew the First-called

Andrew Cavanaugh

Andrew John Demake

Andrew Opio

Andrew Tanacea

ploring the Lord for forgiveness.

His fellow-soldiers, hearing him pray to the Lord Jesus Christ, reported this to the emperor. Under interrogation, St James bravely confessed his faith in the one True God. No amount of urging by the emperor could make him renounce Christ. The emperor then ordered the saint to be put to death.

They began to cut off his fingers and his toes one by one, then his hands and his feet, and then his arms and legs. During the prolonged torture St James offered prayers of thanksgiving to the Lord, Who had granted him the possibility of redemption from his sins by enduring these terrible torments. Finally, the martyr was beheaded. Christians gathered up the pieces of his body and buried them with great reverence.

AND, BE THANKFUL

THIS is the thirtieth Sunday after Pentecost. The Epistle Lesson is taken from St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians 3:12-16. The Church at Colossae was not founded by St. Paul, but by Epaphras one of his disciples. While St. Paul was pleased with the general progress of the community, he was concerned that influences from a number of native pagan beliefs and Judaism were having a distorting effect on the Gospel preached to them. They were becoming syncretistic. This tendency toward syncretism is a problem in our own time as well. We can see the phenomenon at work particularly in "New Age" thinking that takes a little of this and a little of that and blends them into a not so very coherent set of beliefs. St. Paul was warning the Colossians against drifting in this direction.

In this letter St. Paul urges the Colossians to shape themselves in the image of Christ. He calls them to remember their new status, "as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved." He tells them to clothe themselves with "heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience." (v. 12) He instructs them on what it means to be a Christian, a follower of Christ. We are not simply to have kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, but these must be *heartfelt*. Our behavior toward one another should go beyond outer forms and social convention; it should spring from the deepest recesses of our being.

He wants them to be conscious of their goal: to be like our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. "Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive." (v. 13) We are to support one another. We are to put up with one another. When tested or offended we are to forgive one another "just as the Lord has forgiven you." St. Paul is telling us to transform ourselves by the power given us by the Holy Spirit.

He then says to them, "Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony." (v. 14) It is possible to have these virtues of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and even patience without having love. Love is what makes these other actions real and complete. Without love they will lack the substance necessary for them to withstand time. Love is the glue that "binds" our virtuous act with our deeper intention. It makes us whole.

"And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body." (v. 15) The word "rule" could also be translated as "umpire," (even though it might sound a little awkward). What St. Paul means is that as an emotion love can sometimes be an unsteady gauge. Just observe the various ways 'love' is used and misused in our common speech. When we are wrestling with difficult questions, when all of our thoughts and emotions are engaged, we need to let Christ's peace be the arbiter. It serves as a stabilizing influence. While we might go back and forth, Christ's peace remains a steady guide. It rules over all the pettiness or spite we might feel. If we allow Christ's peace to arbitrate our emotions, we become one with Him. We become one with the Body to which we were called.

"And be thankful." (v. 15) St. Paul makes this a stand-alone statement. Like "love, which binds everything together," thankfulness is a state of being that changes us. It is the perspective that reinterprets all of our experiences.

When we thank someone for what they've given us or done for us, our words and sentiments should direct us to transcend the gift in order to focus on the giver. While a kind act can never be thought of small or inconsequential, we also know that the one who offers it is far more important than what was given. When we are thankful we move from focusing on our ourselves to focusing

on the giver. We are drawn out of ourselves to *see* the other. This is the essence of thankfulness.

We might say "thank you" to other people a thousand times a day, and rightfully so; but the deeper question is: do we really *mean* it? Are we employing the words "thank you" as simple social convention, or are they actually a reflection of our inner disposition? Striving to make our sentiments truly heartfelt points us to the goal to which St. Paul is directing us: "be thankful."

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God." (v. 16) St. Paul uses another word in this verse very much like "thankful." He tells the Colossians and us to teach and admonish one another in wisdom and "with gratitude."

Gratitude and thankfulness have a similar root meaning: joy or pleasure. When we are truly grateful or thankful we also have a joy deep inside us. We take pleasure in the act of kindness shown us. More importantly, we take joy in the one who gives us this. When we are thankful the joy changes us.

St. Paul tells the Thessalonians: "give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." (1 Thessalonians 5:18) We know we have grown in Christ when our thankfulness is not conditioned on external events. It is easy to give thanks when things are going relatively well. It is another matter to give thanks when things seem to be going badly. Can we still open a voice of praise to God even when the wind is blowing against us?

Brothers and sisters, as we celebrate our national day of Thanksgiving, let us reflect on the true nature of thanksgiving, and be grateful always and in every circumstance.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA



A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

LORD, OUR GOD: OUR THANKSGIVING CELEBRATION makes us reflect on the riches of life. All too often, we take them for granted! We presume — if we really think about it at all! — that what we are and have is somehow all our own doing. As we celebrate during these days, help us reach a better understanding of how things really are. Enable our minds and hearts to find inspiration and renewal by pondering the marvels life affords us at every turn. Show us how to receive everything and, indeed, every moment of life, as a gift. Cleanse our minds and hearts of the cynical and perverse desire to believe we simply have a right to everything that comes our way. Show us, rather, how indebted we are to everyone, beginning with you, and in all things lead us to yourself.

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



IOCC SUNDAY

A DAY OF SHARING

*Share in
our Ministry
of Love
and Caring*



NOVEMBER 20, 2016

iocc.org/DayofSharing

Paul Jeffrey/ACT

