

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN

JANUARY 29, 2017

TRANSLATION OF THE RELICS OF
ST. IGNATIUS THE GOD-BEARER

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

FOOD PANTRY. Help is needed to staff our monthly responsibility at the Orthodox Food Center **next Saturday, February 5th, 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.**

PITA BAKING. There will be a **Pita Baking Session, Saturday, February 11th, 9:00 am to noon.** Please mark your calendars. **Questions?** talk to **Chris Toda, 508-832-6271.** Also, let her know if you'll be coming. **Remember: There's a job for everyone!**

THE LATEST ISSUE OF THE FAITH/CREDINȚA (the Archdiocesan Magazine) is now available at the candles. Please take a copy home with you.

THE BLESSING OF HOMES AT THEOPHANY CONTINUES. As in the past, we are setting times to bless your

GREETERS TEAM 5:
DEBORAH SEDARES & EVAN STAMOULIS

COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP CREW B:
KARADIMITRIOU/KALPIDO FAMILY

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

EPISTLE: 2 CORINTHIANS 6:16-7:1 ☩ GOSPEL: MATTHEW 15:21-28
(SUNDAY OF THE CANAANITE WOMAN)

TONE 7 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 10

home. If you haven't gotten a notice yet, please talk to Fr. Nick. Also, if there is a specific time that is more convenient for you, please e-mail or call (508-335-7378) Fr. Nick to arrange it.

PLEASE RETURN YOUR EXTRA HOLY WATER BOTTLES! Many of you have Holy Water bottles at home. Please return the ones you're finished using. You can give them to Fr. Nick when he comes to bless your house, or just bring to Church on Sunday.

A NEW PARISH COUNCIL WILL BE ELECTED IN JANUARY, (the two-year term of the Parish Council expires this year). Please consider offering a stewardship of your time in this important ministry. We also are asking for people to serve on other Parish committees, if you would like to focus your efforts in just one area. However you'd like to serve, please speak with **Fr. Nick.**

TODAY WE CELEBRATE A MEMORIAL SERVICE for **Ion Constantin Pitigoi**, father of **Liana Manescu** as well as for her grandparents **Maria & Constantin** and **Ioana & Constantin.** *May their memory be eternal!*

We also REMEMBER: Dr. Victor Lorian, fallen asleep 3 years. *May his memory be eternal!*

TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR is sponsored by **Liana Manescu** in memory of the members of her family. And, **Sofia Apostol** in memory of **Victor Lorian.**

DATES TO REMEMBER

Sat, Feb 4 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry
Fri, Feb 10 Mustard Seed Meal, 5pm
Sat, Feb 11 Pita Baking, 9am-noon
Sat, Feb 18 Saturday of Souls, Lit 10am
Sun, Feb 19 Meatfare Sunday
Sun, Feb 26 Cheesfare Sunday
Mon, Feb 27 Great Lent Begins
Sun, April 16 Great and Holy Pascha

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

Holy Trinity is in need of **new or gently used IPODS and ITUNE gift cards** for the residents' Music and Memory Program. Please contact **Gina Metras**, Activities' Director at 508-852-1000 or gmetras@htnr.net.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Notre Dame Academy (Catholic, college prep school for young women) is inviting seventh grade and transfer students to spend an academic day at NDA through May 1st. **If you're interested contact the Admissions Office at admissions@nda-worc.org.**

Venerini Academy is holding an open your on Sunday afternoon, January 29th. For more information: www.veneriniacademy.com.

NAMEDAYS

January 17

St. Anthony the Great

Anthony Theodore Christo
Scott Anthony Maynard
Anthony Rucho
Tony Nicholas Trakadas

January 18

St. Athanasios of Alexandria

Thanas Lolo
Arthur Peterson

January 22

The Holy Apostle Timothy

Rev. Fr. Timothy Lowe
Timothy Rucho

January 25

St. Gregory the Theologian

Rev. Fr. Gregory Christakos
Dr. Gregory Tsongalis

January 28

St. Ephraim the Syrian

Rev. Fr. Ephraim Peters



SYNAXIS OF
THE THREE HIERARCHS:
BASIL THE GREAT,
GREGORY THE THEOLOGIAN, &
JOHN CHRYSOSTOM
JANUARY 30

This common feast of these three teachers was instituted a little before the year 1100, during the reign of the Emperor Alexis I Comnenus, because of a dispute and strife that arose among the notable and virtuous men of that time. Some of them preferred Basil, while others preferred Gregory, and yet others preferred John Chrysostom, quarreling among themselves over which of the three was the greatest. Furthermore, each party, in order to distinguish itself from the others, assumed the name of its preferred Saint; hence, they called themselves Basilians, Gregorians, or Johannites.

Desiring to bring an end to the contention, the three Saints appeared together to the saintly John Mavropous, a monk who had been ordained Bishop of Euchaita, a city of Asia Minor, they revealed to him that the glory they have at the throne of God is equal, and told him to compose a common service for the

three of them, which he did with great skill and beauty. Saint John of Euchaita (celebrated Oct. 5) is also the composer of the Canon to the Guardian Angel, the Protector of a Man's Life. In his old age, he retired from his episcopal see and again took up the monastic life in a monastery in Constantinople. He reposed during the reign of the aforementioned Emperor Alexis Comnenus (1081-1118).



A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

LORD TEACHER OF HUMILITY:
Deflate our puffed up hearts and remove all arrogance from our bearing lest we succumb to thinking we really are something to be proud of. Imbue us with true humility. Grant us victory over all temptations to arrogance and unhealthy pride, and enable us to adhere strictly to what is good, rejecting every hint of perversity and idolatry in our lives. Bring us to worship you alone, in spirit and in truth, that we may attain the depth of life you desire for us.

For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

WE ARE GOD'S TEMPLE

THIS is the Sunday of the Canaanite Woman, the seventeenth after Pentecost. Depending on the date of Pascha, this Sunday is often moved out of order to just before the start of the Lenten cycle called the *Triodion*. The prescribed Epistle lesson is taken from Second Corinthians starting at verse 6:16 through 7:1, however, for us to get a better sense of St. Paul's point we should begin at verse 14.

Remember, the Corinthian community was in turmoil. St. Paul is working to get them to reaffirm their Christian identity and commitment. He reminds them that as Christians they are now the new Israel — a people set apart. In verse 14 he uses an unusually strong word. He tells them: “Do not be mismatched with unbelievers.” In the Greek original the word “mismatched” is: *ἐτεροζυγοῦντες*. It literally means “yoking together two different kinds of animals,” like a horse and an ox. It just would not work.

The root word “yoked” is also used to describe the marital relationship, so those listening would have that image in their mind when St. Paul continues: “For what partnership is there between righteousness and lawlessness? Or what fellowship is there between light and darkness? What agreement does Christ have with Beliar? Or what does a believer share with an unbeliever?” (v. 14-15)

But you shouldn't get the wrong impression, St. Paul is not referring to ordinary relations with unbelievers, the kind that we have every day. Scriptural scholars both ancient and modern are in almost universal agreement on this. He is not saying we should isolate ourselves or not engage the world around us. Neither is he referring to marriage itself. But rather, he is saying we should not “marry” ourselves to forces and persons who do not have God in their hearts. Notice the words that he uses:

partnership and fellowship, agreement and sharing. Today we might use an idiom such as, “getting in bed with.” Christians need to remember who they are. They are a people dedicated to God.

St. Paul uses a word for the Devil in verse 15 that is common in Rabbinical commentaries and writing, even though it doesn't appear in the Scriptures. The name “Beliar” is a direct transliteration of the Hebrew and it means “worthlessness.” In theological and philosophical writings, “evil” is often characterized as non-being. Worthlessness is another way of saying the same thing. It isn't that evil is not real. It is. Rather, unlike “good,” it could not exist on its own. Evil is like a leech. It sucks the life out of things. It feeds on the blood of its victim. Think about it. When we do something good it stands on its own merits. When we do something bad, it is almost always at someone's expense.

This serves as an introduction to today's selected reading that begins: “What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God.” St. Paul is urging us to understand our calling. By referring first to physical things (temples and idols), he wants us to imagine the possibilities available to us in God's promise: We are His dwelling place.

He used this same image — that we are God's temple — in his First Letter to them (1 Corinthians 3:16ff). There he was speaking of “building” and “laying foundations.” Here he speaks of what we place in the Temple. Will it be God or some false idol? Will we honor God's Temple, or defile it?

To illustrate his point, St. Paul (in verse 16) freely joins a number of verses from the Old Testament to speak of God's promise. He reminds them that God said: “I will live in them and walk among them,” (cf. Leviticus 26:12) and “I will be their God, and they shall be my people” (cf. Ezekiel 37:27). God's

promise is real. God's word is true.

From the outset God's intention was to make us His dwelling place, for us to be the signs of His presence. Paul is telling the Corinthians that the ritual purity required in Old Covenant was to prepare us for the kind of moral purity that could permit God to dwell in us. The images St. Paul uses of “mismatched” pairings are meant to help us see how incompatible sin is with the life to which God has called us. “Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you” (v. 17; cf. Isaiah 52:11 and Jeremiah 51:45). The first thing asked of us then was to keep our hands clean. St. Paul tells us that this was so we would learn to keep our hearts clean as well.

If we do this, “the Lord Almighty says: I will be your father and you shall be my sons and daughters” (v. 18). When God created us He created us for higher things. He invites us to become part of His family, to seek the things He seeks: In a word, to be like Him.

“Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and of spirit, making holiness perfect in the fear of God” (v. 7:1). We approach God first with fear and trembling. Out of faith we learn to trust all the things He has said to us, through holy men and women, and in the person of His very own Son. Finally, we learn to love Him as much as He loves us. Every time we celebrate the Holy Eucharist we hear this call to draw near to Him: with fear, with faith and with love.

We are called to be holy, like God is holy. We are called to prepare a place for Him in our hearts. Each of us can be God's Temple, if we invite Him in.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA

THE PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD IN THE TEMPLE

This feast, celebrated on February 2, is known in the Orthodox Church as The Presentation of Christ in the Temple. Another name for the feast is The Meeting of our Lord. Roman Catholic and Protestant Christians call the feast, The Purification of the Holy Virgin. About 450 AD in Jerusalem, people began the custom of holding lighted candles during the Divine Liturgy of this feast day. Therefore, some churches in the West refer to this holy day as Candlemas. The Feast of the Presentation concludes the observances related to the Nativity of Christ, a period that opened on November 15 with the beginning of the Nativity fast.

The story of the Presentation is told in Luke 2:22-29. Mary and Joseph were faithful Jews and observed their religious customs. An important custom was for the couple to take their first-born son to the Temple. The baby was taken to the Temple forty days after his birth and was dedicated to God. In addition, if the parents were wealthy, they were to bring a lamb and a young pigeon or a turtle dove to be offered as a sacrifice at the Temple. The custom provided that if the parents were poor, they were to offer two pigeons or two turtle doves for the sacrifice.

When Jesus was forty days old, Mary and Joseph took Him to the Temple in Jerusalem. They were not wealthy, so they took two turtle doves with them to offer as a sacrifice at the Temple. As they arrived at the Temple, Mary and

Joseph were met by a very old man named Simeon. He was a holy man and was noted as a very intelligent scholar. Simeon spent much time studying about the prophets of Israel. It was during his studies that he learned of the coming of the Messiah. The Jewish people were waiting for the Messiah to come and deliver Israel from their conquerors. From that time on, Simeon spent his time praying for the Messiah to come. He spent many years in prayer. Finally, while Simeon was praying he heard the voice of God. God promised Simeon that

he would not die until he had seen the Messiah.

Simeon and Christ

Simeon took Jesus in his arms and praised God. When Simeon saw Jesus, he took the baby in his arms and blessed the Lord and said:

“Lord, now let Your servant go in peace according to Your promise, because my eyes have seen Your salvation which you have prepared before the face of all peoples, a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory to your people Israel.”



Also, in the Temple was Anna the Prophetess. She had been a widow for many years. Anna was about eighty-four years old and spent her time in the Temple worshiping, fasting, and praying. When she saw the Christ Child she praised God and spoke of him to all who were awaiting the Messiah.

After Jesus was presented in the Temple, the family returned to Galilee to the town of Nazareth. The Bible tells us that Jesus grew and became strong, and was filled with wisdom.

