

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN

APRIL 23, 2017

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

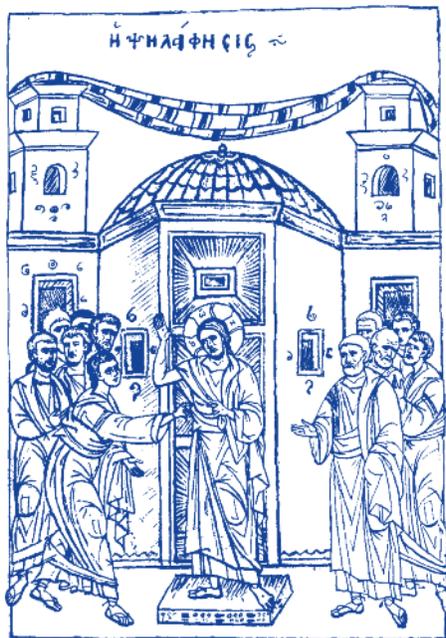
A HEARTFELT THANKS to the hard-working people of our community and for your various efforts and contributions throughout the Lenten season and on in to Holy Week. From the services, to baking, to church school activities and religious ed, to meals, to church administration and crowd control, to the other hundred things we cannot recall. Your community appreciates and recognizes the gifts you share so freely. St. Nicholas is blessed to have such a vital, committed and generous parish.

FOOD PANTRY. Help is needed to staff our responsibility at the Orthodox Food Center for the **next two Saturdays.** **April 29th** is a 'fifth' Saturday and it's our turn to staff it. And, **May 6th,** is our regular monthly obligation. **The hours are 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.**

GREETERS TEAM 1:
V. GERALD BELBA AND
MARGARITE LANDRY

COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP CREW D:
ILIANA & SEAN FAHEY,
DIMITRI SAFFRON,
CHRISTOS & SPIRO SPYROU

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



THE SECOND SUNDAY OF PASCHA
ST. THOMAS SUNDAY
THE HOLY GREAT-MARTYR GEORGE

APOSTOLIC READING: ACTS 5:12-20
GOSPEL: JOHN 20:19-31

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TONE 1 ⊕ MATINS GOSPEL 1

THANKS TO THE MUSTARD SEED VOLUNTEERS! Those who cooked and those who served the meal this past Friday! The Mustard Seed is a Catholic Worker home providing dinner to about 150 people in need each day. **We want to thank Simona and Phil Mills for sponsoring this month's meal.** Our next scheduled meal is **June 16th.** We are looking for **donors to cover the cost of the meal—around \$400.00 for the 200 meals we usually serve.** Contact Fr. Nick if you'd like to help prepare the meals, or underwrite all or a portion of a meal.

METROPOLITAN NICOLAE'S PASTORAL LETTER at Pascha is available in English and Romanian at the candles.

COFFEE HOUR this week is sponsored by **Janice Samara**, in memory of her husband **Randy.** *May his memory be eternal!*

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

Volunteering at Holy Trinity is a rewarding way you can make a difference in the lives of the residents by donating your time and talent. To inquire about volunteer opportunities, contact **Gina Metras**, Director of Activities, 508-852-1000, gmetras@htnr.net, or **Serena Shields**, Director of Community Relations, 508-852-1000, shields@htnr.net.

CHRIST IS RISEN!



DATES TO REMEMBER

Fri, April 21 Mustard Seed Meal, 5pm
Sat, April 29 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-noon
Sat, May 6 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-noon
Thurs, May 24 Feast of the Lord's Ascension
Sat, June 3 Saturday of the Dead, Lit. 10am
Sun, June 4 Pentecost

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas



THE HOLY GREAT MARTYR GEORGE
APRIL 23

George, this truly great and glorious Martyr of Christ, was born of a father from Cappadocia and a mother from Palestine. Being a military tribune, or chiliarch (that is, a commander of a thousand troops), he was illustrious in battle and highly honoured for his courage. When he learned that the Emperor Diocletian was preparing a persecution of the Christians, Saint George presented himself publicly before the Emperor and denounced him. When threats and promises could not move him from his steadfast confession, he was put to unheard-of tortures, which he endured with great bravery, overcoming them by his faith and love towards Christ. By the wondrous signs that took place in his contest, he guided many to the knowledge of the truth, including Queen Alexandra, wife of Diocletian, and was finally beheaded in 296 in Nicomedia.

His sacred remains were taken by his servant from Nicomedia to Palestine, to a town called Lydda, the homeland of his mother, and then were finally transferred to the church which was raised up in his name.

A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

ETERNAL PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING TO YOU, O God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for this wondrous feast whereon you raised him to the glory of new life at your right! As we offer you our hymns and canticles in praise of his victory over death, we beseech you: Grant us the faith of the myrrhbearing women, but not their fright; the hope of the apostles, but not their fear; the straightforward attitude of Thomas, but not his hesitation; and the openness of the Samaritan woman, but not her weakness. At all times and in all things enable us to please you, so that your mercy and compassion may rest on us in this world and in the next.

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



NAMEDAYS

April 21

The Holy Martyr

Alexandra the Queen

Alexandra Dymek
 Alexis George
 Alexandra Mentis
 Sandra Nedelescu
 Casie Soter
 Alexandra Valoras

The Life-giving Fountain

Zoica Nedelcu
 Zoitza Tsongalis

April 23

The Holy Apostle Thomas

Thomas Cavanaugh
 Thomas Chachi
 Rev. Fr. Thomas FitzGerald
 Thomas Fitzpatrick
 Robert T. Sedares
 Thomas R. Sedares
 Thomas Spataro

The Holy Great-martyr

George the Wonderworker

George Belba
 George M. Bourisk
 George Demake
 Gjergji Disho
 Gheorghe O. Galica
 George Grniet
 George Krassopoulos
 George Symock
 George Tonna
 George James Trakadas

April 25

The Holy Apostle and Evangelist Mark

Rev. Fr. Mark Doku
 Mark Soter
 Mark Stamoulis

April 30

The Holy Apostle James, brother of John the Evangelist

James Collins

CHRIST IS RISEN, INDEED!

THE BODILY RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST is the central tenet of our Christian faith. As St. Paul says: “if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain” (1 Corinthians 15:14). Put another way, for Christians, Christ’s actual, physical resurrection from the dead after he was crucified is the cornerstone of our faith. Christianity would be close to meaningless without it.

While this might appear to be a jarring statement, it is not as extreme as it first seems. Christ’s resurrection is not just another miracle, nor is it just the validation of who Christ said he was and is, but rather it is the natural and logical consequence of God’s entire plan for His creation. It was a plan borne out of love, to form a creation brimming with life and grace that would reflect God’s majesty. We humans are intrinsic to this plan. Created in His image, we were designed to grow into the divine likeness. When our Lord Jesus Christ took on our humanity it was to show us what it is like to accept God’s challenge and grow into the fulness of our potential. Christ’s resurrection, and our eventual resurrection, is the fulfillment of God’s promise.

The centrality of Christ’s resurrection to the Christian faith can be seen in how the historical reality of it is constantly affirmed. The earliest written account we have is St. Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians written around 57 ad. After giving a short synopsis of the basic Christian Kerygma (proclamation), that Jesus suffered, died, was buried, and rose on the third day, he names the people who saw him after his resurrection.

“He appeared to Cephas [Peter], then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me” (v. 15:5-8). There is

a significance to why he doesn’t mention the women who were the first to see him. St. Paul is making a “legal” argument, and regardless of what we might think about it today, in the Roman world a woman’s testimony would not be allowed in court. The actual historical reality of Christ’s resurrection had witnesses, and these witnesses were to be believed by everyone.

In a similar way, one can see this appeal to historical grounding in the Nicaean-Constantinopolitan Creed that we recite at every Liturgy. Among other things, Pontius Pilate, is mentioned because, like Annas and Caiaphas, he was a well-known historical figure. Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection could be “dated.”

The other important aspect of our Lord’s resurrection is that this was not a simple resuscitation of his crucified body. There was something different about it. In each of the Scriptural accounts we learn that the people he appeared to did not immediately recognize him. It wasn’t simply because they were not expecting to see someone who they knew to be dead now standing before them alive. It was only when he touched their faith, their hearts, and the scales fell from their eyes that they could realize who he was. He had changed.

People often wonder what our own resurrection will be like. We can get some hints if we read the accounts of how Jesus appeared to his disciples in the forty days between the resurrection and the ascension. We can see there are certain continuities with our present existence as well as some disconnects.

For example, Jesus can be touched and held. Mary Magdalene grabs on to his feet when she recognizes him in the Garden (John 20:17; Matthew 28:9). Thomas touches the wounds of his hands and side, which are very real (John 20:27). He eats fish with the disciples in the upper room, in order to prove he’s not a ghost (Luke 24:41). He

lights a charcoal fire and cooks breakfast for the disciples at the Sea of Galilee and then walks and talks with them (John 21:9). He encounters Luke and Cleopas on the road to Emmaus and dines with them, breaking the bread, at which point they recognize him (Luke 24:30).

Then there are the disconnects. For example, St. Paul says “he appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time.” Holy Tradition tells us that while he appeared to all of these at the same time, not all of the brethren were in the same place. Similarly, while talking and walking with Luke and Cleopas, he was also appearing to the other disciples in the Upper Room (Luke 24:34-35). And, he entered that Upper Room “even though the doors were sealed” (John 20:19)

In his risen body Jesus could be in many places at once, walk through walls, transport himself great distances instantaneously, yet eat, walk, talk, and be held just as we can.

The last important fact that we should consider is that our Lord did not “discard” his body after he was “done” with it. Having assumed it, it is his for eternity. The material world is not only important, it is sacred. It is holy. We regularly use things and throw them away once we are done with them. God is telling us that using His creation in this fashion is an abomination. Everything is holy. His creation is holy. We are called to *be* holy.

So, we Christians believe in Christ’s physical, actual, historical resurrection, because we trust in God’s promise, and we trust in those who saw him. We look forward to our own resurrection, because we too want to be full of light.

Christ is Risen, Indeed!

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA