

# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN

MAY 14, 2017

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!

## THIS WEEK'S NEWS

**FR. NICK WILL REPORT** on the Installation in Chicago two Sundays past of His Eminence **Metropolitan Nicolae** as Metropolitan of our newly established Metropolia, and His Grace **Bishop Ioan Casian** of the newly established Diocese of Canada in Montréal last Sunday.

**IN HONOR OF MOTHER'S DAY** we're asking Fathers and Sons to help with the Coffee Hour and the Clean-up afterwards!

**ALSO, THE BEAUTIFUL FLOWERS** we're presenting to the mothers of our community have been donated by **Tim Rucho**.

**RESERVATIONS FOR JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT** are due **THIS SUNDAY**. See the details on the next page.

**THANKS TO THE FOOD PANTRY VOLUNTEERS** for working the Orthodox Food Center on behalf of our parish the last two Saturdays. 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

### GREETERS TEAM 4:

DIMITRI SAFFRON AND SEAN FAHEY

### COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP CREW C:

PRIZIO FAMILY

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



## THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF PASCHA

THE SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN

APOSTOLIC READING: ACTS 11:19-30 ☩ GOSPEL: JOHN 4:5-42

TONE 4 - MATINS GOSPEL 7

worthwhile ministry, please speak with **Lisa Mielnicki or Nicole Apostola**. Our next date is **Saturday is June 3rd**.

The latest issue of **THE FAITH/CREDINȚA** Archdiocesan Magazine is available at the Candles. Pick up a copy and take it home with you. Also, the **2017 ARCHDIOCESE ALMANAC** is available at the Candles as well.

**WE'RE LOOKING FOR THIS YEAR'S HIGH SCHOOL OR COLLEGE GRADUATES** in our Parish so we can recognize them on their accomplishment. If you know of a soon-to-be graduate, please inform

Fr. Nick or Tim Rucho.

**COFFEE HOUR SPONSORS ARE NEEDED** for the next weeks. Please speak with or contact **Presvytera Maria** if you and your family would like to

## DATES TO REMEMBER

- Sun, May 14 Reservations for *Joseph Dreamcoat* due
- Thurs, May 24 Feast of the Lord's Ascension
- Sat, May 27 e-Recycling. 9am-2pm
- Mon, May 29 Memorial Day, Hope Cemetery
- June 2, 3, & 4 Albanian Festival
- Sat, June 3 Saturday of the Dead, Lit. 10am  
Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-noon
- Sun, June 4 Pentecost
- Aug 7-9 Vacation Church School

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 Metropolia of the Americas

sponsor one.

**THIS WEEK'S COFFEE HOUR** is sponsored by the **Rucho family**.

## UP-COMING

**FEASTDAY VESPERS** for **Ss Constantine & Helen** will be held on **Saturday, May 20th at 6:00pm in Webster** to celebrate the Patrons of the community there. Please mark your calendars.

**AN ELECTRONICS/WHITE GOODS, ETC. RECYCLING** day is set for **Saturday, May 27th**. If you're able and willing to help, please speak with Gerry Belba.

**MEMORIAL DAY** is Monday, May 29th. Fr. Nick will be at Hope Cemetery from 10:00 am. The common Memorial Service will be at noon at the Altar in Hope. If you would like Fr. Nick to visit a grave in another cemetery, please contact him to make arrangements: 508-335-7378.

**PARENTS PLEASE TAKE NOTE! Vacation Church School this summer will be August 7-9.** We will again be holding it in conjunction with Sts. Anargyroi in Marlborough. Please keep these date in mind when schedule other summer activities for your children. **Questions?** see or e-mail: Valarie Stamoulis (valarie.stamoulis@gmail.com); cell: 617-803-3798.

## HOLY TRINITY NEWS

Holy Trinity is hosting its annual **Mother's Day Social on Sunday, May 14th at 2pm.**

This week Holy Trinity staff and residents are celebrating **National Nursing Home Week, May 14 - 20.** The theme this year is "The Spirit of America," with lots of activities, including the Resident Spring Ball with "The American Dream" theme on May 18th.

### A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

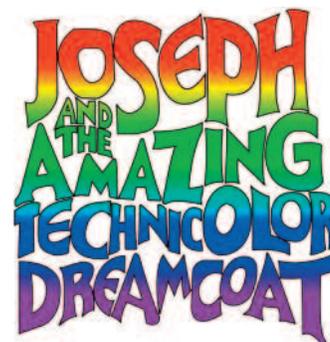
LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**O SKILLFUL AND INGENUOUS ARTISAN OF LIFE:** On this glorious day of celebration, we come before you to thank you for raising your Son from death to the glory of new life at your right. As we celebrate his victory over death, we beseech you to remove the burdens that weigh heavily on our hearts. Dry our tears, and clothe us in the vesture of immortality, in that raiment that reflects the light of your glory. Today, as we stand here before you, prepare us for the joy of the eternal kingdom by directing our lives along the path of righteousness. Finally, at the end of our days, let us — together with all our fathers and mothers, our brothers and sisters, our teachers, and all those who have gone before us — receive the incorruptible crown in the fellowship of the kingdom on high.

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

Latest issue of **Holy Trinity's "Guardian Angel Gazette"** is available on-line. It full of interesting information about our Nursing and Rehab Center. Check it out here: [www.htnr.net/blog/](http://www.htnr.net/blog/)

**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**, Activities Director at 508-852-1000 or e-mail: [gmetras@htnr.net](mailto:gmetras@htnr.net). Or **Serena Shields**, Director of Community Relations, 508-852-1000, e-mail: [shields@htnr.net](mailto:shields@htnr.net).



Together with Sts. Anargyroi Parish we have secured group rates to see a great production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* at Reagle Theater in Waltham on **Sunday, June 11 at 2:00 PM.** Tickets are \$36 for adults (\$21 less than market rate) and \$25 for kids ages 5 - 18. **Reservations and full payment MUST be received by Sunday, May 14th.** For more information, contact **Tim at:** [tjrucho@verizon.net](mailto:tjrucho@verizon.net)

## THANKS, MOM

**I**N THESE WEEKS FOLLOWING PASCHA, we remembered the powerful witness of those who personally experienced the Lord's rising. On the third Sunday of Pascha we remembered the witness of the Lord's women disciples, as well as that of Joseph of Aramathea and Nikodimos. These were the people who saw him die and then buried him. In the case of the women, they were the first ones to whom he appeared after he rose from the dead. In the reflection I offered for Thomas Sunday, I quoted St. Paul and noted that he had not mentioned the women's witness because he was making a "legal" argument. Holy Tradition, as reflected in both the Gospel accounts and in the hymnography, does not have this reticence. The faithfulness and courage of the women are featured prominently. We hear of it in the Matins hymns sung every Sunday morning.

This Sunday is Mother's Day. I always find it a happy coincidence when the Sunday of the Myrrhbearers falls together with Mother's Day, as occasionally happens. It reminds us that many of these women were also mothers. It also reminds us that for most of us it was the women in our lives — mothers, grandmothers, and aunts — who guided us in our faith during our formative years. Without being overly sentimental about it, we should recognize the power of their witness.

The truth is that from the Church's beginning women have been among the primary teachers of the faith, to their children and others. We often remember great men theologians for the sophistication and depth of their writings, but whom do they remember? In his funeral oration for his sister St. Macrina, St. Gregory of Nyssa credits her for teaching him and his brother St. Basil the Great, as well as the rest of their siblings, everything they knew about the faith. In his mind, she was the greatest theologian among them.

There were the many women whom the Church calls "Equal to the Apostles,"

such as Mary Magdalene, Nina, Enlightener of Georgia, and Helen, the Emperor Constantine's mother. Each of these, and many others, were strong and indomitable. They are models for all of us to emulate.

Then there is Mary, our Lord's mother. I didn't begin with her example because she is so often lifted up as the supreme model of both motherhood and virginity; I oftentimes feel she has become a cliché in many people's minds. Like all of these other women she was and is not only a paragon of tenderness, but also of strength and courage. As a way to visualize this, look at the way our Orthodox tradition has chosen to depict her. Unlike western Madonna art forms, Orthodox iconography does not romanticize her. There are no rosy cheeks, no full-figured motherliness. Rather she is portrayed as a person of strength and resolve, even as she is a mother of tenderness and compassion.

While we have many references to Mary in the Gospels, perhaps none is so powerful as the Lord's words from the Cross. Seeing his mother below, weeping, he asks his beloved disciple John to look after her (John 19:26-27). He would not leave this existence without ensuring for her care. Also, we know from Holy Tradition that the first person he appeared to after the Resurrection was his mother. There is perhaps no more powerful sign of our Lord's humanity than his love and devotion for his mother. Moreover, she is not only his mother, but through him, she becomes mother to us all.

A window into the way the Church has viewed this relationship between Jesus and his mother can be found in the Lamentations sung at the Lord's tomb during Great Saturday Matins (Great Friday evening). These hymns attached to the verses of Psalm 119 put poetry to the words spoken by Mary while she is holding her dead Son, and the words of comfort he offers her in return. No one who can imagine what it would

be like to hold the body of their dead child can remain unmoved.

The final observation I would like to offer relates to the movement within certain elements of conservative Christianity regarding the place of women, and especially wives, toward men and their husbands, specifically. Without even attempting to be diplomatic, let me say there is nothing further from the heart of Christ's Gospel than the notion that women are of a different "order" than men. This movement is akin to the Taliban's idea of the place of women. Christianity has opposed all theories of class, all support for slavery, all notions of gender inequality or any other intrinsic division of humanity into lower and higher castes (cf. Galatians 3:28). We are all equal in Christ.

Having said this, God did create us male and female (Genesis 1:27). We should reflect on why God would create polarities within our one humanity, making the procreation of our kind dependent upon the loving coöperation of women and men. Without making too much of gender differences, it is hard to ignore them. Men and women often have a different take on the same issue; usually we don't find this out until this different "take" erupts in one way or another, funneling us (hopefully) toward a happy resolution.

Our mothers are different from our fathers. Motherhood and Fatherhood are not a matter of function (i.e., the services each provides), but states of being, extensions of our gendered personhood. Children always know who is mother and who is father. They don't need a script. They also know when one is missing-in-action.

So, let us give thanks to God for our mothers. We'll hold off on giving thanks for our fathers until June.

Christ is Risen!

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA



## NAMEDAYS

May 1

*The Holy Prophet Jeremiah*

Jeromy Grniet

May 5

*The Great Martyr Irene  
of Thessalonica*

Irene Mountzouris

Irene Tsoules

May 9

*The Holy Martyr Christopher*

Christopher Masterjohn

May 21

*The Holy Equals to the Apostles  
Constantine and Helen*

V. Rev. Fr. Dean Paleologos

Constantine Apostol

Elaine Apostola

Konstantin Charalambides

Presvytera Eleni Christakos

Amalia Helene Collins

Hannah Constance Datz

Dina Entwistle

Iliana Victoria Fahey

Elena Galeriu

Ileana A Nace

Constanta Papit

Eleni Polymeros

Elena Prelipcean

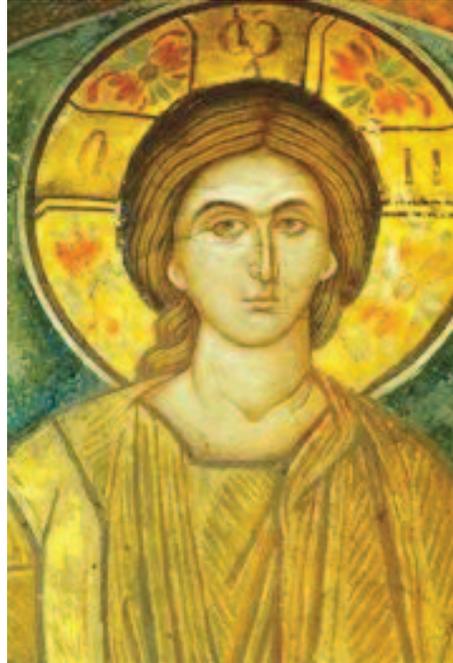
Elaine Rocheford

Dina K. Salerno

Eleanor Sedares

Elaine Tanacea

Dean Valoras



## THE FEAST OF MID-PENTECOST

After the Saviour had miraculously healed the paralytic, the Hebrews, especially the Pharisees and Scribes, were moved with envy and persecuted Him, and sought to slay Him, using the excuse that He did not keep the Sabbath, since He worked miracles on that day. Jesus then departed to Galilee. About the middle of the Feast of Tabernacles, He went up again to the Temple and taught. The people, marvelling at the wisdom of His words, said, "How knows this man letters, having never learned?" But Christ first reproached their unbelief and lawlessness, then proved to them by the Law that they sought to slay Him unjustly, supposedly as a despiser of the Law. Therefore, since the things spoken by Christ in the middle of the Feast of Tabernacles are related to the Sunday of the Paralytic that just passed, and since we reached the midpoint of the fifty days between Pascha and Pentecost, the Church appointed this feast to tie the two great feasts into one. Therefore today's feast is called Mid-Pentecost.

It should be noted that there were three great Jewish feasts: the Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles. Passover was celebrated on the 15th of Nisan, the first month of the Jewish calendar, which coincides with our March. This feast commemorated that day on which the Hebrews were commanded to eat the lamb in the evening and anoint the doors of their houses with its blood. Then, having escaped bondage and death at the hands of the Egyptians, they passed through the Red Sea to come to the Promised Land. It is also called "the Feast of Unleavened Bread," because they ate unleavened bread for seven days.

Pentecost was celebrated fifty days after the Passover, first of all, because the Hebrews had reached Mount Sinai after leaving Egypt, and there received the Law from God; secondly, it was celebrated to commemorate their entry into the Promised Land, where also they ate bread, after having been fed with manna forty years in the desert.

Finally, they also celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles from the 15th to the 22nd of "the seventh month," which corresponds to our September. During this time, they live in booths made of branches in commemoration of the forty years they spent in the desert, living in tabernacles, that is, tents (Ex. 12:10-20; Lev. 23).

