

# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN MAY 28, 2017

## THIS WEEK'S NEWS

**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.

**SATURDAY OF THE SOULS**, the general remembrance of all those fallen asleep in Christ, held before Pentecost, is **this coming Saturday, June 3rd**. Liturgy is at 10:00am preceded by Matins at 9:00am.

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

**THANKS TO THE CHURCH-CLEANING CREW** that worked this past **Monday**. Remember: All help is re-

**GREETERS TEAM 1:**  
V. GERALD BELBA AND MARGARITE LANDRY

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

**ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED**



**THE SEVENTH SUNDAY OF PASCHA  
OF THE FATHERS OF THE FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL**  
APOSTOLIC READING: ACTS 20:16-18; 28-36 ☩ GOSPEL: JOHN 17:1-13  
TONE 6 ☩ RESURRECTION GOSPEL 10

ally welcomed! **Questions?** talk to **Christine Masterjohn** about lending a hand for the next session.

**THANKS TO THE E-RECYCLING CREW** that worked this event yesterday, Gerry Belba, for coordinating and others that helped. God bless them all!

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

**THIS SUNDAY'S COFFEE HOUR** is sponsored by the **Gavala family**.

**UP-COMING**  
**THE ALBANIAN FESTIVAL**, sponsored by St. Mary's on Salisbury St., will be held **Friday-Sunday, June 2, 3, & 4**. Make plans to attend and support

our sister Church!

**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.

### DATES TO REMEMBER

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

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas

## HOLY TRINITY NEWS

**SAVE THE DATE!** Holy Trinity's annual fundraiser, 11th Annual **Food and Wine Fest, Thursday, October 19, 2017.** 5:30-8:30pm at St. George Orthodox Cathedral. Watch for details to follow!

The 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. **Interested?** Contact **Gina Metras**, Activities Director at 508-852-1000; 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).

### A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**P**RAISE TO YOU, ETERNAL, LOVING GOD AND FATHER, O you who loved us before we were even conceived: Today, the gates of heaven, the eternal portals, are lifted high, because your only Son, the king of glory, enters in. As we celebrate his glorious return to the right of your majesty, we pray that you will draw us ever closer to him, so that, faithful to him at all times, we may rise above the difficulties of this earthly life to enjoy the glory of eternal life. Receive our spiritual worship, and prepare us for the descent of your All-holy Spirit in the days to come.

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

## 2017 GRADUATES

*"He has filled them with the spirit of God, with skill, intelligence, and knowledge in every kind of craft."* (Exodus 35:31) We want to acknowledge members of our Church community who are celebrating a graduation and recognize their achievement.

### HIGH SCHOOL

- Aaron Paul Christo** will be graduated from the International Baccalaureate program of Abby Kelly Foster Public Charter School and will attend Northeastern University.  
**Noah Peter Christo** will be graduated from Abby Kelly Foster Public Charter School and will attend Worcester State University.  
**Jani Lico** will be graduated from Millbury High School and has received a full scholarship to study at Worcester State University.

### COLLEGE

- Thomas Sedares** will be graduated from Worcester State University with a B.A. in Sociology and is working towards his next goal of obtaining a commercial pilot's license.  
**Catherine Soliman** will be graduated from Framingham State University and is pursuing admission to medical school.  
**Tony Trakadas** will be graduated *summa cum laude* from the Commonwealth Honors College of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, with a degree in Information and Computer Sciences.  
**Sarah Bourisk** will be graduated from the University of New Haven with a double major in Forensic Science and premed and will continue her graduate studies there in the fall majoring in Forensic Technology.

### GRADUATE SCHOOL

- Zachary Demma** will be graduated from the University of Massachusetts Medical School and will serve his Internship/Residency there also.

*May our loving Lord continue to bless their efforts and grant them a long life, health, prosperity, and many, many years!*



## NAMEDAYS

**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

# IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE

**T**HIS is the seventh Sunday of Pascha. We remember the Fathers of the First Œcumenical Synod held at Nicæa in the year 325 ad. We also find ourselves in the days between the Lord's Ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

Today's lesson from the Book of Acts (20:16-18; 28-36) reads like a farewell speech, a final admonition, from St. Paul to the elders of the Church at Ephesus, but its message speaks to us as well. St. Paul is on his way to Jerusalem for the Feast of Pentecost. He says (in verses not included in today's reading), "I am going to Jerusalem, bound in the Spirit, not knowing what shall befall me there; except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me." (Acts 20:22-23) The authorities in Jerusalem have wanted to imprison and even kill St. Paul since his acceptance of our Lord Jesus Christ as the Messiah. He believes he will never see the Church of Ephesus again. He is correct; he never does.

He is primarily concerned for the future well-being of the Church. He directs his remarks specifically to the "elders" of the Church — that is, the episcopi or "overseers." (In part this explains why this lesson is chosen for today when we remember the Fathers of the First Œcumenical Council.) He tells the "episcopi" to, "Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock, of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of the Lord that he obtained with his own blood." (v. 28)

There are two aspects to this "oversight." The first is that if you are given leadership in the Church you need to "keep watch over yourself." You should keep yourself right with the Lord. You have to be self-disciplined and resolute. St. Paul says something similar to St. Timothy: "Pay close attention to your-

self and to your teaching; continue in these things, for in doing this you will save both yourself and your hearers." (1 Timothy 4:16) When following God's call to shepherd Christ's Church, our first duty is to be watchful over ourselves.

The second important duty is to "Keep watch ... over all the flock, of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers [guardians]." (v. 28) We do not set ourselves up as "leaders" in the Church. People do not (or should not) take this responsibility on themselves. The Holy Spirit chooses; He is the one who anoints leaders in God's Church. We are to behave as shepherds, guarding and protecting the flock. It is God's flock. It is God's Church. We have been enlisted into the Lord's service for His people, "that He obtained with his own blood."

The objective is to remain firmly planted in God's truth. Each Christian generation has faced its particular challenges. The Apostles had theirs. The Church of the fourth century had Arius and his heresy, whom the Synod of Nicæa confronted directly. We have ours, a perhaps even more difficult challenge: indifference and secularism. Surrounded by material comforts, we ignore and resist God who can truly comfort us.

This reading highlights the question of leadership in the Church, and of course, in the parish. In America, we 'elect' parish councils and diocesan congresses to provide assistance and direction to the Church's leadership. Sometimes, but not always, the lay representatives find themselves in conflict with the ordained leadership, the bishops and presbyters, as well as the deacons and the other clergy. Each member of Christ's Body needs to remember that the Holy Spirit is the one who calls us for service. No one should

serve him or her self; each of us should serve God.

When you read this passage take special note of the closing verses. St. Paul admonishes them with tears and kisses. He prays with them and over them. He grieves for the words he has spoken, particularly that he would not see them again. He commends them "to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build [them] up and to give [them] the inheritance among all those who are sanctified." (v. 32) By his love he shows how it is God's Word that we need to keep close to our hearts; this is what will build us up.

Finally, he gives us a saying of the Lord that appears nowhere else in the New Testament, not the Gospels nor the other Apostolic writings: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (v. 35) It is so often quoted because of the simple way it captures so much of what Lord taught us. Its truth resonates in our hearts. It also reminds us that not everything the Lord said and did was written down. As the Evangelist John says: "Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name." (John 20:30-31) This simple truth, that "it is more blessed to give than to receive," should guide our lives. As God is generous, so should we be. Following this it will strengthen our faith, even as it changes our lives.

Christ has Ascended! ...

He has Ascended in Glory!

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA