

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN JUNE 11, 2017

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

THE FAST OF Ss PETER & PAUL begins tomorrow, Monday June 12th and ends with the Feast on June 29th.

OUR NEXT MUSTARD SEED MEAL is **THIS** Friday, June 16th. We'll need help cooking and serving. **Prep** help needed (3 persons), noon Thursday. **Prep** help needed (2 persons), 1 pm Friday. **Serving** help needed (5 persons), 5:30pm Friday. **We are also looking for donors to cover the cost of the meal—around \$400.00 for the 200 meals we usually serve.** If you'd like to help, please talk to Fr. Nick.

THE LAST DAY OF RELIGIOUS ED for the season will be **next Sunday, June 18th.** We'll mark the occasion with a prayer at the end of Liturgy.

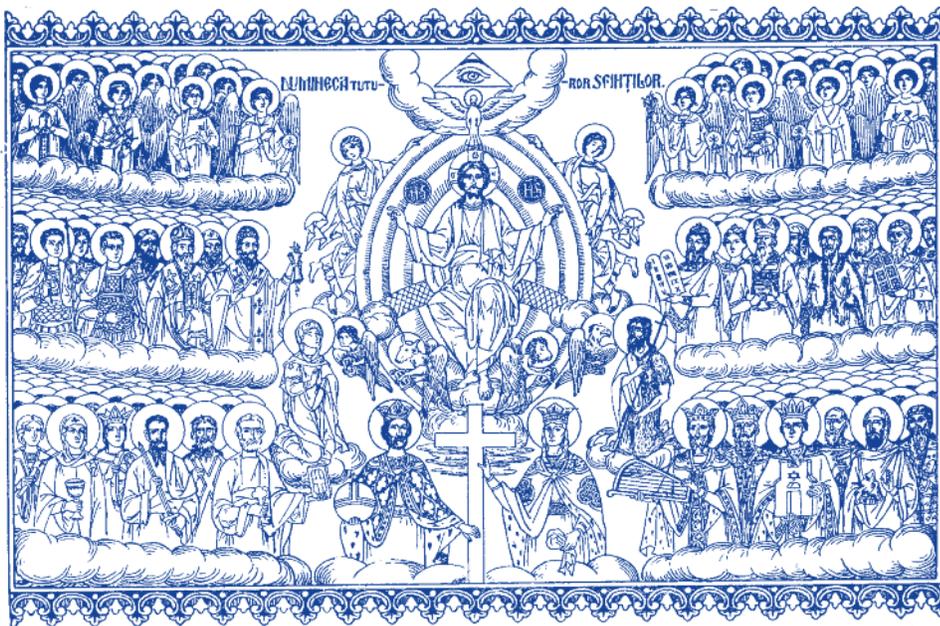
THE PARISH COUNCIL will hold its regular monthly meeting on **Monday, June 12th at 6:30 pm.** Parish Council Members, please let George Demake know if you are unable to attend.

THIS SUNDAY'S COFFEE HOUR is sponsored by **William and Katina Cocavessis and family.**

GREETERS TEAM 3:
EVANS TSOULES AND TOM FITZPATRICK

COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP CREW C:
PRIZIO FAMILY

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

THE SUNDAY OF ALL-THE-SAINTS

APOSTOLIC READING: HEBREWS 11:33-12:2

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 10:32-35; 37-38; 19: 27-30

TONE 8 ☩ RESURRECTION GOSPEL 1

UP-COMING

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

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:
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.



DATES TO REMEMBER

June 12-29 Fast of Ss Peter & Paul
Mon, June 12 Parish Council, 6:30 pm
Fri, June 16 Mustard Seed Meal, 5:00 pm
Sun, June 18 Last Day of Religious Ed for Summer
Sat, July 1 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-noon
Aug 7-9 Vacation Church School

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas

THE HOLY APOSTLE BARTHOLOMEW

JULY 11

The Holy Apostle Bartholomew was born at Cana of Galilee and was one of the Twelve Apostles of Christ. After the Descent of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, it fell by lot to the holy Apostles Bartholomew and Philip (November 14) to preach the Gospel in Syria and Asia Minor. In their preaching they wandered through various cities, and then met up again. Accompanying the holy Apostle Philip was his sister, the holy virgin Saint Mariamne.

Traversing the cities of Syria and Myzia, they underwent much hardship and tribulations, they were stoned and they were locked up in prison. In one of the villages they met up with the Apostle John the Theologian, and together they set off to Phrygia. In the city of Hieropolis by the power of their prayers they destroyed an enormous viper, which the pagans worshipped as a god. The holy Apostles Bartholomew and Philip with his sister confirmed their preaching with many miracles.

At Hieropolis there lived a man by the name of Stachys, who had been blind for 40 years. When he received healing, he then believed in Christ and was baptized. News of this spread throughout the city, and a multitude of the people thronged to the house where the apostles were staying. The sick and those beset by demons were released from their infirmities, and many were baptized. The city prefect gave orders to arrest the preachers and throw them in prison, and to burn down the house of Stachys. At the trial pagan priests came forth with the complaint that the strangers were turning people away from the worship of the ancestral gods.

Thinking that perhaps some sort of magic power was hidden away in the clothes of the apostles, the prefect gave

orders to strip them. But Saint Mariamne became like a fiery torch before their eyes, and none dared touch her. They sentenced the saints to death. The Apostle Philip was crucified upside down. Suddenly there was an earthquake, and a fissure in the earth swallowed up the prefect of the city, together with the pagan priests and many of the people. Others took fright and rushed to take down the apostles from the crosses. Since the Apostle Bartholomew had not been suspended very high, they soon managed to take him down. The Apostle Philip, however, had died. After making Stachys Bishop of Hieropolis, the Apostle Bartholomew and Saint Mariamne left the city and moved on.

Preaching the Word of God, Mariamne arrived in Lykaonia, where she peacefully died (February 17). The Apostle Bartholomew went to India, where he translated the Gospel of Matthew into their language, and he converted many pagans to Christ. He also visited Greater Armenia (the country between the River Kura and the upper stretches of the Tigrus and Euphrates Rivers), where he worked many miracles and healed the daughter of King Polymios from the demons afflicting her. In gratitude, the king sent gifts to the apostle, who refused to accept them, saying that he sought only the salvation of the souls of mankind.

Then Polymios together with his wife, daughter, and many of those close to them accepted Baptism. And people from more than ten cities of Greater Armenia followed their example. But through the intrigues of the pagan priests, the Apostle Bartholomew was seized by the king's brother Astiagus in the city of Alban (now the city of Baku), and crucified upside down. But even

from the cross he did not cease to proclaim the good news about Christ the Savior. Finally, on orders from Astiagus, they flayed the skin from the Apostle Bartholomew and cut off his head. Believers placed his relics in a leaden coffin and buried him.

In about the year 508 the holy relics of the Apostle Bartholomew were transferred to Mesopotamia, to the city of Dara. When the Persians seized the city in 574, Christians took the relics of the Apostle Bartholomew with them when

A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

ETERNAL, SELF-SUBSISTENT GOD, **F**ATHER, SON, AND HOLY

SPIRIT: The entire creation that surrounds and includes us glorifies your ineffable divinity: The rustling of the leaves in the breeze and the buzz of insects in the fields, the warmth of the sun and the chill of the frost, the beauty of a smile and the anguished expression of those in pain. The genius of your wisdom and goodness whispers to us, no matter where we turn, gently telling us that this wondrous creation is the arena of our struggle for holiness and wholeness. And what is this struggle, if not coming to know, love, and serve you in all our brothers and sisters, if not becoming like you, servants and lovers of all! Today, as we celebrate the memory of all those who engaged in this struggle before us, we ask you to help us do the same, so that, with them, we, too, may one day enjoy your presence in the eternal kingdom.

For you are indeed our God, and we give you glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.



THE HOLY APOSTLE BARTHOLOMEW

they fled to the shores of the Black Sea. But since the enemy overtook them there, they were compelled to leave the coffin behind, and the pagans threw it into the sea. By the power of God the coffin miraculously arrived on the island of Lipari. In the ninth century, after the taking of the island by the Arabs, the holy relics were transferred to the Neapolitan city of Beneventum in Italy, and in the tenth century part of the relics were transferred to Rome.

The holy Apostle Bartholomew is mentioned in the Life of Saint Joseph the Hymnographer (April 4). Having received from a certain man part of the relics of the Apostle Bartholomew, Saint Joseph conveyed them to his own monastery near Constantinople, and he built a church in the name of the Apostle Bartholomew, placing in it a portion of the relics. Saint Joseph ardently desired to compose hymns of praise in honor of the saint, and he fervently besought God to grant him the ability to do so.

On the Feast day in memory of the Apostle Bartholomew, Saint Joseph saw him at the altar. He beckoned to Joseph

and took the holy Gospel from the altar table and pressed it to his bosom with the words, "May the Lord bless you, and may your song delight the whole world." And from that time Saint Joseph began to write hymns and canons to adorn not only the Feast day of the Apostle Bartholomew, but also the Feast days of many other saints, composing about 300 canons in all. Saints John Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, Epiphanius of Cyprus and certain other teachers of the Church regard the Apostle Bartholomew as being the same person as Nathanael (John 1:45-51, 21:2).



NAMEDAYS

June 11

The Sunday of All the Saints

Amalia Polymeros

June 27

The Holy Myrrh-bearer Joanna

Joanne V. Prizio

June 29

The Holy Apostles Peter and Paul

Patrick Disho

Petraq Dragoti

Paul Dymek

Petrika Lolo

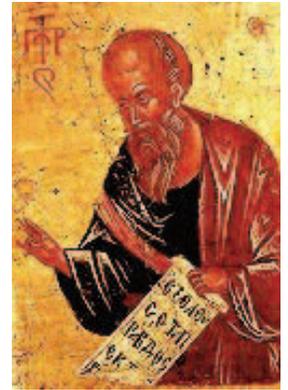
Kenneth Paul Maynard

Paul Soter

Peter Toda

Peter Demetri Tsongalis

The Prophet Elisha (Elis-
seus), remem-
bered on June
14th, the son
of Saphat, was
from the town
of Abel-me-
oul and had
been a hus-
bandman.



In the year 908 B.C., at God's command, the Prophet Elias anointed him to be Prophet in his stead. This happened while Elisseus was plowing his land, having twelve oxen under yoke. Straightway, Elisseus slew the oxen and cooked them, using the wooden plough and the other instruments of husbandry as firewood; then he gave the oxen as food to the people. Bidding farewell to his parents, he followed Elias and served him until the latter was taken up as it were into Heaven (see July 20). When Elisseus received his teacher's mantle and the grace of his prophetic spirit twofold, he demonstrated whose disciple he was through the miracles he wrought and through all that is related of him in the Fourth Book of Kings. He departed full of days and was buried in Samaria, about the year 839 B.C. But even after his death God glorified him; for after the passage of a year, when some Israelites were carrying a dead man for burial and suddenly saw a band of Moabites, they cast the dead man on the grave of the Prophet. No sooner had the dead man touched the Prophet's bones, than he came to life and stood on his feet (IV Kings 13:20-21). Mentioning this, Jesus the Son of Sirach says, "He did wonders in his life, and at his death his works were marvelous" (Ecclus. 48:14). It is because of such marvels that the faithful have reverence for the relics of the Saints (see also Jan. 16). His name means "God is savior."

WHAT'S THE PRICE OF DISCIPLESHIP?

This is the first Sunday after Pentecost, the Sunday when we remember all of those holy persons who from the beginning of time down through the present had lived a godly life. People who lived the life in Christ with love and holiness, but may not have been formally recognized by the Church. These are the good men and women who generally lived quiet and ordinary lives, and took up the Christian yoke. Through their personal example they influenced and changed many of those around them, family and friends, certainly, but also strangers and even enemies. We are all called to holiness, and God has provided us with many examples for us to emulate.

The Gospel reading for this Sunday begins with these powerful and even terrifying words: “Everyone who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 10:32-33). The Lord means more than just testifying with words; he’s speaking of how those of us who wish to follow him should live as beacons of light.

To drive the point home rather dramatically, he speaks of how this might lead to tension and conflict even in our most intimate relationships. We tend to forget that he said he had come not to bring peace, but a sword; to set father against son, and daughter against mother. Finally he said: “He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it” (v. 38). He uses life-and-death language to give us an appreciation of the seriousness of our choices.

The Lord tells us what the price of discipleship is. He shows us the choice, but leaves the decision to us. Jesus introduces a revolutionary shift in human history by telling us that a choice for God is infinitely more valu-



able than following the conventions of society. This is why he uses family relationships as examples. Family relationships are “hard-wired” on every level. Even in our modern social context, we would be hard-pressed to test these relationships, but in the social and cultural context out of which the Lord is speaking, the conventions of these relationships were almost never violated. A son never openly disobeyed his father. A daughter never openly disobeyed her mother. These sorts of things were simply inconceivable. And if they were violated, a heavy price was paid. Our Lord’s words must have seemed unbelievable and even scandalous to those who first heard them.

Once we appreciate how revolutionary Jesus’ words were to the first disciples, we can begin to understand why he puts the choice of discipleship in terms of life and death: “He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it” (v. 38). In order to be worthy of him we are asked to put everything on the line. Suddenly, each choice we make takes on this life and death dimension. By understanding the true significance of the choices we make, we can appreciate how precious those around us are; how precious we are to God. When we fol-

low Christ, and love God and our neighbor, everything can change. We can change.

What the Lord was asking of his first followers was not an easy thing, never forget this. If those of us living today see Jesus’ call as something radically hard, it was even harder for them. We who have been raised to think of ourselves first as individuals and then only, as an afterthought, connected to family and friends, even we would find it difficult to choose between our intimate relations and God, family and friend. Think how hard it was for them to leave wife and children, father and mother, in order to preach Jesus and the Good News. It is not a decision that one takes lightly.

However, most of us who have chosen to follow Christ likely will never be asked to make so great a sacrifice. Most of us have parents who also love God. Generally speaking, the society in which we live accepts Christians. It is not very likely that we will be asked to be martyrs. But, this *has* been asked of many, and this ultimate sacrifice *has* been made by some, even in our own time. Look at the world around us. If we were really prophetic, as Christ was prophetic; if we really lived our lives and interacted with others as He did, don’t you think that people would be angry at us? And, while some might feel drawn to follow Christ’s call, might not others hate us or even want to kill us?

Remember though, the transformation that our Lord asks of us is an internal one, a personal one. Today, many who call themselves Christians demand transformations in others. Yet, our Lord tells us that we are to judge only ourselves, and it is hard enough to that. However, if we change ourselves, the Lord promises others will follow.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA