

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN JUNE 18, 2017

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

THE FAST OF Ss PETER & PAUL began last Monday June 12th and ends with the Feast on June 29th.

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. **Thanks to Deborah Sedares who donated the expenses for this month's meal. God bless her and her family!** Our next scheduled meal is **August 18th**. Contact Fr. Nick if you'd like to help prepare the meals or help underwrite the costs.

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

THIS SUNDAY'S COFFEE HOUR is sponsored by **Eleanor Sedares** in memory of her husband **Thomas**, and in honor of her grandchildren **Thomas** and **Alexis** who recently graduated from college.

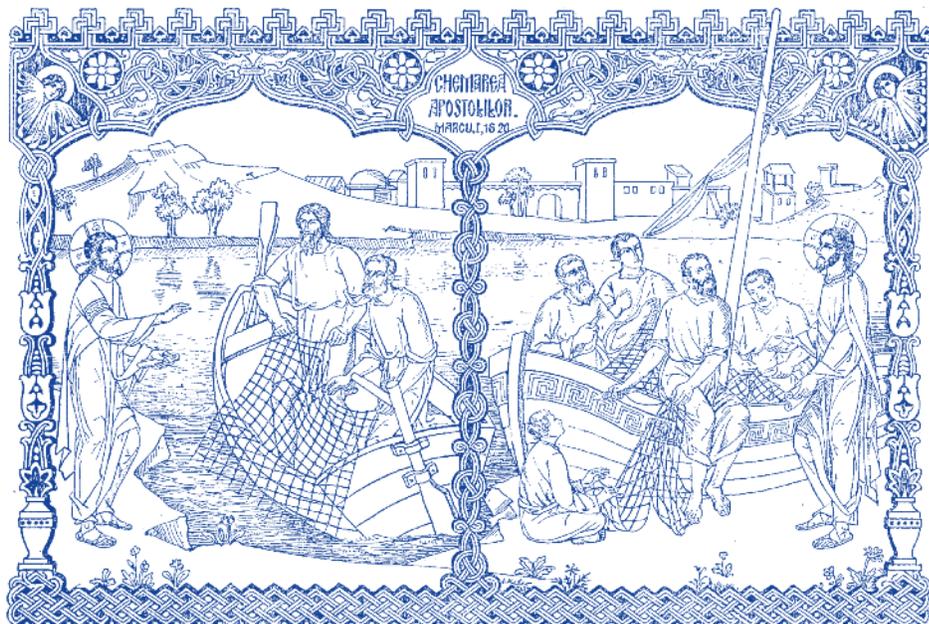
GREETERS TEAM 4:

DIMITRI SAFFRON AND SEAN FAHEY

COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP CREW D:

ILIANA & SEAN FAHEY,
DIMITRI SAFFRON & MACLYNN TROJAN
CHRISTOS & SPIRO SPYROU

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

THE FEAST OF ALL SAINTS OF NORTH AMERICA AND ROMANIA

APOSTOLIC READING: ROMANS 2:10-16 ☩ **GOSPEL: MATTHEW 4:18-20**

TONE 1 ☩ **MATINS GOSPEL 2**

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

HOLY TRINITY'S FIRST SUMMER COOKOUT will be **Thursday, June 22nd** at 11:30pm. Everyone's invited! But please RSVP **Serena Shields** at: 508-852-1000 or by e-mail: shields@htnr.net

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.

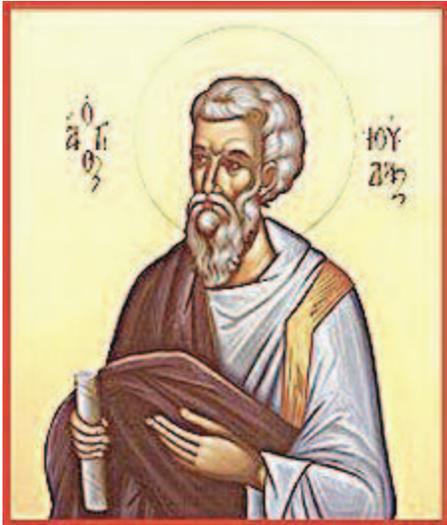
DATES TO REMEMBER

- June 12-29 Fast of Ss Peter & Paul
- 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
- Fri, Aug 18 Mustard Seed Meal, 5:00 pm

34 GOLD STREET, SHREWSBURY, MA 01545-6238 ♦ VOICE: 508.845.0088 ♦ FAX: 508.845.8850

E-MAIL: FRNICK@STNICHOLASCHURCH.ORG ♦ WEB: WWW.STNICHOLASCHURCH.ORG

A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas



THE HOLY APOSTLE JUDE
JUNE 19

The Holy Apostle Jude, one of the twelve apostles of Christ, is descended from King David and Solomon, and was the son of Righteous Joseph the Betrothed by his first wife.

The Holy Apostle John the Theologian writes in his Gospel, "... neither did his brethren believe in Him" (John. 7:5). Saint Theophylact, Archbishop of Bulgaria, explains this passage. He says that at the beginning of the Lord Jesus Christ's earthly ministry, Joseph's sons, Jude among them, did not believe in His divine nature. Tradition says that when Saint Joseph returned from Egypt, he began to divide his possessions among his sons. He wanted to allot a share to Christ the Savior, born miraculously and incorruptibly from the All-Pure Virgin Mary. The brothers were opposed to this because Jesus was born of another mother. Only James, later called "The Brother of God," offered to share his portion with Him.

Jude came to believe in Christ the Savior as the awaited Messiah, and he followed Him and was chosen as one of the twelve Apostles. Mindful of his sin, the Apostle Jude considered himself unworthy to be called the Lord's brother, and in his Epistle he calls himself merely

the brother of James.

The Holy Apostle Jude also had other names: the Evangelist Matthew terms him "Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddeus" (Mt. 10:3). The Holy Evangelist Mark also calls him Thaddeus (Mark 3:18), and in the Acts of the Holy Apostles he is called Barsabas (Acts 15: 22). This was customary at that time.

After the Ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, Saint Jude traveled about preaching the Gospel. He propagated the faith in Christ at first in Judea, Galilee, Samaria and Idumaia, and later in the lands of Arabia, Syria and Mesopotamia. Finally, he went to the city of Edessa. Here he finished the work that was not completed by his predecessor, Saint Thaddeus, Apostle of the Seventy (August 21). There is a tradition that Saint Jude went to Persia, where he wrote his catholic Epistle in Greek. In the Epistle much profound truth was expressed in a few words.

Saint Jude's Epistle speaks about the Holy Trinity, about the Incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, about the good and bad angels, and about the dread Last Judgment. The Apostle urges believers to guard themselves against fleshly impurity, to be diligent in prayer, faith and love, to convert the lost to the path of salvation, and to guard themselves from the teachings of heretics. He also says that it is not enough just to be converted to Christianity, but faith must be demonstrated by good works. He cites the rebellious angels and men punished by God (verse 6) to support this.

The Holy Apostle Jude died as a martyr around the year 80 near Mt. Ararat in Armenia, where he was crucified and pierced by arrows.



A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

TODAY, LORD, as we celebrate the memory of all your saints, help us to learn from them: Show us how to be compassionate and kind to one another. Show us how to be generous to all, just as you have been generous to us in Christ, for, like all your holy ones, we, too, must be like him. Inspire us with love, then, and make our love like that of your Christ when he gave himself for us as a fragrant sacrifice.

For you are one to have mercy on us and save us, O God, and we give you glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.



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

FOLLOW ME!

THE ONE THING that distinguishes our Christian faith from other religions and philosophies is the person of Jesus Christ. There have been and will continue to be many prophets and spiritual leaders who teach with profound wisdom, imparting deep spiritual insight, but none of these has asked what Jesus asked and asks of us: Follow me. Be like me.

The Evangelist John gives us an example of the difference between Jesus and all those who came before and after when he speaks of John the Baptizer in the very first verses of his Gospel. He says John was a witness who testifies to the light. He was not himself the light but a testimony to the true light (cf. John 1:7-9).

As we begin the cycle of readings from St. Matthew's Gospel during the weeks after Pentecost, the first thing we encounter is Jesus' call to Andrew and Peter: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19). He will repeat this same call many times during his three-year ministry. It is repeated at every baptism, at every Liturgy, and in every prayer. Jesus calls us and waits for our response.

It is a personal call, not a general call. Jesus speaks to each of us directly. He isn't saying this generally, to everyone in the audience, like one would in speech. This is not how he addresses us. Rather, He is directing his question to each of us, personally. He is asking each and every one of us, personally, to follow him. No one is excluded from his call, but neither is it a generic call. He calls each of us by name.

One has to be careful these days when speaking of the Lord's personal call. Modern Christian movements have misunderstood and even twisted what this personal call means. In a society where each of us is insisting that we're autonomous individuals with next to no responsibilities toward one to another,

speaking of a personal call and personal relationship can be easily misinterpreted. It seems to our ear to be an exclusive call: to me and no one else. But, that is never what God means.

Because of the recent history with these 'Christian' movements, one needs only to say the words: "I have a personal relationship with Jesus," and people immediately classify you as a particular type of Christian. But, this type of personal relationship, just as a personal salvation — "I was saved on Monday last!" — is a deep misunderstanding of the type of relationship with God to which Jesus calls us.

Jesus came to heal our relationship with God our Father. Adam and Eve planted the seed of our distance from God, but we contribute to it through our own actions. Jesus came to show us how to undo this very damage. He became one with us. He spoke to us like no one had ever spoken before. He taught us the wisdom of God and His love for us through stories and metaphors. He showed us by his own example how to change. And, He called us, by name, to follow him and to do as he has done. Read through the Holy Scriptures. You will notice that God always calls people by name. We truly become persons when we are addressed by our name. The first thing that parents do is name their child. We feel compelled to name even our pets. When we wanted to dehumanize someone we call them by number or function. Our name gives us dignity.

One of the hardest things to explain about our Christian faith is our understanding of the Holy Trinity. To many, including many Christians, it seems confusing at best and polytheism at worse. But the Church did not come to its understanding of a Tri-Personal God by theological speculation. It was through the direct experience of God: how He revealed Himself to the world

and worked in our lives. During hymns sung and prayers offered at Pentecost we said as much. We can know God personally and follow His call because when He created us in His image He gave us this gift of personhood.

When we hear and answer Jesus' call, we start to heal our own brokenness. The problem with many modern Christian movements is that they don't want to begin in the quietness of the heart. They want to fill us with loud noises. St. Seraphim of Sarov famously said: Save yourself and you save thousands. What this means is that the only way to help others is to focus on your own sins. St. Seraphim is like the flight attendant who says at the beginning of the flight: secure your own oxygen mask before you try to assist your neighbor.

One reason the social agenda of many "Christian" conservatives can seem irritating stems from the hollowness of the messenger. A truly holy person — the person who lives the Lord's call — speaks quietly and gently. His or her authority is rooted in the heart. They respect our personhood, the image of God that we carry, even when we ourselves seem to have lost it.

There is a powerful moment at the end of John's Gospel when the Lord is walking on the beach with Peter. He asks him three times, and in a variety of ways, if Peter loves him. It is the Jesus' way of lifting off of Peter's shoulder his threefold denial of Christ. Finally Jesus says to him: "Follow me." Peter turned and saw John some steps behind them and asks the Lord: "What about him?" Jesus said to Peter, that's up to me. You? Follow me! (cf. John 21:15-24)

So much of what passes for Christian morality is concern about someone else's behavior. Yet, Jesus offers us so many ways to lift the sin weighing on our shoulders and darkening our hearts, if we'd only listen. Follow me!

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA