

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN

JUNE 25, 2017

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

THIS SUNDAY'S COFFEE HOUR is sponsored in honor of **Mark Stamoulis** by his Godparents. And, for the health of **Sohir Bekhiut** by her family.

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/

GREETERS TEAM 5:

DEBORAH SEDARES & EVAN STAMOULIS

COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP CREW A:

MARGARITE LANDRY,
CHRISTINE MASTERJOHN

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

APOSTOLIC READING: ROMANS 5:1-10 ☩ GOSPEL: MATTHEW 6:22-33

(CONCERNING THE CARES OF LIFE)

TONE 2 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL: 3

DATES TO REMEMBER

- June 12-29 Fast of Ss Peter & Paul
- Sat, July 1 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-noon
- Sun, July 30 St. Michael Southbridge Festival
- Aug 7-9 Vacation Church School
- Fri, Aug 18 Mustard Seed Meal, 5:00 pm

NAMEDAYS

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

Paul Soter

Peter Toda

Peter Demetri Tsongalis



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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas

CHURCH ATTENDANCE AND HEALTH

People who attend services at a church, synagogue or mosque are less stressed and live longer, according to new research from Vanderbilt University.

“Sometimes in health science we tend to look at those things that are always negative and say, ‘Don’t do this. Don’t do that,’” said Marino Bruce, a social and behavioral scientist and associate director of the Center for Research on Men’s Health at Vanderbilt. The new research findings, however, are “encouraging individuals to participate in something,” he said.

According to the study, middle-aged (ages 40 to 65) adults — both men and women — who attend church or other houses of worship reduce their risk for mortality by 55 percent. “Our findings support the overall hypothesis that increased religiosity — as determined by attendance at worship services — is associated with less stress and enhanced longevity,” said Bruce, a research associate professor of medicine, health and society at Vanderbilt. He is also a Baptist minister.

“We’ve found that being in a place where you can flex those spiritual muscles is actually beneficial for your health,” Bruce said. The effects of attendance at worship services remained after education, poverty, health insurance and social support status were all taken into consideration, Bruce said. The study did not address the effects of frequency of worship.

Read more about this study at: <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0177618>



THE NATIVITY OF THE HOLY
JOHN THE BAPTIST
JUNE 24TH

The Gospel (Luke 1: 5) relates that the righteous parents of Saint John the Baptist, the Priest Zachariah and Elizabeth (September 5), lived in the ancient city of Hebron. They reached old age without having children, since Elizabeth was barren. Once, Saint Zachariah was serving in the Temple at Jerusalem and saw the Archangel Gabriel, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. He predicted that Saint Zachariah would father a son, who would announce the Savior, the Messiah, awaited by the Old Testament Church. Zachariah was troubled, and fear fell upon him. He had doubts that in old age it was possible to have a son, and he asked for a sign. It was given to him, and it was also a chastisement for his unbelief. Zachariah was struck speechless until the time of the fulfillment of the archangel’s words.

Saint Elizabeth came to be with child, and fearing derision at being pregnant so late in life, she kept it secret for five months. Then her relative, the Virgin Mary, came to share with her Her

own joy. Elizabeth, “filled with the Holy Spirit,” was the first to greet the Virgin Mary as the Mother of God. Saint John leaped in his mother’s womb at the visit of the Most Holy Virgin Mary and the Son of God incarnate within Her.

Soon Saint Elizabeth gave birth to a son, and all the relatives and acquaintances rejoiced together with her. On the eighth day, in accordance with the Law of Moses, he was circumcised and was called John. Everyone was amazed, since no one in the family had this name. When they asked Saint Zachariah about this, he motioned for a tablet and wrote on it: “His name is John.” Immediately his tongue was loosed, and Saint Zachariah glorified God. He also prophesied about the Coming into the world of the Messiah, and of his own son John, the Forerunner of the Lord (Luke. 1: 68-79).

After the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ and the worship of the shepherds and the Magi, wicked king Herod gave orders to kill all male infants. Hearing about this, Saint Elizabeth fled into the wilderness and hid in a cave. Saint Zachariah was at Jerusalem and was doing his priestly service in the Temple. Herod sent soldiers to him to find out the abode of the infant John and his mother. Zachariah answered that their whereabouts were unknown to him, and he was killed right there in the Temple. Righteous Elizabeth continued to live in the wilderness with her son and she died there. The child John, protected by an angel, dwelt in the wilderness until the time when he came preaching repentance, and was accounted worthy to baptize the Lord.

CONSIDER THE LILIES OF THE FIELD

THE selection for this week's Gospel reading is taken from St. Matthew (6:22-33). It is toward the end of the Evangelist's account of the Sermon on the Mount. I find there to be no more beautiful and tranquil passage in all of the Gospels than this one. With but a few sentences and images, the Lord manages to challenge us to live up to our divine potential, even as he points out how obvious and easy the path is — that is if our heart is open to following it.

The whole of Sermon on the Mount is remarkable, especially as told us by St. Matthew. Some have likened the Lord's Sermon on the Mount to Moses when he descended Mount Sinai and presented the Law to the children of Israel. Here, on this Mount, the Lord gives his people a new Law — or perhaps more accurately—the fullness and completion of the Law he first gave to his people.

This selection from the Sermon on the Mount begins with the Lord talking about the eye (v. 22). He says that if our eye is sound then our body will be filled with light, and if it is unhealthy we will be filled with darkness. As we know from our own experience, everything depends on how we look at things: the "sights" we allow into our minds and our hearts; the things we allow our gaze to dwell on; the perspectives we allow to harden in our souls. The lens through which we look at things colors our outlook, and eventually our salvation.

He tells us that no one can serve two masters (v. 24). We have to choose between following God, or the wealth and power of this world (mammon). He reminds us that we shouldn't try to fool ourselves, because over time we will either love the one and hate the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. These words are no less true today as when the Lord first spoke them. We can

feel temptations that draws us to put the desire for wealth and fame above our love for God. They are as real today as at any other time in history. We could go further. We've seen countless examples where the desire for wealth and fame has overshadow even love for family and friends; where these passions have brought even good people, and those around them to ruin. The headlines shout out this news to us every day. to We see it every day. The Lord reminds us in a very simple and direct way: we will have to chose. We can't have it both ways.

The root cause of these temptations is the fear of not having enough to eat and clothing necessary to keep us warm. Of course, like every passion, there is never 'enough.' But it begins with a simple worry. The Lord admonishes us not to be anxious about even the most basic necessities of life: food, drink, clothing (v. 25). He wants us to keep everything in perspective. While we know that life is more than food and our bodies are more than clothing, we get consumed by our fear and our greed. But he points out the obvious. Look to the birds of the air, he says, who take no care for these things yet our heavenly Father feeds them all, as well as the lilies which God has made more splendid than Solomon in all his glory. Remember: if our Father values the birds of the air and the lilies of the field in such a fashion, how much more does He value us? We need to stop worrying about the day-to-day things. We need to keep our mind and our heart on the important things. We need to trust.

This is where I find my comfort. The Lord asks us to look around at the creation and marvel at God's loving care for even the grasses of the field. He reminds us that God is our loving Father. He

teaches us to call him Abba — "Daddy." He says that our Father knows all the things that we need and He will give them us, so we should stop being anxious about them. All we need to do is trust.

So where do we find this trust? "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness," the Lord challenges us, "and all of these things shall be yours as well" (v. 33).

This choice is before us each and every day. Recognize it. Commit to it each morning. When we see a bird perching on a tree, or the wild flowers growing through cracks in the pavement, we can remind ourselves of our Father's love for us, and breathe a sigh of relief, and be comforted.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA

A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

LET WISDOM lift our hearts, O God of wisdom, and let prudence purify them. The workings of your divine providence, your just judgments, and the reasons for them defy our abilities to understand. Grant us, therefore, that we may learn self-discipline and arrive at some wisdom in this short life of ours.

For you can enable us to do what we must, O God, and we give you glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.