

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN

JULY 2, 2017

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

A PITA DOUGH ROLLING session, **THIS COMING Saturday, July 8th**, 9:00 am to noon. Please mark your calendars. **Questions?** talk to Chris Toda, 508-832-6271. Also, let her know if you'll be coming. **Remember: There's a job for everyone!**

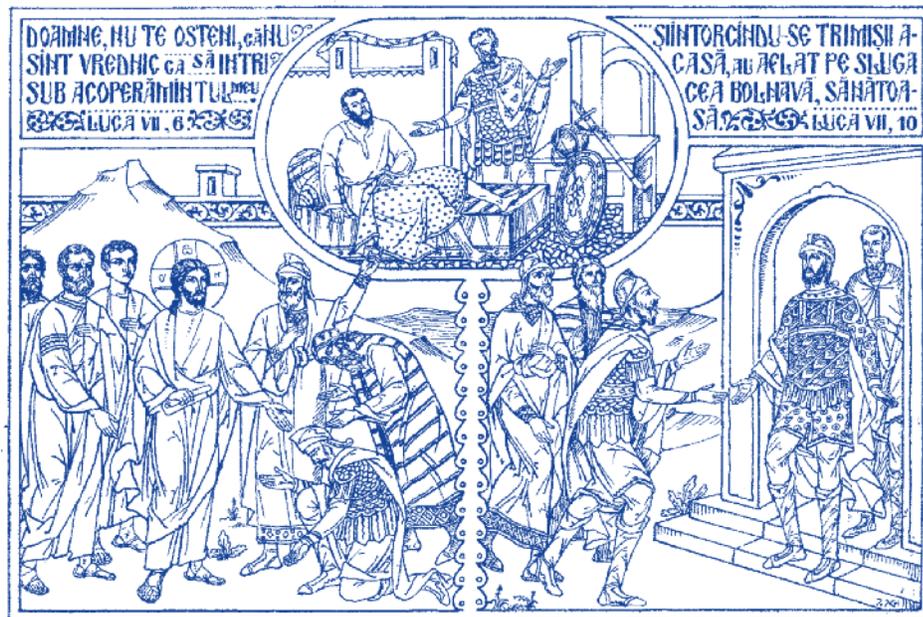
THANKS TO THE FOOD PANTRY VOLUNTEERS for working the Orthodox Food Center on behalf of our parish yesterday. Our regular commitment is the first Saturday of the month from 9am to noon. About 4 people are needed. If you can help in this worthwhile ministry, please speak with Lisa Mielnicki or Nicole Apostola. Our next Saturday is August 5th.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO HEAR FOR A SUNDAY SERMON? During these summer weeks, Fr. Nick will answer your questions, address comments or speak on suggested topics during the sermon. This is your chance to ask the question you've always wondered about. No question is too simple or silly, and while some questions may be difficult or complex, he'll give it his best shot. **There are forms at the candles or you may e-mail your suggestion to him.**

GREETERS TEAM 1:
V. GERALD BELBA AND MARGARITE LANDRY

COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP CREW B:
KARADIMITRIOU/KALPIDO FAMILY

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

APOSTOLIC READING: ROMANS 6:18-23 ☩ GOSPEL: MATTHEW 8:5-13

(JESUS HEALS THE CENTURION'S SERVANT)

TONE 3 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 4

WE CELEBRATE TWO MEMORIALS THIS WEEK.

- For **Dino Sotiropoulos**, grandfather of Jackie Cavanaugh, fallen asleep five years.
- For the **departed members of the Manescu family.**

May their memory be eternal!

THIS SUNDAY'S COFFEE HOUR is sponsored by the **Manescu family** in memory of their family members fallen asleep: **Ion Constantin, Maria and Constantin. May their memory be eternal!**

COMMUNITY NEWS

FREE FUN FRIDAYS are back for the 9th season. There are more than 85 participating venues across the Commonwealth. For more information go to the Highland Street

Foundation site: www.highlandstreet.org/programs/free-fun-fridays. The **Museum of Russian Icons** in Clinton is participating. Their **Friday is July 14th**. It's free. Visit their site: www.museumofrussianicons.org/event/free-fun-friday/ for more information.

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 ac-

DATES TO REMEMBER

Sat, July 8 Pita Dough Rolling, 9 am-noon
Sun, July 30 St. Michael Southbridge Festival
Sat, Aug 5 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-noon
Aug 7-9 Vacation Church School
Fri, Aug 18 Mustard Seed Meal, 5:00 pm

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolis of the Americas

tivities for your children. *Questions?* see
or e-mail: Valarie Stamoulis (valarie.sta-
moulis@gmail.com); cell: 617-803-3798.

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

SAVE THE DATE! Holy Trinity's an-
nual 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/

A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

ALMIGHTY, EVERLASTING FA-
THER: Now that we have
remembered one and all in our
morning office during this com-
memoration of the holy apostles, we
remind ourselves, at the start of this
new day, that, like them, we struggle
in the same arena of life. Therefore,
Lord, help us to be done with run-
ning after barren and vapid fancies
and turn, instead, to the noble and
manifold tradition we have received,
that we may come to understand
what is good and pleasing in your
sight. By the intercessions of your
holy apostles, enable us to fix our
thoughts on the blood of Christ and
to realize how precious that blood is,
for, when it was shed for our salva-
tion, you opened the path for para-
dise for all people everywhere.

For yours is dominion, and yours is
the kingdom and the power and the
glory, Father, Son, and Holy spirit:
now and forever, and unto ages of
ages. Amen.

NAMEDAYS

July 7

The Holy Martyr Kyriaki

Kyri Sedares

July 11

The Blessed Olga, Princess of Russia

Olga Lolo

Olga Thanas

July 12

*St. Veronica, the woman healed by
our Lord Jesus*

Veronica Pandaru

July 16

The Holy Martyr Julia of Carthage

Julia Donabed

July 17

*The Holy Great Martyr Marina
(Margareta) of Antioch in Pisidia*

Margarite Landry

July 20

The Holy Prophet Elijah (Elias)

Elias James Christo

Irli Ilie Durmillari

Louis Evan Stamoulis

July 24

The Holy Great Martyr Christina

Christine Masterjohn

July 26

The Holy Martyr Parascheve

Premtina Thamel





REFLECTIONS ON SS PETER & PAUL

The divinely-blessed Peter was from Bethsaida of Galilee. He was the son of Jonas and the brother of Andrew the First-called. He was a fisherman by trade, unlearned and poor, and was called Simon; later he was renamed Peter by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, Who looked at him and said, “Thou art Simon the son of Jonas; thou shalt be called Cephas (which is by interpretation, Peter)” (John 1:42). On being raised by the Lord to the dignity of an Apostle and becoming inseparable from Him as His zealous disciple, he followed Him from the beginning of His preaching of salvation up until the very Passion, when, in the court of Caiaphas the high priest, he denied Him thrice because of his fear of the Jews and of the danger at hand. But again, after many bitter tears, he received complete for-

givenness of his transgression. After the Resurrection of Christ and the descent of the Holy Spirit, he preached in Judea, Antioch, and certain parts of Asia, and finally came to Rome, where he was crucified upside down by Nero, and thus he ascended to the eternal habitations about the year 66 or 68, leaving two Catholic (General) Epistles to the Church of Christ.

Paul, the chosen vessel of Christ, the glory of the Church, the Apostle of the Nations and teacher of the whole world, was a Jew by race, of the tribe of Benjamin, having Tarsus as his homeland. He was a Roman citizen, fluent in Greek, an expert in knowledge of the Law, a Pharisee, born of a Pharisee, and a disciple of Gamaliel, a Pharisee and notable teacher of the Law in Jerusalem. For this cause, from the beginning, Paul was a most fervent zealot for the traditions of the Jews and a great persecutor of the Church of Christ; at that time, his name was Saul (Acts 22:3-4).

In his great passion of rage and fury against the disciples of the Lord, he went to Damascus bearing letters of introduction from the high priest. His intention was to bring the disciples of Christ back to Jerusalem in bonds. As he was approaching Damascus, about midday there suddenly shone upon him a light from Heaven. Falling on the earth, he heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” And he asked, “Who art Thou, Lord?” And the Lord said, “I am Jesus Whom thou persecutest; it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.” And that heavenly voice and brilliance made him tremble, and he was blinded for a time. He was led by the hand into the city, and on account of a divine revelation to the Apostle Ananias, he was baptized by him, and both his bodily and spiritual eyes were opened to the knowledge of the Sun of Righteousness. And straightway— O wondrous transformation! —

beyond all expectation, he spoke with boldness in the synagogues, proclaiming that “Christ is the Son of God” (Acts 9:1-21).

As for his zeal in preaching the Gospel after these things had come to pass, as for his unabating labors and afflictions of diverse kinds, the wounds, the prisons, the bonds, the beatings, the stonings, the shipwrecks, the journeys, the perils on land, on sea, in cities, in wildernesses, the continual vigils, the daily fasting, the hunger, the thirst, the nakedness, and all those other things that he endured for the Name of Christ, and which he underwent before nations and kings and the Israelites, and above all, his care for all the churches, his fiery longing for the salvation of all, whereby he became all things to all men, that he might save them all if possible, and because of which, with his heart aflame, he continuously traveled throughout all parts, visiting them all, and like a bird of heaven flying from Asia and Europe, the West and East, neither staying nor abiding in any one place — all these things are related incident by incident in the Book of the Acts, and as he himself tells them in his Epistles. In all these things his teaching proved to be a spiritual trumpet, and his speech was seen to be more radiant than the sun, and by these means he clearly sounded forth the word of truth and illumined the ends of the world.

Having completed the work of his ministry, he likewise ended his life in martyrdom when he was beheaded in Rome during the reign of Nero, at the same time, some say, when Peter was crucified.



ONLY SAY THE WORD ...

THE Gospel lesson for this Sunday, the fourth after Pentecost, is the account of the healing of the Centurion's servant, taken from the Gospel according to St. Matthew (8:5-13). St. Luke tells of the same event (7:1-10) and adds a few other details.

The basic story is that there is a Centurion, stationed in Palestine, whose servant has fallen seriously ill. (A centurion was a Roman soldier who commanded a regiment of 100 men.) He is obviously quite worried about this servant. From St. Luke we learn that the Centurion is very pious and had even built a synagogue in the locale. He approaches Jesus and asks him to heal his servant. Jesus offers to go, but the Centurion says, "Only say the word, and my servant will be healed" (v. 8). Jesus marvels at his faith and points this out to everyone. Before proceeding, you might want to pick up your Bible and read both accounts.

There are two aspects of this story I think are important for us to focus on. The first is the most obvious: the immediate faith-response of the Centurion. The second is a bit more subtle: the way in which the Lord elicits the Centurion's faith response. Let me begin with the second.

The Centurion comes to the Lord with his request. In almost every other similar incident the Lord would have simply performed the request (miracle) and sent the person on his or her way. In this instance what does he do? He says to the Centurion: "I will come and heal him" (v. 7). This causes the Centurion to openly confess his confidence that the Lord's word alone is sufficient. He has faith in Jesus.

As far as the understanding the immediate faith-response of the Centurion, St. John Chrysostom draws our at-

tention to other similar instances where the Lord, by subtle provocation, tests the depth of the faith of the person requesting his help. One example he points to is the Canaanite women who approached the Lord asking him to heal her daughter (Matthew 15:22-28). He at first refuses to even speak to her and then, in a startling response, likens her request to taking the children's bread and tossing it to the dogs. Rather than taking issue with the comparison, she rises to the challenge by embracing it, replying that even a dog under a table will feed off of the children's crumbs. Or, in the account of the healing of the ten lepers (Luke 17:12-19), only one returns to thank him, a Samaritan. Rather than praise him directly for this gratitude, the Lord asks after the other nine (who didn't return to thank him), and then calls the Samaritan a foreigner. But the Lord, having tested his faith tells him, "Get up and go on your way, your faith has made you well" (v. 19). The contrast is clear: the 'foreigner' has not only faith, but also gratitude. The other nine were wanting for both.

And then there is the particularly powerful case of Martha after her brother Lazaros had died. When the Lord finally arrives, and she runs out of the house to the place where he and the disciples were resting, says to him: "If you had been here, my brother would not have died ... even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you (John 11:21-22). Jesus questions her, again, testing her faith. He tells her: "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" (v. 25-26).

The faith of the Centurion, by contrast, is immediate and unwavering. It is

brilliant in its purity. He uses his own military training to explain it. He tells the Lord that as

a military officer he knows that if he gives an order it will be carried out. He doesn't need to see it to believe it. In the same way he knows that Jesus has the power to simply "order" the healing and it will be done. He doesn't need to see it to believe it. This is the lesson of total faith we should draw from the Centurion's example.

Finally, there is one more verse worth reflecting on in this story. The Centurion is perhaps a little embarrassed to have such a holy person as Jesus come to his house. He doesn't want to presume too much. And so, he gently says: "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof" (v. 8). The liturgical tradition has taken this verse and applied it to our own unworthiness, especially as we approach the Holy Eucharist. In many of the prayers before Holy Communion we echo the Centurion's humility as we reflect on the amazing reality that by partaking of the Body and Blood of the Savior, God comes to dwell within us. What more appropriate words are there than: "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof"?

We should always strive to be as truly humble and grateful in our hearts, as are the words we speak with our lips. We should prepare a worthy place within us, a roof under which the Lord might find rest. Let us ask the Lord to give us the Centurion's remarkable faith, and especially his humility.



FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA