

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN

OCTOBER 1, 2017

THE FEAST OF THE PROTECTION
OF THE HOLY THEOTOKOS

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES are in session. As a reminder, quiet space to hold Religious Ed classes is limited. It takes very little to disrupt a class of children from lessons their teachers have prepared. **We ask for your cooperation during the time after communion, and during the sermon and coffee-hour.** Please remain in the Church and do not disrupt classes by walking in the coffee hour area, hallway or going to the kitchen.

AN ELECTRONICS/WHITE GOODS, ETC. RECYCLING day is set for **THIS COMING Saturday, October 7th.** If you're able and willing to help, please speak with **Gerry Belba.**

FOOD PANTRY. Help is needed to staff our monthly responsibility at the Orthodox Food Center **THIS COMING Saturday, October 7th, 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.**

PLEASE 'LIKE' OUR PARISH FACE-

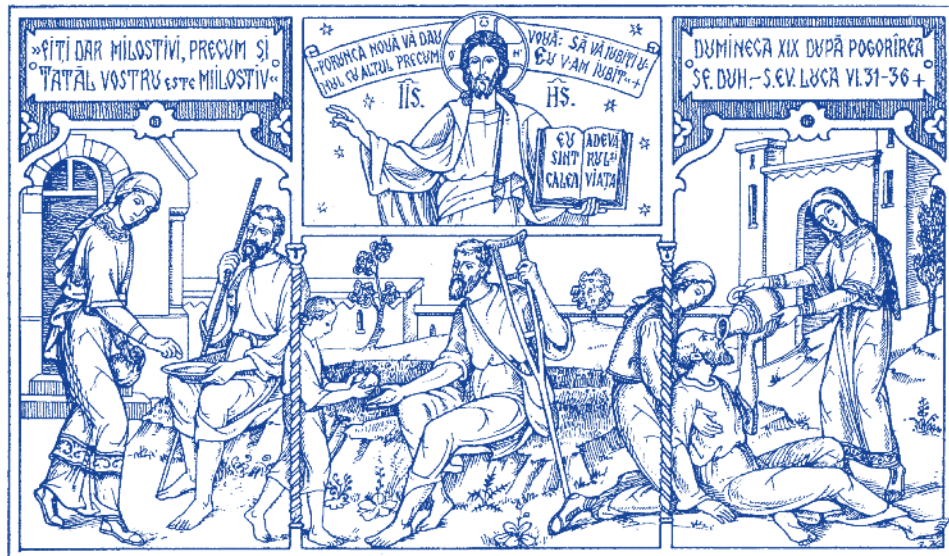
GREETERS TEAM 4:

DIMITRI SAFFRON AND SEAN FAHEY

COFFEE HOUR CREW:

HELP IS NEEDED WITH CLEAN-UP!

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



THE NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

EPISTLE: 2 CORINTHIANS 11:31-12:9 ☩ GOSPEL: LUKE 6:31-36

(JESUS TEACHES: LOVE OF OTHERS, LOVE OF ENEMIES)

TONE 8 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL: 6

BOOK PAGE! It's another way for us to share information about upcoming events on your time-line. We'll also be able to reach a broader audience. Just search for "St. Nicholas Orthodox Church Shrewsbury" and click 'LIKE.'

COFFEE HOUR SPONSORS ARE NEEDED for the coming months. If you would like to sponsor a Coffee Hour please speak with **Presvytera Maria.**

TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR is sponsored by **Dorothea Vasel** in memory of her parents: **Michael & Cynthia Vangel.** **May their memory be eternal!**

UP-COMING

A GIFT BASKET RAFFLE is an additional fundraiser at our **Holiday Marketplace on Saturday, November 18th.** We are asking for donations of **NEW** items all centered on a theme to be assembled into gift baskets. We also welcome cash donations. All items must be received by Novem-

ber 5th. **Questions?** contact **Tim Rucho** (tjruchov@verizon.net)

OUR NEXT MUSTARD SEED MEAL is Friday, October 20th. We'll need help cooking and serving. **Prep** help needed (3 persons), noon Thursday. **Prep** help needed (2 persons), noon Friday. **Serving** help needed (5 persons), 5:30pm Friday. **This month's meal is sponsored by Maria Kalpidou and Kosmas Karadimitriou** in memory of Maria's grandmother, **Maria Albani**, and the members of their family, fallen asleep. **May their memory be eternal!** If you'd like to help with the meal, please talk to Fr. Nick.

DATES TO REMEMBER

- Sat, Oct 7 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-noon e-Recycling, 9am-2pm
- Thurs, Oct 19 Holy Trinity Wine & Food Fest
- Fri, Oct 20 Mustard Seed Meal, 5:00 pm
- Sat, Nov 11 e-Recycling, 9am-2pm
- Sat, Nov 18 Holiday Marketplace, etc.!

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 Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos: “Today the Virgin stands in the midst of the Church, and with choirs of Saints she invisibly prays to God for us. Angels and Bishops venerate Her, Apostles and prophets rejoice together, Since for our sake she prays to the Eternal God!”

This miraculous appearance of the Mother of God occurred in the mid-tenth century in Constantinople, in the Blachernae church where her robe, veil, and part of her belt were preserved after being transferred from Palestine in the fifth century.

On Sunday, October 1, during the All Night Vigil, when the church was overflowing with those at prayer, the Fool-for-Christ Saint Andrew (October 2), at the fourth hour, lifted up his eyes towards the heavens and beheld our most Holy Lady Theotokos coming through the air, resplendent with heavenly light and surrounded by an assembly of the Saints. Saint John the Baptist and the holy Apostle John the Theologian accompanied the Queen of Heaven. On bended knees the Most Holy Virgin tearfully prayed for Chris-

tians for a long time. Then, coming near the Bishop’s Throne, she continued her prayer.

After completing her prayer she took her veil and spread it over the people praying in church, protecting them from enemies both visible and invisible. The Most Holy Lady Theotokos was resplendent with heavenly glory, and the protecting veil in her hands gleamed “more than the rays of the sun.” Saint Andrew gazed trembling at the miraculous vision and he asked his disciple, the blessed Epiphanius standing beside him, “Do you see, brother, the Holy Theotokos, praying for all the world?” Epiphanius answered, “I do see, holy Father, and I am in awe.”

The Ever-Blessed Mother of God implored the Lord Jesus Christ to accept the prayers of all the people calling on His Most Holy Name, and to respond speedily to her intercession, “O Heavenly King, accept all those who pray to You and call on my name for help. Do not let them go away from my icon unheard.”

Saints Andrew and Epiphanius were worthy to see the Mother of God at prayer, and “for a long time observed the Protecting Veil spread over the people and shining with flashes of glory. As long as the Most Holy Theotokos was there, the Protecting Veil was also visible, but with her departure it also became invisible. After taking it with her, she left behind the grace of her visitation.”

On the Feast of the Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos we implore the defense and assistance of the Queen of Heaven, “Remember us in your prayers, O Lady Virgin Mother of God, that we not perish by the increase of our sins. Protect us from every evil and from grievous woes, for in you do we hope, and venerating the Feast of your Protection, we magnify you.”

COMMUNITY NEWS

THE IVERON HAWAIIAN ICON OF THE THEOTOKOS will be at the St. George Cathedral on Anna Street, on **Wednesday, October 18th**, from 7:00 am through the the Paraklesis service at 7:00 pm. The Theotokos has worked many miracles through this Myrrh-streaming image. *It is a great blessing to have this holy image here with us.*

ARCHDEACON SERAPHIM of St. George Cathedral will be ordained to the Holy Priesthood on October 22nd. He has served at St. George for over 25 years. We wish him well, and say with a loud voice: **Axios!**

NOTRE DAME ACADEMY is holding an open house on **Thursday, Oct 22nd at 7:00 pm** for prospective students (young women grades 7-12). For info: www.nda-worc.org, or call: 508-757-6200 x229.

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

HERE IT COMES! Another great **FOOD & WINE FEST** benefiting Holy Trinity Nursing & Rehab Center. Terrific food, music, wine and friends while supporting a great facility. Can’t ask for more! Thursday, Oct. 19th, 5:30-8:30 at St. George Cathedral, 30 Anna St., Worcester. **For tickets see either Irene Tsoules or Margarite Landry.**



LOVE YOUR ENEMIES, DO GOOD, EXPECT NOTHING

THERE comes a point in our growth as children when we begin to understand that words are not just written and spoken ideas, but are meant to take form as an object or an action. Since the time I was old enough to appreciate the important of what Jesus' was saying to us in his words and his deeds, I have struggled to put what he was telling us into practice. This is what it means to be a Christian.

Today's Gospel lesson (Luke 6:31-36) is a portion of St. Luke's account of the Lord's Sermon on the Mount. The reading begins with what's commonly called the Golden Rule: "Do to others as you would have them do to you" (v. 31), and ends with the injunction: "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful" (v. 36). In between those two familiar phrases he offers us the possibility of living in an entirely a new way. He wants us to become a different kind of person. Actually, he wants us become the kind of person he intended us to be.

The center of Jesus' message is love. He speaks about it powerfully. Most people are instinctively drawn to it. But, to love even to those who would do me harm? How do you do this?

His way of speaking about both the Law of Moses as well as the sayings of the Prophets seemed to wipe away a cloud from the eyes of many of those who heard Him. The Scripture they had read and learned now took on a new meaning. People said, he spoke with "authority" (Luke 4:32). He changed the focus of "religion," as they had known and practiced it. God's law was not simply following rules, but listening to our conscience and following our heart, the place where our conscience resides. He said the Law is more than simple justice; it requires self-sacrificial love.

"If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them" (v. 32). The standard is no longer simple parity:



what is done to me, I will do to you. Rather, he asks us to change our thinking from the inside out: how I would like to be treated is how I should treat others. If I am going to follow Christ, then I need to deal with friend or stranger by thinking of them first, putting myself in their shoes, and then acting accordingly.

Clearly, this is not easy. Often we try to find ways to avoid taking what the Lord said too seriously. We tell ourselves that these are simply pious wishes, not really meant to be put fully into practice. We see them as so difficult to achieve that we tell ourselves it is unrealistic to imagine anyone could actually accomplish what is asked.

Or, we think that the Lord was simply teaching a moral code of life, possibly a higher (more "spiritual" in today's language) way of life, but a code that doesn't carry the weight of being God's command; something good to do, but not really required.

However, we have the witness of what Jesus actually did. The Lord's life and the way he lived it is testimony to the truth of what he said. His Death and

Resurrection showed us the power it has to transform everything. The holy men and women who down through the centuries took Jesus' words seriously and lived by them show us that it is possible for us to do the same. We can see that the world becomes a different place when we live the Gospel. People around us can sense this, and come to treat each other with respect. It isn't just monks and nuns who are asked to follow Christ. The truth is that the most important "missionaries" are the good and faithful people of our parish communities who bring the life and light of the Gospel to home, and work, and the supermarket, to each and every place we go, each and every day. The Lord's words are not pious wishes. He lived by them. Christians for millennia have lived by them. We should live by them too.

Our Faith is not a moral code. It is a relationship with the living God. The Lord tells us to not simply *do* good, but rather to *be* perfect (cf. Matthew 5:48). This means that we are called first to a life of holiness and sanctification. Doing good springs from the desire to be like God, to be holy. People say that they don't need faith to be a good person — perhaps. But, how would we know to distinguish between good and evil except that our conscience convicts us? In making us in His image (Genesis 1:26), God made us good, to do good. When we distance ourselves from God, our hearts (conscience) darkens and we lose our way. Without God in our lives we try to make our own way — a way without grounding and direction, no map and no GPS.

So, take the Lord's words seriously. Live them. "Love your enemies, do good, lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High." (v. 35)

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA

NAMEDAYS

October 7

The Holy Martyr Sergius in Syria

Sergis Eleftheriou

October 18

The Holy Apostle & Evangelist Luke

Fr. Luke Veronis

October 20

The Great-martyr Artemius of Antioch

Artemie Gavala

Artemis Gouvelis

October 26

The Holy Great-martyr Dimitrios of Thessalonika

Rev. Fr. Dimitri Moraitis

Dimitri Soterios Apostola

Dhimitra Belica

Dimitri Daniel Christo

James L. Christo

James Demake

Dhimitri Disho

Dimitraq Lolo

Dimitraqi Lolo

Dimitri Michael Saffron

James Seferi

James Evan Stamoulis

James Trakadas

James Vlamis



A GREAT GIFT TO OUR PARISH

OUR HUMBLE PARISH OF **ST. NICHOLAS** has been blessed with a Holy Gift. His Grace Bishop Siluan of the Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Italy has shared with us a relic of our Patron: Saint Nicholas. Moreover, Fr. Daniel Ene, the Dean

of our Eastern Deanery and Secretary of the Archdiocese, commissioned an Icon of St. Nicholas for us, and in which the relic rests.

Some have asked, "What is a relic?" It can be a few things, but in this case it is a sliver of the bones of our beloved Patron. His full remains rest in Bari, Italy where they were taken from Myra in Lycia (present-day Turkey) to Bari, and where they remain today. The sarcophagus that contain his body regularly fills with a clear fragrant oil called Manna that is distributed and used to anoint the myriad of faithful.

We will find a place within our temporary Church space to properly house this wonderful gift so that all can properly venerate the Icon and the Relic of our beloved Patron.

St. Nicholas has always blessed and watched over our community. To have him present with us in this special way is overwhelming! Through his intercessions on our behalf, may our Lord always have mercy on us.

A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

THE demons that abuse us at their whim are beyond counting, O God! They continue to nag at us, forever trying to trip us up by wearing down our resistance more and more, and we must confess that frequently they succeed. But we acknowledge our share of guilt, Lord, and our wrongdoing fills us with dismay. Therefore, come quickly to our aid and reinforce our perseverance.

For you are good and full of love for us, O God, and we give you glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages, amen.

