

# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN NOVEMBER 26, 2017

## THIS WEEK'S NEWS

**OUR ANNUAL FEASTDAY CELEBRATION** will be held **NEXT Sunday, December 3rd**. Reservations for the dinner are due this week! Please sure to get them in.

**GET YOUR FEASTDAY RAFFLE RETURNS IN!** The drawing is next week at the Feastday Celebration. **Questions? George Demake** for tickets and ways to help: [gdemake@charter.net](mailto:gdemake@charter.net) or 774-535-2821.

**CHRISTMAS CARD GREETINGS DEADLINE NEXT WEEK.** Be included in our annual **Community Christmas Card!** Forms have been mailed and also are available at the Candles

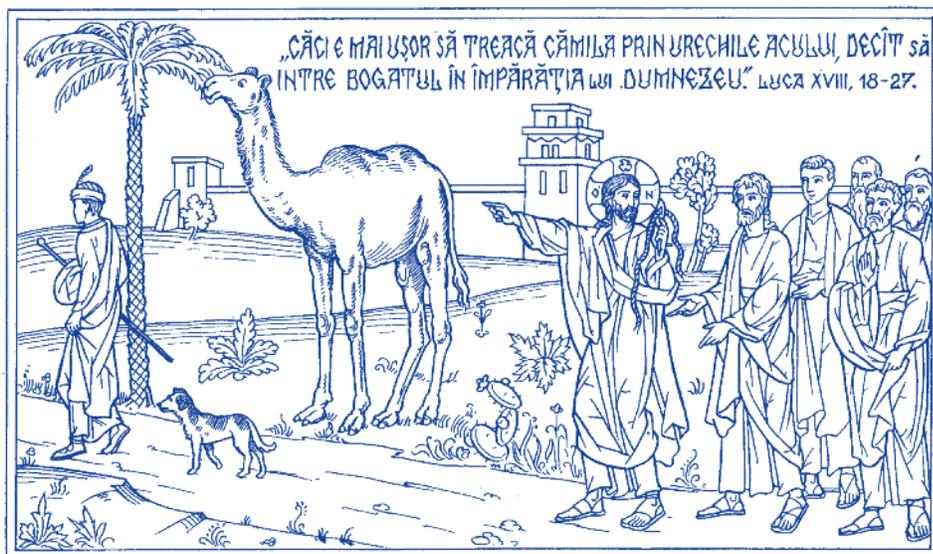
**FOOD PANTRY.** Help is needed to staff our monthly responsibility at the Orthodox Food Center **next Saturday, December 2nd, from 9 am - noon**. About 4 people are needed. Likewise, donations of food are always needed, and may be dropped off at the Food Pantry housed at St. Spyridon Cathedral. If you can help in this worthwhile ministry, please speak with **Lisa Mielnicki or Nicole Apostola**.

**NIKOLLAQ ZHAKA**, loving husband

**GREETERS TEAM 2:**  
ARTIC GAVALA AND V. GERALD BELBA

**COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP CREW:**  
HELP NEEDED! LEND A HAND!

**ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED**



### THE THIRTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

APOSTOLIC READING: COLOSSIANS 3:12-16 ☩ GOSPEL: LUKE 18:18-27

(THE RICH RULER & KEEPING THE COMMANDMENTS)

TONE 8 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 3

of **Natasha Zhaka** and a beloved member of our Community, fell asleep in the Lord this past Monday. We extend our deepest sympathy to Natasha and all of the Zhaka family. **May his memory be eternal!**

**TODAY WE CELEBRATE A MEMORIAL** for the servants of God **Christy Belba**, fallen asleep one year and his wife **Dhoxia Belba**, fallen asleep thirty three years. **May their memory be eternal!**

**TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR** is sponsored by the **Belba Family** in memory of Christy and Doxa.

## HOLY TRINITY NEWS

Each year Holy Trinity Nursing and Rehab gives the Orthodox community the opportunity to **provide Christmas Gifts for the facility's residents**. Our Parish is responsible for providing some of these gifts. You will be asked to purchase and wrap

the gift, and bring it to the Church on Sunday, December 17th. **Eleanor Sedares (508-753-3106)** is coordinating this effort for our parish and can offer suggestions if you need ideas of what to get.

**HOLY TRINITY STAFF** held a food drive and donated 790 lbs. of food to the Orthodox Food Pantry, which was delivered on Friday, November 17th to St. Spyridon Cathedral.

**REMEMBER:** Holy Trinity Nursing and Rehabilitation Center is an Orthodox Charity and relies on your donations to continue its mission of providing the best care possible.

### DATES TO REMEMBER

Sat, Dec 2 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-noon  
Sun, Dec 3 Feastday Celebration  
Tues, Dec 5 Vespers for St. Nicholas 6:00 pm  
Wed, Dec 6 Liturgy for St. Nicholas, 10:00 am  
Fri, Dec 22 Mustard Seed Meal, 5:00 pm  
Mon, Dec 25 Nativity of the Lord

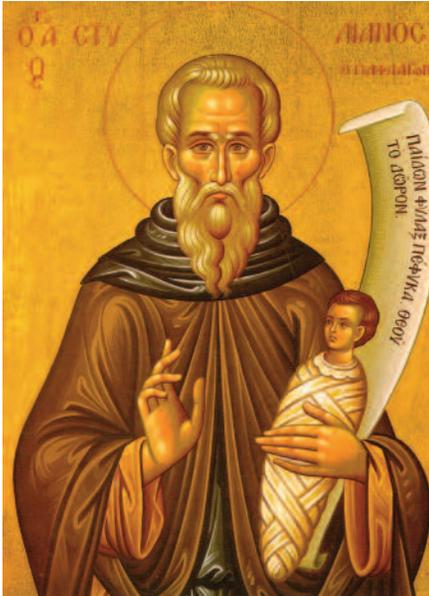
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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas

## COMMUNITY NEWS

**THE WORCESTER COUNTY LIGHT OPERA** is performing *“It’s A Wonderful Life, The Radio Play”* directed by our very own **Lisa Mielnicki**, December 1-10. For details, go to: [www.wcloc.org](http://www.wcloc.org). Questions, e-mail **Lisa** at: [lamielnicki@gmail.com](mailto:lamielnicki@gmail.com).



### VENERABLE STYLIANUS OF PAPHLAGONIA NOVEMBER 26TH

Saint Stylianos was born in Paphlagonia of Asia Minor sometime between the fourth and sixth centuries. He inherited a great fortune from his parents when they died, but he did not keep it. He gave it away to the poor according to their need, desiring to help those who were less fortunate.

Stylianos left the city and went to a monastery, where he devoted his life to God. Since he was more zealous and devout than the other monks, he provoked their jealousy and had to leave. He left the monastery to live alone in a cave in the wilderness, where he spent his time in prayer and fasting.

The goodness and piety of the saint soon became evident to the inhabitants of Paphlagonia, and they sought him

## NAMEDAYS

### November 16

#### *The Holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew*

Scott Matthew Belba  
Matthew Robert Clem  
Matthew Collins  
Matthew Soter

### November 25

#### *The Great-martyr Katherine of Alexandria*

Katina Vanthia Christo  
Katina Cocavessis  
Kathy Lynn Evangelos  
Kathryn Eleanor Sedares  
Katherine Sonobol  
Katina Spataro  
Katherine Stamoulis  
Emily Katherine Valoras

### November 30

#### *The Holy Apostle Andrew the First-called*

Andrew Cavanaugh  
Andrew John Demake  
Andrew Opio  
Andrew Tanacea

out to hear his teaching, or to be cured by him. Many were healed of physical and mental illnesses by his prayers.

Saint Stylianos was known for his love of children, and he would heal them of their infirmities. Even after his death, the citizens of Paphlagonia believed that he could cure their children. Whenever a child became sick, an icon of Saint Stylianos was painted and was hung over the child’s bed.

At the hour of his death, the face of Saint Stylianos suddenly became radiant, and an angel appeared to receive his soul.

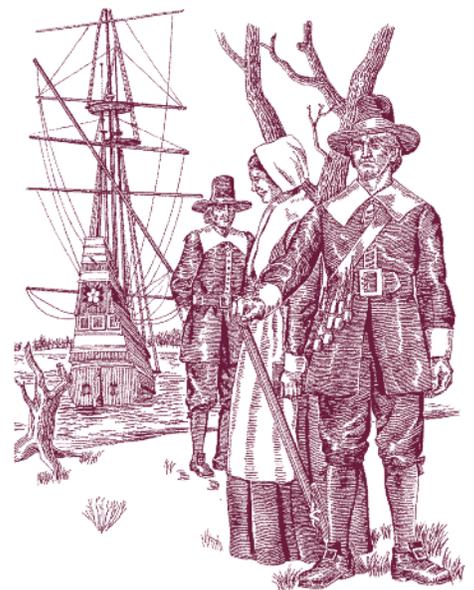
Known as a protector of children, Saint Stylianos is depicted in iconography holding an infant in his arms. Pious Christians ask him to help and protect their children, and childless women entreat his intercession so that they might have children.

## A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**B**LEST BE THIS MORNING for the joy it affords us to stand before you once more, O Lord and lover of all mankind! We give thanks to you, not only for another day, but especially for the wondrous truth that we belong to your Christ, that we are anointed and guaranteed as his. How grateful we are to you, O eternal Father, for it is you who have set your seal on us and sent us your Holy Spirit to dwell in our hearts as a pledge of what is yet to come. As we celebrate this festival of thanksgiving, enable us to love you with all our strength and to offer you this reasonable worship, mindful of the gift of your Christ and our unity in him.

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.



## INHERITING ETERNAL LIFE

**T**HIS week's Gospel lesson (Luke 18:18-27) is the story of the Rich Ruler who asks Jesus, "Good Master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" (v. 19). It is St. Luke's account of the same story we heard earlier in the Liturgical year from St. Matthew (19:16-26), only he is identified there as the Rich Young Man. St. Mark (10:17-27) also tells us the same story, adding some informative details. When I commented on St. Matthew's account I focused on the phrase: "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone." (v. 19) Here, I would like to talk about question of wealth, because, at least on the surface, this seems to be at the heart of the story.

Clement of Alexandria, a Church father born around the year 150AD, wrote a commentary on this Gospel story entitled: "Who is the Rich Man that shall be Saved?" The first thing you might notice is how Clement invites us to think about the question differently. We can sense the way in which he will cause us to shift our preconceptions about the story even from the title of his treatise.

When we listen to the Evangelists' accounts we come away with the impression that it is impossible for someone with wealth to be saved. Isn't that what we usually infer from that Lord comment that, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God?" (v. 25) Clement asks us to focus on the next thing the Lord says: "What is impossible with men is possible with God." (v. 27)

From another perspective, what is central to this story is neither wealth nor poverty, but the pull these have on our hearts. We are being asked to examine where our priorities lay. Remember how the Lord says: "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Luke 12:34)? It is attachment to the things of this earthly existence that is the subject



of the story. A wealthy person who views his or her possessions with detachment, using his or her resources for good, is better off spiritually than a poor person who clings in a greedy fashion to what little he or she might have.

The primary challenge for us in understanding this Gospel story is to remain focused on the question of attachment to the things of this world. When most of us hear the word "rich" we immediately exclude ourselves. I think that it fair to say that even given the current economic situation, most of us Americans are as wealthy, if not more, than was this Rich Ruler. We more than likely are better housed, and with more conveniences, than most very wealthy people in the ancient world.

This is not to minimize the reality of poverty here and in our own time — more and more people are barely making it, if even that. Volunteers at our Food Pantry or those who serve meals at the Mustard Seed get to see the growing numbers of "working poor." Yet even the poor of our country are wealthy in comparison to the very poor in most of the world. Those of us who live an even modest middle-class existence are likely to be on a par with the Rich Ruler who is the subject of this story.

Always keep in mind this spiritual

principle: the "thing" — whatever that "thing" might be — is always in the middle. Money and wealth, privileged or status, looks or popularity, each can be good or bad depending on our attachment to them. It is how we use this thing that makes it "good" or "bad." So, it is not the amount of possessions we might have, but our attachment to them. Can we part with them?

What do we do with our wealth? Do we consider it as our own, for our own comfort? Or, do we see this as God's gift that we should share with others? In the imagery that the Lord gives us, we could say that the attachment to the things of this world are the "camel." We need to decide what we are willing to let go of in order to fit through the "needle's eye," that is to say, the high-calling we have received from the Lord.

Our society has become not only materialistic, but also selfish. This was not always the case. America was known throughout the world for its altruism. Our nation was founded on the principle of caring for the "weakest among us." We still see this principle powerfully at work during times of disasters and catastrophes, when charitable donations and acts of kindness abound. The challenge is to make this care for the other the normal everyday rule, not the exception.

Certainly our Orthodox Christian faith has always taught that we should value love of the other — be it God or our neighbor — above all things. The Lord says that love of our neighbor is the very icon of love of God. He equates them. So, when the Rich Ruler asks Jesus "what must I do to inherit eternal life?", Jesus points him in the right direction. The Lord also invites us to follow this same path. May we find the courage to follow in the direction to which he is pointing us.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA