

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN

DECEMBER 3, 2017

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

OUR ANNUAL FEASTDAY CELEBRATION is being held **THIS Sunday, December 3rd.**

MAKE SURE YOUR FEASTDAY RAFFLE RETURNS ARE IN! The drawing is **TODAY** at the Feastday Celebration. **Questions? George Demake** for tickets and ways to help: 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.

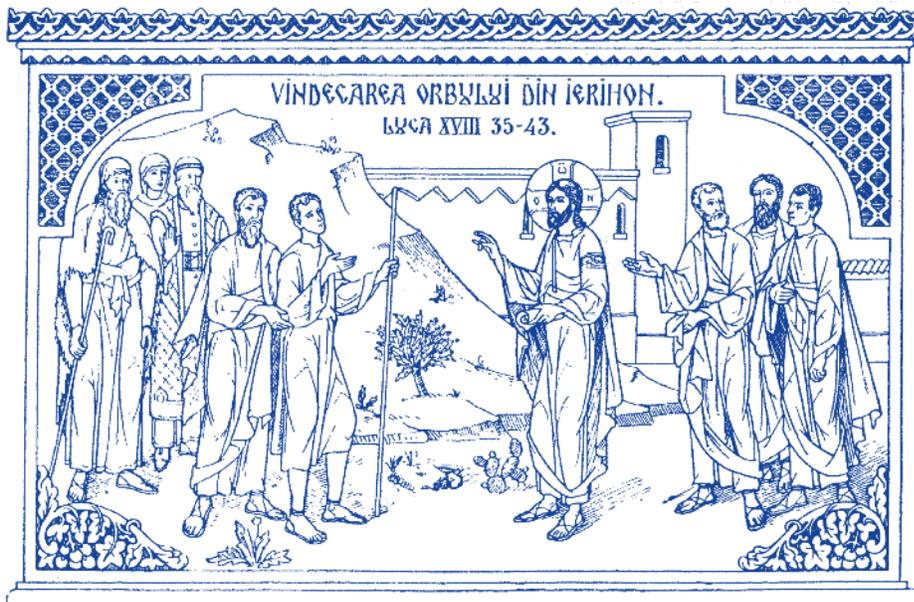
THE LITURGICAL SCHEDULE FOR ST. NICHOLAS IS: **Great Vespers** on Tuesday, December 5th at 7:00 PM. **Divine Liturgy** on Wednesday December 6th at 10:00 AM with Matins preceding at 9:00 AM.

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

GREETERS TEAM 3:
EVANS TSOULES AND TOM FITZPATRICK

FEASTDAY DINNER:
LOTS OF HELP NEEDED! LEND A HAND!

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



THE THIRTY FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
EPISTLE: 1 TIMOTHY 1:15-17 ☩ GOSPEL: LUKE 18:35-43
(JESUS HEALS THE BLIND MAN OF JERICHOO)
TONE 1 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 4

Mielnicki or Nicole Apostola. Our next Saturday is January 6th.

THE 2018 CHURCH CALENDARS are here, in both English and Romanian. Pick them up at the candles. Please consider a small donation to cover the costs.

UPCOMING

OUR NEXT MUSTARD SEED MEAL is Friday, December 22nd. We'll need help cooking and serving. **Prep** help needed Thursday noon and Friday from 1-4 pm. **Serving** help needed (5 persons), 5:30pm Friday. If you'd like to help, please talk to Fr. Nick.

THE CHRISTMAS PAGEANT REHEARSAL will be held on **Saturday December 23rd from 9:00AM to 11:00AM.** **Parental assistance is needed with preparing the costumes and organizing props.** All Sunday School students are invited to participate in the Pageant program which

will be presented to the parish on Sunday, December 24th following Divine Liturgy. Please **confirm your child's participation** by speaking with their Sunday School Teacher during coffee hour following Divine Liturgy or by email to info@stnicholaschurch.org

CALLING ALL MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT ... Want to help with hurricane relief? We are joining with Sts. Anargyroi Church to assist the International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) in their

DATES TO REMEMBER

Sat, Dec 2 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-noon
Sun, Dec 3 Feastday Celebration
Tues, Dec 5 Vespers for St. Nicholas, 7:00 pm
Wed, Dec 6 Liturgy for St. Nicholas, 10:00 am
Fri, Dec 22 Mustard Seed Meal, 5:00 pm
Sat, Dec 23 Christmas Pageant Rehearsal, 9:00 am
Sun, Dec 24 Christmas Eve. Christmas Pageant
Mon, Dec 25 Nativity of the Lord
Fri, Jan 12 Teen IOCC Hurricane Project, 6:30 pm

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas

Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria response. We will be creating “clean up buckets” to assist those in need. These buckets will be used to help the IOCC replenish their supply of buckets to respond as quickly and effectively to areas of need as they arise. **Join us Friday, January 12th at 6:30pm at St. Nicholas Church** for pizza and discussion about this service project. Please RSVP to Valarie Stamoulis at Valarie.stamoulis@gmail.com, 617-803-3798; or Deb Sedares at dsedares@pinehills.com, 508-509-6678.

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 has revamped its website. It’s packed with information in a very attractive format. Check it out at: www.htnr.net. And while you’re there, take a look at the newly designed Newsletter, by clicking on the **“Monthly Newsletter”** button.

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.

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. **Details**, go to: www.wcloc.org. **Questions**, **Lisa** at: lamielnicki@gmail.com.



A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

BLESSED ARE YOU, Lord God of our fathers, for giving us your only Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ, as our refuge and stronghold, that evil might never master our lives nor the enemy enslave us! Now, as we offer you these prayers in watchfulness and expectation, enable us to call on your holy name, filled with understanding and love. Prepare us for the celebration of your Son’s birthday by renewing in us a spirit of true dedication and discipleship, and grant that we may always enjoy your saving power.

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

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

December 4

The Great-martyr Barbara and St. John of Damascus

Barbara Jean Grniet

December 6

St. Nicholas the Wonderworker of Myra in Lychia

Metropolitan Nicolae
Rev. Nicholas Apostola
Nicole Soumela Apostola
Nicholas Belishta
Nicholas Charalambides
Robert A. Clem
Nicholas R. Demake
Nikolla Endriko
Nicholas Ermilio
Frank W. Ford
Nicholas John Johnson
Nicole Amelia Karadimitriou
Nicholas Mazanitis
Nicholas Peter Mentis
Nicolae Nace
Nicholas George Soter
Nicholas Tonna
Nicole Marta Trakadas
Nicholas Valoras

LORD, LET ME SEE AGAIN

THIS WEEK'S GOSPEL READING taken from Luke 18:32-43, is the account of Jesus' restoring the sight of the blind man from Jericho. There are two other versions of this same miracle in the Scripture: Matthew 20:19-34 and Mark 10:46-52. All three Evangelists place this healing just before the Lord's Entry into Jerusalem. It is a prelude to the Passion.

Jesus enters Jericho and there is a commotion as he passes. A blind man is sitting on the side of the road begging; a common occurrence in those days. The first thing that we notice in this story is that once the blind man has been told who is passing by — Jesus of Nazareth — he immediately begins to cry out: "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" (v. 38) I have explained in prior homilies the significance of that title. To call him "Son of David" is to acknowledge him as the Messiah. Certainly the blind man (who we know through St. Mark's account was named Bartimæus) had heard about Jesus, and the other miracles he had done. For Bartimæus this was the moment he had hoped for: a chance to have his sight restored.

You can imagine the scene. Jesus is passing by. There is a crowd of people, each one for their own reason wanting to see this man about whom so much had been said. The able-bodied and sighted people are ignoring the poor, ill-clad and blind beggar. Suddenly, Bartimæus decides that he is not going to simply melt into the pavement, but is going to assert himself. "Those who were in front sternly ordered him to be quiet; but he shouted even more loudly, 'Son of David, have mercy on me!'" (v. 39)



St. John Chrysostom, in reflecting on the blind man's request, tells us to "learn that though we be very vile and outcast, if we approach God with earnestness ... we shall be able to receive whatever we might ask." He goes on to say that even if we are hindered or discouraged, we should persist. Even if we do not receive what we ask from God immediately, we should not tire. And so, he urges us to emulate this man in his fervor and devotion.

When he hears the man's pleading, Jesus stops and asks that he be brought before him. Unlike in other similar situations, Jesus does not ask the man if he believes, but asks, simply, "What do you want me to do for you?" (v. 41) There is a very practical reason for Jesus to put the question in this way. He wants the man to tell him what his request is, and he also wants everyone else to know that Jesus is giving him what he is requesting. The man answers, "Lord, let me see again." The Lord says to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has saved you." (v.

41)

We are able to see the man's gratitude in the fact that once he had regained his sight he "followed him, glorifying God." (v. 43) Like the Samaritan leper who was healed and returned to give thanks to Jesus, this man gives similar evidence of his faith.

St. Luke offers us an even more subtle lesson. I mentioned that each of the three Evangelists who recount this miracle place it just before Jesus' Entry into Jerusalem. In the verses preceding this healing, St. Luke tells us that Jesus took the twelve disciples aside and told them of what was going to happen in Jerusalem. "But they understood nothing about these things; in fact, what he said was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what he said." (v. 34) In pointing this out, St. Luke gives us a parallel: there is more than one kind of blindness. Bartimæus may have been physically blind, but the disciples were spiritually blind. As Jesus healed Bartimæus, so too he would heal the disciples so that they could see, and then believe.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA