

# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN DECEMBER 31, 2017 THIS WEEK'S NEWS

**THE WONDERWORKING ICON** of the **Theotokos** will bless our parish on Saturday, January 6th. Please look below for more information.

**THE FULL CHRISTMAS/ EPIPHANY SCHEDULE** is available and attached to the Bulletin.

**FOOD PANTRY.** Help is needed to staff our monthly responsibility at the Orthodox Food Center **next Saturday, January 6th, 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.**

**THE BLESSING OF HOMES AT THEOPHANY** will begin on Tuesday, January 9th, and continue until all homes are blessed. As in the past, we will be setting times to bless your home. If there is a specific time that is more convenient for you, please e-mail or call (508-335-7378) Fr. Nick to arrange it.

**THE YOUTH CHRISTMAS PAGEANT** held last Sunday was a beautiful



## THE SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY

*THE PROPHET-KING DAVID; JOSEPH THE BETROTHED; JAMES THE LORD'S BROTHER  
THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT*

EPISTLE: GALATIANS 1:11-19 ☩ GOSPEL: MATTHEW 2:13-23

TONE 5 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 8

and uplifting event. Thanks to the teachers and parents who helped organize it. Special thanks to the children and young people who participated. **God bless all of them.**

**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.

**WE CELEBRATE TODAY** a 40-day Memorial for the servant of God **Nikolla Zhaka.** *May our Lord rest his soul with the just!*

**TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR** is sponsored today by the **Zhaka family** in memory of Nikolla.

ternational Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) in their 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.

### GREETERS TEAM 2:

ARTIC GAVALA AND V. GERALD BELBA

### COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP CREW D:

ILIANA & SEAN FAHEY,  
DIMITRI SAFFRON & MACLYNN TROJAN  
CHRISTOS & SPIRO SPYROU

**ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED**

## UPCOMING

**CALLING ALL MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT ... Want to help with hurricane relief?**

We are joining with Sts. Anargyroi Church to assist the In-

## DATES TO REMEMBER

Mon, Jan 1 New Year's Day, Liturgy, 10 am  
Sat, Jan 6 Theophany. Lit 10 am, Blessing of Water  
Visit of Miracle-working Icon  
Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-noon  
Fri, Jan 12 Teen IOCC Hurricane Project, 6:30 pm

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas

## HOLY TRINITY NEWS

Holy Trinity has RN, LPN and CNA job opportunities on all shifts. For more information, call Michelle Williamson at (508) 852-1000, ext. 218 or e-mail: [mwilliamson@htnr.net](mailto:mwilliamson@htnr.net). You may also stop by Holy Trinity and fill out an application.

**HOLY TRINITY** has revamped its website. It's packed with information in a very attractive format. Check it out at: [www.htnr.net](http://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.



### A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**G**LORY TO YOU, ETERNAL FATHER, for sending us your Son! Glory to you, co-eternal Son, for being baptized by John! Glory to you, O life-giving Spirit, for pointing out the Son to all the world! As we celebrate these days of theophany, enable us to praise you with all your creatures, so that our lives may manifest your majesty and glory at all times, O you whose wisdom fashioned and created all things.

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.

## CHRISTMAS & THEOPHANY SCHEDULE

### FRIDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2017

Royal Hours ..... 9:30 a.m.

### SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS CHRISTMAS EVE SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2017

Matins ..... 9:00 a.m.  
Divine Liturgy ..... 10:00 a.m.  
Children's Christmas Program ..... after the Liturgy

### THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD MONDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2017

Matins ..... 9:00 a.m.  
Divine Liturgy of St. Basil ..... 10:00 a.m.

### SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2017

Matins ..... 9:00 a.m.  
Divine Liturgy ..... 10:00 a.m.

### NEW YEAR'S DAY

### CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD ✠ FEAST OF ST. BASIL THE GREAT MONDAY, JANUARY 1, 2018

Matins ..... 9:00 a.m.  
Divine Liturgy of St. Basil ..... 10:00 a.m.

### EVE OF HOLY THEOPHANY FRIDAY, JANUARY 5, 2018

Royal Hours ..... 3:00 p.m.

### HOLY THEOPHANY SATURDAY, JANUARY 6, 2018

Matins ..... 9:00 a.m.  
Divine Liturgy ..... 10:00 a.m.  
Great Blessing of Water ..... at end of Liturgy  
Veneration of the Miracle-Working Icon of the Theotokos of Nicula  
Throughout the day Saturday.

### SUNDAY AFTER HOLY THEOPHANY SYNAXIS OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST SUNDAY, JANUARY 7, 2018

Matins ..... 9:00 a.m.  
Divine Liturgy ..... 10:00 a.m.



HOUSE BLESSINGS. The blessing of homes at Theophany will begin on Monday, January 8, 2018, and continue until all homes are blessed. As in the past, we will be setting times when we will be coming to bless your home. If there is a specific time that is more convenient for you, please call Fr. Nick to arrange it (508.335.7378).



## THE WONDERWORKING ICON OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

from the Monastery of Nicula will be visiting our St. Nicholas parish on Saturday, January 6th. It will afford devout people from the area to venerate this Holy Image and to ask our most blessed Lady and the Mother of our Savior to intercede for us. This holy and wonderworking Icon of the Theotokos, located at the Nicula Monastery in north central Romania, has been the focus of veneration and pilgrimage for over three hundred and fifty years. It has been a sign of both hope and comfort to the Romanian people especially in times of struggle. While pilgrims come to venerate the Icon and ask the Theotokos for her help at all times, special devotion can be witnessed on the Feast of the Dormition on August fifteenth, when tens and even hundreds of thousands of pilgrims make the journey on foot to be present at the Monastery for the celebration. While the original Icon never leaves the Monastery, this copy from the Metropolitan Cathedral in Cluj, is given to travel for veneration. We have the great blessing to receive this Icon. It will be the first time for it to be present here in North America.

## THE SCHEDULE FOR THE ICON'S VISIT IS:

SATURDAY JANUARY 6, 2018

**Matins for the Feast of Holy Theophany**  
will begin at 9:00 am.

**Divine Liturgy**  
will begin at 10:00 am,  
followed by the  
**Great Blessing of Water**

The Church will be open all day to afford the faithful the opportunity to venerate this holy image of our Lord's Mother.

**Paraklesis**  
will be celebrated at 3:00 pm.

At 6:00 pm the holy image will be taken to St. Michael in South-bridge.

For a video on the history and importance of this Holy Icon, (with English subtitles) go to:  
[youtu.be/F1mMoPjWg4Q](https://youtu.be/F1mMoPjWg4Q)



## NAMEDAYS

**December 25**

*The Holy Nativity of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ*

Christopher Blanchard  
Chrysanthi Charalambides  
Cristina M. Culcea  
Christopher Demake  
Cristean Dumitriu  
Kristjan Endriko  
Cristina Gavala  
Cristian Ionete  
Christine Kelly  
Christian Andrew Polymeros  
Christian Prizio  
Christopher Rucho  
Christina Soter  
Christo Spyrou  
Christian Thoren  
Christina Thoren  
Christine Toda  
Christina Marina Tonna  
Chris Zaruha  
Cristian Zaruha

**December 26**

*The holy and righteous Joseph, the betrothed of the Virgin*

Josephine Mbuthi  
Joseph Opio  
Joseph Sonobol

*The Holy Prophet and King David*

David Zonia

**December 27**

*The Holy Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen*

Stephanie Elizabeth Demake  
Stephen Fotos  
Stephanie Keimig  
Stephen Keimig  
Steven Thoren

**December 31**

*St. Melania the Younger, nun of Rome*

Melanie Mentis

# OUT OF EGYPT HAVE I CALLED MY SON

**T**HE SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY OF THE SAVIOR is dedicated to the relatives of Christ, especially David the King and Prophet, Joseph the betrothed of the Theotokos and “step-father” of our Lord, and James the Lord’s brother, Joseph’s son from his first marriage. In the Gospel lesson for this Sunday we hear St. Matthew’s (2:13-23) conclusion to the Nativity narrative. In it he recounts: the fury of Herod when he realized that the Magi had tricked him; the warning that Joseph received in a dream to flee to Egypt in order to save the baby Jesus and His mother; the massacre of the infants in and around Bethlehem; and finally the return from Egypt to Nazareth.

As you can see, there are a number of themes in this relatively short passage, many of which overlap. Let us look first at Herod. We know from other ancient sources that Herod was a ruthless and terrible tyrant. He was jealous of others and feared threats to his power. He killed a number of his own family members when he thought they were plotting against him. And while there is no record outside of the Bible of the specific massacre mentioned by Matthew, it is quite in keeping with Herod’s personality. He often ordered indiscriminate massacres.

Matthew has also another purpose in telling us this story of the massacre of the innocents. He wants us to understand how the lives of many of the people whose stories are chronicled in the Old Testament should also be seen as pre-figuring Christ in God’s plan for our salvation. Christians generally view the Old Testament as a preparation for the coming of Christ. Through and in the Children of Israel, God is readying the world to hear and receive God’s full revelation of Himself. This is partly what is meant by the phrase used to describe the period in and around Christ’s com-

ing as “the fullness of time.”

In his account of the Nativity, St. Matthew draws a particular parallel with two persons in the history of Israel: the Patriarch Joseph (son of Jacob) and Moses. These men represent two “types” or foreshadowings of Christ. For example, just as Joseph

was sold into slavery in Egypt, but later found refuge there and became a savior to his family and nation (Genesis 37:1ff), so also the Christ child finds refuge in Egypt and becomes a Savior to the world. And, just as Moses was rescued from the massacre of Hebrew boys by the hand of Pharaoh (Exodus 2:1ff), so also was Jesus rescued from the massacre of the young boys in Bethlehem by the hand of Herod, who in this regard is likened to Pharaoh. Matthew wants to prepare us to understand how Jesus will be an even greater Savior than these two great saviors of the children of Israel.

Another theme in this Gospel passage is the proclamation of the Good News to the pagan world. The Magi, who had been drawn by a star to worship Jesus, are now warned in a dream not to return to Herod, but rather to go home by another way (Matthew 2:12). They carry within themselves the profound experience God has revealed to them. They lay the foundation for the proclamation of the Gospel in Babylon and Persia — modern-day Iraq and Iran. At the same time Joseph the Betrothed takes Mary and the Child Jesus to Egypt, another sign of how Christianity will come to transform the faith of this ancient pagan civilization.



Finally, we see how Joseph himself has been changed by the events he experienced. The angel comes again, this time to warn of the danger to the Child. The angel comes not to Mary, but rather to Joseph. He says to him, “take the child and his mother” (v. 13) to Egypt. Notice, the angel doesn’t speak of “wife” or “son.” He knows that Joseph believes and no longer needs to be convinced of God’s hand in all that has happened. When Joseph sees the angel there is no doubt or questioning, just faith and action.

And, after Herod had died (a tortured death in prison), the same angel comes to Joseph again, telling him it was safe to go home. He took Mary and the Child Jesus to Nazareth, “calling him out from Egypt” (v. 22-23), and there He grows to manhood.

May each of us embrace the examples of the faith and perseverance of David and Moses, as well as the courage and faithfulness found in the young Virgin Mary and Joseph her betrothed. May each of us be like them, listening to God’s call for us and willing to follow it.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA