

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN MARCH 4, 2018

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

**THE THIRD WEEK OF GREAT LENT
BEGINS TOMORROW.**

**ST. NICHOLAS IS HOSTING THE
PRE-SANCTIFIED LITURGY** this
Wednesday, March 7th. Liturgy will
start at 6:00 pm. We are responsible for
the "pot-luck" Lenten meal after the
service. **Please check with Betty An-
derson or Presvytera Maria** to tell
them what you will be bringing for the
meal.

A PITA BAKING Session will be held,
**THIS TUESDAY, March 6th, 9:00 am
to noon** (to make up for the canceled
Saturday session). **Questions?** talk to
**Betty Anderson (508-756-4848) or
Chris Toda, 508-832-6271.** Please let us
know if you'll be available. **Remember:
There's a job for everyone!**

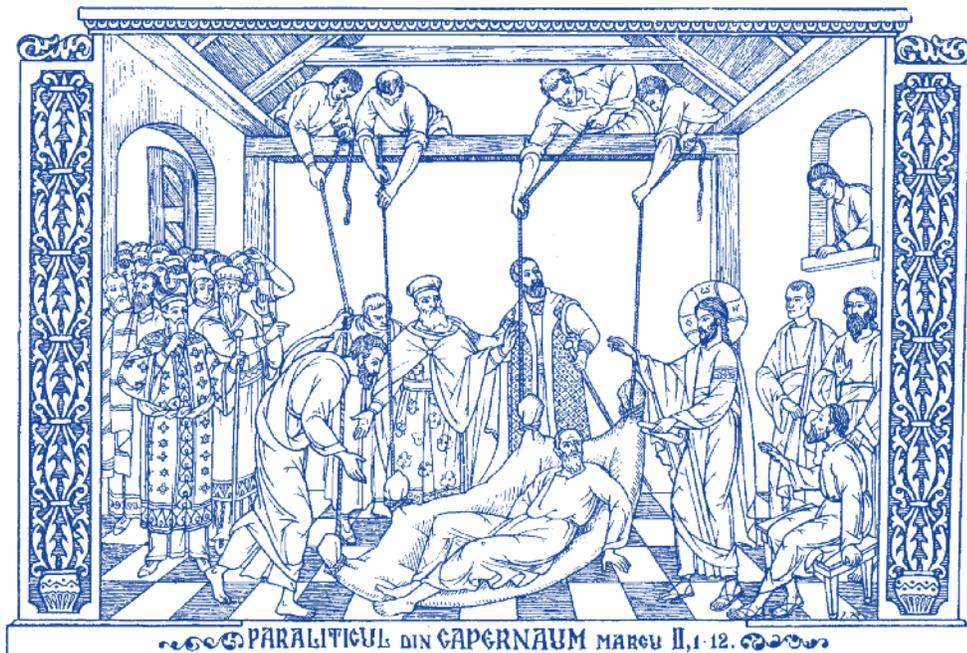
**NEXT SUNDAY IS THE VENERA-
TION OF THE PRECIOUS CROSS.** If
you'd like to donate toward the flowers,
please speak with **Tim Rucho.**

BAKING ORDERS FOR EASTER need
to be in by **Sunday, March 18th.** If you
have family or friends who would like
pitas, pastry, or pastry platters for the
holiday, please make sure we get the or-

GREETERS TEAM 1:
V. GERALD BELBA & MARGARITE LANDRY

COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP CREW A:
MARGARITE LANDRY,
CHRISTINE MASTERJOHN

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



PARALITICUL DIN CAPERNAUM MARGH II, 1-12.

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT

APOSTOLIC READING: HEBREWS 1:10-2:3 ☩ **GOSPEL: MARK 2:1-12**
(JESUS HEALS THE PARALYTIC IN CAPERNAUM ☩ **ST. GREGORY PALAMAS)**
TONE 6 ☩ **MATINS GOSPEL 6**

ders in time! Any questions, **please con-
tact Betty Anderson or Chris Toda.**
You can find the Baking Order Forms at
the candle stand.

**THE 2018 ARCHDIOCESE AL-
MANAC** is available at the candles. Do-
nation \$10.00.

**THANKS TO THE FOOD PANTRY
VOLUNTEERS** for working the Ortho-
dox 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 min-
istry, please speak with Lisa
Mielnicki or Nicole Apostola.
Our next Saturday is April 7th.

**AN ELECTRONICS/WHITE
GOODS, ETC. RECYCLING**
day is set for **Saturday, March
24th.** If you're able and willing
to help, please speak with
Gerry Belba.

THE IOCC has prepared a resource a
booklet for Great Lent: **"Service as
Almsgiving"** that offers six weekly
Lenten reflections, written by IOCC
board members past and present. Avail-
able on-line at: www.iocc.org.

VESPERS AND CONFESSION will be
held **each Saturday evening at 5:00 pm
during Great Lent.** Fr. Nick will be
available for confession each week after
Vespers, and before Vespers by appoint-
ment (e-mail Fr. Nick)

DATES TO REMEMBER

Sat, March 3	Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-noon
Tues, Mar 6	Pita Baking, 9am - noon
Wed, March 7	PreSanctified Lit at St. Nicholas 6pm
Wed, March 14	PreSanctified Lit at St. Mary 6pm
Sun, March 18	Pascha Baking Orders Deadline
Wed, March 21	PreSanctified Lit at Sts. Anargyroi 6pm
Sat, March 24	e-Recycling, 9am - 2pm
Wed, Mar 28	PreSanctified Lit at St. Nicholas 6pm
Sun, April 1	Palm Sunday (Western Easter)
Sun, April 8	GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas

TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR is sponsored by Eleanor Sedares in memory of her husband Thomas Sedares.

COMMUNITY NEWS

ST. MARY ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH in Shrewsbury is holding its Annual Lenten Fish Fry on Friday, March 9. Dinner will be served from 4:00pm to 8:00pm in the Parish Hall (Main St, Shrewsbury). **Information:** www.StMarysFishFry.com.

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

The ladies of St. Mary's Assumption Albanian Church will be hosting a coffee social for the Holy Trinity residents on Thursday, March 8, 2:00PM. The residents always look forward to their visits!

Holy Trinity has job openings for Dietary Aides (FT/PT). Contact Michelle Williamson, Director of Human Resources, 508-852-1000, or email mwilliamson@htnr.net



NAMEDAYS

February 24

St. Theodore of Tyre

Theodore Belba
Theodora Collins
Theodhoraq Lolo
Teodor Nedelcu
Theodore Peter Tonna
Theodore Russell Tonna
Derek Wilder

March 3

*Henricus, the hermit martyr
in Norway*

Eric Lolo
Erik Mayer

March 9

*The Holy Forty Martyrs of Sebaste
Mircea Nedelcu*



A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

O GOD AND FATHER of our Lord Jesus Christ: As we move, day by day, through these weeks of fasting, discipline, and self-control, help us to reflect on the season and its meaning: The days of each week are like us, runners in a contest, and the goal, a place in eternal life. Throughout this time, we are given anew the opportunity to struggle successfully, and, in the end, whether we succeed or fail will be only too clear. To the holy days of this divinely inspired time we add the week of the saving passion of your Son, together with holy and great Saturday. Thus, in a mere tenth of the year, we are given the opportunity to change ourselves in earnest, so that we may attain eternal life. Help us, therefore, O Lord, to fight a good fight and win the crown of incorruptible life.

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

THE PRAYER OF ST. EPHRAIM THE SYRIAN

O Lord and master of my life! Dispel from me the spirit of discouragement and slothfulness, of ambition and vain talk!

Instead, give me the spirit of prudence and humility, of patience and charity.

Yes, my king and Lord, let me look at my own sins and refrain from judging others: For you are blessed unto ages of ages. Amen.

CAN WE NEGLECT SO GREAT A SALVATION?

DURING LENT THE APOSTOLIC READINGS are taken largely from the Letter to the Hebrews. The overarching theme of Hebrews is that Jesus, God's Son, has become the High Priest of the New Covenant at the heavenly altar. God's new sanctuary is not on earth, but above. The Old Law is superseded by the New. The ritual of animal sacrifices has given way to the spiritual sacrifice, through the Self-Sacrifice of Jesus. By reading and studying this Letter we are given deeper insights into the way in which God had been leading humanity, and especially His chosen people, to understand the new relationship with Him to which we all are called.

Today's reading begins at Hebrews 1:10 and ends at 2:3. The theme in the first chapter is to remind the reader who this Jesus is. He is not an angel or other created being; he is the "Son, whom [God] appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world." (v. 2) It seems that the community to which this Letter is addressed were back-sliding in their faith in Jesus. Most scholars think this was a community of Jewish converts. Some even think the audience might have been a community of priests of the Old Covenant. The writer of this Letter wants to remind them that this Jesus "reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature, upholding the universe by his word of power," (v. 3) that is to say: he is God.

I need to say a word about the authorship of Hebrews. Even from the first Christian centuries people who studied the Bible noticed differences in style and vocabulary between Letters we know St. Paul wrote and the Letter to the Hebrews. Various reasons were offered. St. Clement believed that he had written it in Hebrew and then had St. Luke translate it into Greek. Origen believed that the thinking was St. Paul's, but the hand probably belonged to one of his disciples. This does not diminish the author-

ity of the Letter — God forbid! Rather, it simply highlights the distinct challenges that the Letter to the Hebrews presents for us modern readers. The other Letters of St. Paul are primarily pastoral, even while being replete with deep theology and profound spirituality. Hebrews has this same level of theology and spirituality while taking up the question of Old Testament worship and how it changed with the self-sacrifice of the Son of God. For our purposes here, we will assume that St. Paul is the author.

In the first chapter St. Paul cites a number of Old Testament texts that were generally assumed to refer to the Messiah. The way he uses these verses have the form of hymns and poems that were written to describe the enthronement of kings in the ancient Near East, especially when these kings declared themselves to also be gods. St. Paul is telling the Hebrews that Jesus is not just a man, nor is he an angel. All created things, human or angelic, are mutable and changeable. The Son is not. So when he speaks of the Son as sitting down "at the right hand of the Majesty on high," (v. 3) he is emphasizing that Jesus has "become as much superior to the angels as the name [i.e. God's Son] he has obtained is more excellent than theirs." (v. 4)

St. Paul has taken the verses that begin today's reading (v. 10-12) from Psalm 102: "In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands; they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like clothing; like a cloak you will roll them up, and like clothing they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will never end." The Psalmist directs these words to God. St. Paul uses them to describe Jesus, the eternal Son of God.

To emphasize this, he reminds us of the words of Psalm 110: "But to which of the angels has he ever said, 'Sit at my

right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet'?" (v. 13)

The angels are the servants of the Son. "Are not all angels spirits in the divine service, sent to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?" (v. 14) Notice, they are sent not only to serve the Son, but they are also "sent to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation." This means us. God has sent us prophets and angels. Now he sends us His Son.

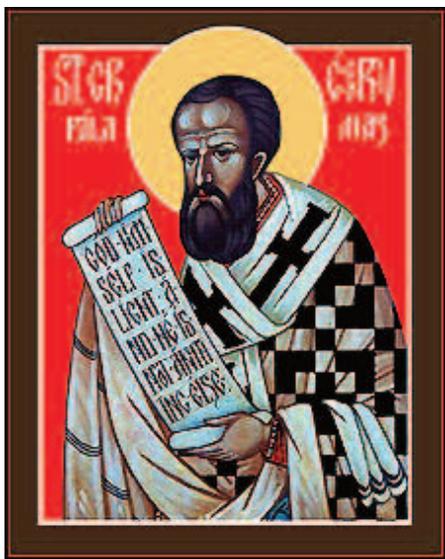
"Therefore we must pay greater attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. For if the message declared through angels was valid, and every transgression or disobedience received a just penalty, how can we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? It was declared at first through the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard him." (v. 2:1-3)

Brothers and sisters, this is our central challenge: to pay attention! How many times do we hear in the Liturgy, "Let us be attentive!?" This is just a polite way of saying: "Pay Attention!" St. Paul reminds us of punishments meted out to those who ignored the angels. Implicit is the consequences that await us if we ignore the Son of God who lived among us.

"Can we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" God is not rescuing us from famine and fire, sword and invasion. He is saving us from death. He is offering us eternal life.

God spoke to us directly — in and through His Son. We know this because those who saw him and lived with him told us; they testified to it not only in word, but also with their very lives. Throughout the centuries the truth of his word and their testimony has enlivened countless believers. May God give us the strength of will to pay attention, and not to neglect our salvation.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA



ST. GREGORY PALAMAS

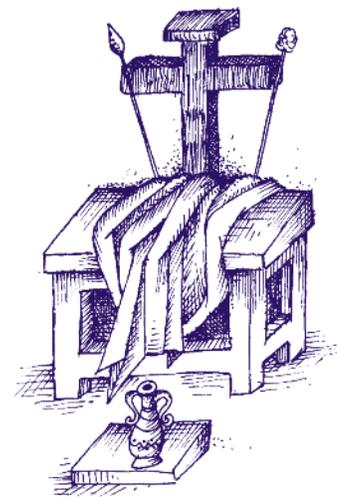
This divine Father, who was from Asia Minor, was from childhood reared in the royal court of Constantinople, where he was instructed in both religious and secular wisdom. Later, while still a youth, he left the imperial court and struggled in asceticism on Mount Athos, and in the Skete at Beroea. He spent some time in Thessalonica being treated for an illness that came from his harsh manner of life. He was present in Constantinople at the Council that was convened in 1341 against Barlaam of Calabria, and at the Council of 1347 against Acindynus, who was of like mind with Barlaam; Barlaam and Acindynus claimed that the grace of God is created. At both these Councils, the Saint contended courageously for the true dogmas of the Church of Christ, teaching in particular that divine grace is not created, but is the uncreated energies of God which are poured forth throughout creation: otherwise it would be impossible, if grace were created, for man to have genuine communion with the uncreated God. In 1347 he was appointed Metropolitan of Thessalonica. He tended his flock in an apostolic man-

EXPLANATIONS FROM THE LENTEN TRIODION

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT. Since 1368 this Sunday has been dedicated to the memory of St. Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica (1296–1359). This commemoration forms a continuation of the feast celebrated on the previous Sunday: St. Gregory's victory over Barlaam, Akindynos and the other heretics of his time is seen as a renewed Triumph of Orthodoxy. In the earlier period there was on this day a commemoration of the Great Martyr Polycarp of Smyrna (+ c. 155), whose feast was transferred from the fixed calendar (23 February). This commemoration, like that of St. Theodore, underlined the connection between Lenten asceticism and the martyr's vocation. The second Sunday also takes up the theme of the Prodigal Son as a model of repentance, with the first of the two Canons at Mattins being devoted to this parable.



ner for some twelve years, and wrote many books and treatises on the most exalted doctrines of our Faith; and having lived for a total of sixty-three years, he reposed in the Lord in 1359.



PRE-SANCTIFIED LITURGIES

2018

Wednesday, February 21, 2018

St. Spyridon

Wednesday, February 28, 2018

St. George

Wednesday, March 7, 2018

St. Nicholas

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

St. Mary

Wednesday, March 21, 2018

Sts. Anagroi

Wednesday, March 28, 2018

St. Nicholas

Each Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts will begin at 6:00 p.m. The faithful should prepare themselves for Holy Communion in the usual way: prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and regular confession. There will be a modest 'pot-luck' lenten meal offered after the Liturgy. People are encouraged to bring something to share with others.