

# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN

MAY 13, 2018

## HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY

### THIS WEEK'S NEWS

**TODAY IS MOTHER'S DAY!** We're offering a small floral reflection of our affection and gratitude to the women of our community. If you'd like to contribute, see Tim.

**THE FEAST OF THE LORD'S ASCENSION** is **Thursday, May 17th**. Fr. Nick will be celebrating Liturgy at Holy Trinity **Wednesday morning** at 9:30 am (Leave-taking of Pascha). On **Thursday**, we will be celebrating the Feast with with our sister Parish of Sts Anargyroi in Marlborough. Liturgy begins at 10:00 am.

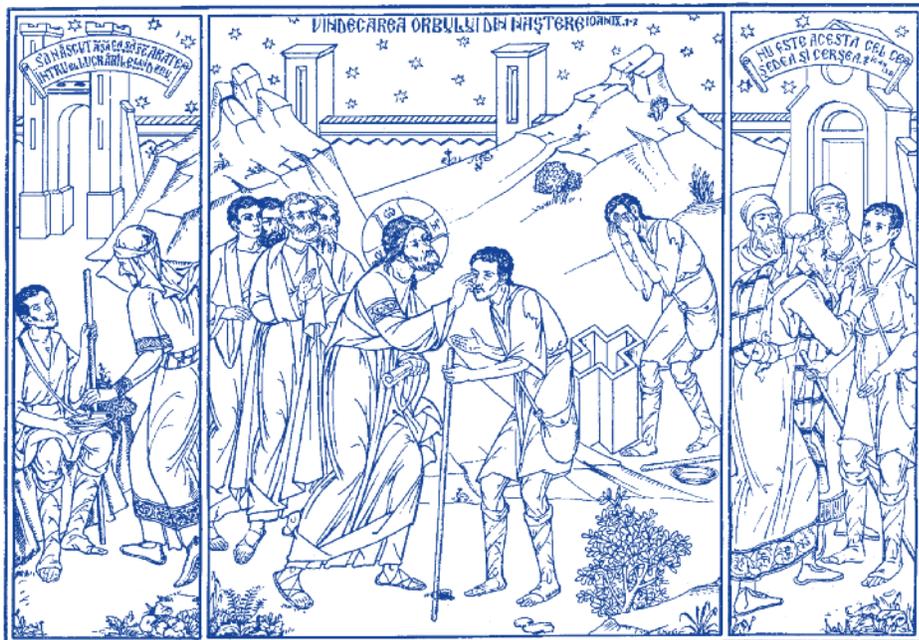
**MEMORIAL DAY** is Monday, **May 28th**. Fr. Nick will be at Hope Cemetery from 10:00 am. The common Memorial Service will be at noon at the Altar in Hope. If you would like Fr. Nick to visit a grave in another cemetery, please contact him to make arrangements: 508-335-7378.

**AN "E-WASTE RECYCLING DAY"** will be held on **Saturday, June 2nd, from 9-2 here at the Church**. You can get rid of unwanted electronic appliances at a minimal cost and help protect the environment. **A few folks are**

**GREETERS TEAM 1:**  
V. GERALD BELBA & MARGARITE LANDRY

**COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP:**  
HELP NEEDED! PICK UP A CUP!

**ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED**



### THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF PASCHA OF THE MAN BORN BLIND

APOSTOLIC READING: ACTS 16:16-34 ☩ GOSPEL: JOHN 9:1-38  
TONE 5 ☩ RESURRECTION GOSPEL 8

**needed to help** direct traffic into and out of the church parking lot. Please see Gerry Belba during coffee hour if you can help.

**LOOKING FOR THIS YEAR'S HIGH SCHOOL OR COLLEGE GRADUATES** in our Parish so they can be recognized. If you know of a soon-to-be graduate, please inform Fr. Nick or Tim Rucho.

**ROYA IS ORGANIZING THE 4TH ANNUAL HERITAGE TRIP TO ROMANIA.** The trip sponsored by our Archdiocese's Youth Organization is for youth and young adults who wish to get in touch with their roots and (re)discover their Romanian heritage. Links to all of the details can be found in the on-line eBulletin, or by asking Fr. Nick.

**COFFEE HOUR SPONSORS ARE NEEDED** for the next weeks. Please speak with or contact **Presvytera Maria** if you and your family would like to sponsor one.

**TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR** is sponsored to honor all our mothers. **Thanks Mom!!**

### DATES TO REMEMBER

- Wed, May 16 Leave-taking Pascha-at Holy Trinity
- Thurs, May 17 Lord's Ascension at Marlboro, 10 am
- Sat, May 26 Saturday of Souls, Liturgy at 10 am
- Sun, May 27 Pentecost
- Mon, May 28 Memorial Day
- Sat, June 2 e-Recycling 9am - 2pm  
No Food Pantry this Saturday
- Fri-Sat, Jun 1-3 Grecian Festival
- Mon, June 4 Apostles' Fast Begins
- Sat, July 7 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-noon
- Aug 6-8 Vacation Church School

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

## HOLY TRINITY NEWS

**Holy Trinity** is planning a week of fun-filled activities during National Nursing Home Week (May 14-18), starting with today, **May 13th, with a Mother's Day Tea!**

**HOLY TRINITY** is organizing a **Dementia Support Group** for family members and friends of loved ones affected by dementia. **Interested?** Contact **Ann Marie LeBoeuf**, Director of Nursing at 508-852-100 or e-mail: amleboeuf@htnr.net.

### A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**SWEET JESUS, OUR SAVIOUR:** We who enjoy the effulgence of the sun and who delight in the luminescence of the moon give thanks to you for the gifts of light and sight. In our good fortune, most of us have never actually known the meaning of being blind, and we cannot even begin to appreciate what a life of total darkness is. You, however, know all things, so your understanding and tenderness brought you to bestow a twofold enlightenment on that poor fellow who had been deprived of sight from his mother's womb. As we commemorate his healing during this paschal season, we entreat you to preserve us from all interior blindness that we may always see reality as it is in fact, and live accordingly.

For you are the healer of our souls and bodies, Christ our God, and we give you glory, together with your eternal Father and your all-holy, good, and lifegiving Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

## DIRECTOR OF ADVANCEMENT & COMMUNITY RELATIONS FOR HOLY TRINITY NURSING & REHABILITATION CENTER

Holy Trinity Nursing & Rehabilitation Center, a non-profit community owned and operated healthcare facility, is seeking applicants for the position of Director of Advancement and Community Relations to support its mission to provide the highest quality skilled nursing and rehabilitation services to residents in Central Massachusetts. In keeping with the values and beliefs of its founders, the twelve Eastern Orthodox Christian parishes from the greater Worcester area, the Director of Advancement and Community Relations for Holy Trinity will serve as part of the senior management team, in a mission driven environment committed to serving our clients and their families, with the highest professional standard of care, compassion and respect. To view a copy of the job description, go to the link below. A letter of interest and resume may be sent to: Director of Human Resources, Holy Trinity Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, 300 Barber Avenue, Worcester, MA 01606, or via email to Jerry Shaffer jshaffer@htnr.net.

*We are an Equal Opportunity Employer. Federal and/or State laws prohibit discrimination in employment because of sex, age, race, color, religion, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, ancestry, service in the armed forces of the United States, disability or any other protected classification.*

[https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/3b56a7\\_82f6c950e4834350994e663908ceb0b3.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/3b56a7_82f6c950e4834350994e663908ceb0b3.pdf)

## OCMC TEAMS

### BUILD UP THE CHURCH

Consider joining an OCMC Orthodox Mission Team in 2018. Help build up the Church around the world: Alaska (Jul 10-19, Jul 20-31); Albania (Jun 12-30, Sept 17-24); Ghana (Aug 6-21); Guatemala (Jun 18-30, Aug 1-8); Kenya (Aug 8-20, Nov 28-Dec 8); Indonesia (Jun 26-Jul 9, Jul 3-16); Jamaica (Aug 2-11); Mexico (Aug 11-18).

If you desire to serve in His vineyard, contact OCMC to experience your faith in a new and meaningful way. Team applications and details are available at [www.ocmc.org](http://www.ocmc.org) or call the OCMC at 1.877.463.6787 (ext 142) for more information.



## ALL - DAY

### MARRIAGE RETREAT

#### SATURDAY, JUNE 2ND

It's called: *Laugh Your Way To A Better Marriage*. This a great opportunity to really think about, discuss and work on your marriage. It is especially valuable for engaged couples as they get ready for their life commitment to each other.

The Marriage Retreat/Seminar is being held at the Sts. Anargyroi Church in Marlborough, on June 2nd from 9:30 am - 4:00 pm. Lunch is provided. The cost is \$20.00 per person (this covers the costs of those running the Seminar). If you have questions, or want to RSVP, please contact: **Fr. Greg Christakos**, by e-mail: [fathergreg@stsanargyroi.org](mailto:fathergreg@stsanargyroi.org) or at: 617-947-5845.

# GOD'S GENEROSITY

WHEN ONE CONTEMPLATES THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S LOVE FOR US, it is difficult not to be overwhelmed. Of course, love in and of itself is a mystery — sometimes we speak of it as chemistry, but I think mystery is still a more apt term. There is a dynamic to love that cannot be calculated by formulas. There are too many moving parts, too many interactions possible. At the very least, these make it unpredictable. And if we know anything about God, he is a God of surprises.

This past Wednesday, while listening to the appointed lesson for the day during the Divine Liturgy at Holy Trinity, I was once again struck by God's generosity and love. The reading was the story of the feeding of the five thousand with two fish and five loaves, this time told by the Evangelist John (6:1-15). The account of this miracle is recounted in each of the four Gospels. It is a powerful story that captures the imagination. It at once satisfies our longing that no one should ever be found hungry or wanting, while at the same time reaffirms our faith in a generous and loving God.

We are in the middle of Spring and can feel and appreciate the abundance of God's creation. It can be overwhelming. Everything is bursting with life. My car is covered with thousands of maple seeds. (How many does a tree need to produce in order to ensure its survival!?) Yet the cornucopia of seeds and weeds, flowers and shoots are but an image given to us of God's Grace that pours over us like a deluge.

At the same time, while there is an abundance and even deluge to God's love there is also a preciousness to it. Witness to this: after everything had been distributed and, "when they were satisfied, [Jesus] told his disciples, 'Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost'" (John 6:12). The left-over fragments are precious. Jesus is not subscribing to a "throw-

away" culture. The creation is holy, each and every part of it.

From those five loaves and two fish they collected twelve baskets of leftovers. People thought they were going to go hungry, yet there was food to spare in spades. In our short-sighted anxiety, we find it difficult to image that God might have a larger plan for us than we can expect in our human limitedness.

Today we read the account of the 'healing' of the man blind from birth. I put the word 'healing' in quotes because in truth Jesus forms his eyes anew from the mud and his saliva. It is an act of creation no less than that of Adam and Eve. There were no eyes. Jesus literally molded them for him.

But the more interesting question for us is the one raised by the disciples who asked Jesus: "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him'" (John 9:2-3).

At first read this seems like a harsh statement. It would almost be easier to believe that his blindness was a result of someone's sin rather than the arbitrariness of God to make a spiritual point, but we need to think about it more deeply. God doesn't punish — at least not in the way we think (or perhaps wished) that he would. Nor does sickness or congenital illness occur to simply make us suffer. Suffering does not have any intrinsic positive value. Rather, illness happens as a result of any myriad of reasons. God always calls us to salvation in whichever situation we might find ourselves. For the man born blind God comes to him as the Word himself. God's love will be revealed in him.

In the baptismal service, in between the exorcisms and the baptism proper, the priest pronounces a blessing over the person coming to be baptized. It is a verse from 1 Timothy 2:4. He says:

"Blessed is our God who desires that everyone be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth." I will tell you truly that every time I say this blessing over the person coming to Baptism, I am overcome with emotion. It is such a powerfully personal blessing. I think of what God has called this person who will soon be baptized to. I think about how God has called each of us. And, of course, I think of how God has called me, not simply to the priesthood, but more importantly, the Life in Christ. I never think of it as a general call ("all of humanity"), but an individual call to each one specifically. Here is God's generosity in action.

So, the greater miracle for me is not the feeding of the five thousand with five loaves and two fish, rather it is in the twelve baskets of left-overs to be "kept in the fridge" for the next meal. God's love is abundant, yet nothing is to be wasted or lost. Everything, everyone, is precious. We all need to bide our time and trust God's plan.

I like to contrast the story of the Paralytic of two weeks ago with this of the Blind Man. Each had a long wait to encounter God's plan for them. Each was healed and completely restored. Yet, they processed the same life-changing experience differently. The Paralytic encounters God in the flesh, yet is unaffected and entirely capable of rejecting him. The Blind Man, in spite of severe interrogation from the religious authorities, never once flinches from testifying to the Grace of God worked in him. God desires that all come to the knowledge of the truth; but, the choice remains ours.

The Lord orders us to gather up every fragment so that nothing be lost. We are those fragments. Let's hope that we are not lost in the gathering.

Christ is Risen!

—FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA



## THE ASCENSION

The Lord Jesus passed forty days on earth after His Resurrection from the dead, appearing continually in various places to His disciples, with whom He also spoke, ate, and drank, thereby further demonstrating His Resurrection. On this Thursday, the fortieth day after Pascha, He appeared again in Jerusalem. After He had first spoken to the disciples about many things, He gave them His last commandment, that is, that they go forth and proclaim His Name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. But He also commanded them that for the present, they were not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait there together until they receive power from on high, when the Holy Spirit would come upon them.

Saying these things, He led them to the Mount of Olives, and raising His

hands, He blessed them; and saying again the words of the Father's blessing, He was parted from them and taken up. Immediately a cloud of light, a proof of His majesty, received Him. Sitting thereon as though on a royal chariot, He was taken up into Heaven, and after a short time was concealed from the sight of the disciples, who remained where they were with their eyes fixed on Him. At this point, two Angels in the form of men in white raiment appeared to them and said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? This same Jesus, Who is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven" (Acts 1:11). These words, in a complete and concise manner, declare what is taught in the Symbol of Faith concerning the Son and Word of God. Therefore, hav-

ing so fulfilled all His dispensation for us, our Lord Jesus Christ ascended in glory into Heaven, and sat at the right hand of God the Father. As for His sacred disciples, they returned from the Mount of Olives to Jerusalem, rejoicing because Christ had promised to send them the Holy Spirit.

It should be noted that the Mount of Olives is a Sabbath's day journey from Jerusalem, that is, the distance a Jew was permitted to walk on the day of the Sabbath. Ecumenius writes, "A Sabbath day's journey is one mile in length, as Clement says in his fifth Stromatis; it is two thousand cubits, as the Interpretation of the Acts states." They draw this conclusion from the fact that, while they were in the wilderness, the Israelites of old kept within this distance from the Holy Tabernacle, whither they walked on the Sabbath day to worship God.

## NAMEDAYS

May 21

*The Holy Equals to the Apostles  
Constantine and Helen*

Constantine Apostol  
Elaine Apostola  
Konstantin Charalambides  
Presvytera Eleni Christakos  
Amalia Helene Collins  
Hannah Constance Datz  
Dina Entwistle  
Iliana Victoria Fahey  
Elena Galeriu  
Ileana A Nace  
Rev. Fr. Dean Paleologos  
Constanța Papit  
Eleni Polymeros  
Elena Prelipcean  
Elaine Rocheford  
Dina K. Salerno  
Eleanor Sedares  
Elaine Tanacea  
Dean Valoras