

# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN

MAY 20, 2018

## THIS WEEK'S NEWS

**SATURDAY OF THE SOULS** before Pentecost is this coming **Saturday, May 26th**. Liturgy will be at 10:00 am. Next Sunday is the Feast of **PENTECOST**, the Descent of the Holy Spirit! **Please make an extra effort to attend.**

**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 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.

**COFFEE HOUR SPONSORS ARE**

### GREETERS TEAM 2:

ARTIC GAVALA AND V. GERALD BELBA

### COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP CREW D:

ILIANA & SEAN FAHEY,  
DIMITRI SAFFRON & MACLYNN TROJAN

**ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED**



**THE SEVENTH SUNDAY OF PASCHA**  
**OF THE FATHERS OF THE FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL**  
APOSTOLIC READING: ACTS 20:16-18; 28-36 ☩ GOSPEL: JOHN 17:1-13  
TONE 6 ☩ RESURRECTION GOSPEL 10

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

### WE ARE CELEBRATING TWO MEMORIALS TODAY:

For the servant of God, **Nikollaq Zhaka**, fallen asleep 6 months.

For the servants of God, departed members of the **Eleftheriou family**.

*May their memory be eternal!*

**TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR** is sponsored by the **Zhaka and Eleftheriou families** in memory of their departed loved ones.



## COMMUNITY NEWS

**Ss CONSTANTINE & HELEN** in Webster will be celebrating their Feastday today, **Sunday, May 20th**, with Great Vespers at 6:00 pm.

**GRECIAN FESTIVAL** next weekend! St. Spyridon Cathedral, Worcester.

### DATES TO REMEMBER

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

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*A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas*

## HOLY TRINITY NEWS

**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.

**HOLY TRINITY IS HOSTING A BOOK LAUNCH MEET & GREET** by their own employee, activities assistant **Diane Johnston Ashmore**. Ms. Ashmore, a first-time author, will hold her book signing for *Inspirational Gifts from the Heart* at Holy Trinity on **Wednesday, May 23, 2018 at 2:00 pm**. Everyone is welcome!

## 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

## 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.

# THE COSMONAUTS DIDN'T FIND GOD

**I**T SEEMS TO ME THAT THE LORD'S ASCENSION presents the modern believer with a few difficult questions, conceptually speaking. For example, for those of us who regularly fly — who regularly “ascend” — what exactly does the Lord's going up mean? For the last fifty-odd years, we periodically send people up beyond earth's atmosphere. What does it mean then that the Lord was carried up into heaven? When the Soviet cosmonauts ascended into the heavens they proclaimed that they hadn't found God there, in this way claiming to prove the silliness of religious faith. For people of Jesus' time it was a marvel if someone ascended to the heavens. Today, we go to the airport and catch our flight.

A second question is perhaps more mystifying. How can the actions of one person effect all of humanity? How can Christ's Ascension (when He took His place on the right hand of God the Father), also impact us? How do we share in the Lord's Resurrection? Why are we living the consequences of what Adam and Eve did?

Even though we have other examples in Scripture of people either being taken up into the heavens or transported from one place to another, the way in which the Lord ascended differs in a number of important ways. His ascension is seen as a return to the Father, a completion of His mission to restore the relationship between God and humanity. It fulfills the promise implicit in the resurrection. He also will send the Holy Spirit to enliven His followers. Moreover, He says that He will return.

The closest example we have in the Bible of an ascension like the Lord's is with the Prophet Elijah (Elias). He had been told by God that he would be taken up and was preparing his disciple Elisha to take up his mantle. (A mantle is a large cloak.) Elijah's mantle is a sign of his prophetic power. For example, one day Elijah and Elisha were walking and

talking about this, and were only able to cross the Jordan after Elijah had struck the water with it causing the river's flow to stop. As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven (2 Kings 2:11). As he was taken up his mantle dropped from the chariot and Elisha picked it up. As Elijah had promised him, Elisha received a double share of his spirit. This is where we get the expression to “take up the mantle.”

Unlike the Lord, Elijah is taken up before he tasted death. In one sense it was a prefiguring, a foreshadowing, of what was to come in Jesus. The way he was taken up also gave rise to the speculation in Israel that Elijah would return to proclaim the coming Messiah. It was John the Baptist, as the Lord himself said, who would be the “Elijah” announcing the Christ (cf. Mark 9:13).

Another example of this sort was in the days of Daniel, when he was held prisoner in the lion's den. The Prophet Habakkuk was in Judaea making a stew and breaking bread and an angel of the Lord took him up and brought him to Babylon to feed Daniel (cf. Daniel 14:31ff). There is also the Prophet Ezekiel, who was carried by the hand of the Lord into the middle of a valley where he was presented with the vision of the dry bones (cf. Ezekiel 37:1). These examples are not ascensions in the sense of Elijah's and certainly not the Lord's, yet in these two instances we can see how time and space have a different meaning for God. The Lord ascended to the place He was before, but not a place we can get to without God's help and permission. So, the Soviet cosmonauts were not able to find God, even though they passed through earth's atmosphere.

I find the second question to be more interesting than the first. While we might find it engaging to speculate where the Lord went when He as-

ceded, the fact that His bodily ascent has an effect on us is more provoking. How is it that what Christ did and does changes me? This is not only true in the Ascension, but in every aspect of Christ's Incarnation. As the Church has always taught, through the sacraments we participate in our Lord's saving work. As St. Paul says, those of us who have been baptized have been joined with Christ in his death. “For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his” (Romans 6:5).

We've been nurtured in a culture that emphasizes our individualism and plays down our connectedness — to one another and to the world around us. Yet our study of biology and other sciences has begun to tell us the same story that our theology has told us for millennia: we are all deeply connected one to another and to the whole of creation. St. Maximos the Confessor speaks of the human being as a “microcosm,” literally, a small world. He says that God created us in such a way that all of creation is summarized in us. We contain the world inside us, in our very being.

The more we unpack and analyze our own DNA and the DNA of everything living, the more we realize how interconnected the creation is. We used to think that “people are different.” Now we know that we are all practically first cousins, even with the animals and plants.

When the Second Person of the Holy Trinity assumed our nature, He changed our DNA. When Jesus dies and rises, death is destroyed for each of us. And, when the incarnate Word of God sits at the right-hand of the Father, we are all enthroned. God's promise to each of us is real and true.

Christ has Ascended! ...

He has Ascended in Glory!

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA

## 2018 GRADUATES

*"He has filled them with the spirit of God,  
with skill, intelligence, and knowledge in every kind of craft." (Exodus 35:31)*

We want to acknowledge members of our Church community who are celebrating a graduation and recognize their achievement.

### HIGH SCHOOL

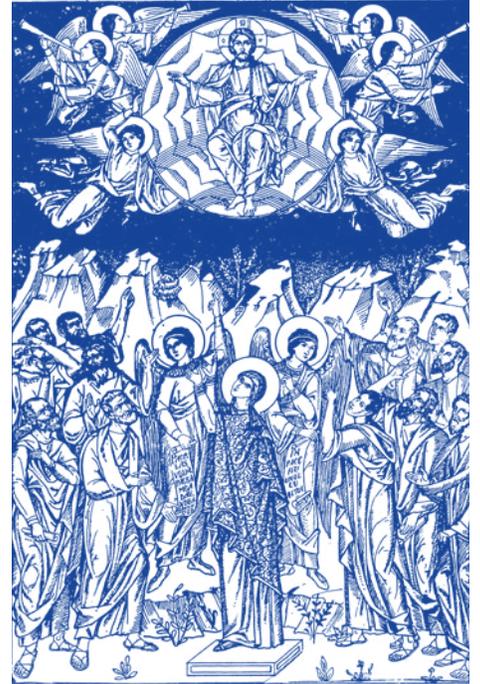
**Rose Salerno** is graduated from Tahanto Regional High School and will attend the University of New Hampshire in the fall.

### COLLEGE

**Elias Christo** is graduated from Roger Williams University with a Bachelor of Science in architecture, and a minor in Business Management. He will be working in the field and attending graduate school in Bristol, RI.

**Peter Tsongalis** is graduated from Virginia Tech, *magna cum laude*, with a Bachelor of Science in computer engineering. He will be working for a software firm in Raleigh, NC.

*May our loving Lord continue to bless their efforts and grant them a long life, health, prosperity, and many, many years!*



### A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**P**RAISE TO YOU, ETERNAL, LOVING GOD AND FATHER, O you who loved us before we were even conceived: Today, the gates of heaven, the eternal portals, are lifted high, because your only Son, the king of glory, enters in. As we celebrate his glorious return to the right of your majesty, we pray that you will draw us ever closer to him, so that, faithful to him at all times, we may rise above the difficulties of this earthly life to enjoy the glory of eternal life. Receive our spiritual worship, and prepare us for the descent of your all-holy Spirit in the days to come.

For you deserve all glory, honor, and worship, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.



**W**hen he saw the sign of your cross in the heavens, this apostle among kings saw in it a call straight from you. Like Paul he turned from his ways and followed you., entrusting his reign to your wisdom and power, O Lord. In our day, too, keep all the world in lasting peace, O only lover of humanity, by the prayers of the Theotokos.