

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN SEPTEMBER 2, 2018

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

QUESTIONS FOR SUNDAY SERMONS. Fr. Nick's is continuing his summer sermon series on the Divine Liturgy. This Sunday he'll be talking about Lord's Prayer through the reception of Communion. If you have any questions about the Liturgy — why we do what we do—please give them to, or e-mail: FrNick@StNicholas Church.org.

THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS is Saturday, September 8th. Liturgy will be celebrate at 9:30 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 Mielnicki or Nicole Apostola. Our next Saturday is October 6th.

AN ELECTRONICS/WHITE GOODS, ETC. RECYCLING day is set also for Saturday, September 15th. This is an opportunity for our parish to serve our local community while caring for the environment. If you're able and willing to help, please speak with **Gerry Belba**.

GREETERS TEAM 1:

V. GERALD BELBA & MARGARITE LANDRY

COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP:

HELP NEEDED

PICK UP A CUP - LEND A HAND

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

APOSTOLIC READING: 2 CORINTHIANS 1:21-2:4 ☩ GOSPEL: MATTHEW 22:2-14

(THE PARABLE OF THE WEDDING OF THE KING'S SON)

TONE 5 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL: 3

stART on the Street

PASTRY CONCESSION AT "START ON THE STREET:" Sunday, September 16th. We'll be selling our boxed pastries and promoting our pitas, and holiday platters. Help is needed on:

- **Thursday, September 13th**, 10:00 am - 5:00 pm for packaging.
- **Sunday, September 16th**, 11:00 am - 6:00 pm, teams to staff our Concession. It's a small space (only 2 people needed for any shift). Shift commitments are to 2-3 hours.
- **Sunday, September 16th**, at 7:00 am to transport and set up. At 6:00 pm, to breakdown and transport. **George Demake** is coordinating. See him if you're able to help.

Betty Anderson and Chris Toda are coordinating the staffing schedule. Check with them if you're able to help and/or would like more information.

COFFEE HOUR SPONSORS are needed in the coming weeks. If you and your family would like to sponsor one, please check the Calendar and speak with Presvytera Maria.

THIS SUNDAY'S COFFEE HOUR is sponsored by **Christo and Tracie Spyrou**.

PARISH FESTIVALS

STS. ANARGYROI PARISH IN MARLBOROUGH will be holding its annual **Greek Festival, Labor Day weekend** (Saturday through Monday, Sept 1-3). For more information: stsanargyroi.org/greek-festival-2018.

STS CONSTANTINE & HELEN IN WEBSTER, will be holding its annual

DATES TO REMEMBER

- Sat, Sept 1 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-noon
- Sat, Sept 8 Nativity of Theotokos, Liturgy 9:30 am
- Fri, Sept 14 Elevation of Holy Cross, Liturgy 9:30 am
- Sat, Sept 15 e-Recycling, 9 am-2 pm
- Sun, Sept 16 stART on Street booth

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas

Greek Festival, Saturday and Sunday, September 8-9. More information: schwebster.org

HOLY TRINITY, FITCHBURG is holding their Annual Greek Festival, Friday-Saturday, **September 14-15**. For more information: www.holytrinity.ma.goarch.org

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

The General Assembly for the Eastern Orthodox Management Corp. (EOMC), which operates Holy Trinity Nursing and Rehabilitation Center will be held on **Tuesday, September 18, 2018 at 7:00 pm at Holy Trinity**, 300 Barber Ave., Worcester, MA. This meeting is open to CEOC parish members and all are encouraged to attend. The purpose of the Annual Meeting is to review the organization's financial and operational performance the previous year, progress with new initiatives, results of annual Fundraising efforts, and to provide the supporting community with the opportunity to learn of the organization's strategic direction. In addition, the election for new Board Members, including Clergy, will also be held, and CEOC appointed Directors are also announced at this time. **Anyone interested in becoming an EOMC Board Member should feel free to contact:** Stephen Fotos, President of EOMC at: 508-667-8870, or the Chair of the Nominating Committee, Basil Tolos at: 978-345-4036. For other information, please call Carol Fotos at: 508-713-7577, or Jerry Shaffer at: 508-852-1000. Hors d'oeuvres will be served.

DID YOU KNOW? Your Medicare Part A benefits cover some of the costs for a total of 90 days in a hospital and 100 days in a skilled nursing facility. Medicare also covers up to 60 "lifetime reserve days." There are qualifying criteria to be eligible for Medicare to cover these costs.

DIVINE LITURGY is celebrated every Wednesday morning at 9:30am. And please always keep Holy Trinity Nursing Home, it's staff, directors, residents, and families in your prayers. And remember: you can always visit!

NEVER FORGET: 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,

ETHERNAL GOD, ALMIGHTY FATHER: In your great love for us you gave us your only Son. Help us to show you our gratitude by struggling for true humility, humility like his, and by embracing the small sufferings of daily living gracefully. Furthermore, prevent us from trying to escape the endless deaths to ourselves that we must undergo for the sake of others, and enable us to open ourselves more and more to what authentic love asks of us.

For you are a merciful and loving God, and we give you glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

NAMEDAYS

August 26

The Holy Martyrs

Adrian and Natalia at Nicomedia

Natalia Dimitra Karadimitriou
Natasha Zhaka

August 29

St. Theodora of Thessalonika

Gina Theodora Trakadas

August 30

St. Alexander,

Patriarch of Constantinople

Alexander Charalambides

Emilia Alexandra Galeriu

Dr. Alexander Gouvelis

Alexandra Mazanitis

Alexandru Nace

Conner Alexander Polymeros

Alexanna Soter

Alexander James Trakadas

BEHOLD! THE BRIDEGROOM COMES!

THIS Sunday's Gospel lesson is the companion to last Sunday's parable of the Wicked Servants. This week we hear of the Wedding Banquet given by the King for his Son (Matthew 22:1-14). St. Matthew places these two parables one after the other to emphasize the images the Lord is giving us of what the Kingdom of God is like. In the first parable Jesus paints an image of a well-established vineyard. In the second he presents us with an image of a royal wedding feast. In both of these he wants us to get a sense of God's gracious generosity, as well as the consequences of being blind to what he is offering us.

Of course, there are differences between the two. The vineyard parable involves labor. There are agreements and expectations that a portion of the harvest is due as payment to the vineyard owner. (It's worth noting that as much as things have changed, so much remains very familiar. Here we find both a labor contract and a lease agreement.) In the Parable of the Wedding Feast, there is no labor or lease, only shared joy. But, even here something is still expected, and, as we will see, there are consequences for failing to comply.

The story is this: A king prepares a wedding banquet for his son. The guests had already long been invited. Now he sends out his servants to tell them to come since everything is prepared. One after another these invited guests decline, "making light of it," as St. Matthew says (v. 5). Each finds a shallow excuse. Some of them even mistreat and kill the messengers. In a rage the king orders his troops to destroy the murderers, and burn their cities.

He then turns to the servants and says that the wedding feast is prepared but those who had been invited were not worthy. He orders them to go out into the streets and invite everyone they can find to the wedding. So they gath-

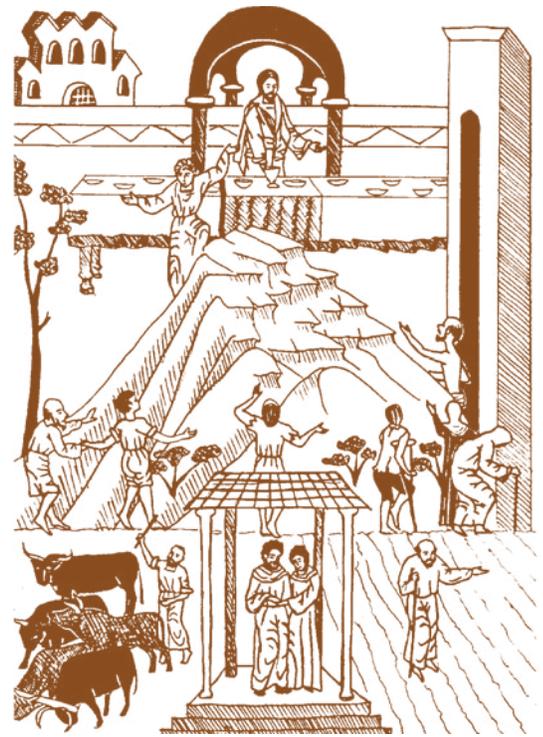
ered everyone they could, both good and bad, in order that the hall might be filled with guests.

When the king entered the hall to greet his guests he notices one man was not wearing a wedding garment. He says to him: "Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?" (v. 12) The man was speechless. Then the king ordered him to be bound and thrown into the outer darkness. He then utters those bone-chilling words: "For many are called, but few are chosen" (v. 14).

You should know that there is another version of this parable related by St. Luke (14:15-24), which we usually hear closer to Christmas. The accounts overlap, but St. Matthew's version is where the Church takes much of the imagery used in the "Bridegroom" Matins Services that we hear during the first days of Holy Week. Nonetheless, both accounts tell a similar story.

There are two types of guests: those who had been invited for a long time, and those who were pulled off the streets. God has been preaching his message to some for a very long time; these should have been prepared to come when the word came to them that the Banquet was ready. Others were pulled off the street, without the same kind of preparation. What made the second group worthy to enter? Very simply, God's grace. What made the first group unworthy? Their arrogance and callous treatment of the great honor that had been given them.

And, then there's that poor wretch who enters the wedding hall not properly dressed. What can we say about him? Not appreciating the honor given him — *not responding to the grace given him* — he belittles his host by not re-



sponding to the invitation appropriately.

As with last week's parable, we find a powerful and even devastating message. So much of today's consciousness makes light of our sin and relies on God's mercy as a kind of insurance policy. These parables are meant as both an invitation to God's mercy and a wake-up call to our casual approach toward it.

If we look we can find ourselves in each of these characters in this parable. There are those of us who have heard the Gospel since childhood. Do we make lame excuses for not heeding God's call? Likewise, there are those of us who find ourselves recently drawn to the spiritual life. Do we take it lightly and not prepare the garment of our souls? Each of us, the good and bad who have been called into the wedding banquet, do we fully appreciate God's generosity toward us, and respond accordingly?

May our loving and generous Lord, always find us properly dressed and worthy of the joy of His Son's Wedding Feast.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA