

# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN OCTOBER 14, 2018

## THIS WEEK'S NEWS

**THE PARISH COUNCIL** will hold its regular monthly meeting **Monday, October 15th at 6:30 PM**. Parish Council Members, please let George know if you are unable to attend.

**OUR NEXT MUSTARD SEED MEAL** is **THIS Friday, October 19th**. We'll need help cooking and serving. **Prep** help needed (3 persons), noon Thursday. **Prep** help needed (2 persons), 1:00pm Friday. **Serving** help needed (5 persons), 5:30PM Friday. **This month's meal is being sponsored by Maria Kalpidou and Kosmas Karadimitriou in memory of their parents and grandparents, fallen asleep.** If you'd like to help, please talk to Fr. Nick.

**PITA DOUGH ROLLING.** This **Saturday, October 20th, 9:00AM until NOON.** **Questions? Chris Toda.** Remember: There's a job for everyone! Tell **Chris or Betty** if you're able to come and help.

The July-September issue of the Archdiocesan quarterly **CREDINȚA / THE FAITH** is available at the candles. **Pick one up and take it home!**

**AN ANTHOLOGY** of Metropolitan Nicolae's Pastoral Letters and other writings has been published by the

### **GREETERS TEAM 2:**

ARTIC GAVALA AND V. GERALD BELBA

### **COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP:**

**HELP NEEDED**

PICK UP A CUP - LEND A HAND

**ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED**



### THE TWENTY FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

EPISTLE: TITUS 3:8-15 ☩ GOSPEL: LUKE 8:5-15 (PARABLE OF THE SOWER AND THE SEED)  
THE SUNDAY OF THE FATHERS OF THE 7TH ŒCUMENICAL COUNCIL  
TONE 3 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 9

Archdiocese celebrating the Fifteenth Anniversary of His Eminence's Archpastorate. Entitled: *On the Path of Salvation with Christ, from the Nativity to the Resurrection*, it is available at the candles for a donation of \$10.00.

**A THREE YEAR MEMORIAL** is observed today for the servant of God **Ann Marie Chachi.** *May the Lord rest her soul among the just!*

**TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR** is sponsored by the **Chachi Family** in memory of **Ann Marie.**

## COMING-UP

**CALLING ALL VENDORS!!! A HOLIDAY MARKET PLACE** will once again be a part of our annual **Thanksgiving Bake Sale and Luncheon on Saturday, November 17th.** We are seeking Vendors to rent table space. We would like to include a variety of vendors and ensure there is no duplication of products or services. If you or a vendor you know is inter-

ested in participating, please contact: **Tim Rucho.**

## HOLY TRINITY NEWS

**COME AND JOIN THE FUN AT HOLY TRINITY!**

♦ The "Honky Tonk Piano Man", Gary Landgren will be appearing on **Monday, October 22nd at 2:00PM.** Families and friends are all invited.

♦ There will be a **Craft Fair & Bake Sale on Saturday, October 27th** from 10:00AM until 3:30PM. Homemade baked goods are greatly appreciated!! All proceeds go to the Alzheimer's Association. Questions? Call Dana Spiney at Holy Trinity at 508-852-1000.

### DATES TO REMEMBER

Mon, Oct 15 Parish Council Meeting, 6:30PM  
Fri, Oct 19 Mustard Seed Meal, 5:00 PM  
Sat, Oct 20 Pita Dough Rolling, 9 AM-NOON  
Sat, Nov 3 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9 AM-NOON  
Sat, Nov 17 Holiday Bake Sale, Luncheon, and MarketPlace, 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas

♦ On **Wednesday, October 31st**, at 2:00PM there will be a Halloween Party in the Main Dining Room. Music will be provided by Joe Cariglia. Feel free to come to the event!

**JOB OPENINGS:** There are a number of employment opportunities available at Holy Trinity. For the latest postings, check out: [www.htnr.net/careers](http://www.htnr.net/careers).

**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!

## COMMUNITY NEWS

**NOTRE DAME ACADEMY** is holding an open house on **Sunday, Oct 21st at 7:00PM** for prospective students (young women grades 7-12). For info: [www.nda-worc.org](http://www.nda-worc.org), or call: 508-757-6200 x229.

### A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**L**ORD GOD, eternal Father: Give us the justice that will make us flourish like the palm tree; give us also the goodness that will enable us to grow before you like the cedar of Lebanon. Help us to avoid senseless controversy, to eschew judging, censoring, and criticizing, and to resist being enslaved to our own opinions. Planted in your courts, O Lord, may we grow by abandoning ourselves to your perfect will.

By the mercies and love for us of your only Son, with whom you are blest, together with your all-holy, good, and life-giving Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.



**ST. PARASCHEVA THE YOUNG**  
**OCTOBER 14**

**O**ur venerable Mother Parascheva the Young lived as a monastic in the 11th century. Her feast day is celebrated on October 14. She is the patron saint of the Romanian region of Moldova and Romanians generally have great esteem towards her.

St. Parascheva was born at the beginning of the 11th century A.D. into a wealthy, noble, and pious Christian family in the town of Epivat on the shores of the Marmara Sea. At the age of ten she heard the words, "Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow me." The words of the Lord had a profound effect on the young girl, and they became the subject of her meditations. The future St. Parascheva began to dress poor people in her expensive clothes, but her parents objected, finding the girl's charity more than they could understand or support. To follow her calling, Parascheva abandoned her wealth and privileges, left her parents, and ran away to Constantinople. There she spent her time in prayer, meditating on the words of Christ.

To elude her parents, who were traveling from city to city trying to find her, she moved to Chalcedon, and then to the Church of the Most Holy Theotokos, in Heraclea Pontica, near the

Black Sea. She spent the next five years there, living an austere life of continuous prayer and devotion. During her prayers she received visions of the Holy Virgin Mary and in one of the visions, she was instructed to go to Jerusalem. After spending some time in the city, she joined a convent in the Jordanian desert. A few years later, she returned to Constantinople and then, at the age of twenty-five, moved to the village of Katikratia where, at the Church of the Holy Apostles, she lived the remaining two years of her life. She revealed herself to a local monk in a dream who uncovered her uncorrupted body, which was interred in the Church of the Holy Apostles, where she had spent the last years of her earthly existence.

Later on her relics were moved to Tarnovo, in Bulgaria, then to Belgrade, in Serbia, and finally to Constantinople. In 1641, they were given as a gift to Vasile Lupu, Voievod of Moldova, by the Patriarch of Constantinople. Her intact relics have remained in Iași ever since. She is venerated as the Protector of Iași and all of Moldova, and each year hundreds of thousands of Orthodox faithful and hierarchs from many countries gather in Iași to celebrate her feast day and venerate her holy relics, which continue to work miracles.

## NAMEDAYS

### October 7

*The Holy Martyr Sergius in Syria*

Sergis Eleftheriou  
Sergiou Eleftheriou

### October 18

*The Holy Apostle and Evangelist Luke*

Fr. Luke Veronis

### October 20

*The Great-martyr Artemius*

Artemie Gavala  
Artemis Gouvelis

## AVOID STUPID CONTROVERSIES

**T**HE Epistle lesson this week is related to the commemoration of the Fathers of the Seventh Œcumenical Council, the second held in Nicæa in 787AD. This was the Council that addressed the issue of the proper role of icons in the Church and in worship. The selection today is from St. Paul's letter to his disciple and co-worker Titus (3:8-15). In it he addresses some of the finer points of pastoring a community, especially an early Christian one still influenced by many pagan enticements.

We read today from the very last verses of that Letter. St. Paul, after giving Titus his advice on how to guide the community in a Christian way, tells him: "I desire you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to apply themselves to good deeds; these are excellent and profitable to men" (v. 8). St. Paul is a man of action. He believes the principles of faith are meant to be put into practice. This is equally true of many of the spiritual fathers of the Church. They believed that by practicing acts of charity and good works, a person is able to integrate their faith into their very being. It is not enough for someone to have good intentions in their head; they also need to act on these same intentions with their hands.

He warns Titus to "avoid stupid controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels over the law, for they are unprofitable and futile" (v. 9.) This isn't to say that Titus himself was prone to such controversies, but rather that itinerant preachers were stirring up things everywhere. People in local communities, informed or ignorant, would form camps and tear each other apart. This is St. Paul's concern.

He tells Titus: "As for a man who is factious, after admonishing him once or twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is perverted and sinful; he is self-condemned" (v. 10-11).

The word translated as "factious" is, in the original Greek, "αἰρετικὸν" —

"heretical." (This word didn't assume the specific theological meaning we understand today until a few hundred years after St. Paul.) The Greek root of the word "heretical" literally means, "to choose;" that is to say, to single out one particular point and emphasize it to the exclusion of other points of view or understandings. Thus, a "heretic" turns their one central point into the whole truth. Many persons who the Church considers to be heretics were not entirely wrong. The problem was that the one point they clung to and emphasized changed the full meaning of the truth. In effect, their one point became their whole truth. The Church has always had a wider understanding of truth, avoiding to reduce it to singular idea.

St. Paul calls this "factious" person "perverted and sinful." Even without discussing St. Paul's understanding or intent of that word in the context of the early Church, we can see his point very easily in the way much public discourse happens today in shouting matches on TV, radio and in the public square. No doubt much of this is theatre, contrived for effect; but increasingly it is not. The factious person uses ideas and language to push people to extremes. The part is presented as the whole. In contrast, the truly thoughtful person tries to keep all perspectives in balance.

This does not mean there are no principles we should defend; of course there are! It is the "stupid controversies" and "dissensions" that St. Paul asks us to avoid; "quarrels" that are "unprofitable and futile." These last two words are key to understanding where and how someone should stand on a question of principle. Will the dispute ultimately build up the Body of Christ, or will it finally be unprofitable and futile? Understanding this difference is what makes one person a saint and another a heretic. It calls for discernment.

Discernment is first and foremost a spiritual gift. It is the ability to distinguish between the various thoughts that enter our mind and to recognize those

that come from God and those that are from the devil. As such, the person with discernment can understand both the short and long term consequences of a thought or an action. Like all spiritual gifts, God gives discernment to a person of prayer. We all need God's help so that He might guide us toward people of true discernment to whom we should listen and from whom we can learn.

In St. Paul's last few lines to Titus, we gain insight into how he was so successful in establishing Churches throughout the Roman world. St. Paul had sent Titus to Crete to bring order to the Church there. He tells him he will "send Artemas or Tychicus" to Crete to replace him and then he would like Titus to come to Nicopolis to join him there (v. 12). He asks him to "speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way;" to "see that they lack nothing" (v. 13). We suppose that these two, about whom St. Paul speaks in other letters, had brought this message to Titus. After they leave Crete they will visit other Churches.

Then he offers Titus a final piece of advice: "Let our people learn to apply themselves to good deeds, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not to be unfruitful" (v. 14). While much has been made of St. Paul's principle of justification by faith, not by works (Romans 3:25ff), we see here, as in other places, the emphasis on how our faith should take concrete form, in ministering to those in need.

He reminds us that ultimately the Church is composed of communities of faithful people who love one another. He says: "All who are with me send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all" (v. 15). And so this is how it should always be, one community embracing another in the love of Christ.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA