

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN NOVEMBER 18, 2018

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

OUR ANNUAL HOLIDAY BAKE SALE, LUNCHEON AND MARKET-PLACE held yesterday was a wonderful success! Lots of people worked very hard. Special thanks go to **Chris Toda and Betty Anderson** for their leadership and dedication. *God bless them!*

THE ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP APPEAL has been sent out. As parishioners we are all called to be stewards of St. Nicholas Church. Our church relies upon the offering of time, talents and treasure from each of us. As we approach Thanksgiving and the celebration of the Feast of St. Nicholas, our patron saint, we ask that you prayerfully consider an offering of time, talents and treasure to sustain our beloved church for the glory of God. *Wishing you and your loved ones a blessed Thanksgiving.*

TODAY IS IOCC SUNDAY — A Day of Sharing. The International Orthodox Christian Charities is *the* major charitable arm of the Orthodox Church. Based in the United States, it brings relief to people in need throughout the world. **To donate go to the website: www.iocc.org, or call: (877) 803 IOCC (4622).**

GREETERS TEAM 1:
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-SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

EPISTLE: EPHESIANS 5:8-19 ☩ GOSPEL: LUKE 12:16-21

(THE PARABLE OF THE RICH FOOL)

TONE 8 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 3

AN ECUMENICAL THANKSGIVING SERVICE, sponsored by the Shrewsbury Clergy Association will be held **TODAY Sunday, November 18th at 7:00 PM** at Trinity Episcopal, Main Street, Shrewsbury. Fr. Nick will be preaching.

THIS WEDNESDAY IS THE FEAST OF THE ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS IN THE TEMPLE. We'll celebrate Liturgy at **HOLY TRINITY** beginning at 9:30 AM

THE CHRISTMAS FAST began this past Wednesday, November 14th. **FASTING IS THE BEST WAY TO PREPARE FOR CHRISTMAS!** In addition to fasting from food, you may want to consider fasting from shopping as well — or at least choosing when and how much to shop. Don't shop on Thanksgiving. Use it as a family day. Don't shop on Sundays. Instead, relax with your friends. We *can* do things that will feed our souls, while perhaps striking a note for a saner society

as well.

THE FEASTDAY RAFFLE TICKETS have been mailed. We still need our own parishioners to promote the Raffle by selling tickets and/or following up with those who got them by mail. **Questions? Tom Fitzpatrick** for tickets and ways to help: Tom.l.fitzpatrick1006@gmail.com or 508-887-1896 **OR George Demake:** gdemake@charter.net or 774-535-2821.

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

DATES TO REMEMBER

Wed, Nov 14 Christmas Fast begins
Sun, Nov 18 Shrewsbury Ecu Thanksgiving Service
Trinity Episcopal, 7:00PM
Sat, Nov 24 e-Recycling, 9 AM-2 PM
Sat, Dec 1 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9 AM-NOON
Sun, Dec 9 Feastday Celebration

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

THE ANNUAL WINTER COAT DRIVE organized by our Orthodox Food Pantry is underway. We're looking for **coats, hats, scarves and gloves clean and in good condition.** Lisa Mielnicki will be collecting them. November 25th is the deadline. Lisa will be available every Sunday after Liturgy and all day Saturday, November 17th.

TODAY WE CELEBRATE A MEMORIAL for the servant of God, **Nikolaq Zhaka**, fallen asleep 1 year. **May his memory be eternal!**

TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR is sponsored by the **Zhaka family**, in memory of **Niko.**

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

HOLY TRINITY is kicking off its **Annual Appeal**, and a couple of representatives will be making a short presentation to the parish on **Sunday, November 25th.** They will also be available during coffee hour to answer any questions. Next year is the 25th Anniversary of Holy Trinity's opening and we're getting ready for that celebration as well!

CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR HOLY TRINITY RESIDENTS. Each year Holy Trinity Nursing and Rehab gives the Orthodox community the opportunity to **provide Christmas Gifts for the facility's residents.** Our Parish is responsible for providing some of these gifts. You will be asked to purchase and wrap the gift, and bring it to the Church, Sunday, December 16th. **Eleanor Sedares (508-753-3106)** is coordinating this effort for our parish and can offer suggestions if you need ideas of what to get.

WISH-LIST ITEM: Holy Trinity is looking for donations of **large print books.** They could be new or used. Cash donations are also welcomed. If you're able and willing to help, please **contact: Dana Spinney**, Activities Director, at

508-852-1000 or e-mail: jamesheald71@gmail.com or Jane Lizotte at: jlizotte2@gmail.com
dspinney@htnr.net

MOMENT TO MOMENT: The Alzheimer's Caregiver Journey, is a presentation that Holy Trinity is sponsoring on **Tuesday, December 4th from 3:00-4:00 pm** at Holy Trinity. Learn new communication skills, how to cope with personality changes, and how to manage the impact upon the family. You'll learn how to take better care of yourself as well. **This is open to all!** Contact **Christie Sullivan** for questions: 508-852-1000, and please RSVP.

COMMUNITY NEWS

TURKEY TROT - Thanksgiving morning Thursday, November 22nd - 8:00 AM Join fellow runners and walkers for the 8th Annual Thanksgiving Day Turkey Trot for the Memory. It's a 5 mile run or a 2 mile walk all to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer's disease. And this wonderful Shrewsbury town tradition is the perfect way to start the holiday. Registration is available online at: www.turkeytroforthememory.org. Questions please email Jim Heald at:



jamesheald71@gmail.com or Jane Lizotte at: jlizotte2@gmail.com

A RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE will be hosted by **St. Spyridon Cathedral on Saturday, December 1st** from 9AM to 3PM. If you'd to donate some blood, you can schedule a time by accessing the link: www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/drive-results?zipSponsor=saintspyridon (We have the address hyperlinked on the e-Bulletin version.)

NAMEDAYS

November 14

The Holy and All-praised Apostle Philip

Philip Favata
Philip Rucho
Phillip Sedares

November 16

The Holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew

Scott Matthew Belba
Matthew Robert Clem
Matthew Collins
Matthew Soter

November 25

The Great-martyr Katherine of Alexandria

Katina Vanthia Christo
Katina Cocavessis
Kathy Lynn Evangelos
Kathryn Eleanor Sedares
Katina Spataro
Katherine Stamoulis
Emily Katherine Valoras

November 30

The Holy Apostle Andrew the First-called

Andrew Cavanaugh
Andrew John Demake
Andrew Opio
Andrew Tanacea

WALK AS CHILDREN OF LIGHT

THIS is the twenty-sixth Sunday after Pentecost. The Epistle Lesson is taken from St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 5:8-19. The section we read last week was concerned about the unity of the Church — what we would normally think of as the parish. St. Paul now directs our attention to the importance of our behavior; how we should live the faith we say we have in Jesus our Lord.

St. Paul is very straight-forward on how he wants the Ephesians to reflect on their behavior. He wants them to think about what their lives were like before accepting Christ, and what their lives are like now that they have accepted Him. He says, "for once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord." (v. 8-10) St. Paul uses an image that is as clear to us as it was to the Ephesians: the spiritual struggle is between the forces of darkness and the forces of light. The difference between darkness and light is like the difference between evil and good. St. Paul isn't being a "dualist." (Dualists taught that everything could be seen in the stark contrast between black and white.) Yet, he is saying that those who follow God, who follow Jesus, need to distinguish themselves by their way of life. There is a choice in front of us. All we need to do is open our soul's eye to see it. Often the choices are as clear as day is from night.

He caps this verse with the comment: "try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord." Discovering for ourselves what it is that would please the Lord is a helpful guiding principle as we grow spiritually. Light and darkness are only metaphors for the creative tension within our psyche — our soul — as we strive to discern God's will for us. Each of us struggles *not* to do things we know will be detrimental to us and others, even as we aim to do things that we feel will bring us closer to God. The back

and forth of it is the essence of what it means to grow spiritually, to grow in the Life in Christ.

St. Paul offers us very concrete advice on how to measure our growth. "Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is a shame even to speak of the things that they do in secret; but when anything is exposed by the light it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light." (v. 11-13)

Sunlight disinfects. Some say it's better than Clorox. Hanging clothes out in the sun to dry is not only environmentally wise, it has the additional benefit of purifying on the microbial level. The metaphor of light as a disinfectant points us to a deeper spiritual reality. God's light burns away our sins and purifies us. When acts of sin and evil are exposed to the light they lose their allure as well as their power. When a person's sins are made known publicly, the glamour of their lives quickly evaporates in the light of day.

"Therefore it is said, 'Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light.'" (v. 14) Sleep is another way of speaking about deadness to spiritual reality. We have suffered a great world-wide economic crisis, yet many still seem to be asleep to its root causes: personal selfishness, greed beyond conception, and desire to live beyond not only our own means, but even our planet's ability to sustain us. When the Scripture speaks of 'sleep' and 'death' we should think about the deeper spiritual truth that God wants us to understand. When we are awake we are conscious to the things around us and better able to understand their consequences.

This is why St. Paul tells the Ephesians: "Look carefully ... how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil." (v. 15-16) The days were not any more or less evil in St. Paul's time than in ours. Each of us is equally vulnerable

to the dangers of our particular time and needs to try to be 'wise.' Do we walk carefully? Do we make the best use of our time? Do we seek out what is pleasing to the Lord? Keeping Judgment Day in front of us will help us focus our attention, if we chose to reflect on it often enough.

"Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is." (v. 17) When we succumb to temptation, we forget our high calling. Again, our human struggle is a constant back-and-forth in our minds and hearts. It is part of being alive. We face a thousand choices a day, and must remember each has a moral consequence. We may be tempted to cut corners or even sin outright, but when we think about things in the light of day, we realize that doing God's will is really what we ourselves want. It is the foolishness of sinful temptation that keeps us away from truly becoming ourselves.

Finally, St. Paul warns us, "do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit." (v. 18) There was a practice among some of the Mystery cults in his time to become 'high' not by God's Spirit, but by other kinds of more earthly spirits. We must always strive to be filled with the Holy Spirit, truly loving one another and "addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all [our] heart." (v. 19)

Faith should be embodied in the way we live. It is not that good deeds justify us before God, but they *will* make us God's children. The way we treat one another, those who love us as well as those who hate us and wish us harm, is the way the world will know that we follow our Lord, Jesus Christ, crucified and risen!

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA



A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

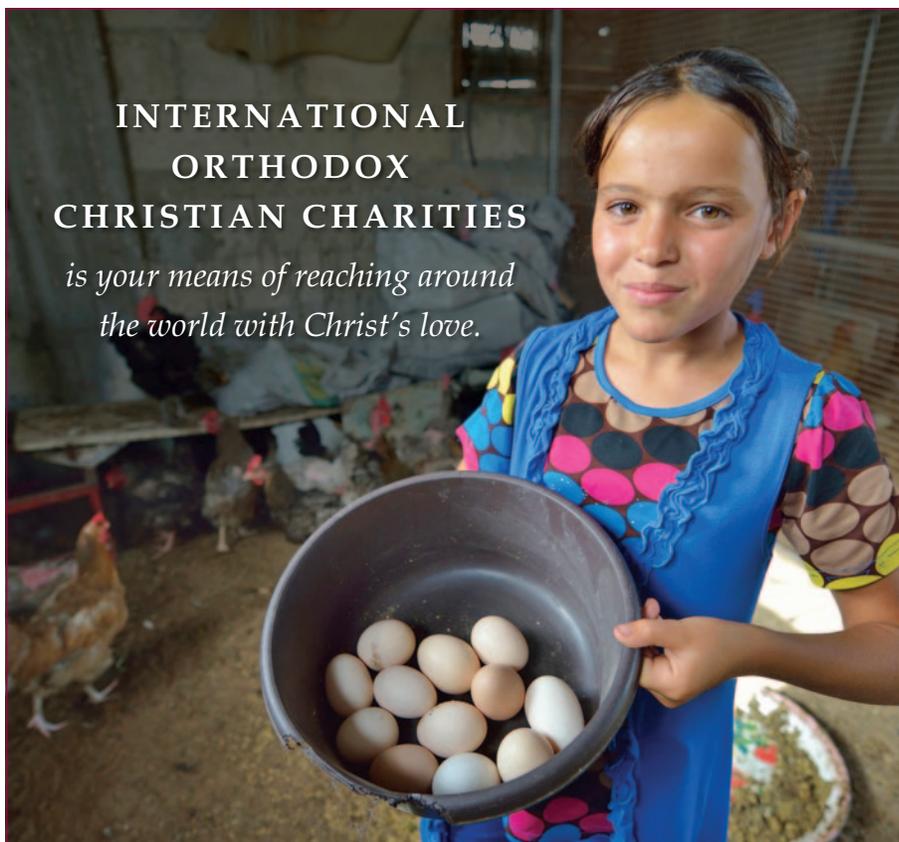
LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

BLEST BE YOUR NAME, O LORD, now and forevermore! From the rising of the sun to its setting, praised be your holy name! And to whom, O Lord our God, shall we offer our grateful praise, if not to you? You are the first and foremost benefactor of our lives. You are the one who bestowed on us all the good that we are and have. You gave us the riches of this world, and in unspeakable wisdom and insight, you revealed to us the mystery of your unfathomable will. Therefore, Lord, as we rejoice now, in preparation of our annual day of thanksgiving, grant that we may always perceive and appreciate the wonders of your creation and accept them from your hand as we should, conscious of your goodness, responsive to your love, and humbled by your generosity.

By the grace and mercy 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.

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