

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN JANUARY 20, 2019 THIS WEEK'S NEWS

SNOW FOR SUNDAY? The National Weather Service has issued a winter storm watch for Saturday evening through Sunday with significant snow and freezing rain. We'll keep an eye on things and **will send out an e-mail notice late Saturday if we decide to cancel** the Sunday Liturgy.

PITA DOUGH ROLLING. It's that time again! We did so well with our sales for the holidays that we've depleted our inventory. We've schedule a session for Saturday, January 26th. We need 12-15 people, so that the work is evenly distributed and we can finish with prep and clean-up in 3 hours. No experience necessary. If you'd like to participate, contact Chris Toda at: thetodas@msn.com, or 508-832-6271.

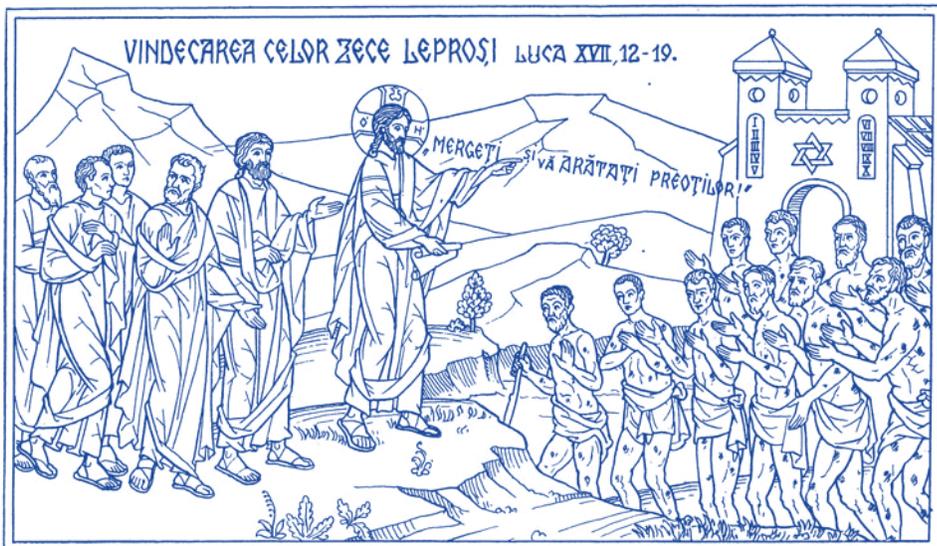
THE BLESSING OF HOMES AT THEOPHANY has begun. If you have a specific date and time that is more convenient, please contact Fr. Nick by e-mail (frnick@stnicholaschurch.org) or on his cell: 508-335-7378.

PLEASE BRING IN YOUR EMPTY HOLY WATER BOTTLES. If you have empty bottles, please bring them with you to Church.

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 TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

APOSTOLIC READING: COLOSSIANS 1:12-18 ☩ GOSPEL: LUKE 17:12-19

(JESUS HEALS THE TEN LEPERS)

TONE 1 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 1

A NEW PARISH COUNCIL WILL BE ELECTED THIS YEAR. Please consider offering a stewardship of your time in this important ministry. We also are asking for people to serve on other Parish committees, if you would like to focus your efforts in just one area. However you'd like to serve, please speak with **George Demake or Fr. Nick.**

COFFEE HOUR SPONSORS ARE NEEDED for the coming weeks. Please speak with Presvytera Maria if you would like to sponsor one.

TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR is sponsored by the **Manescu family** in memory of their departed family members: Ion-Constantin, Maria & Constantin and Ioana & Constantin, and Sofia & Alexandru. May their memory be eternal!

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

JOIN THE RESIDENTS FOR SEASONAL CRAFTING with

the student of Claremont Academy, this Sunday, January 20th at 2:00p.m. Families and friends are all invited.

Holy Trinity has an opening for the **DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES.** If you are interested or know of someone who is, please contact **Jerry Shaffer**, the Administrator of Holy Trinity, at 508-852-1000.

REMEMBER TO RESPOND TO THE TREASURE GENERATIONS appeal. Donate directly by phone or through our website: www.htnr.net/donate. **Help make Holy Trinity the kind of place we know every home should be.**

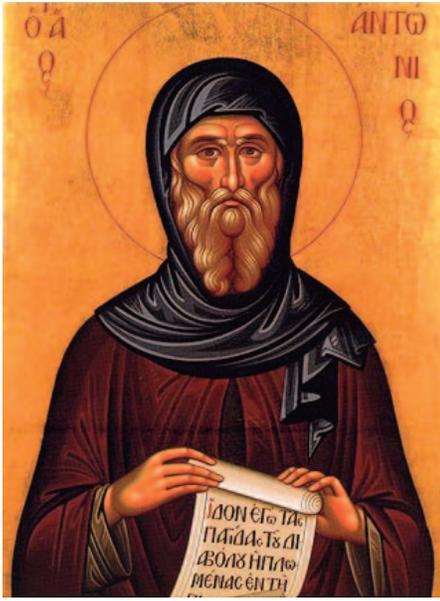
DATES TO REMEMBER

- Sat, Jan 26 Pita Dough Rolling, 9AM-noon
- Sat, Feb 2 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9AM-noon
- Fri, Feb 15 Mustard Seed Meal, 5pm
- Sat, March 2 Saturday of Souls, Lit 10AM
- Sun, March 3 Meatfare Sunday
- Sun, March 10 Cheesfare Sunday
- Mon, March 11 Great Lent Begins
- Sun, April 28 Great and Holy Pascha

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas



JANUARY 17

ST. ANTHONY THE GREAT

According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census (2011), slightly **over 5 percent of the 65+ population** occupy nursing homes, congregate care, assisted living, and board-and-care homes, and **about 4.2 percent are in nursing homes** at any given time.

PLANNING AHEAD HELPS. If a friend or loved one is seriously ill and expected to die in a matter of days or weeks, consider making funeral arrangements in advance. Preparing ahead of time puts you in control. It will make your meeting with a funeral director more productive and is likely save you money. Funerals are expensive and unfortunately, people don't always set aside resources to pay for them. How much public and private assistance is available will depend on where you live and your financial circumstances.

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!

NAMEDAYS

January 17

St. Anthony the Great

Anthony Theodore Christo
Scott Anthony Maynard
Anthony Rucho
Tony Nicholas Trakadas

January 18

St. Athanasios Patriarch of Alexandria

Thanas Lolo
Arthur Peterson

January 22

The Holy Apostle Timothy

Rev. Fr. Timothy Lowe
Timothy Rucho

January 25

St. Gregory the Theologian

Rev. Fr. Gregory N. Christakos
Dr. Gregory Tsongalis

January 28

St. Ephraim the Syrian

Rev. Fr. Ephraim Peters



JANUARY 18

SS. ATHANASIOS AND KYRIL
PATRIARCHS OF ALEXANDRIA

A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

LORD be good to us and fill our minds with insight. Tune the ears of our spirit to the subtleties of living according to your good news. Make us understand that life is a precious gift from you and not ours to abuse. Teach us how to appreciate the value of life and the riches it presents to us, and how to have a healthy confidence in ourselves at all times without ever foolishly trusting solely in our own devices. And let not our prosperity deprive us of understanding.

So that ever enlightened by your wisdom, we may give you glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

HE IS THE FIRSTBORN OF CREATION

THE Epistle Lesson for this Sunday is taken from St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians 1:12-18. It highlights powerful themes present in the Mystery of our Lord's Incarnation. In these past days we have celebrated the coming of Emmanuel (which means: "God-with-us"). And we have witnessed his Epiphany as a great Light in a darkened world.

Today's selected verses have two distinctive parts. Verses 12-14 conclude a prayer that St. Paul is offering for the Colossian community. Remember, Colossae was a community composed largely of Gentile converts, but also with a substantial Jewish component. Some of them were falling under the influence of gnostic teachers — what today we might call "new age" thinkers. He wanted to remind the Colossian Christians of the preëminence of Christ, as well as the great grace that had been offered them through Him.

"Give thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light" (v. 12). St. Paul is making a subtle reference to their Christian status of now being priests through Jesus Christ, the High Priest. We all share in Jesus' priesthood. This is the priesthood of all believers. We also share in the priestly inheritance. Each tribe of the children of Israel had an inheritance of land, except for the Levites, the priestly tribe, who, instead of land were given an inheritance directly from God. They shared a portion of the sacrifices that were offered to God by all the people of Israel. This was their inheritance. St. Paul is saying this is now the Christian inheritance through Jesus.

For "He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins" (v. 13-14). God has saved us from the dark powers of this world and brought us into the safe place that is His kingdom. St. Paul uses a phrase here unique to himself: "the kingdom of his

beloved Son." In the rest of the Scriptures the Kingdom is spoke of as either the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of Heaven. The image that St. Paul gives us in his unique phrase is of a Kingdom in the making. God has entrusted it to "His beloved Son" who will nurture it and perfect it, and then present it back to His Father at the end of time.

The second part of this reading is a great Christological hymn. It speaks of Christ as the center, head, and source of all of creation. It is unclear whether St. Paul is the author of this hymn or it was already in general use in Colossae and other Churches. It most likely formed part of the Baptismal service and perhaps even of the Eucharist. It is rooted in Old Testament wisdom literature — the Books of Job, Proverbs, Sirach, and the Wisdom of Solomon. In Jewish thinking God's Wisdom, Spirit, and Word are closely related. Many elements of the themes present in those Books are used in this hymn as well.

"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation" (v. 15). St. Paul speaks of Christ as the new Adam. Adam was the "image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation." But because Adam failed in fulfilling this great calling, it was necessary that the Christ should come. Jesus, St. Paul reminds the Colossians, is the new Adam, the Christ.

"For in him {that is, Christ} all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers — all things have been created through him and for him" (v. 16). In this phrase St. Paul directly addresses the syncretistic tendencies within the Colossian community. If there are other forces in the world, visible and invisible, not only are these subject to Christ, but even more, he created them and they serve him. He also created us and we should serve only him.

"He himself is before all things, and

in him all things hold together" (v. 17). The phrase "before all things" has a number of meanings, the first of these being Jesus' nature as God's Word; but, it is also a reference to him as the new Adam. St. Paul also tells us that Jesus has preëminence over every other thing in the universe.

"He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything" (v. 18). For St. Paul the "head" is where all things come together and are coordinated. The image is apt. If we can envision the Church as a body, we certainly can understand Christ as our head. He holds all of the members together.

Keep in mind that this is a hymn, poetry. Similar ideas are repeated using other images to reinforce and give texture to the meaning. As both the new Adam and the Christ (the Messiah) "he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything." He both creates and recreates the creation.

There is a strong parallel in these lines of St. Paul with the beginning of St. John's Gospel: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it" (John 1:1-5). Both speak of God's Word and Wisdom coming into the world to save it and us.

As we meditate on the coming of Emmanuel, let us make room for him in our hearts. Let us allow him to be at the head of our thoughts and actions. Let us too be "first" in and through him.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA