

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN FEBRUARY 17, 2019

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

THE TRIODION BEGINS TODAY.

The Triodion is the Church's hymnbook for the period from now, through Great Lent, until Pascha. The next three weeks are meant to prepare us for Great Lent that begins on Monday, March 11th. This coming week is totally fast-free.

THE ANNUAL PARISH GENERAL ASSEMBLY WILL BE HELD SUNDAY MARCH 3RD.

WINTER VACATION EVENT for our youth. **Snow Tubing** with the youth from Sts. Anargyroi, this **Wednesday, February 20th, 10:00 AM.** Information: Valarie Stamoulis, 617-803-3798.

THANKS TO THE MUSTARD SEED VOLUNTEERS! Those who cooked and those who served the meal this past Friday! The Mustard Seed is a Catholic Worker home providing dinner to about 150 people in need each day. We want to thank **Sergiou and Anthi Eleftheriou** for generously sponsoring this month's meal! Our next scheduled meal is **April 19th.** Contact Fr. Nick if you'd like to help.

PITA BAKING. There will be a **Pita Baking Session, Wednesday, February 27th, 9:00 AM to NOON.** Please mark your calendars. **Questions?** talk to **Chris**

GREETERS TEAM 5:
DEBORAH SEDARES & EVAN STAMOULIS

COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP:
HELP NEEDED
PICK UP A CUP - LEND A HAND

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



THE THIRTY THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

PARABLE OF THE PUBLICAN & THE PHARISEE

THE TRIODION BEGINS

APOSTOLIC READING: 2 TIMOTHY 3:10-15 ☩ GOSPEL: LUKE 18:10-14

TONE 5 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 5

Toda, 508-832-6271. Also, let her know if you'll be coming. **Remember: There's a job for everyone!**

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.**

A MEMORIAL IS CELEBRATED TODAY for the servant of God **Alexandru Bogoro, father of Sandra Nedelescu,** fallen asleep forty days. **May his memory be eternal!**

TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR is sponsored by the **Nedelescu Family** in memory of **Alexandru Bogoro.**

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

UPCOMING EVENTS: Holy Trinity will be holding a **poetry reading in celebration of Black History Month** this **Monday, February 18th** at 2:00 p.m. On **Thursday, February 21st** family and friends are invited to join the resident for a **Winter Wonderland Photo Booth** and hot chocolate social starting at 2:00 p.m.

DATES TO REMEMBER

- Fri, Feb 15 Mustard Seed Meal, 5 PM
- Sun, Feb 17 Publican & Pharisee. Triodion begins
- Week of Feb 17 No Fasting
- Wed, Feb 27 Pita Dough Rolling, 9 AM-NOON
- Sat, March 2 Saturday of Souls, Lit 10 AM
- Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9AM-NOON
- Sun, March 3 Meatfare Sunday
- General Assembly, after Liturgy
- Sun, March 10 Cheesfare Sunday
- Mon, March 11 Great Lent Begins
- Sat, March 30 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9AM-NOON
- Sun, April 28 Great and Holy Pascha

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

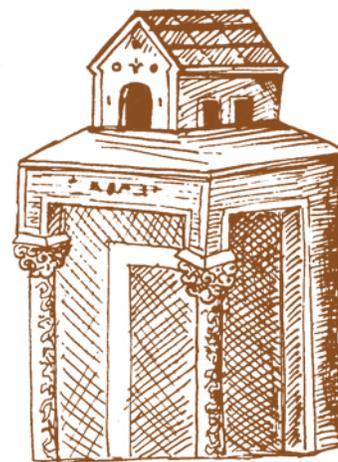
The **February** issue of the *Holy Trinity Times* is available for download on the website: www.htnr.net.

Holy Trinity has an opening for the **DI-RECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES**. Among the responsibilities/ qualifications are: extensive HR experience, preferably in healthcare; recruiting staff; resolving staff disputes; and payroll. If you or someone you know is interested, please contact: **Jerry Shaffer, the Administrator of Holy Trinity, at 508-852-1000**.

EXPLORE A CAREER IN HEALTH CARE at Holy Trinity. **Applications for staff nurses and certified nursing assistants are currently being accepted.** For more information: www.htnr.net/careers

HOLY TRINITY PROVIDES: short-term rehab, long-term care, hospice and respite service. Services include: physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, nutritional therapy, IV therapy and wound care management. There are: recreational activities, weekly Liturgy, on sight beauty salon and home style dining. **Should you or a loved one have a need for any of these services,** or if you have any questions about these for future planning, please contact: **Nicole Couture, Director of Admissions, at: 781-249-5563.**

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,

THOUGH WE constantly provoke you, Lord God, in your boundless mercy you never abandon us. In your own mysterious ways, you ease the burdens of our life, giving us the strength to bear them, and you answer us, again in your own way, when we cry out to you in distress. Still, though we seldom hear or understand your response, by faith we try to remember that you are there and that you hear us. Teach us to live as you wish us to, and, in your loving kindness, increase and confirm our faith.

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

EXPLANATIONS FROM THE LENTEN TRIODION

THE SUNDAY OF THE PUBLICAN AND THE PHARISEE (Gospel reading: Luke 18:10-14). On this and the following two Sundays, the theme is *repentance*. Repentance is the door through which we enter Lent, the starting-point of our journey to Pascha. And to repent signifies far more than self-pity or futile regret over things done in the past. The Greek term *metanoia* means 'change of mind': to repent is to be renewed, to be transformed in our inward viewpoint, to attain a fresh way of looking at our relationship to God and to others. The fault of the Pharisee is that he has no desire to change his outlook; he is complacent, self-satisfied, and so he allows no place for God to act within him. The Publican, on the other hand, truly longs for a 'change of mind': he is self-dissatisfied, 'poor in spirit', and where there is this saving self-dissatisfaction there is room for God to act. Unless we learn the secret of the Publican's inward poverty, we shall not share in the Lenten springtime.

The theme of the day can be summed up in a saying of the Desert Fathers: 'Better a man who has sinned, if he knows that he has sinned and repents, than a man who has not sinned and thinks of himself as righteous.'



CONTINUE IN WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED AND FIRMLY BELIEVED

THIS Sunday we begin the Triodion, the Church's hymn book for Great Lent leading to Pascha. While Lent is still a few weeks off, the Fathers decided to help us get ready for it by focusing our attention through Scripture readings and hymns. Today's Gospel lesson is the parable of the Publican (tax collector) and the Pharisee (Luke 18:10-14). The Epistle reading is from St. Paul's second letter to Timothy, 3:10-15.

Today's selected reading from St. Paul comes out of a portion of this second letter to Timothy concerned with the End-Times, that is, the Second Coming of Jesus. St. Paul is predicting what will happen to people as the time for the Lord's arrival draws near. He is particularly trying to encourage and strengthen his beloved disciple Timothy, who we learn from St. Paul's letters and in Acts, is a quiet and retiring person, not the kind of strong personality that St. Paul himself is.

The first advice St. Paul offers Timothy is his own example. He has done this in other situations as well, for example when he tells the Corinthians that they might have many teachers but not many fathers (1 Cor 4:15); or when he tells them to "be imitators of me as I am of Christ" (1 Cor 11:1). So, in a more gentle way, he says to Timothy: "You have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions, and my suffering the things that happened to me in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. What persecutions I endured! Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them" (v. 10-11). St. Paul had suffered in many places, but in this passage he only mentions those places that Timothy would personally remember, especially Lystra, where St. Timothy was born, raised, and first met St. Paul.

He then tells Timothy a sobering reality: "All who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted" (v. 12). He is speaking first and foremost

out of his own personal experience. While a committed disciple of the Jewish leadership in Jerusalem, he persecuted the followers of Christ mercilessly. When Jesus appeared to him on the way to Damascus and as a result became a follower of Jesus, he himself now became the one persecuted. In our own time Christian believers are being fire-bombed and killed even in their own Churches, in Nigeria, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Syria, the Philippines, and Indonesia — only to mention a few places. For these and others a choice to openly confess their faith in Jesus Christ may very well mean a choice to suffer and die. Not so many years ago the same was true in all of Russia and the Eastern Bloc.

This is not to say that people of other faiths do not also suffer persecution — sometimes at the hands of 'Christians' — but suffering because of faith in the person and teachings of Jesus the Christ has distinguished His followers throughout the centuries, from the very outset. Most of us have grown up in a political situation where we have never had to choose between our life and our faith. Unfortunately, from the beginning, many Christians have. Regardless, it is never easy to be Christian. And, while we might not be forced by others to put our lives on the lines, we are still asked by the Lord Himself to die to ourselves in order to truly live, in Christ.

The second point, a corollary, is that: "wicked people and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceivers and deceived." (v. 13) One of the titles of the devil is the "Deceiver." It was through his deception that Eve took the fruit in the Garden. It was she who naïvely deceived Adam to share in it. (cf. Genesis 3:1ff) St. Paul speaks of a cycle of evil and wickedness. One feeds on the other. It becomes difficult, if not impossible, to stop. Only with God is it possible to break this cycle. (cf. Matthew 19:25-26)

St. Paul offers Timothy this instruc-

tion, both to strengthen his resolve in the face of persecution, as well as to prepare him to face the wickedness of the world. "Continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (v. 14-15).

Timothy's mother was a pious Jewish woman married to a pagan. Theirs was what we might call today a "mixed marriage." Nevertheless, she educated Timothy according to Jewish tradition; beginning from age five all Jewish children were to be instructed in the Sacred Writings. Yet even while recommending the study of Scripture, St. Paul also emphasizes the role of those people who taught him. We can infer that he meant first his mother. Just as he had offered himself as an example to follow, so too is he now reminding Timothy of his mother's example of faith. As parents we are the primary example our children look to for everything, but especially regarding our faith; the way we integrate and manifest what we say we believe in how we actually behave is what our children will remember and incorporate into their lives.

Finally he reiterates the power of Scripture to "instruct for salvation." Until recently it was common for children to memorize Scripture, and especially the Psalms. One requirement for ordination to the episcopacy is to be able to recite the entire Books of Psalms by heart. Verses of the Sacred Text that are engraved on our hearts come to our aid when we are struggling and in need of consolation. "Through our faith in Christ Jesus" the comforting words inspired by the Holy Spirit bring peace to our hearts and salvation to our souls.

Maranatha! ("Lord, come!")

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA