

# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN APRIL 21, 2019

## THIS WEEK'S NEWS

**A REMINDER: HOLY WEEK SERVICES** begin each evening at 6:00 pm. The complete schedule, **with announcements**, is available at the candles and on our parish website.

**PALM SUNDAY LUNCHEON.** Please join us for our annual Palm Sunday Luncheon following the Divine Liturgy TODAY. The meal is being sponsored by the **Mazanitis Family**. We are asking for a **free-will offering that will help support the work of our parish.**

**EASTER BAKING ORDERS** are available for pick up on Palm Sunday and following the evening services during Holy Week. See **Betty Anderson or Chris Toda**.

**CONFESSIONS** will be heard each evening during Holy Week after the Service through Holy Wednesday. **Fr. Nick will be available for confession at other times by appointment** (e-mail: FrNick@StNicholasChurch.org).

**METROPOLITAN NICOLAE'S PASTORAL LETTER** at Pascha is available in English and Romanian at the candles.

**THE GREAT FRIDAY CHILDREN'S RETREAT** for the younger children will be held on **Friday, April 26th starting at 12:30 pm, and concluding with a cel-**



**THE ENTRANCE OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM**  
EPISTLE: PHILIPPIANS 4:4-9 ☩ GOSPEL: JOHN 12:1-18  
(EVERYTHING ACCORDING TO THE FEAST)

**celebration of Great Vespers at 2:00 PM.** Older children and teens are also welcome. There are many ways each can help. A sign-up sheet will be posted at the candle stand. Besides assisting with the children's lessons and activities, assistance is needed with snacks (no lunch) and other logistics. For additional information and offers to assist, **please contact Valarie Stamoulis.**

**DONATIONS FOR MIDNIGHT PASCHAL AGAPE MEAL** are needed. Please see **Evan Stamoulis or Deb Sedares** if you would like to contribute and assist with preparing and serving the meal. Please join with your fellow parishioners to celebrate the Resurrection and break-the-fast together. Everyone's welcomed!

**AN EVENING WITH FR. PAUL TARAZI** on Friday, May 3rd, 7:00 PM at St. Mary's Church hall. Enjoy the Paschal season with fellowship

and a short presentation by Fr. Paul (retired professor of Scripture) on St. Paul's view of the church, with time for questions & answers. Please see the flier on the Bulletin Board for more info.

**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 are also looking for donors to cover the cost of the meal—around \$400.00 for the 200 meals we usually serve.** Our next scheduled meal is **June 21st**. Contact Fr. Nick if you'd like to help prepare the meals or underwrite the costs.

**GREETERS:**  
ALL HANDS ON DECK

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

**ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED**

## DATES TO REMEMBER

Sun, April 21 Palm Sunday (Western Easter)  
April 21-28 HOLY WEEK, Check full schedule  
Sun, April 28 GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA  
Sat, May 4 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9AM-NOON

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*A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas*

## HOLY TRINITY NEWS

**THE APRIL ISSUE** of the *Holy Trinity Times* is available for download. Click the link to view April Newsletter. And don't forget to 'like' Holy Trinity on Facebook and Twitter!

**HOLY WEEK AT HOLY TRINITY.** The area clergy will be celebrating **Holy Unction on Wednesday morning (April 24) at 9:30 AM.** On **Holy Thursday (April 25) Divine Liturgy** will be celebrated at **9:30 AM.** Come and share a little of the Pascha holiday with the residents.

**THE APRIL ISSUE** of the *Holy Trinity Times* is available for download. Click the link to view April Newsletter. And don't forget to 'like' Holy Trinity on Facebook and Twitter!

**SAVE THE DATE** for Holy Trinity Nursing & Rehabilitation Center **25th Anniversary Dinner Dance Celebration on Saturday, August 24, 2019** at St. George Cathedral Anna St., Worcester.

**SEND AN E-CARD** to your loved one and put a smile on their face!!! Visit our website at [www.htnr.net/e-cards](http://www.htnr.net/e-cards) and submit a message and it will be handwritten and delivered daily! ***The little things in life make the biggest difference to someone!***

**HOLY TRINITY** is a non-profit skilled nursing and rehabilitation center and a project of the Council of Orthodox Churches of Central MA. Please keep Holy Trinity in your prayers and in your charitable plans. Contributions to the Treasured Generations Annual Fund can be made at [www.htnr.net](http://www.htnr.net) and volunteers are welcome to be a part of Holy Trinity by contacting : **Dana Spinney**, Activities Director, at 508-852-1000 or e-mail: [dspinney@htnr.net](mailto:dspinney@htnr.net)

### A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**G**LORY TO YOU, O LORD, for letting us live to enjoy the beautiful morning that celebrates the triumphal entry of your Son into Jerusalem. As we add our own hosannas to those of the people who welcomed him, number us among those who hymn you forever. Give us all we need to live in a way that is pleasing to you. Take pity on those whom your own hands fashioned and for love of whom your Son so-journed on this earth. Bring a loving peace and unity to your churches, disturbed by so many divisions and contrary opinions. Grant us all remission of our sins, and, by the prayers of the Theotokos and all your saints, enable us to offer you this morning worship with attention and true devotion.

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



## NAMEDAYS

**April 21**

***The Entrance of our Lord into Jerusalem***

Elodie Lauren Killick  
Florence Rucho  
Florica Tonna

***The Holy Martyr Alexandra the Queen***

Alexandra Costin  
Alexandra Dymek  
Alexis George  
Alexandra Mentis  
Sandra Nedelescu  
Casie Soter

**April 23 (celebrated Mon., April 29)**

***The Holy Great-martyr George the Wonderworker***

George Belba  
George M. Bourisk  
George Demake  
Gjergji Disho  
Gheorghe O. Galica  
George Grniet  
George Krassopoulos  
Gheorghina Shaheen  
George Symock  
George Tonna  
George James Trakadas

**April 25**

***The Holy Apostle and Evangelist Mark***

Rev. Fr. Mark Doku  
Mark Soter  
Mark Stamoulis

**April 28**

***Great & Holy Pascha***

Anastasia Girgis

**April 30**

***The Holy Apostle James, brother of John the Evangelist***

James Collins



# THE LORD IS NEAR

**WE ARE ENTERING JERUSALEM WITH THE LORD TODAY.** It is Palm Sunday. For everyone except Jesus, this is a climatic event. I say everyone except Jesus because no one else except he understands what will eventually take place. In last Sunday's Gospel lesson we heard the disciples continue to be oblivious to the true nature of our Lord's presence on earth. They will continue to not understand until after the Resurrection.

The Epistle lesson for today is taken from St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians 4:4-9. This is a remarkably beautiful letter on many levels. It is gentle, poetic and generous. Paul has an affection for this community, and this community has been generous and affectionate toward him. On a number of occasions they have sent him assistance when he was in need. He says that he is writing this letter from prison; many think this was when he was imprisoned in Ephesus. Regardless from which prison he was writing, the important point is that St. Paul doesn't offer advice out of intellectual speculation. He speaks from the experience of suffering, and this gives his words power.

Listen to what he writes from prison: "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God" (v. 5-6).

In this one sentence he twice tells the Philippians to "Rejoice." He is suffering and the Philippians are themselves suffering, but he nonetheless tells them to rejoice. I heard someone say that the difference between happiness and joy is that happiness means doing what you want, and joy is doing what God wants. Everyone around us (and, this everyone includes ourselves), is searching for happiness by fulfilling their own desires. We are living through a time when we are

able to see what the "happiness" that fulfilling our desires produces. Many of us are suffering because of it, while others continue to profit on the suffering of others. It is not a pretty sight. Moreover, no one seems very happy. That we are living to see this terrible principle at work is in one sense a gift from God. If we take the lesson offered, it will be for our salvation.

Never forget: what God wants for us is what we want for ourselves — in the middle of the night, when we wake up in a cold sweat and regret every evil thing that we've ever done. When we realize our weaknesses and beg God to help us, and then get a glimpse of our true selves. What God wants for us is joy, a joy based not in material things that pass away, but grounded in the very depths of our being, body and soul.

After telling them to "rejoice," St. Paul tells them to: "Let [their] gentleness be known to everyone" (v. 5). This one word "gentleness" is translated as "good sense" (in the *Jerusalem Bible*), and also "forbearance" (in the *Revised Standard* and *King James* versions). Translation can be a tricky business, and while each of these meanings can work well here, we can see even in this small example how much depends on the spiritual insight of the translator.

St. John of the Ladder writes that the antidote to the sin of anger is gentleness. From what we know of the Philippian community, they were guided by good sense, they practiced forbearance, and so St. Paul tells them to let people see how good and gentle they were, as encouragement and inspiration for others; to show others how to quell the fires of anger through gentleness.

The next verse is possibly why this reading was chosen for today. St. Paul bolsters the Philippians by reminding them: "The Lord is near" (v. 5). He surely was referring to his eager hope that the Lord would be returning very soon, but there is another sense to his

phrase that we pick up in verse 6: "Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." God is near to us when we pray. God hears and knows our thoughts and needs even before we ask.

God is also near to us in a particular way today, as he enters Jerusalem. We share the joy of seeing him, even as we contemplate the pain he will endure in the coming days. But, through his suffering he will draw nearer to us still.

If we pray and trust, St. Paul says, "the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (v. 7). One of the great mysteries of the Life in Christ is how God gives us the ability to reconcile and make coherent the joys as well as the tribulations of this life. The world looks for logic. By taking up our cross and following Christ we find the understanding that surpasses logic. We find God's peace.

"Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you" (v. 8-9).

It is when we *do* what is right and good that we find God. It is when we *do* what God asks of us, that we find ourselves. Resist the temptation to over-analyze. It keeps you from doing what you're supposed to do.

During the coming week we will see the Lord do "what he's supposed to do." He will say many things, but as the time for "doing" draws closer, he will say less and less. Instead, he allows his actions to speak. We should take our lesson from him, and do likewise.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA



## HOLY WEEK GREETERS/ USHERS SOUGHT

*Parishioners are needed* to assist with greeting and ushering for the Holy Week services. There is a sign-up sheet on the Bulletin Board, or you can talk to Chris Seith: 978-257-2765 or email: [cbseith@gmail.com](mailto:cbseith@gmail.com).

This is what is required: If possible (based on work and childcare schedules, etc.) it is preferred that the greeter/ushers be at the church 15 min prior to the start of the service, if this is not possible, please let Chris Seith know. General duties are to assist at the candle stand (stock the candles, monitor the lit candles and dispose of as necessary and appropriate, make change), assist or direct parishioners/visitors with seating, and any other assistance that may be related to the particular service. Greeter/ushers should also make sure that any donations for candles, etc. are collected and accounted for. Greeter/ushers should also be sure that the candle stand is left in a neat and clean condition, that candles are restocked and as the sand is cleaned/neatened for the next service. If there are any issues, the Parish Council

## DONATIONS FOR HOLY WEEK

*General donations in any amount to defray the cost of decorations for the Paschal Feast are most appreciated. Some specific needs are:*

Flowers for Palm Sunday Icon .....	\$50.00
Palms .....	\$100.00
Flowers for Bridegroom Icon .....	\$50.00
Holy Thursday Gospel Candles .....	\$60.00
Wreaths for Cross (Great Friday) .....	\$75.00
(Resurrection) .....	\$75.00
Resurrection Icon .....	\$50.00
Bay Leaves for Holy Saturday .....	\$100.00
1 Gallon of Olive Oil .....	\$25.00
½ lb Incense .....	\$40.00
Priest's Paschal Candle .....	\$50.00
Rose Oil for Epitaphion .....	\$25.00
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Flowers for Epitaphion .....	\$600.00
Decorations/Plants for Pascha .....	\$400.00
Easter Candy/Gifts for Children .....	\$100.00

*Please see Betty Anderson to make a donation*

