

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN MAY 5, 2019

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

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

PITAS AND PASTRIES are available for purchase! Talk to **Betty Anderson** or **Chris Toda**.

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

THANKS TO THE FOOD PANTRY VOLUNTEERS for working the Orthodox Food Center on behalf of our parish yesterday. Our regular commitment is the first Saturday of the month from 9AM to noon. About 4 people are needed. If you can help in this worthwhile ministry, please speak with Lisa Mielnicki or Nicole Apostola. Our next Saturday is June 1st.

THE PARISH COUNCIL will hold its regular monthly meeting on **Thursday, May 16th at 6:30 pm**. Parish Council Members, please let George Demake know if you are unable to attend.

MEMORIAL DAY is Monday, May 27th. Fr. Nick will be at Hope Cemetery from 10:00 am. The common Memorial Service will be at noon at the Altar in Hope. If you would like Fr. Nick to visit

GREETERS:

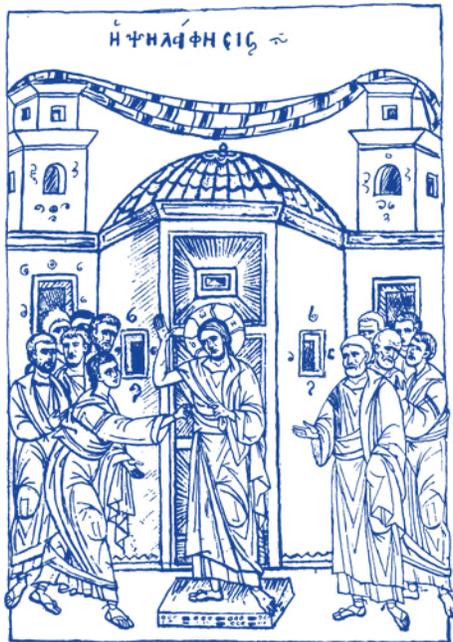
CHRISTOPHER & ANA SEITH

COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP:

HELP NEEDED

PICK UP A CUP - LEND A HAND

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



ANTIPASCHA:

ST. THOMAS SUNDAY

APOSTOLIC READING: ACTS 5:12-20

GOSPEL: JOHN 20:19-31

TONE 1 ☩ RESURRECTION GOSPEL 1

a grave in another cemetery, please contact him to make arrangements: 508-845-0088.

TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR is sponsored by **Sofia Apostol**.

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!

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.

Come and join the residents

A NOTE OF THANKS ...

We want to thank the members of our Parish who helped especially through this Paschal season: those who planned and prepared the wonderful food from the first Lenten meal, to the Palm Sunday Luncheon through the Paschal Agape Meal; the ushers, the altar servers; those who set-up and cleaned the facility; the baking crew, who produced pitas and pastries that brightened the holiday tables throughout the region; the religious education instructors and those who coordinated the Great Friday children's retreat; our chanters: Tim Rucho and George Demake. There are so many who always help and contribute in ways small and large. Take a moment next time you see an act of kindness and service and personally thank the individual.

Christ is Risen!

for a **Greek Dance Group Performance**, Sunday, May 5th at 2:00PM.

Mother's Day Tea Social with Entertainment on Sunday May 12th at 2:00PM.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Sat, May 4 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9AM-NOON
 Thurs, May 16 Parish Council Meeting, 6:30PM
 Mon, May 27 Memorial Day, NOON at Hope Cemetery
 Sat, June 1 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9AM-NOON e-Recycling
 Thurs, June 6 ASCENSION
 Sat, June 15 Saturday of Souls, Liturgy, 10:00AM
 Sun, June 16 PENTECOST
 Fri, June 21 Mustard Seed Meal, 5:00PM
 Mon, June 24 Apostles Fast Begins

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas

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 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



GREETERS/USHERS COFFEE HOUR TEAMS SOUGHT

Parishioners are needed to assist with greeting and ushering. 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.

What does the job require?

You should try to be at the church 15 min prior to the start of the service. General duties are to assist at the candle stand (stock the candles, monitor the lit candles and extinguish the short ones, make change), assist or direct parishioners and visitors with seating, and anything else that may be related to the particular service. Greeters should also make sure that any donations and the like are collected, accounted for, and given to the treasurer. Greeters 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 members can assist.

Coffee Hour Teams are also being reestablished. We're looking to set up 4 to 5 teams to assist with Coffee Hour set-up and clean-up. **Chris Seith** is also in charge of this. Please contact him.

Whether Greeter or Coffee Crew, the idea is that it would be at most a once-a-month commitment. This is a great opportunity to contribute to the warm community our St. Nicholas parish is.

NAMEDAYS

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

May 3

The Life-giving Fountain

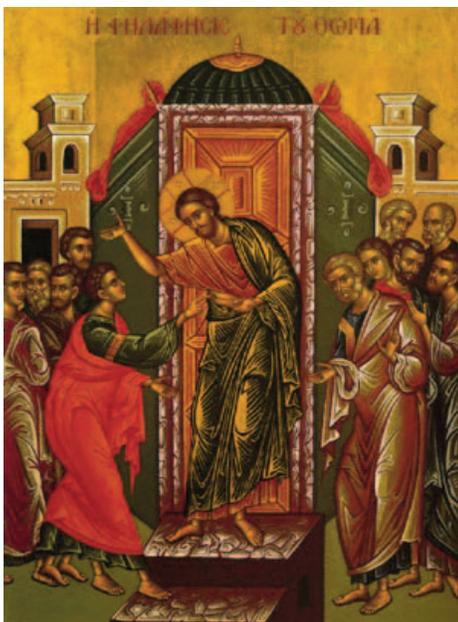
Zoitza Tsongalis

May 5

The Holy Apostle Thomas

Thomas Cavanaugh
Thomas Chachi
Rev. Fr. Thomas FitzGerald
Thomas Fitzpatrick
Robert T. Sedares
Thomas R. Sedares
Thomas Spataro





THOMAS SUNDAY

Though the doors were shut at the dwelling where the disciples were gathered for fear of the Jews on the evening of the Sunday after the Passover, our Saviour wondrously entered and stood in their midst, and greeted them with His customary words, "Peace be unto you." Then He showed unto them His hands and feet and side; furthermore, in their presence, He took some fish and a honeycomb and ate before them, and thus assured them of His bodily Resurrection. But Thomas, who was not then present with the others, did not believe their testimony concerning Christ's Resurrection, but said in a decisive manner, "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe." Wherefore after eight days, that is, on this day, when the disciples were again gathered together and Thomas was with them, the Lord Jesus came while the doors were shut, as He did formerly. Standing in their midst, He said, "Peace be unto you"; then He said to Thomas, "Bring hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and

A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

AUTHOR OF EVERY MARVEL, O you who raised your anointed one from death to sit at your right, where he enjoys new life: Look favorably on us, gathered before you on this day resplendent with the beauty of the paschal mysteries, and receive the hymns and prayers we offered you in celebration of the resurrection of your only Son. By the blood and water that gushed forth from his side, renew us and strengthen our faith in him as he strengthened the faith of Thomas, that we may be worthy of the reward promised to all who believe without seeing.

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.



bring hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not unbelieving, but believing."

And Thomas, beholding and examining carefully the hands and side of the Master, cried out with faith, "My Lord and my God." Thus he clearly proclaimed the two natures - human and divine - of the God-man (Luke 24:36-49; John 20:19-29).

This day is called Antipascha (meaning "in the stead of Pascha," not "in opposition to Pascha") because with this day, the first Sunday after Pascha, the Church consecrates every Sunday of the year to the commemoration of Pascha, that is, the Resurrection.

THE WHOLE MESSAGE ABOUT THIS LIFE

WE are now in the Paschal Season, the period from Easter (Pascha) until the Lord's Ascension. The entire celebration culminates with the Feast of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles. At Pascha we also start the yearly cycle of Scripture readings. At the midnight Paschal Liturgy we hear the opening verses from both the Gospel of St. John and the Acts of the Apostles. For the coming year, starting today, the Second Sunday of Pascha, I will be focusing my weekly reflections on the Apostolic writings: The Acts of the Apostles and the Letters of St. Paul and the other Apostles. Along with the Gospels, these Apostolic writings form the New Testament. Together they form the inspired reflection and recollection of what our Lord did and said.

The Book of Acts has been called the fifth Gospel: the Gospel of the Holy Spirit. It was written by St. Luke. As we find out in the very first verses it is intended to be a continuation of the Gospel that bears his name. Luke wrote both to be a seamless whole. In Acts we see the Lord's disciples transformed by the Holy Spirit into His Apostles. In the Gospels the disciples are often confused, dull-witted, and even cowardly. In Acts and the Apostolic Letters (Epistles) we see something else entirely. Filled with the Holy Spirit, they confidently and courageously preach the Good News of Salvation through Jesus Christ.

Much has already happened in the life of the early Christian community by the time we come to the events described in this week's reading (Acts 5:12-20). Immediately after the Lord's Ascension, the Apostles chose a person to fill the empty twelfth place that had been vacated by Judas. When the Apostles cast lots to determine God's will, Matthias was chosen (Acts 1:26). Then on the day of Pentecost (fifty days after Passover/Pascha), the promised Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles in the form of tongues of fire (Acts 2:3). Filled

with the Holy Spirit, the Apostles address the great crowd from many nations that had gathered in Jerusalem for the Festival of Pentecost. Each person heard what Peter said to them in their own language (cf. v. 2:7). Thousands were added to the followers of Jesus that day.

The Apostles continued to pray each day in the Temple. On one of those occasions Peter and John passed a crippled beggar asking for alms. Instead of money they gave him the ability to walk again, in the name of Jesus (cf. v. 3:6ff). This caused such a commotion that Peter and John were arrested and called before Sanhedrin to explain what they had done (v. 4:3). Peter and John testified to the power of Jesus of Nazareth. The High Priest and the other members of the Sanhedrin threatened them both against preaching about Jesus, but decide to let them go.

In the meantime the early community continued to grow. These early Christians decide to hold all things in common and voluntarily give over their own possessions for the benefit of the whole community (cf. v. 4:34). Among these early believers were a husband and wife — Ananias and Sapphira — who decided to sell a piece of property and give it to the community, except that they secretly held a portion of the proceeds back for themselves. When they were separately confronted with their deception they were struck dead by the Holy Spirit (cf. v. 5:1-11) because of their lie. It is a powerful lesson of God's desire for honesty and truth from each of us.

This is the background for today's reading: Acts 5:12-20. The community continues to grow, and word of the Apostles' power to heal spreads. Signs and wonders were done among the people (v. 12). "They even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on cots and mats, in order that Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he came by" (v. 15).

The High Priest and others in au-

thority were not going to allow this to continue. They arrested the Apostles outright and imprisoned them in the public prison. "But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors, brought them out, and said, 'Go, stand in the Temple and tell the people the whole message about this life'" (v. 19-20).

This is where the selected reading ends. It is worthwhile for us to contemplate the Angel's words: "tell the people the whole message about this life." The lives of the Apostles (and this group includes more than just the twelve) and the other followers of Jesus had changed forever. They not only saw the life and work of Jesus with their own eyes, they are now filled with the Holy Spirit in order to proclaim it. They are not simply called to be witnesses to Christ's coming; they are now preachers of the new life that God gives us through Him. They will suffer, but nonetheless continue to teach the Word and confess to the change in their own lives. As Peter and the other Apostles said to the Temple leadership: "We must obey God rather than any human authority" (v. 5:29).

Those of us who have heard the Word and believed in Jesus are heirs to this same responsibility. Down through the centuries people have witnessed to God's truth in their lives and through their works. We have come to believe through them. The Apostles speak to us through these good and holy people, our parents and our teachers. We must embrace this responsibility to live the Life in Christ, grounded in the Good News they shared with us. We too are called to be witnesses, that through our witness many others may and will believe.

Christ is Risen!

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA