

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN MAY 26, 2019

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

MEMORIAL DAY is **this 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 a grave in another cemetery, please contact him to make arrangements: 508-845-0088.

AN **"E-WASTE RECYCLING DAY"** will be held this coming **Saturday, June 1st, from 9-2 here at the Church**. You can dispose of unwanted electronic appliances at a minimal cost and help protect the environment. **A few folks are needed to help** direct traffic into and out of the church parking lot. Please see Gerry Belba during coffee hour if you can help.

FOOD PANTRY. Help is needed to staff our monthly responsibility at the Orthodox Food Center **this coming Saturday, June 1st, from 9 AM-NOON**. About 4 people are needed. Likewise, donations of food are always needed, and may be dropped off at the Food Pantry housed at St. Spyridon Cathedral. If you can help in this worthwhile ministry, please speak with **Lisa Mielnicki or Nicole Apostola**.

GREETERS TEAM 3:
SEAN FAHEY AND MARGARITE LANDRY

COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP:
HELP NEEDED

PICK UP A CUP - LEND A HAND

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF PASCHA

THE SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN

APOSTOLIC READING: ACTS 11:19-30 ☩ GOSPEL: JOHN 4:5-42

TONE 4 - MATINS GOSPEL 7

LOOKING FOR THIS YEAR'S HIGH SCHOOL OR COLLEGE GRADUATES in our Parish. If you know of a soon-to-be graduate, please inform Fr. Nick or Tim Rucho.

GREETER AND COFFEE HOUR TEAMS are being organized. 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. This is a great opportunity to contribute to welcoming parishioners in our St. Nicholas parish.

PITAS AND PASTRIES are available for purchase! Talk to

Betty Anderson or Chris Toda.

TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR is sponsored by **Florentina Rus** in memory **her mother Florica Handra**.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Mon, May 27	Memorial Day, NOON at Hope Cemetery
May 31-June 2	Albanian Festival
Sat, June 1	Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9AM-NOON e-Recycling
Thurs, June 6	ASCENSION
Sat, June 8	Pita Dough Rolling, 9AM-NOON
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
Sat, June 29	Pita Dough Rolling, 9AM-NOON
Aug 5-7	Vacation Church School

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas

UPCOMING

DOUGH ROLLING DATES ARE SET for **Saturday, June 8TH and June 29TH, 9:00am to noon.** We need 12-15 people, so that the work is evenly distributed and we can finish with prep and clean-up in 3 hours. All help appreciated. No experience necessary — there's a job for everyone. If you'd like to participate, contact Chris Toda at: thetodas@msn.com, or 508-832-6271.

PARENTS PLEASE TAKE NOTE! Vacation Church School this summer will be August 5-7. We will again be holding it in conjunction with Sts. Anargyroi in Marlborough. Please keep these dates in mind when schedule other summer activities for your children. Questions? see or e-mail: Valarie Stamoulis: valarie.stamoulis@gmail.com; cell: 617-803-3798.

70TH ANNIVERSARY

SAVE THE DATE: The weekend of **December 7 – 8, 2019 our Parish Feast Day** will have special significance as we celebrate our 70th Anniversary as a church community.

A few people are needed to serve on a **committee to plan for the 70th Anniversary Festivities.** Please speak with Tim if you have it in your heart to help plan that celebration.

COMMUNITY NEWS

ALBANIAN FESTIVAL 2019 will be held **THIS weekend of May 31-June 2.** Keep the dates open.

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.

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

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.

NAMEDAYS

May 21

The Holy Equals to the Apostles Constantine and Helen

Rev. Fr. Dean Paleologos
Constantine Apostol
Elaine Apostola
Konstantin Charalambides
Presvytera Eleni Christakos
Amalia Helene Collins
Hannah Constance Datz
Dina Entwistle
Lana Eleni Ermilio
Iliana Victoria Fahey
Eileen Favata
Elena Galeriu
Ileana A Nace
Constanta Papit
Eleni Polymeros
Elena Prelipcean
Elaine Rocheford
Dina K. Salerno
Eleanor Sedares
Elaine Tanacea
Dean Valoras

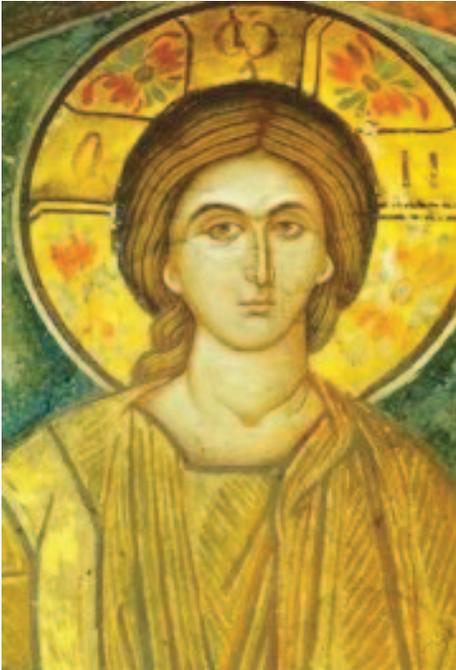
A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

OSKILLFUL AND INGENIOUS ARTISAN OF LIFE: On this glorious day of celebration, we come before you to thank you for raising your Son from death to the glory of new life at your right. As we celebrate his victory over death, we beseech you to remove the burdens that weigh heavily on our hearts. Dry our tears, and clothe us in the vesture of immortality, in that raiment that reflects the light of your glory. Today, as we stand here before you, prepare us for the joy of the eternal kingdom by directing our lives along the path of righteousness. Finally, at the end of our days, let us — together with all our fathers and mothers, our brothers and sisters, our teachers, and all those who have gone before us — receive the incorruptible crown in the fellowship of the kingdom on high.

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





THE FEAST OF MID-PENTECOST

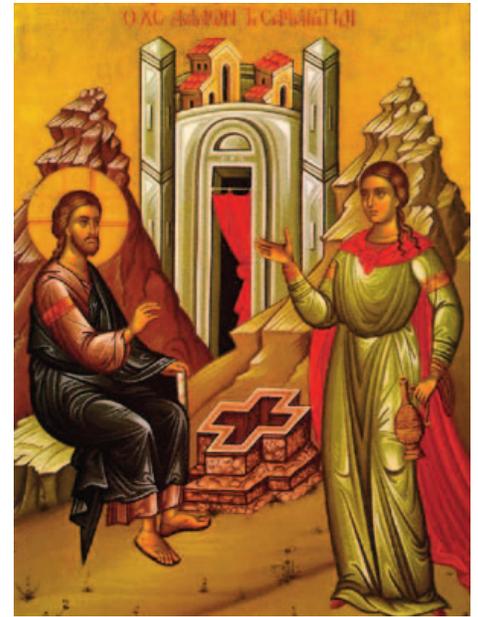
After the Saviour had miraculously healed the paralytic, the Hebrews, especially the Pharisees and Scribes, were moved with envy and persecuted Him, and sought to slay Him, using the excuse that He did not keep the Sabbath, since He worked miracles on that day. Jesus then departed to Galilee. About the middle of the Feast of Tabernacles, He went up again to the Temple and taught. The people, marveling at the wisdom of His words, said, "How knows this man letters, having never learned?" But Christ first reproached their unbelief and lawlessness, then proved to them by the Law that they sought to slay Him unjustly, supposedly as a despiser of the Law. Therefore, since the things spoken by Christ in the middle of the Feast of Tabernacles are related to the Sunday of the Paralytic that just passed,



and since we reached the midpoint of the fifty days between Pascha and Pentecost, the Church appointed this feast to tie the two great feasts into one. Therefore today's feast is called Mid-Pentecost.

It should be noted that there were three great Jewish feasts: the Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles. Passover was celebrated on the 15th of Nisan, the first month of the Jewish calendar, which coincides with our March. This feast commemorated that day on which the Hebrews were commanded to eat the lamb in the evening and anoint the doors of their houses with its blood. Then, having escaped bondage and death at the hands of the Egyptians, they passed through the Red Sea to come to the Promised Land. It is also called "the Feast of Unleavened Bread," because they ate unleavened bread for seven days. Pentecost was celebrated fifty days after the Passover, first of all, because the Hebrews had reached Mount Sinai after leaving Egypt, and there received the Law from God; secondly, it was celebrated to commemorate their entry into the Promised Land, where also they ate bread, after having been fed with manna forty years in the desert. Finally, they also celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles

from the 15th to the 22nd of "the seventh month," which corresponds to our September. During this time, they live in booths made of branches in commemoration of the forty years they spent in the desert, living in tabernacles, that is, tents (Ex. 12:10-20; Lev. 23).



ABOUT JACOB'S WELL

One of the most ancient cities of the Promised Land was Shechem, also called Sikima, located at the foot of Mount Gerazim. There the Israelites had heard the blessings in the days of Moses and Jesus of Navi. Near to this town, Jacob, who had come from Mesopotamia in the nineteenth century before Christ, bought a piece of land where there was a well. This well, preserved even until the time of Christ, was known as Jacob's Well. Later, before he died in Egypt, he left that piece of land as a special inheritance to his son Joseph (Gen. 49:22). This town, before it was taken into possession by Samaria, was also the leading city of the kingdom of the ten tribes. In the time of the Romans it was called Neapolis, and at present Nablus. It was the first city in Canaan visited by the Patriarch Abraham. Here also, Jesus of Navi (Joshua) addressed the tribes of Israel for the last time. Almost three hundred years later, all Israel assembled there to make Roboam (Rehoboam) king.

THE REPENTANCE THAT LEADS TO LIFE

THIS is the fifth Sunday of Pascha. Today's Gospel lesson is the Lord's encounter with the Samaritan Woman at the well (John 4:5-42). In today's Apostolic reading from Acts (11:19-30), we learn about the beginning of a missionary movement that will transform the fledgling Church from a small group of Jewish followers of Jesus Christ into a Spirit-filled force that will change the world.

There were two catalytic events that led to this development. The first was the persecution of Jesus' disciples following the stoning and martyrdom of Stephen (Acts 7:2 ff), especially in and around Jerusalem (v. 19). The second was the conversion and baptism of the Gentile centurion Cornelius by the Apostle Peter (Acts 10:1 ff).

Cornelius was a devout man. Like a number of non-Jews in this period, he was attracted to the God revealed to the Patriarch Abraham. He believed that this God was the one true God. He prayed regularly and constantly, asking for a sign. God would give him a sign.

During his stay in Joppa (remember last week's reading and the raising of Tabitha), Peter had a vision while at midday prayer. He fell into a trance and saw a large sheet lowered from heaven containing every kind of unclean animal. Then he heard a voice saying, "Kill and eat!" Peter protested that he had never eaten anything unclean. The reply came that what God has made clean, he had no right to call profane. The same vision came to him twice more.

At the same time, Cornelius, while at prayer in Caesaria, had an angelic visitation saying his prayer had been answered and that he should send for Peter in Joppa. When Peter arrived in Caesaria, the meaning of his own vision became clear: he was to accept the Gentiles into the Church. He received a warm welcomed by the growing Gentile community of Jesus' followers, who, like Cornelius and his family, were believers. This was a revolutionary moment.

Simultaneously, communities were forming far from Jerusalem. The martyrdom of Stephen and the persecution that followed had the unintended effect of scattering the Apostles and other members of the Jerusalem community throughout the world. The opening verse of today's reading mentions Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch. But, we know that the Apostles themselves eventually traveled throughout the known world, even as far as India. When arriving in a new city, they would usually go first to the local Jewish synagogue to preach Jesus Christ as the promised Messiah who had now come. Then they would reach out to others, often Gentile believers like Cornelius, and proclaim to them the Good News of salvation as well. Today's reading from Acts shows us how this missionary process actually worked.

Disciples from Cyprus and Cyrene (a city on the North African coast in present-day Libya) went to Antioch to preach. Antioch was a city on the Mediterranean coast located in present-day southern Turkey. It was a well-positioned place from which Christianity could spread. It had been the capital of the Seleucid Empire and was one of the major cities of the Roman world, rivaling Alexandria. It had a large Jewish community, as well as groups of other peoples from throughout the Empire. The disciples mentioned in today's reading began to preach not only to the local synagogue, but also to the Greeks, that is, the Gentile population. They were enormously successful. St. Luke says, "The hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number became believers and turned to the Lord." (v. 21) News of this phenomenon reached the Apostles in Jerusalem and they decided to send Barnabas to investigate.

When Barnabas arrived in Antioch he was overwhelmed by what he saw. With his own eyes he witnessed the work of the Holy Spirit and rejoiced. St. Luke describes Barnabas as "a good

man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith" (v. 24), and we can see evidence of this in the next thing he does. After spending a little time with this new community, he goes to look for Saul (Paul) in Tarsus. His immediate instinct is to enlist the most skilled person for this kind of mission. Once he finds him he brings him to Antioch and together they meet with the Church there, teaching, encouraging and converting many. It was the starting point of the Church's missionary effort.

St. Luke captures this important moment with a small phrase: "It was in Antioch that the disciples were first called 'Christians'" (v. 26).

While Paul and Barnabas were in Antioch a number of prophets came from Jerusalem. One of them in particular, Agabus, full of the Holy Spirit, predicted that there would be a severe world-wide famine. The disciples in Antioch decided on the spot that they would send relief to the brethren in Judea (v. 29) through Paul and Barnabas. Paul made it his practice that in each place where he preached and established Churches, he would make this same act of charity — to assist the brothers and sisters in Judea — part of the mission of these new communities.

So as with Peter in Joppa and Caesaria, and Paul and Barnabas in Antioch, the Christian communities are growing beyond their Jewish roots to include every type of person who accepts Jesus.

From this passage in Acts we learn two fundamental Christian duties: to share the Good News with everyone we meet, and always being ready to help those in need. These principles are at the heart of the Life in Christ. Our faith came by way of people who took up this call, and shared their joy with us. It is our turn to share with those around us; to impart to them the words that many long to hear, the words of "the repentance that leads to life" (v. 18).

Christ is Risen!

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA