

# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN JUNE 2, 2019

## THIS WEEK'S NEWS

**THIS THURSDAY IS FEAST OF THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD.** We will be celebrating the Feast along with our brothers and sisters at St. Mary's Albanian Orthodox Church on Salisbury St. **Liturgy begins at 9:00AM.**

**DOUGH ROLLING DATES ARE SET** for **NEXT 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.**

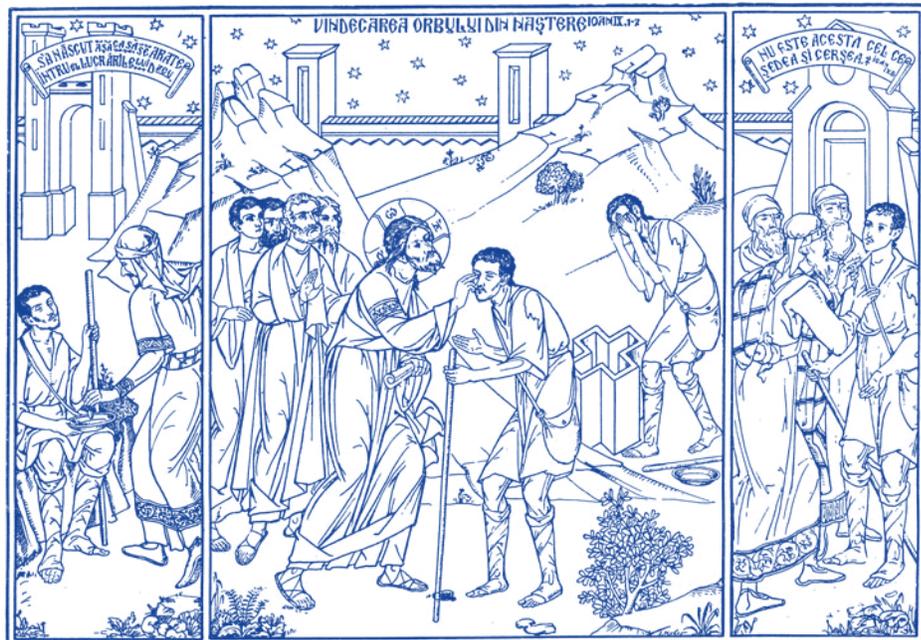
**RELIGIOUS ED WILL BREAK FOR THE SUMMER** with a prayer and a blessing on **Sunday, June 23rd.** The students will be offering a Sundae Social to benefit the IOCC during Coffee Hour. **A beautiful way to start the summer!**

**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

**GREETERS TEAM 4:**  
V. GERALD BELBA & ROSE SALERNO

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

**ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED**



### THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF PASCHA OF THE MAN BORN BLIND

APOSTOLIC READING: ACTS 16:16-34 ☩ GOSPEL: JOHN 9:1-38  
TONE 5 ☩ RESURRECTION GOSPEL 8

Mielnicki or Nicole Apostola. Our next Saturday is July 6th.

**THANKS TO THOSE WHO HELPED WITH THE ELECTRONICS/WHITE GOODS, ETC. RECYCLING** event yesterday. The team is coordinated by **Gerry Belba, and includes: George Belba, Tom Fitzpatrick, and Chris Seith.** Thank you!

**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.

**WE CELEBRATE** a one-year memorial today for the ser-

vant of God **MARY TSOULES.** *May her memory be eternal!*

**TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR** is sponsored by **Sofia Apostol,** as well as by the **Tsoules Family** in memory of **Mary Tsoules.**

### DATES TO REMEMBER

May 31-June 2 Albanian Festival  
Sat, June 1 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9AM-NOON  
e-Recycling, 9AM-2PM  
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  
Thurs, June 20 Parish Council Meeting, 6:30PM  
Fri, June 21 Mustard Seed Meal, 5:00PM  
Sun, June 23 Last Day of Religious Ed  
Sundae Social to benefit IOCC  
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*

## COMMUNITY NEWS

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

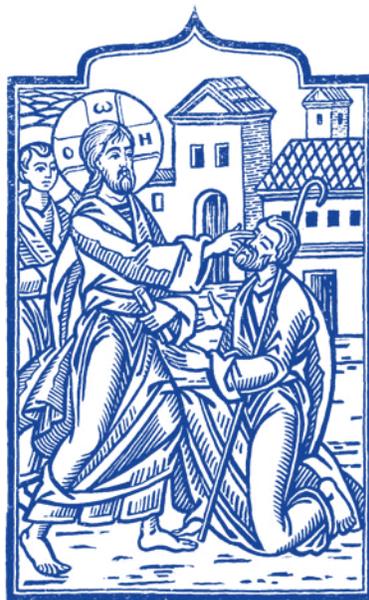
## UPCOMING

**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 date 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.



### A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**SWEET JESUS, OUR SAVIOUR:** We who enjoy the effulgence of the sun and who delight in the luminescence of the moon give thanks to you for the gifts of light and sight. In our good fortune, most of us have never actually known the meaning of being blind, and we cannot even begin to appreciate what a life of total darkness is. You, however, know all things, so your understanding and tenderness brought you to bestow a twofold enlightenment on that poor fellow who had been deprived of sight from his mother's womb. As we commemorate his healing during this paschal season, we entreat you to preserve us from all interior blindness that we may always see reality as it is in fact, and live accordingly.

For you are the healer of our souls and bodies, Christ our God, and we give you glory, together with your eternal Father and your all-holy, good, and lifegiving Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

## HOLY TRINITY NEWS

**THE LATEST ISSUE** of the *Holy Trinity Times* is available for download. Click the link: [www.htnr.net](http://www.htnr.net) to view it. And don't forget to 'like' Holy Trinity on Facebook and Twitter!

There will be a **COFFEE SOCIAL** on **Thursday, June 6th at 2:00 pm**, sponsored by **St. Mary's Albanian Orthodox Church.** As always, families and friends are invited!

**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](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)

**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.



## THE WAY OF SALVATION

**T**HIS is the sixth Sunday of Pascha. Today's Gospel lesson is the Lord's healing of the man blind from birth (John 9:1-38). In the reading from Acts (16:16-34) St. Luke tells us of the start of St. Paul's missionary work in Europe. Paul had been visiting the coastal cities of Asia Minor with Silas and Timothy. One night "a vision appeared to Paul ... a man of Macedonia was standing beseeching him and saying, 'Come over to Macedonia and help us.'" (Acts 16:9) And so Paul and Silas sailed to Philippi, a large city in that province.

Today's reading begins with the encounter Paul and Silas had with a slave girl while they were going toward a place outside of Philippi where the Jews usually gathered to pray on the Sabbath. She had a "spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by soothsaying." (v. 16) In the original Greek the phrase a "spirit of divination" is actually a "Pythonic spirit," referring to the snake that the god Apollo was believed to have slain at Delphi. In Apollo's temple at Delphi, a priestess of Apollo called the 'Phythius' would prophesy in the god's name there. So rather than believe this spirit as something benign, we should understand the girl as possessed.

The girl followed Paul and Silas for a number of days crying out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." (v. 17). Finally Paul had reached his limit and "turned and said to the spirit, 'I charge you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.' And it came out that very hour." (v. 18)

St. Paul did this for two reasons. The first was to free this poor girl from the exploitation of both the demon and her masters. The second was because the spirit meant to deceive and mislead those people who had come to believe in Jesus through Paul's and Silas'

preaching. Paul and the other Apostles never drew attention to themselves when they preached. Their goal was to proclaim salvation in the name of Jesus Christ. The objective of this demon was to gain credibility by correctly saying who and what these Apostles were, only then to later use this gained confidence for evil purposes. Paul knew this, and this is the reason he cast out the demon.

We can see Paul's wisdom in what happened next. Her masters, instead of believing her words that Paul and Silas were indeed "servants of the Most High God, who proclaim the way of salvation," immediately seized them and brought them before the local magistrates complaining that, "these men are Jews and they are disturbing our city. They advocate customs which it is not lawful for us Romans to accept or practice" (v. 21-22). A riot began. The magistrates had Paul and Silas flogged and imprisoned.

During the night while Paul and Silas were singing hymns and praying in prison, an earthquake opens the jail doors and loosens the chains binding Paul and the other prisoners. The jailer woke up, thinking that everyone had escaped. He was ready to kill himself, when Paul cried out to stop him. He told him that no one had escaped. The jailer was so moved that he falls down before Paul and Silas and asks how he might be saved. Finally, he and his whole household believed and were all baptized.

There are at least three important lessons in this story. The first is that believing in Jesus Christ and proclaiming him to the world is not always popular. Sometimes it can lead to outright persecution. Paul and Silas were not doing anything wrong, yet they were seized, brought up on false charges, beaten, put in stocks, and put in prison. They were

never even given the opportunity to defend themselves.

The second lesson is that when evil things befall us we should accept them without complaint. Paul and Silas were not sitting in the prison bemoaning their fate. They were not complaining to God: "Why me? I was doing your will! Why didn't you protect me?" Rather, they were singing hymns and praying. We should understand that we grow when tested. Sharing and witnessing to our faith is like exercising — like exercising our soul. It brings growth. We know what happens to a body that sits all day in front of the TV. It gets fat and lethargic. Exercise strengthens. Comfort weakens. God intends to strengthen us through many of the difficulties we may encounter.

The third important lesson is that we should not try to gain advantage at the expense of others. Paul and Silas were unjustly imprisoned. They could easily have used the opportunity of the earthquake to escape. What would have been the result? The jailer would have committed suicide, his children would have been orphaned, and his family disgraced. Even if Paul and Silas managed to save themselves, they would have been seen by many as in fact guilty as charged, and their preaching would have been in vain. Instead, by trusting in God and enduring their trials, the jailer and his family were saved, not only physically, but also spiritually. The truth of the Good News they preached spread throughout the whole city, even and especially to the pagans. Most importantly, Jesus was glorified.

I would like to emphasize this last point. We are living through world-wide economic and socio-political storms. Even though some people and places seem to have passed through the worst of it, many more have not. These crises are not "acts of God," but created by people, many of whom identify them-

selves as Christians, and who thought nothing of taking advantage of opportunities without considering the consequences of their actions on others. We see this same sort of selfish behavior exercised in many different ways each and every day. Sadly, we ourselves often behave similarly. Can we learn from these catastrophes? Can we be like Paul and Silas? Can we be witnesses to “the way of salvation”? Perhaps. And if we rise to our high-calling, many will indeed be saved.

Christ is Risen!

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA



## 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

## 2019 GRADUATES

*“He has filled them with the spirit of God,  
with skill, intelligence, and knowledge in every kind of craft.”*

(Exodus 35:31)

We want to acknowledge and recognize the achievements of the members of our parish community who are celebrating a graduation.

### HIGH SCHOOL

**William Rucho**, son of Chris & Julie, grandson of Florence Rucho, was graduated from Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School in the field of plumbing and has been employed by Andrew A. Beardsley Plumbing Company.

**Nicholas Soter**, son of Paul & Kiki, grandson of Carol Soter, was graduated from Doherty Memorial High School and will attend Worcester State University to pursue a degree in Education.

**Kylee Soter**, daughter of Matt and Kate, granddaughter of Carol Soter, was graduated from David Prouty High School and will attend Merrimac College to pursue a degree in Nursing.

**Louis Stamoulis**, son of Evan & Valarie, grandson of Jim & Argie Vlamis, was graduated from Algonquin Regional High School and will attend Elon College in North Carolina to pursue a degree in Exercise Science.

### COLLEGE

**Nicholas Johnson** was graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology of athletic training from the University of Rhode Island.

**Matthew Moore**, son of Sharon & Charles, grandson of Janet Samara, was graduated, *cum laude*, from the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth with a degree in Bio-medical Engineering and a fellowship from NASA. He will pursue a Master’s Degree.

**Gabrielle Sedares**, daughter of Peter, granddaughter of Eleanor Sedares, was graduated with a Bachelor’s Degree in Healthcare Administration from Arcadia University in PA.

**Eric Soter**, son of Mark & Stacey, grandson of Carol Soter, was graduated with honors from Bryant University with a degree in Accounting. He will pursue a Master’s Degree.

### GRADUATE SCHOOL

**Sarah Bourisk**, daughter of Diane and George, great-niece of Lillian Chachi was graduated from the University of New Haven with a Master’s Degree in Forensic Science.

*May our loving Lord continue to bless their efforts and grant them a long life, health, prosperity, and many, many years!*



## THE ASCENSION

The Lord Jesus passed forty days on earth after His Resurrection from the dead, appearing continually in various places to His disciples, with whom He also spoke, ate, and drank, thereby further demonstrating His Resurrection. On this Thursday, the fortieth day after Pascha, He appeared again in Jerusalem. After He had first spoken to the disciples about many things, He gave them His last commandment, that is, that they go forth and proclaim His Name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. But He also commanded them that for the present, they were not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait there together until they receive power from on high, when the Holy Spirit would come upon them.

Saying these things, He led them to the Mount of Olives, and raising His

hands, He blessed them; and saying again the words of the Father's blessing, He was parted from them and taken up. Immediately a cloud of light, a proof of His majesty, received Him. Sitting thereon as though on a royal chariot, He was taken up into Heaven, and after a short time was concealed from the sight of the disciples, who remained where they were with their eyes fixed on Him. At this point, two Angels in the form of men in white raiment appeared to them and said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? This same Jesus, Who is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven" (Acts 1:11). These words, in a complete and concise manner, declare what is taught in the Symbol of Faith concerning the Son and Word of God. Therefore, hav-

ing so fulfilled all His dispensation for us, our Lord Jesus Christ ascended in glory into Heaven, and sat at the right hand of God the Father. As for His sacred disciples, they returned from the Mount of Olives to Jerusalem, rejoicing because Christ had promised to send them the Holy Spirit.

It should be noted that the Mount of Olives is a Sabbath's day journey from Jerusalem, that is, the distance a Jew was permitted to walk on the day of the Sabbath. Ecumenius writes, "A Sabbath day's journey is one mile in length, as Clement says in his fifth Stromatis; it is two thousand cubits, as the Interpretation of the Acts states." They draw this conclusion from the fact that, while they were in the wilderness, the Israelites of old kept within this distance from the Holy Tabernacle, whither they walked on the Sabbath day to worship God.

