

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN JULY 7, 2019

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

GOT A QUESTION? Fr. Nick is looking for **Summer Sermon Topics**. Perhaps you've wondered what a particular practice or prayer means? Or how it developed? There's no question too small. If you've been wondering, be assured others have as well. **Send your questions or ideas along to him** at: FrNick@StNicholasChurch.org, or write it down and give it to him on Sunday.

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 August 3rd.

FOOD PANTRY NEEDS YOUR PLASTIC BAGS. Our Orthodox Food Pantry is in serious need of plastic shopping bags used to package food given to the visitors every Saturday. (They could use paper bags as well.) Please gather up your supply of extra bags and bring them to Church. The Food Pantry volunteers from our parish will get them to the Pantry located at St. Spyridon Cathedral. **God Bless You!**

GREETERS TEAM 1:
MACLYNN AND DIMITRI SAFFRON

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

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

APOSTOLIC READING: ROMANS 5:1-10 ☩ GOSPEL: MATTHEW 6:22-33
(CONCERNING THE CARES OF LIFE)
TONE 2 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL: 3

COFFEE HOUR SPONSORS are needed for the coming weeks. Please speak with Presvytera Maria if you are interested in sponsoring one.

TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR is sponsored by the **Manescu family** in memory of their departed loved ones: Ion-Constantin Pitigoi, Maria and Constantin, Ioana and Constantin, Sofia and Alexandru, and Stefan. **May our loving Lord rest their souls with the righteous.**

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 scheduling 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.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Sat, July 6 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-noon
Sun, July 28 St. Michael Sbdge, Annual Festival
Sat, Aug 3 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-noon
Aug 5-7 Vacation Church School
Fri, Aug 17 Mustard Seed Meal, 5 pm

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas

A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

WE BESEECH YOU, LORD GOD OF GLORY: Restrain us lest we fashion more and more idols to worship. Show us how idol-ridden we already are and help us to wipe them out, for though they are not statues of gold and silver, they are not any less idols, the by-products of our forgetfulness of you. Prevent us from worshipping honor, position, and possessions, homes, money, and yes, even our children and other loved ones. You be our only God, and let us glorify and worship you alone.

For you are the one and only God, and we give you glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

NAMEDAYS

July 7

The Holy Martyr Kyriaki

Kyri Sedares

July 11

The Blessed Olga, Princess of Russia

Olga Lolo

July 12

St. Veronica,

The woman healed by our Lord Jesus

Veronica Pandaru

July 17

*The Holy Great Martyr Marina
(Margareta) of Antioch in Pisidia*

Margarite Landry



KYRIAKE THE GREAT MARTYR

JULY 7

Saint Kyriake was the daughter of Christian parents, Dorotheus and Eusebia. She was given her name because she was born on Sunday, the day of the Lord (in Greek, Kyriake). She contested in Nicomedia during the reign of Diocletian, in the year 300. After many bitter torments she was condemned to suffer beheading, but being granted time to pray first, she made her prayer and gave up her holy soul in peace.



HOLY TRINITY NEWS

THE LATEST ISSUE of the *Holy Trinity Times* is available for download. Click the link: www.htnr.net to view it.

Come join the residents for a **patriotic dance show on Wednesday, July 10th** at 2pm.

SAVE THE DATE for Holy Trinity Nursing & Rehabilitation Center **25TH Anniversary Dinner Dance Celebration on Saturday, August 24, 2019** at St. George Cathedral, 30 Anna St., Worcester.

Contributions at work, visit Holy Trinity to see our newly landscaped front entrance!!!

We will have **Board Member Elections in September**, if anyone is interested in serving on the Board of Holy Trinity please contact **Carol Fotos** at carol.fotos.47@gmail.com

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.

WOULD WE DIE FOR OUR ENEMY?

THIS THIRD SUNDAY after Pentecost we continue reading from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans (5:1-10). In this passage St. Paul explains how faith in our Lord Jesus Christ does not simply restore our relationship with God, but transforms it. We are able to stand before our heavenly Father as a true, albeit adopted, child of God. He calls this ability to stand before God "justification." I think it appropriate to use our current legal term "standing" as a way to help us understand St. Paul's meaning, because he is, out of the Torah, is making a legal argument. To have "standing" in the legal sense means that you have a "right" to be in court; you have a place there. When St. Paul says, "we are justified by faith," (v. 5:1) he means that we can stand before God because we belong there.

In the previous chapter, St. Paul provides the example of the Righteous Abraham. He says, "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." (v. 4:3) Even though Abraham and Sarah were very old, God promised him that he would be the father of many nations. Abraham believed Him. His act of faith in God made him righteous, made him able to stand before God..

St. Paul continues this line of thought when he tells us that, "since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God." (v. 5:1-2) It is because of our faith that we have peace with God. On the other hand, because of our sin and lack of faith—our disobedience—we lose this peace, but it can be restored to us through Jesus and our faith in him. Through him, as St. Paul says, we now have access to the grace that allows us to stand before God; and this gives us hope.

Having said that "we rejoice in our

hope," St. Paul directs us to an even deeper reality. He says, "More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings." (v. 3) After having told us of the gift that God offers us by believing in Him, he then tells us that this faith which gives us hope, will also comfort us in the very real trials of this life. We rejoice in God not only for the good things given us, but even during the sufferings that life holds for us.

So, St. Paul sets before us a progression, a pattern, for spiritual growth. He says that, "suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope." (v. 3-4) Our hope isn't abstract; it is grounded in the very real trust that we place in God during the most difficult times of our lives. Remember Jesus' words: "In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

We should appreciate the difficulty in translating St. Paul's words in this verse. What we translate into English as *endurance* or *patience* is the Greek word *ὑπομονή* (*ipomoni*), which captures both of these concepts together. He is speaking of a "constant patient endurance;" a constancy which forms and develops a tried and tested character through tribulation. This kind of character begets hope. It takes away the fear of what the future may bring.

After describing what *we* need to do—what our part is— St. Paul returns to God's initiative. He says that "hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us." (v. 5) He doesn't say that the Holy Spirit has been given to us as though measured out. Rather, God's love has been "poured" into our hearts. This is an image of overflowing grace; an abundance of love. God is not holding back; He is overwhelming us with His presence.

In order to emphasize his point, St.

Paul gives us the ultimate example. "While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly." (v. 6) We are the ungodly. God did not wait for us to turn and repent. He did not wait for our expression of faith. He proved his faithfulness and love "while we were yet sinners." (v. 8)

Listen to St. Paul's argument: "Why, one will hardly die for a righteous man—though perhaps for a good man one will dare even to die. But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." (v. 7-8). I have often reflected on this verse, taking St. Paul's words very seriously. Would I give up my life even for a good person? Could I even contemplate sacrificing myself for someone who was my enemy? But, this is what he who we call Lord, God and Savior did for us, his enemies; his disobedient children. He did it because he loves us and wants to call us back to our Father.

St. Paul finishes his argument with these words: "Since, therefore, we are now justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life." (v. 9-10)

St. Paul is giving the Romans and us hope and urging us on to courageously pursue the spiritual life, the life of faith. He points to God's love for us as expressed by His Son's sacrifice. He tells us that because of this, God and humanity are reconciled—we can be restored to what He intended us to be. He urges us to believe, to have faith in and through our Lord Jesus Christ, and in this way the hope that we have of God's love for us will be poured into our hearts.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA