

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN AUGUST 25, 2019

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

PITA BAKING is starting up! We've schedule a session for **Thursday, August 29th, 9:00 AM**. All help welcome. Questions? See Chris Toda.

WE ARE SADDENED at the falling asleep in the Lord last Sunday, August 18th, of our brother **Theodore Belba**. Calling hours are today, from 3-6 PM at Mercadante Funeral Home. The funeral is here at **St. Nicholas on Monday at 10 AM** with calling hours from 9 AM. **May his memory be eternal!**

THE PARISH COUNCIL will be meeting on **Thursday, August 29th at 6:30 pm**. Parish Council Members, please let George Demake know if you are unable to attend.

THANKS TO THE TEAM that cleaned-up the trailer and back storage room: **Dimitri & Macklynn Saffron, Christo Spyrou, George Demake, and Tim Rucho**. Dimitri, in particular, provided additional help and trucks from his landscaping operation. It was a major job done remarkably efficiently. **Thank You!**

WE'VE COMMISSIONED A PROSKINITARION for the Relics and Icon of St. Nicholas that our parish received from the Romanian Orthodox

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 TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

EPISTLE: 1 CORINTHIANS 4:9-16 ☩ GOSPEL: MATTHEW 17:14-23

(JESUS HEALS THE BOY WITH AN EPILEPTIC DEMON)

TONE 1 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL: 10

Diocese of Italy through His Grace Bishop Siluan, and Fr. Daniel Ene. Fr. Nicolae Simion of Wakefield is sculpting this wood-carved Icon stand which we hope to be ready for the Feastday. The cost is \$3,000 and we are asking for donations to cover the cost. If you have any questions, and/or would like to donate toward it, speak with Fr. Nick or Tim.

COFFEE HOUR THIS SUNDAY is sponsored by **Lisa Mielnicki** in memory of her parents **Nicholas and Androniki Demake**.

COMMUNITY NEWS

STS. ANARGYROI in Marlborough will be holding their annual Festival, Labor Day weekend: Aug 31-Sept 2. For more information check their website:

<http://stsanargyroi.org/>.

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

Holy Trinity Nursing & Rehabilitation Center's **25th Anniversary Dinner Dance Celebration will be held on Saturday, November 9, 2019**. For more information, or to reserve tickets for the event or purchase raffle tickets call Kristina Mironidis at 508-852-1000 or e-mail her at: kmironidis@htnr.

THE LATEST ISSUE of the *Holy Trinity Times* is available at www.htnr.net.

Holy Trinity provides a comprehensive **rehabilitation program** of Physical, Occupational and Speech/Language Ther-

DATES TO REMEMBER

Thurs, Aug 29 Beheading of John the Baptist
Strict Fast Day
Also, Pita Baking
Parish Council, 6:30 PM
Sat, Sept 7 Staff Food Pantry, 9AM-NOON
Fri, Oct 18 Mustard Seed Meal, 5 PM
December 7-8 70TH Anniversary celebration

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas

opies. Call 508-852-1000 for more information.

HOLY TRINITY will hold elections for vacant seats on the Board at the General Assembly in September. If interested in serving on the Board please contact: Carol Fotos at carol.fotos.47@gmail.com

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.

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.



NAMEDAYS

August 15

The Falling Asleep of the Most Holy Theotokos

Maria Blanchard
 Mary Cocaine
 Maria Dumitriu
 Monika Maria Durmillari
 Maria Kalpidou
 Maria Prelipcean
 Nancy Maria Tsongalis
 Marietta Zaruha

August 26

The Holy Martyrs Adrian and Natalia at Nicomedia

Natalia Dimitra Karadimitriou
 Natasha Zhaka

August 29

St. Theodora of Thessalonika

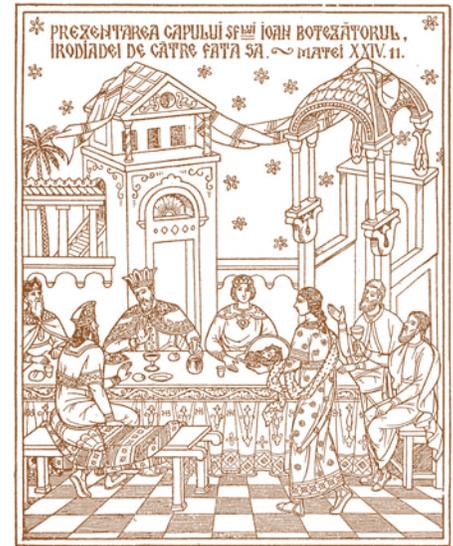
Gina Theodora Trakadas

August 30

St. Alexander, Patriarch of Constantinople

Alexander Charalambides
 Emilia Alexandra Galeriu
 Dr. Alexander Gouvelis
 Alexandra Mazanitis
 Alexandru Nace
 Conner Alexander Polymeros
 Alexanna Soter
 Alexander James Trakadas

HEROD'S BIRTHDAY BANQUET BEHEADING OF ST. JOHN



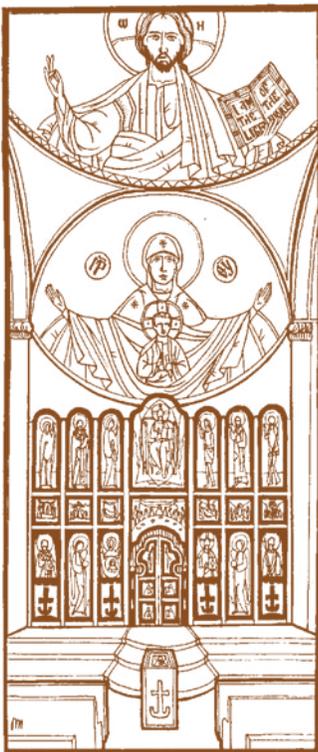
A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

LORD GOD, SOURCE OF ALL PRUDENCE AND GOOD SENSE:

We are always ready to deny our sins completely, or to forget them, or insist that they are mere trifles! Let the practice of our faith be more than lip-service and empty forms, and help us to enter into the struggle for our souls with sincerity of heart and firmness of purpose. Enable us to be faithful to you and conscious of your generosity. Pour forth your mercy on us and give us an authentic rightness of heart.

For you are a merciful and loving God, and we give you glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.



BE IMITATORS OF ME

THIS is the tenth Sunday after Pentecost, and we resume our reading from St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians. We begin almost where we left off last week, at chapter 4:9-16. After reprimanding the Corinthians for their factionalism and childish behavior, St. Paul now uses sarcasm and irony to shock them into repentance. Even though babes in Christ, many in the Corinthian community have come to see themselves as more spiritually advanced than the Apostles themselves. He is looking for a way to put them back on the correct path.

The first thing he does is set the stage. "For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to men" (v. 9). St. Paul tells them that in his opinion God is giving the world the Apostles as an example of what it means to be a Christian — not just on earth, but in heaven as well. God has made them like the lowliest of persons — as last of all; like men sentenced to death, in order to show how followers of His Son should behave.

"We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute" (v. 10). St. Paul's sarcasm rings true to the Corinthians. Here he echoes what he said earlier in the letter: "For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (v. 1:25). The fool for Christ is the one who returns good for evil and a blessing for a curse. This kind of real strength only appears to be weakness. It is incomprehensible to people who only know the ways of this world.

He now changes his tone. He is no longer being sharp, but rather descriptive of what he and the other Apostles endure in order to preach the Gospel. "To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are ill-clad and buffeted and homeless, and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless;

when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become, and are now, as the refuse of the world, the offscouring of all things" (v. 11-13). We should stop and ponder this image of a Christian that St. Paul is presenting us. Just as in first century Corinth, there are people today who understand Jesus and the path toward Him very differently than the picture St. Paul is painting.

In our day there are those preaching a "Gospel of Prosperity" — God wants us to be rich; or a "muscular Jesus" — Jesus and Christians are not wimps; or a gleeful, smiling Jesus — personal happiness is what the Faith is all about. These as well as many other perversions of the Gospel corrupted Corinth and corrupt our time as well. Paul wanted to open the eyes of the Corinthian Christians to really see these preachers who were distorting the Gospel for what they were. He wanted to protect the people that he had nurtured and formed. He wanted them to appreciate how a true minister of the Gospel lives.

Our own experience matters. Many of us have had the experience of a true disciple of the Lord. We have known and experienced humble priests, monks, and nuns who have given their whole lives to the Lord's Gospel: the bishop or the lay person who is nothing, or lower than nothing in the eyes of the world, but shines with God's brightness to those with eyes to see. Some may dress shabbily or appear unlearned, but radiate with God's wisdom and love to those who care to look beyond surface appearances. There are many who claim to understand the Lord's teachings, but very few who really do.

Having said things that St. Paul knew would cut the Corinthians to their heart, he tries to comfort them. "I do not write this to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in

Christ Jesus through the gospel" (v. 14-15). Rather than use his status as Apostle and founder of their Church, or to speak condescendingly to them, as might a teacher to students, he calls them his "children." He says that he considers himself to be their "father," in Christ Jesus. In this one word he expresses the depth of his concern and love in such a way as to encourage them to open their hearts toward him.

He tells them that he has spoken so openly about the "price" of preaching the Gospel not to make them ashamed of him and themselves, but rather to admonish them, to correct them, as a loving father would to his own children.

Notice how careful he is not to speak disparagingly of the other preachers who have been working in the Corinthian community. He distinguishes himself without impugning them. He says to them, "though you have countless guides [or teachers] in Christ, you do not have many fathers." He points to the qualitative difference in their relationship, without directly challenging their authority.

In order to strengthen what he is saying, he tells them: "I urge you, then, be imitators of me" (v. 16). St. John Chrysostom seems to have a text that adds the words: "as I also am of Christ." The text we have does not contain this phrase, but St. John's reading is echoed later on in the Letter where St. Paul tells them: "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (v. 11:1).

St. Paul isn't being conceited; he's being truthful. He's offering himself as an example to them in order to encourage them. For if Paul is able to follow Christ — and that is how we should understand what he said in verses 11-13 — then surely the Corinthian Christians, and we too, will be able to follow our Lord's example and his life.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA