

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN SEPTEMBER 1, 2019

THE START OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL NEW YEAR

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

PITA BAKING is starting up! We've schedule a session for **Saturday, September 7TH, 9:00 AM**. All help welcome. Questions? See Chris Toda.

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

WE CELEBRATE A MEMORIAL TODAY for the servant of God **Kaliopi Demma**, fallen asleep 3 years. *May her memory be eternal!*

COFFEE HOUR THIS SUNDAY is sponsored by **Sam Demma and Joanne Prizio** in memory of their mother **Kaliopi Demma**.

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 ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

APOSTOLIC READING: 1 CORINTHIANS 9:2-12 ☩ GOSPEL: MATTHEW 18:23-35
(THE PARABLE OF THE UNGRATEFUL SERVANT)
TONE 2 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 11

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 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

Holy Trinity provides a comprehensive **rehabilitation program** of Physical, Occupational and Speech/Language Therapies. Call 508-852-1000 for more information.

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

DATES TO REMEMBER

Sat, Sept 7 Pita Baking
Staff Food Pantry, 9AM-NOON
Fri, Oct 18 Mustard Seed Meal, 5 PM
Sat, Nov 23 Holiday Bake Sale
December 7-8 70TH Anniversary celebration

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas

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

September 5

St. Elizabeth the mother of St. John the Baptist

Elizabeth Anderson
Elizabeth Grace Cavanaugh
Elizabeth Florica Galeriu
Lisa Mielnicki
Karen Elizabeth Wilder

The Holy Prophet Zachariah, father of St. John

Zachary Spataro

September 8

The Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos

Maria Z. Mossaides

September 9

The Holy Ancestors of God Joachim and Anna

Ann Marie Clem
Anna Maria Collins
Ana Seith
Ann Trakadas

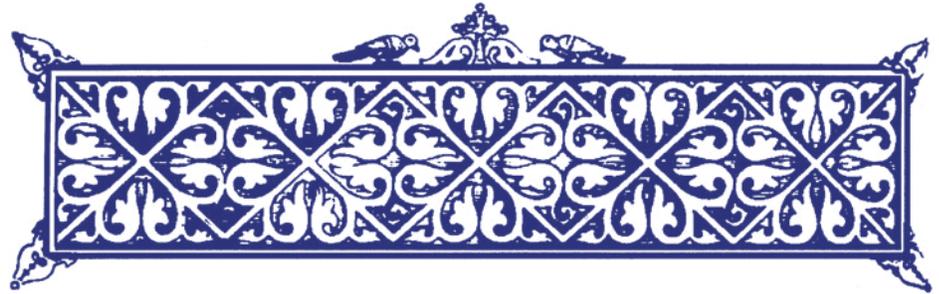
September 17

The Holy Martyr Faith, Daughter of St. Sophia

Faith Mayer

The Holy Martyr Sophia of Rome

Sofia Apostol
Sophia Amyra Apostola
Carol Fotos



CHURCH NEW YEAR

SEPTEMBER 1ST

The first day of the Church New Year is also called the beginning of the Indiction. The term Indiction comes from a Latin word meaning, "to impose." It was originally applied to the imposition of taxes in Egypt. The first worldwide Indiction was in 312 when the Emperor Constantine (May 21) saw a miraculous vision of the Cross in the sky. Before the introduction of the Julian calendar, Rome began the New Year on September 1.

According to Holy Tradition, Christ entered the synagogue on September 1 to announce His mission to mankind (Luke 4:16-22). Quoting Isaiah 61:1-2), the Savior proclaimed, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me; because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent me to proclaim release to captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord..." This scene is depicted in a Vatican manuscript (Vatican, Biblioteca. Cod. Gr. 1613, p.1).

Tradition says that the Hebrews entered the Promised Land in September.

A PRAYER FOR THE ECCLESIASTICAL NEW YEAR

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

LORD AND MASTER! Source and origin of life and immortality! Designer and creator of all that is visible and invisible, of the seasons and of the times, who keep everything in existence, directing all things by your unfathomable power and wisdom! We come to you to give thanks to you for the year that has come to a close. And we entreat you, bountiful Lord: With your grace and light, bless the year we now begin. In your great love for us, grace us with all that we need for the coming year. Give us the strength and the wisdom to live each day as it comes, in peace and without fear, fortified by the knowledge that you are with us, and strengthened by the strength that only you can give. Watch over your church throughout the world, give peace to all people, and have mercy on this world of yours.

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

IS IT FOR OXEN THAT GOD IS CONCERNED?

THIS eleventh Sunday after Pentecost, and the Apostolic reading is taken from St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians: 9:2-12. Here St. Paul is defending the authenticity of his Apostolic authority against some in the Corinthian community who appear to have challenged it.

As we try to understand both St. Paul's comments, as well as the arguments directed toward undermining his authority, we have one problem: we only have St. Paul's response. We do not have other documents — such as the original letters coming from Corinth to St. Paul — to know precisely what they were saying, and so we are left to infer the argument of those opposing St. Paul from what St. Paul wrote. Nevertheless, we can still glean a great deal from St. Paul's text.

It seems that one strong point was that St. Paul did not exercise the normal prerogatives of an Apostle, such as being financially supported by the community. Without inflating his Apostleship, he tells them simply, "If to others I am not an apostle, at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord" (v. 2). He doesn't raise his other missionary work as proof; he tells them to look to themselves and their own community, at the work he has done there in Corinth. This is proof enough.

He then addresses the Apostolic prerogatives that he has not availed himself of. "Do we not have the right to our food and drink? Do we not have the right to be accompanied by a wife, as the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living?" (v.4-6) He is telling them plainly that just because he chose not to burden the community with supporting him and Barnabas, this does not mean that he had forfeited the right. The Church community has a duty to support those preaching and ministering to them.

We are reminded in these verses of some historical facts. All of the original

twelve Apostles, except for John, were married. Paul chose to remain unmarried, perhaps because of the arduous nature of the missionary activity he was called to, or perhaps because he felt that the Lord's coming would be very soon and the new age would then begin. Regardless, he claims his right to be married, without feeling the need to exercise it (cf. 1 Corinthians 7:23ff).

Similarly, we know that St. Paul was a tent maker. This is how he supported himself when he would go to a new city to preach the Gospel. He and many others sacrificed a great deal in order to bring the Good News of salvation to people everywhere. He uses very down to earth images to explain why he has a right to expect to be compensated for his ministry among them. "Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard without eating any of its fruit? Who tends a flock without getting some of the milk?" (v. 7) Each one of us feels that it is only fair that we receive adequate remuneration for our work. This is at the very heart of our life in common. This is the foundation of our economy. But, the basic principle is even more obvious.

"Do I say this on human authority?" asks St. Paul. "Does not the law say the same? For it is written in the law of Moses, 'You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain.' Is it for oxen that God is concerned? Does he not speak entirely for our sake? It was written for our sake, because the plowman should plow in hope and the thresher thresh in hope of a share in the crop" (v. 8-10). One of the more remarkable aspects of the Law is that even three thousand or more years ago fair payment for work rendered was considered central to being in a right relationship not only with our neighbor, but with God. Moses tells us that God is concerned with just treatment of laborers.

Everything that St. Paul has said up until this point was to prepare us for his central point: "If we have sown spiritual good among you, is it too much if we

reap your material benefits? If others share this rightful claim upon you, do not we still more? Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ" (v. 11-12).

Things are not so very different today as they were in first century Corinth. The question of properly compensating people for their labor is again at the center of our nation's economic discussion. People are working harder for less. The Scripture has something to say about this, despite the common misperception that "religion has no place in economic discussions."

And, of course, the question of clergy salaries remains a lively one in the Church. How much should the priest be compensated? Is he really worth it? At least in here in North America, this question still sparks a discussion.

There has rarely been a time more than now when the Church has needed the "best and the brightest" to devote themselves to the preaching of the Gospel. We live in an epoch of huge cultural shifts. People are searching for a way to understand the changes in society and find meaning — find God — in what they are experiencing. We need people who have more insight, more understanding, and more spiritual wisdom than the average person to help minister to us. These persons need to be compensated at least as well as other professionals whom we regularly engage to assist us in our earthly existence. Very simply, if we ask people to help us spiritually, we need to support them and their families.

I believe that among the most important issues facing the Orthodox Church here is the adequate compensation of the clergy. If this issue is not addressed, the consequences will be dire. As St. Paul reminds us, "It is for oxen that God is concerned?" It is certainly both oxen and us.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA