

# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN NOVEMBER 24, 2019

## THIS WEEK'S NEWS

**THE CHRISTMAS FAST** began this past Friday, November 15th. **FASTING IS THE BEST WAY TO PREPARE FOR CHRISTMAS!** In addition to fasting from food, you may want to consider fasting from shopping as well — or at least choosing when and how much to shop. Don't shop on Thanksgiving. Use it as a family day. Don't shop on Sundays. Instead, relax with your friends. We *can* do things that will feed our souls, while perhaps striking a note for a saner society as well.

**OUR DEEPEST THANKS** who labored these past weeks and even months making our **Holiday Bake Sale, Luncheon and Marketplace Luncheon** a great success. No only is it a great fundraiser for our parish, it is even more a community building event for our Church family. **God bless each and every one of you!**

**FOOD PANTRY.** Help is needed to staff our monthly responsibility at the Orthodox Food Center **Saturday, December 7th, 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 1:**  
MACLYNN AND DIMITRI SAFFRON

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

**ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED**



### THE THIRTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

APOSTOLIC READING: COLOSSIANS 3:12-16 ☩ GOSPEL: LUKE 18:18-27

(THE RICH RULER & KEEPING THE COMMANDMENTS)

TONE 6 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 1

**WE HAVE A 40-DAY BLESSING TODAY** for the servant of God **Matthew Sean Fahey** new born son of **Sean and Iliana Fahey** and little brother to sisters **Katherine and Amelia.** **May our loving Lord pour out his Grace on them all!**

**THANKS TO THOSE WHO HELPED WITH THE ELECTRONICS/WHITE GOODS, ETC. RECYCLING** last Saturday. The team coordinated by **Gerry Belba,** and included: **George Belba, and Chris Seith.**

**TODAY WE CELEBRATE A MEMORIAL** for members of the **Manescu Family,** fallen asleep: **Nicolita & Emil Corneci, Ion Constantin, Maria, Sofia, Constantin, and Alexandru.**

**TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR** is sponsored by the **Manescu family,** in memory of loved ones fallen asleep.

### 70TH ANNIVERSARY

**THE MAIN RECEPTION** for the Anniversary celebration will be **Saturday, December 7, from 3-7 PM** here at the Church. This event will be an "open house" style party and feature Mediterranean food stations, a live jazz trio, and holiday cheer! The donation is \$25 per person and reservations sheets will be available soon.

**A 70TH ANNIVERSARY PROGRAM BOOKLET** is being prepared to mark

### DATES TO REMEMBER

Fri, Nov 15 Nativity Fast Began  
Sat, Nov 23 Holiday Bake Sale, Luncheon, and Marketplace, 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM  
Sun, Nov 24 Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service, 7 PM  
Thurs, Nov 28 Thanksgiving Day  
Thurs, Dec 5 St Nicholas Great Vespers, 7:00 PM  
Fri, Dec 6 St. Nicholas Feast, Liturgy 9:30 AM  
Sat, Dec 7 Staff Food Pantry, 9AM-NOON  
December 7-8 70TH Anniversary celebration  
Fri, Dec 20 Mustard Seed Meal, 5:00 PM

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolis of the Americas

this celebration. **Everyone's help is needed** to solicit greetings and acknowledgments from friends and family. Please note, the Program Book is in lieu of our Annual Raffle and Christmas Card this year, so **we are depending on this one major fundraising effort!** Solicitation sheets are available at Church and will be mailed soon!

## HOLY TRINITY NEWS

**CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR HOLY TRINITY RESIDENTS.** Each year Holy Trinity Nursing and Rehab gives the Orthodox community the opportunity to provide Christmas Gifts for the facility's residents. Our Parish is responsible for providing around 20 of these gifts. You will be asked to purchase and wrap the gift, and bring it to the Church, Sunday, December 8th. **Eleanor Sedares (508-753-3106)** is coordinating this effort for our parish and can offer suggestions if you need ideas of what to get. There's also a sign-up sheet at the candles.

Visit **Holy Trinity's** website [www.htnr.net](http://www.htnr.net) to view the November Newsletter, and click "**Newsletter**" on the homepage.

On behalf of **Holy Trinity Nursing & Rehabilitation Center**, we would like to thank you for your donation to the **25TH Anniversary celebration**. Your contribution, and the contributions of others like you, will go a long way to supporting our mission.

**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.

## NAMEDAYS

**November 14**

*The Holy All-praised Apostle Philip*

Philip Favata  
Philip Rucho  
Phillip Sedares

**November 16**

*The Holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew*

Scott Matthew Belba  
Matthew Robert Clem  
Matthew Collins  
Matthew Soter

**November 25**

*The Great-martyr Katherine of Alexandria*

Katina Vanthia Christo  
Katina Cocavessis  
Kathy Lynn Evangelos  
Kathryn Eleanor Sedares  
Katina Spataro  
Katherine Stamoulis  
Emily Katherine Valoras

**November 30**

*The Holy Apostle Andrew*

Andrew John Demake  
Andrew Opio  
Andrew Tanacea



**S**AIN'T CATHERINE, (Nov 25) who was from Alexandria, was the daughter of Constat. She was an exceedingly beautiful maiden, most chaste, and illustrious in wealth, lineage, and learning. By her steadfast understanding, she utterly vanquished the unbridled soul of Maximinus, the tyrant of Alexandria; and by her eloquence, she stopped the mouths of the so-called philosophers who had been gathered to dispute with her. She was crowned martyrdom in 305.

**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).

## COMMUNITY NEWS

**AN ECUMENICAL THANKSGIVING SERVICE**, sponsored by the Shrewsbury Clergy will be held, **Sunday, November**

**24th, at 7:00 pm.** At Wellspring Methodist and Trinity Episcopal, 440 Main St., Shrewsbury. A wonderful way to begin our Thanksgiving celebrations.

**9TH ANNUAL TURKEY TROT** – Thanksgiving morning Thursday, **November 28th At 8:00 am** join fellow runners, walkers and trotters for the Turkey Trot for the Memory. It's a 5 mile run or a 2 mile walk all to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer's disease. This wonderful Shrewsbury tradition is the perfect way to start your holiday. Registration is available online at [www.turkeytrotforthememory.org](http://www.turkeytrotforthememory.org). Questions please email [jamesheald71@gmail.com](mailto:jamesheald71@gmail.com) or [jlizotte2@gmail.com](mailto:jlizotte2@gmail.com).

## AND, BE THANKFUL

**T**HIS is the thirtieth Sunday after Pentecost. The Epistle Lesson is taken from St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians 3:12-16. The Church at Colossae was not founded by St. Paul, but by Epaphras one of his disciples. While St. Paul was pleased with the general progress of the community, he was concerned that influences from a number of native pagan beliefs and Judaism were having a distorting effect on the Gospel preached to them. They were becoming syncretistic. This tendency toward syncretism is a problem in our own time as well. We can see the phenomenon at work particularly in "New Age" thinking that takes a little of this and a little of that and blends them into a not so very coherent set of beliefs. St. Paul was warning the Colossians against drifting in this direction.

In this letter St. Paul urges the Colossians to shape themselves in the image of Christ. He calls them to remember their new status, "as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved." He tells them to clothe themselves with "heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience" (v. 12). He instructs them on what it means to be a Christian, a follower of Christ. We are not simply to have kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, but these must be *heartfelt*. Our behavior toward one another should go beyond outer forms and social convention; it should spring from the deepest recesses of our being.

He wants them to be conscious of their goal: to be like our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. "Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive" (v. 13). We are to support one another. We are to put up with one another. When tested or offended we are to forgive one another "just as the Lord has forgiven you." St. Paul is telling us to transform ourselves by the power given us by the Holy Spirit.

He then says to them, "Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony" (v. 14). It is possible to have these virtues of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and even patience without having love. Love is what makes these other actions real and complete. Without love they will lack the substance necessary for them to withstand test of time. Love is the glue that "binds" our virtuous act with our deeper intention. It makes us whole.

"And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body" (v. 15). The word "rule" could also be translated as "umpire," (even though it might sound a little awkward). What St. Paul means is that as an emotion love can sometimes be an unsteady gauge. Just observe the various ways 'love' is used and misused in our common speech. When we are wrestling with difficult questions, when all of our thoughts and emotions are engaged, we need to let Christ's peace be the arbiter. It serves as a stabilizing influence. While we might go back and forth, Christ's peace remains a steady guide. It rules over all the pettiness or spite we might feel. If we allow Christ's peace to arbitrate our emotions, we become one with Him. We become one with the Body to which we were called.

"And be thankful" (v. 15). St. Paul makes this a stand-alone statement. Like "love, which binds everything together," thankfulness is a state of being that changes us. It is the perspective that reinterprets all of our experiences.

When we thank someone for what they've given us or done for us, our words and sentiments should direct us to transcend the gift in order to focus on the giver. While a kind act can never be thought of as small or inconsequential, we also know that the one who offers it is far more important than what was given. When we are thankful we move from focusing on ourself to focusing

on the giver. We are drawn out of ourself to *see* the other. This is the essence of thankfulness.

We might say "thank you" to other people a thousand times a day, and rightfully so; but the deeper question is: do we really *mean* it? Are we employing the words "thank you" as simple social convention, or are they actually a reflection of our inner disposition? Striving to make our sentiments truly heartfelt points us to the goal to which St. Paul is directing us: "be thankful."

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God" (v. 16). St. Paul uses another word in this verse very much like "thankful." He tells the Colossians and us to teach and admonish one another in wisdom and "with gratitude."

Gratitude and thankfulness have a similar root meaning: joy or pleasure. When we are truly grateful or thankful we also have a joy deep inside us. We take pleasure in the act of kindness shown us. More importantly, we take joy in the one who gives us this. When we are thankful the joy changes us.

St. Paul tells the Thessalonians: "give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thessalonians 5:18). We know we have grown in Christ when our thankfulness is not conditioned on external events. It is easy to give thanks when things are going relatively well. It is another matter to give thanks when things seem to be going badly. Can we still open a voice of praise to God even when the wind is blowing against us?

Brothers and sisters, as we celebrate our national day of Thanksgiving, let us reflect on the true nature of thanksgiving, and be grateful always and in every circumstance.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA



# IOCC Sunday

November 24, 2019

[iocc.org/dayofsharing](http://iocc.org/dayofsharing)

## A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**L**ORD, OUR GOD: our Thanksgiving celebration makes us reflect on the riches of life. All too often, we take them for granted! We presume — if we really think about it at all! — that what we are and have is somehow all our own doing. As we prepare for the coming feast, help us reach a better understanding of how things really are. Enable our minds and hearts to find inspiration and renewal by pondering the marvels life affords us at every turn. Show us how to receive everything and, indeed, every moment of life, as a gift. Cleanse our minds and hearts of the cynical and perverse desire to believe we simply have a right to everything that comes our way. Show us, rather, how indebted we are to everyone, beginning with you, and in all things lead us to yourself.

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

**TODAY IS IOCC SUNDAY — A DAY OF SHARING, NOVEMBER 24TH.** The International Orthodox Christian Charities is *the* major charitable arm of the Orthodox Church. Based in the United States, it brings relief to people in need throughout the world. This is a wonderful organization we can trust our giving to. **To donate go to the website: [www.iocc.org](http://www.iocc.org), or call: (877) 803 IOCC (4622).**

