

# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN

JANUARY 19, 2020

## THIS WEEK'S NEWS

**THE BLESSING OF HOMES AT THEOPHANY.** PLEASE NOTE we will be scheduling House Blessings differently this year. Fr. Nick will be blessing houses through January and February. If you would like him to bless your home, please contact him either by e-mail ([frnick@stnicholaschurch.org](mailto:frnick@stnicholaschurch.org)) or on his cell: 508-335-7378 in order to set up a time.

**PITA BAKING.** We're working to rebuild our pita stock after our successful holiday baking sales. There's a **pita baking session** this coming **Thursday, January 23RD, 9:00 AM to NOON.** There will also be a pita dough rolling session, **Saturday, February 1ST, also 9:00 AM to NOON.** **Questions?** Chris Toda at [thetodas@msn.com](mailto:thetodas@msn.com) and Betty Anderson at [bettya16@verizon.net](mailto:bettya16@verizon.net).

**CONGRATULATIONS** to the newly illumined Noah Vasil Spyrou who was baptized on Sunday, January 12th. Parents: **Christos and Tracie Spiro.** Sponsors: **Spyridon Spyrou and Alexandra Brown.** *Many Years to the parents, sponsors and especially little Noah!*

**COFFEE HOUR SPONSORS ARE NEEDED** for the coming weeks. Please speak with Presvytera Maria if 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 TWENTY NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

APOSTOLIC READING: COLOSSIANS 1:12-18 ☩ GOSPEL: LUKE 17:12-19

(JESUS HEALS THE 10 LEPERS)

tone 6 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 9

would like to sponsor one.

**TODAY WE REMEMBER** Angela Prizio Demake, fallen asleep three years. *May our Lord rest her among the saints!*

**COFFEE HOUR TODAY** is sponsored by Angela's family in her memory.

## HOLY TRINITY NEWS

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

There will be a **COFFEE SOCIAL** on **Thursday, January 23RD** at 2:00 PM, sponsored by St. Spyridon Greek Orthodox Church. *As always, families and friends are invited!*

**DIVINE LITURGY** is celebrated every Wednesday morning at 9:30AM. And please always keep Holy Trin-

ity 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](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).

### DATES TO REMEMBER

Thurs, Jan 23	Pita Baking, 9AM-NOON
Sat, Feb 1	Pita Dough Rolling, 9AM-NOON Staff Food Pantry, 9AM-NOON
Sun, Feb 9	Triodion begins
Sat, Feb 22	Saturday of Souls
Mon, March 2	Great Lent begins
Sun, April 19	Great and Holy Pascha

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*A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas*

## NAMEDAYS

January 12

**St. Tatiana the Martyr of Rome**

Tatiana Sofia Karadimitriou

January 17

**St. Anthony the Great**

Anthony Theodore Christo

Scott Anthony Maynard

Anthony Rucho

Tony Nicholas Trakadas

January 18

**St. Athanasios**

**Patriarch of Alexandria**

Thanas Lolo

Arthur Peterson

January 22

**The Holy Apostle Timothy**

Rev. Fr. Timothy Lowe

Timothy Rucho

January 25

**St. Gregory the Theologian**

Rev. Fr. Gregory Christakos

Dr. Gregory Tsongalis

January 28

**St. Ephraim the Syrian**

Rev. Fr. Ephraim Peters



ST. ITA  
THE HERMITESS OF KILLEEDY  
JANUARY 15

Saint Ita, “the Foster Mother of the Irish Saints,” was born in the fifth century. She, like many of the Irish saints, was of the nobility. Her parents were devout Christians who lived in County Waterford. She founded a school and convent at Killeedy (Cille Ide) which still bears her name near Newcastle West in Co. Limerick. A holy well still marks the site of her church.

When she decided to settle in Killeedy, a local chieftain offered her a grant of land for the support of the convent. Saint Ita accepted four icons, which she cultivated. The convent became known as a training ground for young boys, many of whom became famous churchmen. She received Saint Brendan the Voyager (May 16) when he was only a year old, and kept him until he was six. She also cared for her nephew Saint Mochaemhoch (March 13) in his infancy.

### A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**G**OD, OUR GOD: By your merciful goodness, your grace shapes your image in us so that we reflect your divine glory in spite of all that we do to soil it. In spite of the abyss that separates our reality from yours, we seek to be united with you in this world as in the next. Give us the spiritual tools to do our share of the work in reflecting you, that our way of life will be attractive to others and lead them to turn to you with greater lasting interest and desire.

For you are a God of beauty, goodness, and truth, and for this we praise you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Many people sought her spiritual counsels, and she also seems to have practiced medicine to some degree. Her life was spent in repentance and asceticism.

Saint Ita once told Saint Brendan that the three things most displeasing to God are: A face that hates mankind, a will that clings to the love of evil, and placing one’s entire trust in riches (Compare Proverbs 6:16-19).

The three things most pleasing to God are: The firm belief of a pure heart in God, the simple religious life, and liberality with charity.

Saint Ita fell asleep in the Lord in 570. Her name is a popular one for Irish girls.



## HE IS THE FIRSTBORN OF CREATION

**T**HIS is the twenty-eighth Sunday after Pentecost. The Epistle Lesson is from St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians 1:12-18. This reading highlights powerful themes present in the Mystery of our Lord's Incarnation, the coming of Emmanuel (which means: "God-with-us"). He comes to be Light in a darkened world.

The selected verses have two distinctive parts. Verses 12-14 conclude a prayer that St. Paul is offering for the Colossian community. Remember, Colossæ was a community composed largely of Gentile converts, but also with a substantial Jewish component. Some of them were falling under the influence of gnostic teachers — what today we might call "new age" thinkers. He wanted to remind the Colossian Christians of the preëminence of Christ, as well as the great grace that had been offered them through Him.

"Give thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light" (v. 12). St. Paul is making a subtle reference to the Christian status of now being a priest through Jesus Christ, the High Priest. Through baptism we share in Jesus' priesthood. This is the priesthood of all believers. We also share in the priestly inheritance. Each tribe of the children of Israel had an inheritance of land. The Levites, that is the priestly tribe, were given no land. Their inheritance came from God directly. They shared a portion of the sacrifices that were offered to God by all the people of Israel. This was their inheritance. St. Paul is saying this is now the Christian inheritance.

For "He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins" (v. 13-14). God has saved us from the dark powers of this world and brought us into the safe place that is His kingdom. St. Paul uses a phrase here unique to himself: "the kingdom of his beloved Son." In the rest of the Scrip-

tures the Kingdom that is spoke of as either the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of Heaven. The image that St. Paul gives us in his unique phrase is of a Kingdom in the making. God has entrusted it to "His beloved Son" who will nurture it and perfect it, and then present it back to His Father at the end of time.

The second part of this reading is a great Christological hymn. It speaks of Christ as the center, head, and source of all of creation. Whether it is St. Paul who is the author of this hymn or whether it was already in general use in Colossæ and other Churches is unclear. It most likely formed part of the Baptismal service and perhaps even of the Eucharist. It is rooted in Old Testament wisdom literature — the Books of Job, Proverbs, Sirach, and the Wisdom of Solomon. In Jewish thinking God's Wisdom, Spirit, and Word are closely related. Many elements of the themes present in those Books are used in this hymn as well.

"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation" (v. 15). St. Paul speaks of Christ as the new Adam. Adam was the "image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation." But because Adam failed in fulfilling this great calling, it was necessary that the Christ should come. Jesus, St. Paul reminds the Colossians, is the new Adam, the Christ.

"For in him {that is, Christ} all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers — all things have been created through him and for him" (v. 16). In this phrase St. Paul directly addresses the syncretistic tendencies within the Colossian community. If there are other forces in the world, visible and invisible, not only are these subject to Christ, but even more, he created them and they serve him. He also created us and we should only serve him.

"He himself is before all things, and

in him all things hold together" (v. 17). The phrase "before all things" has a number of meanings, the first of these being Jesus' nature as God's Word; but, it is also a reference to him as the new Adam. St. Paul also tells us that Jesus has preëminence over every other thing in the universe.

"He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything" (v. 18). For St. Paul the "head" is where all things come together and are coordinated. The image is apt. If we can envision the Church as a body, we certainly can understand Christ as our head. He holds all of the members together.

Keep in mind that this is a hymn, poetry. Similar ideas are repeated using other images to reinforce and give texture to the meaning. As both the new Adam and the Christ (the Messiah) "he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything." He both creates and recreates the creation.

There is a strong parallel in these lines of St. Paul with the beginning of St. John's Gospel: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it" (John 1:1-5). Both speak of God's Word and Wisdom coming into the world to save it and us.

We just celebrated the coming of Emmanuel, let us keep room for him in our hearts. Let us allow him to be at the head of our thoughts and actions. Let us too be "first" in and through him.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA