

# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN

FEBRUARY 2, 2020

THE PRESENTATION OF  
OUR LORD IN THE TEMPLE

## 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.

**SOUPER BOWL FUNDRAISER FOR IOCC** will be held **NEXT Sunday**, February 9<sup>TH</sup> by the youth of the parish. See back page of Bulletin for details.

**PITA BAKING.** We're working to rebuild our pita stock after our successful holiday baking sales. There's a **pita baking session Thursday, February 6<sup>TH</sup>, 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).

**FOOD PANTRY.** Help is needed to staff our monthly responsibility at the Orthodox Food Center **next Saturday, February 1<sup>ST</sup>, 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

### GREETERS TEAM 3:

SEAN FAHEY AND MARGARITE LANDRY

### COFFEE HOUR CLEAN-UP:

HELP NEEDED

PICK UP A CUP - LEND A HAND

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



## THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

APOSTOLIC READING: 2 CORINTHIANS 6:16-7:1 ☩ GOSPEL: MATTHEW 15:21-28  
(SUNDAY OF THE CANAANITE WOMAN)

TONE 8 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 11

at St. Spyridon Cathedral. If you can help in this worthwhile ministry, please speak with **Lisa Mielnicki or Nicole Apostola.**

The latest issue of the Archdiocesan quarterly **CREDINȚA / THE FAITH** is available at the candles. **Pick one up and take it home!**

**COFFEE HOUR SPONSORS ARE NEEDED** for the coming weeks. Please speak with Presvytera Maria if you would like to sponsor one.

## HOLY TRINITY NEWS

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 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, Feb 6	Pita Baking, 9AM-NOON
Sat, Feb 8	Youth Souper Bowl Prep, 2PM
Sun, Feb 9	IOCC Souper Bowl Fundraiser Publican & Pharisee. Triodion begins
Week of Feb 9	No Fasting
Sat, Feb 22	Saturday of Souls
Sun, Feb 23	Meatfare Sunday
Sun, March 1	Cheesefare/Forgiveness Sunday
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



**HOLY WONDERWORKERS  
AND UNMERCENARIES  
CYRUS AND JOHN,  
AND THOSE WITH THEM**  
JANUARY 31

**S**aint Cyrus was a noted physician in the city of Alexandria, where he had been born and raised. He was a Christian and he treated the sick without charge, not only curing their bodily afflictions, but also healing their spiritual infirmities. He would say, “Whoever wishes to avoid being ill should refrain from sin, for sin is often the cause of bodily illness.” Preaching the Gospel, the holy physician converted many pagans to Christ. During the persecution by Diocletian (284-305), Saint Cyrus withdrew into Arabia, where he became a monk. He continued to heal people by his prayer, having received from God the gift to heal every sickness.

In the city of Edessa at this time lived the soldier John, a pious Christian. When the persecution started, he went to Jerusalem and there he heard about Saint Cyrus. He began to search for him, going first to Alexandria and then to Arabia. When Saint John finally found

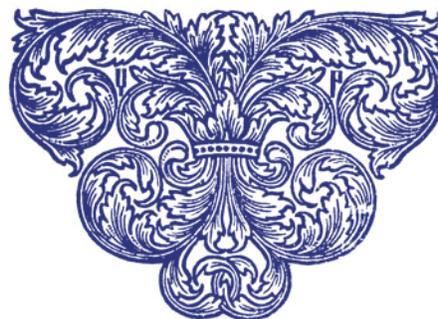
Saint Cyrus, he remained with him and became his faithful follower.

They learned of the arrest of the Christian woman Athanasia and her three young daughters. Theoctiste was fifteen; Theodota, was thirteen; and Eudoxia, was eleven. Saints Cyrus and John hastened to the prison to help them. They were concerned that faced with torture, the women might renounce Christ.

Saints Cyrus and John gave them courage to endure what lay before them. Learning of this, the ruler of the city arrested Saints Cyrus and John, and seeing their steadfast and fearless confession of faith in Christ, he brought Athanasia and her daughters to witness their torture. The tyrant did not refrain from any form of torture against the holy martyrs. The women were not frightened by the sufferings of Saints Cyrus and John, but courageously continued to confess Christ. They were flogged and then beheaded, receiving their crowns of martyrdom.

At the same place they executed the Holy Unmercenary Physicians Cyrus and John. Christians buried their bodies in the church of the holy Evangelist Mark. In the fifth century the relics of Saints Cyrus and John were transferred from Canopis to Manuphin. Later on their relics were transferred to Rome, and from there to Munchen (Munich) (another account is located under June 28).

Saints Cyrus and John are invoked by those who have difficulty in sleeping.



**A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE**

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**L**ORD, TEACHER OF HUMILITY:  
Deflate our puffed up hearts and remove all arrogance from our bearing lest we succumb to thinking we really are something to be proud of. Imbue us with true humility. Grant us victory over all temptations to arrogance and unhealthy pride, and enable us to adhere strictly to what is good, rejecting every hint of perversity and idolatry in our lives. Bring us to worship you alone, in spirit and in truth, that we may attain the depth of life you desire for us.

For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

**NAMEDAYS**

**January 17**

***St. Anthony the Great***

Anthony Theodore Christo  
Scott Anthony Maynard  
Anthony Rucho  
Tony Nicholas Trakadas

**January 18**

***St. Athanasios***

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

# WE ARE GOD'S TEMPLE

**T**HIS is the Sunday of the Canaanite Woman, the seventeenth after Pentecost. Depending on the date of Pascha, this Sunday is often moved out of order to just before the start of the Lenten cycle called the *Triodion*. The prescribed Epistle lesson is taken from Second Corinthians starting at verse 6:16 through 7:1, however, for us to get a better sense of St. Paul's point we should begin at verse 14.

Remember, the Corinthian community was in turmoil. St. Paul is working to get them to reaffirm their Christian identity and commitment. He reminds them that as Christians they are now the new Israel — a people set apart. In verse 14 he uses an unusually strong word. He tells them: “Do not be mismatched with unbelievers.” In the Greek original the word “mismatched” is: *ἑτεροζυγοῦντες*. It literally means “yoking together two different kinds of animals,” like a horse and an ox. It just would not work.

The root word “yoked” is also used to describe the marital relationship, so those listening would have that image in their mind when St. Paul continues: “For what partnership is there between righteousness and lawlessness? Or what fellowship is there between light and darkness? What agreement does Christ have with Beliar? Or what does a believer share with an unbeliever?” (v. 14-15)

But you shouldn't get the wrong impression, St. Paul is not referring to ordinary relations with unbelievers, the kind that we have every day. Scriptural scholars both ancient and modern are in almost universal agreement on this. He is not saying we should isolate ourselves or not engage the world around us. Neither is he referring to marriage itself. But rather, he is saying we should not “marry” ourselves to forces and persons who do not have God in their hearts. Notice the words that he uses:

partnership and fellowship, agreement and sharing. Today we might use an idiom such as, “getting in bed with.” Christians need to remember who they are. They are a people dedicated to God.

St. Paul uses a word for the Devil in verse 15 that is common in Rabbinical commentaries and writing, even though it doesn't appear in the Scriptures. The name “Beliar” is a direct transliteration of the Hebrew and it means “worthlessness.” In theological and philosophical writings, “evil” is often characterized as non-being. Worthlessness is another way of saying the same thing. It isn't that evil is not real. It is. Rather, unlike “good,” it could not exist on its own. Evil is like a leech. It sucks the life out of things. It feeds on the blood of its victim. Think about it. When we do something good it stands on its own merits. When we do something bad, it is almost always at someone's expense.

This serves as an introduction to today's selected reading that begins: “What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God.” St. Paul is urging us to understand our calling. By referring first to physical things (temples and idols), he wants us to imagine the possibilities available to us in God's promise: We are His dwelling place.

He used this same image — that we are God's temple — in his First Letter to them (1 Corinthians 3:16ff). There he was speaking of “building” and “laying foundations.” Here he speaks of what we place in the Temple. Will it be God or some false idol? Will we honor God's Temple, or defile it?

To illustrate his point, St. Paul (in verse 16) freely joins a number of verses from the Old Testament to speak of God's promise. He reminds them that God said: “I will live in them and walk among them,” (cf. Leviticus 26:12) and “I will be their God, and they shall be my people” (cf. Ezekiel 37:27). God's

promise is real. God's word is true.

From the outset God's intention was to make us His dwelling place, for us to be the signs of His presence. Paul is telling the Corinthians that the ritual purity required in the Old Covenant was to prepare us for the kind of moral purity that could permit God to dwell in us. The images St. Paul uses of “mismatched” pairings are meant to help us see how incompatible sin is with the life to which God has called us. “Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you” (v. 17; cf. Isaiah 52:11 and Jeremiah 51:45). The first thing asked of us then was to keep our hands clean. St. Paul tells us that this was so we would learn to keep our hearts clean as well.

If we do this, “the Lord Almighty says: I will be your father and you shall be my sons and daughters” (v. 18). When God created us He created us for higher things. He invites us to become part of His family, to seek the things He seeks: In a word, to be like Him.

“Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and of spirit, making holiness perfect in the fear of God” (v. 7:1). We approach God first with fear and trembling. Out of faith we learn to trust all the things He has said to us, through holy men and women, and in the person of His very own Son. Finally, we learn to love Him as much as He loves us. Every time we celebrate the Holy Eucharist we hear this call to draw near to Him: with fear, with faith and with love.

We are called to be holy, like God is holy. We are called to prepare a place for Him in our hearts. Each of us can be God's Temple, if we invite Him in.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA

## THE PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD IN THE TEMPLE

This feast, celebrated on February 2, is known in the Orthodox Church as The Presentation of Christ in the Temple. Another name for the feast is The Meeting of our Lord. Roman Catholic and Protestant Christians call the feast, The Purification of the Holy Virgin. About 450AD in Jerusalem, people began the custom of holding lighted candles during the Divine Liturgy of this feast day. Therefore, some churches in the West refer to this holy day as Candlemas. The Feast of the Presentation concludes the observances related to the Nativity of Christ, a period that opened on November 15 with the beginning of the Nativity fast.

The story of the Presentation is told in Luke 2:22-29. Mary and Joseph were faithful Jews and observed their religious customs. An important custom was for the couple to take their first-born son to the Temple. The baby was taken to the Temple forty days after his birth and was dedicated to God. In addition, if the parents were wealthy, they were to bring a lamb and a young pigeon or a turtle dove to be offered as a sacrifice at the Temple. The custom provided that if the parents were poor, they were to offer two pigeons or two turtle doves for the sacrifice.

When Jesus was forty days old, Mary and Joseph took Him to the Temple in Jerusalem. They were not wealthy, so they took two turtle doves with them to offer as a sacrifice at the Temple. As they arrived at the Temple, Mary and

Joseph were met by a very old man named Simeon. He was a holy man and was noted as a very intelligent scholar. Simeon spent much time studying about the prophets of Israel. It was during his studies that he learned of the coming of the Messiah. The Jewish people were waiting for the Messiah to come and deliver Israel from their conquerors. From that time on, Simeon spent his time praying for the Messiah to come. He spent many years in prayer. Finally, while Simeon was praying he heard the voice of God. God promised Simeon that

he would not die until he had seen the Messiah.

### SIMEON AND CHRIST

Simeon took Jesus in his arms and praised God. When Simeon saw Jesus, he took the baby in his arms and blessed the Lord and said:

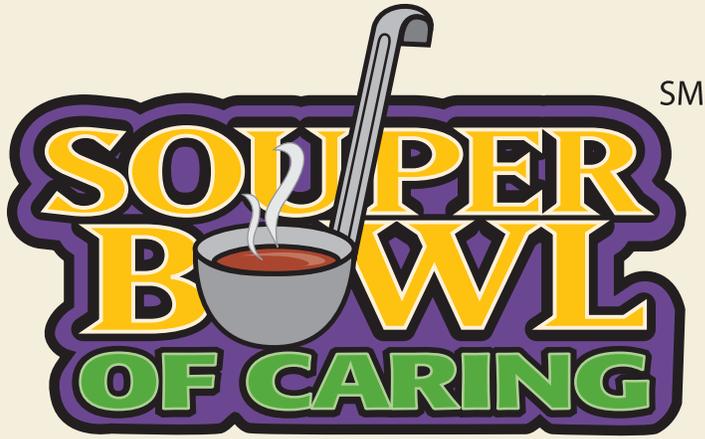
“Lord, now let Your servant go in peace according to Your promise, because my eyes have seen Your salvation which you have prepared before the face of all peoples, a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory to your people Israel.”



Also, in the Temple was Anna the Prophetess. She had been a widow for many years. Anna was about eighty-four years old and spent her time in the Temple worshiping, fasting, and praying. When she saw the Christ Child she praised God and spoke of him to all who were awaiting the Messiah.

After Jesus was presented in the Temple, the family returned to Galilee to the town of Nazareth. The Bible tells us that Jesus grew and became strong, and was filled with wisdom.





SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2020

## Together we can beat hunger.

Help feed the hungry by collecting nonperishables for a local food bank, and collect money for IOCC to support our work around the globe. Together we can turn the biggest weekend in football into a super day of giving!

Learn more at  
[iocc.org/souperbowl](http://iocc.org/souperbowl)



INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES  
P.O. Box 17398 | Baltimore, MD 21297-0429 | Toll-Free: 877.803.4622

## ATTENTION ALL YOUNG PEOPLE!

We are planning a "soup making" day at St Nicholas on Saturday, February 8<sup>TH</sup> from 2:00 PM - 6:00 PM. We will be prepping the soup that Saturday to serve Sunday, February 9<sup>TH</sup> during coffee hour to raise money for IOCC.

After prepping the soup and cleaning up, we will celebrate Vespers followed by pizza dinner for the kids.

This event will be for third graders and older. We're looking forward to having all the kids together. Please tell Valarie Stamoulis if you'll be able to make it.

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