

## **News from St. Nick's**

**Sunday, November 28, 2021**

**The Thirtieth Sunday after Pentecost**

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**Apostolic Reading: Colossians 3:12-16**

**Gospel: Luke 18:18-27**

**(The Rich Ruler & Keeping the Commandments)**

**Tone 6 • Resurrection Gospel 1**

➔ **For Live Streaming Link, [click here](#)**

**[\(Click here for a PDF version of this week's news\)](#)**

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**WE ARE IN THE NATIVITY FAST.** Let us use this time to withdraw from the noise of the "Christmas Season," in order to reflect on the great mystery of Emmanuel: God-with-us!

**THE PATRONAL FEAST OF OUR PARISH HONORING ST. NICHOLAS** will be observed with **Great Vespers on Sunday, December 5th** at 6:00 pm, and **Divine Liturgy on Monday, December 6th** at 10:00 am. **Please mark your calendars and come and celebrate this beautiful feast!**

**FOOD PANTRY THIS COMING SATURDAY.** Help is needed to staff our monthly responsibility at the Orthodox Food Center, **this coming Saturday, December 4th from 9 am - noon.** It is a great blessing to help those who could use the help. So, if you're open to sharing a small part of your Saturday morning, please e-mail Nicole Apostola at [nicole.apostola@gmail.com](mailto:nicole.apostola@gmail.com). She can give you more details. You'll see what a difference it makes.

**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. This year, **our Parish is responsible for providing 15 of these gifts.** You will be asked to purchase and wrap the gift, and bring it to the Church, Sunday, December 12th. **Eleanor Sedares** (508-753-3106) and **Deb Sedares** ([dsedares@pinehills.com](mailto:dsedares@pinehills.com)) are coordinating this effort for our parish. There is a sign up sheet at the entrance to the church if you would like to select a gift to purchase. **Thank you and God bless you!**

**LAST SUNDAY WAS IOCC SUNDAY — A Day of Sharing.** 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. Our **Metropolitan Nicolae** is the IOCC liaison to the Assembly of Bishops. Download and read his IOCC Sunday letter by [clicking here](#). To **donate** go to the website: [www.iocc.org](http://www.iocc.org), or call: (877) 803 IOCC (4622).

**WE OBSERVE A MEMORIAL TODAY** for the servant of God **Ernestine (Anastasia) Rucho** fallen asleep one year. **May our Lord rest her soul among the just!**

**The Town of Shrewsbury has revised its MASKING ORDER.** Wearing masks is required in all indoor spaces, including Churches. We are now asking that all persons attending the Divine Services wear masks until order is lifted.

### **COMMUNITY NEWS**

**ALL THINGS ORTHODOX** is a weekly show hosted by Fr. Christopher Stamas of St. Spyridon Cathedral. Fr. Chris interviews people active in the life of the Church on questions of faith and action. It is aired on the **Worcester Cable channel 194** on **Mondays** at 7 pm, **Saturdays** at 8 pm and **Sundays** at 9 pm. Also look for it on the Cable website: [wccatv.com](http://wccatv.com), or the **Worcester TV** Roku app.

### **HOLY TRINITY NEWS**

## **HOLY TRINITY**

- Has been awarded a 4-star ranking by CMS
- Specializes in short-term rehabilitation with the goal of getting residents back to the community as quickly as possible.
- Is committed to providing exceptional care in a patient-centered environment. Whether residents are there for a short or long-term stay, all aspects of care are focused on meeting the individual's recovery goals.

**LONG TERM CARE.** Holy Trinity offers long-term care and end-of-life services. Knowledgeable and compassionate care is provided for long-term residents with chronic illnesses, dementia and other conditions. Residents are assisted to achieve as much independence as possible while enjoying the highest quality of life. Compassionate and dignified end-of-life services are also provided in a comforting, supportive environment.

**SUB-ACUTE TRANSITIONAL CARE.** Holy Trinity provides caring, compassionate, and skilled care in a nurturing environment to patients needing additional recovery time after a hospitalization, with staff experienced in caring for even the most serious health conditions and diagnoses. Interdisciplinary care plans play a vital role in ensuring that residents' physical, emotional and spiritual needs are met and that rehabilitation goals are attained.

We specialize in caring for patients with cardiovascular disease, neurological conditions, such as stroke, and post-surgical needs.

**STAY CONNECTED.** Be sure to like our [Facebook page](#) for frequent updates and photos.

You can now find us at [www.holytrinityrehab.org](http://www.holytrinityrehab.org)!

## **Orthodox Links**

[Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas](#)  
[Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North and Central America](#) (Assembly of Bishops)  
[International Orthodox Christian Charities](#) (IOCC)  
[Orthodox Christian Mission Center](#) (OCMC)  
[Orthodox Christian Radio Network](#) (OCN)  
[Council of Eastern Orthodox Churches of Central Mass.](#) (CEOC)

## **A Prayer of Fr. Laurence**

### **Let us pray to the Lord**

**Blest be this morning for the joy it affords us** to stand before you once more, O Lord and lover of all mankind! We give thanks to you, not only for another day, but especially for the wondrous truth that we belong to your Christ, that we are anointed and guaranteed as his. How grateful we are to you, O eternal Father, for it is you who have set your seal on us and sent us your Holy Spirit to dwell in our hearts as a pledge of what is yet to come. As we celebrate this festival of thanksgiving, enable us to love you with all our strength and to offer you this reasonable worship, mindful of the gift of your Christ and our unity in him.

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

## **And, Be Thankful**

**This 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

## **DATES TO REMEMBER**

Mon, Nov 15	Christmas Lent Began
Sat, Dec 4	Staff Orthodox Food Pantry, 9am-noon
Sun, Dec 5	Great Vespers for St. Nicholas, 6pm
Mon, Dec 6	St. Nicholas Feast—Liturgy, 10am; Matins 9am
Thurs, Dec 16	Parish Council, 7pm
Fri, Dec 17	Mustard Seed Meal
Sun, Dec 19	Children's Christmas Program

Sat, Dec 25 Nativity of the Lord

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[www.StNicholasChurch.org](http://www.StNicholasChurch.org)  
*Sunday Services: Matins at 9:00 am and Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am*