

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN OCTOBER 18, 2009

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

This Sunday we invite you to attend a **Parish Luncheon** following Liturgy. The menu will be roast chicken, oven roasted potatoes and glazed carrots served family style. The cost will be \$15.00 for Adults and \$5.00 for children 12 and under. To make a reservation, call Eleanor Sedares at 508-753-3106 or e-mail Deb Sedares

A few last minute details for the Luncheon:

- **Volunteers** are needed to help prepare and serve the meal.
- Donations of **baked goods** (cakes, cupcakes, cookies, etc) for the dessert table are requested.
- We welcome **donations** to help underwrite the cost of the meal.
- All proceeds will benefit St. Nicholas.

60th Anniversary and Raffle "Kick-Off!" After Liturgy there will be two brief presentations, one about plans for the upcoming anniversary feastday banquet on Sunday, December 6th, and we'll hear about what each of us must do to ensure the success of this critical fundraiser for our Church, the annual raffle.

We want to **thank** folks who helped to prepare the food and serve the visitors to the **Mustard Seed on Friday night**. The Mustard Seed is a Catholic Work-



THE TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (LUKE 7:11-16)
THE RAISING OF THE SON OF THE WIDOW OF NAÏN
TONE 2 — RESURRECTION GOSPEL 8 — THE EVANGELIST LUKE

er home providing dinner to those in need each day. Our next scheduled date to assist them in that effort will be **Friday, December 18th**. Please contact or e-mail Fr. Nick if you would like to get involved with that ministry.

We will hold a **Special General Assembly** on Sunday, October 25, 2009 immediately following Divine Liturgy. The purpose of the meeting is to provide an update to the parish concerning the financial condition of the parish and to present a proposal obtained from Commerce Bank for refinancing of the current church mortgage. We will be requesting a vote from the General Assembly to authorize the officers of the Parish Council to undertake the refinancing. Please plan on attending this important meeting.

We are gearing-up for the sale of our wonderful Pastry Platters over the coming months. We have created an "e-flier" with colored pictures of our platters that we ask you to send to your friends and family. They could place orders with you, or use the

contacts on the flier directly. Please request this flier by **e-mailing: pastry@stnicholaschurch.org** and we will forward it to you.

It's that time again! A **pita dough making session** is scheduled for **Saturday, October 31, at 9 AM** here at the Church. Please let **Chris Toda** know if you can attend so she can ensure that we have adequate help.

We share the joy of **Nicholas and Chrysanthi Charalambides** in announcing the engagement of their son, **Constantin "Dino" to Stephanie "Nia" Gianulis**, daughter of **Rev. Fr. Milton and Presbyteria Connie Gian-**

DATES TO REMEMBER

- Sun, Oct 18 Parish Luncheon
- Sun, Oct 25 Special General Assembly
- Sat, Oct 31 Pita Dough Making, 9:00 am
- Sat, Nov 7 Staff Orthodox Food Pantry
- Sat, Nov 21 Harvest Bake Sale and Luncheon
E-Recycling Day
- Sun, Nov 22 Parish Thanksgiving Luncheon
- Sat/Sun Dec 5-6 60th Anniversary
Feastday Celebration
- Fri, Dec 18 Mustard Seed Meal

USHERS TEAM 4:
DEAN VALORAS & EVAN SPARAGES
ALTAR TEAM A

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas

ulis. "The prayers of parents make firm the foundation of households!" May God grant them all many, many years!

LOOKING AHEAD

The "Fall Cleaning E-Waste Recycling Day" will be held in conjunction with our **Thanksgiving Bake Sale and Luncheon on Saturday, November 21st from 9-3 here at the Church.** In one day, you can get rid of unwanted electronic appliances at a minimal cost and protect the environment, purchase our wonderful pitas and pastries for Thanksgiving, and have lunch while you're there too! Fliers are on the tables in coffee hour with all of the details.

COMMUNITY NEWS

St. Spyridon Cathedral is hosting a Basketball Clinic for all children on **Saturday, October 24**, at Becker College, Leicester Campus. The schedule is as follows: Elementary Grades 4 & 5th, 9am — Middle School Grades 6-8, 9am — High School Grades 9-12, Noon. The Registration Fee is \$10 (Includes a t-shirt!) Beginners in all brackets will learn and improve their skills. A waiver notice must be signed by parents. To register, please contact George Leasca at 508-751-5654

St. Mary's Albanian Orthodox Church is sponsoring a **Costume Party and Dance on Friday Night, October 30th.** They will have a DJ, food, drinks etc. It is not a "Halloween" Party, but a fun night so they young people (ages 13-17) can get to meet one another. The party is for the members of our Orthodox parishes (please, not for "friends" outside of our communities). If interested, please see Fr. Nick or Tim.

The **Saint Spyridon Women's Philoptochos Society** cordially invites you to attend "**An Array of Extraordinary Tables**" on **Sunday, November 8th**, to benefit the many missions of the

Philoptochos Society. Table viewing at 12:30 pm, Luncheon at 1:30 pm. Donation: \$25.00

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

The **Holy Trinity Activities and Volunteer Department** provides many fun activities and meaningful moments for our residents. *Please come and join our volunteer team!* The residents truly appreciate your time and company. Volunteering at our facility is a deeply rewarding Christian experience. If interested, please contact: Catherine E. Sabatini at 508-852-1000 or e-mail: csabatini@htnr.net

Holy Trinity Hospice "Transitions": A Grief and Healing Support Group meets every other Wednesday from 6-7:30pm. It is free and open to the public. Light refreshments served. It is held at Holy Trinity Hospice, at Washburn House, 1183 Main Street, Worcester, MA. For more info and to pre-register, e-mail David Day or call at 508-791-8200.

A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

WE praise your wondrous greatness, Lord God, though it is beyond our powers to understand or perceive as it really is! And humbled by the magnificence of all your works, we realize that our feeble efforts to praise and thank you amount to nothing. Still, do not be displeased with us. Rather, remove all discouragement from us, and enable us to be truly humble, giving up on ourselves to depend solely on you.

For you are one to have mercy on us and save us, o God, and we give you glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages, amen.

NAMEDAYS

October 13

St. Edward the Confessor

Brian Edward Miner

October 18

The Holy Apostle and Evangelist Luke

Luke Alexander Demma

Fr. Luke Veronis

October 20

The Great-martyr Artemius of Antioch

Artemis Gouvelis

October 26

The Holy Great-martyr Dimitrios of Thessalonika

Dimitri Soterios Apostola

Dhimitra Belica

Dimitri Daniel Christo

James L. Christo

James Demake

Dhimitri Disho

Dimitraq Lolo

Dimitraqi Lolo

James Seferi

James Evan Stamoulis

James Trakadas

LISTEN TO THE WEEKLY NATIONAL ORTHODOX RADIO BROADCAST "COME RECEIVE THE LIGHT"

BY WEB OR PODCAST: WWW.RECEIVE.ORG

PAUL, THE APOSTLE TO THE GENTILES

THE Epistle lesson this week resumes our study and reading of St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians (1:11-19). St. Paul had founded this community. After he left Galatia, a group of Jewish Christians (Judaizers) came there and began to undermine what St. Paul had been teaching by shaking the confidence that the members of the Church there had in his 'apostleship.' St. Paul needs to ground the authenticity of his direct experience of our Lord Jesus Christ in order to defend what he has taught them.

In the very first verse of this Letter St. Paul lays out the basis of his authority: "Paul an apostle—not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead." (Galatians 1:1) After he tells the Galatians his deep concern about the things he has heard concerning them, he takes up in greater detail how exactly it was that God had called him.

"For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not man's. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ." (v. 11-12) Sometimes we read over these words quickly, not stopping to think about what he is actually saying. He is telling us that all his knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ came to him directly through revelation or even revelations! This is the meaning of the words "I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it." He didn't learn about Jesus in the way we have, by reading, listening, and worshiping. Jesus came to him directly.

In order to drive home the point he reminds them of the details of his conversion. "For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it; and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fa-

thers." (v. 13-14) Paul, or Saul as he was known before his conversion, terrorized the early Christians. Saul was present at the stoning of St. Stephen (Acts 8:1). He was "was ravaging the church, and entering house after house; he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison." (Acts 8:3) He received a commission from the authorities in Jerusalem to go to Damascus and root out Christians there and bring them back to Jerusalem for trial and imprisonment (Acts 9:1). He was "extremely zealous."

It was on his way to Damascus that the Lord appeared to him in a vision of blinding light. (Read the entire account of the vision and his conversion in Acts 9:3-31.) It is this experience that Paul reminds the Galatians of when he says, "he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles." (v. 15-16) St. Paul received a vision and a commission.

In order to emphasize both the power and the uniqueness of his vision, he says that God the Father was pleased to reveal his Son *in* me." St. John Chrysostom hones in on this preposition "in." He says, why does he say, "to reveal His Son in me," and not "to me?" It is to signify, that he had not only been instructed in the faith by words, but that he was richly endowed with the Spirit; that the revelation had enlightened his whole soul, and that he had Christ speaking within him. He experienced the Lord directly, and he was told specifically what he was to do: preach and convert the Gentiles.

In order to emphasize the fullness of this revelation he tells them, "I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus." (v. 16-17) By "flesh and blood" he is referring to the other Apostles, but in a deeper sense he

means that he wasn't taught by them.

After this experience he went into Arabia. There is a difference of opinion among Biblical scholars as to what he was doing in Arabia (Arabia here means the desert of eastern and south-eastern Syria). Some believe that he went into the desert to pray and reflect on what God had called him to. St. John Chrysostom is of the opinion that he went to preach to the tribes there; using this as an opportunity to sharpen his message. Both of these views are possible. What we do know is that when he came back to Damascus he was a powerful witness to the Gospel.

It might be helpful to remind ourselves what the word "Gospel" means. The Greek word is "Evangelion" (εὐαγγέλιον), and it literally means: "Good News." It was oftentimes associated with the accession to the throne of a new emperor, or the birth of an heir. To use this word about Jesus Christ was already to make a claim as to whom He was.

"Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days," St. Paul tells them. "But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother." (v. 18-19) He wants to show the Galatians that he is of one mind with the others Apostles; he respects them as older brothers and friends. He goes to "visit" Peter and spent two weeks with him. He shows his respect to James, the Lord's brother, who is clearly in charge of the Jerusalem Church; much beloved and held in high-regard by all, Christians and Jews.

In these few verses we catch a glimpse into the man who God called to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, to us. We see how God was preparing him for this even before he was born. We stand in awe of what God accomplished through him. And, we are humbled by the deep sacrifices he suffered for the sake of the Gospel.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA