

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN APRIL 18, 2010

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

We would like to **thank all those who prepared the food and served the visitors at the Mustard Seed** on Friday, April 16th. The Mustard Seed is a Catholic Worker home providing dinner to about 150 people in need each day. We continue to invite donations to cover the \$250 cost of providing that meal.

Similarly we want to **thank Tim and those with him who began the Spring Yard Clean-up** here at the Church on Saturday. And we'd like to **thank the ladies led by Christine Masterjohn who have been volunteering to clean the Church, hall, and the kitchen.** These are very important ways in which we can contribute to the beauty of God's House.

During Coffee Hour today **Catherine Haddad and David Day from Holy Trinity Hospice** will be available to answer questions about this new program available to our community. They will be available to answer your questions about the hospice program including who qualifies and how hospice can benefit both the patient and family. Handouts about the program will be available, but the most importantly you will be able to meet the persons responsible for this wonderful program.

USHER TEAM 2:
LISA MIELNICKI & JIM CHRISTO
ALTAR TEAM B



THE MYRRH BEARING WOMEN THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PASCHA

EPISTLE: ACTS 6:1-7

GOSPEL: MARK 15:43-16:8

TONE 2 - MATINS GOSPEL 4

Our Church is hosting a Parish Spring Dance, on Saturday, April 24, from 7pm - 10pm here at the Church Hall. The cost is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children, and a family price of \$25. Door prizes and snacks included. Cash Bar - Ethnic & Popular Music will be spun by our own D.J. Join us for a fun evening of music, dancing and fellowship. **Bring a friend!!**

We want to know about any **High School or College graduates in our Parish this year**, so they can be recognized at the Parish Picnic on Sunday, June 13th. If you know of a soon-to-be graduate, please inform Fr. Nick or Tim Rucho.

If you have not already done so, we ask you to consider your **Stewardship Pledge** offering

prayerfully, fill out the pledge form, and submit it today. The 2010 Stewardship Pledge Form and other materials are available at the candle stand. For more information, contact Deb Sedares or Fr. Nick.

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

Hospice Volunteers Needed: Holy Trinity Hospice at Washburn House, 1183 Main Street in Worcester is seeking compassionate men and women from all walks of life who are ready to make a commitment and a positive difference to individuals and families coping with terminal illness. A comprehensive training will begin in May. You will receive ongoing support and education, and a schedule that fits your needs. **For more information please call David Day** at 508-791-8200 or email: davidday@holyltrinityhospice.org

An information session about the services provided through **Holy Trinity Hospice** will be held in the Conference Room at Holy Trinity Nursing Center (300 Barber Ave, Worcester) on Thursday, April 22 at two times: 3:30 - 4:30 or 6:30 - 7:30. This information session will help you learn more about Hospice, including who qualifies and how Hospice can benefit both the patient and family. **Everyone is welcome to attend.**

SAVE THE DATE! Saturday, May 15th - The annual **Louise Peters Me-**

DATES TO REMEMBER

Sat, April 24 Spring Dance
Sunday May 9 Mother's Day Luncheon
Sunday, May 23 Pentecost
Monday, May 31 Memorial Day/Apostles Fast Begins
Sunday, June 13 Parish Picnic
Saturday, June 19 Electronic Recycle Day

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas

A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

O HOLY MASTER! We who have been marked with the sign of your cross glorify your incarnation, for we know that you are both mortal and immortal, God and man, the only Son of the Father. Even though you suffered in the flesh to accomplish your plan to save us, you are still inseparably one of the Holy Trinity. Therefore, O Saviour, strengthen us in our faith, and, in your mercy, watch over your people and save them, that we may all adore your resurrection, O you who dispense life, light, and understanding to all.

For you are indeed our God, and we give you glory, together with your eternal Father and your all-holy, good, and life-giving Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.



morial Walk-A-Thon at Holy Trinity begins at 10:00am -- Great prizes! Pick up a pledge sheet or download one at www.htnr.net. **For more information, call Serena** at 508-752-4628 or shields@htnr.net.

The **General Assembly** of the Eastern Orthodox Management Corp.— **Holy Trinity Nursing & Rehab Center and Holy Trinity Hospice** — will take place on **Tuesday, May 18th at 7:00pm at Holy Trinity**. The purpose of the meeting is to review our organization's performance for last year, both financial, operational, and our progress with new initiatives. Ethnic hors d'œuvres will be served! We need 10 people for our parish delegation, and interested candidates are needed to serve on the Board of Directors. For more information, please speak with Fr. Nick or Deb Sedares

COMMUNITY NEWS

St. George Cathedral (30 Anna St, Worcester) will be celebrating **the Feast of St. George. Vespers** and the blessing of the 5 loaves will be held on **Thursday, April 22nd, at 6 pm**. Divine Liturgy for the Feast will be held on **Friday, April 23rd at 9:30 am**. They invite all of the Orthodox community to share this special celebration with them.

Introducing a Sensory Experience brought to you by the **Shrewsbury Fragrant Garden for the Blind and Visually Impaired – Friday, April 30th, 6:30pm-8:30pm** at Veteran's Inc., 59 South St., Shrewsbury – Donation: \$10 per person which includes hors d'œuvres, cash bar, and raffle. For tickets, contact: ShrewsburyGarden@gmail.com

NAMEDAYS

April 21

The Holy Martyr Alexandra the Queen

Alexandra Dymek
Alexis George
Alexandra Mentis
Sandra Nedelescu
Alexandra Valoras

April 23

The Holy Great-martyr George the Wonderworker

George Belba
George M. Bourisk
George Demake
Gjergji Disho
Dr. George Elias
Gheorghe O. Galica
George Grniet
George Krassopoulos
George Photakis
George Soter
George Symock
George Tanacea
George Tonna
George James Trakadas

April 25

The Holy Apostle and Evangelist Mark

Rev. Fr. Mark Doku
Mark Soter
Mark Stamoulis

April 30

The Holy Apostle James, brother of John the Evangelist

James Collins

THE DEACONATE IN CHRIST

THIS is the third week of Pascha. It is when we remember the Myrrh-bearing women, as well as Nikodimos and Joseph of Arimathea. This Sunday's reading from the Apostolic writings is from Acts 6:1-7. In this passage we learn something about the beginnings of Church structure and order.

The early Christian community in Jerusalem was growing by leaps and bounds. It was becoming too large to be administered on an ad hoc basis by the Apostles, and tensions began to surface. In the Scripture we read: "Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists murmured against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. And the twelve summoned the body of the disciples and said, 'It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brethren, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.'" (Acts 6:1-4)

There are three important points raised in these verses. The first is that there are "Hellenists" who are complaining that their widows are being neglected. The second is that there is a hierarchy of gifts and responsibilities; should the Apostles give up preaching to serve the tables? (The 'table' referred to here is the dinner table not the Altar table.) The third is that in order to "serve the tables" you need to be a person of "good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom."

Let's begin with the "Hellenists." These are not Greeks, per se, but Jews from outside Palestine who spoke Greek as their first language. Given that they were feeling neglected in the daily distribution, it is likely that they spoke little if any Aramaic. It is also in-

teresting to note that the widows were not receiving 'alms.' Rather, they received from the "daily distribution." This early community held things in common (Act 2:44). From what they had, they distributed to all the members of the community according to need.

Let's move to the second point. In saying that it wasn't right for the Apostles to give up preaching to serve the tables, they were not saying that serving tables was beneath them; only that it was an inappropriate use of their time. They had a different responsibility, namely, prayer and ministry of the word (v. 4). Their prayers and preaching encouraged and strengthened this early community. Their proposal to appoint deacons is intended to ensure that the distribution was being properly administered.

Here's the third point. We learn from this passage both the way leadership in the Church is chosen, as well as the qualifications. The Apostles asked the brethren to pick out from among the community persons of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom they might appoint to this duty (v. 3). The Apostles didn't simply name people to the positions; they asked the people themselves to choose persons who were qualified and worthy, both administratively and spiritually. The Apostles didn't relinquish their overall responsibility for the administration of the Church, but they did delegate and empower qualified persons with specific tasks. After the decision had been made, the Apostles prayed over these seven men and laid their hands on them. This is what ordination is: identifying persons who are both spiritually and physically up to the task. Then, God's Grace is prayed for to "complete that which is lacking" in the person ordained.

It is unfortunate that today we un-

derstand the role of "deacons" as almost exclusively liturgical. The root meaning of the word deacon is "to minister." In the Liturgy when we pray for "the deaconate in Christ," the reference is not primarily to the ordained deaconate, but more importantly to what we would call today lay societies and organizations intended for ministry and service.

On the national level, we have living examples of these "deaconates in Christ" in the International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC), and the Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC), as well as many other SCOBA agencies and organizations. Closer to home we have our own Orthodox Food Center — the food pantry — and Holy Trinity Nursing and Rehab Center. Many of us cook and serve meals at the Mustard Seed — a deaconate, if there ever was one. Persons who serve on the parish council and various parish organizations minister to our own community and the whole society around us powerfully and in very real ways. And, so that we don't forget the other important aspect of the Apostolic criterion: in order to be effective, each one who serves in the name of Christ needs to be a person of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom.

Each of us is called to be a deacon, ministering to the members of Christ's Body and to all of the world. We are all called to be persons of good repute, filled with the Spirit and wisdom. We are all called to reach out to those in need, both physically and spiritually, lifting them up in our Lord's name. Let God give us the strength and wisdom to fulfill this call.

Christ is Risen!

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA