

ST. NICHOLAS
WEEKLY BULLETIN
MAY 9, 2010
HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY
THIS WEEK'S NEWS

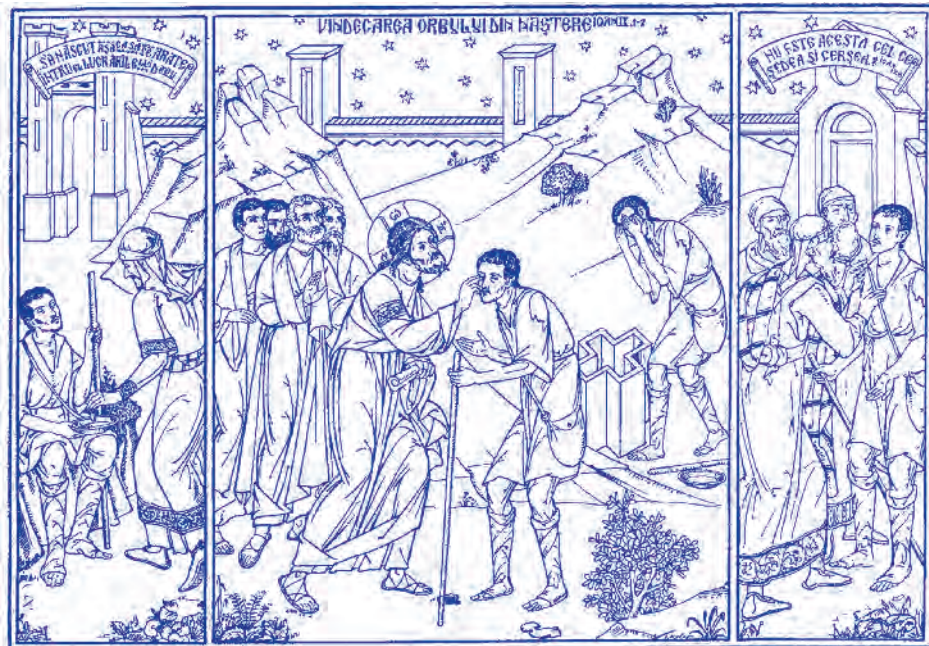
Our community will celebrate the **Feast of the Ascension of our Lord** with our brothers and sisters at St. Mary's Assumption on Salisbury Street. A Vesperal Liturgy will be celebrated on **Wednesday evening, May 12, at 6:30 pm.**

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.

Saturday, May 22, is the Saturday of the Souls celebrated the day before the Feast of Pentecost. Divine Liturgy will be held at 10 am followed by a Memorial Service for the departed. **Please speak with Fr. Nick if you would like to prepare the memorial wheat for that service.**

USHER TEAM 5:
 BRYAN DONABED &
 GEORGE DEMAKE
 ALTAR TEAM A



THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF PASCHA

JESUS HEALS THE MAN BLIND FROM BIRTH
 EPISTLE: ACTS 16:16-34 ⊕ GOSPEL: JOHN 9:1-38
 TONE 5 ⊕ MATINS GOSPEL 8

Today we celebrated a Memorial for **Diana Fitzpatrick** fallen asleep five years. Today's Coffee Hour is sponsored by **Diana's family in her memory. May God rest her among the righteous!**

PLANNING AHEAD

On **Memorial Day, Monday, May 31**, a Trisagion Service for all those fallen asleep in the Lord will be held at **12 noon at the altar in the Orthodox Section of Hope Cemetery**, Worcester. Fr. Nick will be available from 10:00 am prior to the service, to bless individual graves at Hope Cemetery. If you would like to make arrangements to visit a grave in another cemetery, please speak with him.

On **Sunday, June 13th**, we will host a **Parish Picnic** to celebrate **Godparents and Grandparents Sunday**, the end of the Sunday

School Year, and to honor our graduates. The picnic luncheon will be held on the Church grounds after the Divine Liturgy. **Reservations are required**, and must be received by Sunday, June 6th. To make a reservation, speak with Eleanor Sedares during coffee hour, call the Church: 508-845-0088 or e-mail: Fr Nick.

DATES TO REMEMBER

- Sunday, May 9 Mother's Day
- Saturday, May 22 Saturday of the Souls, Liturgy 10 am
- Sunday, May 23 Pentecost
- Monday, May 31 Memorial Day/Apostles Fast Begins
- Saturday, June 12 Picnic Prep, 8 - noon
- Sunday, June 13 Parish Picnic
- Friday, June 18 Mustard Seed Meal
- Saturday, June 19 Electronic Recycle Day/ Car Wash
- Sunday, June 20 Treasurer's Mid Year Update
- Sunday, July 4 No Liturgy at St. Nick's
- Sunday 7/11 - 9/5 Summer Hours, Liturgy 9:30 am
- Friday, July 23 Parish Cookout / Bonfire

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A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas

We will prepare food and serve the visitors at the **Mustard Seed on Friday, June 18th**. The Mustard Seed is a Catholic Worker home providing dinner to about 150 people in need each day. Help is needed during the day to cook and prepare food, and at 5:00 on Friday evening to transport and serve. Please contact Fr. Nick if you can help with this ministry.

Another popular **“E-Waste Recycling Day”** will also be held in conjunction with a car wash **Saturday, June 19th from 9-3** here at the Church. You can get rid of unwanted electronic appliances at a minimal cost and protect the environment too! More details are forthcoming.

On **Sunday, June 20**, there will be a brief mid-year **Treasurer’s Update** immediately following the Divine Liturgy. If you have any particular questions you would like addressed, please speak with **Evan Stamoulis**.

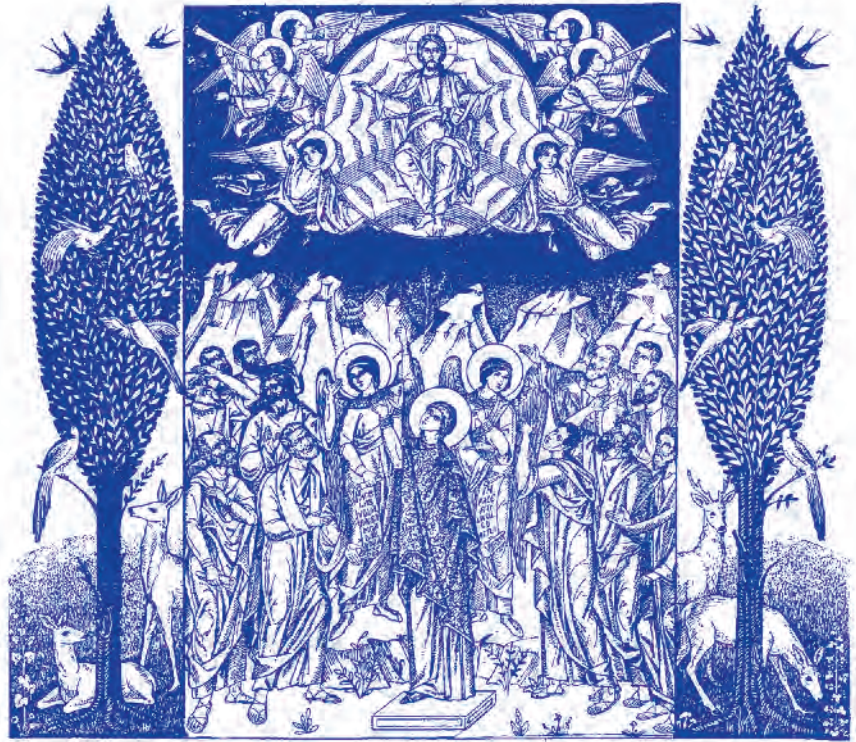
There will be **NO Divine Liturgy at our Church on Sunday, July 4**, because Fr. Nick will be attending the bi-annual Archdiocese Congress in Chicago.

From **Sunday, July 11 through Sunday, September 5** we will be on **“Summer Hours.”** Divine Liturgy will **begin at 9:30 AM, and should be finished by 11:00 AM**. Coffee Hour will also be suspended for these summer weeks, so the faithful crew of coffee-hour workers gets some time off from that responsibility.

Save the Date — On Friday evening, July 23, we will have a Parish cookout, bonfire, and talent show here on the Church grounds.

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

The annual **Louise Peters Memorial Walk-A-Thon** at Holy Trinity begins



at 10:00am on **Saturday, May 15th**— A team from our Church will be walking and seeks your pledges. You may make a pledge to **Elias or Dimitri Christo** in coffee hour, 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

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

COMMUNITY NEWS

Mark your calendars: The **2010 Grecian Festival will be held this year on the weekend of June 4, 5, & 6**. For more information, visit the Grecian Festival web site: www.spyridoncathedral.org/grecianfestival/gfhome.asp



THE WAY OF SALVATION

THIS is the sixth Sunday of Pascha. Today's Gospel lesson is the Lord's healing of the man blind from birth (John 9:1-38). In the reading from Acts (16:16-34) St. Luke tells us of the start of St. Paul's missionary work in Europe. Paul had been visiting the coastal cities of Asia Minor with Silas and Timothy. One night "a vision appeared to Paul ... a man of Macedonia was standing beseeching him and saying, 'Come over to Macedonia and help us.'" (Acts 16:9) And so Paul and Silas sailed to Philippi, a large city in that province.

Today's reading begins with the encounter Paul and Silas had with a slave girl while they were going toward a place outside of Philippi where the Jews usually gathered to pray on the Sabbath. She had a "spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by soothsaying." (v. 16) In the original Greek the phrase a "spirit of divination" is actually a "Pythonic spirit," referring to the snake that the god Apollo was believed to have slain at Delphi. In Apollo's temple at Delphi, a priestess of Apollo called the 'Phythius' would prophesy in the god's name there. So rather than believe this spirit as something benign, we should understand the girl as possessed.

The girl followed Paul and Silas for a number of days crying out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." (v. 17). Finally Paul had reached his limit and "turned and said to the spirit, 'I charge you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.' And it came out that very hour." (v. 18)

St. Paul did this for two reasons. The first was to free this poor girl from the exploitation of both the demon and her masters. The second was because the spirit meant to deceive those people who came to believe in Jesus through the preaching of Paul and Silas. Paul and the other Apostles never drew attention to themselves when they preached. Their goal was to proclaim

salvation in the name of Jesus Christ. The objective of this demon was to gain credibility by correctly saying who and what these Apostles were, only then to later use this gained confidence for evil purposes. Paul knew this and this is the reason he cast out the demon.

We can see Paul's wisdom in what happened next. Her masters, instead of believing her words that Paul and Silas were indeed "servants of the Most High God, who proclaim the way of salvation," immediately seized them and brought them before the local magistrates complaining that, "these men are Jews and they are disturbing our city. They advocate customs which it is not lawful for us Romans to accept or practice." (v. 21-22) A riot began. The magistrates had Paul and Silas flogged and imprisoned.

During the night while Paul and Silas were singing hymns and praying in prison, an earthquake opens the jail doors and loosens the chains binding Paul and the other prisoners. The jailer woke up, thinking that everyone had escaped. He was ready to kill himself, when Paul cried out to stop him. He told him that no one had escaped. The jailer was so moved that he falls down before Paul and Silas and asks how he might be saved. Finally, he and his whole household believed and were all baptized.

There are at least three important lessons in this story. The first is that believing in Jesus Christ and proclaiming him to the world is not always popular. Sometimes it can lead to outright persecution. Paul and Silas were not doing anything wrong, yet they were seized, brought up on false charges, beaten, put in stocks, and put in prison. They were never even given the opportunity to defend themselves.

The second lesson is that when evil things befall us we should accept them without complaint. Paul and Silas were not sitting in the prison bemoaning their fate. They were not complaining

to God: "Why me? I was doing your will! Why didn't you protect me?" Rather, they were singing hymns and praying. We should understand that we grow when we are tested. Having to defend our faith is like exercising — like exercising our soul. It brings growth. We know what happens to a body that sits all day in front of the TV. It gets fat and lethargic. Exercise strengthens. Comfort weakens. Through many of the difficulties we encounter God intends that we should be strengthened.

The third important lesson is that we should not try to gain advantage at the expense of others. Paul and Silas were unjustly imprisoned. They could easily have used the opportunity of the earthquake to escape. The result would have been: the suicide of the jailer, and the orphaning of his family; Paul and Silas would have been seen by many as indeed guilty, even if they managed to save themselves, and their preaching would have been in vain. Instead, by trusting in God and enduring their trials, the jailer and his family were saved, not only physically, but also spiritually. The truth of the Good News they preached spread throughout the whole city, even and especially to the pagans. Most importantly, Jesus was glorified.

I would like to emphasize this last point. We are presently living through a world-wide economic collapse caused by people, many of whom identify themselves as Christians, who thought nothing of taking advantage of opportunities without considering the consequences of their actions on others. We see this same sort of behavior in many different ways each and every day. Sadly, we ourselves often behave the same way. Can we learn from the current catastrophe? Can we be like Paul and Silas? Can we be witnesses to "the way of salvation"? Perhaps, if we can, many others will be saved.

Christ is Risen!

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA



A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

LORD OF HEAVEN AND EARTH, almighty one: You could easily force us to please you, but, instead, you will that we might come to you in total freedom and at our own ease: This evening, we stand before you once again, as we do each day, imploring you to help your unworthy servants. Do not let us be overwhelmed by the diverse and incessant thoughts that come to us. Rather, enable us to grasp the simplicity of which your Son spoke, so that, having persevered on this path, we may delight in the joys of the resurrection at every moment of our lives and forever after.

By the grace and mercy and love for us of your only Son, with whom you are blest, together with your all-holy, good, and life-giving Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

2010 STEWARDSHIP

To date we have **32% participation** in the stewardship program meaning that **30 of the 95 households** have completed their commitment forms. We need 65 more commitment forms to achieve 100% participation.

The current Total Pledge amounts are:

Stewardship: \$23,000.00
MPG/Building Fund: \$12,000.00

WHO IS A FAITHFUL STEWARD OF THE CHURCH?

A faithful steward and member of the Orthodox Christian Church, who can receive or participate as a sponsor in any Sacraments of the church implies that the person:

- Is baptized and christmated an Orthodox Christian
- Comes to Church regularly
- Participates in the Life of the Church
- Participates in Holy Communion regularly
- Is a financial steward of the Church
- Goes to Holy Confession when necessary

NAMEDAYS

May 5

The Great Martyr Irene of Thessalonica

Irena Dorogi
Irene Tsoules

May 9

The Holy Martyr Christopher
Christopher Masterjohn

May 17

The Holy Apostle Andronicos of the Seventy

Androniki Cheverevski
Androniki Demake

May 21

The Holy Equals to the Apostles Constantine and Helen

Constantine Apostol
Elaine Apostola
Konstantin Charalambides
Presvytera Eleni Christakos
Amalia Helene Collins
Ilene Cosmas
Hannah Constance Datz
Elena Galeriu
Elaine Killick
Kostika Lico
Ileana A Nace
Rev. Fr. Dean Paleologos
Constanța Papit
Constantine Pappas
Eleni Polymeros
Elena Prelipcean
Elaine Rocheford
Dina K. Salerno
Eleanor Sedares
Dean Valoras
Elena Marie Zekos

