

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN JUNE 13, 2010

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

Today Sunday, June 13th, after the Divine Liturgy we will host a **Parish Picnic** marking the end of the Sunday School Year. If the weather forecast is accurate, the luncheon will most likely be held inside. To make a reservation, call the Church: 508-845-0088 or e-mail: Fr Nick.

Also, help is needed to prepare for the picnic on Saturday, June 12, from 10 am - Noon. We need people to help with food prep as well as set-up of tables, and chairs. Likewise, help is needed on early **Sunday morning for food prep, and afterwards for clean-up.** Please let Deb Sedares know how you can help.

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.

PLANNING AHEAD

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

ALL USHERS ON DUTY
ALTAR TEAM B



THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

EPISTLE: ROMANS 5:1-10
GOSPEL: MATTHEW 6:22-33
TONE 2, MATINS GOSPEL 3

CELEBRATING GODPARENTS, GRANDPARENTS & GRADUATES

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 9-2** here at the Church. You can get rid of unwanted electronic appliances at a minimal cost and protect the environment too!

In conjunction with the E-Waste Recycling Day, the Youth of the Parish will sponsor a **Car Wash on Saturday, June 19th from 9-2** also here at the Church. Please e-mail Brian Donabed or speak to him in Church to let me know that you're child/children will participate (or if you want to help, as I

could always use a hand managing periodic chaos).

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

Holy Trinity Nursing and Rehabilitation Center and **Holy Trinity Hospice** are Orthodox Charities and rely on your donations to continue their mission of providing the best care possible.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Saturday, June 12 Picnic Prep, 10 - 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

34 GOLD STREET, SHREWSBURY, MA 01545-6238 ♦ VOICE: 508.845.0088 ♦ FAX: 508.845.8850
E-MAIL: FRNICK@STNICHOLASCHURCH.ORG ♦ WEB: WWW.STNICHOLASCHURCH.ORG

A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas

2010 GRADUATES

"He has filled them with the spirit of God, with skill, intelligence, and knowledge in every kind of craft." (Exodus 35:31) We want to acknowledge members of our Church community who are celebrating a graduation and recognize their achievement.

HIGH SCHOOL

Michael Bourisk graduated from St. John's High School and will attend Assumption College.

Ilie Durmillari graduated from Holy Name High School.

Ilya Gjanci graduated from St. Peter Marian High School.

Alex Johnson graduated from St. Mary's High School in Worcester and will attend Assumption College.

Stephanie Kamataris graduated from Shrewsbury High School and will attend Assumption College.

Paul Trotta graduated from Shrewsbury High School and will attend the Isenberg School of Business at UMass Amherst.

COLLEGE

Michael Clem graduated from the University of Massachusetts - Lowell with a degree in Exercise Physiology. He will continue on there to pursue his Doctorate in Physical Therapy.

Hanna Constance Datz graduated from La Salle University as the top student in the Marketing Department and delivered the commencement address at the graduation.

Cristina Elefteria Mazanitis graduated from Boston University.

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Sophia Amyra Apostola graduated from Northeastern University School of Law.

Victor Apostol graduated from Worcester State College with a Masters in Education.

Nicole Maria Mazanitis graduated from Fordham School of Law.

May our loving Lord continue to bless their efforts and grant them a long life, health, prosperity, and many, many years!

A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

OHOLY TRINITY, FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT: As we think of your saints, we see how truly devoted to you these men and women were at all times. Filled with the light of your wisdom, and with no thought for themselves, they were always turned toward others, toward all your creatures. They were friendly to all, compassionate and tender, even-tempered and ready to forgive everyone without exception. Nothing could undo their peace and inner calm, nor could anger or fear or any emotion gain control over them. Free of all vain expectations, they remained intent only on reaching you. Always animated by a deep love for you, they worked solely for your glory in purity of heart. We beseech you to keep the image of their holiness alive in our minds and hearts, so that we, too, may ever live to please you.

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

Did you Know? If you are a Fallon Community Health Plan member, you are able to go to Holy Trinity for your rehabilitation if you let the case manager know as soon as possible that you are a member of the Orthodox Community. They will make the referral to Holy Trinity, and we will do the rest!

COMMUNITY NEWS

St. Michael's Orthodox Christian Church in Southbridge invites you to attend its **Annual Church Picnic** - One of the Oldest & Best in Town! - On **Sunday, July 18th** beginning at 12 Noon. Specialties will include shish-ke-bab cooked to perfection and home-made Romanian pastries. Live music, Free Admission ~ Rain or Shine



NAMEDAYS

June 8

The Holy Martyr Kalliopi

Kaliopi Demma

June 27

The Holy Myrrh-bearer Joanna

Joanne V. Prizio

June 29

The Holy Apostles Peter and Paul

Patrick Disho

Petraq Dragoti

Paul Dymek

Petrika Lolo

Kenneth Paul Maynard

Peter Mountzouris

Rev. Fr. Peter Michael Preble

Paul Soter

Peter Toda

Peter Demetri Tsongalis

Paul Zekos

Peter Zekos

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

BY WEB OR PODCAST: WWW.RECEIVE.ORG

WOULD WE DIE FOR OUR ENEMY?

THIS third Sunday after Pentecost we continue reading from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans (5:1-10). In this passage St. Paul explains how faith in our Lord Jesus Christ does not simply restore our relationship with God; it transforms it. We are able to stand before our heavenly Father as a true, if albeit adopted, child of God. He calls this ability to stand before God "justification." The way St. Paul uses the word "justification" is not unlike the way in which the legal term "standing" is used today in our judicial system. To have legal "standing" means that you have a right to be in court; you have a place there. When St. Paul says, "we are justified by faith," (v. 5:1) he means that we can stand before God because we now belong there; we have a right to be there.

In the previous chapter, St. Paul provides the example of the Righteous Abraham. "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." (v. 4:3) Even though Abraham and Sarah were very old, God promised him that he would be the father of many nations. Abraham believed Him. His faith in God made him righteous.

St. Paul continues this line of thought when he tells us that, "since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God." (v. 5:1-2) So, it is because of our faith that we have peace with God. Conversely, it was, or is, because of our sin and lack of faith—our disobedience—that we lose this peace. It is restored to us through Jesus. Through him, as St. Paul says, we now have access to the grace that allows us to stand before God. This is the source of our hope.

However, St. Paul wants to direct us to an understanding of hope that is

more profound and consists of not simply rejoicing in hope, but even rejoicing in all of the difficulties that come our way. He says, "More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings." (v. 3) The gift that God offers us when we believe Him—when we trust Him—is hope that will also comfort us in the very real trials of this life. We rejoice in God not only for the good things given us, but even during the sufferings that life holds for us.

He sets before us a progression, a pattern, of spiritual growth. He says that, "suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope." (v. 3-4) Our hope isn't abstract; it is grounded in the very real trust that we place in God during the most difficult times of our lives.

Translation can sometimes be an uncertain business, and we have an example in this verse. The word St. Paul uses here is *ὑπομονή*, which we translate it into English as endurance or patience. The original word is actually both of these concepts together. What he speaks of is a "constant patient endurance;" a constancy which forms and develops a tried and tested character under tribulation. He tells us this is the kind of character that begets hope. It takes away fear of what the future may bring.

After describing what we need to do, what our part in this relationship is, St. Paul returns to God's initiative. He says that "hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us." (v. 5) He doesn't say that the Holy Spirit has been given to us stingily, as though measured out. Rather, God's love has been "poured" into our hearts. This is an image of overflowing grace; an abundance of love. God is not holding back. He is overwhelming us with His presence.

In order to prove his point, St. Paul gives us the ultimate example. "While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly." (v. 6) We are the ungodly. God did not wait for us to turn and repent. He did not wait for our expression of faith. He proved his faithfulness and love for us "while we were yet sinners." (v. 8)

Listen to St. Paul's argument: "Why, one will hardly die for a righteous man—though perhaps for a good man one will dare even to die. But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." (v. 7-8). I have often reflected on this verse, taking St. Paul's words very seriously. Would I give up my life even for a good person? Could I contemplate sacrificing myself for someone who was my enemy? But, this is what He who we call our Lord, God and Savior did for us, His enemies, his disobedient children. He did it because He loves us and wants to call us back to our Father.

St. Paul finishes his argument with these words: "Since, therefore, we are now justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life." (v. 9-10)

St. Paul is giving the Romans and us hope and urging us on to courageously pursue the spiritual life: the life of faith. He points to God's love for us as expressed in His Son's sacrifice. He tells us that because of this, God and humanity are reconciled—we can be restored to the relationship He intended for us from the beginning. He urges us to believe, to have faith in and through our Lord Jesus Christ, and so the hope that we have in God's love for us will flood our hearts.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA