

# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN JULY 11, 2010

## THIS WEEK'S NEWS

**Summer Hours begin this Sunday.** 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.

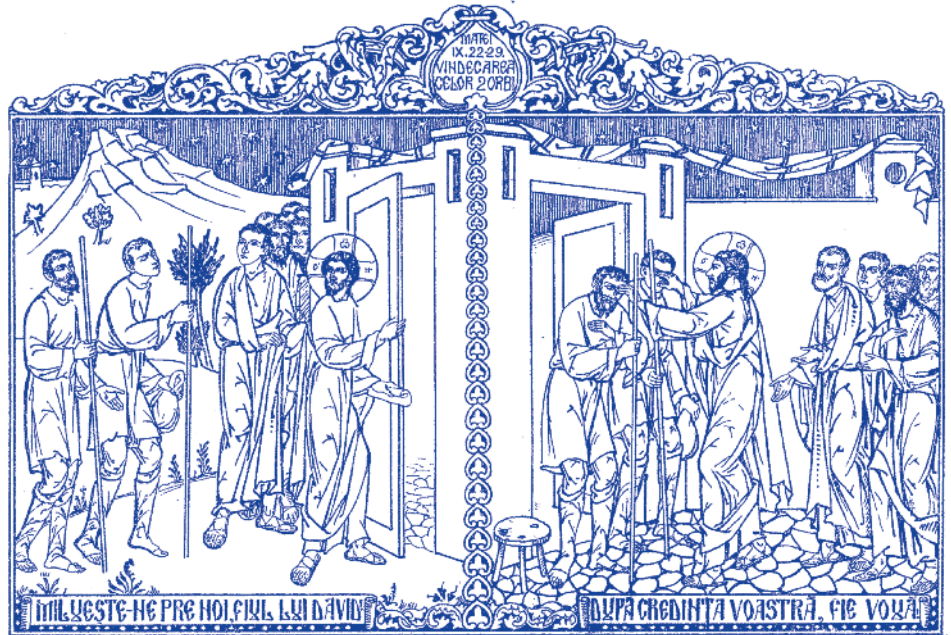
On **Friday evening, July 23, at 6pm** we will have a **Parish cookout, campfire, and talent show here on the Church grounds.** Whether you're a musician, vocalist, comic, actor, gymnast, or whatever, show us what you got! This will be a fun night for our entire Parish, family, and friends. Anyone is welcome to perform their talent for all to enjoy, but entertainers are limited to one performance and the order of performances will be arranged in advance. **To be in the talent show, you must register by providing the following information to Tim Rucho.** Your name, talent and title of performance, e-mail and phone contacts, and what (if any) technical support will you need? (ie: microphone, electrical outlet, etc.)

### 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.

USHER TEAM 2: LISA MIELNICKI  
& JIM CHRISTO

ALL ALTAR BOYS MAY SERVE  
OVER THE SUMMER MONTHS



### THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

HEALING OF THE TWO BLIND MEN AND ONE MUTE IN CAPERNAUM

EPISTLE: ROMANS 15:1-7 ⊕ GOSPEL: MATTHEW 9:27-35

TONE 6 ⊕ MATINS GOSPEL 7

**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-kebab cooked to perfection and homemade Romanian pastries. Live music, Free Admission ~ Rain or Shine

### DATES TO REMEMBER

Sunday 7/11 - 9/5 Summer Hours, Liturgy 9:30 am  
Friday, July 23 Parish Cookout / Campfire

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*

## A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**L**ORD OUR SOVEREIGN GOD, Let us acquire the treasure of love, for it is a grace that only your unspeakable generosity can provide. Let us understand that it is not only an act, but a state of the will, an attitude of the mind and heart, whereby we wish nothing but the very best for all others. In so doing, enable us also to perceive that emotions, the feelings we have for those we love, while all well and good, are not love, though they very frequently accompany it. Help us, Lord, to understand a little more of life.

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

## WEEKDAY LITURGIES

### *Prophet Elias*

- ◊ Vespereal Liturgy at St. Mary's, Monday, July 19 at 6:00 pm
- ◊ Liturgy at St. Spyridon, Tuesday, July 20 at 9:00 am

### *St. Panteleimon*

- ◊ Vespereal Liturgy at St. Spyridon, Monday, July 26 at 6:00 pm

## NAMEDAYS

**July 7**

### **The Holy Martyr Kyriaki**

Kyri Sedares

**July 11**

### **The Blessed Olga, Princess of Russia**

Olga Lolo

Olga Thanas

**July 12**

### **St. Veronica, the woman healed by our Lord Jesus**

Veronica Pandaru

**July 16**

### **The Holy Martyr Julia of Carthage**

Julia Donabed

**July 17**

### **The Holy Great Martyr Marina (Margareta) of Antioch in Pisidia**

Margareta Gikas

Margaret Koyanu

Lindsey Marina Sparages

Marina Sparages

**July 20**

### **The Holy Prophet Elijah**

Louis P. Belba

Elias James Christo

Irli Ilie Durmillari

Louis P. Messier

Louis Rucho

Louis Evan Stamoulis

**July 24**

### **The Holy Great Martyr Christina**

Christine Masterjohn

**July 27**

### **The Holy Great-martyr and Healer Panteleimon**

Rev. Fr. Panteleimon Fatsis

Pandeli Gity

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

BY WEB OR PODCAST: [WWW.RECEIVE.ORG](http://WWW.RECEIVE.ORG)

# WELCOME ONE ANOTHER

This Sunday, the seventh after Pentecost, we conclude reading from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans. Today's selection — Romans 15:1-7 — are his final words of encouragement to the Roman Christians. There is also an epilogue that follows in which he tells them of his future travel plans and his intention to visit Rome, as well as greetings to a number of people whom he knows in Rome, but these verses close his spiritual and theological advice to them.

In the opening verse he uses a rhetorical device to win them over, to open their hearts to listen to what will follow. He tells them, "We who are strong ought to put up with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves." (v. 1) In this one phrase, "we who are strong," he compliments them by both calling them 'strong' and also identifying them with himself.

He tells them that the strong ought to 'bear' or 'put up with' the failings of the weak. The one Greek word he uses has both of these meanings, and each applies equally as well to the context. The strong 'ought' (this is an ethical imperative) to both endure and carry the failings of weaker brothers and sisters and also put aside their own comfort, but with a purpose.

"Each of us must please our neighbor for the good purpose of building up the neighbor." (v. 2) Whether we either 'put up with' or 'carry' the weaknesses of our brother or sister, it is toward a specific end: their edification. The Greek word St. Paul uses, 'oikodomen' is similar to the English word 'edify' in the sense that at the root of both is the word 'house' or 'building.' Whatever we do as Christians should also have a social dimension. This phrase resonates with other images that St. Paul uses to explain this corporate responsibility we have as individual Christians, such as the Church as Christ's Body (cf. 1 Corinthians 12:12ff; Romans 12:4ff). So, when we

build up our neighbor, our objective is to also strengthening the whole 'structure' of Christ's Body.

He then directs the Romans (and us) to our Lord's example: "For Christ did not please himself; but, as it is written, 'The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me (Psalm 69:10).'" (v. 3) In one sense, all of St. Paul's argumentation in this Letter has been leading to this point. He offers the example of Christ, and then invites us to contemplate and follow it.

In his Letter to the Philippians St. Paul says of Christ that "He emptied Himself," (2:7), but here he wants us to focus not simply on the Incarnation (that He became human for us); rather, he wants us see the full extent to which Jesus 'bore' our failings. Jesus not only became human, but He was ill-treated, became a person of ill-repute, was seen as someone weak and of no account, all for our sake. In a word, He suffered. His 'not pleasing Himself' meant a real sacrifice on His part. It will require the same from us.

In order that we might not lose heart, St. Paul tells us that our Lord gave us His example in order to strengthen and encourage us. In quoting from Psalm 69, he wants us to understand that Christ's sacrifice is part of God's whole plan for us. "For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope." (v. 4)

It is not an easy thing to bear one another's burdens. This is why St. Paul reminds us of what exactly might be required of us by offering the example of Christ. Regardless of how 'strong' we might think ourselves, without God's help we will find it impossible to accomplish.

St. Paul directs us to the Scriptures — where the history of God's engagement with humanity is recorded — for instruction and encouragement. By

using the tools offered us in the Sacred Writings, our steadfast commitment to follow the Lord will be filled with hope. Without this hope we will find it impossible to take up the kind of life to which God calls not only us, but all of humanity.

He then bestows a blessing on the Roman Christians. "May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." (v. 6-7) Many of the blessings that we use in the Services of our Church, especially those offered during the Diving Liturgy, echo this blessing. It asks that God our Father grant us the strength to persevere so that we might be able to live together in peace and harmony.

Harmony is a wonderful word to express the unity of life for which we strive. Those who have sung in a choir or played in an orchestra know that each musician offers their particular note and rhythm. When each one is doing exactly as they are supposed to the outcome is magnificent. The whole becomes much more than the sum of the parts. The result is a peaceful beauty that uplifts. If even one person is 'off key' the result is a sourness that can be like the scratching of nails on a blackboard.

In order to realize this harmony, we must "Welcome one another ... just as Christ has welcomed [us], for the glory of God." (v. 7) Last week I spoke about the virtue of hospitality. What is asked here is more than hospitality. It is the opening of our hearts and the offering of ourselves to one another, just as Christ has opened His heart toward us. It is not only the emptying of ourselves, but the filling of ourselves with love for our neighbor, bearing their burdens in order to build them up.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA