

# ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN AUGUST 7, 2016

## THIS WEEK'S NEWS

**THE DORMITION FAST** began on August 1st, and continues through Monday, August 15th. During this two-week period we will hold a number of special services. Please refer to the full schedule on the next page.

**THE PARISH COUNCIL** will hold its regular monthly meeting **THIS Monday, August 8th at 6:30 pm.** Parish Council Members, please let George Demake know if you are unable to attend.

**PITA BAKING** is scheduled for **Saturday, August 13th, 9:00am to noon.** Any questions, contact Chris Toda at: [thetodas@msn.com](mailto:thetodas@msn.com), or 508-832-6271. **All help appreciated. No experience necessary — there's a job for everyone.**

**THANKS TO THE FOOD PANTRY VOLUNTEERS** for working the Orthodox Food Center on behalf of our parish yesterday. Our regular commitment is the first Saturday of the month from 9am to noon. About 4 people are needed. If you can help in this worthwhile ministry, please speak with Lisa Mielnicki or Nicole Apostola. Our next Saturday is September 3rd.

### ORTHODOX FOOD CENTER NEEDS

**GREETERS TEAM 5:**  
DEBORAH SEDARES & EVAN STAMOULIS

**NO COFFEE HOUR THIS WEEK**

**ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED**



### THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

APOSTOLIC READING: ROMANS 15:1-7 ☩ GOSPEL: MATTHEW 9:27-35

(JESUS HEALS TWO BLIND AND ONE MUTE IN CAPERNAUM)

TONE 6 ☩ MATINS GOSPEL 7

**BAGS**, both plastic and paper. We all have hundreds of these filling our pantries. This is your chance to save the Food Center some cash and do even more good by recycling. Please collect good, usable paper and plastic bags and bring them either to the Pantry on Saturday morning between 10 a.m. and 12 noon (St. Spyridon Cathedral, side entrance), or to our parish and we'll have someone from here deliver them.

We'll be holding **VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL** on **August 8, 9, & 10 (Monday – Wednesday)**, from 9am – noon each day, together with the our sister parish of Ss Anagyroi in Marlborough. The theme will be *"The Names of Jesus."* There will be more information forthcoming along with a registration form. **Questions? contact Valarie Sta-**

**moulis: [valarie.stamoulis@gmail.com](mailto:valarie.stamoulis@gmail.com) or 508-393-3517**

**CONGRATULATIONS** to **Janice and Michael Tsoules** on the birth of their son **Alexander Elias Tsoules** on August 3rd in Winston-Salem, NC. He is 22 inches long and weighs 7 lbs, 15 oz. Little Alexander is the grandson of **Evans and Irene Tsoules**. May our loving Lord grant them all **Many Years!**

### DATES TO REMEMBER

- Mon, Aug 8 Parish Council, 6:30 pm
- Aug 8, 9, & 10 Vacation Bible School
- Thurs, Aug 11 Supplication to Theotokos, 6:30pm
- Sat, Aug 13 Pita Baking, 9am-noon
- Sun, Aug 14 Vespers for Dormition at St. Mary's 6pm
- Mon, Aug 15 Dormition Liturgy, St. Mary's 9:00am
- Fri, Aug 19 Mustard Seed Meal
- Sun, Sept 18 stART on the Street Festival
- Thurs, Oct 6 Holy Trinity Wine/Food Fest

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*A Parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas*

## UP-COMING

**OUR NEXT MUSTARD SEED MEAL** is Friday, August 19th. We'll need help cooking and serving. **Prep** help needed (3 persons), 6pm Thursday. **Prep** help needed (2 persons), noon Friday. **Serving** help needed (5 persons), 5:30pm Friday. **We are also looking for donors to cover the cost of the meal—around \$400.00 for the 200 meals we usually serve.** If you'd like to help with preparing the meal or underwriting the cost, please talk to Fr. Nick.

## COMMUNITY NEWS

St. George Orthodox Cathedral will once again host the **FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN MOBILEPACK** event on **August 20th**. They look to raise \$22,000, sign up 500 volunteers and pack 100,00 meals. Meals are sent to one of 70 countries where children are actively starving to death. Within months of eating this food, children's health begins to improve. Each meal costs only 22 cents. Please consider making a donation today by visiting: [www.stgeorgeworces-ter.org](http://www.stgeorgeworces-ter.org) or by sending a check to:

Feed My Starving Children  
Attn: MobilePack #1608-054MI  
401 93rd Avenue NW  
Coon Rapids, MN 55433

**SS. ANARGYROI PARISH IN MARLBOROUGH** will be holding its annual **Greek Festival, Labor Day weekend** (Saturday through Monday). For more information check their website: [www.stsanargyoi.org](http://www.stsanargyoi.org).

**ST. MICHAEL IN SOUTHBRIDGE** will be holding its **9th Annual Romanian Golf Open on Saturday, September 10th**. For more information and/or to register, call Luke Yanka at 508-958-4144 or e-mail: [lsyanka@yahoo.com](mailto:lsyanka@yahoo.com).



THE TRANSFIGURATION

## NAMEDAYS

### August 6

*The Holy Transfiguration  
of the Savior*

S. Richard Seferi

### August 8

*The Holy New Martyr  
Triandaphyllos*

Rose Armida Salerno

### August 15

*The Falling Asleep  
of the Most Holy Theotokos*

Maria Blanchard  
Mary Cocaine  
Maria Dumitriu  
Monika Maria Durmillari  
Maria Kalpidou  
Maria Prelipcean  
Nancy Maria Tsongalis  
Mary Tsoules  
Marietta Zaruha

## AUGUST LENTEN SERVICES

### *Dormition Fast Period (Aug 1-15)*

- ◆ **Supplication Service** to the Theotokos at St. Nick's, Thursday, August 11, 6:30 pm
- ◆ **Dormition Vespers** — St. Mary's, Sunday, August 14, 6:00 pm
- ◆ **Divine Liturgy** at St. St. Mary's, Monday, August 15, 9:00 am

## A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

**O** **SOURCE AND ORIGIN** of the sun and the moon and the stars, of heaven and earth and all that is, O designer and creator of all things, visible and tangible, as well as hidden from our mind and our senses: Your wisdom and love inspire your church to celebrate the feast of the transfiguration of your Son. On Tabor, in a wondrous and unfathomable way, he gave his friends an insight into who he really is. Now, during this feast, we entreat you to open our minds and our hearts to the mystery of his person, that, by ever contemplating his passion, death, and resurrection, we may portray this understanding in our lives and abide in a lasting fellowship with him and with each other.

By the grace and mercies 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.

## WELCOME ONE ANOTHER

**T**HIS 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 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 that we read today 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 need to 'bear' or 'put up with' the failings of the weak. The one Greek word (βαστάζειν) he uses holds both of these meanings, and each one 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 put to one side 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' (οικοδομήν) 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 — for example, the Church as Christ's Body (cf. 1 Corinthians 12:12ff; Romans 12:4ff) — to explain this responsibility we have as individual Christians to the whole body. So, when

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

He then directs us to look at 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 the Letter have been leading to this point. He offers us the example of Christ, and then invites us to meditate on it and then follow Him.

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 He '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 to 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. On the other hand, 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 of us 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