

ST. NICHOLAS WEEKLY BULLETIN

APRIL 9, 2017

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

THE FULL PASCHA SCHEDULE, with the list of donations and announcements may be found attached to this Bulletin or as a separate sheet at the candles. As a guide, all evening Services during Holy Week begin at 6:00 pm.

REMEMBER TO PICK UP YOUR HOLIDAY PITA AND PASTRY ORDERS. Any questions or for pick-up arrangements, see Betty Anderson.

PALM SUNDAY LUNCHEON. Please join us for our annual Palm Sunday Luncheon following the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, April 9, 2017. We are asking for a **free-will offering that will be directed toward The Orthodox School of Bethany for Girls.** You may find out more information on the School at: <https://christianaffairsofslj.tumblr.com/>

THE GREAT FRIDAY CHILDREN'S RETREAT will be held on **Friday, April 14th starting at 12:30 pm, and concluding with a celebration of Great Vespers at 2:00 pm.** All children grades kindergarten through high schoolers are welcome to attend. Younger children are welcomed, but accompanied by a parent. A sign-up sheet will be posted at the candle stand. Please be sure to register your child to attend. Besides assisting with the children's les-

GREETERS TEAMS:
ALL TEAMS ON DUTY

ALL ALTAR SERVERS INVITED



THE ENTRANCE OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM

EPISTLE: PHILIPPIANS 4:4-9 ☩ GOSPEL: JOHN 12:1-18

(EVERYTHING ACCORDING TO THE FEAST)

sons and activities, assistance is needed with snacks and other logistics. For additional information and offers to assist, **please contact Valarie Stamoulis.**

DONATIONS FOR MIDNIGHT PASCHAL MEAL are requested. Please see Presvytera Maria if you would like to contribute and assist with preparing and serving the meal. Please join with your fellow parishioners to celebrate the Resurrection and break-the-fast together. All are welcome!

METROPOLITAN NICOLAE'S PASTORAL LETTER at Pascha is available in English and Romanian at the candles.

THANKS TO THE CHURCH CLEANING CREW. Christine Masterjohn and the rest of the crew did a great job in cleaning up the building. WOW!

THANKS TO THE PITA BAKING GANG. They've been baking for the past months to make our holiday celebration great. A real blessing.

THE GOOD FRIDAY ABSENCE Letter, that parents may need to present to their children's school authorities, is available from Fr. Nick. Just ask him.

THANKS TO THE E-RECYCLING crew: Gerry Belba and the others who helped last Saturday.

THANKS TO THE FOOD PANTRY VOLUNTEERS for working the Orthodox Food Center on behalf of our

DATES TO REMEMBER

- Sat, April 8 Lazaros Saturday Liturgy, 10 am
Vespers/Confession 5 pm
- Sun, April 9 Palm Sunday, Luncheon
April 9-15 Holy Week, Services every night at 6 pm
- Sun, April 16 GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA
- Fri, April 21 Mustard Seed Meal, 5pm

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 Metropolia of the Americas

parish last Saturday. 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 May 6th.

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

The area Orthodox Clergy will con-celebrate **the Healing Service of Holy Unction on Great Wednesday, April 12th at 9:30am**, for the residents of Holy Trinity and any others who would like to attend.

Also, **Divine Liturgy will be celebrated at Holy Trinity on Holy and Great Thursday**, beginning at 9:30am.

Volunteering at Holy Trinity is a rewarding way you can make a difference in the lives of the residents by donating your time and talent. To inquire about volunteer opportunities, contact **Gina Metras**, Director of Activities, 508-852-1000, gmetras@htnr.net, or **Serena Shields**, Director of Community Relations, 508-852-1000, shields@htnr.net.

April 5
The Holy Martyrs
Victor and Victorin

Victor Ioan Nedelescu
Victoria Wilder

April 9
The Entrance of our Lord
into Jerusalem

Elodie Lauren Killick
Florence Rucho
Florica Tonna

April 11
St. Calinic of Cernica

Călin Galeriu

April 21
The Holy Martyr
Alexandra the Queen

Alexandra Dymek
Alexis George
Alexandra Mentis
Sandra Nedelescu
Casie Soter
Alexandra Valoras

The Life-giving Fountain

Zoica Nedelcu
Zoitza Tsongalis

April 23
The Holy Apostle Thomas
Thomas Cavanaugh

NAMEDAYS

Thomas Chachi
Rev. Fr. Thomas FitzGerald
Thomas Fitzpatrick
Robert T. Sedares
Thomas R. Sedares
Thomas Spataro

The Holy Great-martyr
George the Wonderworker

George Belba
George M. Bourrick
George Demake
Gjergji Disho
Gheorghe O. Galica
George Grniet
George Krassopoulos
George Symock
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

A PRAYER OF FR. LAURENCE

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD,

TODAY, O LORD, OUR GOD, with the close of the lenten season, we stand at the threshold of the great week of the passion of your only Son, by celebrating the resurrection of Lazarus. In honor of this feast, we offer you the sweet fragrance of our incense sacrifice in praise of your Christ, whose mighty voice raised his friend from death. In return, deliver us from the stench of corruption and evil, and strengthen us to face our own death at the evening of our life. Teach us to live according to your will in the days that are left to us, and bring us to the resurrection, together with all your saints.

For you deserve all glory, honor, and worship, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.



THE LORD IS NEAR

WE ARE ENTERING JERUSALEM WITH THE LORD TODAY. It is Palm Sunday. For everyone except Jesus, this is a climatic event. I say everyone except Jesus because no one else except he understands what will eventually take place. In last Sunday's Gospel lesson we heard the disciples continue to be oblivious to the true nature of our Lord's presence on earth. They will continue to not understand until after the Resurrection.

The Epistle lesson for today is taken from St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians 4:4-9. This is a remarkably beautiful letter on many levels. It is gentle, poetic and generous. Paul has an affection for this community, and this community has been generous and affectionate toward him. On a number of occasions they have sent him assistance when he was in need. He says that he is writing this letter from prison; many think this was when he was imprisoned in Ephesus. Regardless from which prison he was writing, the important point is that St. Paul doesn't offer advice out of intellectual speculation. He speaks from the experience of suffering, and this gives his words power.

Listen to what he writes from prison: "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God" (v. 5-6).

In this one sentence he twice tells the Philippians to "Rejoice." He is suffering and the Philippians are themselves suffering, but he nonetheless tells them to rejoice. I heard someone say that the difference between happiness and joy is that happiness means doing what you want, and joy is doing what God wants. Everyone around us (and, this everyone includes ourselves), is searching for happiness by fulfilling our own desires. We are living through a time when we are

able to see what the "happiness" that fulfilling our desires produces. Many of us are suffering because of it, while others continue to profit on the suffering of others. It is not a pretty sight. Moreover, no one seems very happy. That we are living to see this terrible principle at work is in one sense a gift from God. If we take the lesson offered, it will be for our salvation.

What God wants for us is what we want for ourselves in the middle of the night, when we wake up in a cold sweat and regret every evil thing that we've ever done; when we realize our weaknesses and beg God to help us, and then get a glimpse of our true selves. What God wants for us is joy, a joy based not in material things that pass away, but a joy grounded in the very depths of our being, body and soul.

After telling them to "rejoice," St. Paul tells them to: "Let [their] gentleness be known to everyone" (v. 5). This one word "gentleness" is translated as: "good sense" (in the *Jerusalem Bible*), and also "forbearance" (in the *Revised Standard* and *King James* versions). Translation can be a tricky business, and while each of these meanings can work well here, we can see even in this small example how much depends on the spiritual insight of the translator.

St. John of the Ladder writes that the antidote to the sin of anger is gentleness. From what we know of the Philippian community, they were guided by good sense, they practiced forbearance, and so St. Paul tells them to let people see how good and gentle they were, as encouragement and inspiration for others; to show others how to quell the fires of anger through gentleness.

The next verse is possibly why this reading was chosen for today. St. Paul bolsters the Philippians by reminding them: "The Lord is near" (v. 5). He surely was referring to his eager hope that the Lord would be returning very soon, but there is another sense to his

phrase that we pick up in verse 6: "Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." God is near to us when we pray. God hears and knows our thoughts and needs even before we ask.

God is also near to us in a particular way today, as he enters Jerusalem. We share the joy of seeing him, even as we contemplate the pain he will endure in the coming days. But, through his suffering he will draw nearer to us still.

If we pray and trust, St. Paul says, "the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (v. 7). One of the great mysteries of the Life in Christ is how God gives us the ability to reconcile and make coherent the joys as well as the tribulations of this life. The world looks for logic. By taking up our cross and following Christ we find the understanding that surpasses logic. We find God's peace.

"Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you" (v. 8-9).

It is when we *do* what is right and good that we find God. It is when we *do* what God asks of us, that we find ourselves. Resist the temptation to over-analyze. It keeps you from doing what you're supposed to do.

During the coming week we will see the Lord do "what he's supposed to do." He will say many things, but as the time for "doing" draws closer, he will say less and less. Instead, he allows his actions to speak. We should take our lesson from him, and do likewise.

FR. NICHOLAS APOSTOLA

HOLY WEEK & PASCHA SCHEDULE

As Orthodox Christians, one of the ways we set ourselves apart from the secular world is by placing a high priority on attending as much of the full cycle of Holy Week services as we are able. By participating in the services that commemorate our Lord's passion and death on the Holy Cross, we can more fully experience the joy of the Paschal celebration.



try to receive Holy Communion on Pascha. Holy Communion is only offered within the context of a Divine Liturgy. Confessions will be heard after Vespers at 5:00 on Lazarus Saturday, April 8th and before and after the Holy Week Services up until Great Tuesday. There will be no Confession in the hours before the Resurrection Service. If you have any questions or wish to arrange a special time, please call Fr. Nick at 508-845-0088.



♦♦♦ Palm Sunday Luncheon:

Please join us for our annual Palm Sunday Luncheon following the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, April 9, 2017. We are asking for a free-will offering that will be directed toward IOCC's Syrian Refugee effort.



♦♦♦ **Agape Meal:** Preteasa Maria (mzm@apostola.org) is organizing the Agape meal after the Resurrection Service. Please speak with her in regard to what food items are needed or consider a donation to help cover the cost of the paper goods and other needed items.

♦♦♦ **Easter Eggs:** We are asking for a donation of cooked and dyed red eggs from each family. The eggs should be at the Church by Holy Thursday evening if possible (*Tradition has it that the eggs are cooked on Holy Thursday.*) Please see Preteasa Maria if you can help wrapping the eggs for distribution on Pascha.

♦♦♦ **Bay Leaves:** Help is needed to remove leaves from their stems in preparation for use on Holy Saturday. This is a task that can be done at home at your leisure. Please see Tim Rucho if you can help.

♦♦♦ **Confession and Communion:** The Faithful should prepare themselves for Confession and Holy Communion, and everyone should

DONATIONS FOR HOLY WEEK

General donations in any amount to defray the cost of decorations for the Paschal Feast are most appreciated. Some specific needs are:

Flowers for Palm Sunday Icon	\$50.00
Palms	\$100.00
Flowers for Bridegroom Icon	\$50.00
Holy Thursday Gospel Candles	\$60.00
Wreaths for Cross (Great Friday)	\$50.00
(Resurrection)	\$100.00
Resurrection Icon	\$50.00
Bay Leaves for Holy Saturday	\$100.00
1 Gallon of Olive Oil	\$25.00
½ lb Incense	\$40.00
Priest's Paschal Candle	\$50.00
Rose Oil for Epitaphion	\$25.00

Flowers for Epitaphion	\$500.00
Decorations for Pascha	\$350.00
Easter Candy/Gifts for our children	\$100.00

Please see Lillian Chachi or Betty Anderson to make a donation

♦♦♦ Great and Holy Friday:

We will have a Church School Program for the younger



Sunday school children. The program will begin at 12:30 pm and conclude with the celebration of Great Vespers at 2:00 pm. Please contact Valarie Stamoulis if you are interested in helping and to register your child/children for the program



Paschal Agape Vespers on Easter Sunday: We have the tradition of reading the Gospel message in many different languages. If you are able to read the Gospel in a

particular language and would like to participate, please speak with Fr. Nick or Tim early in Holy Week. This is not something that can be “pulled together” at the last minute, so we need commitments by Palm Sunday if we are to continue this tradition.



HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE



SATURDAY OF LAZARUS APRIL 8, 2017

Matins	9:00 a.m.
Divine Liturgy	10:00 a.m.
Great Vespers	5:00 p.m.

PALM SUNDAY APRIL 9, 2017

Matins	9:00 a.m.
Divine Liturgy	10:00 a.m.
Matins of Holy Monday	6:00 p.m.

HOLY MONDAY APRIL 10, 2017

Matins of Holy Tuesday	6:00 p.m.
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HOLY TUESDAY APRIL 11, 2017

Matins of Holy Wednesday	6:00 p.m.
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HOLY WEDNESDAY APRIL 12, 2017

Mystery of Holy Unction	6:00 p.m.
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GREAT AND HOLY THURSDAY APRIL 13, 2017

Vespers of St. Basil (at Holy Trinity Nursing Ctr) .	9:30 a.m.
Holy Passion (Reading of the 12 Gospels)	6:00 p.m.

GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY APRIL 14, 2017

Royal Hours	9:30 a.m.
Great Friday Children's Retreat	12:30 p.m.
Vespers with the Taking-down from the Cross	2:00 p.m.
Lamentations-Matins of Holy Saturday	6:00 p.m.

GREAT AND HOLY SATURDAY APRIL 15, 2017

Vespers of St. Basil	9:30 a.m.
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GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA APRIL 16, 2017

Vigil of Pascha	11:15 p.m.
Resurrection Service	11:30 p.m.
Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom	12:00 a.m.
Vespers of Agape	12:00 p.m.

SUNDAY OF ST. THOMAS APRIL 23, 2017

Matins	9:00 a.m.
Divine Liturgy	10:00 a.m.

Communion is offered at every Liturgy

Confessions may be heard after every service until Holy Wednesday