

## Word for the Day

Like the other parables of Jesus, [the Parable of the Wedding Feast] has several levels of meaning. It relates first of all to the Jewish people, to whom God from century to century sent prophets, whom they rejected, and who later rejected the Beloved Son of God, Who came to save this nation. But in a broader sense this parable speaks of many other nations. God called not only the Jewish nation, but in various periods He also called other nations, whom he wanted to make God-bearing nations, but they either did not respond to God's call or turned out to be unworthy of this call. But a nation is not an abstract concept: a nation is all of us, each one of us. And everything that happens in a nation reflects on each one of us; and, vice versa, everything that happens to us reflects on the nation as a whole. From this follows another meaning of the parable: it is addressed to every specific person, to each one of us.

We are very often incapable of responding to God's call. Sunday comes around, and either out of laziness and negligence, or out of coldness and hardness of heart, we do not want to go to church, putting off going to church until the next Sunday. We reject God's call when, coming to the Divine Liturgy, we do not commune of the Holy Mysteries, likewise out of laziness and negligence, or because we have not prepared for Communion, not having read the required rule. But preparation for receiving Christ's Holy Mysteries is not simply a matter of reading prayers. We need to prepare for participation in the Lord's Trapeza our entire lives. The Apostle Paul says: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5). And preparation for receiving the Holy Mysteries of Christ lies precisely in each one of us having this mind. This is the "wedding garment" of which the parable speaks. The Lord calls each one of us, but we should not simply respond to this call and come to the wedding feast in just any old way. We need to spend our whole lives in fulfilling Christ's commandments, in good deeds, in prayer and repentance preparing for Communion.

We have no right to receive Christ's Holy Mysteries if we do not have that mind that was in Christ Jesus. It is Christ that is the image that we must follow. We do not have the right to approach Christ's Holy Mysteries if we carry a grudge against someone or if we ourselves have offended someone...Our eternal fate depends upon how we commune and how we approach God: will we be cast into "outer darkness," where there is "weeping and gnashing of teeth," or will we be found worthy of the promised Heavenly Kingdom? Our fate is decided when we, having heard God's call, respond to it or not, and care for our "wedding garment" or not. And this call sounds unceasingly. Every minute, every hour, and every day of our lives we hear God's call, and at any given moment we make choices between good and evil, between God and the devil, between light and darkness - a choice upon which our future depends. Amen.

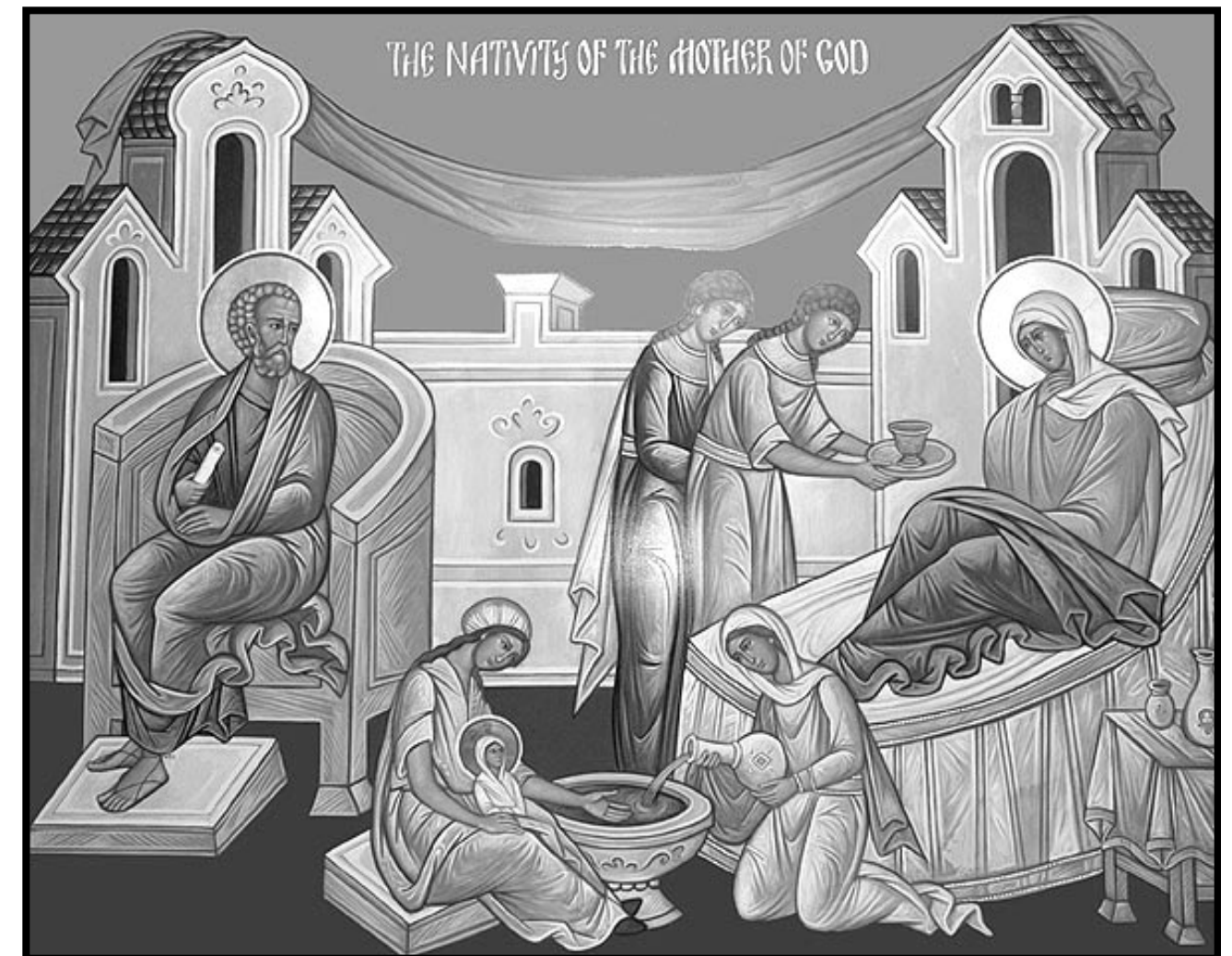
***METROPOLITAN HILARION (ALFEYEV) (2015)***

## ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish Of The New England Diocese ✦ Orthodox Church In America

**September 10, 2017**

**14th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 5. Afterfeast of the Nativity of the Theotokos. Sunday before Elevation.** Martyrs Menodora, Metrodora, and Nymphodora, at Nicomedia (305-311). Ven. Paul the Obedient, of the Kiev Caves (Far Caves—13th-14th c.). Bl. Prince Andrew, in monasticism Joasaph, of Kubensk (Vologda—1453). Apostles Apelles, Lucius, and Clement of the Seventy (1st c.). Martyr Barypsabas in Dalmatia (2nd c.). Rt. Blv. Pulcheria, the Empress of the Greeks (453). Ss. Peter and Paul, Bishops of Nicaea (9th c.).





## Divine Services

**Today:** .....Baptism of Grace Makdisi .....12:30 p.m.  
Saturday, Sept 16 .....Reader's Vespers .....6:00 p.m.  
Sunday, Sept. 17 .....General Confessions ..... 9:45 a.m.  
Divine Liturgy ..... 10:00 a.m.  
(Hours Begin at 9:00 a.m.)

### Today's Readings

**Epistle:** 2 Corinthians 1:21-2:4  
Galatians 6:11-18 (*Sunday before Elevation of the Cross*)  
**Gospel:** Matthew 22:1-14  
John 3:13-17 (*Sunday before Elevation of the Cross*)

### Next Week's Readings

2 Corinthians 4:6-15

Matthew 22:35-46

### For Next Week, Sept. 17

Hours and Thanksgiving Prayers .....Barbara Parhizgar  
Epistle:.....Tanya Bogaevskaya  
Coffee Hour: .....Fadia Makdisi

**For the health and well-being** of Archpriest Joseph and Matushka Julia, Abdullah, David, Tony, Stanislav, Leonard, Timothy, Helen, Fenaeda, Raya, Dennis, Svetlana, Konstantin, Vladislav, Nancy, Maria, Al, Michael, Ludmila, Nick, Koren, Gregory, Mat. Myra, Pam, Tim and Brian.

## September Birthdays

Sorin Fiscu (15), Mark Kurchenko (16), Eva Kurchenko (24)

## Announcements

**Baptism of Grace Makdisi Today at 12:30.** Please welcome Grace into the communion of St. Nicholas after coffee hour when she will be baptized.

**General Confession:** Fr. Igor will speak about General Confession, which will be next Sunday before Liturgy. He will explain the process and who may participate.

**New Divine Liturgy Service Time - 9:30 a.m. September 24:** On September 24, we will begin Divine Liturgy services at 9:30 a.m. This is a practice, used by most OCA and Orthodox churches. Sept 24 is also one of the days we will be working at the AppleSqueeze and will give us time to set up.

**September Charities.** We are collecting for the IOCC relief effort for victims of the disaster in Houston's hurricane/flooding.

**Deanery Youth Retreats (Friday, September 15):** All Saints Orthodox Church in Hartford, CT invites all youth for a year of one-night retreats at All Saints Orthodox Church in Hartford, CT from 6:30 PM-9:30 PM. All youth in grades 6-12 are welcome for food, fun, and fellowship with other Orthodox youth from our diocese! You don't have to have attended Youth Rally, Each evening begins and ends with a short worship service and includes dinner and an activity. The first "Rally after Rally" event will be on Friday, September 15 at 6:30 PM at All Saints Orthodox Church (205 Scarborough St., Hartford, CT). For more information, please call or e-mail Fr. James Parnell at 860-922-5329 or [OCAchaplain@gmail.com](mailto:OCAchaplain@gmail.com). See the flyer on our bulletin board.

## Upcoming Events

**September 21: Third Thursday** in Pittsfield from 5:00 to 8:00. We can use help plus donations of food or funds to purchase foods. See Rick Goudey for how you can help out.

**Lenox Apple Squeeze: September 23-24:** The 38th annual Lenox Massachusetts Apple Squeeze is a long-standing tradition in Berkshire County, ushering in the Fall season. St Nicholas will again participate, this year with a double tent area. We hope to add more baked goods. **Sign up sheets are on the new bulletin board in the coffee room.** Please think about baking and helping. See Rick for more information.



**Fall Sunday School:** We will start the year with a get together and movie night on Friday October 13. First day of Sunday School will be October 15. We will also begin our Fall Daily Vespers services in mid October with Adult Study Group.

### Sunday, October 15: By-Laws Update - Save the Date

Our updated by-laws were approved by the Diocese and now await a formal vote by our parish. On October 15 during coffee hour we will vote to officially approve them. The Parish Council will very soon make the new bylaws available to members of the parish. Please come on Oct. 15 to ratify them.

**St. Nicholas Food Basket:** Remember to donate to the local food pantry by bringing canned and nonperishable donations for the basket in the back.

### Collections

Last Week's Collection .....	\$2,633
2017 Budget .....	\$96,142
Progress Towards Budget.....	\$56,583