

THE ORTHODOX POST

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Pastor's Message

By Father David Fox

On Keeping the Nativity Fast

Friends, as of last Tuesday, we began our Nativity Fast, which goes from Nov. 15th-Dec. 24th. Fr. Thomas Hopko, our former pastor, reminds us in his book on the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord, or Christmas, that Christians from ancient time have considered the Nativity of Christ as "The Winter Pascha." That is, we are reminded that there is a great connection between these feasts: God became man in His Nativity so that He may die and become raised at Pascha. Therefore, just as there is a time of fasting in preparation for Pascha, there is also a time of fasting for the Nativity, a "little Pascha."

We often think of fasting as an extra work we do for God. But the purpose of the fast is not to add to our work, our burden, our "proving ourselves," but rather to lighten our load, to help us. These words from St. Gregory the Theologian's *Oration on the Theophany or Nativity of Christ*, struck me last week: "if we must in some way have luxury, let us seek it in God's Word and in the law and

President's Message

By Lou Foundos

November has been an active month since the Church School is in full swing and church services have been well attended. There have also been several memorial services that have also brought new people to St. Nicholas. On a more joyous note, there have also been several baptisms that have also introduced some new people to our

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Father David's Message	1
President's Message	1
Daughter's Corner	2
Bake Sale Report	2
Religious Education	3
Church Activities and Community News	4
Major Feast Day of the Month	5
Major Events & Sunday Ushers' List	6

the scriptural stories..." It reminded me of a story that someone told me recently: "I was feeling a little overwhelmed at my job. It was lunch time. I knew I had a lot of work to do, and I thought to work through lunch. However, I just wanted time away, to get some peace, and I debated going out by myself for lunch. I work in the city, and I am trying to keep the fast, so the thought came to me, 'how could I spend some money on lunch with the poor all around me?' However, I remembered that whenever I had taken the time away, to read some spiritual work, I had always come back lightened and at peace, and more productive. So I went to lunch and read another chapter of *The Mountain of Silence*. The words helped me a lot. They gave me a sense of peace. I felt like the little *extravagance* I had made had been *for God*, and for *my own soul*, and when I returned to work, not only was I more productive, but I had plenty of opportunities to help others. I realized that for me, fasting was in part taking the time and the resources to give more to my soul, and to God."

community. These are always happy occasions, and we are always thrilled to welcome someone into the Orthodox faith and the St. Nicholas

Please see *President's Message* on page 4

Daughter's Corner

By Christina Liolin

The Daughters would like to thank all the people who cooked, baked, organized, sold, and cleaned up for the Bake Sale/Flea Market on October 29th and 30th.

In addition to all the ladies who helped, there were many gentlemen who always volunteer their time with this event every year. We would like to thank Mark Papalexis, Larry Jance and Nasi Pavllo for working in the kitchen, as well as Bill Nasi for handling the book sale and Lou Foundos for handling the finances. A special thanks is due to

Andrea Topore and his whole family for preparing the hall and doing the clean up afterwards.

By the time you read this, we will have had a meeting on November 20th to discuss how we will spend all the money we collected during the sale – no, not at the mall. We will be making donations to various charities. We will also buy some of the items the Church and Sunday School needs.

On Sunday, December 18th, the Daughters will be hosting our very popular pancake breakfast after the Christmas Pageant. Please see me if you would like to help and make sure you plan to attend. I know you will have a great time!

Bake Sale/Flea Market Report

By Christina Liolin

On October 29th and 30th, the Daughters of St. Nicholas held a very successful bake and rummage sale, thanks to the hard work of a lot of people.

It started with the contribution of a variety of items from members and friends of the St. Nicholas community: clothing, linens, shoes, bags, household items, toys, books and baked goods. There were many people who volunteered to work either Saturday, Sunday or both. It was a lot of work, but we also had a lot of fun.

Tina Peters organized the bake sale, which began with several ladies who made 8 large spinach and cheese pies at church. Many ladies baked at home and brought in lakror, baklava, galaktaburiko, cookies, brownies, cupcakes, and many other goodies which brought in \$1200.

Mark Papalexis, Larry Jance, and Nasi Pavllo worked in the kitchen and made a great Greek salad and tasty hot dogs (especially if you added



the onions, sauerkraut and relish.)

Bill Nasi manned the book sale outdoors and handled quite a bit of activity and successfully sold boxes and boxes of books. The young people did a great job handling the toy table and sold almost every toy we had.

By late afternoon on Sunday, there were very few items left. Lou Foundos added all the numbers – we collected over \$3300 and our net profit was a little over \$3000.

We went home very tired but really happy with a job well done!

Church Activities

Stewardship and Pledging

Stewardship is caring for those things that have been given to us by God. It is a way to serve the church community and the church at large. We are given talents, time and treasures and we are to act responsibly with these gifts. Everything we have should be considered a gift, our life, our faith, our family, and our possessions. They should not be wasted or squandered.

Pledging is an act of stewardship--a tangible means of expressing our love for what has been given to us, a way of giving back so that the church can thrive and grow within the community. It is by your pledging of your time, talent and treasures that we are able to continue to work together, strengthening our own faith while bringing that faith to others who haven't heard the WORD of GOD.

Community News

By Linda Foundos

Love is still in the air for Barbara and Mark Papalexis who celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary with a lovely surprise party thrown by their children, Alison, Laura and Greg. Barbara and Mark also stole away for a long weekend in Naples, Florida at the Naples Grand Resort Club. We wish them many, many more joyful years together.

Good luck to Elizabeth Liolin, who has started a new job as Project Manager with D. Haller & Associates, a construction management company. The company is very lucky to have Liz

Elizabeth Liolin has also just moved into her new apartment in Astoria. It is much closer to her new job, as well as to her sister Alexandra who also lives in Astoria where she teaches. We wish Liz many happy times in her new home.

Our financial goal at St. Nicholas parish is to reach our operating budget of over \$100,000. We have approximately 140 individuals/families. Based on these numbers \$700 per member is the ideal pledge, which translates into \$1.92 per day. Some can give this amount and others can't -- we ask simply to do what you can to support your church.

One way you can help grow the church through stewardship is to encourage a person or family who has a respect for the church to become a full participant in the church. Ask them to come to church. Fr. David and any council member will be glad to meet them. If each member brings a new member imagine how the church can be.

If you have questions concerning stewardship or in deciding how to pledge speak to Fr. David, Lou Foundos, Jim Liolin, or Al Foundos. Soon you will be receiving our annual request for your support. Please help us to keep St. Nicholas serving this community.

Jim Liolin, Pledge Committee Member

SEND IN YOUR PLEDGE!!!!

Religious Education

Youth Report: On Sunday, Nov.6, Carlos and Maria Matute led the first St. Nicholas Youth Group Meeting this year, and about 7-8 youths attended. There were a number of questions about their lives that they discussed, e.g., "What was the happiest moment of your life so far?", "What do you want to do for a career?", "When did you feel closest to God?" The conversation went well, they felt welcomed and there was a good spirit of joy. Plus, they enjoyed pizza, too! The Youth Group will meet every first Sunday of the month after the receiving of communion. Next Meeting: Sunday, Dec. 4. Pizza will be provided again.

Adult Study: will continue every Wednesday until December 21st.

President's Message from page 1

community.

By now, you have received the pledge letter with our revised pledge card. If you have not already returned your pledge card, please discuss this with your family and complete the pledge card and return it to one of the Council members. Remember, just like your household, church expenses rise every year. Therefore, to meet our increasing costs, please seriously consider increasing your pledge as you think appropriate. **Also, please provide your email address since we are developing an email listing for the Orthodox Post and other communications.**

Since our van stopped operating and was not replaced, we constantly have some inquiries about replacing the van. While many families now have a car in the family or access to one, there are families that still use public transportation. Recently, an opportunity came up for us to purchase an older 11 passenger van from Sts. Cosmos and Damian Adult Home in Staten Island. The cost of the van, due to its age, was small; however, we had to spend some \$1400 getting the van in good working order. The Parish Council felt that it was worth this expense to get an operational van and see how much it will be used. The van will be kept in the Ridgewood area, and we are trying to finalize a driver for the van and how it will be handled.

December will be a busy month, including the St. Nicholas Day Luncheon on December 11th. Please look at the calendar for the month for all the other activities and special holiday services.

Church Activities & Events

Special Calendar Dates:

Sunday, December 4th: One year memorial for Elsie Kasuli after Liturgy. Sunday School Children will be baking cookies for delivery during Caroling on Dec. 18th. Youth Group Meeting with Pizza provided.

Tuesday, Dec. 6th: Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m. for Feast of St. Nicholas. Board Meeting: 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 11th: Parish Celebration of Feast of St. Nicholas. Luncheon afterward. Prospective Guest Speaker: Sarah Byrne Francis, M. Div., Orthodox Chaplain and Convert to Orthodoxy. Her conversion story and vocation are truly amazing.

Sunday, Dec. 18th: Pancake Breakfast, Sunday School Pageant, and children will go caroling and bring cookies to our shut-ins/local nursing home after Liturgy. If you know of shut-ins who would appreciate a visit, please call the Church Office.

Sat. Dec. 24th, 7 p.m: Vesperal St. Basil's Liturgy for the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Sunday, Dec. 25th: No Services.

The Vesperal Liturgy the night before, liturgically-speaking, actually takes place on Christmas. If you cannot attend the Christmas Vesperal Liturgy and/or would like to attend Liturgy on Sunday, please attend services at another local Orthodox Church.

Support the Church's Fund Raiser !!!

Buy and Help Sell

"50/50" Raffles

Drawing Sunday, December 11, 2005

at the St. Nicholas Day Luncheon

This Month's Major Feast Day

The Nativity of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ

Commemorated on December 25

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, was born of the Most Holy Virgin Mary in the city of Bethlehem during the reign of the emperor Augustus (Octavian).

The present Feast, commemorating the Nativity in the flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, was established by the Church. Its origin goes back to the time of the Apostles.

The Nativity of Christ has long been counted as one of the Twelve Great Feasts. It is one of the greatest, most joyful and wondrous events in the history of the world. The angel said to the shepherds, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, Who is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: you shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. Then suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly hosts, glorifying God and saying: Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Those who heard these things were astonished at what the shepherds told them concerning the Child. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen" (Lk 2:10-20).

Thus the Nativity of Christ, a most profound and extraordinary event, was accompanied by the wondrous tidings proclaimed to the shepherds and to the Magi. This is a cause of universal rejoicing for all mankind, "for the Savior is Born!"



Concurring with the witness of the Gospel, the Fathers of the Church, in their God-inspired writings, describe the Feast of the Nativity of Christ as most profound, and joyous, serving as the basis and foundation for all the other Feasts.

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

ICON AUCTION

January 8, 2006

Please Return Your Icons

By December 18th

Major Activities and Events

- Sun, Dec. 4 - Memorial for Elsie Kasuli;
Sunday School Baking
- Tues, Dec. 6 - Feast of St. Nicholas Divine
Liturgy at 10 a.m.;
Parish Council Meeting at 7:30 p.m.
- Sun, Dec. 11 – St. Nicholas Day Luncheon
- Sun, Dec. 18 - Pancake Breakfast /
Sunday School's Christmas
Pageant & Caroling
- Sat, Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve service at 7 p.m.
- Sun, Dec. 25 - Christmas Day; no service
- Sun, Jan. 1 - St. Basil's Day Liturgy at 10 a.m.
- Sun, Jan. 8 - Icon Auction

Ushers Assignment List

- Dec. 4 : Jim Liolin, Nasi Pavllo
- Dec. 11: Lou Foundos, Michael Kelapire
- Dec. 18: Roland Llupa, Edi Sera
- Dec. 24: All Board Members
Bill Peters, Nick Papajorgji
- Jan. 1: Petrika Troja, Thoma Fundo
- Jan. 8: Jim Liolin, Nasi Pavloo

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.stnicholasalbanian.org

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