

THE ORTHODOX POST

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St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church, 181-14 Midland Parkway, Jamaica Estates, New York, NY 11432

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Pastor's Message

By Father David Fox

Dear Friends,

How Can I Explain The Scripture If You Don't Pay Me?

The Elder, Father Zossima, is a fictional character from the book, *The Brothers Karamazov*, by Fyodor Dostoevsky.

Dostoevsky's life was changed forever when he met the real-life Elder, Saint Ambrose of Optina Monastery in Russia. It is said that he based Father Zossima on Saint Ambrose. The Elder Zossima was dying, and he knew it. Among other things, he reflected on the life of the Orthodox priests and their need for money.

"Friends and teachers, I have heard more than once, and now for some time past, it can be heard more often, our priests... are everywhere complaining bitterly of their small stipends and their degradation...

And they go so far as to declare plainly, and even in print – I have read it myself, that they are unable to expound the Scriptures to the people

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Father David's Message	1
President's Message	1
Daughters' Corner & Community News	2
Pascha & Holy Friday Highlights	3
This Month's Major Feast Day	5
Bishop Nikon's Visit: May 20-21	5
Major Events & Sunday Ushers' List	6

because their stipends are so small.

And that if Lutherans and heretics come and drive away the flock, then let them do so, for their stipends, you see, are so small.

Heavens above, I think to myself, may the stipends that are so precious to them be increased by all means (for their complaint is certainly just). For verily I say, if anyone is to blame for it, half the fault is ours. For even if he has no time to spare, if he is right in saying he is overwhelmed all the time with work and church services, it is not all the time.

He still has at least an hour a week in which to remember God. And his work does not go on all the year round.

Please see *Pastor's Message* on page 4

President's Message

By Lou Foundos

April is usually a busy month, especially with Pascha being this month. The adult education sessions after the Presanctified Liturgy continued up to Holy Week. They were quite interesting and I would strongly encourage all to attend as many sessions as you can when Fr. David has them again in the Fall. The attendance during Holy

Week started off light and increased throughout the week, with a full church for Holy Friday. We celebrated the Pascha Liturgy in the late evening as usual with an overflow crowd. A special thank you to Petrika Troja, who coordinated several activities and organized the ushers for the week and all the other people that helped.

Please see *President's Message* on page 4

Daughters' Corner

By Christina Liolin, President

On April 9th, the Daughters of St. Nicholas held a meeting to discuss some upcoming events: Pancake Breakfast, Pascha flowers and decorating, fundraising at the May 7th Dinner Dance, and a possible luncheon.

The Pancake Breakfast was held on Palm Sunday, April 16th. The pancakes prepared by Tina Peters were delicious, as usual. We had a large crowd and everyone had a great time. Of course, these events would never take place if it were not for the small group of people who are always ready to shop, set the tables, and clean up afterward. I would like to thank those who helped make this breakfast something we always look forward to. And, of course, our chef, Tina Peters. Thank you all!

The flowers for the Epitaphion were quite beautiful. Tina Peters purchased the flowers and she and a small group of ladies decorated and did a wonderful job. The flowers were purchased by the generous donations of parishioners.

Our next project is the raffle for the May 7th Dinner Dance. Several ladies have donated gift baskets which will be raffled off at the dance. If you wish to participate, please contact Christina Liolin. Of course, we expect everyone to purchase raffle tickets for a chance to win one of the lovely baskets! Look for information regarding a Daughters' Luncheon in early June.

Community News

By Linda Foundos

- Congratulations to Maria & Carlos Matute on the birth of their first child, Simeon. This precious gift was born April 1st, weighing in at 7 lbs. 9 oz. Baby and parents are doing well and are very happy. Our best wishes to the entire family.
- Congratulations to Elizabeth Liolin on her new job. She is working for Tishman Speyer, a construction and building management company which is building the new Yankee Stadium. How exciting a project is that???
- The Oswald Family, Jim, Donna, Kimberly, Daniel and Alex, had a fun-filled week in Naples, Florida visiting with Grandma Joan and Papa Al Foundos. They went to a water park, go-carting, to the beach, canoeing and to Busch Gardens. It was a fun time for everyone.
- Albana, Nasi and Thea Pavlo visited Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. They enjoyed the sights including the Liberty Bell and the "Rocky steps" (seen in the Sly Stallone movie). A great time was had by all.
- Oneda & Edi Sera had an exciting vacation in Las Vegas!! It's definitely a "must see," one of the wonders of the world. There is no other place like it!
- Get well wishes to Larry Jance and Steve Jones after their recent surgeries. Little Renee is keeping busy as she nurses her father and "Baba" back to healthy and speedy recoveries.

Spring Fest

Dinner and Dancing

Music by Binak Elezi accompanied by Suela Sadiku

Adults: \$65 Under 14 years old: \$35



St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church

Sunday, May 7, 2006

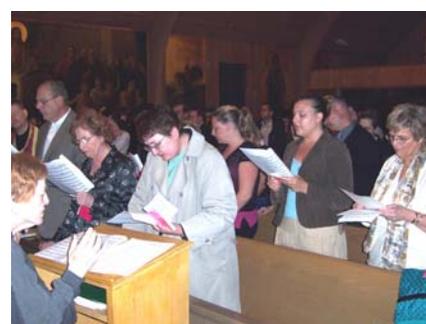
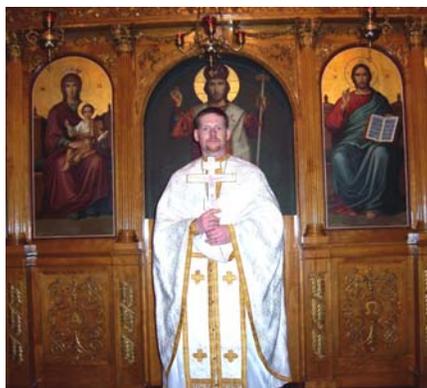
6:30 – 10:30 p.m.

*The Inn at New Hyde Park
214 Jericho Turnpike, New Hyde Park*

COME AND JOIN US

Pascha and Holy Friday Highlights

Services were held throughout Holy Week. On Friday morning, a group of women from the Daughters of St. Nicholas gathered in Church to decorate the Epitaph which was used in the Friday evening Lamentation Services. We owe a "special thank you" to Tina Peters, Gloria Sawyer, Linda Foundos, Helen Pillary, Eli Troja, Sonia Troja, Adriana Topore and Oneda Sera. They did an excellent job of decorating. The floral arrangements were beautiful consisting of a large number of different colored flowers and ferns. The large Floral Cross on top of the Epitaph was made up of white and red carnations with ribbon streamers, and added to the overall magnificence of the Epitaph. Photos of Pascha and Holy Friday are shown below:



President's Message from page 1

We held our Council meeting on April 11th at which time new officers were elected from the new Council. I would like to personally thank Nasi Pavllo and Linda Foundos, whose terms ended, for serving on the Council and all their hard work and know they will continue to work for St. Nicholas when ever they can. At the end of the meeting, Bill Peters was elected the new President of the Parish Council. I would like to congratulate him on his election and look forward to working with him in the future.

In addition to Bill Peters as President, the other officers elected are Petrika Troja – Vice President, Nick Papajorgji – Secretary and Lou Foundos – Treasurer. Other Council Members include Christina Liolin, Jim Liolin, Roland Llupa, Ilia Luka and Mark Papalexis. This is the Parish Council Team that will be serving the Church for the next twelve months.

Pastor's Message from page 1

If at first he gathered only the children, once a week in the evening, their fathers would hear of it, and they, too, would beg to come.

And there is no need to build marble halls for this work, let him simply take them into his cottage, he need not be afraid, they won't make a mess of his cottage, for he will only have them for one hour.

Let him open the Book, and begin reading without learned words, and without conceit, without any feeling of superiority toward them, but gently and tenderly, rejoicing that he is reading to them, and that they are listening to him with understanding...

...loving those words himself, and pausing only from time to time to explain some words that simple people do not understand.

Don't worry, they'll understand it all, the Orthodox heart will understand it all.

Read to them about Abraham and Sarah, about Issac and Rebecca, about how Jacob went to Laban and wrestled with the Lord in his dream and said, 'How dreadful is this place,..'

And you will greatly impress the devout mind of the simple people.

Read to them, and especially to the children, How the brothers sold their own brother, the sweet youth, Joseph, the dreamer of dreams, the great prophet, sold him into bondage and told their father that a wild beast had devoured him and showed their father Joseph's blood-stained coat...

Fathers and brothers, forgive me for talking like a child about something you knew long ago and can teach me a hundred times better and more skillfully...

Let him weep, too, the priest of God, and he will see how the hearts of those who listen to him will be shaken in response.

Only a little seed is needed, a tiny seed, drop it in the soul of a simple person and it will not die – it will live in his soul all his life...

It is not necessary to teach and expound a lot... He will understand it all simply... You will pierce his heart...

...Regardless of the small stipend... the priest will see that our people are kind and grateful...

They will voluntarily help him...

...in this way his stipend will be increased...

It is so simple a matter that sometimes we are afraid to even mention it for fear of being laughed at... He who does not believe in God, will never believe in God's people. But he who has faith in God's people, will also behold His glory, though he had not believed in it til then..."

Dear friends,

Together, we will try to find a time for the children & I to get together and follow Elder Zosima's advice.

Pray for me. Your friend,

+Fr. David

**Do you have any
GRADUATES IN YOUR FAMILY ?
(Elementary, Middle and
High School, College)**

Give Fr. David their names, and we will list all these honorees in the June Orthodox Post.

Holy Equal of the Apostles and Emperor Constantine with his Mother Helen – May 21



The Church calls St. Constantine (306-337) "the Equal of the Apostles," and historians call him "the Great." He was the son of the Caesar Constantius Chlorus (305-306), who governed the lands of Gaul and Britain. His mother was St. Helen, a Christian of humble birth.

At this time the immense Roman Empire was divided into Western and Eastern halves, governed by two independent emperors and their co-rulers called "Caesars." Constantine, the future ruler of all the whole Roman Empire, was raised to respect Christianity. His father did not persecute Christians in the lands he governed. This was at a time when Christians were persecuted throughout the Roman Empire by the emperors Diocletian (284-305) and his co-rulers Maximian Galerius (305-311) in the East, and the emperor Maximian Hercules (284-305) in the West.

After the death of Constantius Chlorus in 306, Constantine was acclaimed by the army at York as emperor of Gaul and Britain. The first act of the new emperor was to grant the freedom to practice Christianity in the lands subject to him. The pagan Maximian Galerius in the East and the fierce tyrant Maxentius in the West hated Constantine and they plotted to overthrow and kill him, but Constantine bested them in a series of battles, defeating his opponents with the help of God. He prayed to God to give him a sign which would inspire his army to fight valiantly, and the Lord showed him a radiant Sign of the Cross in the heavens with the inscription "In this Sign, conquer."

After Constantine became the sole ruler of the Western Roman Empire, he issued the Edict of Milan in 313 which guaranteed religious tolerance for Christians. St. Helen, who was a Christian, may have influenced him in this decision. In 323, when he became the sole ruler of the entire Roman Empire, he extended the provisions of the Edict of Milan to the Eastern half of the Empire. After three hundred years of persecution, Christians could finally practice their faith without fear.

Renouncing paganism, the Emperor did not let his capital remain in ancient Rome, the former center of the pagan realm. He transferred his capital to the East, to the city of Byzantium, which was renamed Constantinople, the city of Constantine (May 11). Constantine was deeply convinced that only Christianity could unify the immense Roman Empire with its diverse peoples. He supported the Church in every way. He recalled Christian confessors from banishment, he built churches, and he showed concern for the clergy.

The emperor deeply revered the victory-bearing Sign of the Cross of the Lord, and also wanted to find the actual Cross upon which our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified. For this purpose he sent his own mother, the holy Empress Helen, to Jerusalem, granting her both power and money. Patriarch Macarius of Jerusalem and St. Helen began the search, and through the will of God, the Life-Creating Cross was miraculously discovered in 326.

While in Palestine, the holy empress did much of benefit for the Church. She ordered that all places connected with the earthly life of the Lord and His All-Pure Mother, should be freed of all traces of paganism, and she commanded that churches should be built at these places.

Bishop Nikon Coming to St. Nicholas' Parish



The Right Reverend Nikon, Bishop of Boston, New England and the Albanian Archdiocese, will be coming to our Parish May 20–21.

He will be presiding at Liturgy on May 21st, on the Sunday of SS. Constantine and Helen. He will be having dinner with Council members on Saturday evening, May 20th.

After Liturgy on Sunday, May 21st, the Church will hold a special Reception in the Fellowship Hall.

Please make every effort to come greet and receive the Blessing of our Bishop.

Major Church Activities and Events

- Tues. May 2nd: Parish Council Meeting
- Sun. May 7th: *SpringFest* Dinner Dance
- Sun. May 21st: Bishop Nikon Visit & Reception
- Sun. June 4th: Daughters' Luncheon
- Sun. June 18th: Annual Picnic at Hempstead
Lake State Park, Nassau County

Ushers' Schedule for Sunday Services

- May 7: Petrika Troja / Thoma Fundo
- May 14: Jim Liolin / Nasi Pavllo
- May 21: Lou Foundos / Jim Kristo
- May 28: Roland Llupa / Edi Sera
- June 4: Bill Peters / Nick Papajorgji

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.stnicholasalbanian.org

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