

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,

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

It is easy to forget that Christmas (The Nativity of the Lord) is a Feast that *begins* (and not ends) on December 25th, a Feast full of days commemorating the Theotokos, Kings and Apostles, the Holy Innocent Babies who were killed by Herod, and the First Martyr Stephen. The Church allows us to see how God becoming human has changed the world, and produced visible saints, who both predicted Christ's Coming, and those who later became examples of "little Christs." We remember St. Basil the Great on the Day of the Lord's Circumcision, commemorated Jan 1. On Saturday, January 6, we will commemorate the Feast of the Theophany, when, in the Baptism of Christ, the Holy Trinity was revealed. Fr. Thomas Hopko writes, "Since the Son of God has taken human flesh and has appeared in the world, manifesting Himself in His baptism in the Jordan, all flesh and all matter is sanctified" (from *The Winter Pascha*, 157). Now, through the Church, God's Manifestation in

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Christ is broadened in the world: the priest takes the water blessed in Christ's Baptism and sprinkles the homes of the faithful, making "little Churches" everywhere. All this is part of the Joy that *begins* at Christmas. I invite you to come and share these Feast Days in the Church, and to consider the days I will be in your area, and to call me if you would like me to come and bless your home. I am hoping this year to go to many of the members I see often on Sunday, but whom, as yet, I have not visited.

Pray for me.

Your friend,

+Fr. David

President's Message

By Bill Peters

With the blessed joys of the Christmas season fresh in our minds, we look forward to a new year. A year that will be filled with parishioner needs and a very busy calendar of activities at St. Nicholas, emphasizing spiritual, social and financial needs.

In January alone, we will have special feast day services for St. Basil the Great and The Theophany – Great Blessing of Water, our annual Icon Auction, the restart of Sunday School and the beginning of House Blessings by Fr. David.

To continue to have the church serve the needs of

our community, we must financially support our St. Nicholas Church. To do this, we depend on many fund raising activities and our parishioners making generous pledges. So, please consider your pledge seriously, complete your pledge card and hand it in. If you have not pledged before and now want to support the church, talk to Fr. David, Jim Liolin, Petrika Troja or any Parish Council member. We will complete the receiving of all the pledge cards in January.

Lastly, a special thank you to all of the parishioners, who have and will continue to support St. Nicholas with their *time, talent* and *treasure*.

A Very Happy & Healthy New Year to All!!!

Daughters' Corner

By Christina Liolin

On the occasion of the St. Nicholas Day celebration, the Daughters of St. Nicholas presented Bill Peters, Church Council President, a check for \$2000 out of our fund raising efforts toward the operating fund. At the luncheon, we raffled off several items and raised \$230. It was a very successful and enjoyable day for everyone!

Several other donations were made by the Daughters to the Home of Hope and Metropolitan Joan in Albania, as well as the IOCC Christmas Stocking Fund.

The annual Christmas Pageant Breakfast was held on December 17th. Tina Peters did a great job as usual and served her pancakes to over 80 adults and 35 children! The bagels were donated by Agathia and Ilia Luka. Through everyone's hard work and generosity, we netted just over \$200!

The next meeting will be held on January 21st after liturgy at which time elections will be held. If you are interested in running for President, Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer, please let Christina Liolin know so that a slate of officers can be presented at the meeting. Please be generous with your time because the organization cannot continue without the help of all the ladies.

We wish you all a Happy, Healthy and Successful 2007!

KENDI SHQIP

(The Albanian Corner)



By Adelina Llupa

Kete radhe po japim disa pergjithesime per pagezimin dhe nje vjershe nga Naim Frasheri (1846-1900)

Pagezimi

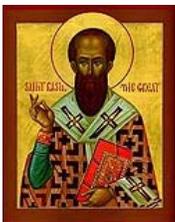
Praktikimi I pagezimit si symbol fetar nuk filloi me Jezusin. Pagezimi, qe fjale per fjale do te thote "zhytje ne uje" (Baptismos), praktikohej nga populli I Dhjates se Vjeter, si dhe nga popuj qe I perkisnin besimeve pagane. Kuptimi universal I pagezimit eshte ai I "fillimit te ri", I "vdekjes se nje menyre te vjeter jetese" dhe I lindjes perseri, ne nje menyre te re jetese. Prandaj **Pagezimi** eshte gjithmone I lidhur me **Pendimin**, qe do te thote nje kthim moral, nje "ndryshim I mendjes", nje ndryshim ne jetimin prej dickaje te vjeter dhe te keqe, ne nje dicka te re dhe te mire.

Vjershe

Ti, Shqiperi me jep nder, me jep emrin Shqiptar,
Zemren ti ma gatove plot me deshire dhe me zjarr.
Shqiperi, o mema ime, ndonese jam I merguar,
Dhashurine tende kurre zemra s'e ka harruar.
Kur degjon zethin e s'emes, qysh e le qengji kopene?
Blegerin dy a tri here, edhe iken e merr dhene;
Edhe ne I prefshin udhen njezet a tridhjete vete
E ta trembin, ai s'kthehet, po shkon ne mes si shigjete.
Ashtu dhe zemra ime me le ketu, tek jam mua,
Vjen me vrap e me deshire aty, ne viset e tua!

ICON AUCTION

Sunday, January 7th - After Liturgy



*Come and Bid in the Auction
or Make a Donation
in Honor of Your Favorite ICONS*

ICON RETURN

Bring in your Icons from last year's Icon Auction, as soon as possible!!! We need to prepare for the next Icon Auction on Sunday, January 7th.

HOUSE BLESSINGS SIGN UP NOW !!!



Father David will be visiting your area for a House Blessing. There will be a maximum of 3 home blessings on each night, so please plan for the Priest to be at your home for a half hour. Please list your family name and telephone number on the sign up sheet, or call Father David.

Evenings:

Tuesday, January 9: Queens

Thursday, January 11: Ridgewood

Tuesday, January 16: New Hyde Park

Thursday, January 19: Staten Island

Tuesday, Jan. 23: Long Island North Shore

Thursday, Jan. 25: New Jersey

Tuesday, Jan. 30: Long Island South Shore

Tues., Feb. 6th: Bronx

Thurs., Feb. 8th: Brooklyn, Ridgewood

Community News

By Linda Foundos

- Congratulations to our Sunday School children and their teachers for their very successful presentation of the Christmas Pageant. It was enjoyed by all.
- The next class offering English to improve your language skills will be held in February after services. More details will be provided later in January. It is a wonderful opportunity to help you in seeking jobs, adjusting to life in America, and making more friends. So far, there are 6 students. **Join Us!!!**
- In San Diego, California, a baby boy was born to Amy & Mark Foundos on Saturday, November 25th. James Mark weighed 7 pounds 15 ounces and is doing very well. Amy & Mark are just beginning to learn what parenthood is all about..... from the joy, the love, the hopes for the future, the diaper changes, the sleepless nights, etc; a new life with a new beginning. Our congratulations to the happy parents, the proud grandparents, Linda & Lou Foundos, and to Steven & Lauren, a new uncle & aunt. We wish James Mark a long, healthy and happy life!!
- Congratulations to Steven Foundos who received his second Masters degree in International Affairs from Columbia University. He had been working on dual degrees and had received his Master in Business Administration this past May from Columbia. We wish him all the best in his future endeavors.
- Congratulations to Klodjana, Aleko, Bledi and Alexis Bode on their new home in Bergen County, New Jersey. May they enjoy making memories for many years of a home filled with happiness, good health, good friends and good times.

IF YOU HAVE COMMUNITY NEWS TO REPORT

**CONTACT
LINDA FOUNDOS**



The Synod of Bishops and the Metropolitan Council, on December 11, 12 & 13, held meetings Individually and in Joint Session to care for the business of the Orthodox Church in America. Representing the Albanian Archdiocese was Bishop Nikon, Fr. Sergei Boutenoff and Bill Peters.

Budgets for 2007, the OCA's financial crisis, reorganization of the central staff at Syosset and increased involvement in operational activities by the Metropolitan Council were among the matters addressed.

It's a pizza party

Mark your calendars

January 14th

All FAMILIES please come to help us welcome Sunday school into the New Year-after church until about 12:30

WE NEED YOU

for more information please contact: Albana Paylo, Adelina Llupa, or Presbytera Kerri

Do Re Me



fa so la



Te Do



Saint Nicholas now has a children's choir

All children ages 4-18 are welcome to come out and join the fun

Choir practice will start on January 14th immediately following Sunday school-upstairs in the nave

we can't wait to see you

Sunday School News

By Kerri Fox

We have so many wonderful things happening in our Sunday School!

- There is nursery for children - infant to pre-K offered after Communion
- A second and third grade class
- Fourth and fifth graders are together
- Sixth - eighth grades are together in the Church office

Sunday School is every Sunday after Communion until 11:45am.

We now have a **Childrens Choir**. Come join the fun!!!
Choir starts January 14th, 11:45am to 12:00.

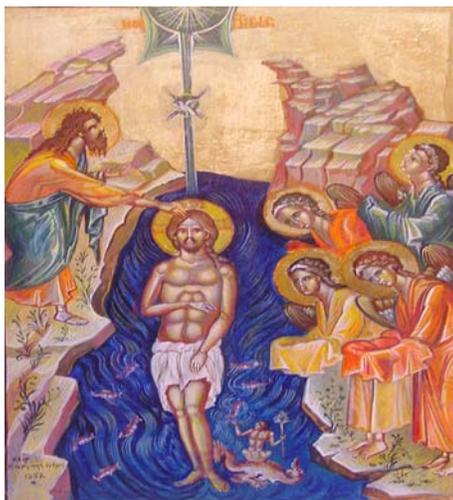
Mrs. Adelina Llupa is teaching **Albanian Class** from 12:00 to 12:15pm

There is no Sunday School on December 31st & January 7th. Children, please stay in church with your parents.

JANUARY 14th - SUNDAY SCHOOL IS BACK!!!!
PLEASE JOIN US FOR A WELCOME BACK PIZZA PARTY FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS.

SAVE THE DATE!!!

This Month's Major Feast Days



The Theophany (Epiphany) of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ Commemorated on January 6

Theophany is the Feast which reveals the Most Holy Trinity to the world through the Baptism of the Lord (Mt.3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22). God the Father spoke from Heaven about the Son, the Son was baptized by the St John the Forerunner, and the Holy Spirit descended upon the Son in the form of a dove. From ancient times this Feast was called the Day of Illumination and the Feast of Lights, since God is Light and has appeared to illumine "those who sat in darkness," and "in the region of the shadow of death" (Mt.4:16), and to save the fallen race of mankind by grace.

In the ancient Church it was the custom to baptize catechumens at the Vespers of Theophany, so that Baptism also is revealed as the spiritual illumination of mankind. The origin of the Feast of Theophany goes back to Apostolic times, and it is mentioned in The Apostolic Constitutions (Book V:13). From the second century we have the testimony of St Clement of Alexandria concerning the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord, and the night vigil before this Feast.

There is a third century dialogue about the services for Theophany between the holy martyr Hippolytus and St Gregory the Wonderworker. In the following centuries, from the fourth to

Ninth century, all the great Fathers of the Church: Gregory the Theologian, John Chrysostom, Ambrose of Milan, John of Damascus, commented on the Feast of Theophany.

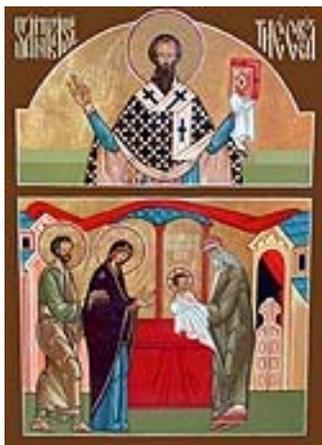
The monks Joseph the Studite, Theophanes and Byzantios composed much liturgical music for this Feast, which is sung at Orthodox services even today. St John of Damascus said that the Lord was baptized, not because He Himself had need for cleansing, but "to bury human sin by water," to fulfill the Law, to reveal the mystery of the Holy Trinity, and finally, to sanctify "the nature of water" and to offer us the form and example of Baptism.

On the Feast of the Baptism of Christ, the Holy Church proclaims our faith in the most sublime mystery, incomprehensible to human intellect, of one God in three Persons. It teaches us to confess and glorify the Holy Trinity, one in Essence and Indivisible. It exposes and overthrows the errors of ancient teachings which attempted to explain the Creator of the world by reason, and in human terms.

The Church shows the necessity of Baptism for believers in Christ, and it inspires us with a sense of deep gratitude for the illumination and purification of our sinful nature. The Church teaches that our salvation and cleansing from sin is possible only by the power of the grace of the Holy Spirit, therefore it is necessary to preserve worthily these gifts of the grace of holy Baptism, keeping clean this priceless garb, for "As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ" (Gal 3:27).

On the day of Theophany, all foods are permitted, even if the Feast falls on a Wednesday or Friday.

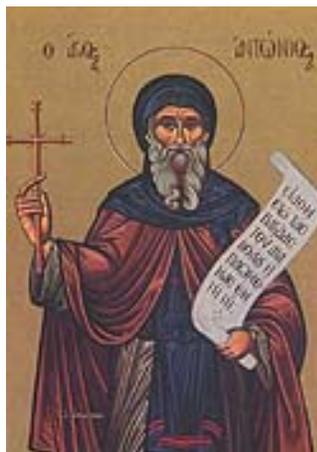
OTHER JANUARY FEAST DAYS



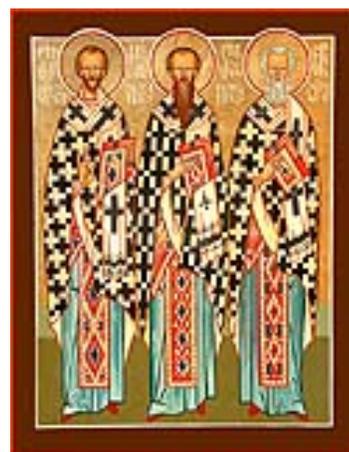
January 1st
The Circumcision of Our Lord Jesus Christ and St. Basil the Great



January 7th
Synaxis of the Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist John



January 17th
St. Anthony the Great, Father of Monasticism



January 31st
The Three Hierarchs: SS. Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and John Chrysostom

Major Church Activities and Events

- Mon, Jan 1: Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m. – Feasts of St. Basil the Great and The Circumcision of our Lord
- Sat, Jan 6: Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m. - Feast of the Theophany, Great Blessing of Water
- Sun, Jan 7: Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.
ICON AUCTION, after Liturgy

House Blessings Begin:

- Tues, Jan 9: Queens
- Thurs, Jan 11: Ridgewood
- Tues, Jan 16: New Hyde Park
- Thurs, Jan 19: Staten Island
- Tues, Jan 23: Long Island North Shore
- Thurs, Jan 25: New Jersey
- Tues, Jan 30: Long Island South Shore.
- Tues, Feb 6: Bronx
- Thurs, Feb 8: Brooklyn, Ridgewood
- Tues, Jan 16: Parish Council Meeting, 7 p.m.
- Sun, Jan 23: Daughters' Meeting/Elections – after Liturgy
- Thurs, Feb 1: Feast of the Meeting of the Lord, 7p.m.

Ushers' Schedule for Sunday Services

- Dec 31: Ilir Fundo / Stefan Baltadori
- Jan 07: Damian Peters / Jim Oswald
- Jan 14: Ilija Luka / Kristaq Petro
- Jan 21: Xhoxhi Coka / Nasi Pavllo
- Jan 28: Ardian Mile / Thoma Beno
- Feb 04: Lou Foundos / Robert Kora
- Feb 11: Roland Llupa / Edi Seri

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.stnicholasalbanian.org

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