

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,

This month we experience together the most powerful time of our faith: Holy Week & Pascha. As St. Paul wrote, "If Christ is not risen from the dead, then we of all people are most to be pitied." We put all our eggs into Christ's basket. All our hopes, our sorrows, our dreams find meaning in these words, "Christ is Risen! Krishti U Ngjall! Christos Anesti!" The services of Holy Week and Pascha are the most important of the year. So if you're going to come at all, come Holy Week.

It has been a joy serving you for five Paschas. You have given me the incredible gift of welcoming me as your priest and pastor.

You have allowed me the privilege of serving you in the greatest vocation. You have welcomed me into your homes, been generous in your celebrations; you

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have made my family not only feel at home, but truly loved and treasured. You were my first Orthodox parish. I have learned a lot at St. Nicholas: you have helped me grow as a priest, a husband, and a father.

I feel I have become an Albanian through love. You have become a part of me, and added a layer to everything I will do.

I will miss seeing you. My family will too. Saying good-bye will be a kind of cross for us.

Pastor's Message is continued on Page 4

President's Message

By Bill Peters

Pascha season is upon us!!! We have the opportunity to fully participate in Pre-sanctified Liturgies, religious study and Holy Week services to achieve a personal spiritual renewal. Do your best to take an active roll. The schedule of activities is shown on page 6 and in the Pascha letter sent to Parishioners.

On April 5th, we will hold the Annual Parish General Meeting. Important church business will be discussed including religious life, finances, Council member election, as well as our Building Expansion Project and its related Fundraising. Construction is expected to start in May. The raising of Funds is still required to pay for this project and efforts are underway. Also, those who have not yet made a commitment donation are urged to do so soon.

And, those who have made commitments are asked to make payment of their installments.

At the end of April, Fr. David, Kerri and their Children will be leaving our St. Nicholas Parish Community. After five years at St. Nicholas, Fr. David is being reassigned to an OCA parish in New Jersey, very close to his home. We will miss them all, not only as fellow parishioners, but also because they all worked for the Church and made meaningful contributions of their time and talents. On behalf of the Parish, I wish to "Thank" them for all they have done. They will be missed.

A Farewell Reception to honor Fr. David and his family on Sunday, April 26th is being held after Liturgy in the Fellowship Hall. A special brunch will be prepared by the Daughters of St. Nicholas. All Parishioners are invited to come and say "Goodbye" and to wish the Family "Best Wishes".

Daughters' Corner

By Linda Foundos

Our focus now is on Pascha and its preparation. The Daughters will host our annual Palm Sunday Pancake Breakfast on Sunday, April 12th. We will be gathering to decorate the Epitaphi on Good Friday morning. Let me know if you are interested in participating. Of course, during Lent, the Wednesday nite pre-sanctified services are taking place with a lesson and a lite meal afterwards.

Perhaps by now you have learned that Fr. David and family will be leaving us. They will go on to another chapter in their lives, as we will move on to another in ours. We have been blessed to have had them with us. We are appreciative of what we have shared with them, and on Sunday, April 26th, St. Nicholas will host a Farewell Brunch for Fr. David, Prefteresha Keri, Mac, Hurley, Paris and Niko. We hope you will be able to come and join us to wish them well.

Annual General Meeting

Sunday, April 5th, after Liturgy
(Please note the change of date)



Come to our Meeting!!!!

Important business of the St. Nicholas Parish will be discussed, including:

Building Expansion Project
Religious Education
Church Finances
Social Activities
Daughters of St. Nicholas
Election of New Council Members

KENDI SHQIP

(The Albanian Corner)



By A. Llupa

Prill, 2009

Këtë muaj po japim mesazhin e Fr. David mbi kreshmën, megjithëse jemi në mes të periudhës

Kreshma është e dyfishtë: shpirtërore dhe fizike. Kristianët kanë nevojë për të dyja.

Kreshma fizike mund të kuptohet si largim nga mishi dhe produktet e bulmetit dhe nga alkoli.

Kreshma shpirtërore përfshin largimin nga e keqja dhe pastrimin e mendimeve, zgjedhjen e fjalëve dhe veprimet.

Të dyja janë positive; është njësoj sikur pastrojmë kopshtin nga barishtet e këqija për t'u dhënë hapsirë luleve të rriten përsëri. Disa shëmbuj: nëse mundohemi të mos ankohemi, bëhemi me mirënjohës për çfarë kemi. Nëse nuk hamë mish dhe t'ja japim të varfërve, shtojmë lutjen. Dhënja të varfërve mund të na uli dhe panikun për paratë.

Kreshma shpirtërore, largimi nga inati, paniku, lakmia, paragjykimi për të tjerët, është më e gjerë dhe më e vështirë. Por, njëkohësisht, kontrolli i oreksit na ndihmon të kontrollojmë shpirtin. Ne nuk mbajmë keshmë sepse ushqimi apo gjërat e tjera nuk janë të mira (të gjitha gjërat që i ka krijuar Zoti janë të mira), por mbajmë keshmë për të përdorur më mirë c'është krijuar.

Kreshma është luftë për trupin, jo kundër tij. Kur jemi të vegjël hamë atë që kemi nevojë. Kur rritemi, ushqimi, mendimet, emocionet fillojnë të na kontrollojnë ne, në vend që ne të kontrollojmë ato. Kreshma na ndihmon të rregullojmë gjëndjen tonë shpirtërore. Ajo është pjesë e pandarë e lutjes. Nëse nuk mësojmë të kontrollojmë veten, ndonjë ditë dikush tjetër do të na kontrollojë ne. Kreshma është rruga drejt lirisë, gëzimit, dhe të ndjerët të ngopur me gjithshka. Njëkohësisht, kur mbajmë keshmë, shohim dobësitë tona. Kështu lidhemi më shumë me Zotin. Qëllimi kryesor i keshmës është të rrisim dashurinë. Kreshma është një dhuratë nga Zoti. Një keshmë e vërtetë mund të quhet ky fakt që gjatë luftës së dytë botërore, një prift orthodox në Greqi dhe familja e tij strehuan dhe fshehen një familje çifute. Gjatë gjithë kësaj kohe, familja greke nuk hëngri gjë tjetër por ushqim që hanin çifutet.

Këshille: filloni me ngadalë dhe kujtoni më të rëndësishmet: mos pini dhe mos hani para martes së kungatës. Të vini në kishë sa më shpesh gjatë kohës së keshmës, sidomos gjatë javës së shenjtë. Mundohuni të luteni për një minutë në ditë. Hani çfarë t'u jepet. Mos e tregoni se po mbani keshmë. Gjithmonë kujtoni se gjithshka bëhet jo për ushqimin, por për dashurinë. Gjithmonë kujtoni historinë e të çmendurit rus, i cili, i ulur në shkallët e kishës po hante mish pa kufi dhe kur shihte njerzit që dilnin nga kisha gjatë keshmës, u hidhte kockat e mishit njerzve duke u thënë: ju nuk hani mish por hani vëllane tuaj".

PRE-SANCTIFIED LITURGY & GREAT LENT



Beginning on Wednesday, March 4th, we will have Presanctified Liturgies every Wednesday night during Great Lent beginning at 7 p.m. These Liturgies are a combination of Vespers and Diving Liturgy and are beautiful and profound. Everyone should try to come to at least one of these during Lent.

After the Liturgy, we will share Lenten dishes (each of us brings one) and while we are eating, we will hold classes for everyone, focusing on The Gospel of Luke.

PASTOR'S MESSAGE – Continued from Page 1

I am taking heart in the words of former St. Nicholas pastor Fr. Tom Hopko, who said while visiting here, regarding our departed loved ones, "Your relationship has not ended; it has only changed." This is the reality the Apostles experienced with the Risen Christ, that we glimpse in the Liturgy. In light of the resurrection, every good-bye becomes transformed into a bright sadness, into a hope confirmed through sorrow that "...Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

I am hopeful for you and for Fr. Andrew. Many things seemed aligned so that St. Nicholas Church may become more than it is today. This is God's will. This is my hope. Please forgive me if I have injured you in any way or fallen short of my calling.

Pray for us, as we will for you.

Christ is Risen! Krishti U Ngjall!

Truly, He is Risen. Vertet, Vertet, Vertet...

Your friend, +Fr. David

FAREWELL RECEPTION for FATHER DAVID and FAMILY Sunday, April 26th after Liturgy in Fellowship Hall

Come One, Come All !!!!

Join Us



in Saying Goodbye and Offering Best Wishes
To

Fr. David, Kerri and Children as they leave St. Nicholas Parish

COMMUNITY NEWS

By Linda Foundos

- Best wishes to Alexandra Liolin who was recently engaged to Michael Kehoe!! Michael was born in County Wexford, Ireland and is a talented craftsman, carpenter by trade, working in the construction industry. Alexandra has been teaching 3rd grade in Astoria for the past 5 years. Alexandra has been deeply involved in the St. Nicholas community since birth.....in the Sunday School as a student, a teacher and director, in our services lending her voice to hymns and bible readings. Our heartfelt congratulations to the happy couple, the delighted parents, Christina & Jim Liolin and their families.
- Happy, Happy 60th Birthday to Billy Nasi. We wish him many, many more happy and healthy years!! Billy, and his family, have been very dedicated members of our St. Nicholas community from the beginning. Billy has been serving in the altar for decades, serving the priest, training and directing the parade of altar boys over the years, reading from the bible, etc. In his quiet way, Billy has always made himself available for whatever needs to be done. Billy and his efforts are greatly appreciated. Per shume vjet gezuar!!!
- Wedding bells rang for Dina Wieland and Mark Stevenson. Charlie Pochari is Dina's proud grandfather; Ellen Gradt the proud great-aunt. Dina is working in the payroll department of the Yonkers Police Department. Mark is a skilled carpenter working in the construction industry. We wish Dina & Mark much happiness. Te Tashegohen!!!
- Welcome to Lele Hysi, mother of Adelina Llupa. Lela has been in our prayers for health and healing. Now, the family is enjoying having her here with them for a time. May God bless the entire family.
- We send a shout out to Helen Pillary and Rosalie Zacharias who have been unable to attend church services for a time. You are missed! For that matter, there are a number of others who we have not seen in a long while. You too are missed! We wish you all well.
- Get well wishes to Anthoni, Grace Holinski's grandfather.
- The Olympic skiers were at it again.....Phil Foundos, Christine Beno, Donna Oswald and family spent a fabulous week in Park City, Utah. The skiing was exciting and challenged them to be just that much better.
- Congratulations to Linda & Lou Foundos on the arrival of their second grandson. Evan was born to Amy & Mark Foundos on February 2nd. Evan's big brother, 2 year old James, is thrilled to have a buddy! May God bless them all.

FUTURE COMMUNITY NEWS

Do you have Community News that you would like to share with our Parishioners????

Please contact Linda Foundos at (516) 671-8071 or email her at ggsutter@aol.com

THIS MONTH'S MAJOR FEAST DAYS

Great and Holy Friday Commemorated on April 17th

On Great and Holy Friday, Christ died on the Cross. He gave up His spirit with the words: "It is finished". These words are better understood when rendered: "It is consummated." He had accomplished the work for which His heavenly Father had sent Him into the world. He became a man in the fullest sense of the word. He accepted the baptism of repentance from John in the Jordan River. He assumed the whole human condition, experiencing all its alienation, agony, and suffering, concluding with the lowly death on the Cross. He perfectly fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah.

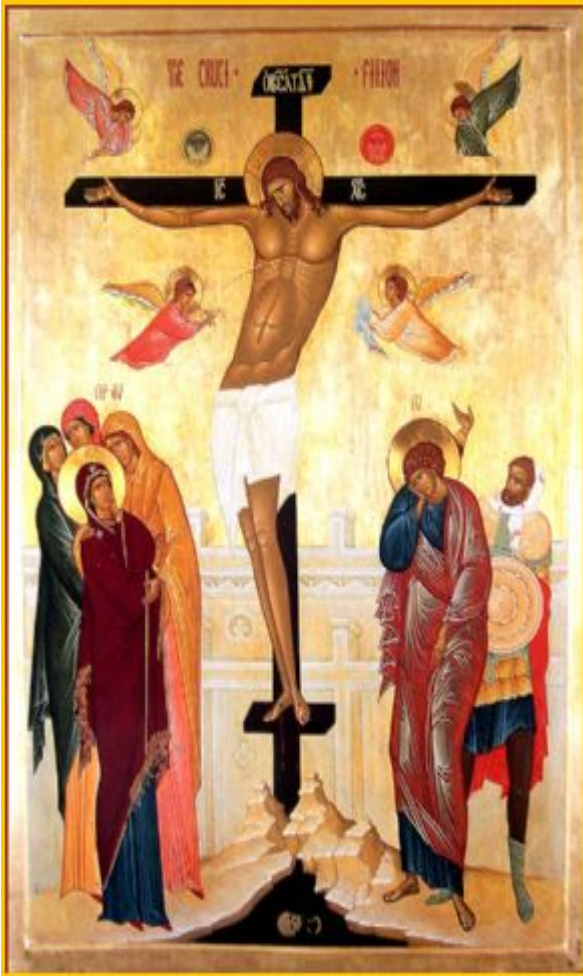
On the Cross Jesus thus became "the man of sorrows; acquainted with grief" whom the prophet Isaiah had foretold. He was "despised and forsaken by men" and "smitten by God, and afflicted". He became the one with "no form or comeliness that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him". His appearance was "marred beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the sons of men". All these Messianic prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus as he hung from the Cross.

As the end approached, He cried: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?". This cry indicated His complete identification with the human condition. He had totally embraced the despised, forsaken and smitten condition of suffering and death - alienation from God. He was truly the man of sorrows.

Yet, it is important to note that Jesus' cry of anguish from the Cross was not a sign of His loss of faith in His Father. The words which He exclaimed are the first verse of Psalm 22, a messianic Psalm. The first part of the Psalm foretells the anguish, suffering and death of the Messiah. The second part is a song of praise to God. It predicts the final victory of the Messiah.

The death of Christ had been sought by the religious leaders in Jerusalem from the earliest days of His public ministry. The formal charges made against Him usually fell into the following two categories: 1) violation of the Law of the Old Testament, e.g., breaking the Sabbath rest; 2) blasphemy: making Himself equal with God. Matters were hastened (consummated) by the moment of truth which followed His entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. He had the people behind Him. He spoke plainly. He said that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. He chastised the scribes and Pharisees for reducing religion to a purely external affair; It was the second formal charge; however, that became the basis for His conviction.

- Father Paul Lazor



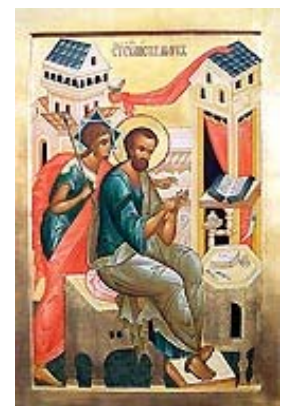
Venerable Mary of
Egypt
April 01



St Tikhon the
Patriarch of Moscow,
and Enlightener of
North America
April 07



Greatmartyr, Victory-bearer and
Wonder-worker George
April 23



Apostle and
Evangelist Mark
April 25

Major Church Activities and Events

Sun, Apr 05: 5th Sunday of Great Lent; Divine Liturgy at 10 a.m.; General Meeting after.

Wed, Apr 08: Pre-Sanctified Liturgy, 7 p.m.; Lenten Meal and Adult Study follows; reading from "the Gospel of Luke"

Holy Week and Pascha:

Sat, April 11th: Lazarus Saturday, Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.

Sun, April 12th: Palm Sunday, Entry of our Lord into Jerusalem, Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m. Followed by Blessing of Palms.

Holy Wednesday, April 15th: Sacrament of Holy Unction, with anointing, 7:00 p.m.

Holy Thursday, April 16th: The Holy Passion, the 12 Gospels, the Crucifixion, 7:00 p.m.

(No morning Liturgy on Holy Thursday this year)

Great and Holy Friday, April 17th: The Lowering from the Cross, 3:00. The Lamentations at the Epitaphi, Procession outside, 7:00 p.m.

Holy Saturday, April 18th: Divine Liturgy, The Lord's Descent into Hades, 10:00 a.m.

Pascha: **Holy Pascha April 18th - 19th: Resurrection Matins: 11:30 p.m.; Divine Liturgy 12 Midnight, Blessing of Baskets, Breaking of Fast**

Sunday, April 18th: Agape Vespers, Reading of the Gospel in many languages, 12 Noon.

Sunday, April 26th: 2nd Sunday of Pascha (St. Thomas), Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m., Final Sunday of Fr. David as Pastor. Brunch following Liturgy.

Ushers' Schedule for Sunday Services Lista e sherbimit te dielave ne kisha

- Apr 05: Andrea Kutali / Larry Jance
Apr 12: Ken Gjika / John Jance
Apr 19: Lou Foundos / Robert Korra
Apr 26: Roland Llupa / Edi Sera
May 03: Bill Peters / Ilia Luka
May 10: Damian Peters / Steven Foundos

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.stnicholasalbanian.org

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