

THE ORTHODOX POST

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Pastor's Message

By Father Andrew Jarmus

Dear friends,

The Commitment to Excellence

If we were to hire a contractor to do work in our house and after he was done he said, "Well, I could have done better, but this is good enough," we would be shocked... at best. If a surgeon were to come to us after operating on us and say, "Well, the procedure could have gone better, but it was good enough for me," we would be mortified... at best.

We place high expectations on the actions of others, and the Bible tells us that God puts a pretty high expectation on us as well. In the Gospels, Jesus tells us to "be perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect." (Matthew 5:48) In other words, settling for "good enough" is not how God wants us to look at our life -- *especially* our spiritual life. God wants from us a commitment to excellence.

"Excellence" means "to excel". God calls us to

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excel at worship, to excel in outreach and acts of unconditional love, to excel in our spiritual growth, to excel in being heralds of His Good News in this world.

If we see our parishes, institutions, organizations and especially our own lives straying away from the goal of excellence, we must make the effort to getting things back on track. This is exactly what is meant by "repentance" -- it is a "change of mind" or "change of direction" away from life-taking attitudes and behaviors and towards the life-giving Way of Christ.

Pastor's Message is continued on Page 3

President's Message

By Bill Peters

As we move into the Summer months and beyond, we have much to be thankful for.

First, we have successfully transitioned to our new Priest, Fr. Andrew Jarmus. He and his Family are increasingly becoming involved in our Parish. Fr. Andrew will be reaching out to the Community to get to better know us as individuals. Feel free to introduce yourself and talk with him.

Second, we officially started construction of our Building Expansion Project with Groundbreaking Ceremonies on Sunday, May 17th. Work will progress through the Summer months and complete in early Fall. Fundraising to pay for this Building Expansion is continuing. More financial support is needed! If you haven't done so already, please make a generous donation to this Church Building Project and encourage

your friends to do the same. For more information, contact Al Foundos or any Parish Council member.

Other key dates and activities include:

- Sunday School Last Day is June 14 and Summer Vacation begins.
- Our Annual Church Picnic will be held on Sunday, June 21st at Hempstead Lake State Park. **REMEMBER!!! Liturgy starts at 9:30 a.m.** in Church)
- Special Church Services for:
 - Memorial Saturday (June 6th, 10 a.m.)
 - Apostles Fast (June 15th to June 29th)
 - Vespereal Liturgy for the Feasts of Sts. Peter and Paul (Mon, June 29th, 7 p.m.)

Have a safe and enjoyable Summer!!!!

Daughters' Corner

by Linda Foundos

Our ground-breaking ceremony marking the start of our renovation project was exciting. It will be a bit of an inconvenience dealing with the construction, but we look forward to our new and improved facilities. Our OCMC missionary guest speaker, Pamela Anastasia Barksdale, delivered a great presentation of her work in Albania. The update of all the programs currently running, especially those with the children, were inspiring and optimistic. The need for such intervention is great. It takes such dedicated people to give their time and the generosity of others to help financially to make this all happen for the good of the people and the country.

Summer is upon us. Graduations. Barbeques. Beach days. Enjoy the season. The change of pace and activity is a good thing. Looking ahead, many events are being planned for the fall including our annual Flea Market. So keep it in the back of your mind to gather your clean, unused items that you can donate for our sale. Details will be coming your way in the months to come.

Happy Fathers' Day to all the fathers and father figures. You work hard, serve as a role model and are very much appreciated for all the wonderful things you do!

Special Feast Day Activities

Memorial Saturday, June 6, 10am

On the Saturday before Pentecost, we serve the Divine Liturgy and a Memorial Trisagion for the departed. If you would like Fr. Andrew to remember the names of your departed loved ones at this Liturgy, please give your list to him either as a hard copy or by email.

Apostles' Fast begins Monday, June 15

The Apostles Fast in preparation for the feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul begins June 15, and ends on June 29. Now is the time to start thinking about what you will give up during this short fast.

Vesperal Liturgy for the Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul, Monday, June 29th at 7 p.m.

KENDI SHQIP

(The Albanian Corner)



By A. Llupa

Qershor 2009

Këtë muaj po japim një pjesë nga Bibla, "Letra e parë Drejtuar Korintasve" me titull "Si Duhet Parafytyruar Ringjallja?"

...Por ndoshta ndokush do të pyesë: "Çfarë ndodh kur të ringjallen të vdekurit?" ose "Çfarë trupi do të kenë ata atëhere?"

Si mund ta bësh një pyetje të tillë? Kur të mbjellësh një farë, me së pari, fara duhet të vdesë që të jetojë bima. Ti nuk e mbjell bimën e rritur, por vetëm farën, një kokërr gruri ose një kokërr tjetër. Por Perëndia i jep secilës farë trupin e bimës, të cilin e caktoi për të. Çdo lloj fare përfshin një formë të vecantë. Edhe qënjet e gjalla nuk e kanë të vetmen formë. Njerzit kanë një formë që ndryshon nga forma e kafshëve, e zogjve dhe e peshqve.

Përveç trupave në tokë, ka trupa të tillë edhe në qiell. Trupat qiellorë kanë një bukuri tjetër nga ato tokësore, edhe ndër to ka ndryshime: dielli ndrit ndryshe nga hëna, hëna ndryshon nga yjet, edhe yjet e veçanta ndryshojnë mes tyre.

Kështu mund ta parafytyroni ringjalljen e të vdekurve. Çfarë vihet në tokë është e vdekshme, por ajo që ringjallet për jetën e re është e pavdekshme. Çfarë vihet në tokë është e dobët dhe e shëmtuar; por ajo që ringjallet për jetën e re është e fortë dhe e bukur. Ç'u vendos në tokë, ishte e frymëzuar nga jeta e natyrshme; por çfarë ringjallet për jetën e re, do të jetë plotësisht e frymëzuar nga Shpirti i Perëndisë. Në qoftë se ka trup të natyrshëm, atëhere duhet të ketë trup të frymëzuar nga Shpirti. Sepse thuhet: Adami, njeriu i parë, ishte i frymëzuar nga jeta e natyrshme. Mesia, përkundrazi, me të cilin fillon krijesa e re e Perëndisë, u bë shpirt jetëdhënës. Por më së pari vjen koha e natyrës, e pastaj koha e shpirtit, e jo anasjelltas. Adami i parë u krijua nga toka. Adami i dytë erdhi nga qielli. Njerzit tokësorë i ngjajnë Adamit tokësor, kurse njerzit qiellorë i ngjajnë Adamit qiellor. Tani ne i ngjajmë njeriut që u krijua nga toka. Më vonë do t'i ngjajmë Atij që erdhi nga qielli.

Fr. Thomas Hopko Albanian Mission Campaign

From June 2 - 17, Fr. Thomas Hopko, former pastor and dear friend of St. Nicholas Parish, will be traveling to Albania as a Mission Specialist from the Orthodox Christian Mission Center. Fr. Thomas will teach at St. Vlash Seminary, lead retreats for university students, and work with OCMC team members. All OCMC missionaries rely on the generous offerings of other to allow them to carry out their work. The cost of Fr. Thomas' mission trip is approximately \$3100. On Sunday, June 7, we will be taking a special collection to go towards helping cover this expense. By supporting this very important work, each of us becomes fellow ministers with Fr. Thomas as he works to continue to spread the Gospel in Albania.

REMINDER

**On Sunday, June 21st - Day of the PICNIC
And thru Sunday, September 6th**

Liturgy starts at 9:30 a.m.

PASTOR'S MESSAGE – Continued from Page 1

One thing to be aware of in the commitment to excellence is the fine line between a sincere struggle to "be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect" and the fall into pride and vainglory. Our commitment to excellence is not for the sake of basking in personal glory. We struggle to excel in our lives because God deserves nothing less from us. As we pursue the commitment to excellence we do so in humility, knowing that success comes not from our own efforts alone, but with the grace of God who give us strength, wisdom and courage. St. Paul says "it is no longer I who lives, but Christ lives in me"(Galatians 2:20) In reality, it is not our perfection that we achieve in the commitment to excellence, but the perfection of God that we take part in through our sincere, prayerful effort.

When it comes to the health and well-being of our souls, "good enough" is not good enough at all. Playing small does not serve anyone. It is the devil who asks us, "Who do you think you are reaching so high?"

Our commitment is to growth in a humble excellence, which is not self-centered but God-centered, and reflects His glory which exists as a potential in each one of us.

In Christ, Fr. Andrew

St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church



Sunday, June 21st

Hempstead Lake State Park

West Hempstead, NY

11:30 a.m. til dark

Games for all Ages!!

Volleyball Basketball Handball Softball Soccer Tennis

Donation: \$5 per person or \$15 per family

Directions: Take Southern State Parkway to Exit #18.

Follow signs to Pavilion, Parking Lot #1.

A THANK YOU LETTER FROM FR. DAVID AND FAMILY

Dear St. Nicholas Friends,

Christ is Risen! Krishti U Ngjall!

THANK YOU for such a magnificent send-off on April 27th.

Tina & Co: The Luncheon was outstanding!

The day was so powerful to us, it took several days to absorb.

On that Sunday night at dinner, the kids, Kerri & I just talked about our memories of being with you and replayed the day's events.

Being able to speak with you individually downstairs after Liturgy was a real joy.

I hope I was able to express what you have meant to us and what I believe you mean to the Church.

I am looking at a stack of thank you cards I am trying to send to you individually, but every time I begin them, something comes up. My first week here we had two funerals!

Thank you for your wonderful gifts: I am wearing my cross as I type this and the Icons will go into our new home. The kids loved the gift cards. Your generous gifts came at a time when we really needed it, so know you helped take off some of the stress of the transition.

May God bless you and your wonderful families for your thoughtful generosity:

Falemin Derit Shume!

We miss you & think of you often, but are glad to hear of the good things happening with Fr. Andrew, the Reader Nathan, the ground-breaking (!!). Thank you for taking good care of Fr. Andrew and his family.

Pray for us.

Your friends, +Fr. David, Prifteresha Kerri, Hurley, Mack, Paris & Niko

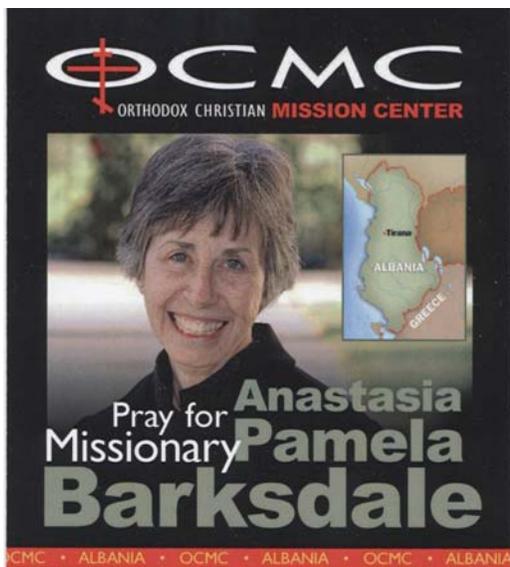
Groundbreaking Ceremonies for New Building Expansion Project



On Sunday, May 17th after Liturgy, a crowd of Parishioners gathered for Groundbreaking Ceremonies held in the Church parking lot, which is the site of major building construction work. Fr. Andrew did a prayer service. Then, Lou Foundos (Building Project Chairman) and Bill Peters (President) used a new shovel provided by Nick Cela, the general contractor, to break ground officially starting the construction. In addition to the many Parishioners, Al Foundos (Building Fundraising Chairman) and Parish Council members participated in the Ceremonies. This Project will create open space under the parking lot to expand the downstairs Fellowship Hall with additional classrooms, dinner & party space, an elevator and other improvements. This event received media coverage by the Albanian Newspaper, Illyria, who was represented by Vehbi Bajrami, publisher.

The Building Expansion is important to the growth of St. Nicholas Parish. It will provide increased capability to serve our community, including people of all ages. Fundraising is still underway and much money is required to pay for the Building Project. Many have made Financial Commitments and have made Donations. Their efforts are very much appreciated. But, more financial support is needed! If you haven't done so already, please make a generous donation to this Church Building Project and encourage your friends to do the same.

Missionary to Albania Visits St. Nicholas



On Sunday, May 17th Anastasia Pamela Barksdale, a Missionary who has been working in Albania for the past year representing the Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC) visited our church. She told us of the many activities and programs of the OCMC which has been in Albania since 1992. She presented a very interesting and informative story with many photos of people and places in Albania.

Anastasia is dedicating her experience and training in working with children to the National Children's Office as a facilitator and trainer. Because nearly a third of the Albanian population is under the age of 15, this ministry of the Orthodox Church is vital; it conducts youth outreach in all of Albania and works directly with the children in the city of Tirana. Our own Al Foundos, who is very involved with charity organizations working in Albania, provided comments about the varied and important work being done by the OCMC.

Our Parishioners provided generous donations to help support Anastasia's ongoing work in Albania.

Community News

by Linda Foundos

- Is there a doctor in the house? Well, there is now! Congratulations to Jennifer Slane, daughter of Tina Slane & grand-daughter of Viola Kallinikos, on her graduation from New York College of Osteopathic Medicine (NYCOM). What a wonderful accomplishment. We are all very proud of her. Jennifer will be working at Winthrop Hospital in Mineola. All the best!
- Is there a lawyer in the house? Well, there is now! Congratulations to Alison Papalexis on her graduation from St. John's Law School. Her parents, Barbara & Mark Papalexis, family and friends are all so very proud of Alison's hard work and success. Alison will be working for a Manhattan law firm, Hahn & Hessin specializing in bankruptcy law. Good luck!
- Is there an editor in the house? Well, there is now! Christina Heiser, daughter of Joanne Heiser, has been elected Editor-in-Chief of the St. John's Torch Newspaper. She began as a Staff Writer and steadily moved up the ladder to Chief! She is responsible for all the editors and staff writers and makes sure that everything is ready to go to print on time. You can find Christina's articles at the online paper at www.torchonline.com. You go girl!!
- Joyous news at the Troja house.....Erald, son of Eli & Petrika, is engaged to Alexandra, a charming, lovely Brazilian young lady who is studying to be a medical technician. We wish the happy, young couple much happiness. Our sincere congratulations to them and their families.
- Get well wishes to Robert Korra who is recovering from a recent double hernia surgery. Thank goodness he has Nurse Tina to care for him. We're sure he'll be back in good condition very soon. Te shkuara!
- Wedding bells were ringing On May 10th for Elvin & Dorina Lengu. We wish the happy couple a lifetime of good health, much happiness and success. Our sincere best wishes to them and their families. Te tashegohen!
- May God bless our newly baptized Orthodox Christians:
Gentjan (baptized Jani) Cullaj whose Godfather is Pavllo Koka and
Florinda (baptized Aleksia) Koka whose Godmother is Georgia Masouras.
We welcome them into the faith and to our St. Nicholas Parish.
- Gloria Sawyer enjoyed a great visit with the Mueller family in Chicago, Fr. Elijah, Rebecca, Gabriel and Baby Isho. Gabriel & Gloria had a good time at the Lincoln Park Zoo. Little Isho now has nine teeth! They are all doing well and look forward to Grandma Gloria's next visit.
- Our travelers, Tina & Bill Peters enjoyed a month-long winter get-away to sunny Florida. They relaxed on the beach and had plenty of family and friends to visit.....Tina's sister Betty in South Palm Beach, Bill's sister Cookie in Juno Beach, their nephew John Kelapire as well as Carmen & Mitch Thomas. They had a wonderful time. Welcome back!
- Our deepest sympathy to Andrea Topore and his family on the passing of his mother Tefta. May her memory be eternal and may all her loved ones cherish all the wonderful moments with her. Ngushellime.

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

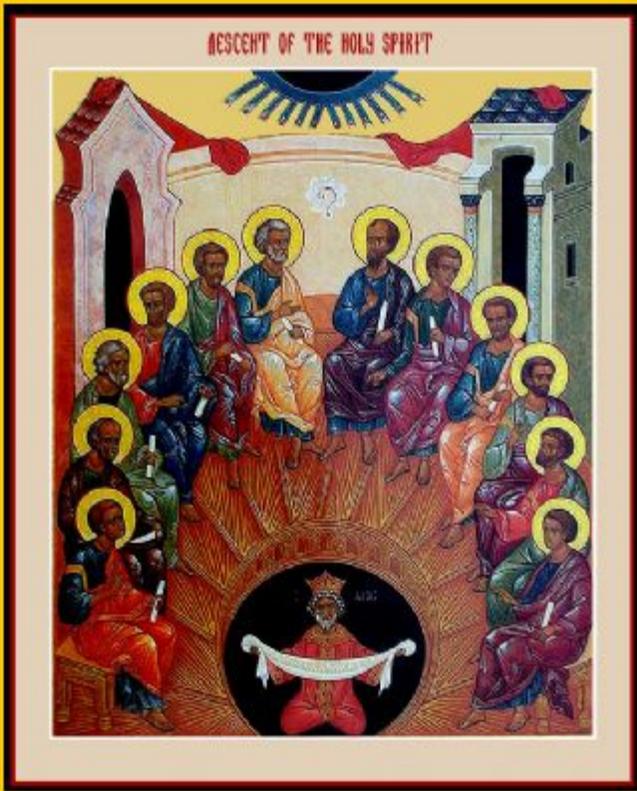
THIS MONTH'S MAJOR FEAST DAYS

Holy Pentecost
Commemorated on June 7th

Pentecost -- The Descent of the Holy Spirit

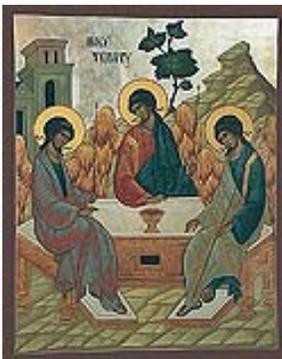
In the Church's annual liturgical cycle, Pentecost is "the last and great day." It is the celebration by the Church of the coming of the Holy Spirit as the end – the achievement and fulfillment – of the entire history of salvation. For the same reason, however, it is also the celebration of the beginning: it is the "birthday" of the Church as the presence among us of the Holy Spirit, of the new life in Christ, of grace, knowledge, adoption to God and holiness.

This double meaning and double joy is revealed to us, first of all, in the very name of the feast. Pentecost in Greek means fifty, and in the sacred biblical symbolism of numbers, the number fifty symbolizes both the fullness of time and that which is beyond time: the Kingdom of God itself. It symbolizes the fullness of time by its first component: 49, which is the fullness of seven (7 x 7): the number of time. And, it symbolizes that which is beyond time by its second component: 49 + 1, this one being the new day, the "day without evening" of God's eternal Kingdom.



With the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Christ's disciples, the time of salvation, the Divine work of redemption has been completed, the fullness revealed, all gifts bestowed: it belongs to us now to "appropriate" these gifts, to be that which we have become in Christ: participants and citizens of His Kingdom.

Every Sunday now will be called "after Pentecost" – and this means that it is from the power and light of these fifty days that we shall receive our own power, the Divine help in our daily struggle. At Pentecost we decorate our churches with flowers and green branches – for the Church "never grows old, but is always young." It is an evergreen, ever-living Tree of grace and life, of joy and comfort. For the Holy Spirit – "the Treasury of Blessings and Giver of Life – comes and abides in us, and cleanses us from all impurity," and fills our life with meaning, love, faith and hope.



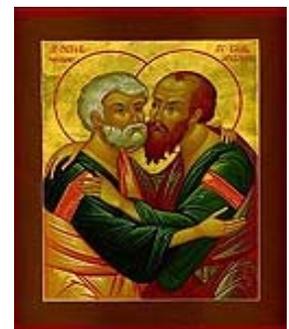
Day Of The Holy Spirit
June 08



Synaxis of All Saints
June 14



Nativity of the Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John
June 24



The Holy Glorious and All-Praised Leader of the Apostles, Peter & Paul
June 29

Major Church Activities and Events

Sat, June 06: Memorial Saturday & Trisagion for the Departed; Divine Liturgy at 10 a.m.

Sun, June 07: Pentecost, Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.;
Oath for Council Members;
Collection for Fr. Thomas Hopko's
Mission Trip to Albania;

Memorial (1 Year) for Betty Pochari

Mon, June 08: Parish Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

Sun, June 14: Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.

Last Day of Sunday School
Summer Vacation

Sun, June 21: Divine Liturgy, 9:30 a.m.; followed by
The Church Annual Picnic at
Hempstead Lake Park,
starting at 11:30 a.m.

Sun, June 28: Divine Liturgy, 9:30 a.m.

Mon, June 29: Vespereal Liturgy for the Feast of Sts.
Peter and Paul, 7 p.m.

Mon, July 13: Parish Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

Sun, June 21–Sept 6: Liturgy Starts at 9:30 a.m.

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

May 31: Ilir Fundo / Stefan Baltadori

June 07: Andrea Kutali / John Jance

June 14: Lou Foundos / Robert Korra

June 21: Bill Peters / Ilia Luka

June 28: Roland Llupa / Edi Sera

July 05: Ken Gjika / Izzy Tsamblakos

July 12: Tomi Beno / Ardian Mile

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.stnicholasalbanian.org

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