

THE ORTHODOX POST

November 2009

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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 Andrew Jarmus

Fasting while those around us are feasting

The 40-day fast in preparation for the feast of the Nativity of Christ is known as St. Philip's Fast, as it begins the day after St. Philip's day (in the west, it is known as "Advent"). Although this lenten period does not have as strong a theme of repentance as the Great Fast before Holy Week and Pascha, it is still a time for a heightened spiritual discipline. We observe a fast, and with the fast we take time for quite reflection on our lives. Christ is coming to be born in a manger! Is the manger of our souls ready to receive the New-born King? When Christ returns again, this time not in silence and squalor, but in all glory, will we be ready to greet Him? Such are the questions that we can ask ourselves during this forty-day period of preparation.

This attitude of reflection is not always easy at this time of the year. In the Christian east, our approach to the major holy days is to draw near to them quietly, and then enjoy a "season of celebration" beginning on the feast day itself. In western society, the opposite approach has developed. At this time of the year, we see people do all the Christmas

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partying before the "big day" and then on December 26 take the tree down until next year: Christmas is over. Whatever happened to those "twelve days of Christmas" sung of in the old English carol?

Our temptation, though, is not in throwing out the tree too early. The real challenge is maintaining a lenten atmosphere when the society around us is in "party mode". Do we simply pretend to ignore the festivities around us? This, I think, is not necessary. It is possible to acknowledge, and even mark, the celebratory events of the seasons beyond our Church life without compromising our spiritual journey through the fast. A story from the desert fathers might help us get a sense of the right approach:

Pastor's Message is continued on Page 3

President's Message

By Bill Peters

On October 18th, we held our semi-annual Parish General Meeting. The overall business of the Church as well as major activities and events were discussed. Many of the topics discussed included Religious Education, Daughters Activities, Finances, Archdiocese Activities and our Building Expansion Project. For your information, several of these topics are discussed in articles in this issue of the Orthodox Post. Of major importance is the need for Parents to bring their children to Church and Sunday School so they can learn about our faith. Parents have an obligation to their children to bring them to church on Sundays.

As you can see from the photos on page 4 and your visits to Church, much progress is being made in our Building Expansion Project. More money is needed to pay for the Project. Though many have made commitments, payments in full are needed and donations from those who have not yet made a contribution are urgently requested. Our Church is

being made bigger and more beautiful so we can better serve the Parish community. It is important that we all participate. We must all urge friends and family to do so!!!

Our annual Pledge Letter will be mailed to all Parishioners in November. We will be asked to make a Pledge of how much money we will donate to the Church next year in 2010. This money is needed to cover the cost of operations of the Church, so we can provide basic services to our community.

Albanian Flag Day, Dita E Flamurit, November 28th, will be Celebrated in Church this month.

CANCELLATION of our Flea Market & Bake Sale, November 14th-15th, is due to construction activities. It is rescheduled to the SPRING. See ad on page 2.

The Celebration of St. Nicholas Day on Sunday, December 6th, will feature a fish dinner in the Church Hall.

Finally, to help us improve our communications with parishioners, we are asking for your email address. As asked in the ad on page 3, send your name and Email address to peterslwp@optimum.net.

Daughters' Corner

by Linda Foundos

Our annual Flea Market/Bake Sale planned for Saturday & Sunday, November 14th & 15th, has been CANCELLED and RESCHEDULED for the SPRING!!! Construction activities have caused us to do the rescheduling. We are asking all those who have items for us to sell at the Flea Market to bring them to Church in December when space becomes available. The merchandise will be stored in one of the new rooms until the Spring. It is important for the success of the Spring Flea Market that you bring your items to the church in December. Watch for the announcement of the dates to bring them to Church!!!

Looking ahead, the Daughters will coordinate with our Parish Council to plan for our annual St. Nicholas Luncheon on December 6th.

Wisdom

There comes a point in your life when you realize:

Who matters,

Who never did,

Who won't anymore....

And who always will.

So, don't worry about people from your past,

There's a reason why they didn't make it to your future.

CANCELLED

Flea Market & Bake Sale

November 14 & 15



Due to Construction Activities
Rescheduled to the SPRING

IMPORTANT: People should Bring Items to
be sold at the Flea Market to Church in
December when Storage Space becomes
available. Watch for Dates!!!

KENDI SHQIP

(The Albanian Corner)



By A. Llupa

Nentor, 2009

Këtë muaj po japim pjesën e parë mbi lutjen nga libri i Tomas Hopkos "Adhurimi" dhe një pjesë nga vjersha "Atdheut" e Gjergj Fishtës e shkruar në vitin 1902, në dialektin e veriut.

...Lutja është e rëndësishme për jetën e krishterë. Vetë Jezu Krishti u lut dhe i mësoi njerzit të lutën. Ai që nuk i lutet Perëndisë nuk mund të jetë pasues i Krishtit. Në Kishën Orthodokse të gjitha lutjet janë Trinitare. Ne lutemi në Shpirtin e Shenjtë, me anë të Jezu Krishtit, Birit të Perëndisë dhe në emrin e tij tek Perëndia At. Ne i themi Perëndisë "Ati Ynë", sepse Jezusi na mësoi dhe na aftësoi për ta bërë këtë. Ne kemi mundësinë t'i drejtohem Perëndisë At, sepse ne jemi bërë bijtë e Perëndisë me anë të Shpirtit të Shenjtë.

Gjithashtu, në Kishë në i drejtojmë lutje Krishtit dhe Shpirtit të Shenjtë, Personave Hyjnorë, të cilët janë një me Perëndinë At, dhe ekzistojnë përjetësisht në unitet të përsosur me Atin, duke marrë pjesë në Qënien dhe Vullnetin e Tij Hyjnor.

Në Kishë, gjithashtu ne i drejtojmë lutje edhe shenjtoreve—jo në të njëjtën mënyrë siç i lutemi Personave të Shen Trinitisë, por si ndihmuesve dhe ndërmjetësve tanë, si bashkëanëtarëve të Kishës, të cilët tashmë janë lavdëruar me Perëndinë, në praninë e Tij Hyjnore. Por mbi të gjithë Shenjtorët dhe mbi të gjithë njerëzorët, të cilët janë lavdëruar në Mbrëterinë e Perëndisë, është Maria, Hyjlindësja dhe Mbretëresha e Qiellit, udhëheqësja ndër ndërmjetësit e shenjtë, të cilët ndërmjetojnë për ne para Perëndisë. Ne mund t'i lutemi gjithashtu engjëjve të shenjtë për të mbrojtur çështjen tonë para Perëndisë.

Në Katekizmin tradicional të Kishës radhiten tre tipe lutjesh: kërkesë, falenderim dhe lavdërim. Ne mund të shtojmë një tip të katërt, që mund të quhet vajtim ose ankim para Perëndisë, duke e pyetur atë rreth kushteve të jetës dhe kuptimit të ekzistencës sonë, veçanërisht në kohëra fatkeqësie e turbullirash. Në Shkrimin e Shenjtë, ne i gjejmë shpesh këto katër tipe lutjesh.

Disa herë lutja është përkufizuar si një dialog me Perëndinë. Ky përkufizim është i mjaftueshëm, nëse mbajmë ndër mend, se ky është një dialog qetësie, mbajtur në qetësinë e zemrave tona. Në Kishën Orthodokse, një përkufizim i vjetër tradicional, e quan lutjen "ngritja e

Kendi Shqip Continued on Page 3

PASTOR'S MESSAGE – continued from Page 1

Once there was a very holy monk in the desert who was elected bishop of a certain city. He left his home in the wilderness and his brother monks to take up his new responsibilities in the city under his care. Several years later, one of the bishop's friends came from the desert and paid him a visit. After spending the day praying and visiting, they sat down to dinner. The bishop's cook brought out a large roasted chicken and placed it on the table. The monk visiting from the desert simply stared at it.

"Is there something wrong, Brother," asked the bishop.

"Father," the monk said, "this is a bird. We monks make a vow never to eat meat."

"Yes, I know," said the bishop, "since leaving the desert, I have eaten meat. But, I in my life I have made a promise never to speak a judgemental word against anyone."

"Truly, Father," replied the monk, "yours is the greater fast."

This story is not meant as a license to totally disregard the "outer fast" of meat, dairy, etc. But it is offered simply to illustrate that if we are only concerned with the outward fast, we are missing the point. The spiritual benefit of the fast is not in the act itself, but in how it trains our will. The "outer fast" — abstaining from animal products, luxuries, etc. — strengthens our spiritual resolve for the more fundamental "inner fast" — abstaining from sin.

Each of us has wisdom, and free will. Each must choose what to do with the festivities around us. We can simply decline invitations. Alternately, we can go but keep the fast (bring our own food, for example, or ask our host to prepare vegetarian or vegan options). Or, we can partake of what is given to us, but do so in a moderate way. Any way we take it, our fast will be truly fruitful if our approach is keeping us open to God's grace strengthening our spiritual fortitude.

May each of us use this time of preparation wisely. It is not an obligation but a gift. My prayer is that our Lord Jesus Christ will touch each one of us during this Advent season as we commit ourselves to the spiritual preparation for His Nativity. In this way, may we all discover that the person that we are when we come out of the fast on December 25th is a little different – a little better – than the one who were when we entered it on November 15th.

See you in Church
+Andrew

KENDI SHQIP – Continued from Page 2

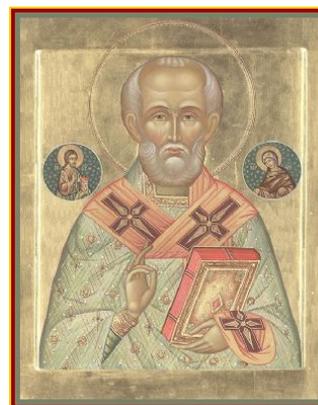
mendjes dhe e zembrës tek Perëndia", qëndrimi në praninë e tij, vetëdija dhe kujtimi i pandërprerë i emrit, fuqisë dhe dashurisë së tij. Kjo lloj lutje është quajtur "të ecësh në praninë e Perëndisë."

Qëllimi i lutjes, është që të kesh një Kungim me Perëndinë dhe që të bëhesh i aftë të përmbushësh dëshirën e Tij. Të krishterët lutën që t'a aftësojnë vetveten për të njohur Perëndinë dhe për të zbatuar porosinë e Tij. Nëse një person nuk e ka dëshirën për të ndryshuar vetveten dhe për ta nënshtruar vetveten tek Krishti, në përmbushjen e porosive të Tij, ai nuk ka arsye ose qëllim për t'u lutur. Madje, sipas shenjtorëve është e rrezikshme t'i lutesh Perëndisë pa pasur mendimin për t'iu përgjegjur dhe për të ecur në rrugën që lutja na udhëheq.

Por një fushë ma e blertë nuk shtrohet,	Pa ty lules s'm' l vien era,
Por një mal ma bukur s'rri,	Pa ty pema fryt nuk m'bjen;
Ma i kulluet një lum s'dikohet,	Mue pa ty nuk m'del prendvera,
Moj Shqypni, pors i ke ti.	Pa ty dielli nuk m'shkëlxen.

N'ty ma i bukur lulzon prilli,	Dersa t'mundem me ligjrue
Janë ma t'kandshme stinë e mot;	E sa gjall me frymë un jam,
N'ty bylbyli pa le dielli	Kurr, Shqypni, s'kam me t'harrue,
Kndon ma ambël t'Madhit Zot.	Edhe n'vorr me t'përmendë kam.

St. Nicholas Day Celebration
Sunday, December 6th
Dinner after Liturgy
Tickets \$25, Buy in Advance



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Building Expansion Continues – Interior Work Begins.....



Progress continues as indicated above. The Foundation and the Concrete Roof have been completed. Interior work has begun with the Elevator Shaft construction and the opening of the existing Fellowship Hall Wall into the new space under the parking lot. See more Photos on the Church's website, www.stnicholasalbanian.org. On the homepage, click the "Construction Progress" box at the lower right corner.

Your help to pay for the Building Project is very much needed. Please make your donation, soon!!!

Community News

By Linda Foundos

- Congratulations to Joanne Heiser who has been promoted to Academic Support Assistant in the St. John's College of Liberal Arts and Science Graduate Division. She will be working with graduate students from 18 different programs in the University. Joanne has been working at St. John's as Library Science Department Chair Secretary for the past 10 years! They are so lucky to have you! Enjoy your new position.
- May God bless the newly baptized Racquel Eleni, precious daughter of Gjyljiana & Illirjan Lacaj. Valbona Mullaj is so proud to serve as Godmother. We wish Racquel, her family and her sponsor much happiness.
- What a wonderful experience for Kostandina Dede to return to Albania for the first time after 9 years. She was born in Permet, but grew up in Tirane with her parents, 2 sisters and 1 brother. Kostandina had a great time covering a lot of territory with family and friends.....from Vlore, Sarande, Durres, Tirane, etc. She was amazed with all the changes.
- Our sincere congratulations to Agathia & Ilia Luka on the marriage of their son, Barry to Sarah McGovern in a beautiful, romantic wedding at the Ocean Place Resort in New Jersey. Everyone enjoyed the festivities. The newlyweds are working and making their home in Connecticut. We wish the happy couple many, many years filled with joy and love. Te Tashegohen!!
- Best wishes to Vanessa & Erral Lengu on the baptism of their son Alexander Pandeli. We wish Alexander a very long, happy and healthy life. All the best to the entire family and to Dorina & Elvin Lengu, the proud Godparents.
- Kudos to Dr. Egesta (Dede) Mani who completed her residency at Lincoln Hospital (affiliated with Cornell) and is now working in The Bronx at the Medalliance Outpatient Clinic in internal medicine. Her husband, Dr. Neritan Mani is the Chief Hospitalist at the Hudson Valley Hospital. They certainly do enjoy a full schedule with their work and their beautiful 7 year old son and 4 year old daughter. All the best!
- The Thomas family is in pink!! Congratulations to Carmen & Mitch Thomas on the birth of their first grandchild Keira Ann born to their son Doug and his wife, Rachael on October 1st. Keira weighed in at 8 lbs. 1 oz and is doing great. She is a very lucky girl as are they to have her. Many blessings upon Keira and all her family.
- Hooray!! the Yankees have won their 40th American League pennant! And now they are looking for their 27th World Series Championship. The Yankees have provided some exciting baseball. Good luck to them!!

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

This Month's Feast Days

Synaxis of the Archangel Michael and the Other Bodiless Powers Commemorated on November 8th



The Synaxis of the Chief of the Heavenly Hosts, Archangel Michael and the Other Heavenly Bodiless Powers was established at the beginning of the fourth century at the Council of Laodicea, which met several years before the First Ecumenical Council. The 35th Canon of the Council of Laodicea condemned and denounced as heretical the worship of angels as gods and rulers of the world, but affirmed their proper veneration.

A Feastday was established in November, the ninth month after March (with which the year began in ancient times) since there are Nine Ranks of Angels. The eighth day of the month was chosen for the Synaxis of all the Bodiless Powers of Heaven since the Day of the Dread Last Judgment is called the Eighth Day by the holy Fathers. After the end of this age (characterized by its seven days of Creation) will come the Eighth Day, and then "the Son of Man shall come in His Glory and all the holy Angels with Him" (Mt. 25:31).

The Angelic Ranks are divided into three Hierarchies: highest, middle, and lowest. The Highest Hierarchy includes: the Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones. The Middle Angelic Hierarchy consists of three Ranks: Dominions, Powers, and Authorities. The Lowest Hierarchy also

includes the three Ranks: Principalities, Archangels, and Angels. All the Ranks of the Heavenly Powers are called angels, although each has its own name and position by virtue of their service. The Lord reveals His will to the highest ranks of the angels, and they in turn inform the others.

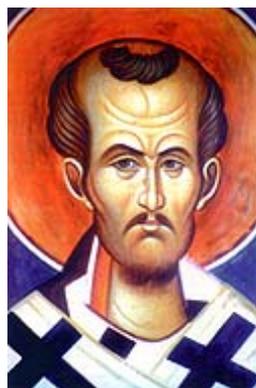
Over all the Nine Ranks, the Lord appointed the Holy Archangel Michael (his name in Hebrew means "who is like unto God"), the faithful servitor of God, as Chief Commander. He cast down from Heaven the arrogantly proud Lucifer and the other fallen spirits when they rebelled against God. Michael summoned the ranks of angels and cried out, "Let us attend! Let us stand aright before our Creator and do not consider doing what is displeasing unto God!" According to Church Tradition, and in the church services to the Archangel Michael, he participated in many other Old Testament events.

We invoke St Michael for protection from invasion by enemies and from civil war, and for the defeat of adversaries on the field of battle. He conquers all spiritual enemies. Each person has a guardian angel, and every nation also receives its own guardian angel from God (Dan. 10:13). When a church is consecrated, it also receives a guardian angel.

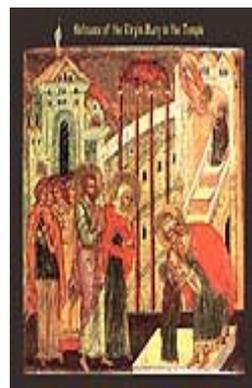
MAJOR FEAST DAYS IN NOVEMBER



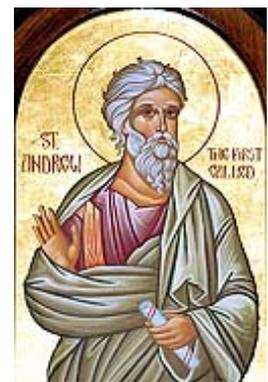
**Sts. Cosmas & Damian
Wonderworkers &
Unmercenary Physicians
November 01**



**St. John Chrysostom
the Archbishop of
Constantinople
November 13**



**The Entry of the Most
Holy Mother of God
into the Temple
November 21**



**Holy Apostle Andrew
the Holy and All-
Praised First-Called
November 30**

Major Church Activities and Events

- Sun, Nov 01: Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.
Sts. Cosmas and Damian
- Mon, Nov 02: Parish Council Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- Wed, Nov 04: Adult Study Group, 7:00 p.m.
- Sun, Nov 08: Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m. – Feast of
St. Michael the Archangel
- Wed, Nov 11: Adult Study Group, 7:00 p.m.
- Sun, Nov 15: Divine Liturgy, 10:00
- Sat, Nov 21: Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.
Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple
- Sun, Nov 21: Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.
- Sun, Nov 29: Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.
- Mon, Nov 30: Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.
St. Andrew the First-Called Apostle
- Sun, Dec 06: Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.
St. Nicholas Dinner after Liturgy

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

- Nov 01: Ilir Fundo / Stefan Baltadori
- Nov 08: Bill Peters / Ilia Luka
- Nov 15: Petrika Troja / Nasi Pavllo
- Nov 22: Andrea Kutali / John Jance
- Nov 29: Damian Peters / Steven Foundos
- Dec 06: Lou Foundos / Robert Korra
- Dec 13: Roland Llupa / Edi Sera

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.stnicholasalbanian.org

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