

# THE ORTHODOX POST

November 2011

Volume VII, Issue 11



*St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church, 181-14 Midland Parkway, Jamaica Estates, New York, NY 11432*  
*Web site: [www.stnicholasalbanian.org](http://www.stnicholasalbanian.org) E-mail: [fr.nathan@stnicholasalbanian.org](mailto:fr.nathan@stnicholasalbanian.org) Tel: (718) 380-5684*

## Pastor's Message

by Fr. Nathan Preston

November, with its sky grown chalky grey, marks the turn of the seasons. This transition of autumn, its early dusks and necessity of a jacket, denotes entrance into the festive days of December. As every child knows, Thanksgiving marks the start of Christmas preparation. Every parent greets this same news with somewhat less eager anticipation, knowing what must be done, purchased, prepared, and completed for these celebrations. As we enter this season of preparation and anxiety, it is good to reflect on how we Christians understand joy and thanksgiving, the message of these days.

All virtues are the occupation of the Christian, and, as occupation, they require activity and pursuit for their fulfillment. It does not suffice simply to feel the boisterousness of joy or the kindly indebtedness of thanks. Rather, these things must be put into practice with or without feelings to accompany them. This is difficult particularly for these two virtues as they are ephemeral, lacking the concrete manifestations that other graces may take. Generosity requires that we actually give; charity demands we extend our blessings to others; love expects that we will be present at times of inconvenience, committed to the lives of others as we are to our own; but what of joy and thanks? What is their implementation?

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Pastor's Message & President's Message	1
Daughters' Corner & Kendi Shqip	2
Information Seminar and St. Nicholas Celebration	3-4
Pledge Program for 2012	5
Building Expansion Project Donors	6-7
Flea Market & Bake Sale	8
The Month's Major Feast Days	9
Major Events & Ushers' Sunday Schedule	10

Thanksgiving is a virtue of memory, its central tenet the recollection that we do not get what we deserve. It is an uncomfortable truth of our faith that there is nothing we can do, no one we can be or become, nothing we can give to make our relationship with God a fair bargain. We cannot ever stand on equal footing with Him, for we are peerless before our God. So vast is His superiority to us that we cannot begin to imagine this in terms that make sense. Thus, that He chooses to embrace us nonetheless, we hardly comprehend. That He chooses to engage us, that He chooses to offer to us opportunities for service, that He chooses to send others to us that we may serve them as Him, all these things are remarkable, miraculous even.

Continued on page 9

## President's Message

by Bill Peters

First, a big "Thank You" to all of you who helped make our Flea Market and Bake Sale a success. Also, a special acknowledgement goes to the many volunteer workers, "The Team" under the leadership of co-chairs Linda Foundos and Tina Peters that made the success of this fundraising event possible.

As usual, November will be a very busy month with extra church services and events as shown on the page 10 Schedule. On November 13, after Liturgy we will hold our semi-annual General Parish Meeting for all to attend. On November 19, we are hosting an Information Seminar for our Parishioners dealing with some basics of income planning as one looks into the future towards retirement. This info is good for all adults. Also on Saturday, November 19 at 4pm Fr. Nathan will begin the Fall sessions of Adult Religious Study.

Preparations for St. Nicholas Day Celebration and Luncheon are underway. Seating is limited, so buy your tickets in advance. That day, we will dedicate a large wall Plaque thanking all those individuals who made donations to the Building Expansion Project. Their names as they will appear on the Plaque are shown on pages 6 and 7. Anyone still wanting to make a generous donation and get their name on the Plaque should contact Lou Foundos, Tomi Beno, Fr. Nathan or any Parish Council member.

Finally, to all, best wishes for a

- gracious Happy Thanksgiving Day and
- joyous Albanian Flag Day - "Dita E Flamurit" !!!!

## DAUGHTERS' CORNER

by Linda Foundos

A great effort was put forth for a successful Flea Market and Bake Sale once again. Everything went smoothly. Our "regular" customers were so happy to be back. They just love the bargains; and especially enjoy haggling over the price!

There were so many that worked behind the scenes in preparation for the weekend, especially those that donated items, those that cooked ethnic foods and other tasty treats at church or at home, and those that worked the sale weekend.

You were all amazing and very much appreciated!!!

Tina Peters and I, as Co-Chairs, thank you very much.

## Albanian Flag Day – Dita E Flamurit November 28

**COMMUNITY NEWS** Please contact Linda Foundos, [ggsutter@aol.com](mailto:ggsutter@aol.com) or 516-671-8071, with any news to share.....birth, special anniversary, vacation, major accomplishment or academic honor, new house, new job, etc.

## General Parish Meeting

Sunday, November 13<sup>th</sup>, after Liturgy



**Come to our Meeting!!!!**

*Important business of the St. Nicholas Parish will be discussed, including: Building Expansion Project, Sunday School and Albanian Class, Adult Religious Education, Church Finances, Social Activities, and Daughters of St. Nicholas activities*

## KENDI SHQIP

(The Albanian Corner)



by A. Llupa

Nentor, 2011

Këtë muaj do të lexoni një pjesë nga Metropolitoni Antoni Blum i Londrës nga e cila të gjithë mund të përfitojmë dicka.

Ikona e Dëmtuar

Vetëm duke depërtuar në brendësi të njeriut,  
Mund të shohim bukurinë që ekziston në të dhe  
mund të pëlqejmë dicka tek ai.  
S'mund të përkrahim dikë tek i cili shohim vetëm gabime,  
Ç'është e shëmtuar, ç'është e dëmtuar në shpirtin e tij.

Kur Krishti vëzhgonte njerzit që takonte, prostitutën apo hajdutin

Ai shihte një bukuri që fshihej atje.  
Ndoshta ishte bukuri e dëmtuar, por Ai e quante atë "bukuri".  
Dhe Ai gjithmonë e ndihmoi këtë "bukuri".  
Të njëjtën gjë duhet të mësohemi ta bëjmë edhe ne për të tjerët.  
Por kjo bëhet vetëm me një zemër të pastër,  
Me një qëllim të kthjellët, me një zemërgjerësi që jo gjithmonë e kemi...

Që të shohim tek njerzit bukurinë që fshihet  
Duhet të mendojmë se secili nga ne është një imazhi i Zotit  
Që duhet konsideruar si një ikonë e dëmtuar...  
Sikur të na jepej një ikonë e dëmtuar nga koha, nga rrethanat,  
Apo të shkatërruar nga urrejtja njerëzore,  
Ne përsëri do ta trajtonim atë ikonë me respect, me kujdes, me butësi.

Ne s'do t'i kushtonim rëndësi faktit që ajo është e dëmtuar  
Por do na vinte keq për tragjedinë e saj dhe do të shijonim "bukurinë" që i kish mbetur  
Këtë duhet të bëjmë edhe ne kur flasim për marëdhënjet me njerzit...

## Information Seminar – Basics of Income Planning Saturday, November 19<sup>th</sup> (10am to 12noon)

As part of the Church's outreach and service to the Community, you are invited to an information seminar dealing with some basics of income planning that will be useful to you as you look into the future toward retirement.

The Seminar will be held our St. Nicholas Church's Fellowship Hall. Speakers from Prudential Financial will be addressing the attendees. They are:

- Genti Qipo (Financial Professional Associate) and
- Sean Kath (Territorial Vice President)

This Information Seminar will present:

- a review of the most common plans for saving money with their respective tax advantages and
- a look at Social Security's current status and future outlook.

This Seminar can be a first step in gathering knowledge for starting a game plan or it can be an opportunity to get updated information to compare with knowledge or plans you may already have.

Plan on attending, space is limited so reserve your place by contacting:

- Tomi Beno at (917)952-9252 or [tom@benogroup.net](mailto:tom@benogroup.net)
- Genti Qipo at (347) 277-6586 or [genti.qipo@prudential.com](mailto:genti.qipo@prudential.com)

WHAT ARE YOUR PRIORITIES?

# ATTEND FINANCIAL CHALLENGES THAT MATTER MOST SEMINAR



Learn some basics of income planning for retirement and take the first steps to developing a game plan

### • Social Security Benefits

- *Current Status*
- *Future Outlook*

### • Retirement Plans

- *401(k)/403(b)/457(k)*
- *IRA's – Traditional / Roth*
- *Variable Annuities*



## *St. Nicholas Day Luncheon*

Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup>  
after Liturgy  
in the Fellowship Hall

Complete fish dinner: \$20  
Children dinner: Free

Please come and help us celebrate our St. Nicholas Feast Day. Let us together worship, share a meal and enjoy each other's friendship.

Tickets will be sold in advance at coffee hour on Sunday, November 20 & 27 and Sunday, December 4.

Also, tickets can be purchased by contacting Linda Foundos, Bill Peters, Tomi Beno or Lou Foundos.

Space is limited. Please plan to buy your tickets in advance.

There will also be prizes to be won at our raffle!!



## Pledge Program for 2012

Pledge Program letters have been mailed to parishioners. As we look into planning for 2012 we begin, once again, with you. We appreciate your continued generosity and it is with your spiritual, physical, and monetary support that maintains St. Nicholas here for us to gather together as one community.

Pledging is the financial commitment each of us makes to pay for all that we do. Giving from our own abundance, sustains the work and mission of the church in ways that benefit us directly, benefit other members of our church and our community. We also reap the spiritual benefits of a life founded on generosity and giving, in gratitude for all that we have received. Nothing is possible without that first commitment from each of you, and we urge you to think about all that St. Nicholas means in your life as you make your Pledge.

We ask you to consider increasing your Pledge over last year's amount. If you can't, at least meet last year's amount. The Pledges you make and fulfill cover only about one-half of the costs to operate the Church and serve parishioners. Your generous Pledge will help close that gap.

Please complete the enclosed pledge card and return it to the church office by December 1<sup>st</sup>. Your help will enable the council to determine the 2012 budget.

As always, St. Nicholas appreciates all your generosity.

## 2012 Pledge Program - Questions and Answers

### **Q. Does my pledge really matter?**

A. Absolutely! Your pledge is a vital sign of your commitment to the church. Like individuals, the church cannot make a budget without knowing what its income will be. More profoundly, your pledge – as an act of giving back to God – is a tangible sign of your gratitude in response to God's grace.

### **Q. But I always put an offering in the plate. Isn't that the same thing?**

A. Plate offerings are always welcome, but they're widely variable, and the church needs to plan. Without a Pledge Card, Pledge Envelop, and related member account, you will not get credit for your donations. Further, since 2007, cash contributions are not considered tax deductible without a receipt.

### **Q. What is proportional and intentional giving?**

A. The Church asks us to recognize the Biblical tithe, 10% of our income, as a standard to which to aspire in our giving. Few people, however, are likely to start tithing all at once. Realistically, most of us may not be in a place to tithe and the 10% standard can seem out of reach. Proportional and intentional giving refers to the private process each of us makes to prayerfully designate some percentage of our income to the church. As we each grow in our spiritual journey we will likely find our percentage increasing, even if we start at one or two percent. When we no longer give to the church whatever we have left over after all of our other expenses – but take a percentage of our income off the top from the beginning for the church – we are being intentional and proportional in our giving.

### **Q. If I have a very modest income, wouldn't a proportional pledge be too small to make a difference?**

A. No pledge amount is too small to make a difference in the parish if it makes a difference to you and the way you live your life.

### **Q. There are many worthy charities to which I make gifts. How should St. Nicholas factor in?**

A. We appreciate that so many of St. Nicholas members support a variety of worthy causes. But consider these two points: As an organization the parish is a small entity. Our parish is almost entirely dependent on the generosity and support of its members both past and present. We do not receive grants from outside sources like many charities. Without the support of all its members the St. Nicholas would not exist. Secondly, and more profoundly, stewardship is not about philanthropy and fund-raising. Stewardship for Christians is about the spiritual journey of giving back what we already acknowledge to be God's grace, given to us abundantly and freely, in our lives.

### **Q. What is our total operating budget?**

A. The church's total 2012 Budget to operate the church is about \$130,000. However, only about one-half of that needed money comes from pledges from our parish members through our Pledge Program. The other half of the needed money comes from several major fundraisers, candle sales, interest on stocks and bonds, rental of church space, open donations, gifts, etc. Our goal is to increase the Pledges each year so a greater share of the budget money needed to operate the church is raised through our Pledge Program.

### **Q. What does the church do with the money we receive?**

A. The Church pays for all our ministries and programs. That includes worship, pastoral care, music, youth ministry, all our Sunday school and adult education programs, stewardship and outreach to the wider community. It also pays for utilities, insurance and building and grounds maintenance. This is the time when we, as a community, review our commitments to staff, and to programs to sustain and further develop these ministries for a new year. Without pledges we are unable to make these commitments.

## Building Expansion Project – Updated Donor List

It is planned to formally acknowledge the specific donors to our Building Expansion Project later this year at the St. Nicholas Day Luncheon on Sunday, December 11. It will be a formal "Thank You" to those who made this Project possible. A large plaque listing the names of the donors will be created. The amount of the individual donation will not be listed. However, as indicated in the original fund raising pamphlets, the donor names will be grouped, alphabetically, within bands representing broad dollar ranges.

To insure the accuracy of the final list, presented below for review and comment are the grouping of donor names. If you have any questions regarding this listing such as spelling of name or your name is missing or in the wrong group, please contact Bill Peters at Church, via email (peterslwp@optimum.net) or at (516) 248-8462. If you still want to make a donation and get on the Plaque, contact Bill Peters or Lou Foundos.

Again, to all of you who Donated, THANK YOU VERY MUCH!!!

### Visionary (\$15,000 to \$25,000)

Al	Foundos
Louis and Linda	Foundos
Rosalie	Zacharias
Memorial Fund for Joan D.	Foundos
St. Nicholas Building Journal/Dance Donors	

### Benefactor (\$1,000 to \$4,999)

Albanian Archdiocese Donors	
Lenore	Apostolu
Ektor and Vitore	Argjendari
Harry	Bajraktari
Stefan and Juliana	Baltadori
Dhimiter and Diana	Beno
Steven	Foundos
Phillip and Johanna	Foundos
Ilir and Fjona	Fundo
Thomaq and Suzana	Fundo
Vasken and Anila	Gjika
Ellen	Gradt
Kostandin and Momoza	Grazhdani
Britu	Haile
Larry	Jance
John	Jance
Eftim	Joco
Viola	Kallinikos
Dr. Ivi	Kasimati

### Patron (\$5,000 to \$14,999)

Tomi and Christine	Beno
Beti Beno and	Isidoros Tsamblakos
Richard and Georgianne	Kasuli
Robert and Tina	Korra
James and Christina	Liolin
Roland, Adelina and Orges	Llupa
James and Donna	Oswald
Bill and Tina	Peters

### Supporter (\$100 to \$999)

Bujar and Suela	Asameni
Sabita	Balloo
Ylli	Cakani
Jorgji and Eleni	Coka
Piro	Diamanti
Frederik and Lori	Dilo
Barbara	Duggan
Alfred	Fundo
Joanne and Doug	Heiser
Steve and Diane	Jones
Edisa	Karamitri
Nikola	Leshi
Elizabeth	Liolin
Vasil	Macuka
Ermira	Mezini
Ilir	Panajoti

**Benefactor**  
(continued)  
(\$1,000 to \$4,999)

Aristotel and Mirela	Kondili
Fotaq and Lina	Kondili
Andrea and Silvana	Kutali
Rozetta	Logore
Pauline	Logore
Ilia and Agathia	Luka
Carlos and Maria	Matute
Memorial Fund for Edward Naum	
Ardian and Irma	Mile
Roland and Gliqeri	Mizaku
Thomas and Concetia	Mone
Peter and Helen	Panajoti
Mark and Barbara	Papalexis
Nasi	Pavlo
Vasil and Suzana	Pecani
Lenora	Peter
Damian and Jenny	Peters
Vladimir	Peto
Christe and Jean	Preftes
Despina	Psirakis,
Violet	Rupp,
Edi and Oneida	Sera
Perikli and Kozara	Sheti
Ardian	Skenderi
Thomas and Odeta	Skendi
Andrea and Adriana	Topore
Petrika and Eli	Troja
Alma	Vesho

**Supporter**  
(continued)  
(\$100 to \$999)

Albert	Perndocoaj
Kristaq and Romana	Petro
Helen and Nicholas	Phillips
Artan	Qosja
Sami and Diana	Repishti
Matthew	Sotir
Gjergji	Terova
Erald	Troja
Kristaq and Mimoza	Vangjel
Andon	Veizi
Angelo	Xhellaj

**Adult Education**

**Begins on Saturday, November 19 at 4pm**

Do you wonder why certain days are considered “great” feasts of the Church? Do you want to know what you are seeing when you kiss the icons of these feasts? Do you want to learn about how the Church sanctifies (makes holy) time?

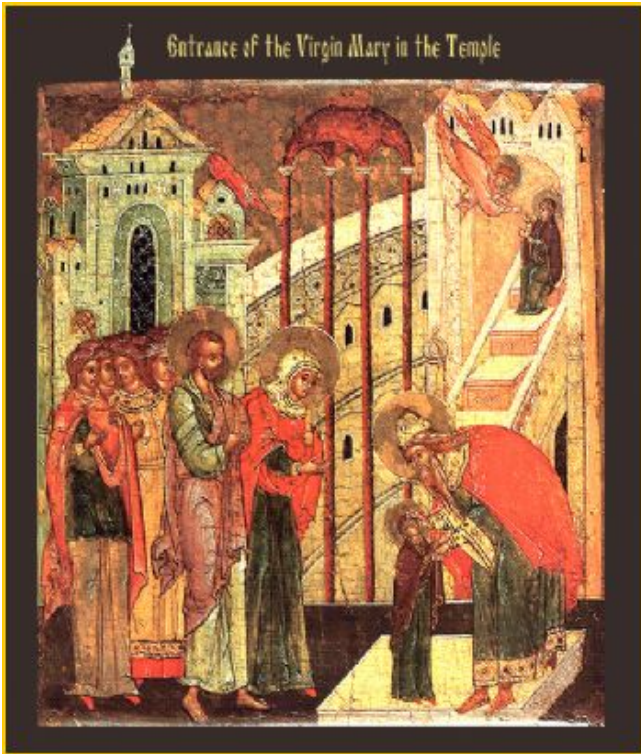
Come to Adult Study on Saturdays at 4pm beginning November 19.

During the pre-Christmas fast, we will learn about a different holy day at each meeting, examining the history, icons, and hymns for each of these. Let us learn how to celebrate with the Church and in the Church by examining its holy days.

See you there!!!

**Pastor’s Message** (continued from page 1)

God so desires us that He became one of us, so that we might know Him. The virtue of thanksgiving is to remember this. Thanksgiving is to know our own unworthiness at being in the position of standing before the face of God. It is to know also that we are always in that position—before Him and with Him. Joy is the same, an accompanying gesture to this movement of thanksgiving. It is to live in the presence of God and experience this world with all its problems as His great gift. It is to despair not, for all is His. Joy is not happiness. It does not draw near or take flight according to our own gratification. Happiness is fleeting and, though we do not like to admit as much, beyond our control. Joy is the discipline of thanksgiving, the exercise of memory, the martyrdom of vision, the remembrance of God. We seek joy, as Christians, not happiness because we seek that which endures and has eternal value. For the saints, there is joy in suffering even in places and situations absent of happiness. The task of the saints, our task, is to struggle to find value in this world, to treasure it despite its blood and tears, because we know full well that our God treasures it. He loves it, and we are witnesses to this love. This is joy. As the season changes and hastens into winter, so may we mature. Turning, realigning our course, filling the momentum of our lives with real hope and true thanks, let us greet the fall and all it holds.



**The Entry of our Most Holy Lady the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary into the Temple –**

**Commemorated on November 21st.**

According to Holy Tradition, the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple took place in the following manner. The parents of the Virgin Mary, Sts Joachim and Anna, praying for an end to their childlessness, vowed that if a child were born to them, they would dedicate it to the service of God.

When the Most Holy Virgin reached the age of three, the holy parents decided to fulfill their vow. They gathered together their relatives and acquaintances, and dressed the All-Pure Virgin in Her finest clothes. Singing sacred songs and with lighted candles in their hands, virgins escorted Her to the Temple. There the High Priest and several priests met the handmaiden of God. In the Temple, fifteen high steps led to the sanctuary, which only the priests and High Priest could enter. The child Mary, so it seemed, could not make it up this stairway. But just as they placed Her on the first step, strengthened by the power of God, She quickly went up the remaining steps and ascended to the highest one. Then the High Priest, through inspiration from above, led the Most Holy Virgin into the Holy of Holies, where only the High Priest entered once a year to offer a purifying sacrifice of blood. Therefore, all those present in the Temple were astonished at this most unusual occurrence.

After entrusting their child to the Heavenly Father, Joachim and

Anna returned home. The All-Holy Virgin remained in the quarters for virgins near the Temple. The earthly life of the Most Holy Theotokos from Her infancy until She was taken up to Heaven is shrouded in deep mystery. Her life at the Jerusalem Temple was also a secret. "If anyone were to ask me," said St Jerome, "how the Most Holy Virgin spent the time of Her youth, I would answer that that is known to God Himself and the Archangel Her constant guardian."

But there are accounts in Church Tradition, that during the All-Pure Virgin's stay at the Temple, She grew up in a community of pious virgins, diligently read the Holy Scripture, occupied Herself with handicrafts, prayed constantly, and grew in love for God. From ancient times, the Church has celebrated the Feast of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple. Indications that the Feast was observed in the first centuries of Christianity are found in the traditions of Palestinian Christians, which say that the holy Empress Helen built a church in honor of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple. St Gregory of Nyssa, in the fourth century, also mentions this Feast. In the eighth century Sts Germanus and Tarasius, Patriarchs of Constantinople, delivered sermons on the Feast of the Entry.

The Feast of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple foretells God's blessing for the human race, the preaching of salvation, the promise of the coming of Christ.

**MAJOR FEAST DAYS IN NOVEMBER**



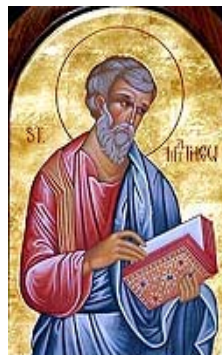
**Sts. Cosmas and Damian**  
Nov 01



**Archangel Michael and all Holy Angels**  
Nov 08



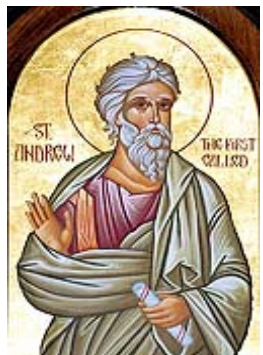
**St. John Chrysostom**  
Nov 13



**Apostle and Evangelist Matthew**  
Nov 16



**Greatmartyr Catherine**  
Nov 24



**Apostle Andrew**  
Nov 30



## Flea Market & Bake Sale

On Saturday and Sunday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Daughters of St. Nicholas ran their annual Flea Market & Bake Sale. Our community and many neighbors in the area attended this event. People especially enjoyed buying and eating the variety of ethnic foods - lakror, baklava and many other pastries, as well as shopping for clothing, jewelry, books, toys, games and household goods among other things.

A special "Thank You" goes to all those who worked on the extensive preparations for this event and who worked to sell food at the bake sale table and kitchen, as well as to the sections selling clothes, shoes, jewelry, books, electronics, household goods, children's toys and sports equipment.

As the result of the efforts of many, the event was a great success!!! This event is an important fundraiser for our Church. A hearty "Congratulations and a Job Well Done!!!" goes to co-chairwomen Linda Foundos and Tina Peters and their Team of Hard-Working Parishioners.

### Enjoy the Photos!!!



**Major Church Activities and Events**

Vespers every Saturday at 5:00 p.m. (except Nov 5)

- Sun, Nov 06: Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.
- Sat, Nov 12: Vespers, 5:00 p.m.
- Sun, Nov 13: Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.; General Parish Meeting, following Divine Liturgy
- Mon, Nov 14: Parish Council Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- Sat, Nov 19: Income Planning Seminar, 10 a.m to 12 p.m.  
Adult Study, 4:00 p.m.; Vespers, 5:00 p.m.
- Sun, Nov 20: Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.;  
Vespers, 5:00 p.m.  
Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos
- Mon, Nov 21: Liturgy, Entrance of the Theotokos, 10:00 a.m.
- Sat, Nov 26: Adult Study, 4:00 p.m.; Vespers, 5:00p.m.
- Sun, Nov 27: Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.
- Sun. Dec. 04: Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.
- Sat, Dec 10: Adult Study, 4:00 p.m.; Vespers, 5:00p.m.
- Sun, Dec. 11: Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m. St. Nicholas Day Luncheon in Fellowship Hall following Liturgy

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

- Nov 06: Lou Foundos / Robert Korra
- Nov 13: Roland Llupa / Edi Sera
- Nov 20: Andrea Kutali / John Jance
- Nov 27: Bill Peters / Ilia Luka
- Dec 04: Ken Gjika / Izzy Tsamblakos

*We're on the Web!*

*Visit us at:*

[www.stnicholasalbanian.org](http://www.stnicholasalbanian.org)

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



Customer Name  
Street Address  
City, State Zip Code