

THE ORTHODOX POST

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Pastor's Message

by Fr. Nathan Preston

I tend to get a lot of reading done during Lent. Specifically, I tend to get a lot of reading done during the first couple weeks of the Fast before my enthusiasm and discipline wane and while the radio remains silent and You Tube subscriptions unchecked. After that, my old habits flare up, and Lent becomes a struggle (as it probably should). Growth is never easy.

I like to save some books for later. In the same way that I regularly put something aside for long airplane flights, so too I try to come prepared to the opening weeks of these holy forty days. As this Lent began, I was happy to pull from the stack of my reading list a wonderful volume of saints' lives.

Traditionally, stories of saints tend to be told in particular ways with the lines between reading, writing, and prayer often blurred. For the author, writing is an act of devotion, a movement of pen and heart. While for the reader (or hearer, as was historically more often the case), each story is a meditation, a prayer of thought. It is not unusual, therefore, for the author to make demands of the reader. For example, that he (but occasionally she) should request that the reader offer prayers on his behalf: "Pray for the unworthy sinner _____, who has written these poor words." In like manner, these stories of saints often makes promises that extend beyond their pages, assuring the audience that the endeavor of reading or listening and offering such requested prayers will not go unrewarded. In the particular volume that I had

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saved and, in anticipation, savored to open during Lent, I found a most interesting exchange of this type between author, audience, and saint.

Imitating the words of two Gospels, the writer enjoins that none who give in charity and devotion even so small an offering as a cup of cold water in honor of the saint will be deprived of divine reward. A solitary cup of cold water: who of us cannot comply? I had read these similar words in Matthew and Mark but glossed past them, thinking them mere hyperbole and rhetoric. At the opening of the Great Fast, though, they struck me anew.

We believe that to struggle during Lent is a great thing. Sometimes, we even think mistakenly that it is too great a thing

Continued on Page 4

President's Message

by Bill Peters

In April, we will have several very important activities.

The first activity is the most important in the spiritual life of the Church and our own lives as Orthodox Christians – The celebration of Pascha!!! This represents the end of an annual journey.

We pass through Great Lent with Pre-Sanctified Services on Wednesday evenings. Then we progress through Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday towards Holy Week.

Of course, on Palm Sunday, April 8th, in addition to services, we have our traditional Pancake Breakfast sponsored by the Daughters' of St. Nicholas after Liturgy. All are invited to attend!!!

Then we move through Holy Week with services featuring Holy Unction, the 12 Gospel Readings and the Lamentations of Good Friday. Other activities include the decoration of the Epitaphi by The Daughters' of St. Nicholas and the holding of related services. And finally, we end the week with our celebration of the midnight Pascha Services. For more details, see the schedule of activities on Pages 3 and 8.

The next important activity deals with the participation of you, the Parishioners, in the operations of our Church. On Sunday, April 29th after Liturgy, the Annual Parish General Meeting will be held. At the meeting, we will hear about the religious, administrative and social activities of our Church. Programs will be reviewed and the financial situation of St. Nicholas Church will be discussed. In addition, elections will be held of members to fill vacant positions on the Parish Council which will become empty due to the 3 year terms of some members' ending. Take part in this very important meeting. Stay informed and vote for your Parish Council Representatives. Make a special effort to attend!!!

Related to being active and supporting St. Nicholas Church, please participate in the Annual Pledge Program. Make a financial pledge to support the Church during 2012. Though most have already done so, there are still about 25 people who have not yet sent in their Pledge. PLEASE, Fill out and Submit your Pledge Card, as soon as possible. See Page 3 for more details.

Of course, Sunday School and Albanian Classes will continue for the children. It is important, so please make arrangements for your children to attend regularly.

TO ALL, A BLESSED PASCHA!!!!

DAUGHTERS' CORNER

by Linda Foundos

It is very easy for us to get lost in our busy lives; however, we must be reminded that this Lenten season is a good time to renew our energies and our commitment to Jesus Christ. We wish you all a joyous Paschal season. Krishti U Ngall!

Please join us for our Easter Pancake Breakfast on Sunday, April 8th.

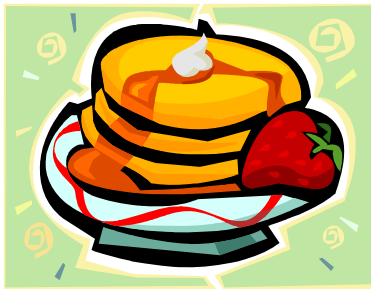
Wisdom:

Use your words to *lift* people, to push them to their greatest potential.

Don't let your past dictate who you are, but rather be a part of who you will become.

Change your thoughts, and you change your world.

Come to Our Pancake Breakfast on Palm Sunday, April 8th



Church School

(Sunday School & Albanian Class)



BRING YOUR CHILDREN TO CHURCH ON SUNDAYS!!!

KENDI SHQIP

(The Albanian Corner)



by A. Llupa

Prill, 2012

Këtë muaj po japim një pjesë mbi keshmën, megjithëse jemi në mes të periudhës

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

Keshma fizike mund të kuptohet si largim nga mishi dhe produktet e bulmetit dhe nga alkoholi.

Keshma shpirtërore përfshin largimin nga e keqja dhe pastrimin e mendimeve, zgjedhjen e fjalëve dhe veprimeve.

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, apo të bëhemi më mirënjohës për çfarë kemi. Nëse nuk hamë mish, le t'ja japim këtë të varfërve, apo të shtojmë lutjen. Dhënja të varfërve mund të na ulë dhe panikun për paratë.

Keshma 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 ka krijuar Zoti janë të mira), por mbajmë keshmë për të përdorur më mirë ç'është krijuar.

Keshma 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 vënd që ne të kontrollojmë ato. Keshma 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. Keshma 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. Keshma është një dhoratë nga Zoti. Një keshmë e vërtetë mund të quhet ky fakt që gjatë luftës së dytë botërore, një prift ortodoks në Greqi dhe familja e tij strehuan dhe fshehën një familje çifute. Gjatë gjithë kësaj kohe, familja greke nuk hëngri gjë tjetër por ushqim që hanin çifutët.

Këshillë: filloni me ngadalë dhe kujtoni më të rëndësishmet: mos pini dhe mos hani para martesës 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 keshme. 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 keshmes, u hidhte kockat e mishit njerzve duke u thënë: ju nuk hani mish, por hani vëllane tuaj".

Parish General Meeting Sunday, April 29th, after Liturgy



Come to our Meeting!!!!

Important business of the St. Nicholas Parish will be discussed: including Building Expansion Project Completion, Religious Education, Church Finances, Social Activities, Daughters of St. Nicholas activities and Parish Council Member Elections.

Pledge Program for 2012

Return your Pledge Cards

To date, some parishioners still have not returned their Pledge Cards for 2012.

If you have not submitted a Pledge Card yet, please mail it in or bring it to Church and give it to Jim Liolin, Lou Foundos or Fr. Nathan.

Your Pledge makes it possible to operate the Church and serve the community.

We appreciate your continued generosity and it is your spiritual, physical, and monetary support that maintains St. Nicholas here for us to gather together as one community.



The following services will be held at St. Nicholas during Holy Week:

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Sat, Apr 07: | Lazarus Saturday, 10:00 a.m. |
| Sun, Apr 08: | Palm Sunday, Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m. |
| Mon, Apr 09: | Bridegroom Matins, 7:00 p.m. |
| Tues, Apr 10: | Holy Tuesday, 7:00 p.m. |
| Wed, Apr 11: | Holy Wednesday, 7:00 p.m.
Holy Unction |
| Thurs, Apr 12: | Holy Thursday – 10:00 a.m.
Vespereal Liturgy
Matins with 12 Gospels – 7:00 p.m. |
| Fri, Apr 13: | Good Friday – 12:00 p.m.;
Lamentations, 7:00 p.m. |
| Sat, Apr 14: | Holy Saturday – 10:00 a.m.
Vespereal Liturgy
Paschal Service, 11:30 p.m. |
| Sun, Apr 15: | Holy Pascha – 12:00 p.m.
Paschal Vespers |
| Wed, Apr 18: | Bright Wednesday Liturgy – 10:00 a.m. |
| Sun, Apr 22: | St. Thomas Sunday Liturgy, 10:00 a.m. |

PASTOR'S MESSAGE (continued from Page 1)

to be within our means. It is not. For a cup of cold water, we may yet win our souls. In these days of drinking fountains and good city water flowing from every tap, we may find the opportunity to live this edict literally scarce, but its central meaning—that no act, however small, can still be a strike towards the good—remains pertinent, applicable, and real. Our challenge is to make even the tiniest of our gestures and interactions holy.

There are thirsty people around us, we meet and speak to them every day, but their thirst is for love, and, particularly by our thoughtless, careless words, we give them often nothing but a little grime, dust, or more nothing. What we say and how we speak reflects the world as we perceive it.

Do I give only orders with never a “please”, never a “would you mind”? Then my world is objects, unpeopled, inhumane, for only I am the center and all those around me exist only as I bid. Do I give thanks to God and to others for good and for bad? If not, I treat the thirsty only to a cup of my steaming expectations and selfish demands. Do I gossip? Then I will have need for a toothpick to flick out the flesh of my neighbor from between my teeth. Do I speak hurt whether in low-spoken sarcasm or loud and angry yells? My world then ripples with discontent or cringing fear. My words, my world.

But to speak a single word with love is to change the world. Where before there was nothing, the void of our expectations or anger or jealousy, now there is something shared, a mutual care. Where before Christ was not, not because He could not be but because we were too busy elbowing Him out of the way to put ourselves first, He is there in our midst. Christ in our words, Christ in our thoughts and interactions, Christ the cold water to slake our thirst.

This Lent, struggle. Change your world; mind your words. Find and remember those small places where it is within your power to give that life-sustaining sip. Growth is never easy. Its absence, though, is death.

COMMUNITY NEWS

By Linda Foundos

- Dr. Perikli Sheti fell asleep in the Lord on Thursday, March 8th. He and his family have been members of our parish community for over 20 years. Dr. Sheti served on the St. Nicholas Parish Council for several years. He was a well-respected man who provided leadership over the years to countless new arrivals in the Ridgewood community. Our heartfelt sympathy to his wife Kozara, son Ralf and daughter Eva along with their families and the extended family as well. He left behind a beautiful mark on this world. May his memory be eternal.
- There is PINK excitement for the Kutali family! Eneida (Kutali) & Orges Kabaj were blessed with a beautiful baby girl on March 11th. Emma Almira weighed 7 pounds 5 ounces and was 21 inches long. Silvana & Andrea, the grandparents, and Kristi, the aunt, are all extremely happy. Our best wishes to Emma and her entire family.
- A very happy, happy birthday to Larry Jance who is now 10 years away from his centennial birthday!! His loving son John and daughter Diane Jones with her family threw Larry a beautiful & fun birthday party. Larry beamed with all the love from his extensive family, especially the secret to his longevity.....Renee, Elizabeth & Sofia!!! We love you Larry!

If you have news you would like to share with the Parish Community, such as a birth, a wedding, engagement, special anniversary, vacation, new house, new job, major accomplishment or academic honor, etc.

Please contact: Linda Foundos, ggsutter@aol.com or 516-671-8071.

Ads from Merchants Who Support the Church – Published in The Orthodox Post (See Pages 6 & 7)

In this issue there are advertisements (Ads) promoting businesses that support our Church which are being displayed in The Orthodox Post on a monthly basis. These Ads are on pages 6 and 7. They will help to financially support our St. Nicholas Church. Therefore, we ask that Parishioners look at the Ads and support these Merchants by buying goods and services from them, whenever possible.



HOLY PASCHA - The Resurrection Of Our Lord
 - Commemorated on April 15th

Enjoy ye all the feast of faith; receive ye all the riches of loving-kindness. *(Sermon of St John Chrysostom, read at Paschal Matins)*

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the center of the Christian faith. St Paul says that if Christ is not raised from the dead, then our preaching and faith are in vain. Indeed, without the resurrection there would be no Christian preaching or faith. The disciples of Christ would have remained the broken and hopeless band which the Gospel of John describes as being in hiding behind locked doors for fear of the Jews. They went nowhere and preached nothing until they met the risen Christ, the doors being shut. Then they touched the wounds of the nails and the spear; they ate and drank with Him. The resurrection became the basis of everything they said and did: ". . . for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have".

The resurrection reveals Jesus of Nazareth as not only the expected Messiah of Israel, but as the King and Lord of a new Jerusalem: a new heaven and a new earth.

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. . . the holy city, new Jerusalem. And I heard a great voice from the throne saying "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away.

In His death and resurrection, Christ defeats the last enemy, death, and thereby fulfills the mandate of His Father to subject all things under His feet. Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.

THE DAY WITHOUT EVENING

Pascha is the inauguration of a new age. It reveals the mystery of the eighth day. It is our taste, in this age, of the new and unending day of the Kingdom of God. Something of this new and unending day is conveyed to us in the length of the paschal services, in the repetition of the paschal order for all the services of Bright Week, and in the special paschal features retained in the services for the forty days until Ascension. Forty days are, as it were, treated as one day. Together they comprise the symbol of the new time in which the Church lives and toward which she ever draws the faithful, from one degree of glory to another.

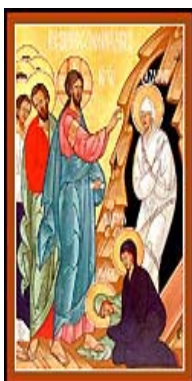
O Christ, great and most holy Pascha. O Wisdom, Word and Power of God, grant that we may more perfectly partake of Thee in the never-ending day of Thy kingdom (Ninth Ode, Paschal Canon).

Exerpts from - The V. Rev. Paul Lazor New York, 1977

MAJOR FEAST DAYS IN APRIL



April 01
St. Mary of Egypt



April 07
Lazarus Saturday



April 08
Palm Sunday



April 23
St. George



April 25
Apostle Mark



April 30
Apostle James

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- Divorce
- Power of Attorney
- Real Estate Closings
- Immigration


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Major Church Activities and Events

Vespers every Saturday at 5:00 p.m.

Presanctified Liturgy and Adult Study every Wednesday at 7 p.m.

Sun, Apr 01: Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.

Mon, Apr 02: Parish Council Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

Sat, Apr 07: Lazarus Saturday Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.

Sun, Apr 08: Palm Sunday Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.
Pancake Breakfast follows in fellowship Hall

SEE PAGE 3 FOR HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Sat, Apr 14: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.
Great and Holy Pascha, 11:30 p.m.

Sun, Apr 15: Paschal Vespers, Noon

Wed, Apr 18 Bright Wednesday Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.

Sun, Apr 22: Thomas Sunday Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.

Mon, Apr 23 St. George Prayers, 7:00 p.m.

Sun, Apr 29: Myrrh Bearing Women Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.
Parish General Meeting after Liturgy

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

Apr 01: Ilir FUNDO / Stefan BALTADORI

Apr 08: Petrika TROJA / Nasi PAVLLO

Apr 15: Andrea KUTALI / John JANCE

Apr 22: Lou FOUNDOS / Robert KORRA

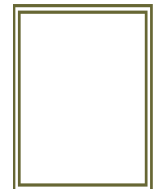
Apr 29: Roland LLUPA / Edi SERA

May 06: Bill PETERS / Ilija LUKA

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