

# THE ORTHODOX POST

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## Pastor's Message

By Father David Fox

Dear friends,

We are approaching the great Feast of the Nativity of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, or what is called in the West, Christmas.

In the midst of the fuss and the noise, we are trying to prepare for the Lord.

We try to fast a little, to give to the poor, to come to Church and pray a little more.

Many of our lives are a great fast: leaving family, homeland, language, cultural traditions, working extra hours, going to school, trying to help our families. We are thankful for the Albanians who have come before us who, by the Grace of God, have placed a Church here so we can return to the Faith that St. Paul delivered himself to Illyria. Others of us have left the communion of our families to receive this precious Faith that is not just an Albanian heritage, but the heritage of every Christian.

## President's Message

By Bill Peters

December is a very busy period with many church and holiday activities. In addition to enjoying these activities, it is important that we all make a special effort to concentrate on the spiritual aspects of this season. Our Church offers us many opportunities to do this, including Sunday Liturgies and special services such as the St. Nicholas Feast Day Vespertal Liturgy on the evening of December 5<sup>th</sup> and the Vespertal Liturgy of St. Basil the Great (Christmas Eve Service) on the evening of December 24<sup>th</sup>. Also, attending Adult Study Group will further help by its discussion of the religious meaning behind the architecture of the church and the items in it.

Our Children will also help us to better

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Like Joseph and the Mother of the Lord, Mary, nearly on a weekly basis, we have to make a kind of pilgrimage to come to St. Nicholas' Church, but, in the midst of our effort, God will come to us; through our effort, His Spirit will be born anew, more deeply, in us, so that we may know by the eyes of our hearts that indeed, God became flesh in Christ. Friends, let us never despair: Come, the Church is here to "lighten our burdens," for "God is with us."

*Pastor's Message is continued on page 6*

understand the true meaning of Christmas with their inspirational presentation of the Christmas Pagaent on December 17<sup>th</sup>. As you can see, our ability to achieve spiritual growth from this Christmas season is up to us. All we have to do is take advantage of the opportunities that are available to us through our Church.

On a secular note, I hope many of you will enjoy the St. Nicholas Day Luncheon on December 10<sup>th</sup>. Seats are limited and tickets must be bought in advance (by December 3<sup>rd</sup>) to avoid overcrowding and people not having seats or food. Following the Christmas Pagaent, come and enjoy our traditional Pancake Breakfast and a Visit from Santa Claus.

On behalf of the Parish Council, I wish you and your families a very

**"Happy and Blessed Christmas Season"**

## Daughters' Corner

By Christina Liolin

On Saturday, October 29 and Sunday, October 30, the Daughters sponsored the Flea Market and Bake Sale. The weather was not very cooperative on Saturday but Sunday was a good day. We did not get as much activity on Saturday as in the past and the gross sales for the weekend were \$3300. After expenses, we netted about \$2600. We are very grateful to all the people who volunteered their time to work one or both days, as well as, several other days the week before to prepare. The Flea Market and Bake Sale would never have happened if not for these people and we thank you all!

On November 19<sup>th</sup>, the Daughters had a meeting at which time it was decided to give the Church \$2000 out of our fund raising efforts toward the operating fund. We will also be making several donations to various charities in Albania as well as the US.

The annual Christmas Pageant Breakfast will be held on December 17<sup>th</sup>. Tina Peters will once again make her famous pancakes. Please plan to attend—the children love it and the grown ups too!

The next meeting will be held on January 21<sup>st</sup> after liturgy at which time elections will be held. If you are interested in running for President, Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer, please let Christina Liolin know so that a slate of officers can be presented at the meeting. Please be generous with your time because the organization cannot continue without the help of all the ladies. We wish you all a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year!

### *St. Nicholas Christmas Book*

*A New and more Beautiful "Christmas Book '06"  
Is being prepared for Mailing to All Parishioners!!!!*

*Sign-up Now and Get Your Name in this Parish  
Christmas Card. Send in the Flyer Mailed to your  
Home or see Viola Kallinikos at Church.*

**ONLY \$20**

**Deadline Dec 11th**

## KENDI SHQIP (The Albanian Corner)



By Adelina Llupa

Kjo eshte nje lutje qe mund te perdoret cdo dite ne mengjez, per te mare bekimin e dites.

O Zot, me jep qetesine shpirtore te perballoj gjithshka qe do te me sjelle kjo dite e re.

Me jep mundesine qe t'i nenshtrohem plotesisht vullnetit tend te shenjte.

Ne cdo ore te kesaj dite, me drejto dhe me ndihmo per te gjitha gjerat.

Cfardo lloj lajmi qe te marr gjate dites, me meso ta pranoj me qetesi dhe me bindjen se gjithshka do te behet sipas deshires tende te shenjte.

Me jep mundesine qe te komunikoj drejt dhe me zgjuarsi me cdo pjestar te familjes time, me ata qe punoj si dhe me ata qe Ti me ke bekuar t'u sherbej.

O Zot, me jep force te perballoj lodhjen e kesaj dite. Me dhuro, O Perendi, vullnetin qe me duhet dhe me meso si te lutem Ty, lutu dhe Ti brenda meje. Me meso te besoj, te shpresoj, te jem I duruar, te fal dhe te kem dashuri. Amen.

VLESA E ATDHEUT Asdreni (1872–1947)

Sa te dua, o Shqiperi,

Sa mall ndjej e sa deshire,

Per ty gas e dashuri,

Mu ne zemer me ka mbire.

Sa per mua, ti O atdhe,

Je nje lule aq e vyer,

Sa nuk gjendesh permbe dhe

Shpirtin tim per t'e ushqyer.

Qindra vjete gjith'ne zi,

Qindra vjetesh I helmuar,

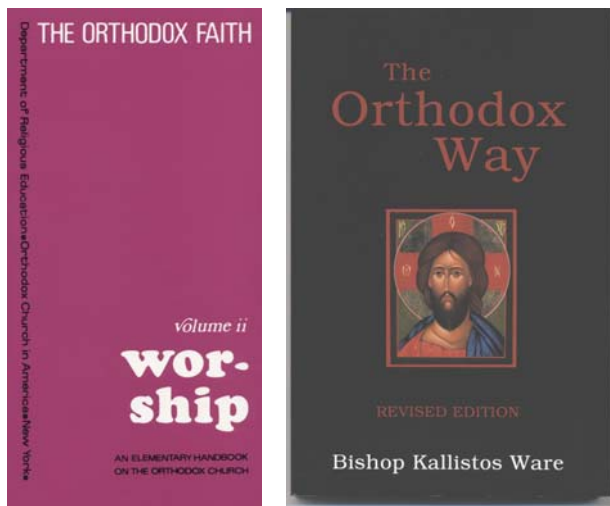
Po nje vlere pate ti,

Qe s'ka shembull, s'esht' degjuar.

### ICON RETURN

Bring in Your Icons from last year's Icon Auction, as soon as possible. We need to prepare for the next Icon Auction.

## Adult Study



Have you ever wondered what we were doing in the Divine Liturgy on Sunday mornings? Or, what we believe as Orthodox Christians?

On Tuesdays in December at 7 p.m. at the Church, Fr. David leads a study group for anyone who wishes to come. **In December, the group is reviewing the meaning of Orthodox Church Architecture. What it is. Why the building and other items inside are designed the way they are.**

After concluding this, the group in January will read Bishop Kallistos Ware's classic introduction to Orthodox Faith in *The Orthodox Way*.

The classes run from 7:00–8:15 p.m. on Tuesdays: December 5, 12 & 19.  
(On Dec 5, a brief Study Group will start after a Vesperal Liturgy celebrating the St. Nicholas Feast Day.)

## ENGLISH CLASSES

**Want to Improve your language skills?  
For a Better Job!  
For Better Personal Skills!**

**ATTEND THE CLASSES!!!!!!**

**The next class will be Sunday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>  
after the Sunday Coffee Fellowship.**

**Sign-up!!!!!!**

## Community News

By Linda Foundos



- Happy Birthday!!! Rosalie Zacharias celebrated her 65<sup>th</sup> Birthday with a Surprise Dinner Party given by her family and friends. Several parishioners attended the celebration. Also, she enjoyed a fun-filled vacation to Montauk with some friends. It's great to explore and enjoy our own New York area.
- Congratulations to the proud new grandparents, Liri and Jani Panajoti!!! A baby boy, Kevin, was born to their son Ardi and his wife Era. Kevin was born on October 27<sup>th</sup>; he weighed 9 lb., 3 oz., and was 54 cm long. Congratulations!
- Speedy recovery wishes go out to Oneida Sera after a recent surgery. She's surely getting a lot of lovin' from her family....."Te Shkuara!"
- A huge thank you to Elizabeth Liolin for her efforts to reorganize the church files in the side room next to the altar. She spent many hours organizing all the church music, service booklets and sacrament pamphlets. She did a wonderful job with a great volunteer spirit.
- Get well wishes to Betty Kelapire after her recent hospital stay. She is looking forward to going to Florida for the winter months. "Te Shkuara!"
- It takes a special person to volunteer to serve in the United States military. Mario (Klaudio) Luka is just such a young man. At 21 years of age, in April 2006, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy. He spent the first 2 months in boot camp in Chicago for training. Following that he was assigned to a base in South Carolina where he will attend school for 4 sessions over a 2 year period. Mario is pursuing the field of nuclear engineering. He completed the 1<sup>st</sup> session ranked "top" of his class. His parents Agathia and Ilia Luka, his brothers Andrea and Kostandine and other family and friends are very proud of him. We thank him and all the other men and women in the armed forces for stepping up to serve our wonderful country. We wish Mario all the best and safe keeping.
- Our deepest sympathy to the family of Janko Skendi, who fell asleep in the Lord after a long battle with cancer. Funeral services were held at St. Nicholas Church on November 24<sup>th</sup>. He is a relative of Thomas and Odetta Skendi. Janco is survived by his wife Ann, son Andrew and daughter Dora.  
"May His Memory Be Eternal"
- The next class offering English to improve your language skills will be held Sunday December 3 after services. It is a wonderful opportunity to help you in seeking jobs, adjusting to life in America, and making more friends. So far, there are 6 students. **Join Us!!!**
- **For More Community News articles, See Page 6**



# *St. Nicholas Day Luncheon*

**Sunday, December 10th  
after Liturgy  
in Fellowship Hall**

**Complete Fish Dinner: \$20  
Pasta or Children: 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.**

No tickets will be sold at the door.

Can only buy ticket at church  
during Coffee Fellowship on  
Sunday, November 19th, 26th and December 3rd.

# FLEA MARKET & BAKE SALE - A SUCCESS

THANKS TO ALL WHO MADE IT POSSIBLE!!!!      SEE PHOTOS!!!!



**Pastor's Message****Continued from page 1**

Below is an excerpt from Discourse On the Nativity of Christ by Saint Gregory Thaumaturgos, Bishop of Neo-Caesarea:

On the present joyous day God hath come to be born; on this great day of arrival God is become That Which He was not: being God, He hath become Man, so to speak as though removed from Divinity (though His Divine Nature be not divested of); in being made Man, He hath remained God. Wherefore, though He grew and flourished, it however was not thus as it were by human power to attain to Divinity nor by any human ability to be made God; but rather as the Word, by miraculous sufferance, wherein He was incarnated and manifest not being transformed, not being made something other, not deprived of that Divine Nature which He possessed previously. In Judea the new King is born; but this new and wondrous nativity which pagan Gentiles have come to believe, the Jew have eschewed. The Pharisees comprehended incorrectly the Law and the prophets. That which therein was contradictory for them, they explained away mistakenly. Herod too strove to learn of this new birth, full of mystery, yet Herod did this not to reverence the new-born King, but to kill Him. That One, Who did forsake the Angels, Archangels, Thrones, Dominions, and all the constant and luminous spirits -- He alone having come a new path, does issue forth from an inviolate of seed virginal womb. The Creator of all comes to enlighten the world, indeed not leaving His angels orphaned, and He appears also as Man, come forth from God... What more to say, what shall I expound on? The new wonders do strike me with awe. The Ancient of Days is become a Child, to make people children of God. Sitting in glory in the Heavens, because of His love for mankind, He now layeth in a manger of dumb beasts. The Inpassionate, Incorporeal, Incomprehensible One is taken by human hands, in order to atone the violence of sinners and the iniquitous and free them of their slavery, to be wrapped in swaddling cloths and be nourished on the knees of Woman, so that shame be transformed into honour, the impious to be led to glory, and in place of thorns a crown. He hath taken on my body, so that I be made capable to have within myself His Spirit -- He hath appropriated unto Himself (my nature), being garbed in my body, and doth give unto me His Spirit, so that I, giving and in turn receiving, might discover the treasure of life.

**ALBANIAN FLAG DAY – DITA E FLAMURIT**  
**NOVEMBER 28TH**

On this date, Albanians everywhere celebrate the historic date of November 28th, 1912, where in Vlora in southern Albania, the venerable Ismail Qemal officially proclaimed the independence of Albania after almost 500 years of Turkish subjugation.

Parish members helped commemorate Albanian Independence Day by attending dinner-dance celebrations on Saturday, November 26<sup>th</sup> in the Bronx and Philadelphia.

The Bronx celebration was sponsored by the VATRA organization and featured guest speakers including United States Ambassador William Walker and Albanian Ambassador Z. Adrian Neritani.

**A Good Time Was Had By All!!!!**

**ANNUAL CHRISTMAS RETREAT FOR**  
**HIGH SCHOOL & COLLEGE STUDENTS**  
**DECEMBER 27-29**

This Retreat will be hosted at St. Vladimir's Seminary in Crestwood, NY. This is a great occasion for young people to gather, socialize and discuss the "ultimate questions" of life's meaning and the relevance of Orthodoxy as we face issues ahead.

The Albanian Archdiocese is encouraging young adults in our parishes to consider attending. One of the presenters will be our own Father David Fox, pastor of St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church in Jamaica Estates, NY.

**Contact Fr. David, if Interested!!!!**

# This Month's Major Feast Days



## The Nativity of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ – Commemorated on December 25

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, was born of the Most Holy Virgin Mary in the city of Bethlehem during the reign of the emperor Augustus (Octavian). Caesar Augustus decreed that a universal census be made throughout his Empire, which then also included Palestinian Israel. The Jews were accustomed to be counted in the city from where their family came. The Most Holy Virgin and the Righteous Joseph, since they were descended from the house and lineage of King David, had to go to Bethlehem to be counted and taxed.

In Bethlehem they found no room at any of the city's inns. Thus, the God-Man, the Savior of the world, was born in a cave that was used as a stable. In the stillness of midnight, the proclamation of the birth of the Savior of the world was heard by three shepherds. An angel of the Lord (Gabriel) came before them and said: "Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, Who is Christ the Lord". The humble shepherds were the first to offer worship to Him Who condescended to assume the form of a humble servant for the salvation of mankind. Besides the glad tidings to the

Bethlehem shepherds, the Nativity of Christ was revealed to the Magi by a wondrous star. Entering the house where the Infant lay, the Magi "fell down, and worshipped Him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented Him gifts: gold, and frankincense, and myrrh".

The present Feast, commemorating the Nativity in the flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, was established by the Church. Its origin goes back to the time of the Apostles; "Brethren, observe the feastsdays; and first of all the Birth of Christ, which you are to celebrate on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month." The Nativity of Christ has long been counted as one of the Twelve Great Feasts. It is one of the greatest, most joyful and wondrous events in the history of the world. The angel said to the shepherds, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, Who is Christ the Lord...Then suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly hosts, glorifying God and saying: Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Those who heard these things were astonished at what the shepherds told them concerning the Child. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen"

Thus the Nativity of Christ, a most profound and extraordinary event, was accompanied by the wondrous tidings proclaimed to the shepherds and to the Magi. This is a cause of universal rejoicing for all mankind, "for the Savior is Born!" The Fathers of the Church, in their God-inspired writings, describe the Feast of the Nativity of Christ as most profound, and joyous, serving as the basis and foundation

**Christ** for all the other Feasts. **is Born!** **Glorify Him!**

## Saint Nicholas, the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia Commemorated on December 6

Saint Nicholas is famed as a great saint pleasing unto God. He was born in the city of Patara in the region of Lycia (on the south coast of the Asia Minor peninsula), and was the only son of pious parents who had vowed to dedicate him to God. The infant Nicholas from the very day of his birth revealed to people the light of his future glory as a wonderworker. His mother, after giving birth was immediately healed from illness. The newborn infant, while still in the baptismal font, stood on his feet three hours, without support from anyone, thereby honoring the Most Holy Trinity. From his childhood Nicholas thrived on the study of Divine Scripture; by day he would not leave church, and by night he prayed and read books, making himself a worthy dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. Constantly at work and vivacious, in unceasing prayer, the priest Nicholas displayed great kind-heartedness towards the flock, and towards the afflicted who came to him for help, and he distributed all his inheritance to the poor.

There was a certain formerly rich inhabitant of Patara, whom St Nicholas saved from great sin. The man had three grown daughters, and in desperation he planned to sell their bodies so they would have money for food. The saint, learning of the man's poverty and of his wicked intention, secretly visited him one night and threw a sack of gold through the window. With the money the man arranged an honorable marriage for his daughter. St Nicholas also provided gold for the other daughters, thereby saving the family from falling into spiritual destruction. In bestowing charity, St Nicholas always strove to do this secretly and to conceal his good deeds. St. Nicholas asked his bishop's blessing for a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Along the way the saint predicted a storm would arise and threaten the ship. St Nicholas saw the devil get on the ship, intending to sink it and kill all the passengers. At the entreaty of the despairing pilgrims, he calmed the waves of the sea by his prayers. Through his prayer a certain sailor of the ship, who had fallen from the mast and was mortally injured was also restored to health.

Having reached old age, St Nicholas peacefully fell asleep in the Lord. His venerable relics were preserved incorrupt in the local cathedral church and flowed with curative myrrh, from which many received healing. In the year 1087, his relics were transferred to the Italian city of Bari, where they rest even now. The name of the great saint of God, the hierarch and wonderworker Nicholas, a speedy helper and suppliant for all hastening to him, is famed in every corner of the earth, in many lands and among many peoples. In Russia there are a multitude of cathedrals, monasteries and churches consecrated in his name. There is, perhaps, not a single city without a church dedicated to him. St Nicholas is the patron of travelers, and we pray to him for deliverance from floods, poverty, or any misfortunes. He has promised to help those who remember his parents, Theophanes and Nonna.

## Major Church Activities and Events

Adult Study: Church Architecture, 7 p.m.,  
Tuesdays: December 5, 12 & 19

Tues, Dec 5: Vespereal Liturgy, 7 p.m., for  
St. Nicholas' Feast Day, followed by Adult Study

Wed, Dec 6: St. Nicholas Day

Thurs, Dec 7: Parish Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

Sun, Dec 10: St. Nicholas Day Luncheon  
Fellowship Hall, after Liturgy

Sun, Dec 17: Sunday School Christmas Pageant  
Pancake Breakfast & Santa Visit

Sun, Dec 24: Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.  
Vespereal Liturgy of St. Basil the Great, 6 p.m.  
(Christmas Eve Service)

Sat, Jan 6: Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m. - Feast of the  
Theophany, Great Blessing of Water

Sun, Jan 8: Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.  
ICON AUCTION, after Liturgy

## Ushers' Schedule for Sunday Services

Dec 03: Roland Llupa / Edi Seri

Dec 10: Bill Peters / Nick Papajorgji

Dec 17: Petrika Troja / Fotaq Kondili

Dec 24: Andrea Kutali / John Jance

Dec 31: Ilir Fundo / Stefan Baltadori

Jan 07: Damian Peters / Jim Oswald

Jan 14: Ilia Luka / Kristaq Petro

*We're on the Web!*

*Visit us at:*

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

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