

THE ORTHODOX POST

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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 David Fox

Dear Friends,

I want you to know that I take great joy in you. Several times lately, trying to be a good spiritual Father and being obedient to my own spiritual Fathers, I have asked you to try something new, and you have.

During the fall, I asked you to take more seriously receiving the Holy Communion Gifts by trying to arrive at least by the Gospel, and you did. I asked you to keep the fast better during meals at the Church, and you did. On Christmas Eve, I asked that we remain quiet while others are receiving Holy Communion Gifts, and you did.

Last Sunday, I asked that while coming forward to kiss the Cross and to receive the Blessed Bread, that we remain quiet and listen to the Prayers after Receiving Holy Communion, and you did.

I will be asking us to consider what it means to prepare to receive the Holy Gifts as individuals and as a parish.

I will challenge us with the question: "how should we welcome newcomers who come to our parish?"

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I rejoice in your desire to grow as individuals and as a parish! I appreciate your telling me your struggles with this; I do the same with my spiritual Fathers.

Most of all, I have been amazed at your humility, your openness, and your receiving these calls for growth for what they are: a recognition of your great potential in Christ.

You are the St. Nicholas Parish of Bishop Nikon, of Chancellor Fr. Arthur, of Protopresbyter Fr. Thomas, and of Jim, Gus & Bill; of Al, Lou, Jim, Mark, of Dr. Troja, Nick, Nasi & Roland, of teachers such as Barbara, Alexandra, Tina, Carlos, Maria, Adelina, Jim, of Daughters such as Christina, Linda, Irma, Rosalie; of choir members like Helen, Gloria & Please see *Pastor's Message* on page 4

President's Message

By Lou Foundos

This was an unusual year since January 1st, St. Basil's day, fell on a Sunday. Attendance was lighter than normal due to people celebrating the night before but still reasonable, and all the Basils and Vasils were there to celebrate their name's day.

Theophany was celebrated on Friday, January 6th, and as usual, the icon presentation

was held the following week, Sunday the 8th. We had quite a good turnout which resulted in some spirited bidding. The result was that we had one of our most successful fund-raisers, and the total pledged was nearly \$5000. I would like to personally thank those that participated and for their generous donations. For those that were not able to be present, we would encourage you to make a donation toward one of the icons on the Please see *President's Message* on page 4

Daughters' Corner

By Christina Liolin, President

After the hectic activities of December, we have had a very quiet January. In February, we will begin to plan for the coming months at our meeting which will be held on Sunday, February 26, after liturgy. Some of the items on the agenda are:

- Lenten activities
- Pancake breakfast on Palm Sunday
- Flowers for Pascha
- Spring Luncheon

Please plan on attending the meeting because we need your help. Also, we need more people to make Meshe. There are many Sundays when we have to buy it and it would be nice if we always had a supply available from our own parishioners.



HOUSE BLESSINGS

SIGN UP NOW!!!

Father David will be visiting your area for a House Blessing. There will be a maximum of 3 home blessings on each night, so please plan for the Priest to be at your home for a half hour. Please list your family name and telephone number on the sign up sheet, or call Father David.

Mon. Jan. 30 th :	Long Island North Shore
Wed. Feb. 8 th :	Long Island South Shore
Mon. Feb. 13 th :	New Jersey
Wed. Feb. 15 th :	Astoria and Manhattan
Wed. Feb. 22 nd :	Ridgewood

Valentine's Day Party

Saturday, February 18, 2006

Buffet Dinner

5:30 p.m. til 10:00 p.m.

D.J. Dancing



*St. Nicholas Albanian Church
Fellowship Hall
181-14 Midland Parkway
Jamaica Estates, New York*

Don't miss all the fun !!!



Admission: \$35 adults \$15 children 12 & under

*Capacity is limited, so tickets will be sold in advance and NOT at the door.
To purchase your tickets, please contact:*

*Agathia Luka (718) 456-6582 Albana Pavllo (718) 805-6383
Irma Mile (516) 520-9870*

TICKETS WILL NOT BE SOLD AT THE DOOR -DEADLINE DATE SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12th
Please make check payable to St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church.

Church Activities & Community News

Scholarships

2006-07 Katina John Malta Fund

Applications are available for the Katina John Malta Scholarship Fund, a scholarship program established at the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. At least two scholarships of \$2,000 each will be awarded for the 2006–07 academic year. Candidates must be of the Eastern Orthodox faith and at the time of application, high school seniors or full-time matriculated students committed to serious study in an undergraduate degree program at an accredited college or university. Candidates must be citizens or permanent residents of the U.S. Candidates must provide a typewritten one-page essay setting forth the reason for applying for the award and include as enclosures three Letters of Recommendation, as well as a Letter of Acceptance or Continuation from their undergraduate college or university. Candidates must provide evidence of financial need.

Applications may be requested from the Office of the Chancellor of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese by calling (212) 774-0513, by e-mail at scholarships@goarch.org, or by written request.

Scholarships must be postmarked by the April 15, 2006 deadline.

Applications are also available on-line at:

<http://www.goarch.org/en/archdiocese/administration/chancellor/scholarships.asp>

Albania Today Slide Presentation Sunday January 29th

Mr. John Joseph, a member of another parish in the Albanian Archdiocese, will present slides on "Albania Today".

It gives a chronology and impressions from a trip from Thessaloniki to Korca to Saranda to Tirana and back to Korca, with many side visits, including many places and people. It will also highlight the Children's Home of Hope and the need for donations.

We hope everyone will be able to attend this interesting presentation.

Blessing of Liturgical Items



After Liturgy on January 22nd, a Tabernacle, Gospel Book and Alter Boys' Candles were blessed.

The Tabernacle has been donated by the Llupa Family in memory of their daughter, Anna Arba, whose birthday is January 21st.

The Gospel and Candles were funded from the St. Nicholas Memorial Fund donations.

Parish News

- **Teuta Koco, co-winner of the International Opera Singers Competition, will be giving a recital in Carnegie Hall on February 3rd.** Her father, Eno Koco a noted musicologist is former Director of the Tirana TV-Radio Symphony Orchestra. He also directed the choir at the Orthodox Cathedral in Tirana in the early 90s, soon after the opening of houses of worship there.
- Congratulations to Anila Gjika on her new position as Controller with Bell Realty of New York in Great Neck. Anila has worked her way up for the past six years from a receptionist, to a bookkeeper, to accountant, and now a controller. She is a smart, ambitious girl moving on up while she and husband Kenny raise baby Chrisien too. Bravo and good luck!!
- The Oswald family, Jim, Donna, Kim, Daniel and Alex along with the Foundos family, Phil, Jana, Matt and Christina had a fabulous time skiing over New Year's at Belleryre in the Catskills. Christina, Kim and Daniel had fun snowboarding. What a great way to ring in the New Year.

President's Message from page 1

list. If you would like to have another icon added to the list, please mention it to Fr. David, and we will see if we can purchase the icon.

Fr. David has started the house blessing. He is trying to do as many as possible and therefore, he is trying to group them by area. If you would like your home blessed, please call him directly to make an appointment.

We are installing a new QuickBooks accounting program at church. It looks like it will be quite useful and consolidate some of the work we have been doing. If someone has a bookkeeping, accounting or business background we could surely use some help. Please see me on this issue.

Pastor's Message from page 1

Pauline, of Post writers such as John and Bill, of a 'Parish Mother' such as Kerri. Consider the potential of the children of our parish, the scholars, athletes, musicians, servers, their questions & faith! You have revealed your desire to grow in God, to understand better the Liturgy, to learn to sing, to teach, to pray, to give to the needy and to beautify God's Holy Church.

I have been overwhelmed by your hospitality, humbled by your sacrifices, and inspired by your education ethic. You have given me simple happiness being with your families. There have been moments that our Lord has blessed me with just a taste of the great love He has for you, so I pray that this vision of our great potential comes from God by being revealed in you.

To this end, during the next several weeks, I will be using the sermons to help teach about 'what we do in Church and why we do it.' Hopefully, these sermons will help us grow in the basic understanding of our Faith as experienced in our Liturgy so that, if our hearts are open, we may grow in our experience of God. During this time, we hope to present the new parish booklets to you, which will help explain many things

Last Sunday we said that our coming to Church on Sunday is first of all, a journey into the Kingdom of Heaven ("Blessed is the Kingdom...").

What does this mean?

May God bless your desire and our attempts to grow together.

Please pray for us.

Your friend.

Archdiocese and OCA News

Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards (FOS)

FOS is a group of people who, united together in Christian Stewardship, provide support for fellow Orthodox Christians by offering voluntary financial support for the programs of the Orthodox Church in America (OCA). FOS members include people and organizations such as Bishops, Priests, Parishes and Parishioners throughout all the churches, including the Albanian churches. Our St. Nicholas Church is a contributing FOS member.

FOS financial support makes possible many activities, some are listed below:

- Produce resources for mission activities
- Develop educational programs for use in Parishes
- Provides Liturgical music for church choirs
- Assists in adoptions of children
- Supports the work of Orthodox military chaplains serving military personnel

Coordinating all this work is the Executive Director of FOS is the Very Reverend Eugene Vansuch. He has served as a priest for nearly 40 years in the Orthodox Church in America, including the Albanian Archdiocese. In the future, we will invite Fr. Vansuch to visit with us and share news of FOS's good work and how we can help with our donations and efforts.

This Month's Major Feast Day

February 2nd

The Meeting of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Temple



Today the Church commemorates an important event in the earthly life of our Lord Jesus Christ (Lk 2:22-40). Forty days after His birth the God-Infant was taken to the Jerusalem Temple, the center of the nation's religious life. According to the Law of Moses (Lev. 12:2-8), a woman who gave birth to a male child was forbidden to enter the Temple of God for forty days. At the end of this time the mother came to the Temple with the child, to offer a young lamb or pigeon to the Lord as a purification sacrifice. The Most Holy Virgin, the Mother of God, had no need of purification, since she had given birth to the Source of purity and sanctity without defilement. However, she humbly fulfilled the requirements of the Law.

At this time the righteous Elder Simeon (February 3) was living in Jerusalem. It had been revealed to him that he would not die until he should behold the promised Messiah. By inspiration from above, St. Simeon went to the Temple at the very moment when the Most Holy Theotokos and St. Joseph had brought the Infant Jesus to fulfill the Law.

The God-Receiver Simeon took the divine Child in his arms, and giving thanks to God, he spoke the words repeated by the Church each evening at Vespers: "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to enlighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel" (Lk 2:29-32). St. Simeon said to the Most Holy Virgin: "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be spoken against. Yea, a sword shall pierce through your own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed" (Lk 2:34-35).

At the Temple was the 84-year-old widow Anna the Prophetess, daughter of Phanuel (February 3), "who did not leave the temple, but served God with fasting and prayers night and day. She arrived just when St. Simeon met the divine Child. She also gave thanks to the Lord and spoke of Him to all those who were looking for redemption in Jerusalem" (Luke 2:37-38). In the icon of the Feast she holds a scroll which reads: "This Child has established Heaven and earth."

Before Christ was born, righteous men and women lived by faith in the promised Messiah, and awaited His coming. The Righteous Simeon and the Prophetess Anna, the last righteous people of the Old Testament, were deemed worthy to meet the Savior in the Temple.

The Feast of the Meeting of the Lord is among the most ancient feasts of the Christian Church. We have sermons on the Feast by the holy bishops Methodius of Patara (+ 312), Cyril of Jerusalem (+ 360), Gregory the Theologian (+ 389), Amphilochius of Iconium (+ 394), Gregory of Nyssa (+ 400), and John Chrysostom (+ 407). Despite its early origin, this Feast was not celebrated so splendidly until the sixth century.

In 528, during the reign of Justinian, an earthquake killed many people in Antioch. Other misfortunes followed this one. In 541 a terrible plague broke out in Constantinople, carrying off several thousand people each day. During this time of widespread suffering, a solemn prayer service (Litia) for deliverance from evils was celebrated on the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord, and the plague ceased. In thanksgiving to God, the Church established a more solemn celebration of this Feast. Church hymnographers have adorned this Feast with their hymns: St. Andrew of Crete in the seventh century; St. Cosmas Bishop of Maium, St. John of Damascus, and St. Germanus Patriarch of Constantinople in the eighth century; and St. Joseph, Archbishop of Thessalonica in the ninth century.

On this day we also commemorate the icon of the Most Holy Theotokos known as "the Softening of Evil Hearts" or "Simeon's Prophecy." The Mother of God is depicted without Her Child, with seven swords piercing her breast: three from the left side, three from the right, and one from below.

A similar icon, "Of the Seven Swords" (August 13) shows three swords on the left side and four from the right.

The icon "Simeon's Prophecy" symbolizes the fulfillment of the prophecy of the righteous Elder Simeon: "a sword shall pierce through your own soul" (Lk 2:35).

Major Church Activities and Events

House Blessings Have Begun: See the Sign up Sheet for when Fr. David will be near your home

Sun. Jan. 29th: Slide Presentation, Albania Today

Wed. Feb. 1st: 7:30 p.m. Evening Liturgy for Meeting of our Lord in the Temple

Thurs. Feb. 2nd: Meeting of The Lord

Sun. Feb. 5th: Zaccheaus Sunday; Youth Group Meeting

12th: Publican and Pharisee

19th: Prodigal Son

26th: Meatfare

Sat. Feb. 18th: Valentine's Dance, 5:30 - 10:00

Sat. Feb. 25th: Memorial Saturday, Divine Liturgy at 10:00 a.m.

Sun. March 5th: Cheesefare

**Ushers' Assignment List
For Sunday Services**

Feb. 5: Petrika Troja/Thoma Fundo

Feb. 12: Nasi Pavllo/Xhoxhi Coka

Feb. 19: Lou Foundos/Robert Korra

Feb. 26: Roland Llupa/Edi Sera

Mar. 5: Bill Peters/Nick Papajorgji

Mar. 12: Petrika Troja/Thoma Fundo

Parish Council Meetings

Tuesday, Feb. 7th at 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Mar. 7th at 7:30 p.m.

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181-14 Midland Parkway
Jamaica Estates, New York 11432



Customer Name
Street Address
City, ST ZIP Code