

THE ORTHODOX POST

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

Web site: www.stnicholasalbanian.org E-mail: snickny@aol.com Tel: (718) 380-5684

Pastor's Message

By Father David Fox

Dear friends,

On Knowing Oneself

A brother in a church committed a fault. A council was called to which Moses (the monk) was invited, but he refused to go to it. Then the priest sent someone to him, saying, "Come, for everyone is waiting for you." So he got up and went. He took a sack, filled it with sand and cut a small hole in the bottom and carried it on his shoulders. The others came out to meet him and said, "What is this, father?" The Abba said to them, "My sins run out behind me, and I do not see them, and today I am coming to judge the errors of another?" When they heard that, they said no more to the brother but forgave him.

From the Lives of the Desert Fathers

You cannot cure the soul of others or 'help people' without having changed yourself. You cannot put in order the spiritual economy of others, so long as there is chaos in your own soul. You cannot bring

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peace to others if you do not have it yourself. Often, we help people, not by a series of conscious acts, directed upon their soul, but rather by influencing them through our spiritual gifts, without ourselves knowing how we do so. Once Antony the Great asked a visitor, who said nothing at all, "Why do you not ask me anything?" and the other answered, "It is enough for me to look at you, holy father."

From Fr. Elchininov's Diary of a Russian Priest

Your friend,

Fr. David

President's Message

By Bill Peters

Battling wind and rain, the Daughters' of St. Nicholas ran another successful Flea Market & Bake Sale on October 28-29. A special "Thank You" to all the Ladies (as well as to the Children and Men) who made donations, spent money and worked long and hard to make this fund-raising event possible. In addition to raising money for the Church to pay for basic costs, this event enabled us to get to know each other better by working together and by giving of ourselves for the benefit of St. Nicholas. Next month's Post will provide more details, acknowledgements and photos.

In serving the needs of our community, we will be

providing free classes to help some parishioners improve their English speaking and writing skills. The classes will help individuals pass tests to get better jobs and improve personal language skills. These FREE classes are made possible by the "Greatest Generation" Grants described on page 4.

CONGRATULATIONS to Fr. David and Prifteresha Kerri!!! Father graduated from Drew University with a Ph.D. in Theological and Religious Studies. The Thesis is "Beyond Secularism: The Theological Vision of Fr. Alexander Schmemmann."

Looking ahead, we will be very busy with the Nativity Fast beginning on November 15, and in December with the St. Nicholas Day Celebration, the Christmas Pageant and the Pancake Breakfast.

Daughters' Corner

By Christina Liolin

By the time you receive this issue of the Post, the Bake Sale/Flea Market will be over. A full report will be written in the December issue of the Post.

In the meantime, we need MESHE every Sunday for communion. If you can bake, please try to make one or two once a month so that we always have a supply on hand. If you are interested in buying the Seal or Meshalnike, please see Christina Liolin to place an order.

TO ALL WHO HAVE VOLUNTEERED THEIR TIME TO WORK AT THE FLEA MARKET AND BAKE SALE AS WELL AS THOSE WHO BAKED, WORKED IN THE KITCHEN AND CONTRIBUTED OTHER ITEMS FOR SALE:

THANK YOU!!!

FOR SALE

\$1975



INTERESTED IN BUYING THE VAN???

**CONTACT: BILL PETERS, PETRIKA TROJA
OR LOU FOUNDOS**

KENDI SHQIP (The Albanian Corner)



By Adelina Llupa

Duke filluar me kete bulletin, po fillojme "Kendin Shqip" me lutje, vargje, e kenge shqipe. Qellimi I ketij kendi eshte te ruajme gjuhen shqipe dhe dashurine per memedheun.

Fjale e urte: "Duaje Atdhene, si Shqiponja Folene"

Lutje

Ati yne , qe je ne qiell, u shenjterofte emri Yt; Ardhte mbreteria jote, u befte deshira jote si ne qiell dhe mbi dhe. Buken tone te perditshme, epjani neve sot, dhe falnai fajet sikunder edhe ne ua falim fajtove tane dhe mos na shtjer ne ngasje, po shpetona nga I ligu.

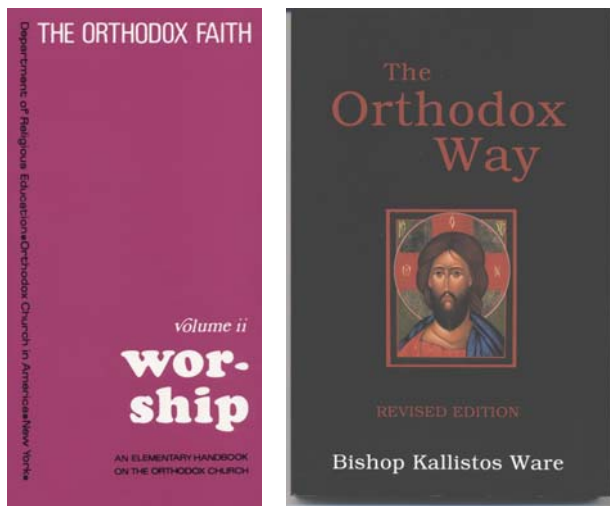
Hymni I Flamurit

Rreth flamurit te perbashkuar,
Me nje deshira e nje qellim,
Te gjithe atij duk' iu betuar
Te lidhim besen per shpetim.
Prej lufte vec ai largohet
Qe eshte lindur tradhetor,
Kush eshte burre, nuk frikohet,
Po vdes, po vdes si nje deshmor!

Flea Market & Bake Sale – A Success!



Adult Study



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

On Tuesday, September 26 at 7 p.m. at the Church, Fr. David began leading a study group for anyone who wishes to come. The group is reviewing the meaning of the Divine Liturgy using the chapter, written by Fr. Tom Hopko, in his introductory volume, *Orthodox Worship*.

After concluding this, the group 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 Wednesdays: November 1, 8, 15 & 29.

Want Your News to Appear in The Orthodox Post!!!

If anyone has any news they would like to share, please contact Linda Foundos.

News includes: births, deaths, baptisms, engagements, weddings, anniversaries, get well wishes, graduations, new job, new home, vacation, special accomplishments or awards, etc.

Community News

By Linda Foundos

- Our deepest sympathy to Ellen Gradt on the passing of her husband Frank on August 28th. They had been married for 51 years, lived in Yonkers and had 2 daughters and 1 son. May his memory be eternal.
- Our deepest sympathy to Dr. Petrika Troja and family. His father, Christaq, died October 25th in Albania. May his memory be eternal!
- Damian Peters recently traveled to Nova Scotia, one of the most beautiful areas in North America.
- The Bode Family, Alfredo, Aida, Teodona and Christopher, have bought a new home in Stratford, Connecticut. May their home be filled with joy, laughter and all good things.
- Congratulations to Betty and Charlie Pochari on the marriage of their daughter Donna to Bill Boss. They are making their home in Scarsdale. Te trasha gohen!!!
- Congratulations to Ariola Vozhilla, daughter of Niko and Nora Vozhilla, who got engaged on October 8, to Gentian Toshkezi from Lushnja who is a neurosurgeon and lives in Philadelphia. Ariola's family came from Korca and lives in the Bronx. We wish the new couple a joyful, long and prosperous life together.
- A very special honor was bestowed upon Iris Mile who was nominated from East Meadow High School to serve as a National Scholar representing the state of New York at the 2006 National Young Leaders Conference (NYLC) in Washington, D.C. She had the opportunity to witness our nation's democracy in action and to interact with many of today's leaders from Congress, the executive branch, the national news media and the diplomatic corps. She visited some of Washington, D.C.'s most famous and moving memorials—the Korean War Veterans Memorial, the Lincoln Memorial, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the FDR Memorial, Jefferson Memorial, Library of Congress and other attractions. Her grandmother Elsa, her parents Irma and Ardian, and sister Angela are all very proud of her.

Archdiocese News

The Albanian Archdiocese held its Annual Assembly in Detroit, Michigan from Thursday, October 19 thru Saturday, October 21. It was hosted by St. Thomas Albanian Orthodox Church of Farmington. Attendees from St. Nicholas Church included Fr. David Fox, Bill Peters and Jim Liolin.

Major agenda items included: Bishop Nikon's Report on the State of the Archdiocese, Review of 2006 Finances, Approval of the 2007 Budget, Report of Theological Student Fund, Election of Archdiocese Officers and Election of Representatives to the OCA Metropolitan Council.

Also, a special Archdiocese Committee composed of parish and Archdiocese representatives was formed to work with the parishes to develop 5 Year Plan guidelines and a preliminary plan for the Archdiocese. The planning effort will assess our current state (status of what the parishes and the Archdiocese are all about and the major issues facing them all), identify where we would like to be in 5 years, set appropriate goals, and specify action plans to accomplish the 5 Year Plan and goals.

We heard about monastic life and its role in the orthodox church from a special guest speaker, Mother Gabriela of Holy Dormition Monastery.

Next year's Archdiocese Assembly will be hosted by St. Mary's Church in Worcester, MA.

ENGLISH CLASSES (FREE)

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

Sign-up after the Sunday coffee fellowship. There will be a sign-up sheet for anyone who would like to take the English class in November.

Or, Call the Church at (718) 380-5684 and leave a message - name, interest and callback telephone number.

"Greatest Generation" Scholarship Winner



Olsi Argjendari is one of six high school students who was awarded the General Electric/"Greatest Generation" Scholarship. This program selected New York City seniors who demonstrated academic performance, leadership skills and a commitment to community service. The program is named in honor of retired NBC anchor Tom Brokaw, whose best selling book, *The Greatest Generation*, tells the story of the generation that helped transform America after World War II. It seeks to support students who demonstrate the values of the Greatest Generation - duty, courage, responsibility, and selfless service to the community and the world.

Olsi is receiving \$15,000 per year for four years in college tuition, and the Foundation will provide \$10,000 (\$2500 per year for four years) to a service or leadership program with which the student works. Thanks to Olsi, this award is going to our St. Nicholas Church. This year's award will be used to provide English language improvement classes to our community. See the ad on this page.

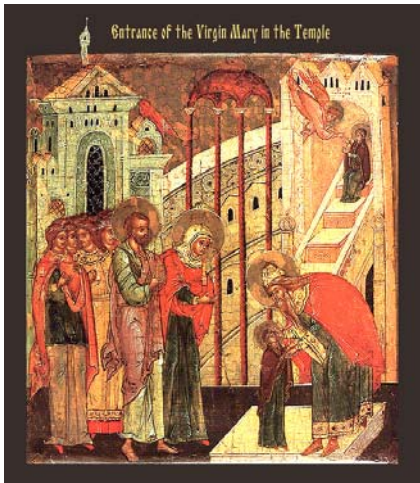
Olsi graduated from Fort Hamilton H.S. in 2005. He was born in Albania and arrived in NYC to begin High School. He distinguished himself as a scholar and a dedicated member of his community through service and leadership activities including translating for his church, volunteering in a local Councilman's office and tutoring students. He was active in his school's newspaper, chess and volleyball teams. He is currently in his second year at New York University, where he is studying to become a doctor.

We congratulate Olsi and his proud parents, Ektor and Viktoria, on this enormous achievement.

Again, we thank Olsi for his contributions to our parish community.

This Month's Major Feast Days

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



According to Holy Tradition, 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, in which those who were dedicated to the service of God dwelt. 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.

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 (May 21) built a church in honor of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple. 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.

DISCOURSE ON THE FEAST OF THE ENTRY OF OUR MOST PURE LADY THEOTOKOS INTO THE HOLY OF HOLIES (edited)

by Saint Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica

If a tree is known by its fruit, and a good tree bears good fruit, then is not the Mother of Goodness Itself, She who bore the Eternal Beauty, incomparably more excellent than every good, whether in this world or the world above? Therefore, the coeternal and identical Image of goodness, Preeternal, transcending all being, He Who is the preexisting and good Word of the Father, moved by His unutterable love for mankind and compassion for us, put on our image, that He might reclaim for Himself our nature which had been dragged down to uttermost Hades, so as to renew this corrupted nature and raise it to the heights of Heaven. For this purpose, He had to assume a flesh that was both new and ours, that He might refashion us from out of ourselves. Now He finds a Handmaiden perfectly suited to these needs, the supplier of Her own unsullied nature, the Ever-Virgin now hymned by us, and Whose miraculous Entrance into the Temple, into the Holy of Holies, we now celebrate. God predestined Her before the ages for the salvation and reclaiming of our kind. She was chosen, not just from the crowd, but from the ranks of the chosen of all ages, renowned for piety and understanding, and for their God-pleasing words and deeds. In the beginning, there was one who rose up against us: the author of evil, the serpent, who dragged us into the abyss. Many reasons impelled him to rise up against us, and there are many ways by which he enslaved our nature: envy, rivalry, hatred, injustice, treachery, slyness, etc. In addition to all this, he also has within him the power of bringing death, which he himself engendered, being the first to fall away from true life.

Except for God, there is no one who is without sin, or life-creating, or able to remit sin. Therefore, the new Adam must be not only Man, but also God. He is at the same time life, wisdom, truth, love, and mercy, and every other good thing, so that He might renew the old Adam and restore him to life through mercy, wisdom and righteousness. These are the opposites of the things which the author of evil used to bring about our aging and death.

God is born of the spotless and Holy Virgin, or better to say, of the Most Pure and All-Holy Virgin. She is above every fleshly defilement, and even above every impure thought. Her conceiving resulted not from fleshly lust, but by the overshadowing of the Most Holy Spirit. Such desire being utterly alien to Her, it is through prayer and spiritual readiness that She declared to the angel: "Behold the handmaiden of the Lord; be it unto Me according to thy word", and that She conceived and gave birth. So, in order to render the Virgin worthy of this sublime purpose, God marked this ever-virgin Daughter now praised by us, from before the ages, and from eternity, choosing Her from out of His elect.

Now, when Righteous Joachim and Anna saw that they had been granted their wish, and that the divine promise to them was realized in fact, then they on their part, as true lovers of God, hastened to fulfill their vow given to God as soon as the child had been weaned from milk. They have now led this truly sanctified child of God, now the Mother of God, this Virgin into the Temple of God. And She, being filled with Divine gifts even at such a tender age, ... She, rather than others, determined what was being done over Her. In Her manner She showed that She was not so much presented into the Temple, but that She Herself entered into the service of God of her own accord, as if she had wings, striving towards this sacred and divine love. She considered it desirable and fitting that she should enter into the Temple and dwell in the Holy of Holies.

Therefore, the High Priest, seeing that this child, more than anyone else, had divine grace within Her, wished to set Her within the Holy of Holies. He convinced everyone present to welcome this, since God had advanced it and approved it. Through His angel, God assisted the Virgin and sent Her mystical food, with which She was strengthened in nature, while in body She was brought to maturity and was made purer and more exalted than the angels, having the Heavenly spirits as servants. She was led into the Holy of Holies not just once, but was accepted by God to dwell there with Him during Her youth, so that through Her, the Heavenly Abodes might be opened and given for an eternal habitation to those who believe in Her miraculous birthgiving.

Major Church Activities and Events

Adult Study: The Liturgy & The Orthodox Way
7pm Wednesdays: Nov 1, 8, 15 & 29

Thurs, Nov. 9: Parish Council Meeting
7pm

Wed, Nov 15: Nativity Fast Begins

**Sun, Nov 26: Celebration for the Entrance
of the Theotokos into the Temple**
(date: Nov 21)

Sun, Dec 10: St. Nicholas Day Celebration
(date: Dec 06)

Ushers' Schedule for Sunday Services

Nov 05: Ilia Luka / Kristaq Petro

Nov 12: Xhoxhi Coka / Nasi Pavllo

Nov 19: Ardian Mile / Thoma Beno

Nov 26: Louis Foundos / Robert Korra

Dec 03: Roland Llupa / Edi Sera

Dec 10: Damian Peters / Jim Oswald

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.stnicholasalbanian.org

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Jamaica Estates, New York 11432



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