

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

On ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH & OUR CHILDREN

Dear friends,

Our Lord Jesus Christ, whose birth and childhood we celebrate this season, said: "Let the children come to me, forbid them not, for to such belongs the kingdom of God." Another time, the Lord said, "If anyone causes any of these little ones to stumble, it would be better for him to have millstone around his neck and to be thrown into the sea." This is how serious God is about the importance of teaching our children about our Faith.

Everyone who came to worship on Sunday, December 23rd witnessed a wonderful gift by the children and the Sunday School teachers of this parish. One person remarked, "I have been coming to this Church for 40 years, and it was the best Christmas pageant I have seen." ***Many Many thanks to the teachers and children, who worked so hard on this. May God bless all of you!***

This day for me was bittersweet, though, because I wish that all the children and their families came to Liturgy like this more often. Of course I know there are times when our children cannot make it. There are Sundays my children are not there. Yes, yes, it is difficult to get kids to come to Church (aren't most things that are good for them

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difficult?). A man I respect very much said to his kids: "Until you are 16, you are coming to Church with us. There may be special times when you miss, but until 16, you are coming to Church."

As priest, I am committed to do my best to help our children know God & our Orthodox Christian Faith:

1. Before January 6th, I will be calling personally every family in the parish on the phone to say "Hello!" and "Our Church is here for you."
2. Beginning January 6th, I will be coming to your homes and reconnecting with you. I look forward to this.
3. On Sunday, January 13th, I will meet with the children of the Sunday School after Liturgy, from 11:45-12 noon, when I will read from the Bible to them and take their questions.

Please see Pastor's Message on page 6

President's Message

By Bill Peters

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!! The Parish Council and I wish you all a year of good health, much happiness and increased involvement in the parish life at St. Nicholas.

As you can see from the many articles in this issue of The Orthodox Post, we are very active as a Community. We have done much and will have an even busier year ahead.

Church activities start the year on January 6th with feast day celebrations for the Feast of the Theophany, Great Blessing of Water: The Baptism of our Lord. This will be followed by our annual "Presentation of the Icons. This auction type event is exciting, fun for all

and a major fund raiser for the Church.

Decisions will soon be made that are very important to the life of the parish. Details will be finalized for our Building Expansion Project providing additional space for classrooms, seating, storage space, several other needs plus an elevator. This will enable construction to begin later this year. To support this building effort, we need all parishioners and the friends of St. Nicholas to make generous financial commitments to the Building Fundraising. Financially supporting our Building Expansion Project, in addition to our annual Pledge Program which pays for the operation of the church is difficult. **But to properly serve the needs of our Parish, we must all sacrifice to make our best commitment.**

Daughters' Corner

By Linda Foundos

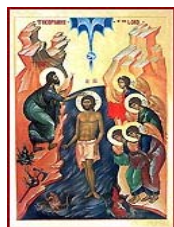
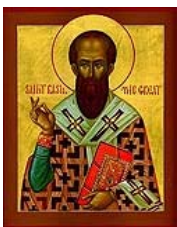
Well, seems like just yesterday, but another year has come to a close! It's amazing when you think about how much happened in those 365 days. It's all the good times, the bad times and the so-so times. So many emails come my way about life, all kinds of wisdom. I must admit, most of the time I am too hurried or impatient to sit and read them. However, honestly, when I do take the time to read and reflect on these words, oh how beautiful and true they are!! We should from time to time, stop and count our blessings, not get caught up in all the material things of this world and the nonsense the media bombards us with. Cherish every moment and realize the wonderment of life. Slow down. Appreciate more. Cherish the relationships we have with loved ones. Make the most of every moment. On our tombstone will be written the year of our birth and the year of our passing. In between there will be a dash. That dash represents how we spent our time on earth. How are you living your dash??

The Sunday School put on a new and very special pageant which was very well received by all. Our kudos to the Sunday School teachers for all their hard work with such a beautiful result. Many thanks to all those who helped make our annual Christmas Pancake Breakfast such a joy for all. It was Tina Peters and her helpers with those delicious pancakes, a jolly visit from Santa with treats for all the children and lots of Christmas blessing exchanges.

You will be notified of our Daughters next meeting. As always, all the women of St. Nicholas are welcome. The Daughters of St. Nicholas wish you and your families a very Healthy and Happy New Year.

ICON AUCTION

Sunday, January 6th - After Liturgy



*Come and Bid in the Auction
or Make a Donation
in Honor of Your Favorite ICONS*

KENDI SHQIP (The Albanian Corner)



By A. Llupa

Kete muaj po japim një lutje që mund të përdoret pas rrëfimit dhe një pjesë nga vjershë "Pellazgët-Shqipëtarët"

Lutje pas rrëfimit

O Zot, Ati im, shpëtimtari dhe bamirësi i shpirtit tim, të kërkoj ndjesë për çdo mëkat që kam bërë dhe mar vendim që kurrë të mos të ofendoj Ty me mëkatet, dhe shpirtërisht, të premtoj të vë në rrugë të drejtë jetën time.

Më frikëso me ligjet e tua te bekuara, që të mposht oreksin fizik dhe të ndjek një jetë të shenjtë, duke menduar dhe duke bërë gjëra që të kenaq Ty. Të lutem që të më japësh mirësinë e shpirtit tënd të shenjtë, të më bësh të fortë të përballoj çdo punë dhe vepër keqëdashëse, apo fjalë e mendime dhe te evitoj çdo kurth të të ligut.

Ndriço zemrën time me Djellin e Drejtësisë Tënde; m'a kthjello mendjen dhe më kontrollo çdo veprim, dhe duke ndjekur rrugën tënde të drejtë, të fitoj jetë të përjetshme, Amin.

Pellazgët-Shqipëtarët

Butuar për herë te pare në Bruksel në1897

...Ne kurdoherë
Burra të ndjere
Edhe të vler
Jemi treguar;
Me grekërinë
Dhe me Persinë,
Me gjith' Azinë
Kemi lëftuar.

Me Pirron vamë
Romës i ramë,
Llatint' i vramë
E i tmeruam;
Me Skënderbenë
Tyrqve sa qenë
U dhamë dhenë
Dhe i dëbuam.

Me Lekën vamë,
Muntmë Daranë
Datën i dhamë
Gjithë Azisë
Burr' u dëftuem
Të gjith' i thyem
Përmbys e kthyem
Fron' e Persisë.

Kush i goditi
Posi petriti
E i çfiliti
Tyrqit, barbarët?
Bota s'guxonte
Që t'u qëndronte,
Po kush lëftonte?
Ne shqipëtarët.

Community News

By Linda Foundos

- Elizabeth Liolin spent 10 days with a college friend in Santiago and Valparaiso, Chile. The warm, friendly people and breathtaking views of the Andes Mountains, the coastline and the sunsets were so memorable. The food and the local wines were great as well. All in all, it was a beautiful trip in every respect. What a great experience!!

- Gloria Sawyer had a special time visiting in Chicago with Fr. Elijah Mueller, Rebecca and Gabriel, now 10 years old. The Mueller's shared some wonderful news with Gloria of a baby boy on the way in March. They are all excited, especially Gabriel! We share their joy, and wish Prefteresha Rebecca a good pregnancy.

- We send a warm "shout out" to Mary Pillary who is doing well at the Chapin Home for the Aged. Her address is Chapin Home for the Aged, 165-01 Chapin Terrace, Room #304, Jamaica, NY, 11432. Her sister, Helen Pillary, has been very generously and lovingly looking after her sister.

- What a fabulous and fun time was had by Michel, Nina and Elton Panariti of New Jersey as they celebrated the Christmas holidays in New York with their family and then went to Montreal, Canada to welcome in the New Year and enjoy some great skiing! It was so beautifully scenic and such fun!!

- Kudos to Ilir Fundo who just received his MBA degree. Little by little, in addition to working full time and caring for his family, he managed to complete his courses of study. Bravo! What a wonderful accomplishment. His wife, Dr. Fiona, family and friends are all very proud of him.

- Happy Engagement News: Congratulations to Anita Kutali and Orges Kabaj on their recent engagement!! Anita's parents, Sylvana and Andrea Kutali, and sister Kris, are so happy for the couple. Anita is currently attending FIT and Orges is also a full time student at TCI and working full time as well. This hard-working, ambitious couple plans to wed after completing school. Much happiness to Anita and Orges and their families.

- The Foundos, Oswald and Beno families enjoyed a weekend of skiing, snowboarding and ski school at Bellaire Mountain. This group including Phil, Matt, Christina, Steven, Donna, Jim, Kim, Daniel, Alex, Christina, Tomi, and Jamie. With all their experience, they could certainly qualify for the Albanian Olympic Ski Team!! or the St. Nicholas Ski Team??

- So good to know that Diana Beno and Beti Tsamblakos are both doing well after their recent health issues. We wish them "shendet te mire!!!"

ST. NICHOLAS DAY LUNCHEON A SUCCESS!!!!

St. Nicholas Day was celebrated by more than 100 people participating in the Luncheon. Thanks to the many who made this successful event possible; especially Agathia and Ilia Luka for all their planning and coordination, the cooking crew headed by Larry Jance and various tasks done by the Daughters of St. Nicholas. The Daughters donated more than \$4,000 to the Building Expansion Fund and Church operations. Also, the Daughters ran a fun-filled raffle.



CHRISTMAS PAGEANT, PANCAKE BREAKFAST & SANTA'S VISIT!!!!



HOUSE BLESSINGS

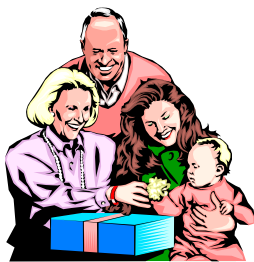
SIGN UP NOW !!!

Father David will be visiting your area for a House blessing. There will be a maximum of 3 home blessings each night. Please make plans for his visit.

- Sun, Jan 6: Jamaica Estates, Flushing.
 Tues, Jan 8th: Ridgewood
 Thurs, Jan 10th: Bronx
 Thurs, Jan 17th: Staten Island
 Tues, Jan 22nd: Brooklyn
 Thurs, Jan 24th: Central Long Island (New Hyde Park, etc)
 Tues, Jan 29th: Long Island North Shore
 Thurs, Jan 31st: Long Island South Shore
 Tues, Feb 5th: New Jersey.
 Thurs, Feb 7th: Astoria & Manhattan
 Thurs, Feb 7th: Ridgewood



HEALTHCARE INFORMATION SEMINAR



Date: Saturday, January 19,
2008

Time: 4:00-5:30 PM

Place: St. Nicholas Albanian
Orthodox Church

Learn about different Healthcare Programs
and which is best for you!!!

FREE ADMITANCE, PLEASE RSVP!!!

Beti Beno
(917) 596-4738

Anila Gjika
(917) 584-4604

Pastor's Message, continued from Page 1

This is the children's time with the priest and all other concerns will have to wait.

4. On January 20th, after the Liturgy, we invite all Sunday School families to come to a Pot Luck Luncheon downstairs after Coffee Fellowship. We will play a fun game that will everyone and all everyone to get to know each other better.

On behalf of your own children, I am asking from you two things:

1. If you have children, godchildren, or friends, bring them to Church, especially during January and February. One father said to me, "What difference does it make bringing kids to Church?" Friends, trust me, it does make a difference. You may never see the seeds you plant. I saw one woman go through years of painful cancer treatments. What got her through it was a Bible verse she learned in Sunday School: "the Lord is my Light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?"

2. One of the best ways we can help the faith of our children grow is by making an investment in the building campaign of this parish, to help our children and teachers do even greater things in the future, to have the best spaces to learn in, to have enough room for them to worship, to have an elevator for their grandparents to join them downstairs. I know for me personally, during the fall other things preoccupied me. But let's start the (secular) new year by making a resolution: By next year, A NEW BUILDING! WOULDN'T IT BE GREAT TO MAKE OUR FIRST HOUSE BLESSING NEXT YEAR, THE NEW SANCTUARY AND CLASSROOM SPACE? If you invest, you are more likely to use the space (who does not like to get his or money's worth?), and there is nothing more important than YOU getting to know GOD. Christ is Born! Krishti U Lind! Glorify Him!

Your friend, +Fr. David

A Personal Note from Fr. David, Prifteresha Kerri and their Children:

Thank you for such kindness at Christmas. Your gifts humbled us. We will strive to be worthy of your trust and love, and are renewed to serve you this year. Please remember us in your prayers. And please reach out to Fr. David with concerns on your hearts. He can be reached via email at snickny@aol.com or by calling (201) 841-7590.

This Month's Major Feast Days

Feast of the Theophany of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ Commemorated on January 6



Theophany is the Feast which reveals the Most Holy Trinity to the world through the Baptism of the Lord. God the Father spoke from Heaven about the Son, the Son was baptized by the St John the Forerunner, and the Holy Spirit descended upon the Son in the form of a dove. From ancient times this Feast was called the Day of Illumination and the Feast of Lights, since God is Light and has appeared to illumine "those who sat in darkness," and "in the region of the shadow of death", and to save the fallen race of mankind by grace.

In the ancient Church it was the custom to baptize catechumens at the Vespers of Theophany, so that Baptism also is revealed as the spiritual illumination of mankind.

The origin of the Feast of Theophany goes back to Apostolic times, and it is mentioned in The Apostolic Constitutions. From the second century we have the testimony of St Clement of Alexandria concerning

the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord, and the night vigil before this Feast.

There is a third century dialogue about the services for Theophany between the holy martyr Hippolytus and St Gregory the Wonderworker. In the following centuries, from the fourth to ninth century, all the great Fathers of the Church: Gregory the Theologian, John Chrysostom, Ambrose of Milan, John of Damascus, commented on the Feast of Theophany.

The monks Joseph the Studite, Theophanes and Byzantios composed much liturgical music for this Feast, which is sung at Orthodox services even today. St John of Damascus said that the Lord was baptized, not because He Himself had need for cleansing, but "to bury human sin by water," to fulfill the Law, to reveal the mystery of the Holy Trinity, and finally, to sanctify "the nature of water" and to offer us the form and example of Baptism.

On the Feast of the Baptism of Christ, the Holy Church proclaims our faith in the most sublime mystery, incomprehensible to human intellect, of one God in three Persons. It teaches us to confess and glorify the Holy Trinity, one in Essence and Indivisible. It exposes and overthrows the errors of ancient teachings which attempted to explain the Creator of the world by reason, and in human terms.

The Church shows the necessity of Baptism for believers in Christ, and it inspires us with a sense of deep gratitude for the illumination and purification of our sinful nature. The Church teaches that our salvation and cleansing from sin is possible only by the power of the grace of the Holy Spirit, therefore it is necessary to preserve worthily these gifts of the grace of holy Baptism, keeping clean this priceless garb, for "As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ".

On the day of Theophany, all foods are permitted, even if the Feast falls on a Wednesday or Friday.

OTHER JANUARY FEAST DAYS



January 2 nd

**Forefeast of the
Theophany of our
Lord and Savior
Jesus Christ**



January 18 th

**St Athanasius the
Great the Archbishop
of Alexandria**



January 30 th

**Synaxis of the Ecumenical
Teachers and Hierarchs: Basil
the Great, Gregory the Theo-
logian, and John Chrysostom**

Major Church Activities and Events

- Tues, Jan 1: Divine Liturgy at 10 am – Feast of St. Basil the Great.
- Sun, Jan 6: Divine Liturgy at 10 am – Feast of the Theophany, Great Blessing of Water: The Baptism of our Lord.
Icon Auction after.
- Jan & Feb: House Blessings by Fr. David
- Tues, Jan 15: Parish Council Meeting – 7:00 pm.
- Sat, Jan 19: Healthcare Information Seminar
4:00 – 5:30 pm.
- Sun, Jan 20: Sunday School Family Pot-Luck Lunch,
after Liturgy & Coffee Hour.

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

- Dec 30: Lou Foundos / Robert Korra
- Jan 06: Roland Llupa / Edi Sera
- Jan 13: Damian Peters / Steven Foundos
- Jan 20: Bill Peters / Ilia Luka
- Jan 27: Petrika Troja / Nasi Pavllo
- Feb 03: Ilir Fundo / Stefan Baltadori

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.stnicholasalbanian.org

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