

THE ORTHODOX POST

March 2013

Volume IX, Issue 3



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Pastor's Message

by Fr. Nathan Preston

In my life, I have heard a great many sermons. Good and bad, hastily flung together or scrupulously constructed, I know and, at this point, have myself both witnessed and delivered both. Some I recall from seminary, where boldness and naiveté walk hand in hand with sometimes thrilling, sometimes hilarious outcome. New and young preachers stabbing wildly at a novel task—we all have been there. I believe one morning lesson made repeated reference to the joys of breakfast meat and somehow worked this theme of bacon and sausage into its scriptural reflection. Though I confess I don't remember whether I was actually in the congregation for that exegetical stretch or whether I just heard of it afterward, hallowed by reputation, become part of campus legend and lore. But as one of the regular breakfast cooks, I knew it not to be beyond reason. Those boys (and girls) did love their sausage and bacon and their scripture.

I remember also the sermons of my youth but, surprisingly, not many or well. For those twice a week rounds of hour-long rhetoric and teaching, I think I occupied myself primarily with reading my picture Bible or illustrating my then current fancies in pen or leaden pencil: either dogs of all types or gory battle scenes viewed from the perspective of a World War I biplane—there was little variation. And as a teenager, forced to lay aside every other distraction but the adult Bible which accompanied me always to Church, I remember even less,

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caught up in my own juvenile angst and universal discontented ill will towards all things not personally chosen by and for me. However there was one sermon that did, somehow, "stick", its repeated theme and phrase inescapably echoing in my mind thereafter.

"It's hard for the devil to get a handle on a grateful people." Thus was the refrain of that one memorable homily. The devil, ever a common trope for those old men (though they now could scarcely be but a few years older than me), our preachers used him as an oddly faithful stand-in to speak of evil or sadness or

Continued on Page 9

President's Message

by Bill Peters

March continues our Parish's very busy schedule of activities. House Blessings by Fr. Nathan are well underway. Make your appointment! Many Pre-Pascha activities are planned as follows:

- Monday, March 18th, "Great Lent Begins"
- Wednesdays,

March 20th and 27th at 7pm

Pre-Sanctified Liturgies

Followed by a Pot-Luck Lenten Meal
and Religious Education Adult Study

- Sunday, March 25th at 10 am,
"Divine Liturgy: Feast of The Annunciation"

- Sunday, March 31st at 5 pm, Pan-Orthodox Vespers

Of course, you are encouraged to attend all Sunday Liturgies and the Lenten Special Services.

Also in March, our 2013 Pledge Program approaches an end. It is important for the life of the Church and its ability to serve the Parish Community that everyone supports St. Nicholas by making the best-possible financial Pledge they can make for the year. To make sure everyone's Pledge has been properly recorded, the names of Parishioners whose Pledge for 2012 has been received will be listed in a future issue of The Orthodox Post. If you have not yet made your Pledge, please do it very soon and so you can get on the List of Supporters.

Also, our Special Team coordinating Natural Church Development activities is making progress. All Parishioners should keep up to date on this very important activity - See page 4 and Sunday Bulletins!

Looking to April - make plans to attend services for Palm Sunday on April 28th, Holy Week (April 29th - May 4th) and Pascha Services on Saturday night, May 4-5th.

KENDI SHQIP (The Albanian Corner)



by A. Llupa

Mars, 2013

Kete muaj po japim nje pjese nga Bibla dhe nje kenge labe per gjuhen shqipe

...Zbulesa hyjnore në Dhjatën e Vjetër, në Kishën e Dhjatës së Re, në jetët e shenjtorëve, në diturinë e etërve, në bukurinë e krijimit ...dhe me e plotë dhe më e përsosur në Jezu Krishtin, Birin e Perëndisë, është zbulesa e Vetë Perëndisë. Perëndia ka folur. Perëndia ka vepruar. Perëndia e ka shfaqur Vetveten dhe vazhdon ta shfaqë në jetën e popullit të Tij.

Nëse duam të dëgjojmë zërin e Perëndisë dhe të shohim veprat e vetëzbulesës së Perëndisë në botë, në duhet të pastrojmë mendjet dhe zemrat tona nga çdo gjë që është e keqe dhe e rremë. Ne duhet të përpiqemi të duam të vërtetën, të duam njeri tjetrin dhe të duam gjithshka në krijimin e mirë të Perëndisë. Sipas Besimit Orthodox, pastrimi prej mekatit dhe gënjeshtërisë është rruga për të njohur Perëndinë. Nëse ne e hapim vetveten ndaj Hirit Hyjnor dhe e pastrojmë vetveten prej çdo gjëje të ligë, atëherë është e sigurt që ne do të jemi të aftë ta kuptojmë drejt Shkrimin dhe të arrijmë një kungim të gjallë me Perëndinë e Gjallë dhe të Vërtetë, që e ka zbuluar Vetveten dhe vazhdon ta zbulojë tek ata që e duan Atë...

Gjuhës Shqipe në Këngën Labe

Me ty mallin ë kam shuar
Me ty dhimbjen e kam prerë
Me ty këngën kam kënduar,
Me ty jam përkund në djep.

Mirëmëngjes, o Mirëmëngjes,
Dua shqip t'u përshendes
Në cdo vatër, në cdo brez,
Shqipëtare, moj le te mbes.

Bijë o bijë në gjuhë të nënës
U bekoftë Perëndija
Të mos shuhet djepi i këngës,
Të mos plakët Shqipëria.

S'të ndërroj me asnjë tjetër,
Nëpër botën anembanë,
Se je gjuha më e vjetër,
Se je kënga më me famë.

DAUGHTERS' CORNER

by Linda Foundos

We hope you've all been able to manage whatever Mother Nature has sent our way so far this winter as well as all the flu going around. You must agree, though, the winter wonderland snowfall is quite beautiful. It did, however, cause us to reschedule the Valentine's Party to the following week. The party was a very lively success; quite a dancing crowd & a delicious buffet. Thank you to Tina Korra & Irma Mile who worked along with some of the Board members to coordinate the evening so well.

Each Sunday parishioners enjoy a nice coffee fellowship following services. Our sincere thanks to all that have been participating to host. If you or a friend would like to be part of our program, please contact Christina Liolin or Adelina Llupa. You can also sponsor a specific one Sunday in honor of a birthday, anniversary, memorial or whatever you would like to celebrate or honor. For regular Sunday hosting, your responsibilities are:

BRING:

8 cakes or the equivalent to serve 80 people

1 pound of coffee

1 gallon of milk

1 box of cookies for the children

1 bottle of juice for the children

DO:

Arrive with items by 9:30 a.m. for preparation

Pour coffee at kitchen window & welcome parishioners

Make certain tables are cleared off at the end

(However, everyone is supposed to clean up after themselves & put trash in trash can.)

Spring is around the corner, as is Easter. During lent, St. Nicholas will be hosting a vesper service & light Lenten buffet for Orthodox churches in the area. It is a beautiful service with several priests concelebrating. These churches each take turns hosting. I urge you to make it a point to be present.

There will be a Daughters meeting on Sunday, March 17th following services. Please plan to attend. We can't have a "community" without people.

We need some new ideas and new energy.

PHOTOGRAPHER NEEDED!!!!



The Church needs a Volunteer who likes photography and enjoys taking photos.

This Volunteer will take digital photos of various Church events so these photos can be used in the monthly St. Nicholas Newsletter, The Orthodox Post.

If interested, contact Bill Peters at peterslwp@optimum.net or (516) 509-7695

House Blessings Continue



Avoid the rush!

**Speak to Fr. Nathan now about coming
to Bless Your Home.**

**Church: 718-380-5684,
Cell: 208-818-3372**



**CHURCH SCHOOL
(Sunday School & Albanian Class)**

**CLASSES ARE
EVERY SUNDAY**

**BRING YOUR CHILDREN
TO CHURCH ON SUNDAYS**

Adult Study Begins

Wednesday, March 20th

Our Lenten Adult Study will begin this year on Wednesday March 20. After the Presanctified Liturgy at 7 pm, we will gather in the hall for a potluck meal and introduction to this year's Lenten discussion and meditation.

Our text this Lent will be *Father Arseny, 1893-1973: Priest, Prisoner, and Spiritual Father*. Though the title may seem long, this is a very engaging work about a prisoner in the Soviet labor camps and is well known and much beloved by faithful people throughout the world. Because of its popularity, it is available both in customary book form and as an e-book or tape set.

Please speak to Fr. Nathan soon about getting your copy and plan to attend these weekly reflections every Wednesday night throughout the Great Fast.

Pan-Orthodox Vespers

Each Sunday of Great Lent

Lent provides us an annual opportunity to do a little bit more at Church and at home as we strive to reorient our lives, learning to prioritize things of eternal value. As with so much of our faith, we do not act alone in this but are always in the company of fellow strugglers, fellow followers of Christ

Each Sunday of Great Lent, we have a special chance to realize this joyful camaraderie as we gather with other Orthodox Christians from neighboring Churches. Pan-Orthodox Vespers takes place every Sunday during the fast, and priests and parishioners take this opportunity to visit each other, pray together, and enjoy a meal with each other.

This year, St. Nicholas is honored to be among those communities asked to host this event. Please mark your calendar for 5pm on April 14 and plan to be here at our St. Nicholas Church as we welcome our brothers and sisters as guests.

For information about where other such events will take place, please refer to the weekly bulletin and announcements.

Pledge Program for 2013

Still a Few People Yet To Submit Pledge Card!!!

PLEDGE CARD

My total pledge for the year **2013**: \$ _____
 I will pay my pledge to St. Nicholas Church (please check one) Weekly Monthly Quarterly Yearly

Signature: _____

Parish Census
 We are continually updating our parish database. Please take a few minutes and fill in the information requested below.
 Please print clearly. Thank you.

Name: _____ Birthday: _____
 Spouse: _____ Birthday: _____
 Address: _____ Zip Code: _____
 Phone Number: () _____ Email Address(es): _____ Wedding Anniversary: _____

Other family members in household:

Name: _____ Birthday: _____ Name: _____ Birthday: _____
 Name: _____ Birthday: _____ Name: _____ Birthday: _____
 Name: _____ Birthday: _____ Name: _____ Birthday: _____

We are approaching the end of our Annual Pledge Campaign for 2013. The Campaign is when we in the St. Nicholas Parish Community indicate our expected level of financial support for the next year. We do this by praying and considering our own lives at St. Nicholas; determining the financial giving we expect to make in 2013; indicating it on a Pledge Card; and returning the Pledge Card to Church. Most pledges are in the \$500 to \$3000 range.

If you have not yet submitted your Pledge, do so as soon as possible. Please consider increasing your Pledge over last year's amount or making a generous first time Pledge for 2013.

St. Nicholas appreciates your continued generosity and it is your spiritual, physical, and monetary support that maintains the Church here for us to gather together as one Community. Thank You!!!

**Orthodox Natural
Church Development**
 Be a part of the ONCD process
 Together we can make a difference



The St. Nicholas Health Church Development process is now ready to move into the next phase. All of us will be encouraged to participate in this phase of the process.

In the next few weeks, we will be organizing focus group meetings to discuss the results of the recent survey. We are looking for volunteers to host a group in your home. The groups will be from 6 to 12 people. The sign-up sheets for each date and location will be posted on the stairway bulletin board. This is a great opportunity for all of us to have our voices heard as we work collectively to bring St. Nicholas to the next level.

If you have any questions please feel free to speak with:

Fr. Nathan, Tomi Beno, Chris Liolin, Joanne Heiser, Mark Papalexis or Nick Filis.

Zhvillimi Natural i Kishes Orthodokse

Zhvillimi Natural i Kishes se Shen Nikolles tashme eshte gati te ndermari fazen e dyte te procesit te saj. Eshte shume kritike qe te gjithet anetaret e Kishes te marrin pjese ne kete faze te procesit.

Gjate ketyre dy javeve qe do vijne, do te organizohen grupe te vogla per te diskutuar rezultated e pyetsorit te sapo kompletuar gjate fazes se pare te ketij procesi. Grupet do te perbehen nga nje minimum prej 6 deri ne nje maksimum prej 12 vetash. Secili prej anetareve te Kishes mund te shruaj emrin ne njerin nga afishet qe do vihen ke tabela e varur ne mure. Tabela eshte e pozicionuar tek shkallet midis Katit te pare dhe Hollit te Kishes. Afishet do te do tju informojne mbi vendin dhe daten ku ju do te mblidheni. Ky eshte nje oportunitet per te gjithet anetaret e Kishes te shpehim lirshem mendimet e tyre dhe qe ne menyre kolektive te sjellin Kishen e Shen Nikolles nje nivel me te larte.

Per detaje te metejshme ne lidhje me kete faze te procesin, ju mund te kontaktoni: Priftin Nathan, Tomi Beno, Chris Liolin, Joanne Heiser, Mark Papalexis ose Nick Filis.

St. Valentine's Party a Great Success!!!

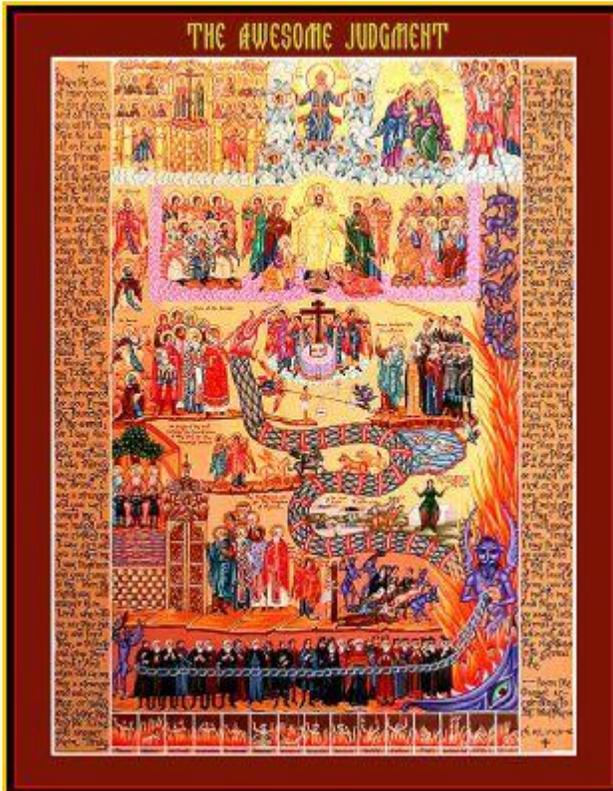


On Saturday, February 16, an overflow crowd of Parishioners attended our annual St. Valentine's Dance and Party. Everyone had a wonderful time. Music, dancing, food and good friends were enjoyed by all. A special "Thank You" to all those who worked on the Party and made the success possible!!!



Community News by Linda Foundos

- The Albanian American National Organization has been in existence for about 70 years. Its original purpose was to unite Albanians in a new country. Over the years the purpose evolved to include awarding scholarships, honoring individuals with exceptional contributions to the Albanian community, helping retain & share our culture, fellowship & many marriages have resulted as well! There are a number of chapter cities that rotate hosting the annual Convention and Queen Pageant. This year the New York Chapter is hosting the 67th convention on August 2, 3 & 4 at the Roosevelt Hotel in Manhattan. Please contact Jana, Phil, or Lou Foundos for details. More information will be available soon.
- Kudos to Kris Kutali who graduated in December, one semester early, from St. Francis College with a B.A. in Advertising and Public Relations. Her parents, Silvana & Andrea, family and friends are very proud of her and her accomplishments. She is bright and enthusiastic with a great future ahead. She is looking forward to working for a time in London! What a great opportunity & experience for Kris. Bravo! Good luck in all that you do.
- A very Happy Birthday to Anila Gjika who was thrilled by the party thrown for her by her husband, Vasken! A great time was had by all with lots of good family & friends, music, dance, laughter, fun, food & drinks. We wish Anila many, many more happy & healthy years.



SUNDAY OF THE LAST JUDGMENT, MEATFARE SUNDAY –
 Commemorated on March 10th

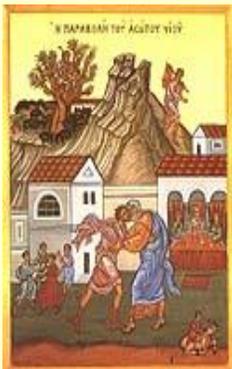
Today's Gospel reading is Matthew 25:31–46, the parable of the Last Judgment. It reminds us that while trusting in Christ's love and mercy, we must not forget His righteous judgment when He comes again in glory. If our hearts remain hardened and unrepentant, we should not expect the Lord to overlook our transgressions simply because He is a good and loving God. Although He does not desire the death of a sinner, He also expects us to turn from our wickedness and live. This same idea is expressed in the prayer read by the priest after the penitent has confessed his or her sins (Slavic practice).

The time for repentance and forgiveness is now, in the present life. At the Second Coming, Christ will appear as the righteous Judge, Who will render to every man according to his deeds". Then the time for entreating God's mercy and forgiveness will have passed.

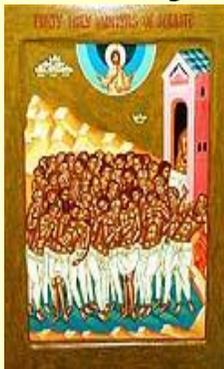
As Father Alexander Schmemmann reminds us in his book GREAT LENT, sin is the absence of love, it is separation and isolation. When Christ comes to judge the world, His criterion for judgment will be love. Christian love entails seeing Christ in other people, our family, our friends, and everyone else we may encounter in our lives. We shall be judged on whether we have loved, or not loved, our neighbor. We show Christian love when we feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, visit those who are sick or in prison. If we did such things for the least of Christ's brethren, then we also did them for Christ. If we did not do such things for the least of the brethren, neither did we do them for Christ.

Today is the last day for eating meat and meat products until Pascha, though eggs and dairy products are permitted every day during the coming week. This limited fasting prepares us gradually for the more intense fasting of Great Lent.

MAJOR FEAST DAYS IN MARCH



Mar 03
 Sunday of The
 Prodigal Son



Mar 09
 Holy Forty
 Martyrs



Mar 17
 Forgiveness Sunday
 (Cheesefare)



Mar 24
 Sunday of
 Orthodoxy



Mar 25
 Annunciation



Mar 26
 Archangel
 Gabriel

PASTOR'S MESSAGE - Continued from Page 1

tragedy in the world. Yet in its very simplicity and the jangle of its presentation, this phrase has outlasted most content of all those other sermons my ears, if not my mind, have collected over these decades. So true, so challenging, thanksgiving as a call to virtue, gratitude the defense against darkness; it is hard for the devil to get a handle on grateful people.

I would contend that most of us think we know what it is to give thanks. We even set aside a Thursday for this each November. Yet gratitude is more than a ceremonial exchange of words, more than just "Falemnderit" and "Ju lutem." To be thankful is nothing else than to know the presence of God and to labor at sustaining this awareness. Real thanksgiving pools forth from the understanding that we are possessors and deservers of nothing, and yet we have, and yet we can, for yet we are children all of that God in Whom nothing needful is absent. The preacher was right: when we give thanks, God is present and the devil cannot be found. More than that, though, when we give thanks, we ourselves are present, and the devil of our own pride takes flight before this knowledge God, He Who does not depart from us.

Lent is approaching and it may be difficult. It is intended and should be difficult to attend more services and to give some things up for a while. In these coming days, we may not find it so easy to give thanks. That's alright. This is by design, for in these coming forty days our charge is to move beyond the mere niceties that we too often call virtue. We are to live with less so that we can find more, be aware and alert more, be thankful more. May we find, in the joy of Pascha, that we have learned to become a grateful people.

Why should we thank God, and charitable persons, for everything? Primarily for our own benefit, to refine the feelings of our soul; to cultivate the feeling of dependence in all things upon God and good men, and grateful love towards them, as well as the feeling of our own nothingness without God, and our inability to live without the help of kind people. —St. John of Kronstadt

Ads from Merchants Who Support the Church

Please look at the Ads and support these Merchants by buying goods and services from them, whenever possible.

Tell the Merchant that you are from St, Nicholas Church and saw their Ad in the Church's Monthly Newsletter!!!

For New Ads Please Contact – Tomi Beno at (917) 952-9252

Orthodox Natural Church Development

Be a part of the ONCD process
Together we can make a difference



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Media Relations
Content Marketing

Major Church Activities and Events

Vespers every Saturday at 5:00 p.m.

March 2, 9, 16 and 23 (not on the 30th)

- Sun, Mar 03: Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.
- Wed, Mar 06: Parish Council Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- Sat, Mar 09: Memorial Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.
The Blessing of Graves at Mt. Tomori
- Sun, Mar 10: Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.
- Sun, Mar 17: Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.
Rite of Forgiveness
- GREAT LENT**
- Mon, Mar 18: Lenten Prayers, 7:00 p.m.
- Tues, Mar 19: Lenten Prayers, 7:00 p.m.
- Wed, Mar 20: Presanctified Liturgy & Adult Study, 7 p.m.
- Sun, Mar 24: Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.; Pan-Orthodox
Vespers, location to be announced
- Mon, Mar 25: Festal Prayers, 10:00 a.m.
Annunciation of the Theotokos; Liturgy,
3:00 p.m. at St. Vladimir's Seminary
- Wed, Mar 27: Presanctified Liturgy & Adult Study, 7 p.m.
- Sun, Mar 31: Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.
Pan Orthodox Vespers, 5:00 p.m., St. Andrews, Dix Hills

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

- Mar 03: Robert KORRA / Lou FOUNDOS
- Mar 10: Roland LLUPA / Edi SERA
- Mar 17: Ilia LUKA / Bill PETERS
- Mar 24: Stefan BALTADORI / Izzy TSAMBLAKOS
- Mar 31: Nasi PAVLLO / Ardian MILE

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.stnicholasalbanian.org

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