

THE ORTHODOX POST

March 2014
Volume X, Issue 3



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Pastor's Message

by Fr. Nathan Preston

I had to call Triple A the other day. Though a sturdy shovel, caution, kitty litter, front wheel drive, and whatever brute strength I can muster these days had been enough to see me through this unrelentingly bleak winter's many storms, I finally had gotten myself irredeemably stuck beyond what my patience could endure. I made the call, waited a bit, and was wrenched off the ice in short order, leaving behind the previous night's unhappy parking, the nighttime struggle to rock the car back in forth into a better place, and the morning's recourse to pushing and to oaths. It was almost too easy; dialing the phone was the hardest part. Because it is an admission that my own abilities are finite and sometimes simply not enough, dialing the phone is always the hardest part.

I am not someone who necessarily looks for lessons in all of life's episodes. Sometimes a stuck car is only that, a problem. In truth, those who are always looking to make every cloud yield its silver lining, every story its simple moral, most often get on my nerves with their unkillable optimism. But here, on the threshold of Lent, this object lesson written in snow and machine seems notably apt, for as I drove away with a bit of relief and a bit of wounded pride, I really began to wonder why it had taken me so long to make this call. Why so long to employ this service for

President's Message

by Jim Liolin

Get Involved Looking To the Future!

For those who were not in Church on February 2nd we celebrated the "Burning of the Mortgage" or the building loan, to be specific. This was a symbolic event marking the completion of the expansion project. Thank you all who supported this project.

In February, for the third year in a row, there was a sell out crowd for the Valentine's Dance... even though the weather was questionable it was a wonderful and fun time. It seems Albanians are full of love. I wonder if the color RED has anything to do with it?

Lent will begin this month. Please think about this special

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which I have paid faithfully these many years yet left unutilized? Asking for help is not easy, and I suspect that I am not the only who finds it so.

Lent is beginning for me in a couple weeks. For you, the reader, it has likely already come. Now, during this richest season of the Church, the resources available to us are vast: more services, more opportunities for prayer, more focus in our individual lives and practices of the Faith. So much is offered to us during this holy season that sometimes it can be overwhelming. Sometimes we see the schedule of the Church services or, taking a look at our Church calendars and all their red shaded days indicating abstinence, we may wonder whether being a faithful

Continued on Page 5

time and make an effort to attend extra services, like the Pre-sanctified Liturgy every Wednesday at 7 p.m. during Lent. This is a beautiful service and everyone should attend at least once. We are always given another chance to turn our life around. Don't miss it!

The Healthy Church committee has been meeting and reviewing the various focus group results and will provide recommendations soon.

Don't forget the General Meeting this month. More info will be coming in another mailing. It's at this meeting that you have the opportunity to express your concerns and interests about the church. If you want to be on the Council please submit your name to Father Nathan or me. To be eligible you need to have been a member in good standing for one year.

See you in Church.

KENDI SHQIP

(The Albanian Corner)



by A. Llupa

Mars, 2014

Këtë muaj po japim një pjesë nga “Ungjilli sipas Lukës” me titull “Ringjallja: Ndarja e Fundit”. Megjithëse i festuam Pashkët, ringjallja e Krishtit gjithmonë është aktuale... dhe një lutje nga “Anafora” e librit “Adhurimi” i Thomas Hopko.

...Në këto fjalë e sipër, papritur, vetë Jezusi qëndroi mes tyre, dhe tha: “Ju përshëndes!” Ata, të habitur dhe me plot frikë, mendonin se po shihnin një fantazmë. Por ai u tha: “Përse çuditëni? Pse lindin këto dyshime në mëndjen tuaj? Shikoni duart dhe këmbët e mija: jam unë! Më prekni dhe binduni! Një fantazmë nuk është prej mishit dhe eshtrave çfarë po shihni se kam unë.” Ndërsa u thoshte këto, u tregoi këmbët dhe duart. Ata ende s’mund të besonin nga gëzimi dhe çudia, prandaj u tha: “A keni këtu gjë për të ngrënë?” Ata i sollën një kurm peshku të pjekur. Jezusi e mori dhe e hëngri para syve të tyre. Pastaj u tha: “Kur isha me ju, ju thashë: “Gjithshka që u shkrua për mua në ligjin e Moshut, në Profetët dhe në Psalmet duhet të plotësohet.” Dhe ai i ndihmoi ta kuptonin siç duhet shkrimin e Shenjtë.” Këtu është shkruar, u shpjegoi, “Mesia duhet të vuajë dhe të vdesë, dhe të ringjallet nga të vdekurit ditën e tretë. Njerëzve të të gjithë popujve duhet t’u shpallet se atyre u ofrohet kthimi nga mëkatet te Zoti për ndjesën e mëkateve, me kusht që të besojnë në Mesinë. Dhe kjo duhet të fillojë në Jeruzalem.” Ju jeni dëshmitarë të të gjitha këtyre dhe ju do të përgjigjeni për këtë. Por unë do t’jua dërgoj Shpirtin që Ati im ju ka premtuar. Rrini këtu në qytet, deri sa të forcoheni me fuqinë nga Perëndia.”

Pastaj i mori me vete gjer në skaj të Bet-Anjës. Atje i ngriti duart për t’i bekuar. Dhe ndërsa po i bekonte ata, u nda nga ata dhe u ngrit lart në qiell. Por ata ranë përmbys para tij, dhe e adhuruan. Pastaj u kthyen të gëzuar në Jeruzalem, dhe vazhdimisht ishin në Tempull duke lavdëruar Perëndinë.

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Daughters’ Corner

by Linda Foundos

Many thanks to all those that made our Valentine’s Dinner Dance such a success. Many worked to shop, decorate, take reservations, arrange seating, reserve a DJ, arrange for catering, set up, clean up & more! All in all, in between blizzards, it was a great evening of fun.

Soul Saturday on February 23rd was well attended, a service of special significance. It was followed by quite a nice, random buffet with contributions from a number of people. It was wonderful to take a pause from our hectic lives for this morning to remember our loved ones no longer with us & to share a meal together.

We will be meeting on March 16th to discuss preparations for Pascha. Please plan to join us then.

Parish General Meeting Sunday, March 30th, after Liturgy



Come to the Meeting!!!!

Parish Business to be discussed:

Religious Education

Church Finances

Social Activities

Daughters of St. Nicholas Activities

Archdiocese and OCA Activities

Parish Council Member Elections

Loan Burning Ceremony for Pay-off of Building Expansion Loan

---NO MORE LOAN---

THE "Burning The Loan" ceremony was held on Sunday, February 2nd with a special prayer service. The burning of the loan document in the censor symbolized the closing of another era in the life of St. Nicholas. We can now concentrate on moving on. Several groups from the outside are taking advantage of the halls capacity from the many shows, baptisms and Jamaica Estates Association meetings. All was made possible by many who donated to the project from the beginning and the subsequent fund raising events such as the Golf Outings, Building expansion Dance & Journal and the recent Car Raffle. Combined with some of the Church savings the loan was paid off a year and a half ahead of schedule. Thank you everyone.



ORTHODOX NATURAL CHURCH DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

We would like to take this opportunity to update everyone on the progress made as a community since we started on this journey to bring our church to the next level.

- We have now completed all the group discussions:
 - There were seven group discussions that included a large number of the Saint Nicholas family members.
 - They took place in New Jersey, Long Island, Brooklyn and Queens.
 - The age groups ranged from teens to senior citizens.
 - It was very exciting to see the level of engagement and care that poured out of these discussions. It was great to see how much love we all have for Saint Nicholas and its future.
- Many of the groups had similar concerns and aspirations for the future of our Church and all brought great ideas on how we could achieve our shared vision for Saint Nicholas to each of the discussions.

Some of the ideas that were shared:

 - Creating a Men's Club.
 - Having a youth group.
 - Sunday school - taking all the hard work people have invested in the program to date and now bringing it to a new level.
 - More outreach programs designed to help our communities and those in need.
 - Find ways to include more parishioners in serving both the Church and Christ.
 - Most importantly, everyone expressed a desire to learn more about their faith.
- We are pleased to let you know that progress has already been made in some of these areas:
 - Saint Nicholas now has a Men's Club which ran a very successful first event in January.
 - The Youth group is starting to make progress and is having its first official meeting later this month.
 - There have been several instances where parishioners with special talents have assisted those in need of their skills.
 - It appears that more people are stepping forward to lead and manage various church activities and projects.

These are just a few of the exciting benefits we are already seeing from the work of the Orthodox Natural Church Development program!!!!

- Next steps:
 - The committee is working on identifying the top two or three opportunities that were shared during all the group discussions.
 - Once the key initiatives are selected, an implementation plan will be created.
 - The plan will then be presented to the Church Board and communicated to the entire community.

With Love - Chris, Joanne, Tomi, Mark, Nick

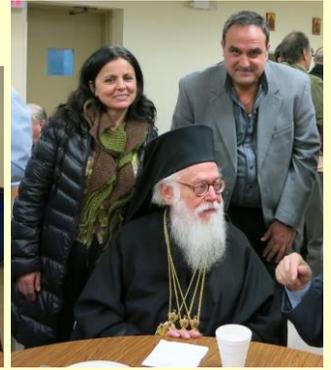
Archbishop Anastasios of Albania Visits St. Nicholas Church

Father Nathan Preston and the faithful of Saint Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church were pleased to welcome His Beatitude, Archbishop Anastasios of Tirana, Durrës and All Albania, Primate of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Albania, and His Eminence, Metropolitan John of Korçës, on Sunday, January 26, 2014.

Archbishop Anastasios and Metropolitan John attended the Divine Liturgy and engaged in fellowship with the parish faithful at the conclusion of services. "Though an unanticipated surprise, this visit was explained by His Beatitude as necessary, since on every journey one must stop first 'to greet family and be at home in their company' before continuing on to business," said Father Nathan.

On this visit to New York, on Tuesday, January 28, Archbishop Anastasios delivered the annual "Orthodoxy in America Lecture" at Fordham University, Bronx, NY, on the topic "*Sharing the Good News in a Multi-Religious Country: Theological Reflections on Other Religions.*" Fordham University also conferred upon His Beatitude an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters in conjunction with the lecture.

For decades, Archbishop Anastasios has been widely recognized for his outstanding missionary endeavors, especially in leading the resurrection of the Church in Albania after the fall of that nation's "officially atheist" communist regime, during which all religious expression was brutally suppressed.



Valentine's Day Dance a Great Success!!!!

Another snowstorm just couldn't keep the Valentine's Day Dance from being a great success!!! Through the terrible weather our friends came to celebrate from CT, NJ and NY. All were glad that they braved the weather. The night started with dim lights, though finally ConEd was able to get them all back on and get our DJ plugged in. With over 130 people, the dance floor was full all night long with a great mix of American & Albanian music spun by the DJ. Dinner was served by The Zenon Taverna, who as usual prepared a wonderful buffet for all to enjoy. The efforts of the committee members truly made a difference in making this event the great success that it was. Kudos to all who helped!!!



PASTOR'S MESSAGE – Continued from Page 1

Christian is not another full time job. It can be but whether it should be or, better, how it should be is for each of us to work out as best we can. The devil, they say, is in the details, but for us in the heavy tide of this season's many blessings, he needn't be the only one there.

However it is that we practice Lent, we must practice. We must learn to do a little bit more, not because there is any merit in simply being more busy at Church, but because these added obligations teach us to look beyond ourselves. I am confident that God does not take a great deal of pleasure in seeing His people always in Jamaica Estates. What I presume He hopes we find at this time is an end to our own capacity, a limit to ourselves. And from this, we learn to turn to Him; we learn to practice what we preach. I think He hopes that we recall amidst the chaos of our lives that we need Him and need each other. When we are tired, when we are spent beyond our last resources and our patience finally runs dry, He is there, if only we are willing to make the call.

KENDI SHQIP – Continued from Page 2

... NJE LUTJE NGA "ANAFORA"... Edhe ne, Zot njeridashës, bashkë me këto fuqi të lumura thërresim e themi: "I shenjtë dhe tërëshenjtë Je, Ti dhe Biri i Vetëmlindur dhe Shpirti Yt i Shenjtë. I Shenjtë dhe i Tërëshenjtë Je dhe madhështore është lavdia Jote; Ti që e deshe botën Tënde, aq sa edhe Birin tënd të vetëmlindur edhe, që çdo njeri që beson tek Ai të mos humbasë, por të ketë jetë të amëshuar; i cili erdhi dhe plotësoi gjithë misionin hyjnor për ne, natën që dorëzohej, ose më mirë dorëzonte vehten e Tij, për jetën e botës, si mori bukën në duart e Tij të shenjtë, të pacënuara dhe të papërlyera, si falenderoi dhe e bekoi, e shenjtëroi e theu dhe ua dha nxënësve dhe Apostujve të Tij të shenjtë duke u thënë: " Merrni hani, ky është trupi im, që thyhet për juve për ndjesën e mëkateve. Amin." Gjithashtu mori dhe potirin (kupon) duke thënë: " Pini prej këtij të gjithë, ky është gjaku im i Dhjatës së Re, që derdhet për juve dhe për shumë, për ndjesën e mëkateve." Duke kujtuar pra këtë porosi shpëtimtare dhe gjithë sa janë bërë për ne, Kryqin, Varrin, ngjalljen e triditshme, të ngjiturit në Qiejt, të ndenjurit në të djathtë, Ardhen e dytë të lavdëruar, "Të tuat nga të tuat, ty të blatojmë, nga të gjitha dhe për të gjitha!"



4th Sunday of Great Lent: St. John Climacus (of the Ladder) - Commemorated on March 30th

The Fourth Sunday of Lent is dedicated to St John of the Ladder (Climacus), the author of the work, The Ladder of Divine Ascent. The abbot of St Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai (6th century) stands as a witness to the violent effort needed for entrance into God's Kingdom (Mt.10: 12). The spiritual struggle of the Christian life is a real one, "not against flesh and blood, but against ... the rulers of the present darkness ... the hosts of wickedness in heavenly places ..." (Eph 6:12). Saint John encourages the faithful in their efforts for, according to the Lord, only "he who endures to the end will be saved" (Mt.24:13).

Troparion — Tone 1

Dweller of the desert and angel in the body, / you were shown to be a wonder-worker, our God-bearing Father John. / You received heavenly gifts through fasting, vigil, and prayer: / healing the sick and the souls of those drawn to you by faith. / Glory to Him who gave you strength! / Glory to Him who granted you a crown! / Glory to Him who through you grants healing to all!

Kontakion — Tone 4

The Lord truly set you on the heights of abstinence, / to be a guiding star, showing the way to the universe, / O our Father and Teacher John

 Search

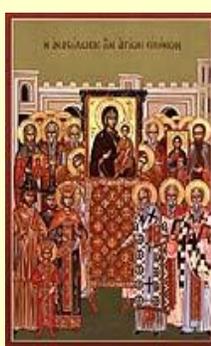
MAJOR FEAST DAYS IN MARCH



Forgiveness Sunday
(Cheesefare Sunday)
March 02



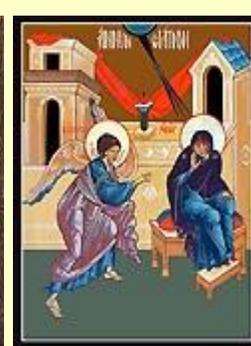
Beginning of
Great Lent
March 03



Sunday of
Orthodoxy
March 09



Veneration
of the Cross
March 23



Annunciation of
the Theotokos
March 25



Archangel
Gabriel
March 26

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Major Church Activities and Events

Vespers every Saturday at 5:00 p.m.

March 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29

- Sun, Mar 02: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.; Rite of Forgiveness to follow
 Mon–Tues, Mar 03–04: Canon of St. Andrew, 7 p.m.
 Wed, Mar 05: Presanctified Liturgy, 7:00 p.m.; Potluck and Adult Study to follow
 Fri, Mar 07: Akathist, 7:00 p.m.
 Sun, Mar 09: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.; Pan–Orthodox Vespers, 6:00 p.m. at St. Nicholas Antiochian Cathedral, Brooklyn
 Mon, Mar 10: Parish Council Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
 Wed, Mar 12: Presanctified Liturgy, 7:00 p.m.
 Fri, Mar 14: Akathist, 7:00 p.m.
 Sun, Mar 16: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.; Pan–Orthodox Vespers, 5:00 p.m., at Transfiguration Russian Cathedral, Brooklyn
 Wed, Mar 19: Presanctified Liturgy, 7:00 p.m.
 Fri, Mar 21: Akathist, 7:00 p.m.
 Sun, Mar 23: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.,
 Pan–Orthodox Vespers, 5:00 p.m., Location tbd
 Mon, Mar 24: Vesperal Liturgy, 7:00 p.m.; Annunciation
 Tues, Mar 25: Prayers, 11:00 a.m.; Annunciation
 Wed, Mar 26: Presanctified Liturgy; 7:00 p.m.
 Fri, Mar 28: Akathist, 7:00 p.m.
 Sun, Mar 30: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m., Parish General Meeting after Liturgy
 Pan–Orthodox Vespers, 5:00 p.m., St. Nicholas, Whitestone

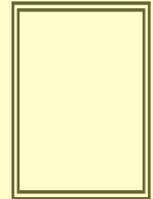
Ushers' Schedule for Sunday Services Lista e sherbimit te dielave ne kisha

- Mar 02:** Stefan BALTADORI / Izzy TSAMBLAKOS
Mar 09: Nasi PAVLLO / Ardian MILE
Mar 16: Donald OSWALD / Tomi BENO
Mar 23: Andrea KUTALI / John JANCE
Mar 30: Robert KORRA / Lou FOUNDOS

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