

THE ORTHODOX POST

April 2015

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Pastor's Message

by Fr. Nathan Preston

It is not so hard for us to live bravely. Most of us come to a point in our lives where, having built or having worked at something for long enough, we feel we know the risks of our choices. We have come to a place where we know the game and its gambles, those worth taking and those that are not. And whether we wager conservatively or stake all, we own these choices; we own the bravery of choice because it is something we permit ourselves to make and then to live with what may come thereafter. No, it is not so hard to live bravely. Yet, at times, it is desperately hard to let others do the same.

The overwhelming majority of us want what is best for those around us. Prisoners and priests, impoverished homeless teens, students, professors, the healthy and the dying, working people of all kinds, pensioners and those still looking for work, young and old, I have listened to them, and barring the occasional and inevitable flare of temper, they speak as one, this consensus of voices. Regardless of station, status, or social category, we all want what is best for those around us. However, good though this well-wishing may be, there is danger, too, in such desire, danger that we make those around us servants to our own will and the slaves of our

President's Message

by Jim Liolin

We are a Church community that has grown truly into one family from several cultures. We have joined each other and have learned much from each. Sometimes we noticed differences but have accepted everyone. Why, because we have come to understand that all has been given by God.

As your Council President these past two years I am pleased that the Council has moved forward in several areas becoming more transparent in its operations.

We have transferred the work load of various ministries and administrative functions typically held by a single individual for years --to include others-- so that what is being done becomes clear to all. As a result several people can bring forth their talents and new ideas.

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best intentions. It's hard to let others be brave. And this hazard grows ever more pronounced the more profound our care and concern; where greater our love, there greater our worry. We may think this is natural, and we may even be right in this allocation, but that does not make it good, for our natural impulses are, at times, some of our worst.

In fear and failure or fear of failure, those double barrels of worry so often trained upon us, we forget too often that our hope to bring success to those around us comes at a high price. It comes at the expense of someone else's freedom and costs the sacrifice of

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We now have a formal budget process which will help keep us updated on where the parish stands financially. An investment committee was established to monitor our portfolio which is critical to our existence. Our Choir has a second leader to maintain the continuance of our congregational singing. The Sunday School functions under the direction of Father and a steering committee. A new website is currently online and more information will be added to it going forward. We initiated through the good work of the Orthodox Natural Church Development Committee regional social/religious gatherings to help with education and communications. The Orthodox Post is now in

Continued on Page 5

KENDI SHQIP

(The Albanian Corner)



by A. Llupa

Prill, 2015

A Prayer For the Day

From the Elders of Optima Monastery

O Lord, grant that I may meet all that this coming day brings to me with spiritual tranquility.

Grant that I may fully surrender myself to Thy Holy Will. At every hour of this day, direct and support me in all things. Whatsoever news may reach me in the course of the day, teach me to accept with a calm soul and the firm conviction that all is subject to Thy Holy Will.

Direct my thought and feelings in all my words and actions.

In all unexpected occurrences, do not let me forget that all is sent down from Thee.

Grant that I may deal straightforwardly and wisely with every member of my family, those with whom I serve, and those whom you bless me to serve. Let me neither embarrass nor sadden anyone.

O Lord, grant me the strength to endure the fatigue of the coming day and all the events that take place during it. Direct my will and teach me to pray, pray Thou, Thyself, in me. Teach me to believe, to hope, to be patient, to forgive, and to love.

Amen.

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DAUGHTERS' CORNER

By Linda Foundos

At last, we've put winter behind us! A new season always seems to breathe new life into us, inspiring us to come alive and get more active.

Please contact Christina Liolin if you are able to make meshe periodically, or on a more regular basis. Also, please contact her if you have one of the meshe pans with the raised seal purchased by the Daughters. Also let her know if you would like to participate in the Coffee Fellowship rotation that we all enjoy each Sunday following services.

On Sunday, April 5th, Palm Sunday, we will host our annual Paschal Pancake Breakfast following services. We hope that you will be able to join us for prayer and a delicious treat!

The Daughters are planning to have a luncheon the end of April or beginning of May. Please watch for details and make your reservation.

Please give special attention to this Lenten season with your family as we approach Pascha.

Krishti U Ngall!!!! Christ Is Risen!!



Scholarships Available!

Partial and full scholarships are available to young people of St. Nicholas Church who wish to attend a session at an Orthodox Summer Camp this year. In addition to outdoor activities, religious education, and just plain fun, many camp sessions tailor to particular interest, so if your child is curious about ecology, horseback riding, music, or art, there is a program especially for him or her. Children from seven years old to high school age are invited to take this opportunity. For more information, please speak to Fr. Nathan. If you would like to review the promotional material for these different camps, follow the links below.

St. Andrew's Camp in upstate New York:
<http://saintandrewscamp.org/>

Antiochian Village in Pennsylvania: <http://avcamp.org/>

St. Tikhon's Summer Camp in Pennsylvania:

<http://www.sttikhonscamp.org/>

Camp St. Paul in Connecticut:

<http://www.campsaintpaul.org/>

In Memoriam: Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko



Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko, Dean Emeritus of Saint Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, Crestwood, NY, and noted Orthodox Christian priest, theologian, preacher, and speaker, fell asleep in the Lord on the afternoon of March 18, 2015. Father Thomas was the beloved husband of Matushka Anne [Schmemmann] Hopko. They were married on June 9, 1963. Together, Father Thomas and Anne are the parents of five children, sixteen grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Thomas John Hopko was born in Endicott, NY, on March 28, 1939, the third child and only son of John J. and Anna Hopko. He was baptized and raised in Saint Mary's Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church and educated in Endicott public schools, graduating from Union-Endicott High School in 1956.

Father Thomas graduated from Fordham University in 1960 with a bachelor's degree in Russian studies. He graduated with a theological degree from Saint Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in 1963, from Duquesne University with a master's degree in philosophy in 1969, and earned his doctorate degree in theology from Fordham University in 1982.

Ordained to the Holy Priesthood in August 1963, Father Thomas served the following parishes as pastor: Saint John the Baptist Church, Warren, OH (1963-1968); Saint Gregory the Theologian Church, Wappingers Falls, NY (1968-1978); and **Saint Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church, Jamaica Estates, NY (1978-1983)**. **During his five years at Saint Nicholas, he helped to set the tone of our community for the subsequent decades. His ministry was comprehensive and dynamic. He helped make Saint Nicholas a place for religious and spiritual development as well as a place where people of diverse backgrounds could work together to seek God. As our pastor, he taught us to love and serve God in loving and serving one another and showed us a path of life and faith that we continue to tread today.**

Father Thomas was honored with the clerical rank of Archpriest in 1970 and the rank of Protopresbyter in 1995. Beginning in 1968, Father Thomas began his long service to Saint Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary. Over the years, Father Thomas held the following positions: Lecturer in Doctrine and Pastoral Theology, 1968-1972; Assistant Professor of Dogmatic Theology, 1972-1983; Associate Professor of Dogmatic Theology, 1983-1991; Professor of Dogmatic Theology, 1991-1992; Dean, Rector of Three Hierarchs Chapel, and Professor of Dogmatic Theology, 1992-2002.

During his years of priestly ministry, Father Thomas authored numerous books and articles. Most well known of these publications is [*The Orthodox Faith: An Elementary Handbook on the Orthodox Church*](#). A prolific speaker and preacher, he spoke at conferences, retreats, public lectures, and Church gatherings of all kinds, many of which were recorded. Father Thomas performed countless duties on behalf of the Orthodox Church in America, including representing the Church at intra-Orthodox gatherings and ecumenical meetings.

Upon retirement, Father Thomas and Anne moved to Ellwood City, PA, where they lived near the Orthodox Monastery of the Transfiguration, and Father Thomas began a new ministry: internet-based Orthodox Christian radio talks. Since 2008, Father Thomas had produced well over 400 podcasts for Ancient Faith Radio.

Father Thomas exercised untiring and loving pastoral care on behalf many who sought him out for spiritual guidance. His greatest desire was that every person would respond to these words of Jesus Christ: "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

Father Thomas's family wishes to thank all those who ministered to him so lovingly during his long final illness. Special thanks are extended to Mother Christophora, Abbess, and the entire sisterhood of the Orthodox Monastery of the Transfiguration for their constant support and help, Archpriest Michael and Matushka Susanne Senyo; Protodeacon Michael Wusylko, M.D.; and Good Samaritan Hospice. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be given to [Saint Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary](#), Crestwood, NY; the [Orthodox Monastery of the Transfiguration](#), Ellwood City, PA; [Ancient Faith Radio](#) and Good Samaritan Hospice of Concordia, Wexford, PA.

May the memory of Protopresbyter Thomas, our own Father Tom,
be eternal! "I perjetshim kujtimi"



Christ is Risen!

Pascha is come again. The Feast of Feasts and high point of our year has returned to us, arriving, as it always does, just in time before our patience breaks or spirits buckle in revolt against the fast and its privations. Now is the time of joy; now, the apt season for rejoicing songs. Let us love, let us rejoice, let us eat and drink, let us be brothers together, proclaim these hymns. Such explicit joy there is in this moment! We have arrived, and we will hold this ground as best we can for as long as we can.

But the weeks pass and the months; the days drone on and drain the potency of this fervor drop by drop. Pascha, this now Pascha, must inevitably join its predecessors as something also in the past. And we will hunger again some time sooner than we might think for the ascent of Lent and the resumption of all those inconveniences that presage and precede and are the foreshadowing of our hoped for joy.

There is a beauty to this cycle and an ample roundness that permits us to come again and again to know God in such a way. There is a motivation to it as there is to all that we do in the Church. Bread and wine, smoke and flame and light and dark, these and time are the elements of our worship, the units by which we build our lives of faith. Our religion, our 'spirituality', as it has come to be known, is a constructed thing, a put together thing, and it is this for a reason. We are still learning. We are still learning that we are not static beings so cannot comport with a static faith.

It is not good enough for us just to know that there is a God, nor is it good enough for us just to define who we are in relation to this God. Ours is not a nodding religion or faith of mere assent. We are meant to be participants in the life of our God, people who don't just hope for heaven sometime maybe out there after we have exhaled a last time. No, we are meant to be learning to be with God even now and to get a sense of heaven's shape, to scent it from afar.

The journey to and from Pascha teaches us that we are all supposed to be on the way. We are all supposed to be fighting to discover something new. Christ is risen, we know. That we will rise with Him, we trust. Yet why wait? Why wait to know that change? The risen Christ is in our midst even now holding out His hand and inviting us to join Him. His path is sometimes hard, but it is always good because it is His path and it is the return to His joy again and again in peace.

Paschal Service Schedule	Orari i Pashkëve
<u>April</u>	<u>Prill</u>
Sat. 4—Liturgy, 10am: Lazarus Saturday	Të shtunë 4: Shën Llazari—Liturgjë, 10AM
Sun. 5—Liturgy, 10am: Palm Sunday	Të diel 5: E diela e dafinave—Liturgjë, 10AM
Mon. 6—Bridegroom Matins, 7pm	Të hënë 6: E hëna e madhe—Mëngjesorja, 7PM
Tue. 7—Bridegroom Matins, 7pm	Të martë 7: E marta e madhe—Mëngjesorja, 7PM
Wed. 8—Holy Unction, 7pm	Të mërkurë 8: E mërkura e madhe—Leximet e Efqelisë, 7PM
Thur. 9—Liturgy, 10am: Last Supper —Passion Gospels, 7pm	Të enjte 9: E enjtja e madhe—Liturgjia e Vasilit, 10AM —Darka mistike dhe 12 Ungjijtë, 7PM
Fri. 10—Tomb Prayers, noon —Lamentations, 7pm	Të premte 10: E premtja e madhe—Lutjet në Varr, 12PM —Leximet e epitaftit, 7PM
Sat. 11—Liturgy, 10am: Holy Saturday —Great and Holy Pascha, 11:30pm	Të shtunë 11: E shtuna e madhe—Liturgjia e Vasilit, 10AM —Ceremonia e Ngjalljes, 11:30PM
Sun. 12—Paschal Vespers, noon	Të diel 12: Pashka e madhe—Mbrëmësorja, 12PM
Wed. 15—Liturgy, 10am: Bright Wednesday	Të mërkurë 15: E mërkura e ndritur—Liturgjë, 10AM

Truly He is Risen!

Coffee List

April	05	Pancake Breakfast
	12	Pascha
	19	Christine Beno/Jana Foundos
	26	Memorial for Fr. Thomas Hopko
May	03	Barbara Papalexis / Barbara Filis
	10	Mother's Day
	17	Christina Liolin / Alexandra Liolin
	24	Open
	31	Silvana Kutali / Tina Korra

Dear Ladies,

Here is the schedule for coffee for the next 2 months. If your name is listed, please be sure to put it on your calendar. If you need to change the date, please advise Christina Liolin or Adelina Llupa.

It is very important to remember that on the day you are scheduled for coffee, **please arrive at church by 10 a.m.** so that preparations can be made. What to bring:

1. Cake for 50-60 people
2. Cookies for the children
3. 1 gallon of milk



KENDI SHQIP – Continued from Page 2

O Zot, bej te mundur qe te pres me qetesi shpirtore gjithshka qe kjo dite do te me sjelle.

Bej te mundur qe plotesisht ta ve veten ne vartesi te Deshires Tende te Shenjte. Ne cdo ore te dites, me drejto dhe me ndihmo me te gjitha gjerat. Per cfaredo lajmi te marr gjate dites, me meso te pranoj me nje shpirt te qete dhe me nje besim te forte se gjithshka eshte ne dore te Deshires Tende te Shenjte. Me drejto mendimin dhe ndjenjat ne cdo fjale dhe veprim. Ne cdo ngjarje te papritur, mos me ler te harroj se eshte derguar nga Ty.

Me bej te mundur qe te sillem ne menyre te drejte dhe te zgjuar me cdo pjestar te familjes, me ata qe u sherbej, dhe me ata qe Ti me jep bekimin t'u sherbej. Mos me ler te turperohem apo te merzis ndonje.

O Zot, me jep fuqine per te perballuar lodhjen e dites tjeter dhe te gjitha ngjarjet e dites. Me drejto deshiren dhe me meso te lutem, te te lutem Ty, brenda vetes sime.

Me meso te besoj, te shpresoj, te jem I duruar, te fal, dhe te jap dashuri. Amin!

PASTOR'S MESSAGE – Continued from Page 1

someone else's choice to rise and confront and find bravery in choosing. And this cannot be. Most particularly, it cannot be for us Christians now standing so close by in weeks and days and hours to Christ's holy resurrection.

Great and Holy Pascha is not just the celebration of an event. It is not just a day to recall some oddity of history or another pious story. On this, the Feast of Feasts, we celebrate the freedom of all from the bondage of everything. We celebrate the return: Christ, the failed messiah, coming back as victorious God. And we celebrate our own failures: our mended brokenness, our capacity to come back better and stronger when we have met fear and conquered fear in the admission of our weakness. This Paschal lesson we dare not hold back from others; it is the good news and Gospel that we are compelled to share.

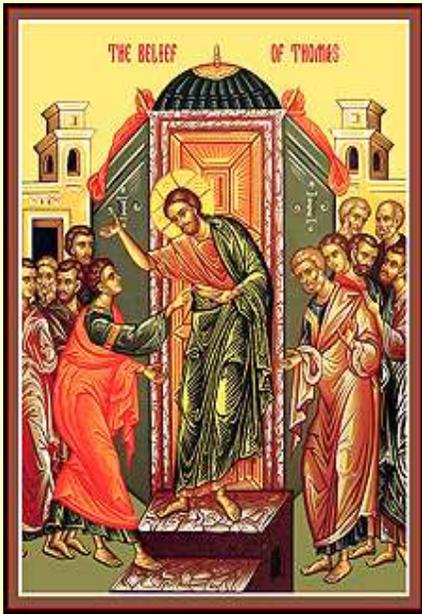
Our faith is struggle when it is real faith. Truthfully, it is sometimes the greatest struggle to hold our tongues and withhold our opinions and judgments when those we love and things we care about are on the line. But struggle we must always and this struggle in particular we must now a little bit more. Unless our mouths open free from pride and free from the fear that is the symptom of that pride, we should keep silence. Unless we admit that all is failure and all will be failure, our best efforts mere dust and charade, we should hold back until we are ready to join Christ in His triumph, the only triumph of rising from failure. Until love burns through us so that we are ready to risk our own comfort and the settled state of settled minds, we must be quiet. And when we are ready to let others be brave, we may find that we have joined them.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – Continued from Page 1

Albanian but that still needs some work. Finally the new Men's Club which is intended to bring the community close on a different social and cultural level, hosting several successful events.

Going forward we need our parishioners to step up and participate so that we can expand our outreach while maintaining our current programs. Sunday School needs your participation as teachers, as well as, bringing your children regularly. We need to increase our service to our community with an increased coat drive, food drives for struggling families, grants and donations to help the homeless and needy, and everything requires that we all are involved.

Let us all do our part as a family to keep our faith and Church growing and strong.



ST. THOMAS - Commemorated on April 19th

Some icons depicting this event are inscribed “The Doubting Thomas.” This is incorrect. In Greek, the inscription reads, “The Touching of Thomas.” The Slavonic inscription is, “The Belief of Thomas.” When St Thomas touched the Life-giving side of the Lord, he no longer had any doubts.

This day is also known as “Antipascha.” This does not mean “opposed to Pascha,” but “in place of Pascha.” Beginning with this first Sunday after Pascha, the Church dedicates every Sunday of the year to the Lord’s Resurrection. Sunday is called “Resurrection” in Russian, and “the Lord’s Day” in Greek.

Troparion — Tone 7

From the sealed tomb, You did shine forth O Life! / Through closed doors You did come to Your disciples, O Christ God! / Renew in us, through them, an upright spirit, / By the greatness of Your mercy, O Resurrection of all!

Kontakion — Tone 8

Thomas touched Your life-giving side with an eager hand, O Christ God, / When You did come to Your apostles through closed doors. / He cried out with all: You are my Lord and my God!

MAJOR FEAST DAYS IN APRIL



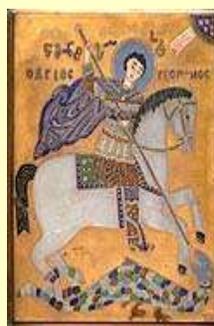
The Raising of
Lazarus
April 04



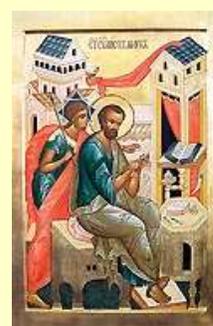
Palm Sunday
April 05



Holy Pascha
April 12



St. George
April 23



St. Mark
April 25



St. James
April 30

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

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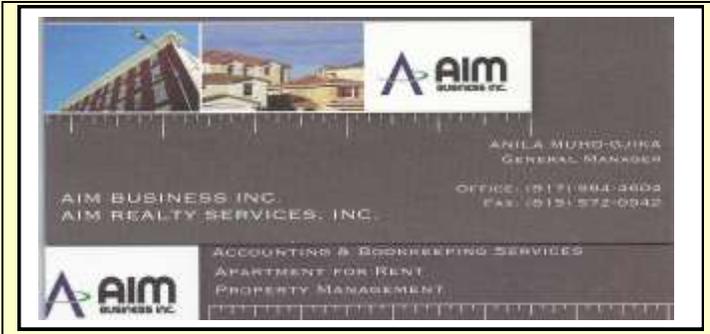
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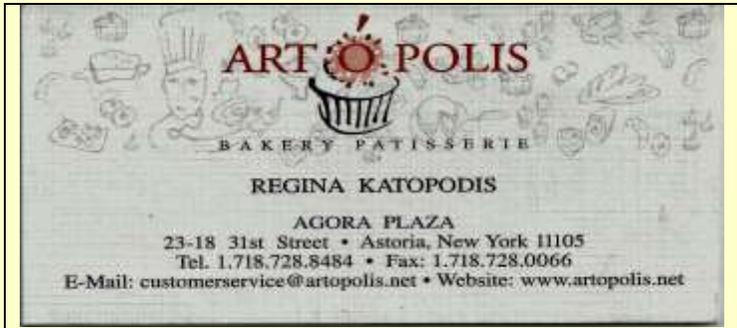
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Major Church Activities and Events

- Wed, Apr 01: Presanctified Liturgy, 7:00 p.m.
- Fri, Apr 03: Vespers, 5:00 p.m.
- Sat, Apr 04: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.; Lazarus Saturday
Vespers, 5:00 p.m.
- Sun, Apr 05: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.; Palm Sunday
Pancake Breakfast
- Mon, Apr 06: Bridegroom Services, 7:00 p.m.
- Tues, Apr 07: Bridegroom Service, 7:00 p.m.
- Wed, Apr 08: Holy Unction, 7:00 p.m.
- Thurs, Apr 09: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.; Last Supper
Passion Gospels, 7:00 p.m.
- Fri, Apr 10: Tomb Prayers, Noon
Lamentations, 7:00 p.m.
- Sat, Apr 11: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.
Resurrection Service, 11:30 p.m.
- Sun, Apr 12: Paschal Vespers, Noon
- Wed, Apr 15: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.; Bright Wednesday
- Sat, Apr 18: Vespers, 5:00 p.m.
- Sun, Apr 19: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.; Thomas Sunday
- Thurs, Apr 23: Prayers, 11:00 a.m.; St. George
- Sat, Apr 25: Vespers, 5:00 p.m.
- Sun, Apr 26: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.

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

- Apr 05: Nasi PAVLLO / Ardian MILE**
- Apr 12: Jim OSWALD / Tomi BENO**
- Apr 19: Andrea KUTALI / John JANCE**
- Apr 26: Robert KORRA / Lou FOUNDOS**
- May 03: Roland LLUPA / Edi SERA**

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.stnicholasalbanian.org

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