

THE ORTHODOX POST

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Pastor's Message

by Fr. Nathan Preston

I have to hold my tongue pretty often. In diverse places and confronted with diverse subjects, there is an expectation of diplomacy from your priest, that discretion not to say things that might alienate or make some feel as though the doors of the Church might close against them. I have sometimes regretted these silences but mostly do not, for what remains unspoken—those necessary challenges, corrections, and redirections—can usually be saved and deferred for a better time and more fitting place. Now is one of those times.

Pretty often someone states that the goal of religion, all religions, is to make us good people; pretty often this someone intoning these words looks at me piously as though I must, of course, agree; pretty often I do. But I don't like to, and this dislike is more than personal perversity of spirit or hot-air contentiousness. I don't like this statement that our faith's goal is to make us good people because, for almost all of us, the goodness to which we aspire is not good. It's not wrong, nor is it that we have purposed ourselves to goals too low. No, our goodness is not good because it cannot be anything else than our goodness. It is not God's. And our goodness, at best, reaps some changes in this world of which we can be proud, and our goodness, at worst, leads us to be

President's Message

by Jim Liolin

LENT - A TIME TO TURN, TURN, TURN

Now as we enter closer to the beginning of Lent I thought about the song TURN, TURN, TURN by the rock group, The Byrds, made popular in 1965. The lyrics I feel are fitting and present a message for the season we are about to enter.

Pascha is the season we are called upon by the Church to repent which means to change, to look at our lives and TURN away from those things that keep us from having a relationship with Christ. To paraphrase a few of those lyrics:

To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, a time to reap that which is planted;

A time to kill, and a time to heal, a time to break down, and a time to build up;

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reprehensible. Even students with but little and brief exposure to history know that yesterday's virtues so often require today apologies, restitution, and making right after having made things very wrong. There is that infamous road nicely tiled and paved with our best of intentions; we all know where it is supposed to lead.

Our Christian faith never had as its goal the production of good people. Our faith, instead, aims to mold us into Christian people, and this is something both simpler and yet more challenging. When we can no longer rely on ourselves to be arbiters of virtue and when we begin to look outside of ourselves for the

Continued on Page 3

A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;

A time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;

A time to mend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

It's not too late for any of us to make the effort to know God. During this Lenten season make time to attend at least one of the services that are available. I promise - you won't walk away disappointed.

On April 3rd, there will be A Time To Speak at the Annual General Meeting. Please be there - we need your thoughts.

Coffee List

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



February	28	Linda Foundos / Elizabeth Liolin
March	06	Open
March	13	Agathia Luka / Antoneta Mertiri
March	20	Nasi Pavllo / Marcela Guma
March	27	Open
April	03	Diana Beno / Beti Tsamblakos
April	10	Adriana Topore / Jonida Dervishi
April	17	Open
April	24	Pancake Breakfast
May	01	Pascha

DAUGHTERS' CORNER

By Linda Foundos

We've heard from so many that they have been suffering with a flu that has been going around that seems to linger for several weeks. We send out our well wishes to all of you. Maybe a little "raki" might help??

We've heard that several of you have been away skiing. What a wonderful winter activity.....fresh air, nature, exercise & fun. We're happy that you were able to have the experience.

Several of you have gotten out of town and headed for some sunshine & warm temperatures. Others have traveled to be with children away at college. To those not well enough to come to services, we send our warm regards.

Our annual Valentine's Dinner Dance had a great turnout. In spite of the bitter cold outside that night, it was pretty hot inside! It was a very lively, fun event. The dinner, the music, the ambiance & the fellowship were all terrific!

Saturday, March 5th is Soul Saturday. At 10:00 a.m., a special memorial service will take place. Please list the names of your loved ones that you would like to be remembered and give it to Joanne Heiser, Linda Foundos or email it to Linda Foundos at ggsutter@aol.com. A donation of \$5 is due with your listing to defray the cost of the light lunch that will be served following the service. After lunch, you may plan to join Fr. Nathan who will travel to the cemetery to bless the graves of our loved ones.

Sunday Church School



Bring Your Children
to Church
for
Religious Education

LENT Begins in March

Forgiveness Sunday
- March 13th



Make every Effort
To attend Lenten Services
Listed in the Calendar of Events
On Page 8!!!

2016 Pledge Program – Make Your Pledge!!!

There are still Parishioners who have not yet made their 2016 Pledge. To those Parishioners, please make your Pledge and submit your Pledge Card as soon as possible. To those who have already made their Pledge – THANK YOU!!!!

Here is why your Pledge is important! Your annual Pledge is necessary in order to support the Church. The Pledges provide the money that enables the Church to serve the Community, to perform its day-to-day operations, and to be there when each of us needs the Church.

It is important to the life of the Church that everyone participates in the Annual Pledge Program. Please think about how important St. Nicholas Church is to you and your family.

Then make as generous a Pledge as possible for 2016. Fill in the information about you and your family and mail the Card or bring it to Church. If you do not have a Pledge Card, contact Jim Lioln or Fr. Nathan.

At the end of the 2016 Pledge Program Campaign, a list of all those Parishioners who have made a Pledge will be published in The Orthodox Post. MAKE SURE YOU ARE ON THIS LIST!!!

St. Nicholas Valentine's Party



The Valentine's Party held in the Church Fellowship Hall was a Great Success!!!

More than a hundred Parishioners and friends of St. Nicholas gathered on Saturday, February 13th. and all had a wonderful time. It was a perfect event to have fun and enjoy the camaraderie of family and friends.

A special thanks to all those hard-working people on the Committee that made this event possible!!!!

Pastor's Message – Continued from Page 1

standard to which we must chart our lives and choices, then we have begun to tread the path of faith. For Christians, goodness does not reside in our ideals but in our proximity to Christ. This is why our faith cherishes that God Who is known not in rules and laws, not in checklists of shalls and shall nots, and certainly not in striving to win the fickle popularity contest of social respectability. No, God has made Himself known to us in story and in person. Christ and His work and the scandal of His life's work are not peripheral elements but at the very core of our faith. Were Jesus simply a nice enough guy, reckoned a good person by His own age's standards, the story of His ministry would have been quite different, but it would have been no gospel, no good news that renews. Ours is a scandalous faith because it calls us to no other virtue than being with and being like Christ our God.

How then do we begin to change, to shift from being mere good people to being people on the way to God and His life, His call, and His kingdom? This is a fitting question now pausing in these days just before one more year's Great and Holy Fast, one more year's journey to Pascha, that Great and Holiest Feast. In these coming weeks, we will make our way through an extended meditation on this very theme: growing to be with God. Not surprisingly, there is an education process built into our hymns and prayers so that their words with which we become so familiar begin to mean more to us, to rise in our minds, and to guide. Also, it should come as no surprise to any that trying to be with God requires time just like any other relationship. In Lent, we are expected to give more of this, and I use that word intentionally for this increase of dedication and attendance is not a suggestion nor proposal, it is an expectation; that's how our faith instructs us that this season works. We need to be removed from our own thoughts, recalled away from striving after our own goodness, and immersed into life with Christ, a sometimes harsh reality but one always tempered with that joy and peace that are part of our promised inheritance as children of God. So make a commitment this Lent to aim higher than being a good person. Aim to be a Christian.



1ST SATURDAY OF GREAT LENT; ST. THEODORE - Commemorated on March 19th
(Reading and Icon courtesy of OCA Website)

Today we remember the miracle of St Theodore and the boiled wheat. Fifty years after the death of St Theodore, the emperor Julian the Apostate (361-363), wanting to commit an outrage upon the Christians during the first week of Great Lent, commanded the city-commander of Constantinople to sprinkle all the food provisions in the marketplaces with the blood offered to idols. St Theodore appeared in a dream to Archbishop Eudoxius, ordering him to inform all the Christians that no one should buy anything at the marketplaces, but rather to eat cooked wheat with honey (kolyva).

In memory of this occurrence, the Orthodox Church annually celebrates the holy Great Martyr Theodore the Recruit on the first Saturday of Great Lent. On Friday evening, at the Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts following the prayer at the ambo, the Canon to the holy Great Martyr Theodore, composed by St John of Damascus, is sung. After this, kolyva is blessed and distributed to the faithful. The celebration of the Great Martyr Theodore on the first Saturday of Great Lent was set by the Patriarch Nectarius of Constantinople (381-397).

The Troparion to St Theodore is quite similar to the Troparion for the Prophet Daniel and the Three Holy Youths (December 17, Sunday Before Nativity). The Kontakion to St Theodore, who suffered martyrdom by fire, reminds us that he also had faith as his breastplate (see I Thessalonians 5:8).

Saint Theodore the Recruit is also commemorated on February 17.

MAJOR FEAST DAYS IN MARCH



Sunday of the Last Judgment
Mar 06



40 Holy Martyrs of Sebaste
Mar 09



Forgiveness Sunday
Mar 13



St. Benedict
Mar 14



St. Patrick
Mar 17



Annunciation of the Theokotos
Mar 25



Archangel Gabriel
Mar 27

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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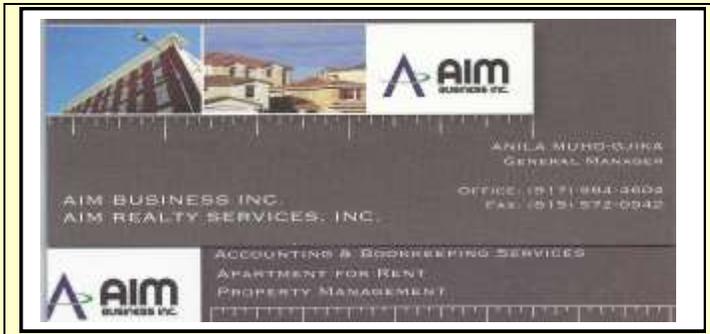
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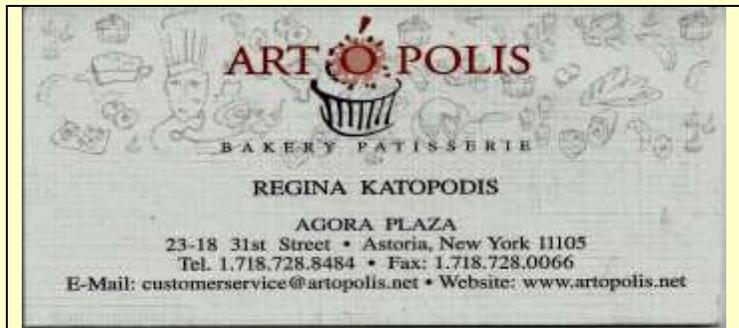
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Major Church Activities and Events

Vespers every Saturday evening at 5:00 p.m.

March 05, 12, 19 and 26

- Sat, Mar 05: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.; Memorial Saturday
Blessing of Graves at Mt. Tomori.; 1:00 p.m.
- Sun, Mar 06: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.; Sunday of the Last Judgment
- Sun, Mar 13: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.; Forgiveness Sunday
BEGINNING OF GREAT LENT
- Mon, Mar 14: Canon of St. Andrew, 7:00 p.m.
- Tues, Mar 15: Canon of St. Andrew, 7:00 p.m.
- Wed, Mar 16: Presanctified Liturgy, 7:00 p.m.
- Fri, Mar 18: Akathist to the Theotokos, 7:00 p.m.
- Sun, Mar 20: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.; Sunday of Orthodoxy, icon
procession with children
Pan-Orthodox Vespers, 5:00 p.m., St. Nicholas
Cathedral, Brooklyn
- Wed, Mar 23: Presanctified Liturgy, 7:00 p.m.
- Thurs, Mar 24: Great Vespers and Artoklasia, 7 p.m., Annunciation
- Fri, Mar 25: Akathist to the Theotokos, 7:00 p.m.
- Sun, Mar 27: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.
Pan-Orthodox Vespers, 5:00 p.m.
- Wed, Mar 30: Presanctified Liturgy, 7:00 p.m.

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

Mar 06: Stefan BALTADORI/Izzy TSAMBLAKOS

Mar 13: Nasi PAVLLO / Ardian MILE

Mar 20: Jim OSWALD / Tomi BENO

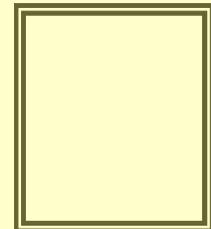
Mar 27: Andrea KUTALI / John JANCE

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