

# THE ORTHODOX POST

April 2016

Volume XII, Issue 4



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## Pastor's Message

by Fr. Nathan Preston

### Holy Week at St. Nicholas

Lazarus Saturday (Friday the 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7pm  
and Saturday the 23<sup>rd</sup> at 10am)

A taste of joy in advance, we recall Jesus' devotion to his friends today and His lived-out promise to help them and us. In recalling Lazarus from the tomb, Christ extends His hand to one whom He loved, showing Himself the possessor of that mighty and unbreakable love for which He will die and rise.

Palm Sunday (Sunday the 24<sup>th</sup> at 10am)

The children lead us. With palms of honor and victory, they show us how to greet that King of All who has made His way into our midst. Yet these are also the palms of martyrdom, presaging that the triumphal entry of our Lord is not an event of worldly victory alone, for the spiritual work of endurance and suffering and return is yet to come. We rest on this day between the austerities of the great fast and the joyful sorrows of Holy Week.

## President's Message

by Jim Liolin

April will be a special time with the many glorious Pascha services that our parishioners and visitors can attend - if not all services- at least try a few. It is always a good learning experience when we are able to enjoy the gifts of these services. There was a time not long ago when many didn't have this opportunity. Let's make the effort to come together and participate as a community on Sundays, pre-sanctified liturgy on Wednesdays, Holy Week services and the midnight Pascha service on Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup>.

You may know by now the Church is in the very beginning stages for the "Beautification" of our St. Nicholas Church temple. The Beautification Committee is involved in preliminary investigations and planning.

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Bridegroom Matins (Monday the 25<sup>th</sup> and  
Tuesday the 26<sup>th</sup> t 7pm)

These services, which at St. Nicholas we do on Monday and Tuesday of Holy Week, offer a quiet hour of contemplation. Before an icon of Christ the Bridegroom (Dhëndëri), we pray for forgiveness and unity with God. This bridegroom, however, is fitted with a crown of thorns to marry us, His people. His hands encircled with a rope of bondage, a ring to betroth us. His wedding garment one of mockery that will be torn from His body to be the gambled stake for a game of dice. Christ celebrates the banquet of His betrothal to His people with a feast of tears and vinegar, toasted with jeers and contemptuous laughter.

Continued on Page 3

More information will be available in the coming months. An update will be presented at the General Meeting on April 3rd.

On May 8<sup>th</sup>, Mother's Day, the men of the church will serve our ladies a simple yet loving coffee hour in honor of all the ladies in the parish. They have always worked hard to help the church in flea market fundraising, holiday breakfasts, Pascha and Christmas decorations and much, much more. It's a way for us to say thank you for their tireless efforts.

Further on in May our Archbishop Nikon will visit the parish on Sunday, May 22, 2016. Please keep that date in mind and bring the family.

# 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



April	03	Diana Beno / Beti Tsamblakos
	10	Adriana Topore / Jonida Dervishi
	17	Open
	24	Pancake Breakfast
May	01	Pascha
	08	Mother's Day
	15	Tina Peters / Rosalie Zacharias
	22	Visit by Archbishop Nikon
	29	Open

## General Parish Meeting

Sunday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, after Liturgy



**Come and Participate!!!!**

## Pancake Breakfast Palm Sunday, April 24<sup>th</sup>



**Come One, Come All!!!**

Paschal Service Schedule		Orari i Pashkëve	
<u>April</u>		<u>Prill</u>	
Fri. 22	Compline, 7pm: St. Lazarus	Të premte 22—Komplin, 7PM: Shën Llazari	
Sat. 23	Liturgy, 10am: Lazarus Saturday —Vespers, 5pm	Të shtunë 23—Liturgji, 10AM: Sheën Llazari —Mbrëmësorja, 5PM	
Sun. 24	Liturgy, 10am: Palm Sunday	Të diel 24—Liturgji, 10AM: E diela e dafinave	
Mon. 25	Bridegroom Matins, 7pm	Të hënë 25—Mëngjesorja, 7PM: Shërbesa e Dhëndërit	
Tue. 26	Bridegroom Matins, 7pm	Të martë 26—Mëngjesorja, 7PM: Shërbesa e Dhëndërit	
Wed. 27	Holy Unction, 7pm	Të mërkurë 27—Misteri i Efqlisë, 7PM	
Thur. 28	Liturgy, 10am: Last Supper —Passion Gospels, 7pm	Të enjte 28—Liturgjia e Vasilit, 10AM: Darka mistike	
Fri. 29	Tomb Prayers, noon —Lamentations, 7pm		—12 Ungjijtë, 7PM
Sat. 30	Liturgy, 10am: Holy Saturday —Great and Holy Pascha, 11:30pm —Festal Shared Meal, 1:30am	Të premte 29—Lutjet në Varr, 12PM —Shërbesa e epitaftit, 7PM	
<u>May</u>		Të shtunë 30—Liturgjia e Vasilit, 10AM: E shtuna e madh —Ceremonia e Ngjalljes, 11:30PM —Darkë Festiv Përbashkët	
Sun. 1	Paschal Vespers, noon	Të diel 1 Maj—Mbrëmësorja, 12PM: Pashka e madhe	
Wed. 4	Liturgy, 10am: Bright Wednesday	Të mërkurë 4 Maj—Liturgji, 10AM: E mërkura e ndritur	

## Pastor's Message – Holy Week at St. Nicholas

### Holy Unction (Wednesday the 28<sup>th</sup> at 7pm)

This sacrament of our faith is prescribed for any time of the year; we pray these prayers of anointing when any of our faith community suffer grave illness. Performed, when possible, with the ministrations of at least seven priests, this is a great and powerful witness of the care with which we are supposed to approach sickness and suffering. In Holy Week, confronted by the overwhelming frailty our souls and the profound sickness of the sins in which we dwell and persist, this anointing with holy oil gives us hope that we, too, can learn to see beyond our spiritual sickness and look toward the wholeness of lives given over to Christ.

### Holy Thursday Liturgy (Thursday the 29<sup>th</sup> at 10am)

On this morning, we recall the Last Supper, that meal wherein Christ instituted the practice of Holy Communion but also and at the same time noted the betrayal and end that would come by the hand of one of his closest friends—Judas Iscariot. During this Liturgy, we prepare and set aside the Holy Communion that is kept in reserve throughout the year so that the sick and dying, those unable to come from their homes or rise from their beds, all may receive the Holy Body and Blood of Christ offered from His table, from His Holy and Final Supper.

### The Passion Gospels (Thursday the 29<sup>th</sup> at 7pm)

With these twelve Gospel readings, we make pilgrimage through Christ's final hours. From betrayal to judgment to death, we witness the tragedy of His end but see and seek still a bright preparation for what is yet to come. This simple service of hymns and readings ushers us into Good Friday, brings us near to the place where He will be laid down and from which He will arise.

### Tomb Prayers (Friday the 30<sup>th</sup> at noon)

When the place has been prepared—decked with the flowers and ribbons that indicate our love—Christ is placed in the tomb. His body taken down from the Cross is wrapped in its shroud, and the epitafi comes to rest in the heart of the Church. There it lays, as a seed planted in the earth, something dead, something yet to come.

### Lamentations (Friday the 30<sup>th</sup> at 7pm)

This is the funeral of the Lord. Chanting our grief, we pay our last respects, anoint His body with incense and sweet-scented perfume—the aroma of our tears and content of our hopes. Carrying the bier around the Church three times, we encircle our temple, our home, marking it as the place where God Himself rests, tracing in outline the place whence He will spring from and return.

### Holy Saturday Liturgy (Saturday the 31<sup>st</sup> at 10am)

A preamble to that joy that is yet to come, this service indicates the turning point in the saga of passion week. We sense the deep rumbling of time and nature as the descended Christ encounters those depths hidden to us. The dead, hearing the voice of their Master, are freed; the spirit of evil flees as every dark place burns with the light of God. Tasting the presence of God in communion, we strew fragrant herbs throughout the Church to welcome and honor His ascent and re-entrance.

### Great and Holy Pascha, the Feast of Feasts (Saturday the 31<sup>st</sup> at 11:30pm)

Arriving into that darkness that is not oppressive but incipient, we behold the holy fire come to greet us, symbol of the unquenchable flame of faith. But this fire is only the start of our rejoicing. Christ returns, and all of creation is made new. Christ returns, and the past slips away covering our fear. Christ returns, and we have cause to hope, to sing, to taste again the sweetness of His renewing presence. In His body and blood, in His story and image, He chooses to make His home with us. Do not reject this invitation, leaving before the feast has begun but stay with the holy fire burning on your candle and in your heart, stay to receive Holy Communion on this holiest day of all year and all of time.

### Paschal Vespers (Sunday May 1<sup>st</sup> at noon)

Warmed by Christ, we inaugurate a new life with Him. On this evening of the first day, the Resurrection commences a new way of being for all; raised with Christ, all is being perfected. With voices made joyful in the knowledge of the risen God, we proclaim the Gospel in as many tongues as we can, letting the news of this Pascha resound in our Church, in our lives, and in the whole world.

## 2016 Pledge Program Pledgers

Every year, St. Nicholas Church asks each Parishioner to make a financial Pledge 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.

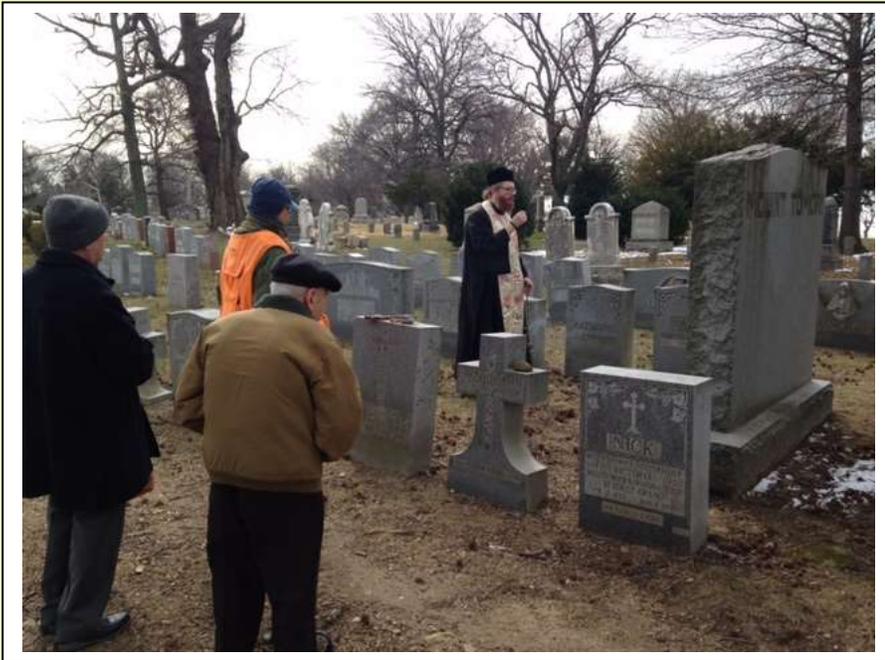
To all those of you who have submitted their 2016 Pledge, we say "Thank You"!!!

Listed below are the names of those who have submitted their 2016 Pledge as of March!!!

**If your name is not on this List, you can still make a Pledge! Please contact Fr. Nathan or Jim Liolin.**

### **Parishioners who Made Pledges to St. Nicholas Church for 2016**

Adams	Nick & Marion	Joanidhi	Zhani	Peter	Lenora
Apostle	Lenore	Jones	Stephen & Diane	Peters	Bill & Tina
Bakalli	Emil & Angelina	Jorgji	Adrian & Dea	Peters	Damian & Jenny
Baltadori	Stefan & Juliana	Kallinikos	Viola	Petro	Romana
Beno	Dr. Dhimiter & Diana	Kastaris	Penelope	Phillips	Helen & Nicholas
Beno	Thoma & Christine	Kasuli	Richard & Georgianne	Pochari	Charles
Celo	Roland & Anila	Kehoe	Alexandra & Michael	Preftes	Christe & Jean
Coka	Jorgji & Eleni	Kelapire	Betty	Preston	Fr. Nathan
Deonas	Linda	Kildunne	Michelle & Stephen	Prifti	Dhiogjen & Dhimitrulla
Dervishi	Hektor & Jonida	Kirka	Chris & Ketj	Prifti	Naum & Rina
Diacosavvas	Alice & Savvas	Kondili	Fotaq & Lina	Psirakis	Panagiotis & Despina
Dilo	Frederick & Zana	Korra	Robert & Tina	Pucca	Martha
Dilo	Lori	Kutali	Andrea & Silvana	Qeramixhi	Pandi & Efigjeni
DiTullio	Laura & Greg	Ladd	Alison & Marc	Rehova	Stavraq & Kostanza
Filipi	Altin & Blerta	Liolin	Elizabeth	Rehova	Thoma & Iliana
Filis	Nicholas & Barbara	Liolin	James & Christina	Sera	Edi & Oneda
Floed	Sam & Elida	Llupa	Roland & Adelina	Sheti	Kozara
Foundos	Albert	Logore	Pauline	Skendi	Thomas & Odeta
Foundos	Lauren	Luka	Ilija & Agathia	Slane	Tina
Foundos	Louis & Linda	Mertiri	Mitro & Vitori	Stroka	Altin & Elda
Foundos	Phillip & Johanna	Mertiri	Themistokli & Antoneta	Topore	Andrea & Adriana
Foundos	Steven	Meta	Frank & Evelyn	Trako	Marjanthi
Fundo	Alfred & Elisabeta	Mezini	Ermira & Helidor Shteto	Troja	Dr. Petrika & Eli
Fundo	Christian & Ariona	Mile	Ardian & Irma	Tsamblakos	Isidoros & Beti Beno
Fundo	Iilir & Dr. Fjona	Mone	Thomas & Concetta	Vangjel	Kristaq & Mimoza
Fundo	Thomaq & Dr. Suzana	Nache	Agatha	Vani	Albert
Gjoka	Arben & Ira	Nasi	William	Vesho	Alma
Grad	Ellen	Ndreu	Leonard & Albana	Zacharias	Rosalie
Grazhdani	Kostandin & Mimoza	Oswald	Jim & Donna		
Guma	Dhimiter & Marsela	Panajoti	Jani & Liri		
Haile	Britu	Panajoti	Peter & Helen		
Halilaj	Gezim	Panariti	Kristaq & Beatrika		
Haxhiaj	Zanina & Agron	Papalexis	Mark & Barbara		
Heiser	Joanne & Douglas	Patelis	Aphrodite		
Jance	John Jance	Pavillo	Nasi & Shqipe Xhuli		
Jance	Larry Jance	Pecani	Vasil & Suzana		



## Memorial Saturday Blessing of Graves at Mount Tomori

On Saturday, March 5<sup>th</sup>, Fr. Nathan and parishioners gathered at Mount Tomori to bless the graves of loved ones. Fr. Nathan was on hand at the Mt. Tomori section of Cypress Hills Cemetery to offer prayers and bless graves. That day is one of the many days set apart by the Church for particular remembrance of those who have fallen asleep in the Lord. We do this on the eve of Pentecost, that feast that falls on the next day, because Pentecost is the day we sometimes call the birthday of the Church. It was on that feast that the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples of the Lord, empowering them and equipping them to be sent out as faithful missionaries throughout the whole world. Thus it is particularly appropriate that we remember all the members of the Church, living and departed, as we recall the grace and comfort the Holy Spirit brings to our lives. If your loved ones were laid to rest in a different place, please speak to Fr. Nathan; he is always happy to accompany you in offering these prayers and remembering the faithful of our community.

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## Bring Your Children to Church School On Sundays





## THE RAISING OF LAZARUS - Commemorated on April 23rd (Reading and Icon courtesy of OCA Website)

Visible triumphs are few in the earthly life of our Lord Jesus Christ. He preached a kingdom “not of this world.” At His nativity in the flesh there was “no room at the inn.” For nearly thirty years, while He grew “in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man”, He lived in obscurity as “the son of Mary.” When He appeared from Nazareth to begin His public ministry, one of the first to hear of Him asked: “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” In the end He was crucified between two thieves and laid to rest in the tomb of another man.

Two brief days stand out as sharp exceptions to the above—days of clearly observable triumph. These days are known in the Church today as Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday. Together they form a unified liturgical cycle which serves as the passage from the forty days of Great Lent to Holy Week. They are the unique and paradoxical days before the Lord’s Passion. They are days of visible, earthly triumph, of resurrectional and messianic joy in which Christ Himself is a deliberate and active participant. At the same time they are days which point beyond

themselves to an ultimate victory and final kingship which Christ will attain not by raising one dead man or entering a particular city, but by His own imminent suffering, death and resurrection. In a carefully detailed narrative the Gospel relates how Christ, six days before His own death, and with particular mindfulness of the people “standing by, that they may believe that thou didst send me”, went to His dead friend Lazarus at Bethany outside of Jerusalem. He was aware of the approaching death of Lazarus but deliberately delayed His coming, saying to His disciples at the news of His friend’s death: “For your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe”. When Jesus arrived at Bethany, Lazarus was already dead four days. This fact is repeatedly emphasized by the Gospel narrative and the liturgical hymns of the feast. The four-day burial underscores the horrible reality of death. Man, created by God in His own image and likeness, is a spiritual-material being, a unity of soul and body. Death is destruction; it is the separation of soul and body. The soul without the body is a ghost, as one Orthodox theologian puts it, and the body without the soul is a decaying corpse. “I weep and I wail, when I think upon death, and behold our beauty, fashioned after the image of God, lying in the tomb dishonored, disfigured, bereft of form.” This “mystery” of death is the inevitable fate of man fallen from God and blinded by his own prideful pursuits. With epic simplicity the Gospel records that, on coming to the scene of the horrible end of His friend, “Jesus wept”. At this moment Lazarus, the friend of Christ, stands for all men, and Bethany is the mystical center of the world. Jesus wept as He saw the “very good” creation and its king, man, “made through Him” to be filled with joy, life and light, now a burial ground in which man is sealed up in a tomb outside the city, removed from the fullness of life for which he was created, and decomposing in darkness, despair and death. Again as the Gospel says, the people were hesitant to open the tomb, for “by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days”. When the stone was removed from the tomb, Jesus prayed to His Father and then cried with a loud voice: “Lazarus, come out.” The icon of the feast shows the particular moment when Lazarus appears at the entrance to the tomb. He is still wrapped in his grave clothes and his friends, who are holding their noses because of the stench of his decaying body, must unwrap him. In everything stress is laid on the audible, the visible and the tangible. Christ presents the world with this observable fact: on the eve of His own suffering and death He raises a man dead four days! The people were astonished. Many immediately believed on Jesus and a great crowd began to assemble around Him as the news of the raising of Lazarus spread. The regal entry into Jerusalem followed.

## MAJOR FEAST DAYS IN APRIL



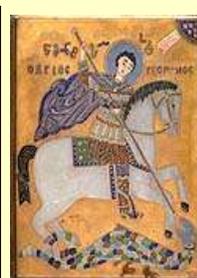
Holy Cross  
Apr 03



St. Tikhon  
Apr 07



St. Mary of Egypt  
Apr 17



St. George  
Apr 23



Palm Sunday  
Apr 24



St. Mark  
Apr 25

### *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.

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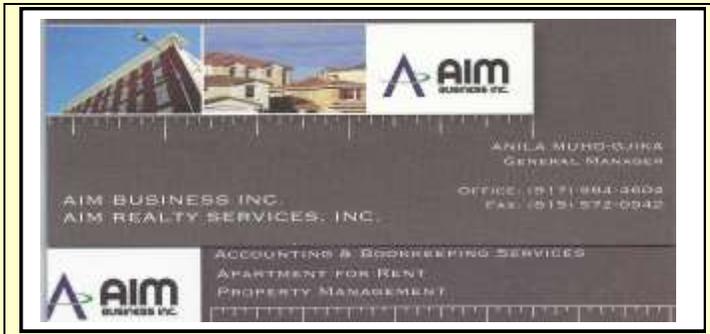
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**Major Church Activities and Events**

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

April 02, 09, 16 and 23 (not 30th)

Vespers Friday evening at 7:00 p.m. – April 01, 08, 15

Fri, Apr 01: Akathist, 7:00 p.m.  
 Sun, Apr 03: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.; Holy Cross; Pan-Orthodox  
 Vespers, 5:00 p.m. @ St. John's in Shirley, NY  
**General Parish Meeting after Liturgy**  
 Wed, Apr 06: Pre-Santified Liturgy, 7:00 p.m.  
 Sun, Apr 10: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.; Sunday of the Ladder;  
 Pan-Orthodox Vespers, 5:00 p.m. HERE @ St. Nicholas !  
 Wed, Apr 13: Pre-Santified Liturgy, 7:00 p.m.  
 Thurs, Apr 14: Canon of St. Andrew, 7:00 p.m.  
 Sun, Apr 17: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.; St. Mary of Egypt; Pan-Orthodox  
 Vespers, 5:00 p.m. @ Holy Trinity oin Yonkers  
 Wed, Apr 20: Pre-Santified Liturgy, 7:00 p.m.  
 Fri, Apr 22: Compline, 7:00 p.m.; Righteous Lazarus  
 Sat, Apr 23: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.; Lazarus Saturday  
 Sun, Apr 24: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.; Palm Sunday – Pancake Breakfast  
 Mon, Apr 25: Bridegroom Matins, 7:00 p.m.  
 Tues, Apr 26: Bridegroom Matins, 7:00 p.m.  
 Wed, Apr 27: Holy Unction, 7:00 p.m.  
 Thurs, Apr 28: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.; Last Supper; Passion Gospels, 7:00 p.m.  
 Fri, Apr 29: Tomb Prayers, Noon; Lamentations, 7:00 p.m.  
 Sat, Apr 30: Liturgy, 10:00 am; Harrowing of Hell; Great and Holy Pascha  
 11:30 p.m.  
 Sun, May 01: Pascha Vespers, Noon

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

**Apr 03: Robert KORRA / Lou FOUNDOS**

**Apr 10: Roland LLUPA / Edi SERA**

**Apr 17: Ilia LUKA / Bill PETERS**

**Apr 24: Stefan BALTADORI / Izzy TSAMBLAKOS**

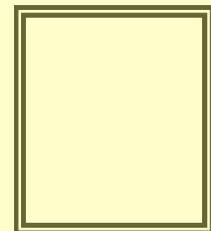
**May 01: Nasi PAVLLO / Ardian MILE**

*We're on the Web!*

*Visit us at:*

[www.stnicholasalbanian.org](http://www.stnicholasalbanian.org)

**St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church**  
**181-14 Midland Parkway**  
**Jamaica Estates, New York 11432**



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