

CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF DECEMBER 5, 2010



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5TH

28th Sunday after Pentecost St. Sabbas the Sanctified

8:40a.m. Hours
9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour
7:00p.m. Great Vespers

MONDAY, DECEMBER 6TH

St. Nicholas the Wonderworker

8:40a.m. Hours
9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8TH

7:00p.m. Orthodox Movie Night
8:00p.m. Compline

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11TH

Diocesan Assembly

5:00p.m. No Class
6:00p.m. No Vespers

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12TH

29th Sunday after Pentecost

8:40a.m. Hours
9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour

Looking Ahead

- Dec. 25: Nativity of the Lord
- Jan. 1-2: Visit of Met. Jonah
- Jan. 6: Theophany
- Jan. 8: Blessing of Atlantic

READER SCHEDULE

Sunday, Dec. 12th

Constantine Mitsopoulos

Sunday, Dec. 19th

Gabriela Jones

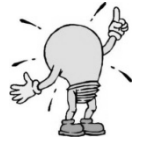


Please Remember in Prayer

Melvin Woodell, Michelle Wilson, Howard Peters, Irene Clenney, Denise Royal, Gabriela Jones, Scott and Maryann, Roman Szwec, Mat. Dunia, Patti Lease, Garrett Cuppels, Bill & Kathy Parrish, Frs Michael & Andrew, Monk Christian, Jane Koshutko, Robert Evanusa, Nicholas & Linda, Nicholas, Anna, Nina Gordon, Mirela & Chris, Jaroslav, Troy, Frank & Mary Miranda, Kathy T., Bruce, Julia Plisko & family, Stella.

Your Input is Requested on a New Idea

Fr. John has been approached about the possibility of offering a Midnight service for Christmas this year. Since this would be something new for our parish (though not new to Orthodoxy), Fr. John is asking that parishioners offer their input regarding this idea. Please consider the following and let Fr. John know how you feel about the proposed schedule:



Proposed schedule of services for Christmas

- Friday, Dec. 24th, 11:00pm – 1:15am:
 - Midnight Service (Matins / Divine Liturgy)
- Dec. 25th, 12:00 noon:
 - Vespers (instead of normal Saturday time at 6pm)

The Feast of St. Nicholas

is held annually on December 6th. We will have Great Vespers tonight at 7:00pm and the Divine Liturgy tomorrow at 9:00am. More information on St. Nicholas (the real Santa Claus) can be found on page 2 of this bulletin. At the end of today's Divine Liturgy we will have a special prayer to St. Nicholas, and the children of the parish will be given special gold (chocolate) coins in remembrance of the Saints great charity.



Orthodox Movie Night

On Wednesday evening we will watch a film TBD.

The 2010 Diocesan Assembly

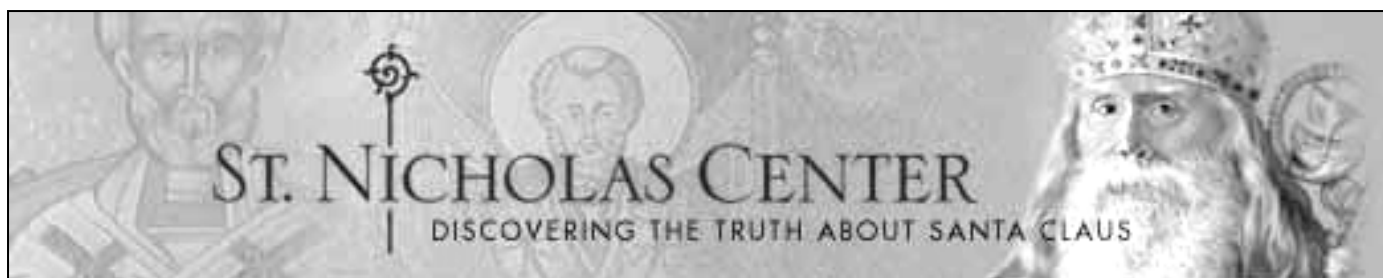
will take place this Saturday, December 11th, at St. Luke's Orthodox Church in McClean, VA. Representing our parish will be Fr. John, Constantine Mitsopoulos, Michael McFarland, and Kenny Marchick. There will be no Bible Study or Great Vespers on this day.

Public Service Announcement from Beebe Hospital

Tunnell Cancer Center is offering no-cost mammograms for qualifying women on Thursday, Dec. 9, 2010 & Jan. 13, 2011. More information can be found on the bulletin board.

About Scheduling Confession Before Christmas

With all the hustle and bustle that revolves around Christmas preparations, let's not forget to make room for Christ through repentance, confession, and Holy Communion.



WHO IS ST. NICHOLAS?

From *The St. Nicholas Center*, stnicholascenter.org

The true story of Santa Claus begins with Nicholas, who was born during the third century in the village of Patara. At the time the area was Greek and is now on the southern coast of Turkey. His wealthy parents, who raised him to be a devout Christian, died in an epidemic while Nicholas was still young. Obeying Jesus' words to "sell what you own and give the money to the poor," Nicholas used his whole inheritance to assist the needy, the sick, and the suffering. He dedicated his life to serving God and was made Bishop of Myra while still a young man. Bishop Nicholas became known throughout the land for his generosity to those in need, his love for children, and his concern for sailors and ships.

Under the Roman Emperor Diocletian, who ruthlessly persecuted Christians, Bishop Nicholas suffered for his faith, was exiled and imprisoned. The prisons were so full of bishops, priests, and deacons, there was no room for the real criminals—murderers, thieves and robbers. After his release, Nicholas attended the Council of Nicaea in AD 325. He died December 6, AD 343 in Myra and was buried in his cathedral church, where a unique relic, called manna, formed in his grave. This liquid substance, said to have healing powers, fostered the growth of devotion to Nicholas. The anniversary of his death became a day of celebration, St. Nicholas Day, December 6th (December 19 on the Julian Calendar).

Through the centuries many stories and legends have been told of St. Nicholas' life and deeds. These accounts help us understand his extraordinary character and why he is so beloved and revered as protector and helper of those in need.

One story tells of a poor man with three daughters. In those days a young woman's father had to offer prospective husbands something of value—a dowry. The larger the dowry, the better the chance that a young woman would find a good husband. Without a dowry, a woman was unlikely to marry. This poor man's daughters, without dowries, were therefore destined to be sold into slavery. Mysteriously, on three different occasions, a bag of gold appeared in their home—providing the needed dowries. The bags of gold, tossed through an open window, are said to have landed in stockings or shoes left before the fire to dry. This led to the custom of children hanging stockings or putting out shoes, eagerly awaiting gifts from Saint Nicholas. Sometimes the story is told with gold balls instead of bags of gold. That is why three gold balls, sometimes represented as oranges, are one of the symbols for St. Nicholas. And so St. Nicholas is a gift-giver.

Through the centuries St. Nicholas has continued to be venerated by Catholics and Orthodox and honored by Protestants. By his example of generosity to those in need, especially children, St. Nicholas continues to be a model for the compassionate life.

DECEMBER CONGRATULATIONS!

Birthdays:

12/2	Isabella Georgiana Milite
12/4	Karen Nichols
12/6	Camelia Milite
12/6	Gabriela Vlahovici-Jones
12/12	Alexander Parsells
12/18	John Cullen
12/29	Fr. Daniel Hubiak

Namesdays:

12/4	<i>St. Alexander Hotovitsky</i> Alexander Parsells
12/5	<i>St. Sava the Sanctified</i> Sava Cook
12/6	<i>St. Nicholas</i> Nicholas Evanusa Mel Woodell
12/17	<i>Prophet Daniel</i> Fr. Daniel Hubiak <i>St. Jacob the Patriarch</i> Jacob McFarland <i>St. Deborah</i> Deborah Royal
12/24	<i>St. Eugenia</i> Jane Koshutko
12/27	<i>St. Stephen</i> Bill Parrish Steven Parrish

ASK FATHER: 2 QUESTION / 2 ANSWER

Q. Father, in your sermon last week you said that the commandments of Christ and the guidelines of the Church are not life-burdening but life-bearing, life-transforming, and life-transfiguring. Is there a difference between the commandments of Christ and the guidelines of the Church?

A. This is an excellent question! And yes, while both the commandments of Christ and guidelines of the Church, when kept spiritually, can lead us to freedom in Christ, there is still an importance difference between them.

Commandments require universal application; they are "binding" on every Christian. For instance, no Christian should kill, steal, lie, etc. and every Christian should pray, fast, be baptized, repent and confess their sins, receive Holy Communion, etc.. In short, every Christian without exception must keep the commandments, loving God with their whole heart, soul, mind, and strength, and their neighbor as themselves.

While guidelines on the other hand require pastoral application as they are more personal in nature. This is because they direct us not so much what to do, but how to do it. That is they teach us the manner in which we should pray, fast, repent and confess our sins, prepare for Holy Communion, etc.. While the Church gives the same guidelines for everyone (men and women, monastic and married, clergy and laity), these guidelines must be tailored to the life of each individual Christian inasmuch as each person is unique. Sometimes this means lessening the "rule", sometimes this means strengthening it. But however the guidelines are modified they must be modified with the sole intent of helping the Christian draw closer to Christ. For this reason, guidelines should be modified in consultation with one's priest, who has been ordained with the specific charge of pasturing Christ's reason-endowed sheep.

Q. How does prayer and the keeping of the commandments actually affect our daily lives? Don't we say that everything that happens to us is part of God's providence? If so, what's the point? We can't really change our destiny, can we?

A. Though the Lord works in mysterious ways, arranging all things according to His Providence, we do actually have a crucial part to play in choosing our own destiny, both in this life and the next.

As the Scriptures teach us, just because God is all-powerful and always desires what is best for us, this does not mean that He will force us to enter into His Kingdom. He respects our free will so much that He even allows us to choose hell, both in this life and the next. Though He desires to shower us with His goodness in an infinite measure, in order not to infringe on our free will, He limits His goodness to us to the measure that we are willing to receive it from Him by working with Him - keeping His commandments, praying to Him, etc..

That's why when we keep the commandments or pray "Lord have mercy" we should remind ourselves that we are not trying to convince the Lord to be merciful to us - how silly would it be to think that we sinners can convince the Lord of infinite goodness, love, and wisdom to be more merciful or more loving. Prayer and the keeping of the commandments have their power to change our destiny not because we convince God to do something better for us, but because through prayer and the keeping of the commandments we become humbler and more open to His action in our lives - we allow Him to work wonders on our behalf - the greatest wonder being the gift of salvation. In the spiritual life, the simple rule is: the measure in which we change (repent, turn to the Lord, keep the commandments, etc) is the same measure in which we will receive God's mercy. I think that this is really what St. Anthimos of Chois was getting at when he said that "the Goodness of God is so rich in graces, that it seeks a cause to have mercy on a person."

Anyway, it is a daily struggle (for all of us) to put Him first, but the great thing about it is that when we do we are guaranteed that everything will turn out for the best (even if we can't always see it from our human perspective). Hard work in the spiritual life always is worth it.

