# THE ORTHODOX

### POST

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#### Pastor's Message

by Father Andrew Jarmus

Survival or Salvation?

The Albanian Archdiocese is currently in the process of forming a strategic plan to help strengthen its future. In forming this plan, various challenges will be addressed. All of these challenges are real and require level-headed and responsible decision-making. To be completely fruitful, this work must be motivated by the right spirit.

The primary mission of the Church is salvation. The Church is the "Body of Christ." Christ came to the world as it's Savior. We too, as members of Christ's Body, must be concerned with the world's salvation – at the very least, with the salvation of that corner of the world in which we find ourselves. The danger is that, in looking at our future, rather than being motivated by a concern for salvation, we become motivated by survival.

# INSIDE THIS ISSUE Pastor's Message & President's Message 1 Daughters of St. Nicholas & Parish News 2 Kendi Shqip 3-4 Building Project, Pledge Program & Parish News 5 Daily Scripture Readings 6 The Month's Major Feast Days 7 Major Events & Ushers' Sunday Schedule 8

The survival instinct compels us to avoid threats (real or perceived) by either resisting them or running away — "fight or flight." When we perceive a threat, the urge to protect ourselves can be very strong, so strong that we will even put others in danger to save ourselves.

While "fight or flight" works well in the natural world, when we open the New Testament, we find a very different way of approached challenges and potential threats:

Pastor's Message is continued on Page 4

#### President's Message

by Bill Peters

Over the next few weeks, we will be preparing for and experiencing the joy of Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Paschal!!! It is a wonderful time in the life of the church year. We should all try to participate in the activities of the season and attend the extra church services available to us during this time of year.

Despite the joy of this season, there is some sadness because right after Pascha, Fr. Andrew and his Family will be leaving St. Nicholas Parish. He is leaving to be the Pastor at a church in Fort Wayne, Indiana. On Palm Sunday, in addition to the Services and our traditional Pancake Breakfast, we will have a "Goodbye" reception to extend "Best Wishes" to Fr. Andrew and his Family. All are welcome to attend!!!

In addition to Lent, Holy Week and other Pascha season activities, we ask that you participate in the following:

1. *Pledge Program* – Each Parishioner's financial commitment for 2010 is needed so the Church can continue serving the community. If you haven't done so, Please turn-in your pledge card with your best possible pledge.

- 2. Valentine's Day Dance On Saturday Night, February 13th, the Church held a very successful Dance and Party in our new, expanded Fellowship Hall. All had a great time!!! Many are asking for another Dance in May.
- 3. Building Expansion Project Much has been accomplished to date!!! Most of the project has been completed. Your financial support is still needed. If you have not made a commitment or donation, please do so, as soon as possible. A Special Parish Building Project General Meeting was held on February 28th. See page 5 for details.
- 4 Parish Annual General Meeting Sunday, April 18th, after Liturgy, Parishioners will gather to address the business of the Church. All activities, projects, plans and finances of the Church will be discussed. All should plan on attending!!!

Your Active Participation in the Life of the Church is Encouraged!!!

#### DAUGHTERS' CORNER

By Linda Foundos

On March 21st the Daughters will be holding a meeting at which time elections will take place. Please plan to attend and take part and bring a friend along. The Daughters are long overdue for some new participants. Our new Fellowship Hall is ready for use. I think it's time to host some great activities.

Our Flea Market has been postponed due to our construction, but now plans must be made to reschedule it. Your help is needed. New management is needed to oversee this project. Volunteers, please step up.

On March 28th the Daughters will host our annual Paschal Pancake Breakfast. We look forward to you joining us. It's always a successful event. Tina Peters has once again graciously offered to prepare her special pancakes for us. We will be looking for others to shop, set up, serve & clean up. This is YOUR church. Don't be shy. Step up and participate.

#### Wisdom:

"Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass. It's about learning to dance in the rain."

"They say it takes a minute to find a special person, an hour to appreciate them, a day to love them, but an entire lifetime to forget them.

"The key to happiness someone said is, be satisfied, be grateful."

# PALM SUNDAY PANCAKE BREAKFAST GOODBYE RECEPTION FOR FR. ANDREW AND FAMILY

On Sunday, March 28th, the Parish will be celebrating 3 important events.

First, it is Palm Sunday and we will celebrate the Liturgical Services which will lead us right into Holy Week.

Second, our special Pascha Season "Pancake Breakfast" will be sponsored by the Daughters' of St. Nicholas.

Third, with Fr. Andrew and his Family leaving St. Nicholas Parish in early April right after Pascha, to become Pastor at a Church in Fort Wayne, Indiana; we will be using the occasion of Palm Sunday to say "Goodbye" and extend "Best Wishes" to Fr. Andrew and his Family.

## Please make every effort to attend these events on this very important Sunday!!!!!

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#### **KENDI SHQIP**

(The Albanian Corner)



By A. Llupa

Mars 2010

Kete muaj po japim nje pjese mbi pagezimin.

SIMBOLIZMI I SHËRBESËS SË PAGËZIMIT NË TË KRISHTËR ORTHODOKS

Jezui na mëson që pagëzimi me "ujin dhe frymën e shenjtë" është kusht për të hyrë në Mbretërinë e Tij (John 3:5). Hyrja jonë në Mbretërinë e Zotit është një hyrje në jetën e Kishës, sepse nëpërmjet Kishës Mbretëria e Zotit bëhet reale në Botë. Kjo hyrje fillon me Misteret (Sacraments) e Shenjta të Pagëzimit dhe të Krishtëzimit. Në këto rite, ne marrim mëshirën e Zotit, nëpërmjet ujit pagëzues dhe "Krizmes" së shenjtë, e cila është një shenjë e dhuratës së Shpirtit të Shenjtë. Paragrafët që vijojnë janë një shpjegim i elementeve kryesore të riteve Orthodokse të pagezimit.

#### RITI I BERJES KATEKUMEN.

Në Kishën e Lashtë, hapi i parë drejt anëtarësisë ishte të bëheshe student, ose "katekumen" i Kishës. Gjatë kësaj kohe, mësohej baza e së vërtetës së Besimit. Me qënë se katekumenet nuk egzistojnë më në Kishë si grup zyrtar, ky rit zakonisht festohet si fillimi i shërbesës së pagëzimit.

Meqënëse pagëzimi është nje rit i hyrjes (pranimit) në Kishë, këto lutje fillestare bëhen mbrapa ndërtesës së Kishës, si pjesë e futjes zyrtare dhe aktuale në kishë.

LUTJET PËR LARGIMIN E SHPIRTIT TE KEQ: Prifti i lutet Shpirtit të Shenjtë të largojë Satanin dhe gjithë engjëjt e tij nga personi që do të pagëzohet. Ai lutet që shpirtrat e të keqes të mos zaptojnë personin me anë të tundimeve apo ndonjë mundimi tjetër. Prifti fryn tre herë në shenjë kryqi, që zimbolizon fuqinë e Shpirtit të Shenjtë në drejtim të atij që pagëzohet-fjala "shpirt" në Greqisht dhe hebraisht ka dhe kuptimin 'frymë'.

MOHIMI (MOSPRANIMI) I SATANIT: Ai që do të pagëzohet, ashtu si edhe sponsorit e tij/asaj kthehen me fytyrë nga perëndimi. Perëndimi është symbol i errësirës, sepse dielli perëndon në perëndim. Nepërmjet kësaj levizjeje ne i kundërvihemi errësirës së vërtetë të botës- djallit, "mbretit të errësirës"- dhe e mohojmë atë, njëkohësisht "dhe gjithë punët e tij, gjithë kultin e tij, gjithë engjëjt e tij, dhe gjithë shërbimin e tij."

PRANIMI I KRISHTIT: Duke u kthyer pastaj drej lindjes, andej nga lind dielli që simbolizon Dritën e Krishtit, ai që do të pagëzohet, si dhe sponsorit e tij/asaj pranojnë Jezuin "si Mbret dhe Zot." Ata e vulosin këtë pranim, duke përsëritur fjalët e Nicene Creed, që përkufizon besimin bazë të Kishës për Zotin, Kishën dhe shpëtimin.

#### RITI I PAGËZIMIT DHE KONFIRMIMIT

Qiriu i Pagëzimit. Një nga termat që përdoret në Orthodoksi, kur i referohen pagëzimit është "Ndricimi I Shenjtë", sepse nëpërmjet pagëzimit Krishti, Drita e Botës", hyn në zemrat tona.

Qiriu i pagëzimit është symbol i pagëzimit si ndricim.

Vaji i gëzimit: Mbas thirrjes dhe litanisë, kandidati miroset me vaj. Në kohët e lashta vaji përdorej si pomadëpër të mbuluar plagët, duke i mrojtur ato që të shëroheshin shpejt. Lyerja me "Vajin e Gëzimit" është një symbol i pagëzimit, që shërben si akt për të shëruar mardhëniet tona të dëmtuara me Zotin.

Pagëzimi: Fjala "pagëzim" do të thotë zhytje. Kandidatin e zhysin krej në pagëzoren me ujë të bekuar, në emër të Atit, të Birit dhe të Shpirtit të Shenjtë. Duke hyrë në pagëzore ai/ajo bashkohen me Krishtin në Varrin e Tij;

dhe duke dalë nga Pagëzorja ai/ajo marrin pjesë në ngritjen e Krishtit nga varri. Kandidati është "lindur përseri", figurativisht "i lindur nga lart", në një jetë të re në Jezu Krishtin.

Rroba Shkëlqyese: Kur e nxjerrin nga Pagëzorja, i sapopagëzuari mbështillet me një rrobë të bardhë, një symbol tjetër i Krishtit. Ky veprim reflekton fjalët e Shën Palit:"Të gjithë ata që janë pagëzuar në Krishtin janë veshur me Krishtin." (Galatians 3:27)

#### KENDI SHQIP - continued

Krizmimi (Confirmimi): Kisha Orthodokse ndjek akoma praktikën e lashtë të konfirmimit të te Krishterit të sapo pagëzuar, menjëherë pas Pagëzimit. Ashtu si në cdo pagëzim cdo i Krishterë merr pjesë në Ringjalljen e Krishtit, në Krizmimin, shpirti i Shenjtë zbret te cdo besimtar, ashtu sic Shpirti zbriti tek Apostutjt në ditën e Pentacost. Nëpermjet kësaj dhurate të Shpirtit të Shenjtë, ne konfirmohemi si anëtarë të plotë të Kishës. Kjo bëhet me anë të një vaji të quajtur "Chrism", nga fjala greke që do të thotë "dhuratë" – si në, dhurata e Shpirtit të Shenjtë". Në kohët e lashta llambat mbusheshin me vaj. Në këtë proces vaji simbolizon zjarrin, që ndricoi mbi dishepujt në ditën e Pentacost. Meqënëse veprimi kryesor i ritit të konfirmimit është lyerja me Crism të Shenjtë, në Orthodoksinë Lindore ne e quajmë confirmimin "Krismim"

Procesi i pagëzimit: Prifti i prin të sapopagëzuarin dhe sponsored rreth pagëzores. Kjo na kujton neve që gjithë jeta jonë si Kristiane duhet të jetë një orbitë a pandalur rreth jetës dhe mësimeve të Krishtit.

Leximi I Skripturave:

Romanes 6:3-11 - Të gjithë ata që janë pagëzuar në Krishtit do të vdesin e rilindin si Ai.

Mathew 28: 16-20 - Jezui i udhëzon dishepujt e Tij të predikojnë Biblën në të gjithë popujt, duke i pagëzuar ata në emër të Atit, të Birit dhe të Shpirtit të Shenjtë.

Ritet pas-pazëzimit.

Në praktikën e lashtë Krishtere, pagëzimi mbaron në këtë pikë dhe gjithë ritet e tjerë që pasojnë do të festohen një javë më mbas. Gjatë kësaj jave i sapo-pagëzuari do të marrë mësime rreth Besimit. Sot këto rite bëhen si pjesë e shërbimit pagëzimor.

Larja e Vajit: Prifti lan vajin e shenjtë dhe Crism nga kandidati. Larja kuptohet si pjesë e pregatitjes përfundimtare të të sapo-pagëzuarit të Krishterë, për të hyrë në botë si dishepull dhe dëshmitar i Krishtit.

Qethja e flokëve: Si të Krishterë duhet të dedikojmë gjithë jetën tonë Krishtit. Kandidatit i prihet një pjesë e flokut si dhurim simbolik. Floku në tregimin Biblik të Samson nënkupton forcën; kështu që floku që ofrohet është për forcën dhe potencialin që i sapopagëzuari ja fal Zotit.

Kishërimi: (bëhet për bebet vetëm ditën e pagëzimit).

Lindja e një fëmijë do të thotë që një jetë e re ka ardhur në botë, nje marrëdhënie e re është vendosur në familje. Kur nëna kthehet në Kishë mbas kohës që i duhet për të marrë vehten mbas lindjes ( direktiva biblike ishte 40 ditë pas lindjes), ajo mirëpritet në Kishtë me lutjen që Zoti "ta pastrojë atë nga cdo mëkat e papastërti, që duke ardhur në Kishën e Shenjtë , ajo mund të marrë pjesë pa dënim, në Misteret e Shenjta". Misteret e Shenjta i referohen "Kungatës së Shenjte" – marrja e Kungatës nënkuptohet si shenja kryesore e anëtarësisë në Kishë.

Prifti pastaj lutet për fëmijen, duke i kërkuar Zotit t'a rrisë atë, ta shenjtëroje atë, ta ndricojë atë, ta pastroje dhe ta pajise me kuptim të mirë... që ai të numërohet midis Tufës së Zgjedhur të Krishtit..."

Prifti e merr foshnjën në krahë dhe duke qëndruar para Portave Mbrëtërore të Altarit, ai ia dedikon fëmijën Zotit. Ndërsa ua kthen fëmijën prindërve, prifti këndon hymnin e Simonit të Vërtetë, i cili kishte premtimin nga Zoti që ai nuk do të vdiste pa parë Mesian:"Tani, shërbëtori i Yt le të largohet në paqe, o Zot, sepse sytë e mi kanë parë shpëtimin Tënd, që Ju e përgatitet në sy të të gjithë popujve..." (shih Luke 2:21-40).

#### PASTOR'S MESSAGE - Continued from Page 1

- -- "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends." (John 15:13)
- -- "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you..." (Matthew 5:44)
- -- "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake." (Matthew 5:11)

These words are hardly motivated by the instinct for survival.

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#### BUILDING EXPANSION PROJECT SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

On Sunday, February 28th, Parishioners attended a Special General Meeting to review the Building Project's status and costs. Lou Foundos, Building Project Committee Chairman, presented the report and Parishioners participated in meaningful discussion. Much has been accomplished and Progress continues!!!

The following major actions were approved:

- 1. The Project Budget Authorization was increased by \$50,000 to \$400,000 in order to cover increased costs and additional needed work not included in the original project plan.
- 2. Authorization of up to \$8,000 to provide for major cleaning of the Church now that the Building Project work is almost complete.
- 3. The Parish Council was charged with exploring options for extending the term of the loan for the Building Project. This will include consideration of a mortgage with a term longer than the current loan.

An update will be provided at the Parish General Meeting on Sunday, April 18th.

#### THINK WITH YOUR HEART



We are blessed by God with material possessions, health, abilities, and life. Also, with intangible blessings – forgiveness, strength, courage, and ultimately eternal life. Therefore it is certainly a given that we should give back to God in return by supporting our St. Nicholas Church.

Pledging is Stewardship

#### **PLEASE**

MAKE YOUR PLEDGE TO SUPPORT OUR CHURCH -- TODAY

# ST. VALENTINE'S DAY DANCE A GREAT SUCCESS!!!





More than 100 Parishioners and Friends celebrated St. Valentine's Day at a Dance in the Church's newly expanded Fellowship Hall.

Everyone had a great time!!!

There was plenty of good food, great music and energetic dancing.

Many are asking for another Dance in May!!!

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#### PASTOR'S MESSAGE - Continued from Page 4

In the Gospel of Matthew (chapter 25 to be exact), Jesus tells the story of a landowner who goes on a journey and gives three of his servants part of his estate - Jesus calls them "talents" -- to look after while he is gone: one gets five talents; one gets two talents and the last gets one talent. When the master returns, he finds that the first two servants have worked their talents and multiplied them. He praises these two servants, and gives them even more responsibility in his estate. The master, however, hears a different story from the third servant: "Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours." The land owner becomes angry with this response, calling this servant "wicked and lazy". He takes the one talent away from him and gives it to the servant started with five talents and ended up with ten.

It was fear that motivated the servant in the Parable of the Talents to bury what he was given by his master, rather than building it up: "And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground." He was afraid of his master's anger, so he chose to do nothing with what he was given. This resulted in him angering his master, the very thing he was afraid of. Whenever we allow fear to lord over us, the very thing that we are most afraid of will be the thing that eventually happens.

Jesus teaches us that "whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the Gospel's will save it" (Mark 8:53 - see also Mt. 16:25 and Lk. 9:24; 17:33). At its core the survival instinct is motivated by fear. One thing that Church life shows us (again, and again, and again) is that the more we try to ferociously hold on to "that which is ours," driven by fear of that which is different, the quicker we find what is dear to us slip through our fingers.

The promise of salvation is grounded in love. St. John the Apostle reminds us that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) St. John also teaches us that "there is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear" (1 John:4:18)

When we are motivated by fears and threats, there can be no hope for a bright future. Following Christ's Way, the way of love, does not mean the future will always be easy, but it does mean that our struggles will never undo us. Jesus Christ is victorious, and in Him we too are victors in the end. This love-inspired, saving testimony is what our parishes, our Church, and our world needs more than anything else.

This love and the confidence that comes from it must be the bedrock of any planning in Church life, because they lead us down a path of spiritual maturity -of hope, courage and joy - they take us into the Kingdom of Heaven.

See you in church. Fr. Andrew

#### DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR MARCH

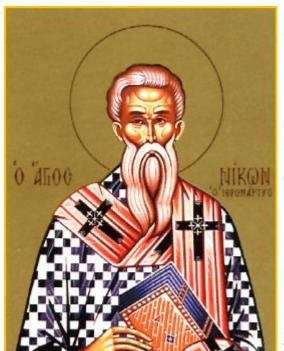
- 1. Isaiah 8:13-9:7 Genesis 6:9-22 Proverbs 8:1-21
- 2. Isaiah 9:9-10:4 Genesis 7:1-5 Proverbs 8:32-9:11
- 3. Isaiah 10:12-20 Genesis 7:6-9 Proverbs 9:12-18
- 4. Isaiah 11:10-12:2 Genesis 7:11-8:3 Proverbs 10:1-22
- 5. Isaiah 13:2-13 Genesis 8:4-21 Proverbs 10:31-11:12
- 6. Hebrews 10:32-38 Mark 2:14-17
- 7. Hebrews 4:14-5:6 Mark 8:34-9:1
- 8. Isaiah 14:24-32 Genesis 8:21-9:7 Proverbs 11:19-12:6
- 9. Hebrews 12:1-10 Matthew 20:1-16
- 10. Isaiah 26:21-27:9 Genesis 9:18-10:1 Proverbs 12:23-13:9
- 11. Isaiah 28:14-22 Genesis 10:32-11:9 Proverbs 13:19-14:6
- 12. Isaiah 29:13-23 Genesis 12:1-7 Proverbs 14:15-26
- 13. Hebrews 6:9-12 Mark 7:31-37
- 14. Ephesians 5:9-19 Matthew 4:25-5:12
- 15. Isaiah 37:33-38:6 Genesis 13:12-18 Proverbs 14:27-15:1
- 16. Isaiah 40:18-32 Genesis 15:1-15 Proverbs 15:7-19
- 17. Isaiah 41:4-14 Genesis 17:1-9 Proverbs 15:20-16:9
- 18. Isaiah 42:5-16 Genesis 18:20-33 Proverbs 16:17-17:17
- 19. Isaiah 45:11-17 Genesis 22:1-18 Proverbs 17:17-18:5
- 20. Hebrews 9:1-7 Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28
- 21. Galatians 3:23-29 Luke 7:36-50
- 22. Isaiah 48:17-49:4 Genesis 27:1-41 Proverbs 19:16-25
- 23. Isaiah 49:6-11 Genesis 31:3-16 Proverbs 21:3-21
- 24. Isaiah 58:1-12 Genesis 43:26-32; 45:1-16 Prov 21:23-22:4
- 25. Hebrews 2:11-18 Luke 1:24-38
- 26. Isaiah 66:10-24 Genesis 49:33-50:26 Proverbs 31:8-31
- 27. Hebrews 12:28-13:8 John 11:1-45
- 28. Philippians 4:4-9 John 12:1-18
- 29. Matthew 24:3-35
- 30. Matthew 22:15-23:39
- 31. John 12:17-50

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#### This Month's Feast Days

#### Martyr Nikon in Sicily -

commemorated on March 23rd



The Monk Martyr Nikon was born at Neapolis (Naples). His father was a pagan, and his mother a Christian. He was not baptized, but his mother secretly instructed him in the tenets of Christianity. Nikon was still a pagan when he reached adulthood. He served as a soldier, and showed unusual courage and strength.

Once, Nikon and his military company were surrounded by enemies. In deadly peril, he remembered the Christian precepts of his mother and, signing himself with the Sign of the Cross, he prayed to God, vowing to be baptized if he were saved. Filled with unusual strength, he killed many of the enemy, and put the rest to flight. He managed to return home and with the blessing of his mother, he set off in search of a priest.

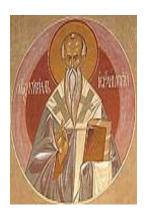
St Nikon went to Mount Ganos, where many monks were hidden, headed by Theodosius the Bishop of Cyzicus. St Nikon received from the bishop both the mystery of Baptism and the monastic tonsure. Living in the cave church, St Nikon became an example for all the brethren. Three years later, St Nikon was consecrated bishop and moved to the province

of Sicily with all the monks. Many years passed, and there was another persecution against Christians. By that time, 199 monks were living with St. Nikon. All the monks were seized and beheaded, but the Roman officials left St. Nikon alive in order to torture him. After several attempts to torture him were unsuccessful, St. Nikon was also beheaded, his body left in the wilderness. But even in death the Spirit of the Lord worked through him, healing a demon possessed man when the man touched his body. Eventually, the bishop of Messina learned where St. Nikon was, then he and his clergy buried the bodies of St Nikon and his disciples.

#### MAJOR FEAST DAYS IN MARCH



40 Holy Martyrs of Sebaste March 9



St. Cyril the Arch-Bishop of Jerusalem March 18



The Annunciation of the Theotokos March 25



Entry of Our Lord into Jerusalem March 28

#### **Major Church Activities and Events**

Wednesday evenings - Presanctified Liturgy, 7 p.m. –

Potluck and Study Group following.

March 3, 10, 17 and 24

Sun, Mar 07: Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.

Mon, Mar 08: Parish Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

Sun, Mar 14: Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m. Sun, Mar 21: Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.

Sat, Mar 27: Lazarus Saturday: Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.

Sun, Mar 28: Palm Sunday: Divine Liturgy and the

Blessing of Palms, Pancake Breakfast and Goodbye Reception for Fr. Andrew & Family

Wed, Mar 31: Holy Wednesday: Holy Unction, 7:00 p.m.

Thurs, Apr 01: Holy Thursday: Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.

Reading of the Passion Gospels, 7:00 p.m.

Fri, Apr 02: Holy Friday: vespers, 2:00 p.m.;

Matins with Procession of the Shroud

(Epitaphi), 7:00 p.m.

Sat, Apr 03: Holy Saturday/Pascha: Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.;

Paschal Vigil & Liturgy, 11:00 p.m.

Sun, Apr 04: PASCHA: Agape Vespers, 1:00 p.m.

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

Mar 07: Hir Fundo/Stefan Baltadori

Mar 14: Petrika Troja/Nasi Pavllo

Mar 21: Andrea Kutali/John Jance

Mar 28: Damian Peters/Steven Foundos

Apr 04: Lou Foundos/Robert Korra

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.stnicholasalbanian.org

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