

THE ORTHODOX POST

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

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Pastor's Message

By Father David Fox

Dear Friends,

I just spoke with a man named John who is one of our volunteers at Covenant House. John is the father of 7 children, who are grown now with their own families and children. John is also recently retired (he looks too young and healthy to be retired), and now with his free time, John comes to volunteer helping homeless kids. Often John comes early and sits to listen to the youth talk about their lives and to join them in their prayers in the chapel, then he spends most of the day sitting in front of a computer logging in information, even bringing a lunchbox so as not to waste any time. Last week John found out that he has lung cancer, though he had never smoked a day in his life, no family history, no poor work environment. A complete mystery. Over the weekend all of John's family came to see him, one a lawyer living in Indiana, another a businessman in California. One of John's daughters, who had been

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Pastor's Message	1
President's Message	1
Daughters of St. Nicholas & Kendi Shqip	2
Reader Nathan Message & Sunday School News	3
Mission Work in Albania	4
This Month's Major Feast Days	5
Major Events & Ushers' Sunday Schedule	6

depressed for a long time, has become a new person, organizing all her siblings to help their father. The high-power lawyer took off from work: "I just have to be with you Dad," he said. John is hunched over his computer as I am writing this, his breathing is a little labored and he coughs from time to time. He goes on Holy Thursday to see about treatment. "I can't believe how this has brought my family together," John said. He went on, quietly, with a sense of wonder in his eyes: "What a gift this has been! I said, 'Lord, **Please see Pastor's Message on page 3**

President's Message

By Bill Peters

Hope everyone enjoyed a blessed and happy Pascha!!!

It was good to see so many of you participating in Holy Week Services. Good Friday had an attendance that filled the Church. For Pascha Midnight Services, we had an overflowing crowd -- onto the choir loft, onto the Fellowship Hall with live-video of the upstairs services and out onto the front lawn.

Moving ahead, we will continue our busy schedule of activities at St. Nicholas. These will include a Sunday School Retreat with Workshops (May 4th), a Sunday School Play (May 18th), Adult Study Classes (Wednesdays, beginning May 14th) as well as Children's Choir and Albanian Classes.

At our April 6th General Parish Meeting, we discussed the important business of the Church. The major highlight was the status report on our Building

Expansion Project. The final construction plan was presented and approved which will enable the Project to continue forward. The Fundraising is going well with most parishioners having made commitments and donations. The goal is to have all parishioners participate in this Project. In May, we will begin to reach out for financial support beyond our parishioners to the Albanian Community at large and to the other friends of St. Nicholas Church.

Mission work in Albania continues through efforts of the OCMC. Anastasia Pamela Barksdale is a missionary who just left the USA to work in Albania. More information is shown on page 4. To support her effort in Albania, we will take up a special collection as well as seek donations on Sunday, May 18th.

Looking towards June, don't forget to participate in the Annual Picnic on Fathers Day and Sunday School Graduation Ceremonies.

Daughters' Corner

By Linda Foundos

Krishti U Ngall!!

After a beautiful Palm Sunday service including a palm procession with all the children, we all enjoyed our annual Pancake Breakfast. Many thanks to First Lady Tina Peters for all her hard work to prepare her award-winning pancakes for us. It was a huge success enjoyed by a full house. Many others helped to shop, set up, collect money, serve and clean up. Their help was greatly appreciated.

The Epitaphi was beautifully decorated with flowers on Friday morning under the direction of Tina Peters. As always, the ladies did a wonderful job.

A mother is a very special person in each of our lives. Her responsibilities go way beyond any job description. To love, nurture, care for and mold a life is an awesome thing. For those of you who are mothers, future mothers, or thought of as a mother to someone, the Daughters of St. Nicholas would like to wish all of you ladies a very Happy Mother's Day.

ADULT STUDY
Begins May 14th

On Wednesdays
7:00pm to 8:30pm



KENDI SHQIP (The Albanian Corner)



By A. Llupa

Maj 2008

Këtë muaj po japim një pjesë për shërbesat kishtare Orthodoxke dhe një pjesë nga parathënia e librit "Shqiptarët" i Edwin E. Jacques.

...Lutja liturgjike kishtare nuk është thjesht lutja e individëve të krishterë të bashkuar në një, nuk është një "shërbesë lutjeje" e shumë njerzve së bashku, por është lutja zyrtare e Kishës e mbledhur zyrtarisht. Shërbesat zyrtare të Kishës Orthodoxke janë zakonisht më të gjata se në kishat e tjera. Kjo ndodh, sepse ne shkojmë në Kishë jo vetëm thjesht për t'u lutur.

Ne shkojmë në Kishë të jemi së bashku, të këndojmë së bashku, të meditojmë së bashku mbi kuptimin e besimit, të mësojmë së bashku dhe të kemi bashkim e Kungim së bashku me Perëndinë. Shërbesat e Kishës nuk janë berë për lutjen e heshtur. Ato janë për miqësinë plot lutje të gjithë popullit të Perëndisë me njeri tjetrin, me Krishtin dhe me Perëndinë. "Emri i Zotit qoftë i bekuar, që tani e gjer në jetë të jetëve".

.... "Shqiptarët"

....Shqiptarët kanë jetuar në një vënd horizontesh të dhembëzuar, majash të larta, shkëmbinjsh të thikët, rrafshnaltash erërrahura dhe grykash plot me borë. Ata nuk e quajtën atë "Albania", por "Shqipëria", "Toka e Shqiponjës". Ata nuk e quajtën veten "Albanians", por "shqiptare", ose "Bij të Shqiponjës". Kështu, ata u identifikuan me më fisnikun prej shpendve, që fluturon më lart, që çiftohet përjetë dhe që e bën çerdhen ndër maja mbi dy mijë metra të larta. Kjo tokë piktoreske është përmendur në letërsi me konsideratë. Megjithëse Uilliam Shekspiri kurrë nuk e ka vizituar këtë vend, ai e vendosi komedinë e tij "Nata e Dymbëdhjetë" në Iliri, pra në Shqipëri. Vizitat që bëri Lordi Bajron në Shqipëri e lanë atë kaq entuziast për vendin dhe popullin, sa miku i tij poet, Shelli, i vuri nofken "Alby". Në Çajld Haroldin, Bajroni e shprehu admirimin e tij për "luginat e Ilirisë", për "malet e shumta sublime", për ato "toka të rralla dhe për përrallat e lashta", dhe shpalli "të tilla gryka të bukura rrallëherë t'i sheh syri".

Pastor's Message – continued from Page 1

if this is what I have to go through to make all this good happen, so be it." After John said this, I remember the words of Christ on Holy Thursday, "Father, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, Thy Will be done." John continued, calmly, with the same quiet but steady voice: "I can't imagine what my life would be like without God, without knowing that Jesus is the Lord, and that whatever happens to me, whether I live or I die, that He is the Lord. I know now what St. Peter meant when he said, "Where else can I go?" The doctors can only do so much, the family is beautiful, but, where else, besides to Jesus, can I go?"

Your friend,
Fr. David

**Retreat and Workshop at St. Nicholas
St. Thomas Sunday, May 4th**

CHILDREN & ADULTS

12noon to 2pm

**Come and Improve your Knowledge & Skills
for
Singing Church Music, Reading parts of the
Liturgy, Serving in the Alter, Etc.**

Sunday School Play

Sunday, May 18th, after Liturgy



**Come
to this
Special
Event**

**The Lives of Saints
Constantine and Helen**

A MESSAGE FROM THE READER NATHAN

Dear Friends,

In this season of renewed joy, I would like to take the opportunity again to thank so many of you for your aid, assistance, advice, and genuine labors. Lent is not an easy time with its expectations of spiritual abundance and material scarcity. Life does not give us a break—and for this, too, we should be thankful. The appointments we must keep, the job that does not let us rest, the harried pace of parents cum chauffeurs, all of this is a blessing reminding us that our ascetic endeavors, our so-called "spiritual lives", are nothing but vainglory when rent from our real lives of toil and conflict and great joy. So, to all of you who came to even one Lenten service, to all who sang or chanted or read, and to all who even intended sometime in there to be present: thank you for your intentions, thank you for your devotion, thank you for your thoughts and prayers.

Great and Holy Pascha is not a day; it is a foretaste of the day without end, when we will stand together for all time with all those we love singing to the one who is Love. In the Church, Pascha is a season—as Lent led us to this day, this season leads us through this day. Part of the festivities this year for this season at St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church will be a retreat and workshop on the Sunday after Holy Pascha.

Now, when our bellies are full again, we have an opportunity to use the energy instilled in us by our resumed heavier diets for a good purpose. If you would like to serve in the altar (young or old), if you would like to hear more readings in Albanian (or simply are sick of hearing my voice each week), if you would like to join the choir, if you just want to know more about these things (but are afraid yet to commit), now is the time! If you can walk without tripping and stand without falling, you can serve in the altar. If you can shout "Vërtet u ngjall!" (and I know your voice is hoarse from doing just this), you can chant. May fourth, Thomas Sunday, we will share a meal, then we will share some time together learning. Remember, Thomas doubted and Christ revealed Himself to him. If you doubt your own abilities don't be surprised if there is a revelation for you, too.

Some friends of mine, the Rev. Deacon Nicholas Garklavs and his wife Charlene, have happily agreed to assist us that day. They will join us for Liturgy, and I trust that you will show them true Albanian hospitality afterward at the meal. We will then spend some time breaking into small groups and learning about those things which interest us and to which we might have a calling. Finally, if there is time, we may have an opportunity to demonstrate some of our new talents to our friends and peers.

Come one, come all, come old and young—May fourth and bring some festal food! Your church needs you.

Krishti u ngjall!



Mission Agape - Albania

Sharing the good news of God's love

Christ is Risen!
Truly He is
Risen!
Krishti Ungjall!
Vertete Ungjall!

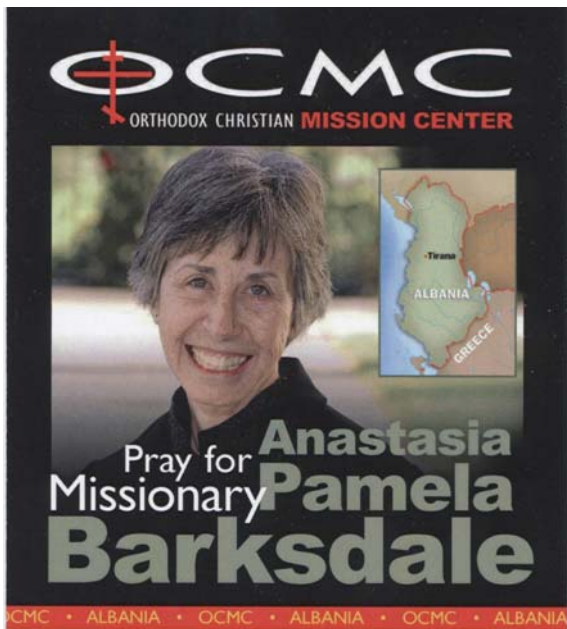
Dear Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Thanks be to our good and loving God, and your faithful support! My fundraising is complete and, God willing, I depart for Albania on April 14th. After taking a few days to recover from jet lag, I will begin my ministry in Albania by praying with the Orthodox community in Tirana during Holy Week and celebrating the joyous Resurrection of Our Lord with them at Pascha!

The Lord has made the way straight for me by providing an already furnished apartment near the Metropolis. Georgia Gilman, who is one of our OCMC missionaries in Albania, married in January and offered me her lovely one-bedroom apartment, with a view, an elevator, and (glory be!) a washing machine. Nathan Hoppe, our team leader lives across the street, so I already know my neighbors, or at least one of them.

My mind is a whirl with packing details, and yet I wanted to share my joy and experience with you. My three month mini-tour was an incredible experience. When I arrived home two weeks ago, my heart was overflowing with the joy, love, kindness and generosity I experienced from the parishes and people I visited. Often I wished all my prayer partners could have been with me and felt the vibrancy of our Orthodox communities.

**Me agape, Anastasia Pamela Barksdale,
OCMC Missionary Candidate to Albania**



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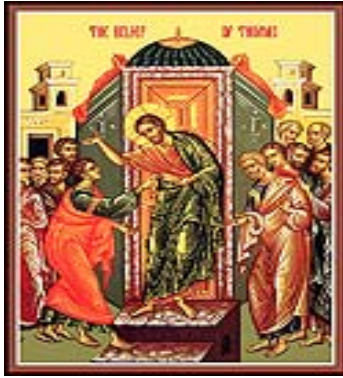
A SPECIAL COLLECTION ON SUNDAY, MAY 18TH -----TO SUPPORT MISSION WORK IN ALBANIA

This Month's Major Feast Days

Antipascha – St. Thomas Sunday

2nd Sunday of Pascha

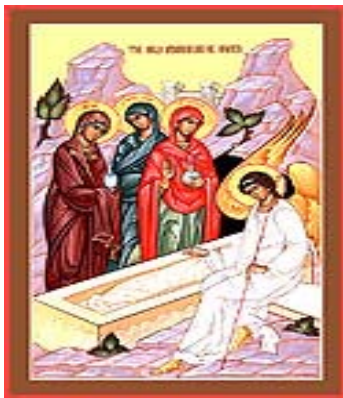
Commemorated on May 4



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.

Sunday of the Holy Myrrhbearing Women with the Noble Joseph

3rd Sunday of Pascha - Commemorated on May 11



Today we commemorate the Holy Myrrh-bearing women Sts Mary Magdalene (July 22), Mary the wife of Clopas, Joanna (June 27), Salome, mother of the sons of Zebedee (August 3), Martha and Mary, sisters of Lazarus (June 4). Also St Joseph of Arimathea (July 31), and Nicodemus.

Sunday of the Paralytic

4th Sunday of Pascha - Commemorated on May 18



On this day the Church remembers the man who lay by the Sheep's Pool in Jerusalem for thirty-eight years, waiting for someone to put him into the pool. The first one to enter the pool after an angel troubled the water would be healed of his infirmities, but someone always entered the pool before him. Seeing the man, the Lord felt compassion for him and healed him.

The Kontakion for this Fourth Sunday of Pascha asks Christ to raise up our souls, "paralyzed by sins and thoughtless acts."

Sunday of the Samaritan Woman

5th Sunday of Pascha - Commemorated on May 25



During the time of the emperor Nero (54-68), who displayed excessive cruelty against Christians, St Photina lived in Carthage with her younger son Joses and fearlessly preached the Gospel there. At Rome the emperor ordered the saints to be brought before him and he asked them whether they truly believed in Christ. All the confessors refused to renounce the Savior. Then the emperor gave orders to smash the martyrs' finger joints. During the torments, the confessors felt no pain, and their hands remained unharmed.

Nero ordered that Sts Sebastian, Photinus and Joses be blinded and locked up in prison, and St Photina and her five sisters were sent to the imperial court under the supervision of Nero's daughter Domnina. St Photina converted both Domnina and all her servants to Christ. She also converted a sorcerer, who had brought her poisoned food to kill her.

Three years passed, and Nero sent to the prison for one of his servants, who had been locked up. The messengers reported to him that Sts Sebastian, Photinus and Joses, who had been blinded, had completely recovered, and that people were visiting them to hear their preaching, and indeed the whole prison had been transformed into a bright and fragrant place where God was glorified. Nero then gave orders to crucify the saints, and to beat their naked bodies with straps. On the fourth day the emperor sent servants to see whether the martyrs were still alive. But, approaching the place of the tortures, the servants fell blind. An angel of the Lord freed the martyrs from their crosses and healed them. The saints took pity on the blinded servants, and restored their sight by their prayers to the Lord. Those who were healed came to believe in Christ and were soon baptized.

Nero had her brought to him and asked if she would now relent and offer sacrifice to the idols. St Photina spit in the face of the emperor, and laughing at him, said, "O most impious of the blind, you profligate and stupid man! Do you think me so deluded that I would consent to renounce my Lord Christ and instead offer sacrifice to idols as blind as you?" Hearing such words, Nero gave orders to again throw the martyr down the well, where she surrendered her soul to God (ca. 66).

Major Church Activities and Events

- Sun, May 04 : St. Thomas Sunday, Divine Liturgy at 10 a.m.; RETREAT AND MEAL 12:00 – 2:00 (see details on page 3).
- Tues, May 06: Board Meeting, 7 p.m.
- Sun, May 11: Myrrhbearing Women, Divine Liturgy at 10 a.m.; Albanian class for children 11:45 – 12:00; Basics of Christianity class with Fr. David 11:45 – 12:00
- Wed, May 14: Adult Study resumes, 7 p.m.
- Sun, May 18: Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.; One year Memorial for Edward Naum; Sunday School play on SS Constantine & Helen
- Sun, May 25: Samaritan Woman, Divine Liturgy 10 a.m.

Children's Choir:

St. Thomas Sunday and every Sunday after this, 11:45 – 12 Noon

Albanian Class (learning prayers and hymns in Albanian with Adelina Llupa) – Sun May 11 and every other week after this, 11:45 – 12 Noon

Ushers' Schedule for Sunday Services Lista e shërbimit të dielave në kishë

- May 04: Roland Llupa / Edi Sera
- May 11: Damian Peters / Steven Foundos
- May 18: Bill Peters / Ilija Luka
- May 25: Petrika Troja / Nasi Pavllo
- June 01: Ilir Fundo / Stefan Baltadori
- June 08: Tomi Beno / Ardian Mile

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.stnicholasalbanian.org

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