

THE ORTHODOX POST

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

Web site: www.stnicholasalbanian.org E-mail: snickny@aol.com Tel: (718) 380-5684

Pastor's Message

By Father David Fox

Dear friends,

*On Why We Fast, some thoughts inspired by Bishop Kallistos Ware's Introduction to the **Lenten Triodion***

Fasting is twofold, spiritual and physical. Christians need both.

Physical fasting: abstaining from Meat and Dairy products, alcohol.

Spiritual fasting: refraining from evil and impure thoughts, words, actions.

Both are positive: when we take out weeds, must replace with flowers or weeds will grow back.

Examples: If we attempt to give up complaining, we can plant thankfulness;

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Pastor's Message; President's Message	1
Daughters of St. Nicholas & Kendi Shqip	2
Parish & Community News	3 & 4
The Month's Major Feast Days	5
Major Events & Ushers' Sunday Schedule	6

if we give up meat, we can give to the poor, increase our prayer;

Giving to poor can decrease anxiety over money.

Spiritual fasting, from anger, greed, anxiety, judgment of others, is the greater and more difficult. But controlling our stomachs will help us control our spirit.

Pastor's Message is continued on Page 4

President's Message

By Bill Peters

This March is a time of preparation for Pascha. The Lenten Season provides us the added opportunity to look into ourselves and to examine our relationship with God. We are helped in this effort by the added services, primarily, the Pre-Sanctified Liturgies on Wednesday evenings followed by Adult Education discussions about the Gospel of St. Luke. We should try our best to actively participate in this Lenten period.

Our Annual Pledge Program is still underway! There are still many Parishioners who have not turned in their Pledge Card for 2009. Our St. Nicholas Church needs the financial support of all our Parishioners. These funds make possible the services we provide to our community. Consider the importance of the

Church in the life of you and your family and then make the best pledge that you can. Fill out the Pledge Card and return it to church.

You only have a few more weeks to buy the Albanian Archdiocese Centennial DVD. It describes the history of the Archdiocese in America, some scenes in Albania and the role of Bishop Fan Noli in our growth in America. We will have DVDs in Church, so you can get your own copy of this very special story. Buy the DVD in Church for only \$45.

Lastly, on Sunday, March 29th after Liturgy, we will hold our Parish Semi-Annual General Meeting. The business of the Church will be discussed and the latest status of our Building Expansion Project will be reviewed. It is important to our church life to have as many people as possible come to the meeting.

PLEASE COME AND PARTICIPATE!!!

Daughters' Corner

By Linda Foundos

On February 2, 2009, the Daughters of St. Nicholas held a meeting. Upcoming events were discussed and elections were held. Our new officers are: President, Linda Foundos; Vice-President, Irma Mile; Secretary, Pauline Logore; Treasurer, Viola Kallinikos; Sunshine Person, Joanne Heiser. We very much appreciate the fine job that Christina Liolin has been doing to maintain our Coffee Hospitality Listing for many years. Adelina Llupa manages the Hospitality reminder calls. Thank you so much to these ladies who have volunteered to serve. Heartfelt thanks also for their efforts to our outgoing Vice-President Agathia Luka and Sunshine Person Helen Panajoti.

We are trying to compile an updated listing of women who are house-bound and unable to come to church. If you know of such a woman, please give the information to one of our officers. Also, if you know of a Daughter who is ill for an extended period or in the hospital, please let one of our officers know. By the way, the term "Daughter" refers to ALL the women of the St. Nicholas community.

A very special tradition we observe is Soul Saturday, E Shtuna E Shpirtrave. Normally, it is observed during lent on the Saturday before Meatfare Sunday and the Saturday before Pentecost. However, this year the prayers will be made on Sunday, February 22. This service honors and remembers the souls of our loved ones that have fallen asleep in the Lord.

Since our records have become very outdated, it is time to compile a new listing. We invite all of you to submit names of deceased loved ones for whom you want prayers provided. To do this, pick up the memorial form in Church at the candle stand, fill it out and return it to Linda Foundos or to the church office so that your family names will be included in our memorial prayers.

KENDI SHQIP

(The Albanian Corner)



By A. Llupa

Mars, 2009

Këtë muaj po japim një lutje kur jemi në vështirësi, dhe një pjesë nga vjersha "Korça" e Naimit

Lutje kur jemi në kohë të vështirë

O Zot, Ti që na ndihmon dhe përkrah gjithmonë, që je i drejtë dhe mëshirëplotë; Ti që je ndihma dhe kuraja jonë, që dëgjon lutjet tona, kujdesu për mua , një mëkatar i varfër; ki mëshirë për mua dhe më nxir nga kjo gjëndje e vështirë në të cilën jam futur dhe që e meritoj të vuaj. E kuptoj dhe besoj, O Zot se të gjitha provat e kësaj jete jepen nga Ty për mëkatet tona, kur ne largohemi nga Ty dhe kur nuk zbatojmë këshillat e Tua; mos më gjyko pasi t'i kem bërë gabimet, por më gjyko sipas mëshirës tënde, sepse jam krijesa jote dhe Ti m'i njeh më mirë dobësitë e mia. Të lutem më dhuro hirësinë tënde hyjnore dhe më jep durim dhe fuqi të përballoj vështirësitë e mija duke iu përlurur dëshirës tënde. Vetëm Ti m'a njeh shqetësimin dhe vuajtjen dhe vetëm tek Ti, e vetmja shpresë dhe shpëtim, vij për t'u lehtësuar dhe kam besim tek dashuria jote e pafund, që kur të jetë koha e përshtatshme, Ti do të më nxjerësh nga kjo gjëndje ku jam futur dhe do të ma kthesh mërzitjen në gëzim dhe në mëshirën tënde, do t'i thur lavde Emrit Tënd të Shenjtë, O At, Bir dhe Shpirt i Shenjtë, tani dhe përherë, në jetë të jetëve, Amen.

Korça

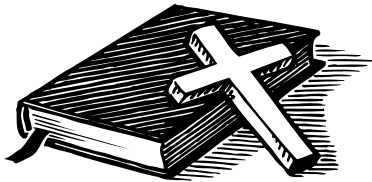
O vëllezër shqipëtarë!
Gëzohi! që erdh kjo ditë,
Kaq' e mir' e kaq' e mbarë,
Që sjell gjithë mirësitë.

Lumja ti, moj Korç' o lule
Q'i le pas shoqet e tua,
Si trimi në ball' u sule,
T'a paçim për jetë hua.

Kjo është dit' e rezë,
Që bije vëllazërinë,
E dëbon jetën e zezë,
Dhe ndarjen' e marrëzinë.

Kushdo që është sot burrë,
Dhe Shqiptar i vërtetë,
Emëri s'i shuhet kurrë,
Dhe nderi i rron për jetë.

PRE-SANCTIFIED LITURGY & GREAT LENT



Beginning on Wednesday, March 4th, we will have Presanctified Liturgies every Wednesday night during Great Lent beginning at 7 p.m. These Liturgies are a combination of Vespers and Diving Liturgy and are beautiful and profound. Everyone should try to come to at least one of these during Lent.

After the Liturgy, we will share Lenten dishes (each of us brings one) and while we are eating, we will hold classes for everyone, focusing on The Gospel of Luke.

Annual General Meeting

Sunday, March 29th, after Liturgy



Come to our Meeting!!!!

Important business of the St. Nicholas Parish will be discussed.

This includes our:

Building Expansion Project,
Religious Education,
Church Finances,
Social Activities,

Daughters of St. Nicholas, and
the Election of New Council Members.

COMMUNITY NEWS

By Linda Foundos

- Beti, Izzy, George Tsamblakos enjoyed a winter getaway to Naples, Florida. The warmth of the sun was a real treat after the winter we've been having.
- Christina, Tomi, Jamie & Daniela Beno had a great time at the beaches of Naples, Florida. Papa Al Foundos was delighted to have them visit.
- Congratulations to Ediona Sera on her outstanding performance which helped her team win First Team All County Girls Foil from the Nassau County Fencing Coaches Association. Her parents, Oneida & Edi Sera, sister Christiana, Grandmother and friends are so proud of her. Bravo!!
- Having been in the United States only 4 years, Mariela Mitre is a third year chemical engineering student at The Cooper Union School of Engineering. She is a Dean's List student who was accepted into a 2008 summer research program at Harvard and MIT Health Sciences and Technology Division. Mariela did her research at a tumor biology laboratory at Massachusetts General Hospital/Harvard Medical School. In November, 2008, Mariela was inducted into the Tau Beta Pi Chapter of the National Honor Society of Engineers. She is quite an amazing young woman!! Her parents, Ermira & Thomaq, and brother, Andi, are very proud of her, as are we all!! We wish Mariela continued success.
- IF YOU HAVE ANY NEWS YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE, PLEASE CONTACT LINDA FOUNDOS.

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Continued from Page 1

We do not fast because food or anything in creation is bad in itself (all that God makes is good), but to restore our proper use of creation.

Fasting is a fight for the body, not against it. As children we eat what we need.

As we get older, food (and thoughts, emotions) begin to control us, rather than we controlling them.

Fasting helps restore our true condition.

Fasting is an indispensable part of prayer.

If we do not learn self-control, someday someone will control us.

Fasting is the path to true freedom, joy, becoming full. Ultimately, we fast in order to fail, to see our weakness.

To know *by experience* our dependence upon God.

The true purpose of fasting is to grow in love.

Fasting is a gift from God.

A true fast: Once during WWII in Greece, an Orthodox priest and his family took in and hid a Jewish family.

The entire time the Jewish family stayed with them, the priest's family ate nothing but Kosher food.

Advice: Start small: remember the basics: no eating or drinking before receiving Communion. Come as much to Church as you can during the Fast. Come Holy Week. Try to spend 1 minute a day in prayer. Eat what is given to you. Hide your fasting. Don't forget: it's not about food; it's about love.

Remember the story of the Russian fool, who sat on the steps of a Church eating mounds of meat and while all the people left during Lent, threw bones at them, saying, "you do not eat meat, but you devour your brother."

May God grant us a Good Fast so we may be prepared for Holy Pascha.

Successful Activities In February

St. Valentine's
Day
Party



An Overflow Crowd Had a Wonderful Time in the Church's Fellowship Hall for Valentine's Day!!! There was Great Music, Excellent Food and Lot's of Dancing.

Healthy Marriage & Healthy Family Seminar



Fr. David conducted a very effective information and counseling Seminar on Healthy Marriage and Healthy Family.

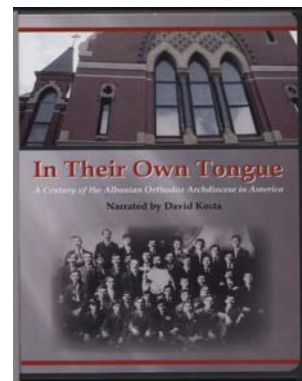
The Panel of married couples representing relatively new and longer term marriages proved to add much interest to the Seminar.

CENTENNIAL DVD

A HISTORY OF THE
ALBANIAN
ARCHDIOCESE

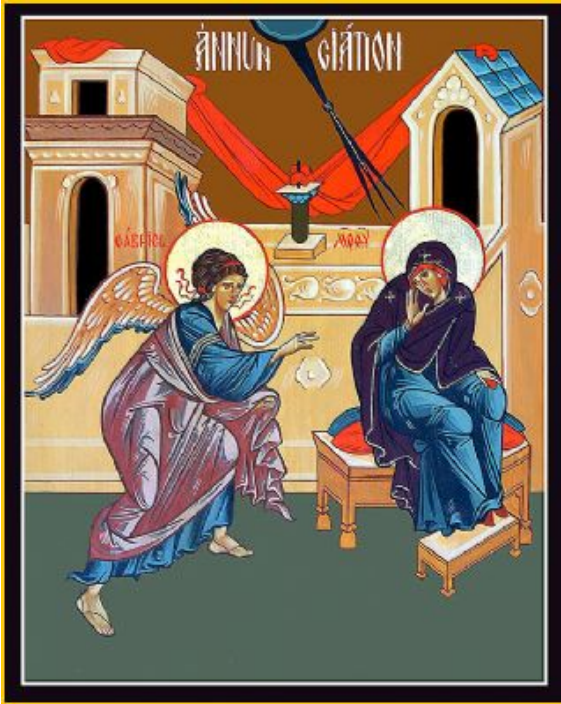
BUY AT CHURCH

ONLY \$45



THIS MONTH'S MAJOR FEAST DAYS

The Annunciation of our Most Holy Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary Commemorated on March 25



The Feast of the Annunciation is one of the earliest Christian feasts, and was already being celebrated in the fourth century. The Greek/Slavonic names for the Feast may be translated as "good tidings." This, of course, refers to the Incarnation of the Son of God and the salvation He brings. The background of the Annunciation is found in the Gospel of St Luke. The troparion describes this as the "beginning of our salvation, and the revelation of the eternal mystery," for on this day the Son of God became the Son of Man.

There are two main components to the Annunciation: the message itself, and the response of the Virgin. The message fulfills God's promise to send a Redeemer: "I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed; he shall crush your head, and you shall lie in wait for his heel." The Fathers of the Church understand "her seed" to refer to Christ. The prophets hinted at His coming, which they saw dimly, but the Archangel Gabriel now proclaims that the promise is about to be fulfilled.

The Archangel Gabriel was sent by God to Nazareth in Galilee. There he spoke to the undefiled Virgin who was betrothed to St Joseph: "Hail, thou who art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son

of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

In contrast to Eve, who was readily deceived by the serpent, the Virgin did not immediately accept the Angel's message. In her humility, she did not think she was deserving of such words, but was actually troubled by them. The fact that she asked for an explanation reveals her sobriety and prudence. She did not disbelieve the words of the angel, but could not understand how they would be fulfilled, for they spoke of something which was beyond nature.

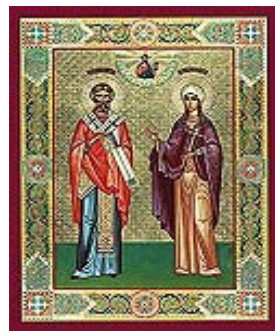
Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?"

"And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: therefore also that which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible.' And Mary said, 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.' And the angel departed from her".

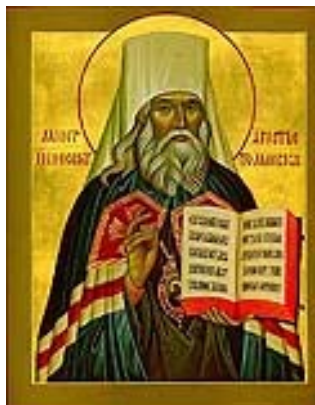
The icon of the Feast shows the Archangel with a staff in his left hand, indicating his role as a messenger. Sometimes one wing is upraised, as if to show his swift descent from heaven. His right hand is stretched toward the holy Virgin as he delivers his message.



**40 Holy Martyrs
of Sebaste - March 9**



**Martyr Chrysanthus
And those with Him
At Rome - March 19**



**Repose of
St. Innocent**

- March 31

Major Church Activities and Events

Sun, Mar 01: Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.
Forgiveness Sunday (Cheesefare)

Mon, Mar 02: First Day of Lent

Pre-Sanctified Liturgy, 7 p.m.; Lenten Meal and Adult
Study follows; reading from "the Gospel of Luke"

Wednesday, March 04

Wednesday, March 11

Wednesday, March 18

Wednesday, March 25

Sun, Mar 08: 1st Sunday of Great Lent

Mon, Mar 09: Parish Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

Sun, Mar 15: 2nd Sunday of Great Lent

Sun, Mar 22: 3rd Sunday of Great Lent

Tues, Mar 24: Vesperal Liturgy for the Feast of the
Annunciation, 7 p.m.

Sun, Mar 29: 4th Sunday of Great Lent; General
Meeting in the Fellowship Hall,
following Divine Liturgy

Ushers' Schedule for Sunday Services

Lista e sherbimit te dielave ne kisha

Mar 01: Bill Peters / Ilia Luka

Mar 08: Damian Peters / Steven Foundos

Mar 15: Tomi Beno / Ardian Mile

Mar 22: Petrike Troja / Nasi Pavllo

Mar 29: Ilir Fundo / Stefan Baltadori

Apr 05: Andrea Kutali / John Jance

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.stnicholasalbanian.org

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Jamaica Estates, New York 11432



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