

THE ORTHODOX POST

May 2013

Volume IX, Issue 5



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

by Fr. Nathan Preston

Heresy is not a popular word. A fact I learned, as with most things, the hard way. As a priest, you see, jests and offhand comments about death and damnation come naturally—that gallows humor of the professional. Where a banker might joke about fraud, a builder about calamitous and imperiling destruction, or a doctor about sickness, surrounded so often by issues of spiritual importance, the use and abuse of such terms and categories come sometimes too quickly to me. Replying to a friend one day, who had asked after my sister following one of my sibling's annual visits, I answered that we had enjoyed each other's company despite the fact that she, my own sister, was a pizza heretic. This was not met with the chuckle I had presumed but with near bafflement approaching outrage. Where I had simply meant lightly to indicate that we had disagreed over which slice was better and where the pies of such slices were to be procured, my friend took the mere use of this word as indication of real and abiding judgment, condemnation literally. In 21st Century America, it seems heresy of any kind is still a grievous charge. So I use it cautiously.

Heresy, real heresy, is that which separates us from God; it is sin in perception or attitude which prevents us from drawing near

President's Message

by Bill Peters

Holy Week and Pascha are upon us!!! In the last few days of April and the first week of May, we will be celebrating these very important events. These celebrations are most important in the spiritual life of the Church and our own lives as Orthodox Christians. Pascha represents the end of our annual journey. Hope you will be participating in the services, especially on Good Friday and on Pascha.

On Palm Sunday, we celebrated its meaning at the Liturgy and watched our children carrying palms in a procession around the Church to commemorate our Lord's entrance into Jerusalem. Later, we gathered in fellowship at our annual Pancake Breakfast. It was a great success! A "Special Thanks" to the Daughters of St. Nicholas for all their work, especially Chef Tina Peters, Linda Foundos, Tina Korra and Silvana Kutali.

Our Annual Pledge Program is coming to an end. However, if you have not yet made a Pledge, please think how important the Church is to you and your family, decide on a generous pledge and then submit a Pledge Card. We appreciate your continued generosity and it is your spiritual, physical, and monetary support that maintains St. Nicholas here for us to gather together as one community.

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in faith and love as we ought. And there are many types of this, nearly none of them new since all hearken harken back to ancient prototypes. For in sin, we humans are not exceptionally creative nor innovative. However, the late and much beloved Fr. Alexander Schmemmann noted the rise of one particular form, particularly virulent in its modern strain. This peril he termed secularism, and its definition may surprise you. Fr. Schmemmann believed that we are all created exceptionally and purposefully intended to be worshippers in communion with God. Bound by love and praise for

Continued on Page 5

Looking ahead, please take part in the following activities:

- Join us for a Mothers' Day Breakfast on May 12th. The men will prepare and serve a continental breakfast to the ladies.
- Bring your children to Sunday School and to Albanian Class.
- Save these dates of upcoming events:
 - Sunday, June 16th, for our Annual Church Picnic!
 - Monday, October 7th, for our Annual Golf Outing.

Also, to raise money to help pay off our remaining building construction loan from the bank, during the next few months the Parish will conduct a Raffle for a new luxury car. The prize will be a multi-year Lease or a Cash award. Raffle Tickets and more information will become available soon. To help St. Nicholas, encourage your friends and family to buy Raffle Tickets when they go on sale. Watch for details!!!

St. Nicholas Church is a small but an active Parish. Its success in meeting the needs of Parishioners depends on active participation by all of our Parishioners and the friends of St. Nicholas Church.

We look forward to seeing you in Church!!!

KENDI SHQIP

(The Albanian Corner)



by A. Llupa

Maj, 2013

Këtë muaj po japim një pjesë nga vjersha “Ujët e Bekuar” e Naim Frashërit marrë nga përmbledhja “Lulet e Verës”.

....Dashurinë duke mbjellë,
Dhe kënetë duke pjellë,
E gas të madh duke sjellë
Mjerëseja na mbulohet.

Të keqijat harrohen,
Dhe mejtimet s'mbarohen,
Edhe brengatë s'mejtohen,
Njeriu qesh e gëzohet.

Jakeni, shokë, te rrimë,
Rreth druvezës' e të pimë,
Se të nesërmen s'e dimë,
Na arriti pleqërija.

Koha po shkon e mës'kthehet,
Njeriu i zi gëzohet,
Me punë të rrema merret,
Dhe e mbulon babëzija.

Gjithë jetën nukë rrojmë,
Shpirtinë pse t'ë mundojmë?
Pa qasuni të këndojmë,
Se na plasi buz' e shkretë.

Shkel e shko zemëra ime,
Mos bjerë në hidhërimë
E ne breng' e në mejtime,
Mos të gënjëjë kjo jetë....

DAUGHTERS' CORNER

by Linda Foundos

The majesty of the concelebrants, the beauty of the service, the sharing of a delicious buffet all made for a wonderful Pan Orthodox Lenten Vesper service evening. A huge thank you goes out to Britu Haile, Irma Mile, Agathia Luka, Joanne Heiser, Christina Liolin, Diana Beno, Eli Troja, Tina Korra, Silvana Kutali, Pauline Logore & Christine Beno for their homemade contributions, shopping, set-up & serving effort. The efforts of these women helped make this such a success. Our great reputation still stands! Our guests were very pleased.

On **Sunday, April 28th** the Daughters will host our annual **Palm Sunday Pancake Breakfast**. It's a guaranteed wonderful day! Please plan to join us.

Attention All Women of St. Nicholas! The Daughters have planned a **luncheon**; the details are outlined below. **Please contact Tina Korra at (201) 338-2002 or Silvana Kutali (347) 335-0177" to make a reservation** for this lovely afternoon event. Car pools will be arranged from church following services. Please let Tina or Silvana know if you need a ride. We look forward to having you join us!

Sunday, May 19th

Dazies Restaurant

39-41 Queens Blvd.

Sunnyside, N.Y. 11101

718-786-7013

1:00 p.m. (following church services)

Car pools will be arranged from church

\$30 per person

Our hearts go out to the victims, the injured & citizens of the Boston area. We pray that our broken world can heal.

Mothers' Day Breakfast

Sunday, May 12th

Come and Celebrate



CONGRATULATIONS TO FATHER ADAM

At recent ceremonies held at St. Vladimirs' Seminary. Our Deacon Adam Horstman was ordained to the priesthood. He is now Father Adam.

The Parish congratulates him and his family. We wish them well in their new parish assignment beginning in Mid June.

Before they leave, the Parish will have a Sunday coffee hour in their honor to say *"Farewell and Best Wishes for the Future!!!"*

Watch for announcement of the date and come to say Good Bye!!!

House Blessings Continue



Avoid the rush!

**Speak to Fr. Nathan now about coming
to Bless Your Home.**

**Church: 718-380-5684,
Cell: 208-818-3372**

PALM SUNDAY SPECIAL ARCHDIOCESE COLLECTION FOR OCMC

**TO SUPPORT MISSIONS WORK
FOR ALBANIA**



**PLEASE
MAKE A DONATION!!!**

Council Members Elected

At the Parish General Meeting

Sunday, April 21st



Congratulations to the 6 individuals elected to the Parish Council!!! They are Tina Korra, Mark Papalexis, Damian Peters, Tomi Beno, John Jance and Lou Foundos.

These 6 individuals plus Fr. Nathan and the other Parish Council members (Bill Peters, Jim Liolin, Ardian Mile, Joanne Heiser and Isidoros Tsamblakos) will care for the operations of St. Nicholas Church for the next year. Your support is important for success.

A special "Thank You" to Beti Beno and Kenny Gjika for their service on the Council during their 3 year term which expired this April.

Officers for the next 12 months will be elected by the members of the Council at the May 8th Meeting of the Parish Council.

Save the Date!!!

Monday, October 7, 2013

St. Nicholas Annual Golf Outing

At The Town of Oyster Bay Golf Course



COME JOIN US !!!

Pledge Program for 2013

*If You Have Not Done So,
Submit Your Pledge Card!*

PLEDGE CARD
My total pledge for the year **2013** is: \$ _____
I will pay my pledge to St. Nicholas Church (please check one) Weekly Monthly Quarterly Yearly

Signature: _____

Parish Census
We are continually updating our parish database. Please take a few minutes and fill in the information requested below.
Please print clearly. Thank you.

Name: _____ Birthday: _____
Spouse: _____ Birthday: _____
Address: _____ Zip Code: _____
Phone Number: () _____ Email Address(es) _____ Wedding Anniversary: _____

Other family members in household:

Name: _____ Birthday: _____ Name: _____ Birthday: _____
Name: _____ Birthday: _____ Name: _____ Birthday: _____
Name: _____ Birthday: _____ Name: _____ Birthday: _____

We are approaching the end of our Annual Pledge Campaign for 2013. The Campaign is when we in the St. Nicholas Parish Community indicate our expected level of financial support for the next year. We do this by praying and considering our own lives at St. Nicholas; determining the financial giving we expect to make in 2013; indicating it on a Pledge Card; and returning the Pledge Card to Church. Most pledges are in the \$500 to \$3000 range.

If you have not yet submitted your Pledge, do so as soon as possible. Please consider increasing your Pledge over last year's amount or making a generous first time Pledge for 2013.

St. Nicholas appreciates your continued generosity and it is your spiritual, physical, and monetary support that maintains the Church here for us to gather together as one Community. Thank You!!!

**Orthodox Natural
Church Development**
Be a part of the ONCD process
Together we can make a difference



The Orthodox Natural Church Development program is progressing to the next phase. We have had several people volunteer their homes to host a Focus Group:

1. Donna and Jim Oswald (Nassau)
2. Phil and Jana Foundos (Nassau/Suffolk)
3. Nick and Barbara Filis (Nassau) 13 to 19 year-olds
4. Mark and Barbara Papalexis (Nassau) 20 to 35 year olds
5. Agathia and Ilia Luka (Brooklyn/Ridgewood)
6. Robert and Tina Korra (New Jersey/Staten Island)
7. Adelina and Roland Llupa (Bronx)
8. Open (Ridgewood)
9. Open (Ridgewood)
10. St. Nicholas Church (Queens)

The first Focus Group was held on Saturday, April 27th at the home of Donna and Jim Oswald. It was well attended and a good discussion was had regarding the Parish. Dates for the other Focus Groups will be established soon. Sign up lists are posted in the Church Hall for Parishioners to select a meeting that they will attend.

This is a great opportunity for all of us to have our voices heard as we work collectively to bring St. Nicholas to the next level.

Together we can make a difference!

If you have any questions please feel free to speak with:

Fr. Nathan, Tomi Beno, Chris Liolin, Joanne Heiser, Mark Papalexis, Nick Filis

Community News by Linda Foundos

- There's a lot of excitement these days for Alison (Papalexis) & Marc Ladd as they rock a pink cradle! They were blessed with Alexandra Mary on March 25th who weighed in at 8 lbs 2 oz. Barbara & Mark Papalexis are thrilled to be first-time grandparents! We wish Alexandra a very long, healthy & happy life. May God bless the entire family!
- There's even more cause for joy in the Papalexis family as they celebrate the engagement of Laura to Greg DiTullio! Our sweet, sweet, nurse Laura & Greg will have their wedding bells ring in May of 2014. Again, Barbara & Mark are delighted. Our sincere congratulations to the Papalexis family!
- The Filis', Barbara, Nick & Cleo, enjoyed a wonderful winter getaway. They soaked up the sun in West Palm Beach, Florida & got together with family & friends. Then they moved on to New Orleans, Louisiana and soaked in the jazz music, great cuisine & party atmosphere of Bourbon Street. All in all, they had a great time!
- April 11th was a very special day for Dea & Adrian Jorgji with the birth of their first child, Krista. She weighed 7 lbs. 6 oz. Baby, Mom & Dad are all doing well and extremely happy. May God bless Krista with a very long, healthy & happy life. Our sincere best wishes to them as they begin an exciting new chapter in their lives.
- Congratulations to Charlie Pochari for becoming a great-grandfather once again. His grandson, John Wieland & Salamwit gave birth to baby boy Kaden on February 28th. Kaden weighed in at 9 lbs. 1 oz.!! Kaden was baptized on April 7th at an Ethiopian church in Yonkers. Congratulations also to the proud grandparents Donna (Pochari) Boss & John Wieland.
- In addition to Income Tax Day, April 15th was very significant for Dr. Fiona & Ilir Fundo with the birth of their second son, Darien Alban who weighed in at 6 lbs. 15 oz.. The grandparents, Zana & Thomaq Fundo are delighted that 2 year old Thomas has a baby brother. May God bless the entire family.
- **On Sunday, April 28th the Daughters will host our annual Palm Sunday Pancake Breakfast.**
- **On Sunday, May 19th the Daughters will be going out to lunch at Dazies Restaurant in Sunnyside. Please see Tina Korra or call her at (201) 338-2002 to make a reservation.**
- Please contact Linda Foundos with any news you'd like to share at ggsutter@aol.com or 516-671-8071.

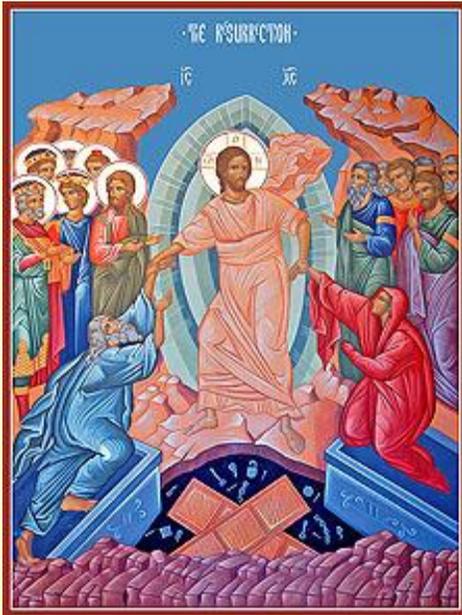
PASTOR'S MESSAGE - Continued from Page 1

our Creator, our lives are shaped and pointedly aimed at this end. The heresy, then, that he found was when we apportion ourselves, when we decide what part or time or allotment of ourselves will be God's. In so doing, we turn our backs upon our place of divine design; in so doing, we turn our backs upon that God who does not wish to be with us on Sunday mornings alone but at all times, adopting and establishing us as His children. This is the heresy of secularism: not that we give too little, but that we believe that is within our capacity to choose to give. In essence, whether our lives will be guided by egotism, with ourselves in the center, or by God, with us falling into orbit around Him.

As a guard against that destructive path of delusion and ego, it is helpful to ponder daily where we are. So I propose two questions as a routine corrective: Have I made myself God's today? Will I commit to make myself His tomorrow? Doubtless, we will fail on both accounts and fail regularly, but by this become more aware and so begin to change. Adding on the additional question of How? the means to such change will become clearer and practical and personal. How have I or how will I make myself God's? If my lips have offered even a single prayer in the course of twenty-four hours, this is progress. If I have made the sign of the Cross, this is growth. If I have been patient or kind when decorum or etiquette, my position or role, did not dictate this, this, too, is an advance. If I have attempted to keep the fast, if I have kept my mouth closed from words of hurt or trouble, if I have given even a little to someone whose need I may not think dire, I have begun to become God's. Every day noting how little I have practiced my vocation of Christianity becomes an opportunity for me, the next day, to live this more deeply, each day striving to depart from my heresy. It is our unawareness that will kill and rob us, our "natural" inclination towards selfishness that will lead to spiritual death.

Heretics we are, each and every one, but with God's help, improving. Heretics because we live in such a way that we do not grow nearer to God, do not worship as we should but instead live as we are accustomed. This word may shock us, but if it does not precipitate change in us, even it is too weak. We are fallen and broken, but we need not stay this way.

- N.B. The best pizza is at DiFara's in Brooklyn, in case you were wondering.



HOLY PASCHA – THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD –

Commemorated on May 5th

. Enjoy ye all the feast of faith; receive ye all the riches of loving-kindness.
(Sermon of St John Chrysostom, read at Paschal Matins)

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the center of the Christian faith. St Paul says that if Christ is not raised from the dead, then our preaching and faith are in vain. Indeed, without the resurrection there would be no Christian preaching or faith. The disciples of Christ would have remained the broken and hopeless band which the Gospel of John describes as being in hiding behind locked doors for fear of the Jews. They went nowhere and preached nothing until they met the risen Christ, the doors being shut. Then they touched the wounds of the nails and the spear; they ate and drank with Him. The resurrection became the basis of everything they said and did: "... for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have".

THE FEAST OF FEASTS: The Christian faith is celebrated in the liturgy of the Church. True celebration is always a living participation. It is not a mere attendance at services. It is communion in the power of the event being celebrated. It is God's free gift of joy given to spiritual men as a reward for their self-denial. It is the fulfillment of spiritual and physical effort and preparation. The resurrection of Christ, being the center of the Christian faith, is the basis of the Church's liturgical life and the true model for all celebration. This is the chosen and holy day, first of sabbaths, king and lord of days, the feast of feasts, holy day of holy days. On this day we bless Christ forevermore (Imros 8, Paschal Canon).

PREPARATION: Twelve weeks of preparation precede the "feast of feasts." A long journey which includes five pre-lenten Sundays, six weeks of Great Lent and finally Holy Week is made. The journey moves from the self-willed exile of the prodigal son to the grace-filled entrance into the new Jerusalem, coming down as a bride beautifully adorned for her husband. Repentance, forgiveness, reconciliation, prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and study are the means by which this long journey is made.

THE PROCESSION: The divine services of the night of Pascha commence near midnight of Holy Saturday. At the Ninth Ode of the Canon of Nocturn, the priest, already vested in his brightest robes, removes the Holy Shroud from the tomb and carries it to the altar table, where it remains until the leave-taking of Pascha. The faithful stand in darkness. Then, one by one, they light their candles from the candle held by the priest and form a great procession out of the church. Choir, servers, priest and people, led by the bearers of the cross, banners, icons and Gospel book, circle the church. The bells are rung incessantly and the angelic hymn of the resurrection is chanted. The procession comes to a stop before the principal doors of the church. Before the closed doors the priest and the people sing the troparion of Pascha, "Christ is risen from the dead...", many times. Even before entering the church the priest and people exchange the paschal greeting: "Christ is risen! Indeed He is risen!" This segment of the paschal services is extremely important. It preserves in the experience of the Church the primitive accounts of the resurrection of Christ as recorded in the Gospels. The angel rolled away the stone from the tomb not to let a biologically revived but physically entrapped Christ walk out, but to reveal that "He is not here; for He has risen, as He said". Finally, the procession of light and song in the darkness of night, and the thunderous proclamation that, indeed, Christ is risen, fulfill the words of the Evangelist John: "The light shines in darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it". The doors are opened and the faithful re-enter. The church is bathed in light and adorned with flowers.

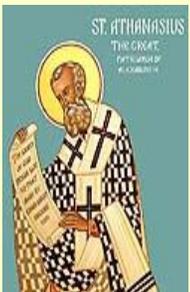
MATINS: Matins commences immediately. The risen Christ is glorified in the singing of the beautiful canon of St John of Damascus. The paschal greeting is repeatedly exchanged. Near the end of Matins the paschal verses are sung. They relate the entire narrative of the Lord's resurrection. They conclude with the words calling us to actualize among each other the forgiveness freely given to all by God: The sermon of St John Chrysostom is then read by the celebrant. The sermon was originally composed as a baptismal instruction. It is retained by the Church in the paschal services because everything about the night of Pascha recalls the Sacrament of Baptism: the language and general terminology of the liturgical texts, the specific hymns, the vestment color, the use of candles and the great procession itself. Now the sermon invites us to a great reaffirmation of our baptism: to union with Christ in the receiving of Holy Communion.

THE DIVINE LITURGY: The sermon announces the imminent beginning of the Divine Liturgy. The altar table is fully laden with the divine food: the Body and Blood of the risen and glorified Christ. No one is to go away hungry. The service books are very specific in saying that only he who partakes of the Body and Blood of Christ eats the true Pascha. The Divine Liturgy, therefore, normally follows immediately after paschal Matins. Foods from which the faithful have been asked to abstain during the lenten journey are blessed and eaten only after the Divine Liturgy.

THE DAY WITHOUT EVENING: Pascha is the inauguration of a new age. It reveals the mystery of the eighth day. It is our taste, in this age, of the new and unending day of the Kingdom of God. Something of this new and unending day is conveyed to us in the length of the paschal services, in the repetition of the paschal order for all the services of Bright Week, and in the special paschal features retained in the services for the forty days until Ascension. Forty days are, as it were, treated as one day. Together they comprise the symbol of the new time in which the Church lives and toward which she ever draws the faithful, from one degree of glory to another.

The V. Rev. Paul Lazor New York, 1977

MAJOR FEAST DAYS IN MAY



**St. Athanasius
The Great
May 02**



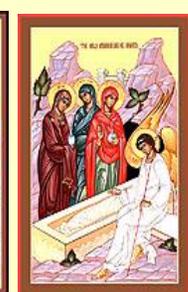
**St. John
the Theologian
May 08**



**St. Christopher
of Lycia
May 09**



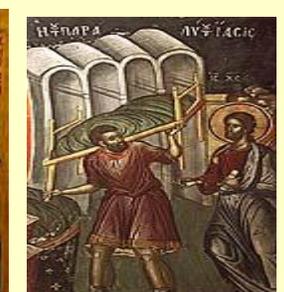
**St. Thomas
Sunday
May 12**



**Sunday of the
Myrrhbearing Women
May 19**



**Sts. Constantine
& Helen
May 21**



**Sunday of the
Paralytic
May 26**

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.

Tell the Merchant that you are from St, Nicholas Church and saw their Ad in the Church's Monthly Newsletter!!!

For New Ads Please Contact – Tomi Beno at (917) 952-9252

Orthodox Natural Church Development

Be a part of the ONCD process
Together we can make a difference

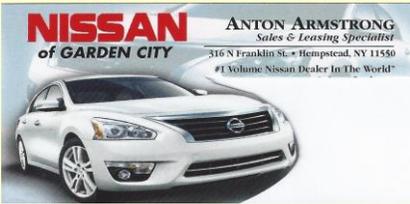


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Major Church Activities and Events

Mon & Tues, April 29-30: Bridegroom Matins, 7 p.m.

Wed, May 01: Holy Unction, 7:00 p.m.: Great and Holy Wednesday

Thurs, May 02: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.: Great and Holy Thursday
Passion Gospels, 7:00 p.m.

Fri, May 03: Tomb Prayers, noon: Good Friday
Lamentations, 7:00 p.m.

Sat, May 04: Vesperal Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.: Holy Saturday
Paschal Service, 11:30 p.m.: Great and Holy Pascha

Sun, May 05: Paschal Vespers, Noon; Great and Holy Pascha

Wed, May 08: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.: Bright Wednesday

Parish Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

Sat, May 11: Vespers, 5:00 p.,m.

Sun, May 12: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.: Thomas Sunday
Mothers' Day Brunch

Sat, May 18: Vespers, 5:00 p.m.

Sun, May 19: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.; Sunday of the Myrrhbearing Women

Sun, May 26: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.: Sunday of the Paralytic

Wed, May 29: Prayers, 7:00 p.m.: Midpentecost

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

May 05: Ilia LUKA / Bill PETERS

May 12: Stefan BALTADORI / Izzy TSAMBLAKOS

May 19: Nasi PAVLLO / Ardian MILE

May 26: Petrika TROJA / Tomi BENO

June 02: Andrea KUTALI / John JANCE

We're on the Web!

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www.stnicholasalbanian.org

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