

Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church

DECEMBER 17, 2006

Epistle Reading

Heb. 11:33-40; 12:1-2

BRETHREN, all the saints through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated - of whom the world was not worthy - wandering over deserts and mountains and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect. Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfection of our faith.

Apolytikion of the Church

The truth of your manner of life manifested you to your flock as a rule of faith and an icon of gentleness and a teacher of self-control. By humility, therefore, you acquired the things on high, and riches through poverty. Father Holy Hierarch Nicholas, intercede with Christ our God, entreating that our souls be saved.

Kontakion

On this day the Virgin cometh to a cave to give birth to God the Word ineffable, Who was before all the ages. Dance for joy, O earth, on hearing the glad-tidings; with the Angels and the shepherds now glorify Him Who is willing to be gazed on as a young Child Who before the ages is God.



Gospel Reading

Matt. 22:14;
Luke 14:16-24

The Lord said this parable: "A man once gave a great banquet, and invited many; and at the time of the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for all is now ready.' But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I go out and see it; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I must go to examine them; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So the servant came and reported this to his master. Then the householder in anger said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame.' And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and there is still room.' And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet. For many are called, but few are chosen.'"

Resurrectional Apolytikion

When You descended unto death, O Lord who yourself are immortal Life, then did You mortify Hades by the lightning flash of Your Divinity. Also when You raised the dead from the netherworld, all the Powers of the heavens were crying out: O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory be to You.

Wisdom of the Fathers

This parable ... proclaims beforehand both the casting out of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles; and it indicates together with this also the strictness of the life required, and how great the punishment appointed for the careless

St. John Chrysostom, Homily 69 on Matthew 22
4th Century

From the Bible

A voice cries out, "Prepare in the wilderness a road for the Lord! Clear the way in the desert for our God! Fill every valley; level every mountain. The hills will become a plain, and the rough country will be made smooth. Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all mankind will see it. The Lord himself has promised this."

Isaiah 40:3-5

Parish News and Events (www.stnickaa.org)

Welcome Visitors!

Please fill out the form on the notepads in the pews and put it in the collection tray so we may welcome you to our Parish.

Visitor's Please Note

Holy Communion is reserved for Orthodox Christians. Visitors are welcome to receive the Antidoro (Blessed Bread), which is distributed at the end of the Divine Liturgy.

Fellowship Hour sponsor needed for Dec. 31.



From the Pastor's Desk

Upcoming Services

Christmas falls on Monday this year, so the service schedule, as per Archdiocesan and Metropolis protocol will be as follows:

Sunday Morning, Dec. 24th: 9:00 am
Orthros **10:00 am** Divine Liturgy (St. John Chrysostom – as usual for a Sunday)

Sunday Evening, Dec. 24th: 5:00 pm
Great Vespers for the Nativity of Christ

Monday Morning, Dec. 25th: 9:00 am
Orthros followed immediately by the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great.

Please remember, Holy Communion distributed to prepared Orthodox Christians during Divine Liturgies only.



Philoptochos Notes

Sharing Favorites of Our Greek American Cuisine is a new collection of recipes presented by the Metropolis of Detroit Ladies Philoptochos Society.

Enjoy family favorites including traditional Greek, contemporary American, Lenten, Festival treats and other useful information. Whether cooking for one or entertaining a crowd, novice cook or experienced, there are many satisfying choices for all needs.

Books are \$20.00 each and can be obtained from either Margaret Yates, 663-0131 or Presvytera Eva Paul, 663-0821 or during the Sunday fellowship hour.

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP: EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

"Upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." (I Corinthians 16:2)

This concept of Christian giving is the very essence of Church support. Each of us should return to the Lord a portion of our blessings so the Church may continue to grow and provide a spiritual haven for the faithful. The concept, known as Christian Stewardship is not new to us.

It is important for us to remember that a Church is not mortar and brick but rather a meeting place for the faithful to gather and drink from the cup of Life. Christ said, ". . . Whoever drinks from the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." (John 4:14)

Our desire at St. Nicholas is to provide such a spring of water so that the faithful who are part of our beloved Church family may experience the joy of Jesus Christ and His promised blessings. Without your devotion to our Savior and the financial support of His Church, we at St. Nicholas could not actively support the mission of Christ's church.

Therefore, the Stewardship Committee has dedicated today, Sunday, December 17th, to our Parish's Stewardship Program. We invite everyone to come to the Fellowship Hall after the Divine Liturgy and the Christmas Program to make their Orthodox Christian pledge commitment to our church for 2007. **YOUR HELP AS A CHRISTIAN STEWARD IS CRITICAL!**



JOY

There will be a JOY meeting and Christmas party today from 5:00 p.m.—7:00 p.m. in the Church Social Hall. All children from grades 3 to 6 are welcome to attend.

December 22nd

Anastasia the Great Martyr

This Saint, who was from Rome, was a most comely, wealthy, and virtuous maiden, the daughter of Praepextatus and Fausta. It was her mother who instructed her in the Faith of Christ. The Saint was joined to a man named Publius Patricius, who was prodigal in life and impious in disposition, but she was widowed after a short time. Henceforth, she went about secretly to the dwellings of the poor and the prisons where the Martyrs of Christ were, and brought them whatever was needed for their daily subsistence. She washed their wounds and loosed them from their fetters, and consoled them in their anguish. Also, because the Saint, through her intercessions, has healed many from the ill effects of spells, potions, poisons, and other harmful substances, she has received the name "Deliverer from Potions." Since the fame of her deeds had spread about, she was arrested by Diocletian's minions, and after enduring many torments she was put to death by fire in the year 290.

Reading Courtesy of Holy Transfiguration Monastery

GOYA News

The GOYA would like to thank everyone who supported the GOYA Brunch this year, and a special thanks to Dr. Kales for his generous donation. Please help the GOYANs raise money for Mott Children's Hospital by bringing in your Popcan tops and **dropping them into the bin provided outside the fellowship hall.**

SCRIP Gift Cards

Beat the holiday shopping rush and help St. Nicholas by buying SCRIP gift cards. They start as low as \$5.00. For more information, inquire at the SCRIP booth this Sunday or call 644-1614 with questions. The first and third Sundays of each month are SCRIP Gas Sundays, so please, plan on placing your order for gas gift cards them. We have SCRIP gas cards for almost every gas company and you can use them at gas stations nationwide. Inquire how you may get Meijer's rewards for your gas if you get your gas from Meijer's.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Ring in the New Year in our St. Nicholas fellowship hall on Sunday, December 31, 2006. Start time is 9:00 p.m. and everyone is welcome! Entertainment for children is provided.

There will be a variety of music, door prizes, dancing, finger food and a complementary champagne toast to greet the New Year!

Tickets are \$30 per person for adults, \$15 for students, children 15 and under are free. Seating is limited, reserve tickets today! Please share with everyone you wish. For reservations or more information, please call Christopher Bekiaries at 734-761-9255 or Billy Res at 734-662-6105.



The Bookstore

You can find at the bookstore: Vasilopita coins, Christmas cards in Greek and English, ornaments, votives, Bibles, cookbooks, and books, including beautiful Christmas books for children of all ages. Look for *Making God Real in the Orthodox Christian Home* by Fr. Anthony Coniaris as found in the Church's COMPASS this month. Come browse today.

Church School News

Thank you to all the families who helped the children with the Church School "Thanksgiving Food Drive." The SOS community center was very appreciative and thankful that our young people cared so much to collect so much food for those families in need.

The children are currently collecting coins for St. Basil's Academy and will continue through the holidays until Jan. 7, the day we honor St. Basil. Please help and support them in this very worthwhile project.

Today the children, under the direction of our Youth Choir director Teresa Stokes, will be singing Christmas carols for our St. Nicholas Parishioners and guests. **It is also the last day of Church School for the year (no classes on Dec. 24 and 31). We will resume on Sunday, Jan 7, 2007.**

The children, teachers and directors wish everyone a peaceful "Merry Christmas" and festive holiday.

THE SUNDAY BULLETIN

December 17, 2006



ELEVENTH SUNDAY OF LUKE

Orthros 9 AM

Divine Liturgy 10 AM

Church School

Following Communion

Epistle Reading

Heb. 11:33-40; 12:1-2

Gospel Reading

Matt. 22:14; Luke 14:16-24

Psaltis

Zannis Res

Choir Director

Dr. Jon Wardner

Prosforo

Demetra Mitropoulos-Rundus

Fellowship Hour

Stewardship Committee

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, Dec. 17

PARISH STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM — AFTER DIVINE LITURGY

Church School Pageant

Greek School Party — 1:00 p.m.

JOY Christmas Party — 5:00 p.m.

Monday, Dec. 18

Bible Study — 10:00 a.m.

Bible Study—7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, Dec. 20

AHEPA, Daughters & Maids of Athena Christmas Party—7:00 p.m.

YAL Hang Out Night — 7:30 p.m.

Youth Choir Practice — 6:15 p.m.-7:00 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 21

YAL & GOYA Christmas Caroling

Submissions for the Sunday bulletin must be sent to: office@stnickaa.org by 10 p.m. on the Tuesday prior to publication.

SAINT NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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Proistamenos: Father Nicolaos H. Kotsis (frnick@stnickaa.org)

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Reverend Protopresbyter John Paul

MAKE SURE TO CHECK OUR WEBSITE: www.stnickaa.org