

Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church



American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese

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Pastor – Very Rev. R. Michael Zak, Cell phone:(412)-804-8865

Deacons: Fr. Deacons Artemius Stienstra & Dr. Marc Wisnosky

Sub- Deacon: Andrew Halapin, Jr.

Cantor/Choir Director: Danielle Bartko

Assistant Cantors: Donald Bodnar, Jr. & Michele Tomko

Parish Council President: Tom Pingor

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Sunday, December 15, 2019

26th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (ELEVENTH OF LUKE)

Chanting of the Nativity Canon: 8:20 A.M.

Divine Liturgy: 9:00 A.M.

Epistle: Ephesians 5:8-19;

Resurrection Tone: 1;

Gospel: Luke 18:18-27

Tropar & Kondak: Blue Book: 81-83 / Red Book: 95-99

Altar Flowers' Sponsor: **Feast Day of Saint Nicholas**, offered by Cheryl & Michele.

Panachida Service conducted for the repose of the soul of God's departed servant, **+Rose**

Jordanoff, offered by Mary Ann Kelch.

Saint Nicholas Day Brunch Buffet in the Parish Auditorium, following the Divine Liturgy. Free-will offering in effect for the repast. Visit of the Archbishop of Myra with bags of treats for all the children of the church.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18... 7:00 P.M. Great Vespers on the Feast of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker of Myra in Lycia, with the Blessing of Bread, Wheat, Wine & Oil.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19... 9:30 A.M. Divine Liturgy on the Feast of Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker of Myra in Lycia.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21... 11:00 A.M.-12 Noon: Hearing of Confessions during the Nativity Fast.

Sunday, December 22, 2019

27th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (TWELFTH OF LUKE)

Chanting of the Nativity Canon: 8:20 A.M.

Divine Liturgy: 9:00 A.M.

Epistle: Ephesians 6:10-17;

Resurrection Tone: 2;

Gospel: Luke 17:12-19

Tropar & Kondak: Blue Book: 84-86 / Red Book: 99-102

Luke 18:18-27 –

Math. 19:16, 17 – This man does not come to test Jesus, but to seek advice from one he considers no more than a **good Teacher**. Christ's response (v. 17) does not deny that He is God, but is designed to lead the rich man to this knowledge.

19:20 – Formal observance of commandments does not make one righteous before God. This man has an earnest desire for eternal life and sensed that he still lacked something; thus, he continues to press Jesus for the answer.

19:21 – To be perfect, one must willingly sacrifice all and **follow** Christ. Nothing is gained unless this sacrifice is given freely. The specifics of how one follows Christ will be different for each person. Because wealth had such a grip on this rich man, his only hope was to **sell** and **give** away all his possessions. St. John Chrysostom tells us that giving away possessions is the

least of Christ's instructions here; following Him in all things is a far greater and more difficult calling.

19:23-26 – Various interpretations have been suggested for the impossible image of a **camel** going through **the eye of the needle**: e.g., that the word was not camel, but “rope”; or that the eye of a needle was a city gate through which a camel might barely squeeze if it were first unloaded of all its baggage, symbolizing wealth. Even the Talmud uses the expression “for an elephant to go through the eye of a needle.” Whatever the phrase refers to, it displays the impossibility of salvation for those who are attached to riches. This is clearly evidenced by the disciples' response, “**Who then can be saved?**” Yet by God's grace, even what is **impossible** to man can come to pass.

Luke 22:30 – “Christ judges by discerning the heart, and not by examining deeds. So also the apostles are being shaped to exercise spiritual judgment concerning faith, and in rebuking error with virtue.” (St. Ambrose). The apostles will judge not with earthly judgment, but by the witness of their own lives. Since God's **kingdom** begins with the Resurrection of Christ, the authority of judgment has already been given to the apostles and their successors in the journey of the Church on earth (Mt. 16:19; John 20:23).

Luke 19:8 – Zacchaeus uses the term **give** for his free and generous offering **to the poor**, and **restore** for what he owes those he had cheated, as this was not a gift but required by the Law (Ex. 22:1). By doing both, Zacchaeus not only fulfills the Law, but shows his love of the gospel.

19:9 – The title **son of Abraham** indicates Zacchaeus had become like this patriarch of Israel; he was counted righteous by his faith, he became generous toward the poor, and he was united to the people of God. Early records tell us he went on to be a bishop of the Church.

RECTORY OFFICE HOURS are 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. Monday thru Friday.

EMERGENCY SICK CALLS can be made anytime. Please notify your Pastor when someone is taken to the hospital; Sacred Scriptures remind us to call the presbyter to anoint the sick.

MARRIAGES are celebrated on Saturdays and Sundays. Consult the Pastor at least 6 months in advance and before wedding reception plans have been made. Marriages cannot be celebrated during Lent or Advent, or on Fridays.

BAPTISMS are scheduled on Saturdays and Sundays at 11 A.M. Two God-parents are required; at least one of whom must be an Orthodox Christian by Faith, and the other a practicing Christian. An infant's first or middle name must be a saint's name.

CHURCH FUNERALS are provided for parishioners who are current in their spiritual and financial obligations to the Parish. Otherwise, burial is from the funeral home. The Church does not permit cremation.

FOLLOW OUR DIOCESE ON-LINE! Diocesan Website: <http://www.acrod.org> Camp Nazareth: <http://www.campnazareth.org> Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/acroddiocese> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/acrodnews> You Tube: <https://youtube.com/acroddiocese>

THE WILDERNESS JOURNAL
365 Days with the PHILOKALIA
By: Angela Doll Carlson

Day 342

When we fiercely oppose the passions, the demons trouble us all the more severely with shameful thoughts. At such a time, we should reaffirm our faith in the Lord and set our hope steadfastly in the eternal blessings that He has promised us.

St. John of Karpathos, “Texts for the Monks in India,” p. 301

FIGHTING BACK

ETERNAL BLESSINGS SEEM SO FAR away and perhaps even out of reach. When I lift my hands out in front of me, I don't know what I'm hoping to grasp. It's always been my thought-life that suffers temptation. Thoughts are vivid and strong, ideas race through my head, trigger that longing for something other than God.

That longing is temporary and temporal. That longing becomes distorted and disruptive. I try to move it back to its proper place, arms reaching out to God, but the

eternal has no form, no substance around which I can wrap my fingers, and so it slips away.

Fight back, I tell myself, when I find myself sliding back into old habits, damaging patterns, shameful thoughts. Fight back.

There's no promise it will get easier, but failing to fight for something better is sure to lead away from God, the source of everything that is good. The only life-giving choice, the hopeful choice, we can make is to continue to fight for what is good.

COME DOWNSTAIRS THIS MORNING FOR AN APPETIZING ST. NICHOLAS DAY BRUNCH! In honor of our parish's Patron Saint, we're planning a scrumptious breakfast-lunch repast, "fit for a Wonder-Worker" today following the Divine Liturgy. A free-will offering is in effect for the meal. And make certain that all of the children of St. Nicholas Church proceed to the parish hall on this Lord's Day, since the Bishop of Myra will be in town, delivering bags of treats to all the youngsters.

LENTEN FOODS FOR THE NATIVITY FAST CAN BE PURCHASED THIS MORNING IN THE CHURCH KITCHEN! The Mothers' & Daughters' Guild is selling Haluski, Bean Soup and Vegetable Soup for the Advent season. You can buy these fasting staples today in the parish hall for \$8.00 each.

WHO DOESN'T WANT TO RECEIVE A CHRISTMAS PRESENT OF HOMEMADE HOLIDAY COOKIES AT THE NATIVITY FEAST? The Mothers and Daughters Guild of St. Nicholas Church will be making homemade cookie trays for the Christmas Holiday. The scrumptious pastries will be mouth-watering to look at and beautifully packaged for gift giving. The price is \$18 per tray. See any of the Mothers and Daughters Guild members for more information.

THE NEXT ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH BOARD MEETING! The Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church Board Session is scheduled for Monday, December 30th at 7:00 P.M. Auditors will meet at 6:30 P.M. and all parishioners have the privilege to attend the meeting.

2020 CHURCH CALENDARS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE AUDITORIUM! All parishioners are invited to pick up the liturgical guide and calendars for their home use. To afford the opportunity of all faithful members to secure the new calendars, we kindly request that parishioners take just (1) date guide for their residence at this time. And, when you are at the Savolskis – Wasik – Glenn Funeral Home on Main Street in Munhall, thank Supervisor Michael Perovich and his administrative staff for once again sponsoring the calendars for St. Nicholas Church of Homestead, PA.

GO NO FURTHER THAN OUR FABULOUS ST. NICHOLAS GIFT SHOP AND BOOK STORE FOR YOUR NATIVITY SHOPPING THIS YEAR! Our parish is certainly blessed to have a wonderful display of religious items and spiritual books that make "perfect gifts" for every member of your household at the celebration of the Birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. No need to battle the "maddening crowd of shoppers, working themselves up into a frenzy, searching for that unique present," when you can view the icons, candles, crosses, religious jewelry, Orthodox Bibles & Prayer Books, a splendid library of Orthodox Christian books and spiritually-rich publications, greeting cards for all occasions, and children's coloring books and religious education pamphlets, plus, much more! Take time to browse the Store & Shop, ask questions on any of the articles, and enjoy the conversation you'll have with the ladies waiting on you.

2020 A.C.R.Y. LOTS-O-LUCK CALENDARS! The calendars are available for your purchase. They are \$25.00 each and make wonderful gifts for Christmas. See Carol Dunn! Also, congratulations to the Newly Elected Sr. ACRY Officers: John Fedornock – Vice President; Michele Hubert – Financial Secretary; Lucy Tomtko – Recording Secretary; Carole Dunn, Andrea Zober – Auditors; Sergeant of Arms – Alisha Zak. President – Cathy Pawlik.

PREPARE YOURSELF FOR THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST BY CONFESSING YOUR SINS ON THE SATURDAYS DURING THE NATIVITY FAST FROM 11:00 A.M. TO 12 NOON! Acquire the grace of Almighty God in the Holy Mystery of Penance during this season of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Your Pastor shall welcome you to this life-saving sacrament and offer prudent council to aid you in your spiritual warfare against the unseen principalities who are ever so ready to tempt us to sin (miss the mark) and not seek first the Kingdom of God. Feed your immortal soul during this time of fasting!

MEN'S CLUB PARTY AT DUKES! The St. Nicholas Men's Club will be hosting their annual Christmas Party during their January meeting on Monday, January 13th at 8:00 P.M. at Dukes on 8th Avenue in Homestead. The Men's Club would like to extend an invitation to all the men in our church who would like to consider joining our organization as we celebrate Russian New Year's Eve. Food and drinks will be provided by the club. If you are interested or need more details, please check with a Men's Club member. Please consider joining us for the evening! Thanks, Brian.

Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church

