

The Orthodox Faith

Chronicle of St Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church
Diocesan Bishop-His Grace Bishop IRINEJ
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December 14,27, 2020
Twenty Ninth Sunday after Pentecost
No.3
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Matthew 6:33-But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (KJV)

Services this Past Week

December 20-Divine Liturgy-Father Christopher Shadid officiated at the Divine Liturgy. The parish Slava was celebrated with Blessing of the Slava Kolac' and Koljivo. One family also celebrated their Slava and brought a Kolac' and Koljivo. One adult and the children present received Communion.

Monday through Wednesday evenings-Parishioners and others participated in Small Compline by telephone. (339)207-6529

Services this Coming Week.

Today-Sunday -December 27-Divine Liturgy-Warmly welcome again-Father Christopher Shadid officiating.

Dates to Keep in Mind

December 27-Sunday of the Holy Forefathers, Holy Martyrs Thyrsus, Leucisu, Philemon and those with them. Serbian Mother's Day,

December 30-Holy Prophet Daniel, Holy Deacon Avvacum and Hegumen Paisius

December 31-Holy Martyr Sebastian, St, Modestus, Patriarch of Jerusalem and those with them.

January 2-St. Ignatius the God-bearer. St. Daniel II of Serbia, Forefeast of the Nativity

January 3-Serbian Father's Day

January 5-Holy 10 Martyrs of Crete, St. Nahum of Ochrid

January 6-Holy Nun Martyr Eugenia, Christmas Eve

January 7-Feast of the Nativity of Jesus Christ

January 8-Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos

January 9-Holy Apostle, Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen

January 10-Thirty First Sunday after Pentecost-Holy God-bearing Fathers

January 13-Venerable Melania of Rome, St. Dositij of Zagreb, Apodasis of Nativity

January 14-The Circumcision of Our Lord Jesus Christ. St Basil the Great

January 17-Forefeast of Theophany-Sunday before Theophany, Synaxis of the 70 Apostles

If You are Too Busy to Pray...You are Too Busy

Pray for the Suffering Serbian People in Kosovo, Metohija and Montenegro

Parish Life

- Thank you to Very Reverend Dr. Donald Shadid for serving for an out-of-state burial at St. Petka Cemetery this past Monday.
- Thank you to Father Christopher Shadid for serving today and last Sunday.
- Thank you to Suzette Gardenhour for directing the choir and coordinating the weekday evening Small Compline participation.
- Thank you to St. Nicholas Choir for singing throughout the year.
- Thank you to all participating in the weekday evening Small Compline.
- Thank you to St. Nicholas parishioners for steadfastly supporting the church in this interim period and these challenging times.
- Nativity greetings to friends of the parish celebrating Christ's Nativity on the Gregorian calendar.
- Pray for the doctors, nurses, nurse aides and all working and caring for the sick including those in family homes.
- Pray for the teachers and students adjusting to educational challenges.
- Pray for all persons having suffered from job or income loss.
- Pray for the sick, the suffering, the hospitalized, imprisoned, those in nursing homes, rehab centers, the homebound, and the mentally ill,
- Pray for the workers in mines, law-enforcement, corrections, probation and parole and firefighters, all working in dangerous occupations.
- Pray for the men and women serving in the military and their families.
- Honoring the fasts of the Church strengthens the parish and each home.

Appreciate and support St. Sava School of Theology in Libertyville, Illinois

To Consider

- St. Nicholas Church is a blessing to many different communities.
- St. Nicholas parishioners are steadfast in supporting the parish.
- St. Nicholas Church nourishes the hearts, souls and homes of parishioners.

A Thought from Very Reverend Stavrophor Dr. Nedeljko Grgurevich. .

Man is the center of all that is created in this world and as such brings together all creation, making of it one single physical world. The chief meaning of man's life in this world and his final goal is, among other things, to have a share in the divine life.

Because man does not possess a completely independent in relation to God, he must gravitate toward a union with God. Union with man is not necessary to God, but union with God is necessary to man. By uniting himself with God in a communion, man begins to realize his goal already in this earthly life.

(The Eucharist as Sacrifice. Johnstown, Pa.1993, p.23.)

The Twenty Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Luke 14:16-24

Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.

And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper. (KJV)

The present Gospel compels deep thinking about excuses that arise within us not to accept the Lord's ever-present invitations to receive eternal and life-giving nourishment.

The Lord God invites believers at every moment of life to draw near for nourishment. The invitation is particularly true during the Divine Liturgy. Believers have the opportunity to receive Christ's Precious Body and Blood.

The Church prescribes this Gospel each year. The Gospel is for each person. Honesty to the self and to the Lord are expected. It is time to admit to saying "no" too often to the Lord's invitations.

The Church provides the Nativity Fast at this time to intensely focus on the birth of Jesus Christ. Now is the time to increasingly draw near to the Lord with strong faith and an open heart.

Hunger in the soul is satisfied only in the Lord's nourishment. Declining invitations to be nourished at the Lord's supper deprives the soul of the food for life and salvation.

The Lord Jesus Christ was very clear about the importance of partaking of His Precious Body and Blood. Jesus said: "Whoso eateth my **flesh**, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." (Jn.6:54)

Decisions are made at every moment of life. These decisions have lasting impact. Careful use of the mind is needed in decision-making to ensure all thoughts and actions are directed toward the Kingdom of God.

Refusing the Lord's invitations jeopardizes the condition of the soul and personal peace. The possibility of experiencing eternal life and the Heavenly Kingdom is reduced each time the Lord's invitation to draw near is declined.

We never know when our last breath will be taken. The moment our heart will stop beating is not known. Jesus Christ's return for the Last Judgment can occur when least expected.

Christians are advised to always be vigilant and watch. Keeping the Kingdom of God in mind at all times influences daily decisions. Love of the Lord is demonstrated in freely and willingly accepting invitations to draw near.

The condition of the heart, mind and soul affect each believer's decision-making. Personal interests and goals will dictate the extent the Lord's invitations are accepted.

The Lord Jesus Christ said: “Lay up for **yourselves treasures** in heaven, **where** neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and **where** thieves do not break through nor steal.” (Mt.6:20)

The use of personal time, talents and energy will reveal the degree of interest in the Lord. Love of God is demonstrated by the extent God occupies the mind, fills the heart and illumines the soul.

We cannot say we love God when our time, energy and interests have very little to do with God. We cannot say we love God if we maintain interests and engage in activities contrary to the Lord’s teachings.

If we seek to accumulate material wealth and fail to be generous to the Lord, lack of interest in the Lord becomes apparent. If God enters our mind only a few minutes per week, how can we expect to spend eternity in the Lord’s Kingdom?

Each person is subject to the Lord’s final judgment. Personal thoughts and actions determine where eternity will be experienced. If time is not made for God now, the person cannot expect God to provide for life eternal at the last judgment.

In the time remaining in the Nativity Fast, let us commit to accepting the Lord’s invitations. Our lives will change and improve to the degree we are accepting of the Lord.

Daily life is full of temptations, invitations and requests. God is supreme and worthy of being first in decisions of acceptance. When God is first in our lives, all else is in proper perspective.

The Lord Jesus Christ said: “For **where your treasure** is, there will **your** heart be also.” (Mt.6:21) Welcome with great joy the invitations of the Lord. Draw near to experience the Lord’s love, mercy and joy.

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Twenty Ninth Sunday after Pentecost. Holy Martyrs Thyrsus, Leucius, Philemon and Those with Them. Serbian Mother’s Day December 14/27, 2020.
Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic

Donations Sunday, December 20, 2020

Offering - \$1,371.00

Candles - \$7.00

Dues - \$200.00

Slava Donations

Kumovi Brandon, Melana, Braydon & Marcus Simms - \$100

Dianna Dunnington - \$100

Pete & Joanne Todorich – \$25 – IMO Nikola, Milka, & Nick Jr. Todorich

Richard & Suzette Gardenhour - \$40

Tom & Carol McAllister - \$10

Christopher McAllister - \$10

Ashley McAllister - \$10

Gary & Rose Marinkovich - \$40

Kristina Marinkovich - \$10

Tony & Linda Freidhoff - \$20

Joanne Uzelac - \$20

Evelyn Walat - \$40

Betty Feldbauer - \$25

Peter & Anna Vuckovich - \$100

Nick & Emma Saula - \$50

Olga Lucas - \$50

Mary Kelly - \$25

Large Candle Donations

Stella Nikolenic in memory of Kata & Stanko Villa

Richard Kondash in memory of parents Amelia & Joe Kondash

Cam Palmer in memory of Eva Visnich Johnson

Peter & Joanne Todorich in memory of Nikola & Milka, Nick Jr Todorich

Richard & Suzette Gardenhour in memory of the Grisin & Gardenhour Families

DOLLAR-A-DAY

A reminder that the final collection for the Dollar-A-Day is due. Thanks to all who contributed! It was a great success!

MEN’S CLUB

The Men’s Club will be celebrating their Slava Sveti Jovan (January 20) on Sunday, January 24, 2020 with the Blessing of the Kolac, zito and wine.

They will holding a Serbian Steak Take-Out Dinner on that Sunday – details to follow.

FISH FRY

Friday, January 29, 2020
3:00 PM to 6:30
Take out Only

SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR NATIVITY WEBINAR ON JANUARY 2-3, 2021

With the blessings of His Grace Irinej, the Bishop of Eastern America SOC, the Department of Christian Education organizes the Webinar titled THE JOY OF NATIVITY for all the faithful people of our Diocese and their families.

Please, join us!

https://easterndiocese.org/news_201221_1

For more information and registration go to: <https://forms.gle/GbVynYTTVSE2UofH9>
