

# ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

A PARISH OF THE DIOCESE OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY

170 Lexington Avenue, Passaic, New Jersey, 07055  
www.stjohnspassaic.org

REV. FR. IGOR KSENIUK, Rector

973-473-1928 (Phone/Fax)  
646-387-5494 (cell)  
fr.igorksn@gmail.com

Department of  
**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**  
ORTHODOX CHURCH in AMERICA

## The Sufferings of Saint Nicholas

**December 6<sup>th</sup> is the feast day of Saint Nicholas, the patron saint of everyone from longshoremen to embalmers, and of places from New York City to Argentina. In fact he is the patron of more occupations, causes, people and places than any other saint we know of.**

The stories of his humility and compassion are well-known. He had no ambition to become a bishop, but accepted the office in obedience. When he saved three marriageable and impoverished girls from disaster by providing money, he planned to do it secretly. There are stories of sailors caught on stormy seas, defenseless peasants wrongly accused of crimes, and countless others in need or in danger who were saved by his intercession. His kindness to children helped them to see Christ in him, so that even if their life circumstances were harsh, they knew a Savior cared for them.

But additional aspects of his life give even more luster to his example. Though he was not a martyr, Saint Nicholas suffered greatly in his life, and had to stand up to powerful forces that could have undermined the Church.

He became a bishop at the beginning of the fourth century and during the reign of Diocletian, a Roman emperor who detested Christianity as an enemy of Rome's glory. Nicholas, having become a publicly visible leader of the Christians, was imprisoned and tortured. The incarceration was not brief, either. Not until Constantine ascended the throne were the Christian prisoners released.

It was not only outward threats that faced the Church during Nicholas' time as bishop. Within the Church the Arian heresy, denying that Christ was truly the Son of God, was widely popular.

## Intercessory Prayers

We pray for all our fellow parishioners, and we pray especially for those who are incapable of being with us in church. Please keep in your prayers our Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Genevieve Bobenko, Michael Bzik, Mary Fechisin, Andrew Fabian, Mary Hadginske, Barbara Kary, Helen Kurnewitz, Kathleen Lazorczyk, Marian Nagel, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Helen Rahnefeld, Anna Rozanovich, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky, Ann Velebir.

Bishop Nicholas had to work against its falsehoods, and defend his people against its influence.

At the Council of Nicaea the threat of Arianism was made physically present. Arius had eloquence enough to make his "reasonable" version of the faith appealing to listeners and did so at the Council, speaking to those in attendance in his intelligent and engaging manner. How painful it must have been for Nicholas to hear this smooth talker distort everything for which Christ had died and risen. His memories of his own imprisonment and that of so many others who would not compromise the faith only added to the pain.

So Saint Nicholas exemplifies more than loving benevolence. He also shares our experience of suffering, and shows how to carry on without flinching from it. The words of Jesus Christ in Luke 21: 12-19, which are read on this day, apply to Nicholas' life: "...they will lay their hands on you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors...some of you will be put to death; you will be hated by all for my name's sake."

But Christ's final words in this passage are the ones Nicholas would encourage us to remember: "By your endurance you will gain your lives."

## Birthday Greetings

Happy birthday to **Greg Cahayla**, who celebrates his birthday this Tuesday, **Effie Stankovci**, and **Georgiana Stankiewicz**, both this Wednesday. May God grant all of you and all who celebrate a birthday this week good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaya Lita!



## Announcements

◆ On the Feast of Nativity of Christ (Monday, December 25) during our traditional Christmas social after the Divine Liturgy, the children of our parish will perform a **Christmas Concert** for all parishioners. If you would like your child to participate in the concert, please see Matushka Anna.

◆ Please note: Vespers for the Feast of St. Nicholas this Tuesday is at **6pm**, not 6:30pm as it is written in The Enlightener.

◆ Now we are in the **Nativity Fast** that will last until December 25 – the Feast of Nativity of Christ. As always, during this fasting time, each member of our parish community is encouraged to prayerfully and spiritually prepare for this joyous celebration. On **Saturday, December 16 at 2PM** there will be an **Akathist** (healing service) to the Mother of God in front of her icon "Queen of All", followed by **Parish Confessions**. Take this opportunity to rejuvenate your spiritual life as we prepare to celebrate the Nativity of Our Lord. And remember that not variety, or quality, or quantity of foods that we prepare for the feast will make our celebration more joyous, but that our souls, cleansed in private Confession and sanctified in Holy Communion will be immensely more joyful when prepared properly.

◆ Annual F.O.C.A. St. Andrew and St. Nicholas Vespers will be served today at St. John the Baptist Church in Little Falls, NJ at 3:00 PM. For more information please see a flyer at the bulletin board.



December 3, 2017

26<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

- **8:45am** – Hours
- **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy  
Epistle: Eph. 5:9-19  
Gospel: Lk. 18:18-27
- **Coffee Hour** – everyone is invited for fellowship following the service

## Schedule of Services

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5**

6:00pm - Great Vespers & Litya

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6 – ST. NICHOLAS**

9:00am - Divine Liturgy

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9**

6:00pm - Great Vespers

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10**

9:00am - Divine Liturgy