

# Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church



## American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese

903 Ann Street

Homestead, PA 15120

Rectory Office Phone: (412) 461-3264

Church Office & Auditorium: (412) 461-9437

Web Site: [www.stnichomestead.org](http://www.stnichomestead.org)

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E-mail Address: [frmzak@gmail.com](mailto:frmzak@gmail.com)

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

Weekday Cantors – Donald Bodnar Jr. & Michele Tomko

Parish Council President: Tom Pingor

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**Sunday, December 18, 2016**

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

Service of the Third Hour: 8:20 A.M.

Divine Liturgy: 9:00 A.M.

Epistle: Ephesians 5:8-19

Tone: 1

Gospel: Luke 17:12-19

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

Holy Day Flowers' Sponsor: **Feast of St. Nicholas the Wonder-Worker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia**, offered by Cheryl & Sue.

Panachida service conducted for the repose of the souls of God's departed servants, the Pastors: **Right Rev. Peter E. Molchany & Protopresbyter Paul Herbert and all the deceased members of St. Nicholas Orthodox Church of Homestead, PA.**

**Saint Nicholas Brunch in the parish auditorium after church services** (Free-will offering in effect). Visit of our Patron Saint Nicholas, offering treat bags of goodies to all the children of the parish.

**7:00 P.M. Vespers on the Feast of St. Nicholas the Wonder-worker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia**, with the Blessing of bread, wheat, wine & oil.

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**Monday, (Dec. 19)...** 9:30 A.M. Divine Liturgy on the Feast Day of Saint Nicholas the Wonder-worker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia.

**Friday, (Dec. 23)...** 9:00 A.M. Divine Liturgy for the repose of the soul of God's departed servant, +Charles Udut, offered by himself.

**Saturday, (Dec. 24)...** 11:00 A.M. – 12 Noon: Hearing of Confessions.

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**Sunday, December 25, 2016**

## 27<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST & SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FORE-FATHERS

Matins: 8:00 A.M.

Divine Liturgy: 9:00

Epistle: Colossians 3:4-11

Tone: 2

Gospel: Luke 14:16-24

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

Panachida service conducted for the repose of the soul of God's departed servant, +**Dolores Zak**, offered by Father Michael & Pani Deborah Zak.

**Luke 17:12-19**

**17:12-14 – Luke 5:12 – Leprosy** was one of the most dreaded diseases of the time. It brought greater physical suffering as well as total banishment and isolation from society. It is also a symbol of our sin.

**Luke 5:14 – Show yourself to the priest:** Christ gives this command in order to convince the priests by a tangible miracle that He is superior to **Moses** (St. Cyril of Alexandria). The priests

hold Moses to be greater than Christ, yet Christ heals a leper immediately and with His own divine authority. However, when Miriam was struck with leprosy, Moses had to seek mercy from above, and still she was only healed after seven days (Numbers 12:10-15).

**17:17-19 – Where are the nine?** Christ came to heal all of fallen humanity, yet only a small portion receive Him in faith and thanksgiving **to give glory to God** (v. 18). Thus, “many are called, but few chosen” (Math. 20:16). The lesson for Orthodox Christians is that worship is the number one priority.

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**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.**

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### **THE MORNING OFFERING by Abbot Tryphon**

### **DARKNESS IS JUST THE ABSENCE OF LIGHT**

Our Orthodox Christian theology views evil not as a primeval essence that is coeternal and equal to God, but rather as a falling away from good. Evil does not exist in and of itself, and God did not create it. Our Orthodox Church rejects the gnostic teaching that the entirety of being is made up of two realms that have forever existed together: the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness.

This darkness does not exist in its own right, but is simply the absence or lack of light. Evil, according to St. Basil the Great, “is not a living and animated substance, but a condition of the soul which is opposed to virtue and which springs up in the slothful because of their falling away from Good. Do not, therefore, contemplate evil from without; and do not imagine some original nature of wickedness, but let each one recognize himself as the first author of the vice that is in him.”

Nothing is greater than God, including evil. Evil results when the free will of God’s creation is directed against God.

This is precisely what happened when the light-bearing morning star (Lucifer) fell away from the Source of goodness and became the evil one, Satan. By imposing his own will, Lucifer found himself in darkness. Since his power is based in falsehood, he can influence us only by convincing us that he is as powerful as God. Yet his power is finite, and good will eventually triumph on the Last Day.

That God would allow evil to exist in the first place is a mystery, for the Scriptures do not explain it. Yet we do know through the Scriptures that true love must express itself in action. And in the face of evil and suffering, a Christian is called to action by loving God and his neighbor. Evil then becomes but a simple practical problem, one the Christian finds ways to alleviate. As Christians, we are charged with bringing God’s love and goodness into the world by our actions.

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**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>**

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### **SAINT NICHOLAS**

One of the responses from the service for St. Nicholas shows precisely where the worth and originality of St. Nicholas lie: “Your practical virtues, O Father clothed by God, have made the beauty of your priestly robes shine with yet greater splendor.” These lines say all, and put it perfectly. He is the ideal type of ‘hierarchy’ who would not only be a bishop or a doctor, but who would also be actively involved in the secular world, doing good there. He wears “priestly robes,” but on him, these “shine with yet

greater splendor" than on so many others, because he combined them with "practical virtues." The stories attached to the name of St. Nicholas always present him as engaged in bringing help to some urgent case of human distress. This "saintly life" expresses an idea of charity. It is what the chants of the service for the saint repeat several times: "Called upon from all sides, you did hasten to help those who sought the shelter of your protection... appearing to them in faith by day and by night, saving them in their destitution and trials... Who, seeing your infinite humility, would not marvel at your patience and at your joyous mercy towards the poor and your compassion towards the afflicted...?" Today, still, crowds of Orthodox willingly shelter under the patronage of St. Nicholas who is a healer of the sick, the liberator of captives, the treasure of the poor, consoler of the afflicted and the guide of travelers. He is a living symbol of the Saviour's mercy and love towards men. For, in the final analysis, it is to Jesus Himself, that the popular devotion accorded to St. Nicholas reaches. May this feast bring us a message of "practical Christianity" and of hope in divine goodness!

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**PLACE YOUR ORDER FOR THE HOLIDAY SWEETS!** We are making "fruit-filled puff pastry stars" with apricot or cherry filling. Place your order with Cheryl, Miki or Jean.

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**TO ACCOMMODATE ALL OF OUR WORSHIPERS, A CONSIDERATE LAY PERSON HAS DONATED THE CHAIR-LIFT FOR GOD'S HOUSE OF PRAYER!**

We are so pleased as a parish to have an anonymous donor contribute \$10,000. toward the installation of a chair-lift to enable faithful members experiencing difficulty in walking up and down the stairs of church to use this means of transportation. We are extremely grateful for the generosity manifested by this charitable person(s) and pray that the Lord grant these "People of God" with "every good and perfect gift from above." The chair-lift still has to be serviced and shall be operative in a very short period of time.

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**PARTAKE OF THE SCRUMPTIOUS ST. NICHOLAS DAY BRUNCH THAT WE ALL WILL ENJOY THIS MORNING FOLLOWING THE DIVINE LITURGY!**

An appetizing repast is being planned that will feature sausage patties, French-toast casserole, applesauce, fruits and hot & cold beverages. A free-will offering shall be in effect and we kindly ask all faithful to sign their names on the paper downstairs if they plan to partake of this wonderful meal. We are anticipating the visit of a special guest, Saint Nicholas the Wonder-worker and Bishop of Myra who will charitably favor our children of the church with bags of candies and other goodies. Thus, it important that all of our young people are brought to church services today, dine in the hall and welcome our Patron Saint to Homestead and receive his personal blessing as well.

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**YOUR ASSISTANCE IS SOUGHT!** Christ the Saviour Seminary is in need of a vehicle. The inquiry is made within our congregation if there is a parishioner willing to make a donation of a reliable used vehicle – any make, any year, preferably an SUV if possible, or an all-wheel drive vehicle that is necessary for the Johnstown area. The Seminary community is grateful for your attention to this matter. Sincerely, Protopresbyter Frank P. Miloro.

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**COME AND SEE WHAT'S NEW AT THE BOOKSTORE...** All occasions and Nativity cards, children's books and gifts, icons, jewelry, nesting dolls, books and more! Special orders can be made with a nominal deposit... Reserve a couple of the newly published **Keeping the Feasts at Home: In the Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Tradition**. The book is a spiritual and educational full-color reference for all to share the faith and traditions of our Diocese... Toddler Toy Box... for infants and toddlers too young for Sunday School. Please donate gently used infant/toddler toys to the bookstore. The toys will be available during Coffee Social/Sunday School.

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**GIVE TO THE ICON FUND, TODAY!** We humbly seek the monetary gifts of additional faithful members to finance the additional artwork, such the Christian symbols, Scriptural verses, and crosses in the nave.

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**ST. NICHOLAS MEDOVNIKI COOKIE SALE!** St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, 903 Ann Street, Homestead, PA 15120. Senior A.C.R.Y. Chapter #11. \$2.00 each; \$10.00/half dozen. Cookies will be individually wrapped with a special treat from St. Nicholas himself! Please contact Aaron Zak with orders: [aaronzak@gmail.com](mailto:aaronzak@gmail.com) or 724-910-9719. Pre-orders should be placed by Friday, December 9<sup>th</sup>. Cookies will be available for pickup starting Saturday, December 17<sup>th</sup>.

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**THE YEAR IS COMING TO AN END, SOON; ARE YOU CHURCH DUES FOR 2016 PAID IN FULL?**

Less than a month remains in this present calendar year. Are your financial obligations to the parish still incomplete? If you have any questions regarding this matter, speak with Susan Semancik or Cheryl Tomko.

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**YOU MAY WISH TO GET IN CONTACT WITH THIS GODLY WOMAN!** The current address of Olga Grimes is: 14500 N. Frank Lloyd Wright Blvd., Apt. 256, Scottsdale, Arizona 85260. She would appreciate a call as well. Her cell phone number is: 412-512-0747.

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