

# Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church



Vol. 4, No. 52

## 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)

E-mail Address: [stnic@stnichomestead.org](mailto:stnic@stnichomestead.org)

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

**Sunday, December 25, 2016**

## 27<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST & SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FOREFATHERS

Matins: 8:00 A.M.

Divine Liturgy: 9:00 A.M.

Epistle: Colossians 3:4-11

Tone: 2

Gospel: Luke 14:16-24

Tropar & Kondak: Blue Book: 84-86; 128 / Red Book: 99-102; 145-146

Birthday prayers are extended to: **Michele Fedornock** (Dec. 25), offered by the Family.

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

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**Thursday, (Dec. 29)...** 9:00 A.M. Divine Liturgy for the repose of the soul of God's departed servant, **+Libbie & +Michael Bachofsky**, offered by the Family.

**Saturday, (Dec. 31)...** 11:00 A.M. – 12 Noon: Hearing of Confessions.

7:00 P.M. Vespers.

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**Sunday, January 1, 2017**

## 28<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST & SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY; OF THE GENEALOGY

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

Divine Liturgy: 9:00

Epistle: Hebrews 11:9-10; 17-23; 32-40

Tone: 3

Gospel: Matthew 1:1-25

Tropar & Kondak: Blue Book: 87-89; 129-130 / Red Book: 102-105; 146-148

Panachida service conducted for the repose of the soul of God's departed servant, **+Anna Marie Popovich**, Mother, on the 13<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of her falling asleep in the Lord (Jan. 1), offered by Son, Albert.

### Luke 14:16-24

**14:16, 17** – This parable operates on two levels, illustrating both the first and second coming of Christ, who is the **servant** sent to gather many. **Supper** indicates evening, the end of the age. The people **invited** are first the Jews, then all mankind.

**14:18-20** – The Fathers see the three **excuses** as having both a literal meaning, that many are too attached to worldly cares to accept the Kingdom of God (v. 26; 18:29), and spiritual meanings. St. Ambrose sees the three excuses of **I cannot come** representing the Gentile, the Jew, and the heretic. The Gentile's devotion to earthly wealth is represented by the **piece of ground**, the Jew's enslavement to the five books of the Law by the **five yoke of oxen**, and the heretic's espousal of error by the man refusing on account of his **wife**. Saint Theophylact more generally associates the excuses with people devoted to earthly matters, to things pertaining to the five senses, and to all pleasures of the flesh.

**14:21-23** – Those in the **streets and lanes** indicate (1) the Gentiles who accepted Christ after the faithless Jews rejected Him, and (2) those outside the Church replacing those within who have rejected their own baptism.

**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 GRATEFULNESS MAKES US HAPPY**

We all know that money can't buy happiness. And many gifts on Christmas Day can't bring happiness either. But do we know that practicing simple gratitude brings about happiness? Researchers testing gratefulness have discovered that it actually changes the brain and makes us happier. But gratitude changes more than brain chemistry, for it makes us better and kinder to others.

If we practice being thankful for the compliments we receive from our friends – for those dinners they treat us to, for the gifts they give us, or for just being there when we need them – we find that our gratitude brings about more friendships, for others are drawn to us.

Dr. Robert A. Emmons conducted a study on gratitude at the University of California at Davis that showed measurable benefits on the psychological, physical, and interpersonal health of subjects who practiced gratitude. He wrote, "Evidence of gratitude contradicts the widely held view that all people have a 'set-point' of happiness that cannot be reset by any known means." This simply means that if we practice gratitude, we can be happier than we've ever thought possible.

Gratitude is an affirmation of goodness; we affirm that there are good things and good people in the world. Being grateful does not mean that everything in life is perfect, but that we look at life as a whole and receive with gratitude all of the goodness in it. In turn, our gratitude becomes the foundation for building up those around us, for in being happy ourselves, we are more likely to bring about happiness in others. Being happy nurtures random acts of kindness and promotes goodness and kindness even among strangers. People loves it when other people are good to random people.

There is nothing that brings about satisfaction like being grateful for our lives, for the lives of those around us, for the things in our lives, and for the love God has for us. Remember, it is not happiness that makes us grateful, but gratefulness that makes us happy.

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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/acroddioocese> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/acrodnews> You Tube: <https://youtube.com/acroddioocese>**

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### **THE HOLY FORE-FATHERS OF THE LORD**

The "Fore-Fathers" or "Ancestors" are the Patriarchs and the Prophets of the Old Covenant, from Adam to John the Baptist. The Church sings: "Let us rejoice together, we who are friends of the Fathers, in commemorating their memory..." One wonders whether these words correspond to any genuine feeling on the part of the majority of believers. Many among us have lost touch with the Old Testament, and neither read nor understand it, and so do not take into account that Jesus Christ is present, though veiled, in all the events and all the texts of Hebrew Scripture. All is centered on Him. Many do not recognize in Abel the first martyr, and the prototype of the Good Shepherd as well as the Sacrificer; in Melchisedek the type of the eternal priest; in Abraham the spirit of faith and the type of the Father; in Isaac the spirit of sonship and of sacrifice, in Jacob free election, patient service and conversion; in Joseph the great features of the Passion and of Christ's redemptive work. They forget that through the reading of

the Prophets the voice of Jesus Himself speaks to our heart. They are not really "friends of the Fathers" and they do not delight in remembering them. Let us ask our Lord on this Second Sunday before the Nativity of Christ, to open our understanding to the message of the Old Covenant and to teach us, as Jesus taught the disciples on the road to Emmaus: "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken;... And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, He expounded to them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself."

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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 is operative and shall be inspected within a short period of time.

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**YOUR KINDNESS IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!** May God bless all of the people for the beautiful cards, phone calls, gifts and especially your prayers, for not only our 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary, but for all of your support in the passing of my husband. Thank you Fr. Michael for visiting my husband. May God bless all of you with good health and happiness. Thank you, Mary Lou Lenart.

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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 as 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 are 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. You can purchase these scrumptious honey pastries in the church hall this morning. See Pani Deborah Zak or any of the Senior ACRY members and secure a good supply of these wonderful Nativity treats for your family, friends and co-workers. They'll appreciate your charitable action in imitation of the holy and beloved hierarch and wonder-worker!

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**THE YEAR IS COMING TO AN END; ARE YOU CHURCH DUES FOR 2016 PAID IN FULL?** Just one week 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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**GRATEFUL FOR THIS CHRISTMAS LITURGICAL DONATION!** St. Nicholas Church is appreciative of the kind and considerate action of Diane Lacock, who, once again, is offering the Nativity candle for the Feast of the Incarnation on Jan. 7<sup>th</sup>. The thick wax taper is given in memory of +Edward & +Dolores Pingor and +Wendy Pingor, offered by the Family. We pray that their memory be eternal in the mind of Almighty God, and thank Diane for this appropriate gift to the church!

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**PREPARE YOURSELF FOR THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST BY CONFESSING YOUR SINS IN Church!**

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