

ST. NICHOLAS NEWS

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ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH

505 Jefferson Avenue, Scranton, Pa. 18510

Fr. Nicholas Ferencz, Ph.D., pastor
Rectory: 570-344-5917
Cell: 724-953-6046

Hall - 570-344-1522
www.stnicholasorthodoxscranton.org
nferencz35@gmail.com

February 10, 2013

36TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

PARISH CALENDAR HI-LITES

Please see monthly calendar for all events

Sun., Feb. 10 19th Sunday of Luke. Monks Ephraim & Isaac.

9:30 Divine Liturgy – Tone 3 pp. 87–89

Church School - Elementary

Men's Club meets

THREE HOLY BISHOPS BASIL, JOHN & GREGORY.

Tue., Feb. 12 9 AM Divine Liturgy

ENCOUNTER OF OUR LORD

WITH SIMEON IN THE TEMPLE

Thu., Feb. 14 5 PM Great Vespers with Litija

Fri., Feb. 15 9 AM Divine Liturgy & Blessing of Candles.

Sat., Feb. 16 Synaxis of the Holy Prophets Simeon & Anna

5 PM Vespers

Sun., Feb. 17 Sunday of Zacchaeus

9:30 Divine Liturgy - Tone 4, pp. 90-93.

Parish Board Meeting

FEASTS & FASTS

In February there are two Feasts: Three Holy Hierarchs (Jan.30/February 12) & *The Encounter of Our Lord with Simeon in the Temple* (Feb. 2/Feb.15). Services will be as scheduled.

Fasting: The week after the Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee is a *No Fast* week. Please check calendar.

PEOPLE STUFF

Please remember in your prayers:

Living: Stephanie Bonk. Gloria Bracey. Jennifer Collins. Susan Danchak. Louis & Terri DiMichele. Michael Danchak. Michael Hrywnak. John & Jen Hrywnak. Gary Joyce. Lorraine Kacaba. Dee Lositski. Peggy Majcher. Emma Sacco. Amy Shimo. Connie Lou Slater. Jeff Thomas. Ann Marie Tigue. Gary Wassel. Julia Worobey.

At Home: Michael Andreosky. Elizabeth Basalyga. Steve & Julie Roberts. George & Anna Senich. Kathryn Stocoski.

In Assisted Living Homes: Kathryn Derenick. Julie Kovacs. Irene Munchak. Julie Soares.

Altar Vigil Candle: Special Intention - Anonymous

YOUR GIFTS TO GOD AND HIS CHURCH

February 3, 2012

\$ 495.00	General Collection
\$ 70.00	1 st Sunday
\$ 70.00	7 Day Lights
\$ 270.00	Church Dues
\$ 7.00	Eternal Light
\$ 912.00	Total Collection

PARISH EVENTS

Men's Club meets today.

Parish Board meets next Sunday.

Church School - Elementary meets today.

SPECIAL 75TH ANNIVERSARY REQUEST

TO ALL PARISHIONERS:

Part of the meeting held last Sunday to kick off the planning for the parish 75th anniversary was spent discussing the banquet plans: venue, type of meal, etc. At that meeting it was realized that many of the plans depend upon the size of the crowd we may be able to anticipate - i.e., as in "Will we have 50 or 500 people coming? So, what we are asking is that all parishioners help us out trying to estimate how many people might be coming to the event.

What we know so far: The Parish 75th Anniversary will be held on Sunday, October 27, 2013. We will celebrate the Divine Liturgy and then some kind of banquet event.

What we need to know: Approximately how many people might be coming.

SO, we are asking all of you to let us know if you are considering being a part of this major event in the life of the parish. This is *not* a commitment – we just need to know if you are thinking about coming, and how many of you there might be. Please include not only your immediate family, but also find out from your extended family who no longer live around here – kids, grandkids, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc., etc. if *they* might be considering attending.

If you absolutely know that you will not be able to participate on October 27, because of another event already planned – wedding, etc., please let us know that also, and let us know how many in your family would be affected by the date conflict.

Please get your information about how many are thinking about coming to the anniversary to

Nick & Maryann Polanichka: 570-563-2325, or by email: marnickpol@frontier.com.

The sooner we get this information, the better we will be able to plan, so please let us know as soon as you can! Thanks for your help and let's try to make this 7th anniversary a memorable event!

Altar Society News - Here are some of the upcoming events being planned:

- PRE-LENTEN BREAKFAST – Sunday, March 3, after Liturgy. *Menu:* scrambled eggs & sausage, potato, fruit, Danish & rolls, coffee/tea & juice. \$7.00/adult. Everyone is welcome! Sponsored by both the Altar Society and the Men's Club.
- Looking Ahead! The Society is planning a RUMMAGE SALE/ETHNIC DINNER in May. They are asking that you all start saving up your spring cleaning stuff that you wish to donate. Clothes must be clean and in slightly used condition and they are seeking larger sizes. Other household items in good condition are accepted.

ALSO DOWN THE ROAD

(BUT NOT TOO FAR)

Lenten Deanery Missions. I received the following letter from Fr. Mark and am passing it along to you all I could have re-explained it in my own words, but I thought Fr. Mark did a pretty good job of that, so I am just a-cuttin' & a-pastin':

February 6, 2013

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Dear Fathers:

With the Lenten Season quickly approaching, please prepare accordingly for the 2013 Mission schedule. Note that all Missions will be on Sunday. Also note that there will be no Mission at St. Nicholas Church in Lansford this year. We simply can't fit it in.

In addition, please be aware that His Grace Bishop Gregory will be celebrating Orthodox Sunday Vespers at St. John's Church in Perth Amboy. The invitation to participate has been extended to our Deanery. We should all encourage our faithful and personally make every effort to attend.

Schedule:

March 24 - Orthodox Vespers - St. John's Church, Perth Amboy, NJ – 4:00 p.m.

Scranton: Sunday, March 31 – Vespers @ 3:00 p.m. (Fr. Bob Preaching)

Dickson City: Sunday, April 7 - Moleben to the Cross

@ 3:00 p.m. – (Fr. Larry Preaching)

Freeland: Sunday, April 14 – Paraklis @ 3:00 p.m.
(Fr. Ron Preaching)

Nesquehoning: Sunday, April 21 – Vespers @ 3:00
p.m. (Fr. Deacon Ted Preaching)

Taylor: Sunday, April 28 – Confessions @ 2, Vespers
@ 3:00 p.m. (Fr. Nik Preaching)

I look forward to seeing everyone on March 24.

In Christ,

Protopresbyter Mark Leasure

Dean, Pocono Deanery

3rd Annual International Children's Classic Golf Tournament: St. Michael's in Binghamton will again be the host of the Third Annual International Children's Classic Golf tournament. The event will take place at the Endwell Greens Golf Course on Saturday, May 18th, with the shotgun tee-off at 12 noon. A dinner and awards presentations will follow.

All proceeds of the event benefit needy youngsters at the St. Nicholas Children's Home in Medzilaborce, the Holy Cross Orphanage in Uzghorod, and the Children's Wing of the Uzghorod Regional Hospital in Uzghorod, Ukraine.

There is a poster in the hall with all the details. Also, please feel free to contact Dr. Nicholas Seketa, chairperson of the event, if you have any questions. You can reach him by e-mail at NFSeketa@gmail.com or by phone at (607) 729-0261.

A HISTORY OF FASTING, Part One

By The Very Rev. Protopresbyter Lawrence Barriger
And Jesus said unto them, "Can the children of the bride chamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast." (Matthew 9:15)

In the Orthodox Tradition fasting is seen as a vital part of the spiritual life of the individual and the Church, not only because of its practice in the Old Testament but most importantly because our Lord Himself combined fasting and prayer in His earthly life. At the beginning of His ministry, immediately after His Baptism, He retreated into the wilderness

where we read: "And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward hungry."

Who can forget his instruction to the Apostles in the case of the epileptic boy whose demon the Apostles could not cast out? "This kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting." (Matthew 17:21) The Lord Himself gave instructions for fasting: "But you, when you fast, anoint your head, and wash your face; That you appear not unto men to fast, but unto your Father which is in secret. Matthew." (6:17-18)

The Apostles themselves kept in the Church the Lord's example and mandate on fasting. As an example in the Acts of the Apostles we read:

As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. (Acts 13:2,3)

The familiar fast days of Wednesdays and Fridays date back to Apostolic times. The first century document called the *Didache*, more commonly known in English as *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* instructs the faithful: "Your fasts must not be identical with those of the hypocrites. They fast on Mondays and Thursdays; but you should fast on Wednesdays and Fridays." (Didache 8:1) The Jews fasted on Monday and Thursday; the followers of Christ were to fast on Wednesday – the day when Christ was betrayed - and Friday – the day of His Crucifixion.

The fasting referred to here was not simply an abstention from meat or dairy products - it was a complete abstention from both food and drink until sundown. This type of fasting was preserved in the Church on the Wednesdays and Fridays of Lent, which called for a complete fast from food and drink until the reception of Holy Communion at the evening Presanctified Liturgy. (In the modern practice a light Lenten meal early in the day is generally observed).

In the centuries following the time of the *Didache* the Feast of the Resurrection of the Lord - Pascha - was observed with at first a forty hour fast, then a week long fast and then a forty day fast - known to us as Great Lent. This forty-day fast was generally well established in the fourth century but was observed differently in different places. The remarks of the Church Historian Socrates Scholasticus demonstrate the wide variety of fasting that was observed in the

Early Church during the Lenten Season. After pointing out that different places reckoned the forty-day fast by differing methods he goes on to talk about the fasting practices observed:

One can see also a disagreement about the manner of abstinence from food, as well as about the number of days: Some wholly abstain from things that have life: others feed on fish only of all living creatures: many together with fish, eat fowl also, saying that according to Moses, these were likewise made out of the waters. Some abstain from eggs, and all kinds of fruits: others partake of dry bread only; still others eat not even this: while others having fasted till the ninth hour, afterwards take any sort of food without distinction. And among various nations there are other usages, for which innumerable reasons are assigned. Since however no one can produce a written command as an authority, it is evident that the apostles left each one to his own free will in the matter, to the end that each might perform what is good not by constraint or necessity. Such is the difference in the churches on the subject of fasts. (Ecclesiastical History Book V:12)

In examining the practices listed here we have already mentioned the fast "until the ninth hour" (three P.M.) which survived in the Church in the liturgical fast for the Presanctified Liturgy. (The Muslims observe the fast of Ramadan in the same way - eating or drinking nothing while the sun is up - Mohammed undoubtedly copied either a Christian or Jewish fasting practice that he was familiar with). At this time it should be pointed out that most people in the ancient world - at least in the Roman Empire - existed primarily on bread and vegetables. Fish and shellfish were common in coastal areas but meat generally was eaten only by the wealthy on a regular basis because of its cost. In the ancient world there was no means of refrigeration and meat was normally kept "on the hoof" until it was to be consumed.

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