

ST. NICHOLAS NEWS

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ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH

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December 1, 2013

9th Sunday of Luke. 22st Sunday after Pentecost.

PARISH CALENDAR

Sun., Dec. 1 9th Sunday of Luke. 22st Sunday after Pentecost. Martyrs Plato & Roman.

8:45 – 9:15 AM Confessions

9:30 AM Divine Liturgy - Tone 6, p. 96–98.

Altar Society meets.

Pirohi Sale this week: See monthly Calendar.

ENTRANCE OF HOLY MARY THEOTOKOS
INTO THE TEMPLE

Tue., Dec. 3 7 PM Great Vespers

Wed., Dec. 4 9 AM Divine Liturgy

Pirohi Prep Before & After Liturgy

Thu., Dec. 5 Apostle Philemon

8 AM Pirohi making

Fri., Dec. 6 Bps. Amphilochios & Gregory

9:30 AM – 4:30 PM Pirohi Sale

Sun., Dec. 8 10th Sunday of Luke. 24nd of Pentecost.
Last Day of Feast of Entrance

8:45 – 9:15 AM Confessions

9:30 AM Divine Liturgy - Special Sheets

Church School - All Church School Classes

Men's Club Meets

FEASTS AND FASTS

Filipovka (Philip's Fast, or Christmas Lent) begins on Thursday, Nov. 28 civil calendar (Nov. 15 Julian) and goes until Christmas Eve, January 6 civil (Dec. 24 Julian). It is called Philip's Fast because it begins the day after the Feast of St. Philip the Apostle on Nov. 14/27. The **Traditional Fast** requires: (a) Strict Fast (no meat, dairy, and in some places no wine or oil) on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays; (b) no meat on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The MINIMUM Diocesan Rule is no meat on Wednesdays and Fridays.

Christmas Eve is a DAY OF STRICT FAST in preparation for the celebration of the Birth of Our Lord. No dispensation has been granted from fasting on Dec. 24, 25, or Jan. 1 (civil calendar).

All are reminded that fasting from food goes hand-in-hand with fasting from sin. This is why the traditional directive to receive the Holy Mystery of Confession is given during the Christmas Fast period. During the Christmas Fast, Confessions are scheduled for Sunday morning 8:45 – 9:15.

Also, almsgiving (giving to the poor and needy) is the flip side of the coin of fasting. Our hands are supposed to move away from stuffing our own faces in order to give out to others who are in need. The parish will be providing opportunities for parishioners

to do so this Christmas Fast.

Entrance of Holy Mary Theotokos Into the Temple. Wed., Dec. 4. Services as scheduled.

PEOPLE STUFF

Please remember in your prayers:

Living: Stephanie Bonk. Gloria Bracey. Mary Chupron. Susan Danchak. Michael Danchak. Jada Eiden. Robert & Eddie Hawley. Lorraine Kacaba. Anna Mae Kuklis. Dee Lositski. Peggy Majcher. Emma Sacco. Amy Shimo. Connie Lou Slater. Faye Snell. Marion Sosnowski. Jeff Thomas. Ann Marie Tigue. Gary Wassel. Michael Wassel. Julia Worobey.

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

In Assisted Living Homes: Julie Kovacs.

YOUR GIFTS TO GOD AND HIS CHURCH

November 24, 2013

\$ 534.00	General Collection
\$ 19.00	Holy Days
\$ 25.00	Donation
\$ 91.00	7 Day Lights
\$ 25.00	Maintenance & Repairs
\$ 10.00	Tapers
\$ 1640.00	Pirohi
\$ 338.00	Heat Offering
\$ 158.00	Food Pantry Collection
\$ 2838.00	Total Collection

PARISH STUFF

2014 Church Calendars: Are now available in the Church Hall. Please pick up yours today.

2014 Contribution Envelopes are now available in the hall. Please pick yours up as soon as you can.

Parish Board update – open seats. As you all know by now, the *Board President's seat* will be vacated as of January 1, since Bill Thomas decided to retire and no one was willing to accept a nomination for that seat at the annual Parish Meeting.

Before the Parish Board meeting in November, Walter Orzolek resigned as *Board Vice-President*,

and Millie Orzolek resigned as *Trustee*. Both resignations were effective immediately.

So, there are two board seats which are open as of right now.

The Board has asked that eligible members of the parish consider stepping up and volunteering to fill any or all of these three seats (one per person, please). If there are more than one candidate for each position, you will be informed of the proper manner of choosing between them.

Perhaps you have considered being on the Board in the past, but did not have the time right then, or needed to put your efforts in other directions. Perhaps you have never considered the possibility of being on the Parish Board. Maybe you thought that the parish would not want you on the board, or you don't have the right skills or ability to fill a seat on the Board. Maybe you have an entire 8 ½ by 11 sheet of paper filled with reasons and excuses to not put out the effort to be on the board. Maybe you've always dreamed of being on the Parish Board, but never had the chance.

Well, this is your golden opportunity! You are being asked to step up and help carry the responsibility of leading this parish. Consider it, pray about it, think about it.

If anyone is interested in possibly, maybe, perhaps almost considering dipping their toe into parish leadership waters, you may want to discuss the duties of each of the positions that are now open with those who have held them.

Those who decide to volunteer to fill a board seat are asked to speak to Bill Thomas (before Dec. 31, while he is still Board President), or Fr. Nik, who will convey your wishes to the Board.

Church School meets next Sunday, Dec. 8. All classes will meet.

Altar Society meets today.

Men's Club meets next Sunday, Dec. 8.

Pirohi Sales: There are 3 – three – Pirohi Sales this month: this week and the following 2 weeks. The making schedule needs to be adjusted because of upcoming Holy Days, so *please check the monthly calendar for days and times.*

This week Pirohi Prep will still be on Wednesday,

but they will start around 6 AM, break for Divine Liturgy, and then finish after the Liturgy.

Photos Being Returned: Last call for photos. A number of people lent photos of the parish for the 75th Anniversary CD. Please pick up your photos at the Board office in the hall. Thanks for your help with that project! If you don't pick yours up now, they will still be available. I just won't be reminding you.

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UPDATE ON THANKSGIVING FOOD DRIVE

On Monday 12 boxes and 3 brown grocery bags filled with groceries as well as a check in the amount of \$156.00 were delivered to Sandra Rogers, Executive Director of Bread Basket of Northeastern Pennsylvania, 550 Madison Avenue. She was overwhelmed with our generosity and stated with the funding cuts, their supplies are rapidly being depleted. Only through the generosity of individuals could the organization continue to carry on their mission "to feed on a weekly basis the hungry and malnourished of Lackawanna County." Thank you for your generosity.

CHRISTMAS FOOD DRIVE

We are beginning to collect non-perishable food items for our Christmas Food Drive. You can begin to bring in Canned Goods, etc., anytime between now and Dec. 22. More info coming.

Please pray for guidance for yourself and for all of us in the matter. And, while you are praying, put some food in a big bag to bring to Church on Sunday.

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Christmas Mitten Tree: This time of year folks are not only hungry, they are cold, so . . .

A gift giving tree for needy children is being set up in the hall. We are asking for donations of *Mittens, Gloves, Hats and Scarves* for those kids in need in our area. Just bring them and pin them on the tree. Thanks and God bless for your donations!

Church School Classes the Fall Semester:

- Dec. 8: All Classes, Elementary & Hi School .
- Dec. 22: Elementary & Middle School classes.

We are still looking for a kindergarten teacher.

Adult Enrichment Gatherings: The next AEG will

be this Wednesday, Dec. 4, at 6 PM. Back to Liturgy. All are welcome to attend. Each session is independent, so don't feel that you missed too much to start coming now.

St. Nicholas Dinner Coming Up! The annual St. Nicholas Dinner will be held on Sunday, December 15, after the Divine Liturgy.

Christmas Cookie Walk!

- Friday December 20st
- 9:30 A.M. until Sold Out
- We are asking for donations of assorted cookies, breads, cakes, cupcakes, sugar free items...whatever your specialty is!
- FANCY CHRISTMAS COOKIES AND GOODIES ARE WHAT SELL THE BEST! Think Christmas Party style cookies!
- It will help a lot if we know what you are bringing. Please let Carol Pugh know, or sign up in the hall.
- **Parish Has Freezer Space** Bring your stuff on Sundays, or call to get the hall opened for you.
- Please bring your bring baked goods by Thursday December 19th.

FROM THE DIOCESE & OTHER STUFF

Crisis in Syria: A Presentation by the IOCC at the University of Scranton Monday, Dec. 2: Roy Azar is a Syria Relief Coordinator for International Orthodox Christian Charities. He will be speaking here at the University on Monday, Dec. 2 (7:30pm) on IOCC's work in Syria. The presentation will be at the Weinberg Memorial Library, Room 305. All are welcome to attend. Refreshments are provided. No Admission fee, no reservations necessary.

Christmas With You -featuring Nicole Rasmus with Special Guests The Paramounts. St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church Center, 320 Mifflin Ave., Scranton, Pa. 18503, December 6, 2013. Doors open at 5:00pm. Full Course Buffet at 6:00pm, Cash Bar. Performance 8-11pm. Tickets \$35.00. Call 570-299-5655 or 800-830-7463. Tickets are also available at Plotkin Red Wing Shoes, 219-221 Linden St. Scranton, Pa. *Portion of proceeds will benefit Homeless Veterans Housing at St. Francis Commons and U.S. Marines Toys for Tots.*

Christmas Bazaar: St. Thomas More is holding a Christmas Bazaar on Saturday, December 14, 2013, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at St. Joseph Church Hall, 1625 N. Main Ave., Scranton, PA 18508.

Christmas crafts, gifts, ornaments and baked goods, Silent Auction with numerous gift baskets.

Vendors needed. For more information please contact Sandra Campbell c/o St. Thomas More Parish Office 570-343-0634, contact@stmscranton.org.

International Dinner Club Presents "**A Taste of Christmas**" on Thursday, December 12, 2013 at St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church Parish Center, 320 Mifflin Ave., Scranton, Pa. 18503. The menu is being prepared by Chef Joe Lomeo and will start with Irish Soda Bread and a Cranberry Salad with mixed greens tossed with walnuts, pears and dried cranberries with a shallot vinaigrette. Then there be a roasted Beef Tenderloin with a red wine glaze, Brussels Sprouts roasted with chestnuts and smoked bacon and Roasted Potatoes with thyme and rosemary. The desert will be a Chocolate Peppermint Cake. For more information, ticket prices, etc., call 570.343.5151.

ENTRANCE OF HOLY MARY THEOTOKOS INTO THE TEMPLE

November 21/December 4

From the Menologion

According to Holy Tradition, the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple took place in the following manner. The parents of the Virgin Mary, Ss Joachim and Anna, praying for an end to their childlessness, vowed that if a child were born to them, they would dedicate it to the service of God.

When the Most Holy Virgin reached the age of three, the holy parents decided to fulfill their vow. They gathered together their relatives and acquaintances, and dressed the All-Pure Virgin in Her finest clothes. Singing sacred songs and with lighted candles in their hands, virgins escorted Her to the Temple (Ps. 44/45:14-15). There the High Priest and several priests met the handmaiden of God. In the Temple, fifteen high steps led to the sanctuary, which only the priests and High Priest could enter. (Because they recited a Psalm on each step, Psalms 119/120-133/134 are called "Psalms of Ascent.") The child Mary, so it

seemed, could not make it up this stairway. But just as they placed Her on the first step, strengthened by the power of God, She quickly went up the remaining steps and ascended to the highest one. Then the High Priest, through inspiration from above, led the Most Holy Virgin into the Holy of Holies, where only the High Priest entered once a year to offer a purifying sacrifice of blood. Therefore, all those present in the Temple were astonished at this most unusual occurrence.

After entrusting their child to the Heavenly Father, Joachim and Anna returned home. The All-Holy Virgin remained in the quarters for virgins near the Temple. According to the testimony of Holy Scripture (Exodus 38; 1 Kings 1: 28; Luke 2: 37), and also the historian Josephus Flavius, there were many living quarters around the Temple, in which those who were dedicated to the service of God dwelt.

The earthly life of the Most Holy Theotokos from Her infancy until She was taken up to Heaven is shrouded in deep mystery. Her life at the Jerusalem Temple was also a secret. "If anyone were to ask me," said St Jerome, "how the Most Holy Virgin spent the time of Her youth, I would answer that that is known to God Himself and the Archangel Gabriel, Her constant guardian."

But there are accounts in Church Tradition, that during the All-Pure Virgin's stay at the Temple, She grew up in a community of pious virgins, diligently read the Holy Scripture, occupied Herself with handicrafts, prayed constantly, and grew in love for God. From ancient times, the Church has celebrated the Feast of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple. Indications that the Feast was observed in the first centuries of Christianity are found in the traditions of Palestinian Christians, which say that the holy Empress Helen (May 21) built a church in honor of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple.

St Gregory of Nyssa, in the fourth century, also mentions this Feast. In the eighth century Ss Germanus and Tarasius, Patriarchs of Constantinople, delivered sermons on the Feast of the Entry.

The Feast of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple foretells God's blessing for the human race, the preaching of salvation, the promise of the coming of Christ.