

# ST. NICHOLAS NEWS

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## ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH

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February 15, 2015

ENCOUNTER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST WITH SIMEON IN THE TEMPLE

MEAT-FARE SUNDAY

### PARISH CALENDAR

SUN., FEB. 15 ENCOUNTER OF OUR LORD JESUS  
CHRIST WITH SIMEON IN THE TEMPLE.  
MEAT-FARE SUNDAY.

8:45 – 9:15 AM Confessions

9:30 AM Divine Liturgy & Blessing of Candles  
– Special Sheets

Panachida: Mary Chupron - 40 day  
remembrance.

*Parish Board Meets*

Wed., Feb. 18 Martyr Agatha

*7:30 AM Pirohi Prep*

Thu., Feb. 19 Virgin-martyr Dorothy

*8:00 AM Pirohi Making*

Fri., Feb. 20 Bishop Parthenius

*10 AM – 4 PM Pirohi Sale*

Sun., Feb. 22 *Cheese-fare Sunday, or, the Sunday of  
Forgiveness.* Last Day of the Feast of  
the Encounter. Martyr Nichephoros.

8:45 – 9:15 AM Confessions

9:30 AM Divine Liturgy – Special Sheets

*Social Hour - about ½ hour*

*Church School Meets*

*Forgiveness Vespers*

*Confessions*

**Confessions:** from about 45 minutes before any  
Divine Liturgy until about 15 minutes before.

### FEASTS . . . & FASTS

**Encounter of Our Lord with Simeon in the Temple**  
is next Sunday. It will be celebrated together with  
Meat-Fare Sunday. On this day it is customary in  
many places to bless candles as a remembrance of the  
Prophet Simeon's declaration of Our Lord as the Light  
of the World.

*Meat-Fare Sunday:* In the traditional Fast of the  
Church, today is the last day to eat meat until Pascha  
(hence, "Farewell to Meat" Sunday). This was  
intended to be a way to ease into the stricter fast of the  
Great Lent. Diocesan regulations only require the  
usual Wednesday/Friday abstinence from meat.

### THE LENTEN FAST

Below is an expanded explanation of fasting, which  
includes both the Diocesan Regulations and more  
traditional fasting guidelines for all of Lent. *Please  
note: The "traditional rules" regarding fasting  
published here have been very simplified from the*

*actual rules.*

**CLEAN WEEK (FEB. 23 – FEB. 28):** The first week of Lent is called Clean Week, since the emphasis is on the cleansing of both the soul and the body.

DIOCESAN RULES require Strict Fast on Clean Monday, no meat on Wednesday & Friday.

TRADITIONAL RULES call for not eating at all between Vespers on Sunday and the Presanctified Liturgy. If one does eat, they are supposed to only eat boiled vegetables and fruit juice during this whole week. At most one small meal should be eaten.

### **WEEKS 2 THROUGH 6:**

DIOCESAN RULES require fasting from meat on Wednesdays and Fridays (which we are supposed to do all year anyway).

TRADITIONAL RULES call for STRICT FAST (no meat, dairy, wine or oil products) *every weekday* during the Great Lenten Season, with some few exceptions which I note in the bulletin. On Saturdays and Sundays the Traditional Rules permit wine and oil. Meals should be limited to one a day.

*Wine and Oil* are also permitted on the following Feasts: Apr. 6 (Mar. 24) (*Pre-feast of the Annunciation*); Apr. 8 (Mar. 26) (*Synaxis of Archangel Gabriel*)

FEAST OF ANNUNCIATION, APR. 7 (MARCH 25) *is also Great Tuesday this year:* Even so, the fast is mitigated (lessened) this day because of this Great Feast. The Traditional Rules say you may eat fish, oil and dairy on this day. If you are not yet keeping the Traditional Fast, you may “step up” two steps on this day. For instance, if you are fasting from meat and dairy only, you may eat meat.

*LENT ENDS ON FRIDAY, APRIL 3.*

**LAZARUS SATURDAY AND PALM SUNDAY** are days of rejoicing, and the Fast is mitigated (lessened) the same way as on *Annunciation* (see above).

### **FOR HOLY WEEK:**

TRADITIONAL RULES call for STRICT FAST (no meat, dairy, wine or oil products) *every weekday* during the Holy Week, starting on Great Monday.

DIOCESAN RULES require the following for Holy

Week: Monday through Thursday, no meat. Great Friday and Holy Saturday, STRICT FAST.

### **BRIGHT WEEK:**

From Pascha through Thomas Sunday, there is *no fast* permitted, even on Wednesday or Friday, as we celebrate the great joy of our salvation in the Resurrection.

### **DURING GREAT LENT:**

*EVERYONE IS ENCOURAGED TO DO MORE THAN THE MINIMUM, AS MUCH AS YOU ARE ABLE. PLEASE REMEMBER THAT TOGETHER WITH FASTING, WE ARE CALLED ESPECIALLY TO GIVE ALMS DURING THIS SEASON.*

We are always called to grow in our spiritual life. With the Lenten Fast, we should be trying each year to be more and do more than we did last year. Here are a couple of ideas to get you started thinking:

- 1) Try fasting one more day a week than last year. For example, if you abstained from meat 2 days a week, go for 3 days this year.
- 2) Try fasting more on one or more days of the week. For example, if you abstained from meat 2 days a week, then abstain from meat and dairy both on those days.

By building up slowly, we become stronger spiritually. If we just do the same old thing we always did, we never exercise our spiritual muscles, and never grow in our faith and love for God.

*Please remember that the rules are given to us so that we may THINK about what we are doing, and not just go through the motions. Thinking about it can lead us to praying about it, and hopefully enriching our life through the fast.*

### **COMMUNION FASTING:**

For the reception of Holy Eucharist in the morning, we must fast from bed-time until we receive, as usual. To receive Holy Eucharist in the evening (for instance, at the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts), we must fast for *at least 3 hours before the beginning of the service.* ESSENTIALLY, THIS MEANS NOT EATING AFTER LUNCH UNTIL YOU RECEIVE THE EUCHARIST, IF POSSIBLE. Of course, those who are under a doctor’s care or are infirm must follow the doctor’s orders. If you have any question about this, please see me.

## PEOPLE STUFF

*Please remember in your prayers:*

*Deceased:* Mary Chupron.

*Living:* Matt & Lori Algar. Stephanie Bonk. Gloria Bracey. Tim & Christina Bracey. Susan Danchak. Ricky, Rick & Sarah. Michael Danchak. Fr. George Dursa. Jada Eiden. Tammy Hall. Heather Harris. Robert & Eddie Hawley. Lorraine Kacaba. Dawn & Warren Kieffer. Anna Mae Kuklis. Dee Lositski. Dan & Teri Ludwig. Peggy Majcher. Theresa Niester. John Polanichka. Emma Sacco. Amy Shimo. Connie Lou Slater. Faye Snell. Marion Sosnowski. Russell Spilka. Jeff Thomas. Ann Marie Tigue. Fr. Donald Valasek. Gary Wassel. Julia Worobey.

*At Home:* Michael Andreosky. Elizabeth Basalyga. George & Anna Senich. Kathryn Stocoski.

*Assisted Living Homes:* Julie Kovacs. Julie Roberts.

### YOUR GIFTS TO GOD AND HIS CHURCH

ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH

FEBRUARY 8, 2015

\$ 862.00	General Collection
\$ 2.00	1st Sunday
\$ 95.00	7 Day Light
\$1104.00	Pirohi
\$ 19.00	Holy Days
\$ 184.00	Church Dues
\$ 11.00	Tapered Candles
\$ 10.00	Vigil Light
<b>\$2287.00</b>	<b>Total Collection</b>

### COMMUNITY SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

**Ongoing Food Collection Project:** *To all of our parishioners:* Please remember those families who rely on food donations to help make ends meet. As you are aware, the funding for the Bread Basket of NEPA has been cut, and they rely on donations to help those families in need. A food donation container is available in the Church Hall. Please help fill this container with non-perishable food items: cans, dry goods, etc.

## PARISH STUFF

**Auditors Sought:** One more auditor is needed. If you are willing to consider taking on this task, please see Fr. Nik or Jane Togher. Ordinarily there are 2 auditors selected to check the parish's books every year.

**Pirohi Sale** this week. Same Bat-time, Same Bat-station. It has been a pleasure to work with all of you who come to help!

**Men's Club Meeting** - Election of Officers results:

President – Bill Thomas

Secretary/Treasurer – Nick Polanichka

Sergeant of Arms – Andrew Barnett

**Parish Board Meets** today.

EASTERN REGION

DIOCESAN LENTEN RETREAT

Saturday, March 28, 2015

9:00 Am to 5:00 Pm

At

Holy Ghost Orthodox Church

Starr and Bridge Streets

Phoenixville, Pa

Cost to Attend (Includes Lunch):

\$20.00 Adults / Teens

\$7.00 (Ages 6 to 12)

Overnight Accommodations

Available upon Request

Registration Deadline: March 21, 2015

Contact

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Sponsored by the National ACRY

### FROM THE DIOCESE & OTHER STUFF

**St. John's Byzantine Catholic Church**, 310 Broadway St., Scranton, Pa. is having a **Lenten Food Sale Monday, March 2**. They will be offering: Haluski at \$7.00 per Quart; Clam Chowder at \$8.00 per Quart and Pirohi at \$8.00 per dozen by order only. The deadline for orders is Thursday, Feb. 12, 2015 and you may pick them up on Monday, March 2, 2015 from 10am to 2 pm. Please call Sylvia at 570-343-8820. Place orders early, do not be disappointed.

**"Meatless Meal for Lent: "BAKED HADDOCK" FISH DINNER.** " on Friday, March 27, 2015 sponsored by SS. Cyril and Methodius Ukrainian Catholic Church, Olyphant, PA. Sponsored by Ss. Cyril & Methodius Ukrainian Catholic Church, Olyphant, Pa. TIME: 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. PLACE: At the REGAL ROOM (Ballroom/side entrance), 216 Lackawanna Avenue, Olyphant, Pa. MENU: Baked haddock, potato, vegetable, cole slaw, roll and dessert Sit Down or Take Out!! Pre sold tickets are \$13.00 per dinner. Call 570-383-9487 for Reservations

\*Deadline for pre-sold Tickets is Monday, March 23, 2015. \*LIMITED amount of Dinners will be available a the Door \$15.00.

## CANDLES, CANDLES EVERYWHERE

Every time we light a candle, the flame and the light should remind us of God Who in the history of salvation has appeared time and again as fire and light. Let us look briefly at the meaning of candles as used in our worship. The Sanctuary Lamp, otherwise known as the Ever-Burning Light that burns constantly, usually suspended from the ceiling over the Tabernacle on the Holy Table, reminds us of God's constant presence in our midst. He never leaves us or forsakes us. Other candles are extinguished after services but never the Ever-Burning Light. A symbol of God's unfailing presence in our midst, the flame flickers endlessly.

Many Orthodox Christians light a candle upon entering church. This simple act is deeply meaningful. It means that in the liturgy when the word of God is preached, the Holy Spirit will come to remove the veil (2 Cor. 3:15 and 4:6) of blindness from our eyes, the veil of lack of understanding and make the light of Christ shine in our hearts. Lighting a candle on entering church expresses our belief that Jesus is the Light of the World and that as His disciple, I am called daily to reflect His light in my life. It reminds us that when we were baptized we received Jesus Who is the Light of the World. Like Him, instead of cursing the darkness, we are to be lighting candles of hope and love in the lives of people. As we light that candle on entering the church we can pray the beautiful words of the Psalmist, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my

life; of whom shall I be afraid?" (Psalm 27:1).

We light the Paschal Candle at the midnight Easter liturgy to remind us that Christ has gone on before us into the darkness of death and has overcome that darkness, transforming it into unwaning light. "Come, receive light from the unwaning light and glorify Christ Who is risen from the dead." The Paschal Candle proclaims our faith that the Resurrected Christ "has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in Whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins" (col. 1:13-14).

When the priest comes out in procession with the Gospel Book during the liturgy, he is preceded by acolytes carrying candles to show that the word of God, to use words of the Psalmist, is "a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path." The candles that precede the procession with the Gospel Book speak loud and clear. They tell us that the word of God is light for the darkness in which we walk. Its purpose is to prevent us from stumbling; to show us the way; to lead us home to God.

In some Orthodox churches in the Middle East, I have seen an object resembling an ostrich egg suspended immediately above the flickering flame of hanging votive lights. The symbolism of the ostrich egg has to do with the heat produced by the flame of the votive candle. Just as an ostrich must sit on the egg for a long time in order to slowly hatch it with the heat of its body, so the Christian must remain close to the flame of Christ. He must stay close to the church and must nurture his faith through daily prayer and regular communion with Christ through the Eucharist. Only then will faith grow, develop, mature and come to life. The ostrich egg represents the embryonic state of faith which can spring to life through patient and faithful asceticism (man's struggle to keep the commandments of Christ), producing a life full of the fruits of the Spirit, a life that will glorify the Trinity.

St. Symeon of Thessalonika, the New Theologian, says that the reason virgins' lights are placed before the icons of the saints is to show that without the Light, Who is Christ, the saints are nothing. It is only as the light of Christ shines upon them that they become alive and resplendent.

(Excerpts from *Sacred Symbols That Speak* by Anthony Coniaris)