

# ST. NICHOLAS NEWS

Vol. 4 No. 5.2

## ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH

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### SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN

May 10, 2015

Christ Is Risen!      Christos Voskrese!      Christos Anesti!      Feltamadt Krisztus      Al Massih Kam!  
Indeed He Is Risen!      Vo Istinu Voskrese!      Alithos Anesti!      Valoban Feltamadott!      Hakkan Kam!

#### PARISH CALENDAR

#### PEOPLE STUFF

Sun., May 10 SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN.  
Martyred Bishop Simeon.

9:30 AM Divine Liturgy – pp. 205–206. Music  
for “The Angel Exclaimed” on 195 &  
for the Greek “Christ is Risen” on 196.

*Mothers’ Day*

Panachida: For all deceased mothers of  
parish and parishioners

Sat., May 16 Martyr Timothy & his wife Maura.

9:00 AM *Spring Cleaning of the Church*

Sun., May 17 SUNDAY OF THE MAN BOR BLIND.  
Martyr Pelagia

9:30 AM Divine Liturgy – pp. 20–207. Music  
for “The Angel Exclaimed” on 195 &  
for the Greek “Christ is Risen” on 196.

*Last Church School Meeting*

*Parish Board Meets*

**Confessions:** Before Divine Liturgy

#### FASTING AND FEASTING

**PASCHAL SEASON:** The traditional rules of fasting  
state that we return to the ordinary Wednesday &  
Friday fast after Thomas Sunday.

**Upcoming! The Feast of the Ascension** is on  
Thursday, May 21. Divine Liturgy will be at 9:00 AM.

*Please remember in your prayers:*

*Deceased:* Emma Sacco.

*Living:* Fr. George Dursa. Fr. Donald Valasek. Matt,  
Lori & Nathan Algar. Stephanie Bonk. Gloria Bracey.  
Tim & Christina Bracey. Bob Chalk. Susan Danchak.  
Ricky, Rick & Sarah. Michael Danchak. Jada Eiden.  
Ted Goosley. Tammy Hall. Heather Harris. Robert &  
Eddie Hawley. Lorraine Kacaba. Dawn & Warren  
Kieffer. Anna Mae Kuklis. John Lange. Dee Lositski.  
Peggy Majcher. Theresa Niester. Margie Pecuch. Mary  
Phillips. John Polanichka. Karen Rolka. JoyAnn  
Scarnato. Amy Shimo. Connie Lou Slater. Faye Snell.  
Marion Sosnowski. Russell Spilka. Jeff Thomas. Ann  
Marie Tigue. Gary Wassel. Julia Worobey.

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

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

#### PARISH STUFF

The **Men’s Club** regular monthly meeting has been  
moved to Sunday, May 24.

*Thanks and God bless!* To the Men’s Club for  
donating the flowers offered to the moms of our  
parish.

The **Parish Board** meets next Sunday, May 17.

**Altar Society News.** The Society had a fruitful meeting last Sunday. The attending members expressed their desire to grow their service to the parish community and intention to move forward with a couple of ideas that were voiced at the meeting. SO,

- Do you have fresh ideas ?
- Are you willing be part of making them happen?
- The Altar Society is seeking New Members to be part of an Important and Worthy organization.
- Contact Carol Pugh or Maryann Polanichka to renew your old membership, or to become a new member!

**Church Spring Cleaning, Sat., May 15, starting at 9 AM.** The Altar Society, with help from members of the Men’s Club, is spearheading a Spring Cleaning of the Church. Everyone from the parish is requested to participate in this event.

Cleaning supplies will be provided or you can bring your own. Any questions please see Carol Pugh.

<b>YOUR GIFTS TO GOD AND HIS CHURCH</b>	
ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH	
May 3, 2015	
May 3, 2015	
\$2243.00	General Collection
\$ 196.00	1st Sunday
\$ 89.00	7 Day Light
\$ 92.00	Church Dues
\$ 10.00	Maintenance & Repairs
\$ 14.00	Eternal Light
\$ 12.00	Taper Candles
<b>\$2656.00</b>	<b>Total Collection</b>

**Grave Blessings on Memorial Day, May 25:** I plan to begin at the parish cemetery at about 9:00 AM. Here is the tentative schedule:

- 9 AM Parish Cemetery
- Abington Hills
- Fairview (in Elmhurst)
- Nicholson

I’m not sure how long I will be at each cemetery. For those at the other cemeteries: if you are trying to figure out when to be present, I suggest you allow about 1 hour at each cemetery plus travel time. It would help if someone at each cemetery

would plan to have your cell phone and let me know the number so that I can try to call ahead.

## COMMUNITY SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

### Ongoing Food Collection Project:

The food donation container continues to be available in the Church Hall. Please help fill this container with non-perishable food items: cans, dry goods, etc. This is an ongoing good thing.

### FROM THE DIOCESE & OTHER STUFF

**Camp Nazareth Family Day Raffle Tickets!** We now have the raffle tickets for the annual Camp Family Day. \$20 each. Please see Nick Polanichka for yours before they run out!

**Family Camp at Camp Nazareth June 5 – June 6.** The Registration Form, Flyer and Schedule are all available on the Camp website: campnazareth.org. Planned are a variety of activities and events that will allow your family the opportunity to learn together, have fun together, pray together and simply be together in the peaceful environment of the Camp. Families will be staying together, and have to themselves a Camp cabin; plenty of space to rest and relax and simply be together during and after the weekend's festivities. Space is limited to the first 10 families, so please send in your registration forms soon. They are due by Friday, May 22, 2015.

**St. John's Auxiliary,** 310 Broadway St., Scranton is having a *Flash* potato/cheese Pirohi Sale on Monday, May 18, 2015. The price is \$8.00 per dozen. Please pre-order by calling 570-343-8820 by Friday May 8th. Pick up is at the Church Hall on Monday between the hours of 12 to 4pm. Thanks!!!

**St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church Center International Dinner Club,** 320 Mifflin Ave., Scranton, Pa. will be visiting "France" on Thursday May 14th, 2015. Seatings at 5:30 and 6:30pm. Reservations at 570-343-5151. Deadline is May 11. \$20.00 per person .The menu: a classic Bistro Salad including Bitter Frisee, crispy bacon, poached egg and topped w/ a sherry Dijon vinaigrette, followed by Coq Au Vin (Frenched Airline Chicken, braised w/wine and mushroom sauce) with Tartiffette ( French Bacon Potato and Reblochon cheese casserole) and Green beans w/spring onions and carrots. The dessert is Cherry Clafoutis (Pitted black cherries in a thick flan-like batter, dusted w/powdered sugar and served

w/mint whipped cream. Water, Soda, Coffee and Tea included. Cash Bar is available.

**The Young Women's Encounter will take place from Sunday, June 28th to Wednesday, July 1st, 2015, running concurrently with the Diocesan Altar Boy Retreat.** The YWE will be held at the Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Christian Church in Windber, Pennsylvania. Young women in our Diocese ages 12-18 are encouraged to attend. Please do not miss this opportunity for the girls of our Church and Diocese to gather with one another and grow in their faith. Space is limited, so please register as soon as possible. Registration forms will be made available in the coming weeks & space is again limited to the first 30 young women.

**Orthodox Christian Studies Center Benefit Cocktail Party** Tuesday, June 17, 2014 | 6 – 8:30 p.m. Thalassa Restaurant | 179 Franklin St. | Tribeca, N.Y. The Orthodox Christian Studies Center has earned the most prestigious grant available for humanities-based scholarship in the United States: a National Endowment of the Humanities (NEH) Matching Challenge Grant. The NEH will award the center \$500,000 if—and only if—Fordham raises \$1.5 million. Join us to celebrate winning the NEH Grant and to help raise our portion of the matching challenge. All proceeds go to the National Endowment for the Humanities Matching Challenge Grant: Enhancing Orthodox Christian Studies. Tickets include cocktails, authentic Greek food, live music, and entertainment. For more information, contact Valerie K. Longwood at 212-636-7439 or [longwood@fordham.edu](mailto:longwood@fordham.edu). For additional information, please visit [www.fordham.edu/orthodoxy](http://www.fordham.edu/orthodoxy).

**Conference in Preparation for the Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church** - Co-sponsored by the Orthodox Theological Society in America (OTSA) and the Orthodox Christian Studies Center. Friday, June 26 – Saturday, June 27, 2015. Fordham School of Law | 150 W. 62nd St. (between Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues) | New York, N.Y.

This conference is a series of papers, panel discussions, and a research poster competition addressing several themes from the Agenda for the Great and Holy Council:

- Autocephaly and Diaspora
- The Canonical Impediments to Marriage

- Ecumenical Relations
- The Contribution of the Orthodox Church to the Realization of Justice, Freedom, Brotherhood, and Love among Peoples
- Fasting regulations
- His Eminence Metropolitan Kallistos (Ware) of Diokleia will present the Florovsky Lecture, the keynote of the conference. A scholar at the University of Oxford who lectures throughout the world, Metropolitan Kallistos resonates equally with laypersons and clerics, on both timeless mysteries and urgent contemporary concerns.

The Florovsky Lecture will be followed by a reception and exhibition of a juried competition of research posters.

The conference is hosting the Annual Meeting of OTSA and will include the regular business meeting for OTSA members at which officers will be elected.

On-campus accommodation is available on campus on a first come, first served basis. To book, click "register online" below. To stay at the nearby Empire Hotel, call 212-265-7400 and ask for the "Fordham rate" (\$297 per night). REGISTER ONLINE. For more information, contact Jake Braithwaite at 212-636-7501 or [braithwaite@fordham.edu](mailto:braithwaite@fordham.edu).

**St. Tikhon's Monastery 111<sup>th</sup> Memorial Day Pilgrimage** May 22 – May 25. **Hi-Lite of the Pilgrimage:** the *Miraculous Myrrh-streaming Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos of Hawaii* will present throughout the pilgrimage, with a healing unction service on Monday. The event is open to the general public. Bring a friend!

#### ST. TIKHON PILGRIMAGE SCHEDULE

##### Friday, May 22, 2015

- 3:30 pm Official Opening of the 111th Pilgrimage Greeting of the Hawaiian Myrrh Streaming Icon with Moleben in the Church
- 4:00 pm Vespers and Matins in the Monastery Church. *All pilgrims are invited to dinner in the monastery dining hall following the services.*

##### Saturday, May 23, 2015

- 9:00 am Hierarchical Divine Liturgy. *A meal for all pilgrims in the Monastery dining hall following services*
- 1:00 pm 73rd Annual Academic Commencement of

Saint Tikhon's Theological Seminary  
4:30 pm Resurrection Vigil in the Monastery Church. *Dinner in the monastery dining hall for all pilgrims following the services.*

**Sunday, May 24, 2015**

9:00 am Hierarchical Divine Liturgy. *A meal for all pilgrims in the Monastery dining hall following services.*

4:00 pm Vespers and Matins in the Monastery Church

**Monday, May 25, 2015**

7:30 am Divine Liturgy – Monastery Church

10:00 am Hierarchical Divine Liturgy

12:15 pm Veteran's Pannikhida and Memorial Service, All Saints Bell Tower

1:30 pm Akathist to Saint Alexis Toth in the Monastery Church

2:30 pm Molieben to the Most Holy Theotokos and Anointing of the Sick, Infirm and all Pilgrims at the Monastery Bell Tower

4:00 pm Vespers and Matins in the Monastery Church

**MIDFEAST OF PENTECOST**

Commemorated on May 6

from [www.oca.org](http://www.oca.org) and [www.goarch.org](http://www.goarch.org)

Today's celebration is the midpoint of the fifty days between the Feasts of Pascha and Pentecost. St John tells us (John 7:14) that "in the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the Temple, and taught." The Feast in question is the Feast of Tabernacles (celebrated in September), not Pentecost.

The Fathers teach us that the feast of Mid-Pentecost stands in the middle of the fifty-day period from Pascha to Pentecost as a mighty flowing river of divine grace which have these two great feasts as its source. Pascha and Pentecost are united in Mid-Pentecost. Without Pascha there is no Pentecost and without Pentecost there is no purpose to Pascha.

The Church has appointed John 7:14-30 to be read for the Midfeast, thereby linking Pascha and Pentecost. John ch. 8, the Lord came to the Temple again and taught the people who came to Him. After leaving the Temple, he encounters the man born blind. We will hear about him on the Sunday of the Blind Man.

The Troparion of the Midfeast ("In the middle of the Feast, O Savior, fill my thirsting soul with the waters of godliness, as Thou didst cry to all: If anyone

thirst, let him come to Me and drink [John 7:37]. O Christ God, Fountain of our life, glory to Thee!") hints at the encounter of Christ and the Samaritan Woman in just a few days.

It should be noted that there were three great *Jewish feasts*: the **Passover**, **Pentecost**, and the **Feast of Tabernacles**. **Passover** commemorated that day on which the Hebrews were commanded to eat the lamb in the evening and anoint the doors of their houses with its blood. Then, having escaped bondage and death at the hands of the Egyptians, they passed through the Red Sea to come to the Promised Land. **Pentecost** was celebrated fifty days after the Passover, first of all because the Hebrew tribes had reached Mount Sinai after leaving Egypt, and there received the Law from God (and so the Mid-Pentecost icon has Jesus the Law-giver teaching in the Temple). Finally, they also celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles from the 15th to the 22nd of "the seventh month," which corresponds roughly to our September. During this time, they live in booths made of branches in commemoration of the forty years they spent in the desert, living in tabernacles, that is, tents (Ex. 12:10-20; Lev. 23).

**GREATMARTYR, VICTORY-BEARER AND  
WONDERWORKER GEORGE**

Commemorated on April 23

The Holy Great Martyr George the Victory-Bearer, was a native of Cappadocia (a district in Asia Minor), and he grew up in a deeply believing Christian family. His father was martyred for Christ when George was still a child. His mother, owning lands in Palestine, moved there with her son and raised him in strict piety.

When he became a man, St George entered into the service of the Roman army. He was handsome, brave and valiant in battle, and he came to the notice of the emperor Diocletian (284-305) and joined the imperial guard with the rank of comites, or military commander.

The pagan emperor, who did much for the restoration of Roman might, was clearly concerned with the danger presented to pagan civilization by the triumph of the Crucified Savior, and intensified his persecution against the Christians in the final years of his reign. Following the advice of the Senate at

Nicomedia, Diocletian gave all his governors full freedom in their court proceedings against Christians, and he promised them his full support.

St George, when he heard the decision of the emperor, distributed all his wealth to the poor, freed his servants, and then appeared in the Senate. The brave soldier of Christ spoke out openly against the emperor's designs. He confessed himself a Christian, and appealed to all to acknowledge Christ: "I am a servant of Christ, my God, and trusting in Him, I have come among you voluntarily, to bear witness concerning the Truth."

"What is Truth?" one of the dignitaries asked, echoing the question of Pontius Pilate. The saint replied, "Christ Himself, Whom you persecuted, is Truth."

Stunned by the bold speech of the valiant warrior, the emperor, who had loved and promoted George, attempted to persuade him not to throw away his youth and glory and honors, but rather to offer sacrifice to the gods as was the Roman custom. The confessor replied, "Nothing in this inconstant life can weaken my resolve to serve God."

Then by order of the enraged emperor the armed guards began to push St George out of the assembly hall with their spears, and they then led him off to prison. But the deadly steel became soft and it bent, just as the spears touched the saint's body, and it caused him no harm. In prison they put the martyr's feet in stocks and placed a heavy stone on his chest.

The next day at the interrogation, powerless but firm of spirit, St George again answered the emperor, "You will grow tired of tormenting me sooner than I will tire of being tormented by you." Then Diocletian gave orders to subject St George to some very intense tortures. They tied the Great Martyr to a wheel, beneath which were boards pierced with sharp pieces of iron. As the wheel turned, the sharp edges slashed the saint's naked body.

At first the sufferer loudly cried out to the Lord, but soon he quieted down, and did not utter even a single groan. Diocletian decided that the tortured one was already dead, and he gave orders to remove the battered body from the wheel, and then went to a pagan temple to offer thanks.

At this very moment it got dark, thunder boomed,

and a voice was heard: "Fear not, George, for I am with you." Then a wondrous light shone, and at the wheel an angel of the Lord appeared in the form of a radiant youth. He placed his hand upon the martyr, saying to him, "Rejoice!" St George stood up healed.

When the soldiers led him to the pagan temple where the emperor was, the emperor could not believe his own eyes and he thought that he saw before him some other man or even a ghost. In confusion and in terror the pagans looked St George over carefully, and they became convinced that a miracle had occurred. Many then came to believe in the Life-Creating God of the Christians.

Two illustrious officials, Sts Anatolius and Protleon, who were secretly Christians, openly confessed Christ. Immediately, without a trial, they were beheaded with the sword by order of the emperor. Also present in the pagan temple was Empress Alexandra, the wife of Diocletian, and she also knew the truth. She was on the point of glorifying Christ, but one of the servants of the emperor took her and led her off to the palace.

The emperor became even more furious. He had not lost all hope of influencing St George, so he gave him over to new and fearsome torments. After throwing him into a deep pit, they covered it over with lime. Three days later they dug him out, but found him cheerful and unharmed. They shod the saint in iron sandals with red-hot nails, and then drove him back to the prison with whips. In the morning, when they led him back to the interrogation, cheerful and with healed feet, the emperor asked if he liked his shoes. The saint said that the sandals had been just his size. Then they beat him with ox thongs until pieces of his flesh came off and his blood soaked the ground, but the brave sufferer, strengthened by the power of God, remained unyielding.

The emperor concluded that the saint was being helped by magic, so he summoned the sorcerer Athanasius to deprive the saint of his miraculous powers, or else poison him. The sorcerer gave St George two goblets containing drugs. One of them would have quieted him, and the other would kill him. The drugs had no effect, and the saint continued to denounce the pagan superstitions and glorify God as before.

When the emperor asked what sort of power was

helping him, St George said, “Do not imagine that it is any human learning which keeps me from being harmed by these torments. I am saved only by calling upon Christ and His Power. Whoever believes in Him has no regard for tortures and is able to do the things that Christ did” (John 14:12). Diocletian asked what sort of things Christ had done. The Martyr replied, “He gave sight to the blind, cleansed the lepers, healed the lame, gave hearing to the deaf, cast out demons, and raised the dead.”

Knowing that they had never been able to resurrect the dead through sorcery, nor by any of the gods known to him, and wanting to test the saint, the emperor commanded him to raise up a dead person before his eyes. The saint retorted, “You wish to tempt me, but my God will work this sign for the salvation of the people who shall see the power of Christ.”

When they led St George down to the graveyard, he cried out, “O Lord! Show to those here present, that You are the only God in all the world. Let them know You as the Almighty Lord.” Then the earth quaked, a grave opened, the dead one emerged from it alive. Having seen with their own eyes the Power of Christ, the people wept and glorified the true God.

The sorcerer Athanasius, falling down at the feet of St George, confessed Christ as the All-Powerful God and asked forgiveness for his sins, committed in ignorance. The obdurate emperor in his impiety thought otherwise. In a rage he commanded both Athanasius and the man raised from the dead to be beheaded, and he had St George again locked up in prison.

The people, weighed down with their infirmities, began to visit the prison and they there received healing and help from the saint. The exploits and the miracles of the Great Martyr George had increased the number of the Christians, therefore Diocletian made a final attempt to compel the saint to offer sacrifice to the idols. They set up a court at the pagan temple of Apollo. On the final night the holy martyr prayed fervently, and as he slept, he saw the Lord, Who raised him up with His hand, and embraced him. The Savior placed a crown on St George’s head and said, “Fear not, but have courage, and you will soon come to Me and receive what has been prepared for you.”

In the morning, the emperor offered to make St George his co-administrator, second only to himself.

The holy martyr with a feigned willingness answered, “Caesar, you should have shown me this mercy from the very beginning, instead of torturing me. Let us go now to the temple and see the gods you worship.”

Diocletian believed that the martyr was accepting his offer, and he followed him to the pagan temple with his retinue and all the people. Everyone was certain that St George would offer sacrifice to the gods. The saint went up to the idol, made the Sign of the Cross and addressed it as if it were alive: “Are you the one who wants to receive from me sacrifice befitting God?”

The demon inhabiting the idol cried out, “I am not a god and none of those like me is a god, either. The only God is He Whom you preach. We are fallen angels, and we deceive people because we are jealous.”

St George cried out, “How dare you remain here, when I, the servant of the true God, have entered?” Then noises and wailing were heard from the idols, and they fell to the ground and were shattered.

There was general confusion. In a frenzy, pagan priests and many of the crowd seized the holy martyr, tied him up, and began to beat him. They also called for his immediate execution.

The holy empress Alexandra tried to reach him. Pushing her way through the crowd, she cried out, “O God of George, help me, for You Alone are All-Powerful.” At the feet of the Great Martyr the holy empress confessed Christ, Who had humiliated the idols and those who worshipped them.

Diocletian immediately pronounced the death sentence on the Great Martyr George and the holy Empress Alexandra, who followed St George to execution without resisting. Along the way she felt faint and slumped against a wall. There she surrendered her soul to God.

St George gave thanks to God and prayed that he would also end his life in a worthy manner. At the place of execution the saint prayed that the Lord would forgive the torturers who acted in ignorance, and that He would lead them to the knowledge of Truth. Calmly and bravely, the holy Great Martyr George bent his neck beneath the sword, receiving the crown of martyrdom on April 23, 303, 10 years before Emperor Constantine made Christianity legal.