

ST. NICHOLAS NEWS

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ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH

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ALL SAINTS SUNDAY

June 7, 2015

PARISH CALENDAR

Sun., Jun 7 *Sunday of All Saints.* Martyr
Theodotus of Ancyra

9:30 AM Divine Liturgy – pp. 217–218

Panachida: Edward Bonk, Sr. - Bonk family.

Sun., June 14 2nd Sunday after Pentecost. Holy
Martyr Justin and companions.

9:30 AM Divine Liturgy – Tone 1, pp. 88–83.

Panachida: Agnes Uhrin – Daniel Oneschuck
& Leonard Ogden.

Men's Club meets

Confessions: Before Divine Liturgy

FASTING AND FEASTING

Apostles' Fast begins tomorrow, June 8 and goes
until the Feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul on
July 12.

The traditional fasting regulations state that red meat,
poultry, and dairy products are not allowed during the
entire fasting period on all weekdays, Monday through
Friday. Also, Fish, wine, and oil are allowed on all
days except on Wednesdays and Fridays. The diocesan
rules merely require the usual Wednesday/Friday fast.
All are encouraged to do more than the minimum.

Upcoming Feasts: The next feasts in the Church
Calendar are the *Birth of St. John the Baptist* (6-24/7-

7) and the *Holy Apostles Peter and Paul* (6-29/7-12).

PEOPLE STUFF

Please remember in your prayers:

Living: Fr. George Dursa. Fr. Donald Valasek.
Stephanie Bonk. Gloria Bracey. Tim & Christina
Bracey. Bob Chalk. Susan Danchak. Ricky, Rick &
Sarah. Michael Danchak. Jada Eiden. 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.

Eternal Light: Memory of Catherine Brizinski.

PARISH STUFF

Suggestions & Suggestion Box: The Parish Board is
looking for ideas, thoughts, concerns – anything you
may be thinking about which will help the parish
become a better, more spiritual, hospitable place for

faithful to gather and pray.

If you have any ideas or suggestions, you are always welcome to approach Jane Togher, Fr. Nik or any member of the board to offer your thoughts. If you would like to bring up something, but would prefer to remain anonymous, you can place your suggestion in the ***Suggestion Box*** that we are resurrecting. The box will be in the hall by the door for your convenience. The Parish Board would really like your input, so please feel free to offer your *suggestions!*

Men's Club will hold its regular monthly meeting on Sunday, June 14.

Parish Board will hold its regular monthly meeting on Sunday, June 21.

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.

SYNAXIS OF ALL SAINTS

from www.oca.org

The Sunday following Pentecost is dedicated to All Saints, both those who are known to us, and those who are known only to God. There have been saints at all times, and they have come from every corner of the earth. They were Apostles, Martyrs, Prophets, Hierarchs, Monastics, and Righteous, yet all were perfected by the same Holy Spirit.

The Descent of the Holy Spirit makes it possible for us to rise above our fallen state and to attain sainthood, thereby fulfilling God's directive to "be holy, for I am holy" (Lev. 11:44, 1 Peter 1:16, etc.). Therefore, it is fitting to commemorate All Saints on the first Sunday after Pentecost.

This feast may have originated at an early date, perhaps as a celebration of all martyrs, then it was broadened to include all men and women who had borne witness to Christ by their virtuous lives, even if they did not shed their blood for Him.

St Peter of Damascus, in his "Fourth Stage of Contemplation," mentions five categories of saints:

Apostles, Martyrs, Prophets, Hierarchs, and Monastic Saints (PHILOKALIA [in English] Vol. 3, p.131). He is actually quoting from the OCTOECHOS, Tone 2 for Saturday Matins, kathisma after the first stichology.

St Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain (July 14) adds the Righteous to St Peter's five categories. The list of St Nicodemus is found in his book THE FOURTEEN EPISTLES OF ST PAUL (Venice, 1819, p. 384) in his discussion of I Corinthians 12:28.

The hymnology for the feast of All Saints also lists six categories: "Rejoice, assembly of the Apostles, Prophets of the Lord, loyal choirs of the Martyrs, divine Hierarchs, Monastic Fathers, and the Righteous..."

Some of the saints are described as Confessors, a category which does not appear in the above lists. Since they are similar in spirit to the martyrs, they are regarded as belonging to the category of Martyrs. They were not put to death as the Martyrs were, but they boldly confessed Christ and came close to being executed for their faith. St Maximus the Confessor (January 21) is such a saint.

The order of these six types of saints seems to be based on their importance to the Church. The Apostles are listed first, because they were the first to spread the Gospel throughout the world.

The Martyrs come next because of their example of courage in professing their faith before the enemies and persecutors of the Church, which encouraged other Christians to remain faithful to Christ even unto death.

Although they come first chronologically, the Prophets are listed after the Apostles and Martyrs. This is because the Old Testament Prophets saw only the shadows of things to come, whereas the Apostles and Martyrs experienced them firsthand. The New Testament also takes precedence over the Old Testament.

The holy Hierarchs comprise the fourth category. They are the leaders of their flocks, teaching them by their word and their example.

The Monastic Saints are those who withdrew from this world to live in monasteries, or in seclusion. They did not do this out of hatred for the world, but in order to devote themselves to unceasing prayer, and to do battle against the power of the demons. Although

some people erroneously believe that monks and nuns are useless and unproductive, St John Climacus had a high regard for them: "Angels are a light for monks, and the monastic life is a light for all men" (LADDER, Step 26:31).

The last category, the Righteous, are those who attained holiness of life while living "in the world." Examples include Abraham and his wife Sarah, Job, Sts Joachim and Anna, St Joseph the Betrothed, St Juliana of Lazarevo, and others.

The feast of All Saints achieved great prominence in the ninth century, in the reign of the Byzantine Emperor Leo VI the Wise (886-911). His wife, the Holy Empress Theophano (December 16) lived in the world, but was not attached to worldly things. She was a great benefactor to the poor, and was generous to the monasteries. She was a true mother to her subjects, caring for widows and orphans, and consoling the sorrowful.

Even before the death of St Theophano in 893 or 894, her husband started to build a church, intending to dedicate it to Theophano, but she forbade him to do so. It was this emperor who decreed that the Sunday after Pentecost be dedicated to All Saints. Believing that his wife was one of the righteous, he knew that she would also be honored whenever the Feast of All Saints was celebrated.

FAST OF THE HOLY APOSTLES

By Archpriest Ayman Kfouf
from <http://www.antiochian.org>

Origins of the Fast of the Apostles

The Fast of the Holy Apostles is dated back to early years of the church. The first evidence of this fast is found in the writings of St. Athanasius the Great (†373). In his letter to Emperor Constance, he writes: "During the week following Pentecost, the people who observed the fast went out to the cemetery to pray." Some 20 years later, St. Ambrose (†397) writes: "On the days following his ascension into heaven, however, we again fast" (Sermon 61).

The famous pilgrim Egeria mentioned the Apostles' Fast also in her fourth-century-writing which records that "on the day following the feast of Pentecost, a period of fasting began". In the same period, the fourth century, the Apostolic Constitutions prescribes: "After the feast of Pentecost, celebrate one

week, then observe a fast, for justice demands rejoicing after the reception of the gifts of God and fasting after the body has been refreshed."

Until the second half of the 3rd century, the Fast of the Holy Apostles was linked to Pentecost and lasted only for one week (Apostolic Constitutions). Later on, after the martyrdom of the apostles Peter and Paul and following the development of the commemoration of their death around the year 258, the Apostles' Fast became linked to the feast of Saints Peter and Paul on June 29. Consequently, it became a fasting period of preparation for the celebration of the feast of the great apostles. St. Symeon of Thessalonica (†1429) explains: "The Fast of the Apostles is justly established in their honor, for through them we have received numerous benefits and for us they are exemplars and teachers of the fast ... For one week after the descent of the Holy Spirit, in accordance with the Apostolic Constitution composed by Clement, we celebrate, and then during the following week, we fast in honor of the Apostles."

Subsequently, the duration of the Fast of the Holy Apostles changed from one week to a variable period depending on the date of the Feast of Pascha (Easter).

Duration of the Fast of the Apostles

The fast of the Holy Apostles starts on the second Monday after Pentecost. The duration of this fast varies, depending on the date of Pascha (Easter). The rule is that the Fast starts on the second Monday after Pentecost and ends on June 29, on the feast of Saints Peter and Paul. According to the new calendar, the Apostles' Fast could last as short as 8 days and as long as 30 days (42 days according to the old calendar).

Fasting Rules of the Fast of the Holy Apostles

The Fast of the Holy Apostles is not as strict as the Fasts of Pascha and the Nativity of Christ; rather it is more lenient in its duration and rules. The current rules of fasting, during the Apostles' Fast, were established first for the monks of the Monastery of the Kiev Caves by Metropolitan George of Kiev (1069-1072). These rules are still practiced today amongst most Orthodox Christians with minor variations, depending on the jurisdiction.

The rules are:

- Red meat, poultry, and dairy products are not allowed during the entire fasting period in all weekdays.

- Fish, wine, and oil are allowed on all days except on Wednesdays and Fridays.

Conclusion

The Apostles fast has emerged since the very early days of Christianity. It is honored and preserved in the Church as a part of our Holy Tradition. Like all Fasts in the Orthodox Church, the Holy Apostles' Fast aims to help us put on the "armor of light" to against the attacks of the enemy that may befall during our spiritual journey to become united with God through His grace. No better words may express the importance of fasting in our life like the words of St. Abba Isaac the Syrian who says, "... since fasting is a weapon established by God ...the human race knew no victory before fasting, and the devil was never defeated by our nature as it is: but this weapon has indeed deprived the devil of strength from the outset... As soon as the devil sees someone possessed of this weapon (fasting), fear straightway falls on this adversary and tormentor of ours, who remembers and thinks of his defeat by the Saviour in the wilderness; his strength is at once destroyed and the sight of the weapon given us by our Supreme Leader burns him up. A man armed with the weapon of fasting is always afire with zeal. He who remains therein, keeps his mind steadfast and ready to meet and repel all violent passions."

FROM THE DIOCESE & OTHER STUFF

Altar Servers' Retreat! Don't forget that this annual event is also taking place in Johnstown from Sunday, June 28 through Wed., July 1. All information and registration forms can be found on our diocesan website, www.acrod.org. Our parish will again be covering the cost of going for any of our altar servers. If you have any questions, please see Fr. Nik.

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.

St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church, 320 Mifflin Ave., Scranton, Pa. will present "**THE TASTES OF ITALY**" on Thursday evening, June 11, 2015 with seatings at 5:30 and 6:30pm. The price is only \$20.00 per person. Please call with reservations to 570-343-5151 by June 8, 2015. The menu will start with Smoked Chicken Canneloni and an Insalata Salad. The Entree will be Veal Osso Bocco and the Dessert will be Fresh Summer Berries. Choice of Coffee, Tea, Soda or Water is included and a Cash Bar is available.

YOUR GIFTS TO GOD AND HIS CHURCH	
ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH	
May 31, 2015	
\$ 380.00	General Collection
\$ 10.00	1st Sunday
\$ 80.00	7 Day Light
\$ 65.00	Holy Days
\$ 92.00	Church Dues
\$ 100.00	Parking Donation
\$ 7.00	Eternal Light
\$ 11.00	Taper Candles
\$ 25.00	Church Repairs Donations
\$ 770.00	Total Collection

New Item: Rummage Sale - St Thomas More Parish, 1625 North Main Avenue, will hold a GIANT RUMMAGE SALE on Saturday, June 13. Items of all kinds will be available - books, toys, clothing, household items, appliances! Please plan to attend. Lunch will be served and a bake sale will be included. Parking off the street is available.

Old Fashioned Chicken Bar-B-Que At St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church, 320 Mifflin Ave., Scranton, Pa. on Sunday, June 14, 2015 on the Church grounds from 11am to 4pm. Eat-in or Take-out. Adults \$12.00 and Children (under 10) \$6.00. All are welcome!!!

Slavic Festival at St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church, 320 Mifflin Ave., Scranton, Pa. on Fri. Aug. 14 (4-10pm); Sat. Aug. 15 (3-10pm); Sun. Aug. 16 (12-5pm). Their will be Live Entertainment Friday, (Joe Stanky), Saturday, Doubleshot and Sunday, (D.J. Sara). Featuring Homemade Ethnic Foods, Carnival Foods, Clams, Homemade Soups, Beer Tent, Games, Raffles, White Elephant Sale and More!!!