

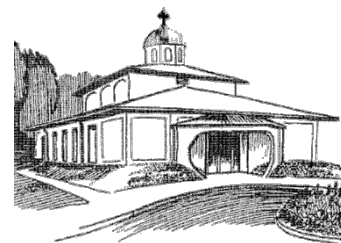


St Nicholas Orthodox Church

*A Parish of the Diocese of the Midwest
of the Orthodox Church in America*

9650 Johnnycake Ridge Road, Mentor, OH 44060

<https://saintnicholas-oca.org/>



Parish Rector: Fr Mark Therrien + (252) 813-6993 + fr.mark.therrien@gmail.com



Services & Events for the Week Starting January 28, 2024

- Sunday, January 28** *34th Sunday after Pentecost, Tone 1, Our Venerable Father Ephraim the Syrian*
(Readings: Colossians 3:4-11; Matthew 22:35-46)
9:00a Church School
9:45a Third Hour || 10:00a Divine Liturgy || Coffee hour
- Thursday, February 1** 6:30p Great Vespers with Lity
- Friday, February 2** *The Meeting (Encounter) of the Lord in the Temple*
(Readings: Hebrews 7:7-17; Luke 2:22-40)
9:30a Divine Liturgy
- Saturday, February 3** 4:30p Confessions || 5:30p Great Vespers
- Sunday, February 4** *35th Sunday after Pentecost, Tone 2, Post-Feast of the Meeting, Venerable Father Isidore*
(Readings: Colossians 3:12-16; Matthew 25:14-30)
9:00a Church School
9:45a Third Hour || 10:00a Enrollment of Catechumens & Divine Liturgy || Coffee hour



Attendance & Stewardship for January 21, 2024

Operating: \$2,400; Maintenance: \$85; Diocesan Dues: \$512.50; Candles: \$62; Uganda: \$65; Parish Charities: \$95; Seminary: \$10

“Again we pray for those who bring offerings and do good works in this holy and all-venerable temple . . .”

(from the final petition of the Augmented Litany)

Thank you for your generosity!

Official notice: The per member diocesan assessment amount for 2024 is \$212.25.



NOTES FROM THE RECTOR

House Blessings Continue

I continued blessing homes this past week. Thank you to everyone for your help in scheduling these. For those whom I have not yet scheduled, I will be in touch with

you. In the meantime, I will leave the sign-up sheets in the foyer again this weekend for those who want their homes to be blessed. After this weekend, I will take them down. So, if you decide that you want your home blessed later on, please be in touch with me.



The Saint as Doer of the Lord's Teaching

In today's Gospel, we hear this famous passage in which the Lord offers a summary of the entirety of the Law. As he teaches, the first and great commandment is that we are to love the Lord our God “with all [our] heart, with all [our] soul, and with all [our] mind.” And then, as the second, he teaches that we are to love our neighbor as our own very self. “On these two commandments,” as he says “hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

The bar of the Lord's teaching, obviously, is a high one. And so, in light of what the Lord says, we might very well find ourselves asking: How is this possible?

It is precisely here where the examples of the saints become so important to us as Christians. To summarize the remarks of one twentieth century theologian: the true exegetes or interpreters of Scripture are the saints, since they enact the Lord's teaching in their lives.

This past week we commemorated a number of saints in the Church whose lives help us to see how to put the Lord's teaching in the Gospel today into practice. One of these occurred on Wednesday: St Xenia of Petersburg.

St Xenia was a 'fool for Christ.' Fools-for-Christ are saints who intentionally lived in ways that seemed absurd to the worldly standards of their day in order to hide their piety and holiness, and also as a way of calling the people of their day to repentance. Her story is quite extraordinary: St Xenia unexpectedly became a widow when she lost her husband. Because he died so suddenly, her husband did not receive the holy Mysteries of the Eucharist and Confession. The fact that he died without the Sacraments struck St Xenia to her core. And so, being moved by compassion, St Xenia decided to give up all of her belongings and to rely entirely upon God for her personal well-being. Out of love for her husband, she also decided to dress in his clothing, and to spend the rest of her life in prayer and repentance for his sake.

In how she responded to the Lord's teaching, St Xenia's example is, to be sure, a radical one. And indeed, as some of the fathers teach, even if everything in the life of a saint is worthy of emulation, not everything is worthy of imitation by each of us. Still, in thinking about her life in light of today's Gospel, we might ask ourselves: Even if God does not call all of us to become fools for his sake, he does call all of us to make actual in our own lives the teaching that he sets forth in the Gospel.

Through her intercession, may the Lord make clear to us how we might put into practice the two greatest commandments in our own lives so that, in the way known to him, we might become more like Christ, just as St Xenia was transfigured into his likeness in her life.



A Note Regarding Festal Services for the Encounter

This week, we will celebrate one of the major feasts of the Church: The Encounter of the Lord. We will have two services this year: Vespers with Lity on Feb. 1, and Divine Liturgy on Feb. 2. Note that the Divine Liturgy will be served at the time when the homeschool co-op normally meets. *Since the liturgy will be in the morning, help with singing would be especially appreciated.*



Next Sunday: The Making of New Catechumens

By God's grace, next Sunday several people will be enrolled as catechumens in our parish—two in preparation (God willing) for reception into the Church by the mystery of holy baptism, and one in preparation for reception into the Church by holy chrismation: Nick & Abrea Monda, and Dalton Moses.

As they prepare for this major step in their journey towards Christ and his holy Church, please pray for them especially fervently this coming week.



Parish Prayer List

If you know of someone who is in special need of prayer, please email me so that I might add the person to the prayer list. In the meantime, please remember especially:

Perry Capitan, Julian, Sarah Crivella, Joella (LuAnn Dzura's daughter), **Anna Como, Barb, Emily Finazzo**, (friend of the Rendas), **David Campbell** (Debbie Clements' brother), **Patrick Leahy** (Dave K.'s brother-in-law), **Rick Wagner** (Merrick and Mia's grandfather), **Patricia** (Rosemary Bagley's mother), **Bruce** (Kristen Moore's father), **Joseph Chuppa, Ronald** (in baptism, **Thomas**) (Collin Moore's father), **Bruce** (Kristen Moore's father), **Mary Ann Sheranko, Helen** (Jan Ursinyi's mother, in hospice); **Kevin, Declan, and Teagon** (husband and children of the newly-reposed Michelle [see below]); **Christina Brzozowski** (Mike Brzozowski's sister); **Alan; LuAnn Dzura; the suffering Christians of Ukraine, the Middle East, and Armenia**

Birthdays this week: 1/29: **Simon Schlafer**; 2/1: **Alexander Schelkanov**; 2/3: **Jack Lemaster, Maya Elizabeth Alexander**

Expecting: **Greg & Grace, Jairus & Riley, Weston & Rachel, Joseph & Venessa, Jon & Alexandra, Patrick & Katherine**

Newborn: **Esther** (Stephen & Rebecca)

Newly departed: **Paris Anthony Santone** (Debbie Covelli's nephew), **Joseph Demanski, Cathy Ubancic** (friend of the Rendas), **Patricia** (Michael Abernathy's grandmother), **Nun Elizabeth** (of Holy Transfiguration Monastery), **Kristen** (Michelle Hoover's cousin)

