

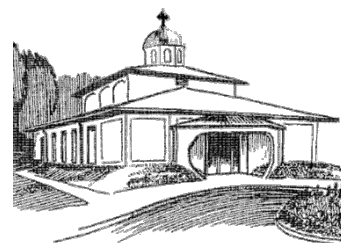


St Nicholas Orthodox Church

*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/>



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Services & Events for the Week Starting April 7, 2024

- Sunday, April 7** *Third Sunday of the Great Fast: The Holy Cross*
(Hebrews 4:14-5:6; Mark 8:34-9:1)
9a Church School || 9:45a Third Hour || 10a Divine Liturgy || Coffee hour
5p Akathist Hymn to the Holy Cross (at Holy Assumption Church in Canton)
- Tuesday, April 9** 6:30p Choir Practice
- Wednesday, April 10** 6:30a Morning Service (*Matins or Hours*) || 4p Confession || 6:30p Liturgy of the Presanctified
- Thursday, April 11** 6:30p Catechism class (*open to all*)
- Friday, April 12** 9a Hours, Typika, & Veneration and Removal of the Cross (with Confession to follow)
- Saturday, April 13** *Fourth Saturday of the Great Fast: Fourth Saturday of the Departed*
4p Confessions || 5:30p Great Vespers
- Sunday, April 14** *Fourth Sunday of the Great Fast: St John of the Ladder*
(Hebrews 6:13-20; Mark 9:17-31)
9a Church School || 9:45a Third Hour || 10a Divine Liturgy || Coffee hour



Stewardship for March 31, 2024

Operating: \$2,418; ZOE: \$45; Maintenance: \$60;
Diocesan Dues: \$266.25; Candles: \$64; Uganda: \$20;
Parish Charities: \$20; Alms: \$155; Seminary: \$10;
Flowers: \$40

“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!



NOTES FROM THE RECTOR

Formed by the Cross: A Brief Word on St Tikhon

Being the third Sunday of the Great Fast, the principal commemoration that we keep in the Church today is, as always, the precious and life-giving Cross of our Lord. At the same time, we also keep another commemoration

today from our monthly calendar: We celebrate the repose of St Tikhon, the Patriarch of Moscow and Enlightener of North America.

I think that it is very Providential that we feast St Tikhon today since his life was entirely shaped by his willingness to embrace the cross of our Lord (especially in his later years in light of the challenges that the Russian Revolution and its aftermath posed to Church life). And yet, despite his sufferings, St Tikhon did not waver in his fidelity to the Lord. Rather, he continually persevered in his sufferings, accepting them “for the sake of the joy that lay before him” (cf. Heb 12:2) as coming from God for the sake of his salvation.

Today, then, let us use the example given to us by St Tikhon really to take to heart the central message of our service texts and Scriptures for this day of the holy Cross: If we are faithful to God, suffering will come to us; of this reality, we can have no doubts whatsoever. And so, when it comes, we must choose: Will we

embrace this suffering and so become sanctified (made holy) through it, thus preserving our souls? Or will we reject it, and thus (to echo the Lord's words in today's Gospel) thereby lose our souls instead?



Choir Practices in the Month of April

Please take note that, during April, there will be three choir practices (especially in preparation for Holy Week and Pascha):

- Tuesday, April 9th, at 6:30p (i.e., this Tuesday)
- Friday, April 19th, after the *Akathist* hymn
- Thursday, April 25th, at 6:30p

Thank you to all those who participate in this ministry of beautifying the services. As we pray in the Ambon Prayer at the Divine Liturgy: "O Lord... sanctify those who love the beauty of Thy house..."



Catechism Class This Thursday

Since I have spoken a number of times about the passions in some of my short homilies/reflections at services, I want to use this week's catechumen class as a chance to give an outline of the Church's teaching on passions and spiritual life (using as my base some texts from Evagrius that were received by the larger Tradition). If you are interested in this topic, please come since (as always) this class is open to all.



This Friday: Hours & Veneration of the Cross (But NO Presanctified Liturgy)

On the monthly calendar, I had tentatively scheduled a Presanctified Liturgy for this Friday morning. Please note that we will *not* serve the Presanctified Liturgy as tentatively planned. Instead, we will have the Sixth and Ninth Hours and Typika, which will include the final veneration of the Cross and its removal. If you are looking to participate in more of the Church's prayer during these forty days, please come for this week's final opportunity to bow down before and to kiss the precious and life-giving Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. The service will last approximately 45 minutes.



Special Services in our Deanery

As noted on the monthly calendar, there are two liturgical services taking place elsewhere in our deanery:

First, in honor of today's commemoration, the Akathist Hymn to the Holy Cross will be served **this evening** at Holy Assumption Church in Canton at **5pm**.

Second, on the evening of the fifth Sunday of the Great Fast (**April 21**), a General Unction Service will be celebrated at St Nicholas Church in Mogadore at **5pm**.

I encourage everyone to participate in one or both of these services. Regarding the Unction Service, please take note of the following: When Unction is served as a 'general' service (i.e., when Unction is served not for a specific person who is physically ill, but rather for the purpose of anointing all of those who are present and who are of a confessing age), those who are to be anointed must be properly prepared. More specifically: Since the Unction service includes a prayer of absolution from sin, it is presumed that those who are participating in the sacrament have made a recent confession.

Therefore, if you plan to participate in this service and to be anointed, but if you have not yet made your confession during the Great Fast, please plan to do so before April 21, and please plan to receive the Holy Gifts either that Sunday morning at Divine Liturgy, or on the nearest occasion thereafter (i.e., the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts on Wednesday evening).



A Reminder: Now is a Time to be Giving Alms

As we set forth the cross today, thus marking the middle point of the forty days of the Great Fast, we should take the opportunity given to us today of seeing and venerating the cross, the greatest sign of God's mercy, as a reminder of our own duty to be merciful.

To that end, please keep in mind that we have three almsgiving (*mercy-giving*) activities going on in our parish during the Great Fast:

- Meal-making for St Herman's House
- The church school bottle project for ZOE
- The project to build Joe Chuppa a ramp

As we continue with the second half of the Great Fast, please consider contributing to one or more of these.



St Herman's House: Final Call Next Sunday

In line with the announcement above, please note that next Sunday, April 14 will be the last day to bring chili for St Herman's House. If anyone has any questions about this (or if you encounter any problems), please contact Peggy (440-668-1275) or Collin (440-479-

6688). Collin will make the delivery after that date. If anyone wants to help, please be in touch with him.

Thank you to everyone who has graciously donated their time and talents to this ministry. We hope that we can do this project once again in the late summer or fall.



Tetrapod Flowers Today

The flowers on the tetrapod today have been given by Maureen in memory of her father on his birthday.



The Great Fast as a Time to Become Normal: A Lenten Catechesis from Fr Thomas Hopko (of blessed memory)

“[The Great Fast is] not a time for a special pious devotional activity. It’s a time for normal Christian life and normal Christian activity, the way it should be lived all year round but is not. So the season of repentance, the lenten spring as it’s often called, this ‘tithe of the year,’ is when the believers mobilize themselves individually and together, corporately, to try to be God’s people, to be a Christian, to be a human being, ...

Now during this ‘tithe of the year,’ Christians are called to do all those things which open them up to the grace of God, all those disciplines that prove that they are believers. Usually they’re summarized, as they are in Orthodox tradition, in the Gospel readings on the Saturday and Sunday before Lent begins, by those three teachings of Jesus that are found in the Sermon on the Mountain—when you pray, when you fast, and when you give alms or more technically, more correctly translated, when you do acts of mercy.

So the lenten season would be a time for praying—personally, corporately, in one’s heart, in one’s room, in one’s church, as a member of the Church. It would be a time for fasting in secret—abstaining from foods, not overeating, realizing that our food and drink is the Word of God, and not some physical food, our food is the Bread of Life who is Christ himself. And then also that it would be a time of doing acts of mercy—helping others, giving to the poor, spending time with people.

And then in addition to those three things, you would have confession of sins; you would have a practice of silence; so many things, reading the Bible, that Christian believers should be doing all of the time. So the lenten season is that ‘tithe of the year,’ when we try to be and do what we should be and do at all times.”

(Source: <https://www.orthodoxchattanooga.com/news/2020/3/4/lent-the-tithe-of-the-year>)



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), **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), **Bruce** (Kristen Moore’s father), **Joseph Chuppa, Ronald** (in baptism, **Thomas**) (Collin Moore’s father), **Mary Ann Sheranko, Helen** (Jan Ursinyi’s mother), **Kevin, Declan, and Teagon** (husband and children of the newly-reposed Kristen), **Christina & John** (Mike Brzozowski’s sister and brother), **Alan, LuAnn Dzura, Rich Cook** (Cindy Renda’s brother), **Daniel Conger** (friend of Jim Renda); **the residents of St Herman’s House, as well as those who serve them;** our seminarian, **Cole (Paul) Schlafer**, and his family members: **Sarah, Simon, Michael, & Nikolai;** the members of the **Bagley family, especially Joseph, Rosemary, Isaac, Lucia, & Julian;** **Jim Barkas; John & Delphine Kiernan** (parents of Sean Kiernan); **Jennifer** (Katie Horabik’s friend); **Dana** (Merrick and Mia Wagner’s step-mother); **Stacey and Ian** (friends of Katie Horabik); **the suffering Christians of Ukraine, the Middle East, and Armenia**

Birthdays this week: 4/8: Emily Schlotzer; 4/10: Leonard Heim IV; Benjamin Sherman

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

Catechumens: Dalton Moses, Nick & Abrea Monda, Alex Wittie

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), **Jane Hunt** (great grandmother of Sofia Kiernan), **Patricia Wilcoxson** (Rosemary Bagley’s mother); **Joseph Naymik; Jay Emmer-Lovell** (friend of the Russell, Horabik & Lehman families); **Pauline Demanski; Elizabeth** (Denise Busch’s aunt); **Theodore Kisha** (father of Ted Kisha)