

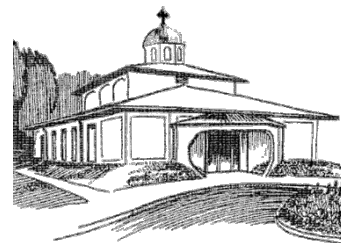


St Nicholas Orthodox Church

*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 + (216) 678-8181 + fr.mark.therrien@gmail.com



Services & Events Beginning Sunday, July 14, 2024

- Sunday, July 14 *Third Sunday after Pentecost & The Fathers of the First Six Ecumenical Councils*
8:45a Third Hour & Divine Liturgy
- Wednesday, July 17 9a Akathist to the Theotokos, Nurturer of Children (NB: not on monthly calendar)
- Thursday, July 18 6:30p Parish Council Meeting
- Friday, July 19 6:30p Festal Vespers with Lity
- Saturday, July 20 *The Holy Prophet Elias (Elijah) the Tishbite*
9a Divine Liturgy & Blessing of Vehicles || 4:30p Confessions || 5:30p Great Vespers
- Sunday, July 21 *Fourth Sunday after Pentecost*
8:45a Third Hour & Divine Liturgy



ATTENDANCE & STEWARDSHIP FOR JULY 7, 2024

Attendance: 197; Operating: \$4,709; Capital
Maintenance: \$210; Holy Day: \$50; Icons: \$20;
Diocesan Dues: \$550.25; Candles: \$120; Uganda: \$90;
Parish Charities: \$135; IOCC: \$20; Seminary: \$35

“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)



WEEKLY CATECHETICAL REFLECTION

Reflections on the Parish Development Forum: Some Thoughts for Parish Self-Examination

This past week, Matthew Visnick and I participated in the Parish Development Forum, which was hosted at St Michael the Archangel Church in Broadview Heights. The theme of the forum was to think about how to make our parishes better able to serve in a secular world. We spoke much about the various challenges that parishes face today, as well as how to respond to those challenges in ways that are consonant with the holy Gospel.

By way of offering some of the highlights of the forum to everyone at the parish, this week for my catechesis I have decided to share some of my notes. These are given below in bolded text. Some of these are direct quotes from conference speakers; others are my summaries of important points that were made. In each case, I also offer some questions or commentary as a way of encouraging all of us to reflect on them.

Parishes do not grow; parishes are built. *Parish growth is not a given; rather, it comes from hard work (and, of course, by the grace of God first of all). In what ways are we actively working to build up St Nicholas and thinking ahead for where it will be in the next five to ten years?*

“A church without a mission is a contradiction in terms. . . . Mission is inseparable from the nature of the Church.” *Parishes only exist for one reason: to go out and preach Jesus Christ. A parish that does not do this as its main task is no longer a church in the proper sense. How could St Nicholas be more minded of its mission in what it does? What would people in the community say about our parish if we asked them about our mission?*

We must think in this way: “The world is my parish,” not “my parish is my world. *Parishes oftentimes face the danger*

of parochialism—i.e., of becoming insular. When we say the phrase “St Nicholas Parish,” do we think about our temple and its members? Or do we think about the entire local area as being our parish in which we are called to serve?

“A mission-orientated parish ... serves the fullest possible offering of services.” *Ultimately, the point of the church is that people may come to know God. Since this happens principally in the liturgy, offering a full array of divine services must be the priority of our parish. How does our parish measure up here? How might we expand our current service offerings (morning or evening)?*

“Parishes that focus on education as a whole, and not on some narrow program, tend to be successful in being mission minded.” *I think the point of this statement is this: What we need in the church are not programs in the first place, but rather regular, consistent formation in the faith on a daily and weekly basis. What might we do here to promote formation/education in a more holistic manner—not only in what we do in the temple, but also (and especially) in what we do at home and in our day-to-day lives?*

“The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing” (quoted by a speaker from Fr John Parker). *The most important thing for a parish to keep in mind in everything that it does is Jesus Christ, his Church, and his holy Gospel. As we examine our parish priorities—especially as they are expressed in things such as our calendar, our budget, the events that we hold, the outreach efforts that we strive to engage in—is it readily apparent that Jesus Christ is at the heart of everything that our parish is about?*

“You know that things are going right when you’re not comfortable.” *Growing always entails growing pains. And so, if we feel that we are very comfortable in our parish life, it probably means that we are not actually maturing spiritually as a community. What is our feeling at St Nicholas? Are we comfortable or complacent with the way that things are here or (even more seriously) about our faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and in our desire to grow closer to him? If so, how might we start repenting of this?*

Finally, although there is a not a pithy quote to use, the point was made a few times about **the primacy of prayer in being mission-oriented** (cf. the remarks of St Innocent in his instructions to a missionary). *Do we prioritize prayer—both as a parish, and as individual limbs of this body of Christ? What concrete steps can we take to improve our prayer lives—both as a parish and also as individual Christians? For example, would anyone be willing to come to the temple during the week and be here for a few hours for the sake of having some time in which the church is open for prayer in quiet and stillness?*

These are some of the points that I am especially going to be considering as I look ahead to the annual meeting. I want to encourage you all to do the same. Thank you for your collaboration in thinking through them.



UPCOMING SERVICES AND EVENTS IN OUR PARISH

Divine Services This Week

This week, there are a number of divine services in addition to the typical weekend schedule.

First: This Wednesday morning, July 17, at 9a I will serve the Akathist to the Mother of God, the Nurturer of Children. By way of background as to why: While my family was at St Vladimir’s Seminary, a group of people there would periodically read this Akathist together for the sake of our children. I am hoping to introduce this beautiful practice to our parish on at least a semi-regular basis (perhaps we might try to read it monthly?). In any case, we will have the service for the first time this coming Wednesday morning. If you have children (young or old), grandchildren, or godchildren, please try to participate in this service as a way of entrusting them to the protection of the most holy Theotokos.

And then, this coming Saturday, July 2, we celebrate the feast of the holy prophet of God, Elias (or Elijah). To mark this feast-day, we will offer two divine services: On the evening of Friday, July 1, we will serve Festal Vespers with Lity at 6:30p. (The readings at this service are especially moving. And so, if for some blessed reason you cannot be present at Vespers, you should read them wherever you find yourself.) And then, on the morning of Saturday, July 2, we will serve the Divine Liturgy at 9a. Following the Divine Liturgy, we will bless vehicles (cars, etc.) (a custom that has developed in many places in honor of the fact that St Elias was translated to heaven in a fiery chariot).

This feast-day of St Elias is a beautiful summer feast. And so, to re-iterate what I said a few weeks ago: **Holy days are just that: holy days—i.e., days that are set apart.** I highly encourage everyone to be in church for at least one divine service, and I ask parents: please offer your children a good example of what it means to “redeem the time” (Eph 5:16) in this world by making a good effort to be here for a service.





Vacation Church School: July 22–26

Vacation Church School will take place July 22–26. The theme will be “The Twelve Great Feasts of the Orthodox Church.” This year we will be focusing on the four feasts of the Theotokos. VCS will be held from 9:30a to 12p daily (ages 5–13). A snack will be provided Monday to Thursday. Friday will begin with Divine Liturgy, followed by lunch, water games, and a final wrap-up. An email sign up will be sent to all parents of children within the age group. If you can help in any way or if you have any questions, please contact Debbie Clements or Juliana Kingsbury.



Altar Server & Sacristan Workshop: August 10

On Saturday, August 10 at 10am, there will be a workshop for altar servers and sacristans, going to noon or so. All who participate in these ministries, or who would like to do so, are expected to be present. (I will announce a date for a similar event for those who read, or who wish to read, in church, in the coming weeks.)



MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

Scripture Reading Group in the Making...

Subdeacon Daniel has offered to facilitate a scripture reading group. If you are interested in doing this, please speak with him.



PARISH PRAYER LIST

If you know of someone who is in special need of prayer at the moment, please email me so that I might add the person to the prayer list. Please also email me to make changes to this list (e.g., to remove a name).

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, Mary Ann Sheranko, Helen** (Jan Ursinyi’s mother), **Kevin, Declan, and Teagon** (husband and children of the newly-reposed Kristen), **Andrew 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**; **Delphine** (mother of Sean Kiernan); **Jennifer, Gani, Stiljan, & Vera** (friends of Katie Horabik); **Janice** (Laurie Alexander’s mother); **Miriam Kuhl** (Sue Hoffacker’s sister); **Boris & Maria** (friends of Anna Kozikov); **Michael** (cousin of Anna Kozikov); **Katarina** (relative of Natalie Antonoff); **Aleksey Byltsov** (son of Natalie Antonoff); **Willie Gomer** (in baptism: **Alexander**); **Nancy** (Leah Woodruff’s mother); **Priest Peter & Matushka Sophie** (as Fr Peter begins his new assignment); **Archpriest Jan, Matushka Jana, and the parishioners of St Theodosius Cathedral**; **Theodore Tollefson**; **Yeny Ramos** (mother of newly-reposed John and Isaac); **Bill Gubser**; the suffering Christians of **Ukraine, the Middle East, and Armenia**

Birthdays this week: 7/14: Emma Moore; 7/16: Joseph Chuppa; 7/17: Tina Rausch, John Sapp

Anniversaries this week: 7/14: George & Paula Tintor; 7/17: Ted & Elaine Kisha, Tim & Linda Halligan

Expecting: Jake & Allison Szendrey, Subdeacon David (Jeffrey) & Michelle, Brian & Katya; Theodore & Jessica

Catechumens: Dalton Moses, Alex Wittie

Newly born: Anysia Theophana (Joseph & Venessa); Leo (Weston & Rachel); Kennedy Anne (Jon & Alexandra); James (Patrick & Katherine); Margaret Lee (Greg & Grace)

Newly crowned: Elizabeth & Patrick

Newly illumined: Nicholas & Mary Monda

Departed: 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); **Daniel** (infant son of Fr Peter and Matushka Sophie Ries); **John** (father of Sean Kiernan), **Ronald** (in baptism, **Thomas**) (Collin Moore’s father); **John and Isaac Ramos** (sons of Yeny Ramos, a colleague of Mark Miller); **Priest James Bernstein**

