

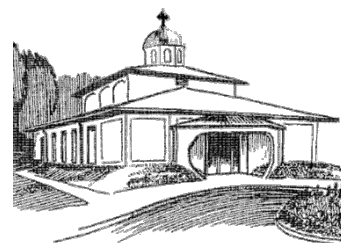


# St Nicholas Orthodox Church

*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 21, 2024

Sunday, July 21	<i>Fourth Sunday after Pentecost</i> 8:50a Third Hour & Divine Liturgy
Monday, July 22	<i>St Mary Magdalene</i> 8a Divine Liturgy    9:30a–12p Vacation Church School (VCS)
Tuesday, July 23	9:30a–12p VCS
Wednesday, July 24	9:30a–12p VCS    6–8p Scripture Reading Group 8p Panikhida for Ronald Moore ( <i>40th day after his repose</i> )
Thursday, July 25	9:30a–12p VCS
Friday, July 26	<i>St Jacob of Alaska</i> 9:30a Divine Liturgy ( <i>conclusion of VCS to follow</i> )
Saturday, July 27	<i>The Holy Great-Martyr Panteleimon</i> 9a Moleben ( <i>with Prayers for Healing</i> )    4:30p Confession    5:30p Great Vespers
Sunday, July 28	<i>Fifth Sunday after Pentecost</i> 8:50a Third Hour, Baptism of James, & Divine Liturgy



### ATTENDANCE & STEWARDSHIP FOR JULY 21, 2024

**Attendance:** ca. 120 (exact count not taken); **Operating:** \$2,053; **Capital Maintenance:** \$195; **Icons:** \$20; **Diocesan Dues:** \$63; **Candles:** \$97; **Uganda:** \$55; **Parish Charities:** \$75; **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)*



### WEEKLY CATECHETICAL REFLECTION

**Preparing for Holy Communion, Part II,  
& A Reflection on the Importance of Participating  
in the Liturgical Hours**

Several weeks ago, in response to an inquiry, I offered

the first part of an extended catechesis on preparing for the reception of Holy Communion. There I focused on what we should do to prepare *before* coming to the temple on the day of the liturgy. To summarize: During the week before receiving, we should sincerely try to live as the Lord commands us in the Gospel, and we should fast on Wednesday and Friday (and other days, as prescribed by the Church—these are noted on the wall calendar). Then, on the day before receiving, if possible, we should attend the evening service. At home, we should try to keep an atmosphere of peace as much as we can. We should examine our conscience and, if we find ourselves to have committed serious sins, we must confess them before receiving. In terms of prayer, at a bare minimum we should read the Office in Preparation for Holy Communion. We should keep a total fast from midnight (unless we cannot do so for some blessed reason). And finally, we should do all of these things not

out of any sense of ‘earning’ the right to receive (for nothing can do that). Rather, we should do all of these things because we realize that, for the sacrament to bear fruit in our lives, the seed of this grace must find a prepared ground (cf. Matthew 13:8).

All of this should take place in the days before receiving. But then, what about the day of Holy Communion?

As the most proximate preparation, on the day of receiving we should try to attend whatever liturgical services are scheduled immediately before the Divine Liturgy—whether it be Matins/Orthros (as in most Antiochian, Greek, and Romanian parishes, as well as some parishes in the OCA), or the Third and Sixth Hours (as in most OCA parishes). The reason for this is simple: Attending the liturgical Hours helps us to focus our minds on the things of God and to enter into a state of prayer before the Liturgy begins.

Attending the services before the Liturgy, then, is the single best preparation for Liturgy that there is. But beyond that, in thinking about the importance of participating in the Hours, there is also something else that should be said here: Participating in the celebration of the liturgical Hours is not simply an addendum to Sunday Divine Liturgy; participating in the Hours is just as important as the Liturgy.

Saying this, I know, will strike many as odd. Isn’t it the case, after all, that the Divine Liturgy is the most important thing that we do in the Church? On the one hand, that is true: The Liturgy is the most important activity of our life in Christ. On the other hand, if we look at the Church’s liturgical directives as found in the *Typikon* (the book that regulates our worship), we find the following: On some days, the Church *prescribes* that we should celebrate the Eucharist. On others, she *allows* this. But on some others (e.g., most weekdays during the Great Fast, and also on a number of other days), she does not allow it, but *forbids* it.

From these prescriptions, a key principle of the Church’s worship emerges: *Not every day of the year is a Eucharistic day*. Contrariwise, we are directed, on each and every day (without exception), to keep the regular services of the liturgical Hours (Vespers, Compline, Matins, the Small Hours, etc.). In the Church’s *Typikon*, thus, it is the liturgical Hours, and not the Eucharistic Liturgy, that form the foundation of the Church’s daily cycle (the celebration of the Eucharist crowning *some* of those days, but *not* all of them). For this reason, we should be serious about participating in them whenever we can.

Related to this point, another should be made about the

importance of the Hours in the Church’s liturgical cycle. That point is this: Sometimes, because of how regularly we are able to participate in the Eucharist, we might start to take our access to the Eucharist as a given (or even as something due to us). But this is not correct because, at its heart, the Divine Liturgy is all about giving us access to the kingdom of God. And simply put, this access is not something that we should take for a given. Rather, access to this kingdom is—always and every time that we experience it—a completely gracious gift from God. And sometimes God may choose to withhold access to this grace from us for some reason.

Therefore, the Church’s Tradition has long recognized that there are all kinds of impediments that make it impossible for us to serve the Eucharistic Liturgy, even on a day that it is appointed (such as Sunday). There is, in fact, an extensive genre of manuals of liturgical accidents in the Church’s tradition. To give some examples from the hundreds that could be cited here: If on the morning of a scheduled liturgy the serving priest were to injure myself such that he were bleeding, he could not serve the liturgy (for it is theologically inadmissible to have blood in the place where the bloodless offering is made—see the Epistle to the Hebrews). Or again, if the priest were to discover that the bread for liturgy were not suitable (the seal of the Lamb could not be seen, an air pocket under the surface of the loaf causes it to disintegrate as he cuts it, it became moldy overnight, etc.), the Divine Liturgy cannot be served. Or again, if the wine were found to have soured, the Liturgy could not take place.

The list of possible issues goes on and on... But the main point is this: Even if something impedes the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, still, the obligation to worship God remains; even if we are not granted access to the kingdom in the gift of receiving the Eucharist, still, we must come to Church to participate in the Hours. And indeed, as we know from Church history, there are many Christians who, lacking access to the divine Mysteries on a regular basis, were nonetheless sanctified through their regular celebration of the liturgical Hours. (And it should be recalled here: In its earliest days, it was through coming together for lay-led ‘Reader’s Services’ that St Nicholas was able to start growing.)

So, in sum: When it comes time to come for Sunday worship, we should plan to participate in the Hours as best as we can. And then, IF the Divine Liturgy can be served because nothing unforeseen impedes it, then we should also give special thanks to God for giving us access to his kingdom through the Eucharistic

Liturgy (and not withholding it from us for some reason known to himself).



## UPCOMING SERVICES AND EVENTS IN OUR PARISH

### Divine Services This Week

This week is quite a busy week in the Church since there are a number of prominent saints being celebrated. In our parish, we will not keep all of these days with full festivity. But, if God gives us strength, we will mark at least a few of them with divine service:

On Monday, July 22, we will serve Divine Liturgy for the commemoration of **the holy myrrh-bearer and equal to the apostles, St Mary Magdalene**. Having followed our Lord during his public ministry, St Mary was one of the few people who remained faithful to him in the final moments of his earthly life—thus leading to her being granted the honor of being the first to bear witness also to his glorious resurrection. For this reason, although St Mary's commemoration is not a high-ranking feast in the Church's calendar, I think that it is important to mark her memory (especially since her image is featured on our iconostas). Please note: To accommodate the beginning of the Vacation Church School, Divine Liturgy will commence an earlier time: 8:00a.

Then, on Friday, July 26, we celebrate the feast-day of **the repose of St Jacob of Alaska**. If you are not familiar with the life of this saint who has shone forth in our own land, it is really worth taking the time to read about him. Having been born in Alaska and later ordained in Russia, St Jacob eventually returned to the land of his birth in order to preach the Gospel. By God's grace, his efforts were blessed abundantly: Within months of his ministry, he had received/reconciled hundreds of people into the Church. These souls were only the first fruits of an innumerable multitude that he eventually brought to our Lord and his holy Church, which easily number in the thousands. (To read more about his life, see this link: <https://www.oca.org/saints/lives/2024/07/26/102091-repose-of-saint-jacob-netsvetov-enlightener-of-the-peoples-of-al>.) Please note that, to accommodate the Vacation Church School schedule, Divine Liturgy this day will begin at 9:30a.

Finally, on Saturday, July 27, we celebrate the feast-day of **the holy great martyr and healer, St Panteleimon**. A martyr of the fourth century, already during his lifetime St Panteleimon was famed for healing many (he treated whoever came to him without taking pay for it). After

suffering and dying for our Lord, St Panteleimon has continued to work miracles century after century, thus making him especially well-loved in many different Churches. To commemorate him, we will serve a Moleben (prayer service) in his honor on Saturday at 9a. At the end of this service, after a supplicatory prayer to St Panteleimon, I will also read some of the prayers for the sick. Especially if you are experiencing any kind of sickness or health issue, try to attend (or, if you cannot be here physically, please make the special effort to ask for St Panteleimon's prayers on this day). To mark this occasion, I have also ordered a small vial of oil that has been sanctified over his relics, which are venerated at the Kyiv Caves in Ukraine. God willing, if the oil reaches us in time (it is still in transit over seas), I will use this to anoint people at the end of the service.



### NEXT SUNDAY, July 28: Service of Holy Baptism

God willing, next Sunday we will celebrate the baptism of James LePointe. Since our starting time is already earlier for the Summer, we will keep the beginning time for the service of baptism at **9a**, with Third Hour being read at **8:50a**. This week, please pray for James as he awaits full reception into the Church.



### August 10: Altar Server & Sacristan Workshop

On Saturday, August 10 at 10a, 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.)



### August 24: Parish Clean-Out

We will do a large-scale clean-out of our temple and hall on Saturday, August 24. A sign-up sheet to assist with this has now been placed in the foyer. Please sign up to help with this project, which will help contribute to the on-going beautification of our temple.



## MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

### New Treasurer Needed Soon

With thanks to Jared LeMaster for his services as our treasurer, it is time to start thinking about who next will take on this critical role in our parish ahead of the

election of the new parish council. If you are able to perform this vital work, please see Jared, Nick, or me.



### Flower Ministry Sign-Up

In just a few weeks, we will celebrate the feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos—a day on which, according to custom, we bless flowers and herbs. To mark our entrance into the beginning of the Dormition Fast on August 1, we are going to try something new for the weekly beautification of our temple: We are going to start asking for weekly flower donations. If you would like to sign up for a week, you can do so online here:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040445A8AD2DA3F58-50363602-flowers#/>

We will try this new way of approaching our flower ministry for August and September to see how it goes. During this time, please consider signing up: It is a very beautiful thing to offer flowers in honor of Christ and the Mother of God. Preparing the bouquets might be an especially good thing to involve your children in as a way of extending the liturgy into what we do at home.



### Prayers after Communion

For the past several months, one of the sacristans has been reading the post-communion prayers while I consume the holy Gifts and purify the holy vessels. Starting this week, I am going to ask the sacristan to read these prayers aloud so that anyone for anyone who wishes to hear them. This will take place after the veneration of the holy cross and after the holy doors have been closed. If you would like to hear the prayers read, please stay in the temple at that time.



### 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; Charlie Deeb**; the suffering Christians of **Ukraine, the Middle East, and Armenia**

**Birthdays this week: 7/23: Camille Nicoletti; 7/26: Jim Schlotzer; 7/27: Jim Capitan, Melissa Tintor**

**Anniversaries this week: 7/25: Jim & Cinda Renda**

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

**Catechumens: Dalton Moses, Alex Wittie**

**Infants Awaiting Holy Illumination: Leo** (son of **Weston & Rachel**); **Kennedy Anne** (daughter of **Jon & Alexandra**); **James** (son of **Patrick & Katherine**); **Margaret Lee** (daughter of **Greg & Grace**)

**Newly illumined: Nicholas & Mary Monda; Anysia Theophana Pohl**

**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**