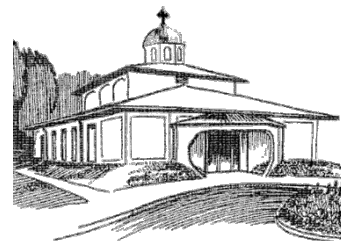




St Nicholas Orthodox Church



*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, August 18, 2024

- Sunday, August 18 *Eighth Sunday after Pentecost & Afterfeast of the Dormition*
8:50a Third Hour & Divine Liturgy
- Tuesday, August 20 6:30–8:30p Fundraiser for the St Nicholas Uganda Children's Fund
- Wednesday, August 21 9a Akathist to the Theotokos, Nurturer of Children (*NB: schedule change*)
- Thursday, August 22 6:30p Parish Council Meeting
- Friday, August 23 *Leave-taking of the Dormition* || 9a Service (*TBD*)
- Saturday, August 24 8a Church Clean-Out (and Cleaning)
4:30p Confessions || 5:30p Great Vespers
- Sunday, August 25 *Ninth Sunday after Pentecost*
8:50a Third Hour, Baptism of Leo, & Divine Liturgy
During Coffee Hour: Meeting with Church School Teachers



ATTENDANCE & STEWARDSHIP FOR AUGUST 11, 2024

Attendance: 134; Operating: \$2,990; ZOE: \$110;
Capital Maintenance: \$150; Holy Day: \$125; Icons:
\$20; Diocesan Dues: \$23; Candles: \$102; Uganda: \$84;
Parish Charities: \$75

“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

Bread Etiquette: Some Historical & Liturgical Notes Regarding the *Antidoron*

I've recently received a number of questions about the
antidoron bread, especially in terms of how it should be
treated. These were raised especially in light of how

crumbs from this bread are falling to the floor as people
exit the holy temple to go to the parish hall.

I want to say a few things about the etiquette that we
should be practicing when it comes to this bread. But
before getting to that, I want to say a few things about
the history of this bread and our contemporary practice.

Historically speaking, the custom of distributing some
kind of bread that is blessed (and thus, set apart for non-
profane use) but not sanctified (i.e., not consecrated into
the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Eucharist)
seems to go back to the earliest centuries of the Church.
The most common name for this bread at that time was
evlogia (the Greek word for ‘blessing’). Some are of the
opinion that the practice of offering this bread goes back
to the early Christian practice of celebrating the
Eucharist in conjunction with a fellowship meal called
the *agape* (the Greek word for ‘love’). Others see remarks
that St Augustine makes in his *Letter 54* as the first
reference to this bread.

While there might be something to these speculations, on the whole there is a fair bit of murkiness surrounding both the origins of the practice of giving this bread, as well as how it was practiced in the earliest centuries. In any event, once we get into the second millennium, we start to see the practice mentioned more regularly in written sources. The twelfth century in particular is a turning point for our information regarding the practice of giving this bread. In fact, it is only in this century that, for the first time, written sources refer to this bread by the name that we still use for it today: Speaking of this bread in one of his canonical rulings, Patriarch Theodore Balsamon refers to it as *antidoron*—a Greek term that comes from two words: *anti-* (a prefix meaning ‘instead of’) and *doron* (a noun meaning ‘gift’). By this time then, it seems, some were receiving this bread as a kind of a substitute for the holy Gifts.

Besides Theodore, other ecclesiastical writers from this century also discuss this bread—many of them wishing to regularize how it should be given. The fact that so many wish to standardize the practice is interesting to note because it seems to indicate, implicitly, that there were a variety of practices, and that not all of these were viewed as acceptable. For example, we find some comments on the distribution of this blessed bread in the writings of an early twelfth century churchman, Patriarch Nicholas III of Constantinople. In writing about this bread, he comments that, if one is banned from taking communion (i.e., for a canonical reason—not just, it seems, because of a sense of awe before the Mysteries), then he or she may not take this blessed bread either. He also says that this bread should be received only on an empty stomach (i.e., after fasting), and that one should consume it with a prayer. Other sources from this time reflect a similar concern for proper decorum in treating this bread. For example, another writer from this time comments that the proper place for consuming it is the temple (a regulation that implicitly bans the practice of taking this bread home).

In sum, then, we can say that, in these later sources, there is a clear and consistent concern that there be propriety in the way that this bread is treated. At the same time, what these different writings imply in their attempt to regulate this practice is that the customs surrounding the giving of this bread continued to remain diverse.

Moving from this quick historical overview, we can come now to present-day practice. What we find here, in brief, is that the diversity seen in the ancient sources largely continues. In some places, the stricter views that developed in the second millennium have prevailed. For

example, in many Russian and Ukrainian communities, the custom remains that the *antidoron* may only be received by those who have fasted; it may not be received by those who have already consumed regular food. And yet, although strictness is kept in maintaining that custom in those communities, in other ways the ancient discipline has been relaxed. For example, it is now very common in Slavic piety to take some extra *antidoron* home, to dry it out, and to consume a little bit of it each morning (always, of course, on an empty stomach—and usually accompanied by a little holy water).

What about our own contemporary practice in the Orthodox Church in America? As far as I am aware, the only official instructions about this bread are found in a few short rubrics given in our *Hieratikon* (this is the service book used by the clergy). After the priest says the dismissal, the rubrics say this: “The polychronion is sung, and the people come forward to venerate the Cross and receive the antidoron bread.” In terms of ‘what is official,’ that is all that we find: This bread is to be given at the end of liturgy. In terms of how we are to receive it, we are left to rely upon received practice and custom.

With all of that said, then, we can go back to the beginning of this little write-up. **Within the temple, what is the proper etiquette when it comes to this bread?** Above all, it must always be remembered that the *antidoron* is the bread that is left-over from the rite of *proskomedia*—i.e., from the service in which the bread and wine are prepared for consecration later in the Divine Liturgy. That is important for two reasons. First, it is important because it means that this bread was cut at least in part with the same liturgical knife (called a *spear*) that is used to cut the holy Eucharist. Second, it is important because it means that, before being given out, at one point this bread rested upon the table of oblation. And that is significant: According to the Church’s current practice, the table of oblation is treated with almost the exact same respect and reverence as the holy table (since, just like the holy table, at times it too is the place where the holy Eucharist is kept). And so, even if the *antidoron* is not blessed in any explicit way (at least, not in our practice—other Orthodox Churches do have rituals to bless it, but we do not), it should be treated as having been sanctified by contact with the holy Gifts.

Therefore, this bread should be taken and consumed with reverence. In the words of St Nicholas Cabasilas: this bread “is given to the faithful as something that has been hallowed by being dedicated and offered to God” (*Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, p. 119). Thus, it should not be taken in such a way that crumbs from it

fall to the ground. Furthermore, if some of the bread is to be taken home, it should be put into a fitting vessel immediately. But if not is not to be taken home, it should be consumed immediately when received; by no means should one wait to consume it during coffee hour with other foods. And when it is consumed, you should check your hands to make sure that no crumbs remain. Finally, as something that is blessed, it is should be received as any blessing: That is, as a sign of God's love for us, and as a reminder that everything that we have is given to us through his grace and mercy.



UPCOMING SERVICES AND EVENTS IN OUR PARISH

Divine Services This Week

In comparison to previous weeks, this week our liturgical schedule in the parish is fairly light.

This Wednesday, we will serve the Akathist to the Theotokos, the Nurturer of Children. As announced last month, we will try to have this service once a month to pray for the children in our parish. To prepare for it, I will try to prepare a list of all of the children in our parish by Wednesday so that we can read all of their names during the service. If you want to add any other children or godchildren to the list, please write their names on a sheet of paper (or, ideally, type them) and bring them to the service. Please note: On the monthly calendar, I had originally put this service on Friday morning, but I have moved it to **Wednesday morning**. (The plan was originally to keep it on Wednesday, but I forgot this when I made the monthly calendar.) On **Friday morning**, then, we will serve another service instead of the Akathist (TBD—it will likely be either Matins for the leave-taking of the Dormition, or Hours & Typika).



August 20: Fundraiser for the Uganda Children's Fund

Please remember: A Good Night for a Good Cause in Support of the St Nicholas Uganda Children's Fund will take place on **this Tuesday**, August 20 from 6:30–8:30pm (with bidding ends at 8:00pm). You can participate in a silent auction of over 60 baskets/items, purchase handmade Ugandan Crafts, and listen to a short presentation about the St Nicholas Uganda Children's Fund. The funds raised help to provide what is necessary for the education, health and welfare of Ugandan children, teens, and young adults who are otherwise unable to receive an education. We hope that

you can attend this enjoyable evening to support such a wonderful cause! (Light refreshments will be served.)



August 24: Parish Clean-Out

As noted in the bulletin for several weeks now, 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.

Thank you to all who have signed up to help. If you have not yet done so, please consider offering your time to assist with the beautification of the 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

There are still slots to sign up to bring flowers for September. If you would like to donate two small bouquets for the tetrapod, please use the following link:

[https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040445A8AD2DA3F58-50363602-flowers -/](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040445A8AD2DA3F58-50363602-flowers-/)



Thank You

The first meeting of the parish teens went very well. Thank you to those parents who brought your teens. May God bless this group and its endeavors as it continues to take shape.



Today Heaven Receives Heaven:

St John of Damascus on the Feast of the Dormition

“Today the Eden of the new Adam welcomes the spiritual Paradise where our condemnation has been cancelled, where the tree of life is planted, where our nakedness is clothed again. ... For in this Paradise, the serpent has no means of entry—that serpent whose false promise of divinization led us to a covetousness that

made us the equal only of irrational beasts. The only Son of God, who is God and of the same substance as the Father, formed himself into a human being from this virgin, from this pure soil; and so I, who am human, am made divine ... For I have taken off corruption, and put on the robe of divinity.

Today the immaculate Virgin, who never involved herself in earthly passions but was nourished on heavenly thoughts, did not return to earth (cf. Gen 3:19); being truly a living heaven, she now dwells in the tents of heaven. For who could err in calling her heaven, unless one were to say—and say rightly—that she has been lifted even above heaven in her incomparable privileges? ...

Today the treasury of life, the abyss of grace (I do not know how I can say these things with my bold, fearless lips!) is wrapped in a death that brings life. Undaunted, she draws near to death, having given birth to death's destroyer—if one may call her departure from the world, so full of holiness and life, a death at all. For how could she, who brimmed over with true life for all, ever become subject to death's power? Still, she yields to the law established by her own Son, and as a daughter of the old Adam she undergoes the ancestral trial, since even her Son, life itself, did not refuse it. But as Mother of the living God, it is also right that she should be brought into his presence. For if God was concerned "lest the first human being reach out his hand and take from the tree of life and eat, and live forever ..." (Gen 3:21), how can she, who has received the life that knows no beginning or ending, the life free from the boundaries of both birth and death, not live herself for endless ages?

(Source: *On the Dormition of Mary: Early Patristic Homilies*, translated by Fr Brian Daley, SJ, pp. 205–206.)



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), **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); **Archpriest Jan, Matushka Jana, and the parishioners of St Theodosius Cathedral; Theodore Tollefson; Charlie Deeb; James Horabik; Dolores Kessler** (friend of Suzanne Gubser); **Richard Brown** (husband of newly reposed Joan); **Janet Evans** (friend of Ruth Bede); **the suffering Christians of Ukraine, the Middle East, and Armenia**

Birthdays this week: 8/20: Galina Povozahev; 8/23: Mary Ray, Alexandra Dzura, Mary Pahoulis

Anniversaries this week: 8/18: Greg & Dianne Kochan

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**); **Margaret Lee** (daughter of **Greg & Grace**)

Newly illumined: Nicholas & Mary Monda; Anysia Theophana Pohl; James Lapointe

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); **Priest James Bernstein; Joan Brown** (friend of Fr Mark and Matushka Olena); **Carol Wright; Paul Webb** (friend of Abby Goodell)