

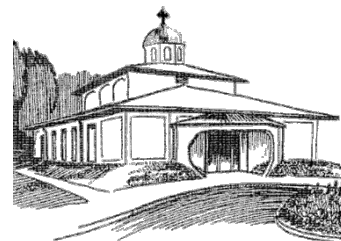


St Nicholas Orthodox Church

*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, September 29, 2024

- Sunday, Sept. 29 *Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost*
9a Church School || 9:35a 3rd & 6th Hours, Divine Liturgy
- Monday, Sept. 30 6:30p Festal Vespers with Lity
- Tuesday, Oct. 1 *The Protection of our Most Holy Lady, the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary (Pokrov)*
9a Divine Liturgy
- Saturday, Oct. 5 4p Catechism Class || 5:30p Great Vespers (confession to follow)
- Sunday, Oct. 6 *Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost, Glorification of St Innocent, Apostle to America*
9a Church School || 9:35a 3rd & 6th Hours, Divine Liturgy



ATTENDANCE & STEWARDSHIP FOR SEPTEMBER 22, 2024

Attendance: 134 (75 adults + 59 children); **Operating:** \$3,440; **ZOE:** \$20; **Capital Maintenance:** \$15; **Diocesan Dues:** \$63; **Candles:** \$28; **Uganda:** \$103.50; **Parish Charities:** \$37.50

“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

“O Lord, Bless My Enemies”: A Prayer of St Nikolai of Zhicha

A few weeks ago at the end of Vespers, I mentioned the fact that, having suffered through the horrors of a concentration camp, St Nikolai of Zhicha (i.e., St Nikolai Velimirović) later said that he would give anything to return to it for a few minutes because of the prayer that he experienced there. Providentially, this past week a parishioner sent me the text of a prayer composed by St Nikolai, in which the saint thanks and blesses God for the gift of enemies. In light of today's Gospel, I think that it is fitting to share it with everyone.

Bless my enemies, O Lord. Even I bless them and do not curse them.

Enemies have driven me into Thy embrace more than friends have. Friends have bound me to earth; enemies have loosed me from earth and have demolished all my aspirations in the world. Enemies have made me a stranger in worldly realms and an extraneous inhabitant of the world.

Just as a hunted animal finds safer shelter than an un hunted animal does, so have I, persecuted by enemies, found the safest sanctuary, having ensconced myself beneath Thy tabernacle, where neither friends nor enemies can slay my soul.

Bless my enemies, O Lord. Even I bless them and do not curse them.

They, rather than I, have confessed my sins before the world. They have punished me, whenever I have hesitated to punish myself. They have tormented me, whenever I have tried to flee torments. They have scolded me, whenever I have flattered myself. They have spat upon me, whenever I have filled myself with arrogance.

Bless my enemies, O Lord. Even I bless them and do

not curse them.

Whenever I have made myself wise, they have called me foolish. Whenever I have made myself mighty, they have mocked me as though I were a dwarf. Whenever I have wanted to lead people, they have shoved me into the background. Whenever I have rushed to enrich myself, they have prevented me with an iron hand. Whenever I thought that I would sleep peacefully, they have wakened me from sleep. Whenever I have tried to build a home for a long and tranquil life, they have demolished it and driven me out. Truly, enemies have cut me loose from the world and have stretched out my hands to the hem of Thy garment.

Bless my enemies, O Lord. Even I bless them and do not curse them.

Bless them and multiply them; multiply them and make them even more bitterly against me: so that my fleeing to Thee may have no return; so that all hope in men may be scattered like cobwebs; so that absolute serenity may begin to reign in my soul; so that my heart may become the grave of my two evil twins: arrogance and anger; so that I might amass all my treasure in heaven; ah, so that I may for once be freed from self-deception, which has entangled me in the dreadful web of illusory life.

Enemies have taught me to know what hardly anyone knows: that a person has no enemies in the world except himself. One hates his enemies only when he fails to realize that they are not enemies, but cruel friends.

It is truly difficult for me to say who has done me more good and who has done me more evil in the world: friends or enemies.

Therefore bless, O Lord, both my friends and my enemies.

A slave curses enemies, for he does not understand. But a son blesses them, for he understands. For a son knows that his enemies cannot touch his life. Therefore he freely steps among them and prays to God for them.

Bless my enemies, O Lord. Even I bless them and do not curse them. Amen.

(Source: <https://www.orthodox.net/trebnic/lord-bless-my-enemies.html>.)



UPCOMING SERVICES AND EVENTS

Divine Services This Week

This week, we celebrate a feast that is especially dear to many Orthodox Christians: The Protection of the Theotokos (*Pokrov*). Historically-speaking, this feast recounts an event in which the Theotokos appeared in a vision to St Andrew, a fool-for-Christ. During this vision, Theotokos was seen praying for a long time. She then spread her veil over the worshippers in the Church in which she appeared as a sign of her love.

Beyond that one-time event, however, we celebrate this feast as a way of marking in a special way the fact that we all live under the embrace and protection of the Theotokos. For this reason, although this feast is not one of the twelve major feasts of the liturgical year, over time it has come to be celebrated with special solemnity in the Church. To mark it at our parish, we will keep two services: on Monday evening, we will serve Festal Vespers with Lity at **6:30p**. And then, on Tuesday morning, we will serve the Divine Liturgy at **9a**. (Usually on feasts, the Hours are also chanted before Liturgy beginning at 8:35 or 8:40.)

If you are experiencing any affliction or spiritual struggle, please remember: we have no greater patroness than the Mother of God. **And so, as always, everyone should plan to participate in at least one service.**



MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

An Announcement Regarding St Herman's House from Peggy Walker

With summer almost over and folks settled into a new routine, I am hoping that our St. Nicholas parishioners can once again prepare a meal for St. Herman's House. The past response was amazing! I am sure we can have a repeat performance! The menu this time will be **PULLED PORK**. I can provide a recipe or please use your own. Containers will be provided. Prepared Food can be placed in church freezer through **November 3** after which it will be delivered to St. Herman's House. Please let me know if you have any questions.



Flower Ministry Reminder from Matushka Olena

Thank you so much to all who have signed up and brought flowers to beautify our temple! We are continuing this practice for the months of October,

November, and December. Please, consider signing up to bring flowers to our Lord and our Most Holy Lady the Theotokos. To sign up, please click on the “Flower Ministry” link under “Parish Resources” on our parish’s website: <https://saintnicholas-oca.org/parishresources>.



Request for Prayer for Safe Travels for Peter Georges

Please note that this week, on Tuesday and Wednesday (October 1 and 2), Peter Georges is making his journey back to Uganda. God willing, he will be back for Christmas. Please pray for Peter this week—both for his safe travels, and also for his continued efforts in Uganda.

May the most holy Theotokos watch over you, Peter, especially as you travel.



Catechetical / Educational Resources Online

As part of the website redesign, I have started to keep a list of some catechetical and educational resources. The list is not at all comprehensive at this point. But I hope that, for those looking for something educational, but who might not be sure of where to begin, it might provide a good starting point. If you are interested, these resources are found under the heading “Catechetical Resources.” For direct access, see this link: <https://saintnicholas-oca.org/catecheticalresources>.



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, 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; James Horabik; Dolores Kessler** (friend of Suzanne Gubser); **Richard Brown** (husband of newly reposed Joan); **Carol Lehman** (Darlene Horabik’s sister, wife of newly-reposed George); **Mirela** (friend of Katie Horabik); **Joe Dzura** (brother of Andy Dzura); **Viktor and Dominik Povozaev; Vincent** (Thomas Alexander’s father); **Subdeacon Peter** (from St Theodosius); **the suffering Christians of Ukraine, the Middle East, and Armenia**

Birthdays this week: 9/30: Thomas Oberhausen, Abby Goodell; 10/4: Michael Abernathy, Mason Zadd

Anniversaries this week: 10/2: Jim & Kate Schlotzer

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

Catechumens: Dalton Moses, Alex Wittie, Scott Salzgeber

Infants Awaiting Holy Illumination: Kennedy Anne (daughter of **Jon & Alexandra**); **Margaret Lee** (daughter of **Greg & Grace**); **Gianna Denise** (daughter of **Jake & Allison**)

Newly illumined: Nicholas & Mary Monda; Anyisia Theophana Pohl; James Lapointe; Leo Szalay

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; 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); **George (Bim) Lehman** (Darlene Horabik’s brother-in-law); **Anna Mae Sokol** (Darlene Horabik’s cousin); **Janet Evans** (friend of Ruth Bede); **Olga** (Nicholas Covelli’s mother)