

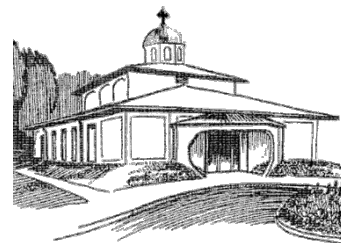


St Nicholas Orthodox Church

*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, October 13, 2024

- Sunday, Oct. 13** *Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost, Fathers of the 7th Ecumenical Council*
9a Church School || 9:35a 3rd & 6th Hours, Divine Liturgy
- Wednesday, Oct. 16** 9a Moleben (Paraklesis) to the Theotokos
- Thursday, Oct. 17** 6:30p Parish Council Meeting
- Saturday, Oct. 19** 10a Baptisms || 2–4p Harvest Festival || 4p Catechism Class
5:30p Great Vespers (confession follows after Vespers)
- Sunday, Oct. 20** *Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost*
9a Church School || 9:35a 3rd & 6th Hours, Divine Liturgy



ATTENDANCE & STEWARDSHIP FOR OCTOBER 6, 2024

Attendance: 135 (76 adults + 59 children); **Operating:** \$3,400; **Capital Maintenance:** \$125; **Icons:** \$25; **Diocesan Dues:** \$88; **Candles:** \$78; **Uganda:** \$190; **Parish Charities:** \$105; **IOCC:** \$45; **Seminary:** \$60

“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

Thoughts on the 2024 Diocesan Assembly

This past week, Subdeacon Daniel and I participated in the 2024 Diocesan Assembly. Overall, the Assembly went very smoothly in the sense that there were not any major disputes or points of contention or controversy.

In regard to the practical life of the Diocese, two important announcements were made. **First:** The Diocese will soon have a new treasurer who is coming to us from the Diocese of the West. This is a good thing for us: The Diocese of the West has a long-standing custom of the diocesan treasurer working with parish treasurers

to help them, to offer guidance on procedures/legal issues, etc. **Second:** A new organizational plan for the diocese will be rolled out on November 15. With this, there will be a clearer sense of the resources available in the Diocese, and also a clearer sense of the avenues to pursue when help is needed at the parish level.

The Assembly was fruitful in other ways. The highlight, of course, was the hierarchical Divine Liturgy served at the end of the Assembly. It was good to see our own Subdeacon Daniel assist at this celebration—especially since Archbishop Daniel has said that he intends to serve a hierarchical Divine Liturgy during his next visit to our parish. Beyond that, the plenary sessions were very helpful. These were given by Archpriest Timothy Hojnicky, the vice chancellor of the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania. These sessions were dedicated to some of the practical steps that can help to grow a parish, which he spoke about from his own experience of shepherding a congregation from the status of being a young mission to a full (and very vibrant) parish—a task that is not the easiest in light of some of the logistical challenges faced by the Church in eastern Pennsylvania.

By way of trying to distill some of his insights, this week I want to offer some quotes from his presentations, along with some comments/questions for parish reflection:

“The Church has one program: The Gospel.” – “Every church is a mission parish.” Sometimes, parishes get into the habit of thinking that church life is about programs. Programs can be good, but ultimately there is one reason for a parish to exist: The Gospel. And so, every parish must be a mission parish, because every parish has one goal: To offer the Gospel to the world. *How does our parish measure up to the Gospel standard for the Church’ mission as found in Matthew 28? Do we have the mindset that the reason for doing everything in our parish is because God has called us together to offer his saving message to those who do not believe?*

“The Church should be known for what it gives out.” – “If your hand is out to give, you’re able to receive at the same time.” – If we hold on to what we have with closed hands, we cannot receive anything. We can receive only if our hand is out to give. *How might our parish expand its interaction with the outside world? Can we work with St Herman’s House on a more regular basis? Can we branch out to work with other organizations in the area?*

“How we give (not what we give) indicates where we are spiritually.” The amount of time, talent, and treasure that we give is not what is most important. What is most important is that we give whatever we can in a spirit of authentic generosity. *When we think about stewardship, are we thinking primarily in terms of the bottom line of what our parish needs? Or do we approach stewardship primarily from the perspective that giving is something meant to change us by making us more like God?*

“We don’t have to be afraid of anything. It’s Christ’s Church.” – “It’s not about programs and stuff. It’s the Holy Spirit.” – Ultimately, the Church is not about us; it is the body of Christ, which is enlivened and animated by the Holy Spirit. And so, as long as we are aiming to do things that are in accord with the teaching of the Church, we do not have to be afraid of failure. *What are some of the new things that we might try to be more faithful to our mission as a parish? Are there new pastoral needs—either within the parish or in the wider community—that we are being called to respond to? Are we willing to try new things in response to new challenges?*

And finally: “We should worry about what we are doing, not how we are doing it.” – The primary way to evaluate the success of a parish is fidelity to God because, if we are doing the right things, we know that God will bless our work. *Having been given this great gift of the fullness of faith, what are some of our current strengths in how we offer the Gospel to our local area? And where can we improve in responding to the call that God has given to us as a community to offer this saving Word to others?*

In addition to these points, there are a few more that I want to offer to the parish. But passing over those for the time being, I invite everyone to reflect on those that I have mentioned here for this week. *And please: If something strikes you in response to one of them, or if you have some idea that you want to try in our parish, come and talk with me. I am always glad to hear ideas about the direction of our parish.*



UPCOMING SERVICES AND EVENTS

October 19: Fall Harvest Festival

This year, the St Nicholas Youth Group is sponsoring a Harvest Festival. The festival will take place on **Saturday, October 19, from 2 to 4p**. In the church hall there will be games, music, and dancing, and outside there will be a fire pit, a hayride, snacks and drinks. For ages 12 and under. Older children can volunteer to help with games and with the younger kids. **What to bring:** Costumes are optional (but please, nothing ghoulish); jackets (dress for outside); camp chairs or blankets; and a snack to share (a sign-up sheet will be posted).



October 31: Feast of St John of Chicago

At the end of this month, we celebrate a local saint of our own diocese: October 31 is the feast-day of St John of Chicago. To celebrate St John, we will keep a typical round of evening and morning divine services. Please also note: in light of his importance to our diocese, I want to keep the morning services with extra festivity. To that end, after the Divine Liturgy, I want to have a festal potluck. Please plan to attend (and to bring an item to share with everyone).



November 14: Unction Service at St Innocent

The Greater Cleveland Council of Orthodox Clergy will offer the Mystery of Holy Unction ahead of the Nativity Fast. With the blessing of His Eminence, Archbishop Daniel, this year Saint Innocent Parish will be hosting this service on **Thursday, November 14, at 6p**. Receiving this holy Mystery for the healing of soul and body would be a wonderful way to begin the Fast for the Lord’s Nativity. And so, all parishioners of St Nicholas parish have a blessing participate and to be anointed with the holy oil (provided that you make a confession near to the day of the celebration).





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.



Some Quick Reminders

Flowers. The sign-up for flowers is full for October, but there are still open spots in November and December. To sign up, use the "Flower Ministry" link under "Parish Resources" on our website: <https://saintnicholas-oca.org/parishresources>. Thanks to all who contribute!

Names of Departed. I need some assistance in making a list of those who have departed from our parish for the purpose of commemorating them more regularly. If you can help with this, please get in touch with me.



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, 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 Povozahev**; **Vincent** (Thomas Alexander's father); **Subdeacon Peter** (from St Theodosius); **Renee Kirouac** (goddaughter of Ruth Bede) & **Tristan Scott** (as they prepare for Holy Matrimony); **Edward** (Matushka Olena's father); **the suffering Christians of Ukraine, the Middle East, and Armenia**

Birthdays this week: 10/13: Venessa Pohl; 10/14: Emily Medakovich; 10/17: Kaitlin Murphy, Mario Christani, Cole Schlafer; 10/19: Merrick Wagner

Expecting Parents: 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**); **Charlotte Xenia** (daughter of Subdeacon David and Michelle)

Newly illumined: Nicholas & Mary Monda; Anysia 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); **Helen** (Jan Ursinyi's mother)