



Weekly Bulletin

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

A Community of the Orthodox Church in America

Witnessing to the Apostolic Faith in Lake County for over 42 Years

Father Andrew Clements, Pastor

Volume 32

2018

Number 2

Sunday	Jan 14	<i>32nd Sunday after Pentecost / Tone 7 / St Nina of Georgia</i>
		9:00 am Church School
		10:00 am Divine Liturgy Coffee Hour
Saturday	Jan 20	<i>Venerable Euthymius the Great</i>
		4:00 pm Bede / Christani Memorial
		5:30 pm Great Vespers Confession
Sunday	Jan 21	<i>33rd Sunday after Pentecost / Tone 8 / Zacchaeus</i>
		Readings: 1 Tim 4:9-15 Lk 19:1-10
		9:00 am Church School
		10:00 am Divine Liturgy Coffee Hour

ATTENDANCE / STEWARDSHIP / Jan 7

Attendance: (Adults 120, Children 28)	148
Operating	\$3,305.00
OCA Assessments	1,743.00
Uganda Children	51.00
Charities	15.00
Icons	25.00

COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday, Jan 18 at 7:00 pm.

TUESDAY EVENING ADULT CLASS

The Tuesday Evening Adult Class will resume after the House Blessing Season.

MEMORIAL NEXT SATURDAY

The One Year Memorial will be served next Saturday, Jan 20 at 4:00 pm for Ron Bede and Mary Christani. A Reception will follow in the hall.

HOUSE BLESSING

Please sign-up in the Foyer if you wish to have your house blessed this Theophany Season. Blessings can be scheduled up to Feb 11.

PRAYER CORNER + + + + +

Eleanor Alexander (Tom's mom), Perry (Capitan), Sbdcn Leonard, Kathy (Denise F's sis), Jim (Ruth's dad), Michael (Chongris nphw), Ted Geletka, (Fr's frnd), Connie (Linda D's frnd), Alex Dzura, infant Julian, John Clements, Willie (Elena G's son), Infant Sophia, (Elaine T's granddaughter), Sarah Crivella, suffering Christians in Ukraine and the Middle East.

Birthdays: Stephen Hoffacker (1/17), John Hecht Jr, Miranda Oberhausen (1/19).

Newborns: Andrew James (James & Lisa).

Expecting: Tom & Miranda, Mitch & Winnie, Brian & Nicole, Jon & Larissa, Cole & Sarah, Matt & Krista.

Our Seminarian: Brian Crivella & Family.

Our Missionaries: Peter & Sharon.

Newly Illumined: Anastasia.

Newly United: John & Lindsay.

Memory Eternal: Leona (Pauline Demanksy's sis), Fr John Klembara.

In this world the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church manifests itself as a plurality of churches, each one of which is both a part and a whole. It is a part because only in unity with all churches and in obedience to the universal truth can it be the Church; yet it is also a whole because in each church, by virtue of her unity with the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, the whole Christ is present, the fullness of grace is given, the catholicity of new life is revealed. The visible unity of all churches as the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church is expressed and preserved in the unity of faith, the unity of sacramental structure, and the unity of life. The unity of faith has its norm and content in the universal tradition. The unity of sacramental structure is preserved through the apostolic succession, which is the visible and objective continuity of the Church's life and order in time and space. The unity of life manifests itself in the active concern of all churches for each other and of all them together for the Church's mission in the world.

— Fr Alexander Schmemmann —

Of Water and Fire

by Dcn George Shumaik

Biological science provides ample evidence that life, as we know it, cannot exist in the absence of water. The Earth is composed mostly of water, as are our own bodies. Humans can go weeks without food but can only survive a few days without water. Holy scripture is replete with references to water, over 600 times according to an Internet word-search of the New King James Version of the Bible.

“In the beginning” water was foundational to God’s Creation and at the Crucifixion it flowed with His blood from the side of Jesus. The first act of Christ’s ministry is His descent into the river Jordan not for repentance, as He is without sin, but to “fulfill all righteousness”. (Matthew 3:15)

What is this righteousness of which the Lord spoke? It is the righteousness of the Father in His unwavering faithfulness to His Creation, in His salvific plan for mankind. Christ instructs: “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.” (Matthew 5:17) The Law was given so that by obedience and faithfulness, humans might still aspire to commune with God even in their fallen state. His Father who proclaims, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased”, honors Christ’s obedience in Baptism. (Matthew 3:17)

There is another element in the narrative that tends to be overlooked both in a cosmologic and spiritual sense – Fire! In addition to water and a relatively small quantity of chemical dust, life is dependent on the fire of our Sun. Our spiritual life in Christ (aka the Sun of Righteousness) is likewise dependent on the fire of the Holy Spirit that is kindled in all of us. In the same Gospel text that recounts the Baptism of Christ the Fore-runner John speaks to the penitents:

“I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” (Matthew 3:11-12)

Just as with water, the biblical references to fire are numerous – the pillar of flame in Exodus from Egypt, the burning bush encountered by Moses, the Three Youths in the fiery furnace in the book of Daniel, the tongues of fire at Pentecost. Christ announces:

“I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! But I have a baptism

to undergo, and what constraint I am under until it is completed! Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division.” (Luke 12:49-51)

James and John ask Jesus if they might each sit at His right and left when He comes in His Glory. He replies - “You don’t know what you are asking ... can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?” They answered – “We can”. Jesus then affirms – “You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with.” (Mark 10:38-39)

The baptism to which Christ was referring was revealed to be His own crucifixion and death on the cross. As with His first, this second baptism is voluntary and obedient to the Will of His Father. While undeserved from any judicial perspective, His immersion into death is ultimately necessary to complete God’s plan of salvation. For if there is no cross there is no Resurrection “and if Christ is not raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!” (1 Corinthians 15:17)

His Baptism then becomes our baptism; His death becomes our death to this corrupt world and our affirmation of faith in the resurrected Christ. Emerging from the water of the font, we “put on Christ” and are sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, the same Comforter sent by Christ Himself descending as fiery tongues upon the disciples at Pentecost. The same Holy Spirit in the form of a dove present along with the Father at the Jordan completing this revelation of the Holy Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – a Theophany!

There is an oft-recounted story from the Sayings of the Desert Fathers:

“Abba Lot went to Abba Joseph and said to him, Abba, as far as I can I say my little office, I fast a little, I pray and meditate, I live in peace as far as I can, I purify my thoughts. What else can I do? Then the old man stood up and stretched his hands toward heaven. His fingers became like ten lamps of fire and he said to him, if you will, you can become all flame!”

St. Seraphim of Sarov instructs - “God is a fire that warms and kindles the heart and inward parts. Hence, if we feel in our hearts the cold that comes from the devil - for the devil is cold - let us call on the Lord. He will come to warm our hearts with perfect love, not only for Him but also for our neighbor, and the cold of him who hates the good will flee before the heat of His countenance.”

Wisdom – Let us attend!