



Weekly Bulletin

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

A Community of the Orthodox Church in America

Witnessing to the Apostolic Faith in Lake County for over 45 Years

Father Andrew Clements, Pastor

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Sunday	Nov 6	<i>21st Sunday after Pentecost / Tone 4 / St Paul the Confessor</i>		
Collection for City Mission		9:00 am	Church School	
		10:00 am	Divine Liturgy	Coffee Hour
Saturday	Nov 12	<i>St John the Merciful</i>		
		11:00 am	Hoover Baptism / Reception	
		5:30 pm	Great Vespers	Confession
Sunday	Nov 13	<i>22nd Sunday after Pentecost / Tone 5 / St John Chrysostom</i>		
		Readings:	Gal 6:11-18	Luke 10:25-37
		9:00 am	Church School	
		10:00 am	Divine Liturgy	Coffee Hour

ATTENDANCE / STEWARDSHIP / Oct 30

Attendance	135
Operating	\$5,47.00
OCA Assessments	43.00
Maintenance	131.00
Charities	87.00
Icon Medallions	1,700.00
Uganda	95.00
Turkeys	310.00
Seminarians	50.00

IN OUR PRAYERS

Please keep Eleanor Hoover in your prayers this week as she prepares for Holy Illumination this Saturday, Nov 12 at 11:00 am. A Reception will follow in the hall.

ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, November 20 after a short Coffee Hour. Also, Liturgy begins at 9:00 am that day.

PRAYER LIST UPDATE

Please be attending to the names you requested for prayers. The list just grows and grows and many names have been on for a very long time with no status updates.

PRAYER CORNER + + + + +

Perry (Capitan), Julian, John Clements, Sarah Crivella, Joella (LuAnn D's dghtr), Francis James (Anna D's frnd), Paris Santone (Debbie C's nephew), Kristin & Cameron Robinson, Anna Como, Evelyn Kontra (Renda frnds), Nick Covelli, Jan & Tonya (Ruth Bede's sis & frnd), Becky Strunk (Gloria H's frnd), David Camp-

bell (Deb's bro), Karla Bennett (Deb's frnd), suffering Christians in Ukraine and the Middle East.

Anniversaries: John & Valerie Christani (11/8), Jim & Darlene Horabik (11/10), David & Michelle Schroeder (11/12).

Birthdays: Cassandra (11/7), Luba Schlkanov, Pauline Demanski (11/8), Evelyn Wick (11/10), Nicolet Lechintan (11/11), Tom Alexander, Natalie Antonoff (11/12).

Expecting: Mitch & Winnie, Brian & Katya, Jairus & Riley.

Newly United: Rebecca & Stephen.

Newborns: Remi (Doug & Allysa), Eleanor (Jeffery & Michelle), Vasili (Joseph & Venessa).

Newly Departed: Richard Stark (10/28, Robyn Lannon's dad, Dolores Heim's brother), William Capitan (10/18, Jim's brother).

John Miklos (10/2, Fr A's frnd).

A Cultural Feast

by Fr Steven Freeman

I read somewhere that, prior to the Protestant Reformation, there were over 50 feast days in England on which people did no labor (these were in addition to Sundays). If you do the math, it adds up to over seven weeks of vacation per year. The Reformation abolished all but

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one or two. I have often thought that this was one of the sources of Protestant economic success – abolish seven weeks of vacation and productivity increases! As it turns out, feast days are so culturally important that they eventually found their way back into the calendar. However, they are not the old feast days and serve a different master and a different purpose. They probably have a larger role in your life than you know.

As I write, the feast of Halloween has just passed. Yes, I know its origins as the “Eve of All Saints’ Day,” but not one reveler in a thousand knows that. It’s the feast of scary things, yard decorations, and candy. I’ve pondered its popularity and think that people like the thrill of scary things. Also, who doesn’t like chocolate? As such, it’s an emotion-based feast – it feels like fun, let’s do it!

Other major days include Thanksgiving (which still retains some elements of its original purpose), Christmas (which often has some minor nods to the Birth of Jesus), Valentine’s Day (the feast of romance), and so on. Someone, somewhere, seems to be declaring various months of the year to be dedicated to special themes. Those themes mostly tell you what is important to one political wing of popular culture. That there is no Free-Market Capitalism Month tells you who is not in charge of the office of monthly dedications.

My computer’s calendar setting includes a notice for holidays. I get reminders for Hindu festivals, Muslim festivals, Buddhist festivals, etc. I have no idea what most of them mean. They serve as reminders that feast days are a universal phenomenon.

My wife and I have a habit of watching one television show each night (well, most nights). She loves mysteries. We’ve watched all of the Agatha Christie’s (only Joan Hickson is acceptable as Miss Marple) and killed off most of Great Britain. Recently, we’ve discovered ways of watching foreign mysteries with subtitles. Our favorites are set in Italy (don’t ask me why). We notice the coming and going of their cultural feasts as the sleuth goes about her work. August 15 is huge! That delighted my soul.

A difficulty with feast days in the Church is the absence of festival. Only Christmas and Pascha (maybe Theophany) have any “festival” attached to them. As such, there is a Church service as feast in which we are likely to have pointed out to us how few people are in attendance as well as a good bit of theological instruction on the feast’s meaning. I think, forgive me, that most of our feast days have long since fallen into the merely academic: Christianity as a perpetual inquirers’ class.

Josef Pieper, a German Catholic philosopher, wrote extensively on the topic of festival and its place in human life. He saw in it a celebration of our existence under various headings. He saw in the little modern cultural festivals a very sad, shrunken and desiccated version of the real thing. We want to feast but we don’t know why. We don’t know why because we have forgotten why we exist. I commend his work to you. *In Tune with the World* is a good read.

It is nearly impossible to escape culture – it’s like a fish escaping water. We live as moderns whether we like it or not and we will likely continue to feast like moderns – empty and meaningless. But we will do so as Christians, complaining about what the culture is doing.

A task before the Church (particularly those who imagine themselves to be living in some outpost of the Benedict Option) is the recovery of festival – not just a feast day with the Vigil the night before and a Liturgy on the day (if your parish does that much). Festival is a larger celebration, a break from routine and an entrance into an alternate form of time. I would point people to the Christmas of their childhood, complete with the school holiday and all of the magic that might have surrounded it. It is the innocence of children that allows enough “magic” into the world to make “festival” possible.

As an adult Orthodox believer, I think that Holy Week and Pascha still retain much of this (and, even then, it could use more). When I hear that someone in the parish has taken Holy Week as vacation time in order to be as involved as possible, my heart rejoices. The culture, if all were right, would do the same, or, at least close the shops before the evening’s services. No doubt, we’re going to have problems explaining to our bosses why we need 50 days a year vacation...we can start with less.

How many people clean their homes on the first day of Lent (“Clean Monday”)? It was the origin of “Spring cleaning.” These, and hundreds of other “festival customs” are largely lost in much of modern Orthodoxy (particularly in convert Churches where there is no living memory of such customs).

Festival is a human phenomenon. It’s why Buddhists, Muslims, and Hindus, Jews and Jainists all have festivals. Modern Secularists have festivals, too, and their festivals often have us. God give us grace, in recovering the true faith, to let it recover our true humanity in the world of festival.

Rejoice. Dance. Sing a lot. Take the day off.