



# 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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Number 3

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Jan 16</b>	<i>30th Sunday after Pentecost / Tone 5 / Veneration of the Chains of the Apostle Peter</i>	
		9:00 am	Church School
		10:00 am	Divine Liturgy      Coffee Hour
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Jan 19</b>	<i>Venerable Macarius the Great</i>	
		9:30 am	Divine Liturgy
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Jan 22</b>	<i>Apostle Timothy of the Seventy</i>	
		5:30 pm	Great Vespers
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Jan 23</b>	<i>31st Sunday after Pentecost / Tone 6 / Hieromartyr Clement of Ancyra</i>	
		Readings:	1 Tim 1:15-17      Luke 18:35-43
		9:30 am	Greet the Bishop
		10:00 am	Divine Liturgy      Luncheon

**ATTENDANCE / STEWARDSHIP / Jan 9**

Attendance	93
Operating	3,062.00
OCA Assessments	449.00
Maintenance	50.00
Icons	60.00
Uganda	20.00
Memorial Brick	50.00
Charities	250.00
IOCC	70.00

**2022 ASSESSMENT**

\$215 per person.

**COUNCIL MEETING**

Thursday, Jan 20 at 6:30 pm.

**EFFECTIVE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY**

The Class has concluded. Thanks to all who attended. We will be developing steps to implement what was presented.

**BISHOP'S VISIT**

Archbishop Paul will be with us next weekend. Peggy Walker is planning the meal for after Lurgy. Please contact her if you can help.

**PRAYER CORNER + + + + +**

Perry (Capitan), Julian, John Clements, Sarah Crivella, Joella (LuAnn D's dghtr), Tim Price, Francis James

(Anna D's frnd), Paris Santone (Debbie C's nephew), Subdeacon Leonard, Kristin & Cameron Robinson, Evelyn (Maureen M's mom), Dave Renda, Tina (Jim's fmly), Greg Williamson (Michelle S's frnd), Ron Moore (Collins's dad), suffering Christians in the Middle East.

**Birthdays:** Grace Walker (1/16), Miranda Oberhausen (1/19), Magnus Tollefson (1/21), Mira Kucmanic (1/22).

**New Borns:** Chloe (Ryan & Jessica), Wyatt (Brian & Katya), Seraphina (Bobby & Juliana).

**Expecting:** Mario & Beth (Val C's son & dr-n-lw), Brad & Katie, Peter & Katie (Clements frnds).

**Newly Illumined:** Michelle Hoover (Christine), Nicolina Hoover (Christine), Ashley Blakenship (Elizabeth).

**Newly Departed:** Kim, Robert (1/5, Maryann S's friends).

The One Whom you denied at His condemnation, you hymned when He rose from the dead. You preached Him to the ends of the earth, O Apostle, as the God and Man Who in His great goodness entered into fellowship with mankind! Therefore, we bless you with love, O all-glorious Peter, venerating the chains which you bore for Christ.

— Vesperal Hymn for St Peter, the Apostle —

Today is Sanctity of Life Sunday in the OCA

# The Beatitudes Part IX — Persecuted for Righteousness' Sake

by Fr Thomas Hopko

“Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when men revile you, and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely for my sake” (Mt 5.10–11). In saying these words, Christ promised that those who would follow Him would certainly be persecuted. This is a central prediction of the Gospel and an essential condition of those who accept it.

Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecute Me, they will persecute you; if they have kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all this they will do to you on My account, because they do not know Him who sent Me (Jn 15.20–21).

True Christians will always be persecuted for Christ's sake. They will be persecuted with Christ and like Christ, for the truth that they speak and the good that they do. The persecutions may not always be physical, but they will always be spiritual and psychological. They will always be mindless, unjust, violent, and “without cause” (Ps 69.4, Jn 15.25). They will always be painful and the cause of much suffering. For “indeed all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted” (2 Tim 3.12).

A person embarking on the spiritual life must expect persecution and slander. He must be wary, however, of any false persecution complex, and must be absolutely certain that the suffering he meets is solely “for righteousness' sake” and not because of his own weaknesses and sins. The apostolic scripture makes this precise warning:

For one is approved if, mindful of God, he endures pain while suffering unjustly. For what credit is it, if when you do wrong and are beaten for it, you take it patiently. But if when you do right and suffer for it you take it patiently, you have God's approval. For to this you have been called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in His steps. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or a wrongdoer, or a mischief-maker; yet if one suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but under that name let him glorify God (1 Pet 2.19–21, 4.14–16).

The suffering of Christians must be accepted gladly, with mercy and love to those who inflict it. Here once again is the Lord's own example, as well as that of His prophets, apostles, martyrs and saints. As Christ said, “Father, forgive them . . .” (Lk 23.34), while hanging on the Cross; and as the first martyr Stephen prayed, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them” (Acts 7.60), while being stoned, so all those who follow God's righteousness must forgive their offenders “from their hearts” (cf. Mt 18.35).

But I say to you that hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. To him who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from him who takes away your cloak do not withhold your coat as well . . . Love your enemies, and do good, and give, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He is kind to the ungrateful and selfish. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful. Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you . . . (Lk 6.27–38).

The generous and loving forgiveness of the persecuted for the persecutors is an essential condition of the spiritual life. Without it, all suffering “for righteousness' sake” is in vain, and does not lead to the Kingdom of Heaven.