



Weekly Bulletin

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

A Community of the Orthodox Church in America

Celebrating our 50th Year witnessing to the Apostolic Faith in Lake County

Father Andrew Clements, Pastor

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Sunday	Jul 9	<i>5th Sndy aft Pentecost / Tone4 / Hieromartyr Pancratius</i>
		9:30 am Divine Liturgy Coffee Hour
Saturday	Jul 15	<i>Great Prince Vladimir, Equal-to-the-Apostles</i>
		5:30 pm Great Vespers Confession
Sunday	Jul 16	<i>6th Sndy aft Pentecost / Tone4 / Fathers of the first six Ecumenical Councils</i>
		Readings: Heb 13:7-16 John 17:1-13
		9:30 am Divine Liturgy Coffee Hour

ATTENDANCE / STEWARDSHIP / Jul 2

Attendance	132
Operating	\$5,616.00
Maintenance	300.00
Icons	40.00
OCA Assessments	63.00
Charities	155.00
Uganda	230.00

WELCOME FR JOHN

We welcome Fr John Zdinak who presided at our Liturgy this morning. Thanks Fr John for your faithful service and encouraging words.

WEDDING BANNS

Ashley Blakenship and Kenneth Hockenberry on Sunday, July 23 at 2:30 pm.

FLOOR WAXING

The hall floor will be stripped and waxed beginning Monday. Please be available after Coffee Hour to help remove everything from the Hall. Everything will also have to be put back as soon as the work is complete. Let Chad Nicoletti know if you can help with putting the Hall back together.

ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, July 13 at 6:00 pm.

GAME NIGHT

Friday, July 14 from 7 - 10:00 pm. Bring your favorite Board Game to share. Snacks and drinks will be available for a nominal fee.

YOUTH GROUP POOL PARTY

Sunday, July 16 at 2:30 pm at the Renda's house, 5423 Harmony Lane, Willoughby. Swimming, activities and dinner planned. Please bring a side dish or dessert to share. Pool is 4.5 ft deep. Rain date: Sunday, July 30.

UGANDA FUNDRAISER

Tuesday, July 18 from 6:30 - 8:30 pm.

SUMMER CONFESSION

Please be planning to approach for your Summer Confession. Note the special times scheduled in addition to each Saturday after Vespers.

PRAYER CORNER + + + + +

Perry (Capitan), Julian, Sarah Crivella, Joella (LuAnn D's dghtr), Paris Santone (Debbie C's nephew), Anna Como, Barb (Renda frnd), Nick Covelli, David Campbell (Deb's bro), Theresa, Bernice, (Maryann S's frnds), the suffering Christians in Ukraine and the Middle East.

Anniversaries: George & Paula Tintor (7/14).

Birthdays: Nicholas Covelli, Elizabeth Rausch (7/11), Emma Moore (7/14).

Newborns: Raphael (David & Maria).

Expecting: Peter & Caitlin, Stephen & Rebecca, Maxim & Mindy, Collin & Laiken, Patrick & Elizabeth.

Our Missionary: Scott.

Celebrating our 50th Anniversary

Grace and the Handbasket

by Fr Stephen Freeman

A difficulty arises when making cultural observations – things rarely turn out as expected. The Roman Empire fell once upon a time, although the fall wasn't nearly as clean and final as Gibbons imagined and it wasn't really the Roman Empire that fell. But ever since the "Roman Empire fell" people have been rehearsing the lessons learned and expecting its repeat. Yet the empires (or whatever is expected to fall) seem to trundle on.

I am a cultural observer, and I share my observations here. Occasionally they can be rather bleak and even cynical. After all, having read the Scriptures and the Fathers, history is not expected to turn out well on its own. The Second Coming is an intervention in the worst of the worst of times.

And yet.

There always seems to be something else at work within history. We have seen the collapse of empires, and the creation of evil empires. But in my lifetime, it has largely been the "evil empires" that have fallen. How is it that things, placed on a firm foundation of nefarious workings, ruled by dark masters with no remorse for their cruelty, actually get better? Why does evil not grow relentlessly stronger?

I believe the answer is simple – grace. Grace is the very life of God. It sustains

our world in its existence. It works good despite the best (or worst) of our evil intentions. It mends our brokenness and creates new beginnings over and over again.

And it must always be borne in mind when we think about history and the workings of various forces and tendencies. It must be remembered when we feel lost in the various disasters that haunt our personal lives: grace is at work.

There are causes and effects that can be analyzed and yet the sums never add up properly. This doesn't negate the cause and effect of events around us but points to something outside that chain that is persistently working in a single direction – our well-being.

To be an Orthodox Christian in a modern setting easily breeds a negative view of the surrounding culture. Modernity is antithetical to tradition. But the very persistence of Orthodox Christianity in the modern world is itself a product of grace. Why are we still here?

All of this is expressed in St. Luke's gospel: "For He is kind to the ungrateful and the evil" (6:35). The proof is all around us.