



Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker lived during the reign of Saint Constantine the Great, and reposed in 330. As a young man, he desired to espouse the solitary life. He made a pilgrimage to the holy city Jerusalem, where he found a place to withdraw to devote himself to prayer. It was made known to him, however, that this was not the will of God for him, but that he should return to his homeland to be a cause of salvation for many. He returned to Myra, and was ordained bishop. He became known for his abundant mercy, providing for the poor and needy, and delivering those who had been unjustly accused. No less was he known for his zeal for the truth. He was present at the First Ecumenical Council of the 318 Fathers at Nicaea in 325; upon hearing the blasphemies that Arius brazenly uttered against the Son of God, Saint Nicholas struck him on the face.

Since the canons of the Church forbid the clergy to strike any man at all, his fellow bishops were in perplexity what disciplinary action was to be taken against this hierarch whom all revered. In the night our Lord Jesus Christ and our Lady Theotokos appeared to certain of the bishops, informing them that no action was to be taken against him, since he had acted not out of passion, but extreme love and piety. The Dismissal Hymn for holy hierarchs, The truth of things hath revealed thee to thy flock ... was written originally for Saint Nicholas. He is the patron of all travellers, and of sea-farers in particular; he is one of the best known and best loved Saints of all time.

**EPISTLE Hebrews 13:17-21**

Brethren, obey your leaders and submit to them; for they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have to give account. Let them do this joyfully, and not sadly, for that would be of no advantage to you. Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things. I urge you the more earnestly to do this in order that I may be restored to you the sooner. Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do His will, working in you that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

**TODAY'S READER: CHRISTY COONEY**

**GOSPEL Luke 13:10-17**

At that time, Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. And there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity for eighteen years; she was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. And when Jesus saw her, he called her and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your infirmity." And he laid his hands upon her, and immediately she was made straight, and she praised God. But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the sabbath, said to the people, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be healed, and not on the sabbath day." Then the Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to water it? And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?" As he said this, all his adversaries were put to shame; and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.

**Apolytikion to St. Nicholas**

The truth of things hath revealed thee to thy flock as a rule of faith, an icon of meekness, and a teacher of temperance; for this cause, thou hast achieved the heights by humility, riches by poverty. O Father and Hierarch Nicholas, intercede with Christ God that our souls be saved.

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12**

**FEAST OF ST. SPYRIDON**

**ORTHROS 8:30 A.M.**

**DIVINE LITURGY 9:30 A.M.**



**THE FEAST OF ST. NICHOLAS:  
A TIME TO REMEMBER**

The Feast of St. Nicholas in the Orthodox Church is a yearly reminder that some wonderful ideas — go hopelessly wrong. As a community of faith, today we remember a pious believer, a saintly Bishop, an outspoken defender of the faith against the heretic Arius at the Council of Nicea, and a man who gave away the wealth of his family because of Christ's command to do so. We remember a spiritual giant whose life priorities reflected his interior grounding. Fast forward to Santa Claus — a portly figure who laughs heartily and magically delivers tons of presents to children throughout the world. Though the man in the red suit takes his origins from the ascetic figure dressed in the vestments of a Bishop, their meanings couldn't be more divergent. One based his life on the Christ who at Christmas was born in a cave in Bethlehem — thus touching Heaven to earth; the other speaks more to the cravings of a society that is bent on acquiring things, and more things — having chased the spiritual meaning of Christmas out of sight, out of mind. O come all ye faithful — don't miss the sales! One represents spiritual centeredness, authentic human identity; the other speaks more of a society creeping steadily towards greater materialism, consumerism, and a collective indifference to imitating the poverty of Christ or the generosity of His saints. The contrast is plain to see. The longer our society "progresses", the farther away it moves from the cave of Emmanuel — God with us. As Orthodox believers we cannot accommodate this movement nor can we surrender the stark truth of our spiritual living. We cannot become so acculturated by the forces around us as to lose the "one thing needful" — *the care and cure of our souls with the healing power of Jesus the Christ of God who came "for us men and for our salvation."* It is His birth that we will soon celebrate. It is the hope He brought that causes our joy. It is the healing

**PRAYER LIST:** Antonia "Nitsa" Kempf, Connie Kanaris, Diana Lazar, George Markomanolakis, Argie Palaios, Katherine Panagakos, Priscilla Preuss, George Virvan, Sylvia Basdekas, George Speris, Mariah Smiley, Joseph Saxton, Doris Webb, the child Camille Feruzzi who is gravely ill, the child Heather Greene, Irene Pappas, Marty Levine, Georgia Loukas, Lindsey Reijsoo, the child Ashley Lyvers, the child Alexis Ross, Thomas Jenkins, the child Joseph Saxon, Francine Bruggeman, Estrella Grandea Ocampo, Artie Constantinides, and Robert Shriver. **US ARMED FORCES:** (Col.) Fr. Alexander Webster, Rev. Fr. John Kalantzis, Lt. Nicholas Karnaze, Spc. Spiro Nino, John Xanthakos, Lt. Mikael Johnson, Colonel James Karas, and Gary Hogman (Iraq) and his wife Cindy.

with which he anoints us that makes this time, forevermore, a Divine Wonder. The feast of St. Nicholas reminds us to stand fast and hold on to the spiritual truth we have been given, much as he stood fast to defend the truth of the faith against the insidious influences of *his* day. It wasn't easy for him. It won't be for us.

**MEMORIALS**

A Memorial Service will be offered today for **John Antokas (1 Year)** requested by his beloved wife, Amalia, and his children and their families; for **George Deoudes (1 Year)**, requested by his beloved wife Nancy and family; and for **James C. Manis (6 Years)**, requested by his beloved wife Rose Marie, his daughters Athena (Ken) and Maria (Fred) and his grandchildren Jimmy, Patrick, Michael, Amalia, and Nicholas. May their memories be eternal!

**A PRAYER TO ST. NICHOLAS**

O Saint Nicholas, bountiful Father and saintly Bishop, You are a shepherd and teacher to all who invoke your protection, and who, by devout prayer, call upon you for aid. Hasten and save the flock of Christ from ravenous wolves; and by your holy prayers protect all Orthodox Christians and save them from worldly disturbances, earthquakes, attacks from abroad, from internal strife, from famine, flood, fire, sword, and sudden death. As you had mercy on those three men in prison and saved them from the king's wrath, now also have mercy on me who by word, deed, and thought have sunk into the darkness of sin, Save me from the just anger of God, and from eternal punishment. Through your intercession and aid as well as through his own mercy and grace, may Christ our God allow me to lead a tranquil and sinless life, and save me from standing at "his left," but deem me worthy to stand at "his right" with all the saints. Amen.

**40 DAY BLESSING**

A 40 Day Blessing will be given today to the child of God Elleana, daughter of Peggy and John Van Eepoel. God grant her many years!

### PASTORAL VISITATIONS

Please inform the Church Office 301-469-7990 (ext 300) of any loved ones who are hospitalized or "shut-ins," so they may be visited and receive the grace of Holy Communion.



### SERIES ON THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH

The 4-part series on the Fathers of the Church HAS BEGUN. The times are the same as Bible Study (Thursdays 10:30 a.m. to noon and 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.) The next three parts are on Dec. 3, 10, and 17. The series is being given by Chrysostomus. Join us to learn more about the Church Fathers who, after the Holy Apostles, are the foundation stones upon which Orthodox theology and spirituality are built.

**PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS** Elections will be held on Sunday, December 13, 2009, in Founders' Hall from 12:00 noon to 3:00 PM. We will fill nine (9) vacancies for the period of January 2010 through December 2011. Absentee ballots are available through December 11th at the church office (see Catherine Sarlis) between 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM and must be returned to the church in a sealed envelope no later than 12:00 noon on December 13th, 2009.

**FIFTY PLUS** On December 9<sup>th</sup> meeting at 11:30am in the Founder's Hall the club will have its annual Christmas pot luck lunch and celebration. A special treat by Achilleus Papaephthimiou and friend will entertain us with live Greek music. Hope to see everyone there and, please, bring your favorite dish. If there are any questions, please call Maria Kopsidas 301-493-5789.

**FEED THE HUNGRY** is in need of drivers and cooks to deliver and prepare food for the local shelters **THE NEXT FEED THE HUNGRY SUNDAY IS DECEMBER 20th.** Contact is Peggy Hackman \* 301-340-6027 \* or email her at [hackmans@comcast.net](mailto:hackmans@comcast.net)

**PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY** The Ladies Philoptochos Society is hosting their Annual Christmas Party this Tuesday, December 8, 2009 at 7 PM. There will be a Pot-luck and gift-exchange. Please rsvp to Madonna Calender, 301-365-7097 or [madonnac501@aol.com](mailto:madonnac501@aol.com). We hope to see you there! We welcome new members. To join our Ladies Philoptochos, please contact Lia Kent at 301-762-8976 or [kent\\_amalia@yahoo.com](mailto:kent_amalia@yahoo.com). Thank you for your support!

**COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING AND POT-LUCK SUPPER** On Friday, December 11, we will have our 4th Annual Tree Lighting and Lenten Pot-Luck Supper beginning at 6:30 a.m. The entire community is invited to celebrate this special evening. Our choir will lead us in song opening our festive season. The supper entrée will be provided. Families A to L are asked to bring salads; Families M to S are asked to bring desserts; and Families T through Z are asked to bring beverages. Christmas caroling will begin in Church followed by the tree lighting. Please RSVP to George Karayianis at 301-299-6838. ([gk6skcna@yahoo.com](mailto:gk6skcna@yahoo.com)) Even if you don't RSVP you are most welcome to join us! **This event will take the place of the JOY/HOPE meeting scheduled for the 18th of December.**

**CHALLENGE LITURGY**The next Challenge Liturgy is: Saturday Dec.19<sup>th</sup>, 9:30 a.m. Join us to experience the warmth of God's love for us all this Nativity Season. The Challenge Liturgy is held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday each month, unless otherwise announced. Join us for the fellowship following Liturgy. The intellectually and physically challenged are an important part of our community. For more information or to volunteer, contact Amalia Kent (301)-762-8976) or Marcia Williams (301) 570-6476.

## FEAST OF OUR HOLY FATHER ST. NICHOLAS THE WONDERWORKER

DECEMBER 6, 2009



### THE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF SAINT GEORGE

7701 Bradley Blvd., Bethesda, Maryland 20817  
Office 301-469-7990 + Fax 301-469-5945

[www.stgeorge.org](http://www.stgeorge.org)

Proistamenos: Rev. Fr. Dimitrios J. Antokas

Email: [FrAntokas@stgeorge.org](mailto:FrAntokas@stgeorge.org)

Rev. Fr. George Khitiri

Email: [FrGeorge@stgeorge.org](mailto:FrGeorge@stgeorge.org)

Rev. Fr. Nicholas Despotides, Emeritus