

St. Nicholas Antiochian Orthodox Church

6447 76th Avenue, North, Pinellas Park, St. Petersburg, Florida 33781

His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH, Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of North America

His Grace Bishop NICHOLAS, Auxiliary Bishop of Miami & the Southeast

Fr. Michael Massouh, Pastor (727) 510-7657 • Fr. Stephen Siniari, Pastor (727) 503-5207

www.stnicholasaoc.org

info@stnicholasaoc.org

April 7, 2019, John of the Ladder

Welcome to St. Nicholas Antiochian Orthodox Church

We greet you in the Name of the Lord, and are thankful for your visit to pray with us. Your participation in the work of all who enter here with faith, reverence and the fear of God makes the Divine Liturgy alive. For the “lit-orgia” is truly the “work of the people.”

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church’s mission is to assist people of all races, cultures and backgrounds on their journey to God’s Kingdom by standing firm in the Gospel handed down to us by Christ and His Apostles. We will accomplish this mission by a) living a full liturgical and sacramental life, b) proclaiming the Orthodox Christian faith to all people, c) providing effective charitable and social programs, and d) establishing strong spiritual leadership and educational resources. St. Nicholas is a living reflection of Christ and shines as a light to all people.

Communion is reserved for those Orthodox Christians who prepared themselves through regular confession and fasting from the night before. Others may approach the chalice for a blessing and partake of the antidoron (blessed bread).

To encourage a proper spirit of prayer and devotion, we respectfully ask that you enter the sanctuary quietly during the Diving Liturgy. Please, do NOT enter or exit the sanctuary at the following times:

- When the priest censes the church
- During the Little Entrance with the Gospel
- During the reading of the Epistle and Gospel. (*You may enter the nave immediately after the reading of each is completed*).
- During the delivery of the Sermon
- During the Great Entrance with the Holy Gifts
- During the Prayers of Consecration. *You may enter the nave after the Hymn to the Theotokos “It Is Truly Meet.”*

REGULAR SERVICE SCHEDULE

Saturday **5:00 PM Vespers**
Sunday **9:30 AM Orthros**
 10:30 AM Divine Liturgy

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE FOLLOWING BROTHERS & SISTERS:

Departed: Jamilleh Jacob, Sonja Twors, Nancy Blair, Phyllis Kirschy, Habeeb Khoury, Kokab Kakesh, Victoria Jasmine White, Bassam Ishaq

Shut-Ins/Sick: Metropolitan PAUL, Archbishop YOHANNAH, Nicholas Hughes, Schauki Kassis, John Bennett, Rose Beede, Alice Flaherty, Theodora Ohlinger, Sally Bell, Bob Bostley, Bill Yopp, George Joseph Rolfes, Aurelia Buda, Evelyn Lonack, Richard Pippy, Diane Zorich, Lisa McCoy, Viola Haddad

For the Health of: Fr. Lazarus Sucanto, Kh. Loretta Karpelenia, Kh. Virginia Massouh, Pf. Margot Siniari, Angela Jacob, Farhat David, Helen Massarelli, Carole Massarelli, John & Evelyn Salem, Helen Salem, Ruth & Evern Hazel, Luann Ellias, Kay Varoutis, Georgette Abraham, Mariam Haddad, Bryan Haddad, Nasir Kassis, Mitch & Geri Kanaan, John & Stephanie See, Mary Ellen James, Alice Faccenda, Pat Salem, David & Eva Szabo, Andrew, Marion Bostley, Theodore Todorow, Alex Gimon, George Hooker, Fuad Mobayed, Leo Poirier, Collin Lamkin, Sophie Massouh, Stephen Bove’, Ted Liss, Leila Bashara, Natalie Floreancig, John Rollins, Millicent Palko, Trenton Wesley, Ray Nawas, Bill Stanley, Poppi Madalvano, David Berryhill, Barbara Penny, Michael Kritikos, Dolores Fry

Service Members: Christopher Salem (USAF): Nephew of Helen Salem, Peter McIntire (Army): Grand Nephew of Viola Haddad, Curtis Brickwood (Navy): Fr Michael’s Cousin, Derek Voss (Army): Son of Carolyn & Joe Galluccio, David Butler (Navy): Son of Joanna Kassis Butler, Trenton Wesley (Army): grandson of Leila Bashara, Luka Dundua (Army): Grandson of Salome Rollins

If you wish your name or the name of someone else to be placed on the prayer list please contact Doreen Radich at 727-367-1059

God grant you many years...

BIRTHDAYS

April 8	Christopher Jacob, Simon Najjar
April 11	Marion Bostley, Donna Mason

EVERYONE IS INVITED TO COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWING DIVINE LITURGY

Show hospitality to one another..." 1Peter 4:9

Today's Coffee Hour is Sponsored by the Ladies Society

We welcome all of those who are visiting with us this morning.

Please join us following the Divine Liturgy for coffee hour.

We pray that your experience here this morning was uplifting.

We look forward to seeing you again soon.

2019 ARCHDIOCESE DUES

All parishioners are encouraged to contribute \$50 per person for the year to help offset the assessment our church has to pay the archdiocese. Our assessment for 2019 is approximately \$9,800 and we are hopeful that as many parishioners as possible will help fulfill this assessment by contributing \$50 per person. Payment can be made by check, cash or credit card. Please be sure to let Al or Doreen know that it is your archdiocese dues so that it is accounted for correctly. The total amount collected so far is \$3,050.

To date the following parishioners have made a contribution: Gaby & Alicia Atik, George & Sandra Baidurashvili, Leila Bashara, Robert & Marion Bostley, Andi & Alba Budo & Family, James Calamas, Charles & Christine Doerner, Koly & Mona Elkhoully, Alice Flaherty, Deena Graves, Viola Haddad, Najib & Anna Jacob, Mitch & Geri Kanaan, George Kanalos, Loretta Karpelenia, Najla Kassis, Peter & Jaymelyn Kassis, Al & Cheryl Lipscomb, Mary Jean Lubin, Fr. Michael & Kh. Virginia Massouh, Matt Nassif & Family, Theodora Ohlinger, Ralph & Eleanore Parker, Bob & Jeanne Poirier, Doreen Radich, Jordan & Samantha Raynovich, Luis & Janet Rodriguez, Robert & Kay Rolfes, Anamay Rossomando, Helen Salem, John & Evelyn Salem, Samya Semaan, Sam Specian, David Yopp

St. Nicholas Calendar

***TODAY-5:00 PM Lenten Vespers at St. George Serbian Orthodox Church,
15250 58th Street, North, Clearwater***

Monday, April 8-6:30 PM Great Compline

Tuesday, April 9-6:30 PM Parish Council Meeting

Wednesday, April 10-6:00 PM Pre-Sanctified Liturgy

Friday, April 12-6:30 PM Akathist Hymn to the Theotokos-Entire Service

Saturday, April 13- 5:00 PM Vespers

Sunday, April 14-5:00 PM Lenten Vespers at St. Philip OCA Church,
9100 El Portal Drive, Tampa

2019 STEWARDSHIP TO ST NICHOLAS

Many thanks to those families and individuals who have filled out their 2019 Stewardship forms designating their monetary pledge to the church for the year. Our church is 100% dependent upon the sacrificial giving of our parishioners and it is never too late to submit your Stewardship form with your pledge. The church also always welcomes its parishioners to give their time and talent, so if you are interested in volunteering in helping with the various necessary work that is required on a regular and consistent basis please make your willingness known.

So far the following parishioners have made a Stewardship commitment to St. Nicholas: Gaby & Alicia Atik & Family, Leila Bashara, Robert & Marion Bostley, Jim Calamas, Koly & Mona Elkhoully, Viola Haddad, Don & JoAnn Hawkins, Subdeacon Najib & Anna Jacob, Peter & Jaymelyn Kassis & Family, Loretta Karpelenia, Lance & Mary Jean Lubin, Fr. Michael & Kh. Virginia Massouh, Ralph & Eleanore Parker, Bob & Jeanne Poirier, Robert & Kay Rolfes, Helen Salem, John & Evelyn Salem, Samya Semaan

LENTEN RETREAT, SATURDAY, APRIL 13th : 9:00 am – 2:00 pm

We will be having a Lenten retreat at St. Nicholas led by V. Rev. David Rodney Fox, Ph.D. who is the Assistant Dean for Mission Advancement for St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary. Father David is the author of "Beyond Secularism: The Liturgical Theology of Fr. Alexander Schemann". During the retreat Father David will lead a study of the major themes of Fr. Alexander Schemann's work, in the attempt to help participants better understand life through a deepened experience of Orthodox Christian Sacraments.

If you are interested in attending the seminar please place your name on one of the sign up sheets located in the Fellowship Hall and Narthex so we know how much food to prepare for lunch. This is a free retreat, but if you choose you may make a free will offering which will benefit St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary.

NEW ST. NICHOLAS WEBSITE

We now have a new website thanks to the extraordinary talent and creativity of Kay Rolfes and Al Lipscomb. The site address is www.stnicholasaoc.org. It has our service calendar and lots of pertinent information specific to our parish and our faith. There is also a means for you to donate to the church on-line with your credit card or through PayPal.

You can now also read the weekly bulletin and the monthly Wonder Worker on line.

In addition to the new website we have a greater presence on Facebook thanks to Kay and Al. Everyone is encouraged to view our Facebook page and follow the church for ongoing and timely updates.

BOOKSTORE NEWS

We now have some new Lenten cook books in the bookstore just in time for Great Lent. In addition we have service books for Holy Week and Pascha. And as always, Anamay has many other new items in stock.

PICTURE DAY, TODAY

We will be taking a photos of the entire parish, and it's organizations today so please after church to be included. These will be used on our new website

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE FOUR

Having learned the joyful message of the Resurrection from the angel the women disciples of the Lord cast from them their parental condemnation. And proudly broke the news to the Disciples, saying: Death hath been spoiled; Christ God is risen, granting the world Great Mercy.

KONTAKION FOR SUNDAYS IN GREAT LENT IN TONE EIGHT

To thee, the Champion Leader, do I offer thanks of victory, O Theotokos, thou who hast delivered me from terror; but as thou that hast that power invincible, O Theotokos, thou alone can set me free: from all forms of danger free me and deliver me, that I may cry unto thee: Hail, O Bride without bridegroom.

THE EPISTLE

The Lord will give strength to His people. The Lord will bless His people with peace.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews. (6:13-20)

Brethren, when God made a promise to Abraham, since He had no one greater by whom to swear, He swore by Himself, saying, "Surely I will bless you and multiply you." And thus Abraham, having patiently endured, obtained the promise. Men indeed swear by one greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of His purpose, He interposed with an oath. So that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible that God should prove false, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to seize the hope set before us. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

THE GOSPEL

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Mark. (9:17-31)

At that time, a man came to Jesus, kneeling down and saying unto him, "Teacher, I brought my son to you, for he has a dumb spirit. And wherever it seizes him, it dashes him down; and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid; and I asked Thy Disciples to cast it out, and they were not able." And Jesus answered them, "O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him to Me." And they brought the boy to Him; and when the spirit saw Jesus, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth. And Jesus asked his father, "How long has he had this?" And he said, "From childhood. And it has often cast him into the fire and into the water, to destroy him; but if Thou canst do anything, have pity on us and help us." And Jesus said to him, "If you can

believe, all things are possible to him who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You dumb and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again." And after crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse; so that most of them said, "He is dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. And when Jesus had entered the house, His Disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" And Jesus said to them, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer and fasting." They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And Jesus would not have anyone know it; for He was teaching His Disciples, saying to them, "The Son of man will be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him; and after He is killed, He will rise on the third day."

THE SYNAXARION

On April 7 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate the Martyr Kalliopios of Cilicia; Venerable George, bishop of Mitylene; and Tikhon, patriarch of Moscow and Enlightener of North America.

On this same day, the Fourth Sunday of Great Lent, we make remembrance of our godly father, John, the author of *The Ladder of Divine Ascent* (or Climacus).

Verses

*John, dead in the flesh and also living,
Liveth eternally, even though appearing dead and without breath.
Leaving letters, a ladder for the journey upwards,
He showeth forth his pursuit of the journey upwards.*

The celebration of his feast on this day arose from the custom prevalent in the honorable monasteries of starting Great Lent with the reading of his lessons. John describes the method of elevating the soul to God as ascending a ladder. He teaches those who seek salvation how to lay a firm foundation for struggles, how to detect and fight every passion, how to avoid demonic snares, and how to rise from the rudimental virtues to the heights of Godlike love and humility. John of the Ladder came to Mount Sinai at age 16 and remained there, first as a novice under obedience, then as a recluse, and finally as abbot until his eightieth year. One time, his disciple, Moses, fell asleep under the shade of a large stone. John, in prayer in his cell, saw that his disciple was in danger and prayed to God for him. Later, when Moses returned, he fell on his knees and gave thanks to his spiritual father for saving him from certain death. He related how, in a dream, he heard John calling him and he jumped up and, at that moment, the stone tumbled. Had he not jumped, the stone would have crushed him. John Climacus died on March 30, 606.

Through his intercessions, O Christ God, have mercy upon us. Amen.