

# St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

28 Cross Street - Auburn, New York, 13021 ([www.stnicholasauburn.com](http://www.stnicholasauburn.com))

**Very Reverend Michael Speck – Parish Priest**

**(315) 246-6051 - [mspeck100@gmail.com](mailto:mspeck100@gmail.com)**

**Office Hours Thursday from 2PM to 4PM or by Appointment**

Reverend Deacon David Donch    Reverend Deacon Michael W. Speck

Reader Nathaniel Donch

Sr. Warden - Greg Michaels

Jr. Warden – Reverend Deacon David Donch

Secretary – Jane Kimak

Treasurer - Glenn Peters



**Sunday, November 20, 2022**

**Venerable Gregory Decapolis**

*A Happy and Blessed Thanksgiving to All!*

**Saturday, November 19 – 5:00 PM – Vespers**

**Sunday November 20 - 8:40 AM - Adult Education**

**– 9:30 AM - Divine Liturgy and Coffee Hour and  
Sisterhood Meeting**

**-5:00 PM – Vespers with Litya**

**Monday, November 21 – 8:30 AM Festal Divine Liturgy - Entrance of the  
Theotokos into the Temple**

**Wednesday November 23 – No Divine Liturgy**

**Thursday, November 24 – Thanksgiving Day – 8:30 AM Divine Liturgy**



**Saturday, November 26 – 5:00 PM Vespers**

**Sunday, November 27 – No Adult Education**

**- 9:30 AM - Divine Liturgy**

**Please remember the needs of our church for its every-day operating expenses in your charitable giving. God Bless You for continuing to support the work of our church in this community.**

*Words cannot express my thanks to all of you who so kindly prepared the luncheon for Matushka Julie and me last Sunday in honor of my 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ordained ministry in Christ's Holy Church (November 15). Special thanks to Matushka Jonni for her gracious words, for all who organized and worked at the event, for the wonderful food, and fellowship. I am overwhelmed by the very generous gift from you that will be used to purchase a set of blue priestly vestments to match the altar server robes that were donated earlier this year. May God Bless You for Your Love and Kindness!  
Many Blessed Years to All of You!*

**We were blessed to be able to deliver our donations to the St. Alphonsus Food Pantry several days ago. The workers were surprised and most grateful for our generosity as they are distributing 600 food parcels to the needy of our community today. Let's try to outdo ourselves as we begin to collect again for Christmas this weekend. There is no gift that we could receive during these Blessed Holidays that could give us the joy and personal satisfaction that helping and giving to others does. May God Bless You for doing the work that He asks us to do in this world!**

#### **Donations**

**\$100 to the General Fund in Memory of Bill Acker by Barbara Foster for the General Fund**

**\$50 by Natasha Shynkarenko in memory of all of the Ukrainians who have suffered this past year because of the war for the General Fund.**

## **Great Martyr Katherine of Alexandria**



**Commemorated on [November 24](#)**

The Holy Great Martyr Katherine was the daughter of Konstos, the governor of Alexandria, Egypt during the reign of Emperor Maximian (305-313). Living in the capital, the center of Hellenistic knowledge, and possessed of a rare beauty and intellect, Katherine received an excellent education, studying the works of the greatest philosophers and teachers of antiquity. Young men from the most worthy families of the empire sought the hand of the beautiful Katherine, but she was not interested in any of them. She told her parents that she would enter into marriage only with someone who surpassed her in nobility, wealth, comeliness and wisdom.

Katherine's mother, a secret Christian, sent her to her own Spiritual Father, a saintly Elder living in a cave outside the city, for advice. After listening to Katherine, the Elder said that he knew of someone who surpassed her in everything. "His countenance is more radiant than the shining of the sun, and all of creation is governed by His wisdom. His riches are given to all the nations of the world, yet they never diminish. His compassion is unequalled."

This description of the Heavenly Bridegroom produced an ardent desire in the soul of the holy maiden to see Him. "If you do as I tell you," said the monk, "you will gaze upon the countenance of this illustrious man." In parting, the Elder gave Katherine an icon of the Theotokos with the Divine Child on Her arm and told her to pray with faith to the Queen of Heaven, the Mother of the Heavenly Bridegroom, and she would hear Katherine and grant her heart's desire.

Katherine prayed all night and was permitted to see the Most Holy Virgin, Who said to her Divine Son, "Behold Thy handmaiden Katherine, how fair and virtuous she is." But the Child turned His face away from her saying, "No, she is ugly and unbelieving. She is a foolish pauper, and I cannot bear to look at her until she forsakes her impiety."

Katherine returned again to the Elder deeply saddened, and told him what she had seen in the dream. He received her, instructed her in the faith of Christ, admonished her to preserve her purity and integrity and to pray unceasingly. She then received the Mystery of Holy Baptism from him. Again Saint Katherine had a vision of the Most Holy Theotokos with her Child. Now the Lord looked at her tenderly and gave her a beautiful ring, a wondrous token of her betrothal to the Heavenly Bridegroom (this ring is still on her hand).

**At that time Emperor Maximian was in Alexandria for a pagan festival. Therefore, the celebration was especially splendid and crowded. The cries of the sacrificial animals, the smoke and the smell of the sacrifices, the endless blaze of fires, and the bustling crowds at the arenas defiled the city of Alexandria. Human victims also were brought, the confessors of Christ, who would not deny Him under torture. They were condemned to death in the fire. Katherine's love for the Christian martyrs, and her fervent desire to ease their sufferings, compelled her to speak to the pagan priest and to Emperor Maximian.**

**Introducing herself, the Saint confessed her faith in the One True God, and exposed the errors of the pagans. The beauty of the maiden captivated the Emperor. In order to convince her of the superiority of pagan wisdom, the Emperor ordered fifty of the most learned philosophers and rhetoricians of the Empire to dispute with her, but the Saint got the better of the wise men, so that they came to believe in Christ themselves. Saint Katherine made the Sign of the Cross over the martyrs, and they bravely accepted death for Christ and were burnt alive by order of the Emperor.**

**Unable to persuade the Saint, Maximian tried to entice her with the promise of riches and fame. Hearing her angry refusal, the Emperor ordered his men to subject the Saint to terrible tortures, and then throw her in prison. The Empress Augusta, who had heard much about the Saint, wanted to see her. She prevailed upon the military commander Porphyrios to accompany her to the prison with a detachment of soldiers. The Empress was impressed by Katherine's strong spirit, and her face was radiant with divine grace. The holy martyr explained the Christian Faith to them, and they were converted to Christ.**

**On the following day, they again brought the martyr to the judgment court where, under the threat of being broken on the wheel, she was urged to renounce the Christian Faith and to offer sacrifice to the "gods." The Saint steadfastly confessed Christ and she was taken to be tortured on four wheels with sharp iron spikes, but an Angel smashed the instruments of execution, which shattered into pieces with many pagans standing nearby.**

**After seeing this miracle, the Empress Augusta and the imperial courtier Porphyrios and 200 soldiers confessed their faith in Christ before everyone, and they were beheaded. Maximian tried again to entice the holy martyr, offering to marry her, and again he was refused. Saint Katherine remained faithful to her heavenly Bridegroom Christ, and after praying to Him, she laid her head on the block beneath the executioner's sword.**

**The relics of Saint Katherine were taken by the Angels to Mount Sinai. In the VI century, the venerable head and left hand of the holy martyr were found through a revelation and transferred with honor to the newly-constructed church of the Monastery on Mount Sinai, built by the holy Emperor Justinian (November 14).**

## **Thanksgiving Day is a time when families can offer a witness of the Gospel**

*We give thanks to You, Lord God Almighty!*

Revelation 11:17

**The tradition of Thanksgiving Day has a long history in this country, beginning with the celebrations of early settlers who offered thanksgiving to God for safe passage to this land, for their freedom from religious persecution, for the strength to endure many hardships, and for the opportunities that were before them. In 1789 following a resolution passed by Congress, President George Washington issued a Thanksgiving Proclamation designating November 26 as a day “for rendering unto Him our sincere and humble thanks for His kind care and protection of the people of this country previous to their becoming a nation; ...and, in general, for all the great and various favors which He has been pleased to confer upon us.”**

**The institution of Thanksgiving Day as a annual national holiday followed in 1863, when in the midst of the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln issued a proclamation calling for the people “to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens...and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility and Union.”**

**These foundations of Thanksgiving Day, and its place within the history and life of this nation as a regular observance have made this a holiday shared by many as well as a time for families to gather in fellowship and gratitude. The focus on giving thanks to God, the attitude of gratefulness for the blessings in our lives, and the traditions centered upon the family resonate with our emphasis on the family as a dwelling of Christ and a witness of His Gospel.**

**On this day when families gather to give thanks to God, they are gathering in His name, and Christ is in their midst (Matthew 18:20). As a day of Thanksgiving, it is a day of worship and prayer. It is a day to celebrate the life that comes from our Creator and is transformed by our Resurrected Lord. It is**

**a day when the fruits of the Holy Spirit are shown in the fellowship of the home. Thanksgiving Day is a day when families share in what the family and home should be throughout the year – a place of praise and thanksgiving and a dwelling of Christ.**

**This strong relationship between our faith and the observance of Thanksgiving Day also shows that this is a time when families can offer a witness of the Gospel. Through the commemoration of this day, families have the opportunity to offer a witness of the Gospel by acknowledging that Christ is in their midst and by offering visible gratitude to God for His abundant blessings. In addition, the fellowship among members of the family nurture the bonds that are shared, affirming that the family is a place of love, care, healing, and forgiveness. In a home that is a dwelling of Christ with a family that is connected to God, each member can experience the love that flows from God's love for each of us. Friends and guests can see a testimony of the power of faith and grace, and lives can be drawn by this witness to the Gospel of salvation, which renews, transforms, and saves.**

**On this blessed Thanksgiving Day may we offer our deep gratitude and jubilant thanksgiving to our Almighty God. May His abundant blessings be upon your gatherings and fellowship, and by observing this strong and vibrant tradition of our nation, may Christ be in your midst as you offer a witness of His Gospel of truth and love.**

**Archbishop Demetrios**

**Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America**

