

St. Nicholas Orthodox Christian Church

30 Cross Street - Auburn, New York 13021 (www.stnicholasauburn.com)

Very Reverend Michael Speck – Pastor (315) 246-6051 mspeck100@gmail.com

Office Hours 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM Thursday or any time 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, February 23, 2025

SUNDAY OF MEATFARE — Tone 2. Sunday of the Last Judgment. Hieromartyr Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna (167). St. Gorgonia, Sister of St. Gregory the Theologian (370).



Thanks so much to everybody who helped to make last week's pork chop dinner a success. We encourage all of our parishioners, *especially our younger people* to PLEASE join us in working at these dinners. It is becoming increasingly important to the survival of our parish that our younger members become more involved in keeping the church financially supported. God will bless you for your efforts and our church will be able to continue to minister to the needs of our parishioners and those whom we support who are in need.

Service Schedule (This schedule may be subject to change)

**Saturday, February 22 - 10:00 AM – Baptism and Chrismation of
Violet Christine Cheney**

– 5:00 PM – Vespers

Sunday, February 23 – 8:40 AM – Adult Education

-9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy followed Coffee Hour

Wednesday, February 26 – No Divine Liturgy

Friday, February 28 and Saturday, March 1 – Pierogi Making

Saturday, March 1 – 5:00 PM Vespers

**Sunday, March 2 – 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy followed by
Forgiveness Vespers**

Monday, March 3 – 6:00 PM – Canon of St. Andrew of Crete

Tuesday, March 4 - 6:00 PM – Canon of St. Andrew of Crete

Wednesday, March 5 – 6:00 PM – Canon of St. Andrew of Crete

Thursday, March 6 – 6:00 PM – Canon of St. Andrew of Crete

Friday, March 7 – 5:00 PM – Presanctified Divine Liturgy

**Saturday, March 8 - 8:30 AM – Divine Liturgy - St. Theodore Saturday
- 5:00 PM – Great Vespers**

**Sunday, March 9 – 8:40 AM – Adult Education\
- 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy**

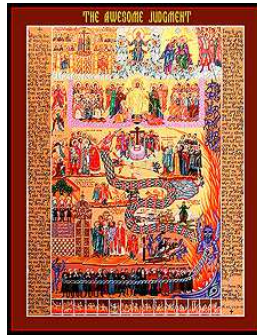
**The Parish Council Meeting originally scheduled for this Sunday will
be held at a future date.**

Donations

**Dr. David and Geraldine Speck have donated a laptop computer for use
in live-streaming our services.**

**A donation of \$250 has been received in memory of Paul and Margareta
Kondakoff toward the live-streaming of our services.**

Sunday of Meatfare of the Last Judgment



Commemorated on [February 23](#)

Today's Gospel reading is Matthew 25:31-46, the parable of the Last Judgment. It reminds us that while trusting in Christ's love and mercy, we must not forget His righteous judgment when He comes again in glory. If our hearts remain hardened and unrepentant, we should not expect the Lord to overlook our transgressions simply because He is a good and loving God. Although He does not desire the death of a sinner, He also expects us to turn from our wickedness and live (Ezek. 33:11). This same idea is expressed in the prayer read by the priest after the penitent has confessed his or her sins (Slavic practice).

The time for repentance and forgiveness is now, in the present life. At the Second Coming, Christ will appear as the righteous Judge, "Who will render to every man according to his deeds" (Rom. 2:6). Then the time for entreating God's mercy and forgiveness will have passed.

As Father Alexander Schmemmann reminds us in his book **GREAT LENT** (Ch. 1:4), sin is the absence of love, it is separation and isolation. When Christ comes to judge the world, His criterion for judgment will be love. Christian love entails seeing Christ in other people, our family, our friends, and everyone else we may encounter in our lives. We shall be judged on whether we have loved, or not loved, our neighbor. We show Christian love when we feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, visit those who are sick or in prison. If we did such things for the least of Christ's brethren, then we also did them for Christ (Mt.25:40). If we did not do such things for the least of the brethren, neither did we do them for Christ (Mt.25:45).

Today is the last day for eating meat and meat products until Pascha, though eggs and dairy products are permitted every day during the coming week. This limited fasting prepares us gradually for the more intense fasting of Great Lent.

New Martyr John Kalphes, the Apprentice

Commemorated on [February 26](#)

The Holy New Martyr John Kalphes (the Apprentice) lived in a suburb of Constantinople, called Galata. He was a cabinetmaker by profession, and he had acquired great skill in his craft, so that important officials made use of his services. He was entrusted with the inner adornment of the sultan's palace.

Saint John Kalphes was distinguished for his Christian charity, he provided for orphans and those locked up in prison, and many turned to him for help. One time a certain dignitary asked Saint John to take on his nephew as an apprentice. He agreed, and the youth received an honorable position at court upon the completion of his apprenticeship.

Once, encountering his former teacher and benefactor, he asked Saint John what it says in the Christian books about their “prophet” Mohammed. Saint John did not want to answer his question, but because of the persistent demands of the youth, he declared that Mohammed was a mere mortal, an uneducated man who did not perform a single miracle during his lifetime. He went on to say that Mohammed was no prophet, but rather an adversary of God. The youth, devoted to Islam, reported to his fellow Moslems that the cabinetmaker had insulted Mohammed.

Saint John was brought to trial, where they demanded that he renounce Christ, but he bravely confessed his faith in Christ. After torture, they sent the holy martyr off to penal servitude, where he spent six months. Then, for the next three months they beat him in the prison. Seeing that they could not coerce him into submitting to their will, they beheaded him in the crowded city square in Ergat-Bazara, near the Bedestan (a covered bazaar) on February 26, 1575.

The suffering of the holy Martyr John Kalphes were recorded by Father Andrew, the Chief Steward (Megas Oikonomos) of the Patriarch of Constantinople, who communed him with the Holy Mysteries in prison.

The (Non-)Lenten Look of Orthodox Christians



Lent is the season given to Orthodox Christians for sincere prayer, repentance, temporary abstinence from food and worldly blessings on the threshold of the most important feast of Holy Pascha. Fasting allows the faithful to purify their minds and bodies, getting rid of excesses, unnecessary desires and material needs. Fasting is a time of renunciation from evil thoughts and deeds, resentment and anger. This period is given to us to turn to God, to remember Him, forgetting about the bustle of this world.

Lent originated as the commemoration of the Savior's forty-day fasting in the wilderness: for forty days Jesus *Being... tempted of the devil. And in those days He did eat nothing: and when they were ended, He afterward hungerd* (Lk. 4:2). Fasting came to the early Christians from the Old Testament. At that time it meant total abstinence from food (from several hours to several days) and represented "a sacrifice in which a person sacrificed himself."

In the modern world the pattern of observing Lent has changed. Today believers seem to have forgotten about the true mission of this period, and only a few actually spend this time with benefit for their souls and bodies. Many people tend to think that fasting is only about abstaining from food. For example, some, while abstaining from meat, can spend hours browsing social media in search of

entertaining content. Others tend to believe that this period is a wonderful opportunity to get your body in good shape and lose weight, arranging a so-called detox for your body, combining the useful with the agreeable, as it were. “But he’s fasting! He doesn’t eat meat and doesn’t drink milk...” And it’s hard to argue with that. But is it really fasting?

Nowadays, there are countless news portals and blogs offering various tips on how to “live through” Lent. There is a great variety of such “fasting” dishes that allow you to fast without infringing on your usual eating habits: sausage without meat, milk without milk, even fasting desserts and cakes. The internet is full of millions of variations of cooking fasting desserts that resemble the tastes of the “non-fasting” originals so much that you can’t tell the difference. It may seem to be a real “salvation” for those observing Lent!

Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man (Mt. 15:11). This is such a simple but meaningful phrase that points to the true mission of any fast. What good does it do us if we limit ourselves, keep the gastronomic fast and do not eat meat, but “eat” our neighbor? It stereotypically seems to us that fasting is strictness and the absence of animal products in our diet. In other words, “we don’t eat meat, but no one forbade us to judge.” But, on the contrary, at this time we must direct all our efforts to get closer to the Lord, help our neighbor, not to judge, not to be rude, but to learn to love. “What you have done to men, you have done to Me” (cf. Mt. 25:40), the Lord tells us.



**Just love,
Just don't judge,
Just don't be sad,
And just forgive everyone!**

(A poem by Archpriest Andrei Logvinov)

Lent is a “preparatory course” of earthly life that teaches us the skills of patience and humility before meeting the Risen Christ. This is an opportunity to show Him our love in the form of such a small “sacrifice”.

Ariadna Nefedkina

Sretensky Monastery