

St. Nicholas Orthodox Christian Church

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

Very Reverend Michael Speck – Pastor - (315) 246-6051 (Cell), (315) 255-2998 (Home)
mspeck100@gmail.com

Office Hours Monday and Thursday 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM in the Church Hall or by Appointment

Reverend Deacon David Donch

Sr. Warden Greg Michaels

Jr. Warden Rocco Lupo

Subdeacon Michael W. Speck

Reader Nathaniel Donch

Sunday, August 25, 2019

- Sunday, August 25** -8:40 AM – 3rd and 6th Hours
-9:00 AM – Divine Liturgy
- Wednesday, August 28** -No Divine Liturgy
-5:00 PM – Vespers with Litya
- Thursday, August 29** -9:00 AM – The Beheading of the Holy Prophet, Forerunner, and
Baptist John - Divine Liturgy
- Saturday, August 31** -4:30 PM - Confessions
-4:45 PM – 9th Hour
-5:00 PM – Vespers
- Sunday, September 1** -8:40 AM – 3rd and 6th Hours
-9:00 AM – Divine Liturgy

If you plan to attend the brunch honoring Matushka Barbara scheduled for September 8, and have not already done so, please sign up today. We really need to know the number of attendees today. Last minute add-ons are not possible . Thank you.

Memorial Donations

\$30 for the health of David Lupo -- by Beverly & Jacqueline Aversa -- for the Benevolence Fund
\$20 in memory of William Wilczek Sr. -- by Wulfgar & Baren Switzer -- for the Benevolence Fund

How can you find out if you are living within the will of God? Here is the sign; If you are troubled about anything, this means that you have not completely given yourself over to the will of God. A person who lives within the will of God is not concerned about anything. If he needs anything, he gives both himself and it to God. And if he does not receive the necessary thing, he remains calm nevertheless, as if he had it. The soul which has given itself over to the will of God is afraid of nothing, not thunder or thieves - nothing. But whatever happens she says, "Thus it pleases God. If she is sick she thinks, this means that I have to be sick, or else God would not have given it to me. Thus peace is preserved between both body and soul. (St. Silouan the Athonite)

What the Holy Fathers Have Said About 666

There is a lot of anxiety and distress about the famous 666 in some circles, which most of the time (if not always) distracts us from our main aim in life – the salvation of our eternal soul. As we know from scripture, this phenomenon comes from the verse of Revelation 13:18 where it states: “Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.” (NKJV)

The first thing which the Holy Fathers teach us when we want to “deeply” focus onto “666” and the Antichrist is to AVOID doing so, for it rather darkens our mind, dragging it into dangerous labyrinths and provoking us with pride with knowledge which we think we have. That’s why we rather should avoid it, for the scriptures have been interpreted by the Holy Spirit via the vessels of the Saints and we are not in such a spiritual state to make broad conclusions. However, the Holy Fathers have spoken about this important but delicate issue in order to shed some light and thus not leaving us in total darkness. There are three main complementary interpretations of this number which we should mention that is different from “the mark of the beast” even if the number will be used on the mark.

The oldest and the most known one is tied to the fact that “it is the number of a man”, that is Greeks, Latins and Hebrews did not have special symbols for numbers. They used letters, so every letter has a corresponding numeric value. Summing these numbers gives a numeric value to a word or name. The most accepted case was for Nero (Roman Emperor between 54-68 AD). Written in Aramaic, this can be valued at 666. Also “Nero Caesar” in the Hebrew alphabet is נרון קסר NRON QSR, which also sums to 666. Here we should mention that Nero wasn’t the Antichrist but an icon of him. Also, some fathers spoke about the fact that the 666 has a symbolic meaning, based on the fact that the number seven is used in the Bible as a symbol of completeness, of fulfillment, of perfection, so they say that the triple 6 is the fullness of distortion, of imperfection, of evil.

However there is another explanation which is unknown but very important, especially in our days: In the official text, derived from Byzantine text-type manuscripts, the number six hundred sixty-six is represented by the Greek numerals χξς, with the Greek ligature stigma (ς) representing the number 6. The Saints say that the Holy Spirit didn’t want to put in the Holy Book the name of the Antichrist and hence put the name of his essence. In the same way in which at Isaiah 7:14 Christ was called Emmanuel which describes Christ essence that is “God is with us”, in the same way here, in Revelation the Holy Spirit put the essence of the Antichrist which is “χξς”, that is “Χριστός ξένος σταυρού” which means “[a] christ stranger of the Cross”. That is the Antichrist will be a “savior” of the mankind, offering any material pleasure possible without any effort.

We will be just bodies without any spirituality, without any desire of virtue, living a false happiness, caught in the fierce slavery of our own desires, in the fierce slavery of our self-love thing which is already happening inside us. Let us be awake – the antichrist’s energy is working inside us. We shouldn’t be too much concentrated to find a certain person in order to target our hate upon him but we need to target it upon the evil pleasure which is within us. (Based upon St. Andrew of Crete, Elder Cleopas Ilie)