

# *St. Nicholas Orthodox Christian Church*

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

**Very Reverend Michael Speck – Pastor (315) 246-6051 [mspeck100@gmail.com](mailto: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**

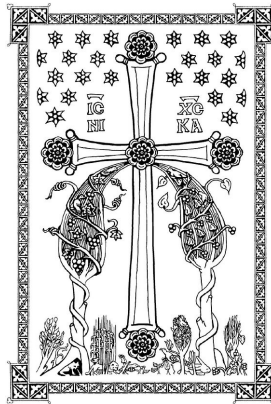
**Sr. Warden - Greg Michaels Jr. Warden – Reverend Deacon David Donch**

**Secretary – Jane Kimak**

**Treasurer – Glenn Peters**

## *Sunday, October 27, 2024*

**18th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 1.** Martyr Nestor of Thessalonica (ca. 306). Ven. Nestor the Chronicler of the Kiev Caves (Far Caves—ca. 1114). Uncovering of the Relics of St. Andrew, Prince of Smolensk (1540). Martyrs Capitolina and Eroteis of Cappadocia (304). Saint Claudia Procula (1st c.). Martyrs Mark, Soterikhos, and Valentine (304).



**Saturday, October 26 – 8:30 AM – Pork Chop Dinner Prep**

**– 5:00 PM – Great Vespers**

**Sunday, October 27 - 9:00 AM – Confessions**

**10:00 AM - Divine Liturgy followed the**

**Pork Chop Dinner**

**Wednesday, October 30 – 8:30 AM - Divine Liturgy**

**Saturday, November 3 - 5:00 PM – Great Vespers**

**Sunday, November 4 – 8:40 AM – Adult Education**

**9:30 AM - Divine Liturgy followed by a Parish Council Meeting  
and Coffee Hour**

## Upcoming Events

**Sunday, October 27 – Pork Chop Dinner**

**Friday, November 8 – Feast of the Archangels Michael and Gabriel  
and the Heavenly Host.**

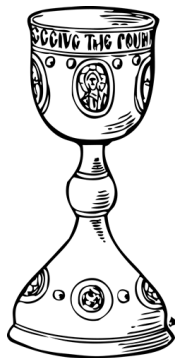
**Saturday, November 9 – 10:00 AM until 3:00 PM - Sisterhood Bazaar**

**Thursday, November 21 – Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos  
into the Temple.**

*We plan to deliver our Food Pantry Ministry donation  
for this month next Wednesday, October 30. Please pick  
up some things for those who are in need during your  
shopping this weekend. God bless you!*

### Donation

**\$100 for the General Fund by Claudia Bashta in memory of the  
Bashta and Bandas Families**



# Martyr Nestor of Thessalonica



Commemorated on October 27

**The holy Martyr Nestor was very young in age, handsome in appearance, and he was known to the holy Great Martyr Demetrios (October 26), for he had instructed Nestor in the faith.**

**The Emperor was visiting Thessaloniki, and he built a high platform in the midst of the city so that a gigantic barbarian named Lyaios could wrestle there and be seen by everyone. Beneath the platform many spears and other sharp weapons were placed pointing upward. When Lyaios defeated his opponents, he threw them down onto the spears and they died. Many Christians were forced to fight Lyaios, and were killed. When Nestor saw how Emperor Maximian rejoiced over the victories of his champion, he disdained his pride. Seeing the miracles of Saint Demetrios, however, he took courage and went to the prison where the holy Martyr was confined, and fell at his feet.**

**“Pray for me, O Servant of God Demetrios,” he said, “that by your prayers, God may help me to beat Lyaios, and put an end to him who brings reproach upon the Christians.”**

**The Saint, after sealing Nestor with the Sign of the Cross, told him that he would prevail over Lyaios, and then suffer for Christ. Nestor mounted the platform without fear and exclaimed: “Help me, O God of Demetrios.” After he defeated Lyaios, he hurled him down onto the spears, where he gave up his wretched soul.**

**Maximian became enraged and ordered that both Nestor and Demetrios should be put to death. Saint Demetrios was stabbed with spears, and Saint Nestor was beheaded. Thus, by his example Saint Nestor teaches us that in every human challenge we must say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do to me.” (Psalm 117/118:6, Hebrews 13:6).**

## Saint Claudia Procula



Commemorated on October 27

**Saint Matthew is the only Evangelist to mention Pilate’s wife, who told him “Have nothing to do with that just man, because I have suffered many things in a dream today because of him” (Matthew 27:19). She is not identified by name, but the author of the apocryphal Acts of Paul says that she received Baptism from the Apostle of the Gentiles. In the apocryphal Gospel of Nikódēmos she is called Procla, or Procula. Beginning in the late fourth, or early fifth century, she is known as Claudia Procula.**

**Pontius Pilate would not free Christ, because he was afraid of the Jews, After her husband’s death, Claudia Procula is said to have embraced Christianity. After living her life in the utmost goodness and piety, she surrendered her soul in peace. There are other accounts, however, which say that she was a martyr.**

# The Silence of the Theotokos



**After the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ into Heaven, His Most Blessed Mother, the Most Holy Virgin Mary became the head of Christianity. She was the prototype of the Christian woman on earth.**

**The holy Church, founded by the Apostles, preserved her as a sacred treasure, and after the wondrous Dormition of the Mother of God, it recognized her, the most glorious one, higher than the angels, as its all-powerful intercessor and advocate before the Son of God, the Savior of the world. It was only after her Dormition that her spiritual power and universal glory was revealed to men.**

**But the question is, why doesn't the Holy Gospel, composed a good while after the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, say anything about the life and deeds of the Mother of God? Why don't the four Evangelists have even a single word about the miraculous birth of the Most Holy Virgin from her elderly parents Sts. Joachim and Anna, about her upbringing, her dedication to God, her sufferings and spiritual labors? The name of the Mother of God is rarely found in the Gospel and always in circumstances and events that relate more to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Everything we know about the Most Holy Theotokos was recorded by the Disciples, Apostles, and Holy Fathers according to the Church Tradition that came down to them.**

**The reason for the silence of the Holy Scriptures of the New Testament about the life and labors of the Most Holy Virgin Mary is in the Mother of God herself, in her spiritual disposition, in her highest, purest, most perfect virtues; in her humility**

**and self-denial on the one hand, and strictness of Christian spirit on the other, as well as in the rules of her life—the life that she developed in her heart—a life in quietness and silence of spirit! The greatness and glory of the Mother of God on earth remained within her and became inviolate not only for all people, but also for her Divine Son.**

**Brought up under the canopy of the Temple, nurtured and enlightened in the Holy of Holies, she was endowed with the highest, detached love for God alone and became an image of moral purity. As the bearer of the greatest mystery of God, inaccessible to any human mind, she reverently kept within herself the awareness of the greatness granted to her by the Almighty Creator. Filled with meekness, humility, and a quiet spirit, she fearfully embraced all the words, stories, and prophecies about Christ the Savior, as well as the events related to her earthly life, *pondering them in her heart* (Lk. 2:19). According to one of the holy hierarchs, the heart of the Most Blessed Mary became the first book upon which the Gospel was inscribed.**

**Always hounded by suspicions, accusations, and human curiosity, obliged to conceal the unfathomable wisdom of God within herself, she, as one detached from the world, alone in all her thoughts and feelings, ever concentrated within herself, praying without ceasing, tormented by fears for her Son's life and fearsome events and expected trials, avoiding even the slightest contact with the outside world. She feared the sympathy of those around her, any kind of renown, and in her amazing silence, as a perfect vessel of grace, she bore her earthly lot, her holy obedience, not needing any help, consolation, or glorification, but only the strengthening of grace, due to human infirmity.**

**From the very first day of Jesus Christ's ministry to the world, unable to bear being parted from Him, the Mother of God followed His path of the Cross, enduring the same hardships, deprivations, calamities, persecutions, and vicissitudes, and just like the Son of God, she sought where to lay her weary head.**

**Exhausted from the scorching rays of the sun, from wandering along mountain roads and deserts, still silent, barely noticed by others, always the last in a crowd, removed even from the chosen disciples and women, she watched from afar her beloved Jesus, Who was the goal of her entire martyric life, and she followed the Gospel events, contemplating them in her pained heart.**

**During the days of Christ's prayer, she imperceptibly moved away from Him, then serving people with her help and example in everything, so the reflection of her Son's glory might not unexpectedly touch her maternal image. Thus, she wasn't present at His solemn and royal entry into Jerusalem, but in His days of sorrow, illness, pain of soul and danger, the Mother of God drew near to Him and found herself among the few self-sacrificing disciples and women, ready to suffer the same fate with Him, so as not to be separated for a single hour.**

**She didn't walk away from the Cross upon which was crucified her Son and Lord. She experienced the last sufferings with Him, and perhaps she would have also have been subjected to bodily torments if she hadn't fainted and been carried away from Golgotha by the most beloved and closest apostle of Christ.**

**If the Son of God Himself, during His earthly life did not permit Himself to disturb the spiritual disposition and silence of His Most Holy Mother with even a word, didn't dare to violate her unceasing contemplation of the mysteries of God and her self-denial, and considered her sacred rules of life inviolable, then how could the Holy Apostles not follow the example of Jesus Christ? How could they instead violate her silence or touch upon her spiritual sorrow after her separation from her Divine Son, by their open appeal to her and glorification of her as the Most Holy Theotokos during her lifetime, when she held to the same self-denial, didn't appear openly in the world, and always remained hidden behind the Apostles as Christ's vicars on earth, participating only in common prayers (Acts 1:14)?**

**Being the prototype of the Christian woman, the Mother of God educated and strengthened her Son's followers not in word, but by her example. Even Church Tradition is silent about her labors of preaching .**

**Majestic was the silence of the humble Mary! St. Philaret of Moscow says:**

**Let us listen to the silence of Mary and learn from her! What does this incomprehensible spiritual labor mean? That Mary is a perfect vessel of grace. Just as a leaking vessel is unfit for use, so a spiritual vessel has no merit if it doesn't preserve the received grace in humble silence, but leaks and empties itself through idle, immodest, impatient, or vainglorious words.**

**Just as a perfect vessel preserves both its contents and their essence without the slightest loss, resisting destruction from impact or fire, so too will be perfected the spiritual vessel that, in the mystery of faith, with a pure**

**conscience, in the peace of heart and silence of its entire being, preserves the grace entrusted to it with such firmness that no blows of sorrows and misfortunes, no passion, no temptation can destroy it.**

**In Mary's silence, she made an unceasing, pure, and great sacrifice to God the Word, for not even to Joseph did she reveal her secret. Neither the highest joy nor the deepest sorrow could change this main characteristic of her spirit.**

**Look! Christ is born, the angels glorify, pastors preach, and the Mother of God *kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart* (Lk. 2:19).**

**Simeon pierces her soul with his terrible prophecy that Jesus would leave her in His early years, and she *kept all these sayings in her heart* (Lk. 2:51).**

**Finally, she stands at the Cross. What should be expected from a mother when everyone is weeping and wailing? Complaints, cries, and anguish! She silently loses consciousness.**

**Such is the sacred image of the spiritual silence of the Theotokos. Who, if not us Orthodox, should understand the hidden and majestic beauty of her labor of silence?**

### **Silence and speech**

**The gift of speech is the greatest gift and corresponds to man's need for expressing feelings, for exchanging thoughts, impressions, and conversations.**

**But nothing can do more harm to one's neighbor and nothing can so easily destroy as verbosity, which the enemy uses cunningly and especially successfully to catch people in his nets. Therefore, Scripture says: *Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof* (Prov. 18:21). *He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life [soul]* (Prov. 13:3).**

**Silence loves those who rely not on themselves, but on God alone. Silence is a great power for the inner battle with the passions and a sure hope for victory. The Holy Fathers glorify silence, saying that it's the guardian of sacred prayer and a wondrous helper in the exercise of virtues, and at the same time a sign of spiritual wisdom.**



**A restrained conversation and silence will calm more quickly than a free and cheerful word. Free speech is equivalent to free behavior. Carried away by it in conversations, we forget about its influence on those who hear us and on ourselves. Free speech is born from forgetfulness and more often from lack of restraint.**

**To not exceed the measure of talkativeness, gaiety, and verbosity, we must think about the harm caused by empty conversations, and understand that nothing is gained by them, but everything is lost. There are cheerful and sinless conversations, but one should not be carried away by useless chatter, lest verbosity entangle us in the enemy's net. Verbosity easily gives rise to slander.**

**St. Seraphim (Chichagov)**