

Every Sunday at 9AM: Adult Education Class

## **ST NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH** CROSS &

COTTAGE STS, AUBURN 252-3423 [www.stnicholasauburn.com](http://www.stnicholasauburn.com)

Choir Director Paul Flurschutz

*Reader Michael Speck*

Senior Warden Greg Michaels

Jr Warden Rocco Lupo

Fr. Stephen Mack, Pastor Fr. Michael Speck *Deacon David Donch*

*January 8, 2017*

*St Marion's Sisterhood Meeting today following Coffee Hour*

*Blessing of homes is proceeding. If you haven't had your home blessed or made arrangements, please see Fr. Steve or call the rectory.*

*Wednesday, Jan 11 at 9AM: Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom*

*Saturday, Jan 14 at 6PM: Vespers*

*Sunday, Jan 15 at 10AM: SANCTITY OF LIFE SUNDAY - Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom - Parish Council Meeting following Coffee Hour*

**FOOD PANTRY NEEDS:** Something our local Food Pantries can use dearly, in addition to food items, are hygiene products (soaps, shampoos, deodorants, etc.), diapers, baby foods & related items. Your support for our Food Pantries has been wonderful; please do your best to continue helping.

Memorial donation: \$60 in memory of Nicholas Johnson -- by Stephen Johnson -- for the General Fund

The Orthodox, Byzantine or Russian (Orthodox) Cross,<sup>i</sup> is a variation of the **Christian cross**, commonly found in the **Eastern Orthodox Churches**, and used widely by groups to connote the Byzantine Rite. The cross has three horizontal crossbeams—the top one represents the plate which in the older Greek tradition is inscribed with a phrase based on John's Gospel "The King of Glory", but in later images it represents **INRI**, and the bottom one, a footrest. In many depictions, the side to Christ's right is higher. This is because the footrest slants upward toward the penitent thief **St. Dismas**, who was crucified on Jesus' right, and downward toward impenitent thief **Gestas**. It is also a common perception that the foot-rest points up, toward Heaven, on Christ's right hand-side, and downward, to Hades, on Christ's left. One of the Orthodox Church's Friday prayers clearly explains the meaning: "In the midst, between two thieves, was Your Cross found as the balance-beam of righteousness; For while one was led down to hell by the burden of his blaspheming, the other was lightened of his sins unto the knowledge of things divine, O Christ God glory to You."<sup>i</sup>

# Who was St. Tikhon?

Who was he? Head of the Russian Archdiocese in North America at the turn of the 20th century, and later Patriarch of Moscow during the Bolshevik Revolution and its bloody aftermath. He was known for being a kind bishop, humble and unassuming. He suffered under Bolsheviks and was glorified as a saint in 1988.

Something he's famous for: In 1905, he wrote a reply to a survey the Russian Church had sent to each of its bishops. Part of that reply included a sort of blueprint for Orthodoxy in America. St. Tikhon envisioned a future where each Orthodox ethnic group in America had its own ethnic bishop, with overlapping jurisdictions, but with all the bishops sitting on a single local synod, led by the Russian Archbishop (and under the Russian Holy Synod).

Something nobody knows: St. Tikhon's brother Michael served as his secretary during his time in America. Michael supposedly died of a broken heart in 1902, when he was 31. The story goes that he was madly in love with an opera singer in San Francisco, but she wasn't interested. When he found out she was leaving the country, his heart couldn't take it.

Something he said: "We live surrounded by people of alien creeds; in the sea of other religions, our church is a small island of salvation, towards which swim some of the people, plunged in the sea of life. 'Come hurry help,' we sometimes hear from the heathen of far Alaska, and oftener from those who were our brothers in faith also, the people of the Union. 'Receive us into your community, give us one of your good pastors, send us a priest that we might have the divine service performed for us of a holiday, help us to build a church, to start a school for our children, so that they do not lose in America their faith and nationality,' — those are the wails we often hear, especially of late. ...

"But who is to work for the spread of the Orthodox faith, for the increase of the children of the Orthodox Church? Pastors and missionaries, you answer. You are right, but are they to be alone? ... At the beginning, not only pastors alone suffered for the faith of Christ, but lay people also, men, women, and even children. Heresies were fought against by lay people as well. Likewise, the spread of Christ's faith ought to be near and precious to the heart of every Christian. In this work every member of the Church ought to take a lively and heartfelt interest.

... "Orthodox people, in celebrating the day of Orthodoxy, you must devote yourselves to the Orthodox faith not in word or tongue only, but in deed and in truth." — From his homily on the Sunday of Orthodoxy in 1903, published in the English-language supplement to the *Vestnik*, 2/23/1903.