



# ST. MARK'S ORTHODOX CHURCH

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## Clergy

V. Rev. Raymond M. Browne,

*Rector*

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Protodeacon Gregory Moser, *Attached*

V. Rev. Michael Sekela, *Retired. Attached*

## Readers:

- ❖ G. Peter Bohlender
- ❖ Dustin Joseph Crosby

## Choir Directors:

### Service Schedule

Great Vespers/Vigil

*Saturdays 6pm*

*Eve of Feast 7pm (6pm on Sundays).*

Hours

*Sundays and Feast Days 9:10am.*

*Sundays and Feast Days 9:30 am*

December 6, 2020

- ❖ Daria Cortese
- ❖ Mat. Martha Moser
- ❖ Sergei Arhipov

## Church School

### Director

- ❖ Jennifer Sremanak



**Divine Liturgy:** Sundays and Feast Days  
9:30am

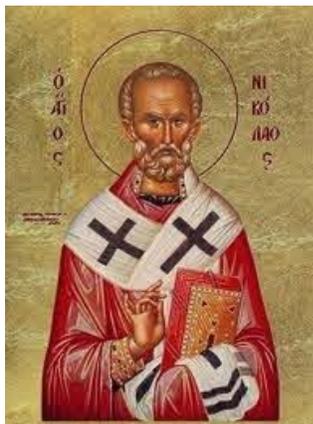
## Confessions:

*Saturdays after Vespers and by appointment.*

## Akathist Service

*Wednesdays at 9:15am.*

**Memorial Services (Panikhida/Litya):** as requested.



**26<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (11<sup>th</sup> of Luke) — Tone 1. & St. Nicholas the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia (ca. 345).**

**Epistle:** Ephesians 5: 5-19; Hebrews 13:17-21

**Gospel:** Luke 17:12-19; Luke 6:17-23

**Baptisms:** Children must have Orthodox Godparents who provide a letter from their parish priest. Parents and Godparents are required to attend two preparatory classes. Scheduling arrangements should be made with the Rector by contacting him directly.

**Weddings:** Arrangements should be made **at least** six months prior to the wedding and scheduling is subject to the liturgical calendar of the church. **Please do not** make arrangements for receptions without speaking with the Rector first.

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF SERVICES AND EVENTS:

**Sunday, December 6:** Hours and Divine Liturgy - 9:10am;

**Wednesday, December 9th:** Akathist with Litya for Departed- 9:30am

**Saturday, December 12:** Vigil for St. Herman of Alaska and Confessions-6pm.

**Many Years** to the Newly Illumined Claudia Procula Bendas, daughter of Nick and Jamie Bendas who was baptised and chrismated on the Eve of St. Nicholas and receives Holy Communion for the first time



at Divine Liturgy today, her father's Names Day! Many Years also to her grandparents Charles and Charla, and Glenn and Colleen, Godparents Charles and Mat. Heidi.

**Bible Study:** The second online Zoom Bible Study will be this Monday evening at 7pm. The link is accessible on the Parish Calendar online. There is a phone option as well as computer option. Please join us.

**Repose of Archbishop David:** Our deepest condolences to the faithful of Alaska who have lost their archpastor and to the Mahaffey family who have lost their father and grandfather. May Archbishop David's Memory be Eternal!

**Confessions:** You may come at the regular scheduled times or make an appointment with me for a mutually convenient time. Please do not neglect this gift given to us, where Christ the Good Samaritan stops and cleanses our wounds and takes us with Him. If in person is not an option and you want to go, call Fr. Martin to make other arrangements.

**Nativity Fast:** We continue the 40 Days of prayer, fasting and preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of our Lord in the Flesh. The usual fasting practices are commended to all of us, but this year perhaps we could add media consumption, so that we might have more peaceful minds, softer hearts, and clearer eyes. Try it, you will be surprised. But above all pray daily, attentively.

**Wrightstown Food Cupboard:** Make an offering of food or a donation of cash during the Nativity Fast. The needs are great, especially at Thanksgiving and Christmas. Be mindful of the poor and the needy

**Names Day**

Nicholas Bendas  
Nicoleta Vatov

**Holy Illumination**

Claudia Procula

**Anniversary**

Fr. Martin Priestly Ordination

**Vigil Lights**

**From: Irene Arhipov**

*For the Health of:* Sergei, Stephanie, Peter, Vera, Katherine (Kay), Metropolitan Herman, Fr. Alexander, Kristen, Bradley, Ludmilla, Alan, Mary.

*In Memory of:* Newly Departed James, Susan, Met. Theodosios James, Susan, Suzanne

**From: Mosers**

*For the Health of:* Peter, Stephanie, Raymond, Raymonde

*In Memory of:* Fr. Demetri, Fr. John, Dn. John, Veronica, Rebecca, Charles, Stephen, Sophia, Michael, Anthony.

Please remember in your prayers



**Living:** Captives Hierarchs Paul and John All those caring for the sick and suffering at this time throughout the world, especially our family and friends Charles and Erin, Ann Marie, Joseph, Alexis, Aphrodite. Ill afflicted Archpriest Daniel, Priest Stephen *Matushki Elena, Laryssa, Lisa, Priscilla, Myra, Suzanne, Anne, Jennifer, Emilia, Myra Servants of God* Peter, Stephanie, Samuel, Sergei, Vera, Anna, Scott, Dennis, David, Garry, Vincent, Stephen, Raymond, Darrell, Andrew, Daniel, Amanda, Michael, Laura, Stephen, Jason, Katina, Donna, Rebekah, Alexander, Grover, Valerie, Raymonde, Anita, Jim, Peter, Jonathan, Gregory, Charles, Kyra. Margaret, Arlene, Vaughn, Helen, Nicholas, Elena, Nicholas, Valerie, John, Alice, Edward, Marina and the child to be born of her,

Anastasia and the child to be born of her..

**Departed:** Newly departed Archbishop David, Archpr. John, Pr. Demetrios, Mat. Elizabeth, Elizabeth, Laura, Eloise, Kevin, Helen. Departed Archpriests Stephen, Vladimir & Mat. Mary, Priest George, Archpriest Paul & Khouria Shirley.

### Saint Nicholas and the Dowries: A story of Christian stewardship

When St. Nicholas was still a young man, before he was a bishop, and long before he was a saint, he was an orphan. His parents died in one of the epidemics that swept through the countryside. Nicholas survived the epidemic. Perhaps, when his parents became ill, they sent their only son to stay with his beloved uncle, Bishop Nicholas of Patara, at the monastery outside the city. And he stayed there, after the death of his parents.

His parents had been wealthy, but he had no interest in the money. He wanted to live in piety and obscurity. He spent much of his time standing quietly in the back of the church, praying. When he was in



the town, he moved quietly, listened much, and said little. And he heard a great deal.

#### NEIGHBORHOOD GOSSIP

A man who lived near his parents' home had fallen on hard time. His wife had died during the epidemic that had killed Nicholas's parents. He was left with three young daughters to raise on his own. Then there had been an accident. He'd made his fortune in trade, but when he could no longer work, there was no more income. His wealth dwindled, as he spent money on doctors, on food, on the necessities of life.

He and his daughters were going to starve. He'd tried to find husbands for them, of course. With a good marriage, they'd be taken care of. But the friends that had offered to help wouldn't accept a dowerless daughter for their sons. And there was no money for a dowry.

All they had left was the clothes on their bodies. And his daughters' bodies were beautiful. He knew it was an evil thought. But starvation was evil, too. Working as prostitutes would put them out of the communion of the Church, of course. But at least they wouldn't starve.

#### **HOW TO HELP A PROUD MAN**

St. Nicholas couldn't help hearing about the widower's plans for his daughters.

Of course, Nicholas thought, he had more than enough money to provide dowries for the widower's daughters. But the old man wouldn't accept it. He knew that for sure, because he'd already tried to give him the money. The old man's wrath had been terrible. But his plans were terrible, too.

#### **UNDER COVER OF DARKNESS**

It didn't take much to make it happen. Nicholas exchanged his everyday clothes for those of a high-ranking servant; nobody would notice a servant.

He filled a small leather pouch with gold coins and fastened it to his belt.

Keeping his head down, Nicholas walked from the monastery to the neighborhood where he'd lived as a small child. He walked to the side of the house, took the pouch of gold from his belt, and dropped it through the window. He slipped away into the darkness.

#### **WEDDING INVITATIONS**

It was only a week later that invitations went out for the wedding of the widower's eldest daughter, who became a merchant's wife. St. Nicholas waited until after the wedding and went back to the widower's home. A few days later, another wedding was announced. The rumors of brothels had ceased. The widower was once again attending divine services at church. His younger daughter went with him.

As St. Nicholas planned his next midnight delivery, the widower stood in the church and prayed. He had received help he had no way to refuse. Now he wanted to know who had delivered his daughters from the evil that he had planned for them. He asked God to show him his benefactor, so that he could repay the kindness. Not with money, of course. He'd never be able to do that. But he wanted to pray for his benefactor by name.

#### **THE FINAL GIFT**

On a moonless night a few weeks later, the widower was restless. The night was cold. His joints ached. He couldn't sleep. And as he lay there in the darkness, he heard the sound of footsteps outside. He got up as quietly as he could, and went out his front door. As a shadow slipped out into the street, he shouted.

"Ho! You there! Wait!"

And the shadow stopped moving. The widower approached.

It was the young man, Nicholas.

"Why?" he asked.

"I had no need of gold," Nicholas said. "It's a burden to me. In your hands, it could be put to good use."

They stared at each other.

"Shall I give you a seat of honor at the next wedding?"

Nicholas shook his head. "No! Please, father, tell no one. Let it stay between us as long as we both breathe."

The old man nodded. He held out his arms and embraced Nicholas. His tears fell into the saint's hair.

"I will not speak of it," the man said. "Except in prayer."