

# Holy Apostles Orthodox Church

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HolyApostlesLansing.org

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## December 3, 2017

**TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 1.** Prophet Zephaniah (Sophonias—635–605 B.C.). Ven. Savva (Sabbas), Abbot of Zvenigorod, disciple of Ven. Sergius of Rádonezh (1406). St. Theodulus, Eparch of Constantinople (ca. 440). Ven. John the Silent of St. Sabbas' Monastery (558). Hieromartyr Theodore, Archbishop of Alexandria (606). Monk Martyr Cosmas of St. Anne's Skete (Mt. Athos).

**EPISTLES: Ephesians 5:9–19:** Living in anticipation of the Kingdom.

**GOSPELS: Luke 18:18–27:** The rich young man questions Jesus.

**COFFEE HOUR: This week:** Potluck **Next week:** Sign up today!

**SAINT NICHOLAS:** This Wednesday, December 6, is the Feast of St. Nicholas, Bishop of Myra in Lycia. We'll have Vespers Tuesday evening, and Liturgy Wednesday morning. Come join us in honoring this beloved example of Christian love, whose witness is so often distorted at this time of year.

**ADVENT RETREAT:** An Advent Retreat will be held on Saturday, December 16, from 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM at Sts Peter & Paul Church in Syracuse. A Moleben to St Tikhon of Moscow will be served in commemoration of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his enthronement as Patriarch. Archbishop MICHAEL will then give a talk on "The Fullness of the Church." All are invited to attend. If you plan to attend, please leave a message at 315 468 0442 so that they know how many to expect for meal planning purposes.

**NATIVITY FAST ALMSGIVING:** In addition to prayer, fasting, and confession, the Nativity Fast is also a time for increased giving to those in need. We'll be collecting items to assemble emergency relief kits for IOCC, which enable them to respond to disasters around the world. (They distributed many of these kits in the wake of the recent hurricanes, and need to replenish their supplies so that they can be ready for the next disaster.) We'll have a list so that you can sign up with what you'll be bringing.

**PARISH EDUCATION:** During the Nativity Fast we'll have a series of classes on the Divine Liturgy (focusing on the spiritual significance of liturgical actions) and on the liturgical cycles of the Church. The classes will be held on Saturdays, beginning at 4:30 PM and ending in time

for Vespers at 6 PM. One of the spiritual disciplines recommended for the fasting seasons is increased spiritual reading or study of the faith, and these classes will provide an opportunity to do that, as well as to understand better what it is that we do in church and its importance in our spiritual lives.

**WELCOME VISITORS!** We warmly welcome all of our visitors! Please know that we are glad to have you here praying with us, and we invite you to stay after the service to enjoy a meal and meet everyone in our community.

## PRAYER SCROLL

### LIVING:

Apr Timothy H

Apr Herman S

Apr Sergius K

Apr Thomas E

Apr John R

Apr Patrick C

Pr James & Family

Pr Seraphim

Pr Adam S & Angie

Mother Raphaela

Mother Christophora

Mat Joanna B

Mat Katya

Mat Mary G

Mat Rebekah

Pani Amy

Joshua

Brittany

Gretchen

Marianne

Terrence

Helen

Judy

Mary & Susan

John & Carmine

Nathan

Leah

Helen

Lindsey

Elizabeth

Mary

Joe A

Daniel

Andrew & family

Carol

Elizabeth

David

Shirley

Christina

Jim & Kim

Rachel

Constantine & Maria

Gaetan

Christine

Samuel

Lisa

Lyudmila

Nickolay

Anetta

Zachary

Helena

Natasha, Lena, Vera,

Sergei

Caleb

Danielle

Larry, Mark, Katie

Ann

Dorothy

Ronald

Sheryl & Lacey

Alexander, Angela,

Anton

Peter

Gregory & Ann

Raymond

Vincent

Photini

Robert

Dianna

Elizabeth

John

Felicia

Tom

Vladimir

Lou

Seraphim & Anna

Micah, Danielle, &

Family

Gregory & Ashley

Petruta

Ivan

Elizabeth

Anastasia

Galina

Michael

Nikolas

Jenny

Gina

Paula

Children: Anthony,

Mia, Isabel, Bear,

Victoria, Iva Bell,

Panagiotis, Ada,

Grace, Elias, Jack,

Everett, Thomas

Seminarians: Dcn

Ivan, Rdr Robert

**Birthdays:**

**Anniversaries:**

**Namesdays:**

**REPOSED:**

Apr John U

Priest Matthew

Priest John

Apr Alexander

Priest William

Pdn Gregory

Dn Mark

Rdr Gregory

Daniel

Ada

Lillian

Joseph

Marie

Joseph

Laura

Martha

Stanley

Taïssia

Steluța

Theophan

Lynda

Florence

James

James R

Vasily

Mordecai

Alexandr

Ron

John

Eleanor

Harold

Alfred

Edward

Michael

Mat Jultanna

Mario

Robert

James

Wilhelmina

Barbara

Sr Theophano

Walter

Martha

Olga

Hilarion

Priscilla

**Newly Reposed:**

Apr Stephen M

Pdn Keith

Apr Michael

Khouria Lynne

**BY THE NUMBERS:** Last Collection: \$1019. Building Fund: \$0. Weekly Budget: \$1150. November Total: \$6086. Monthly Budget: \$4600.

## SCHEDULE FOR THIS WEEK

*Confessions are heard before and after Vespers, after Morning Prayers  
Tuesday–Thursday, or by appointment.*

**Sunday, December 3:** 9:10 Hours, 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy and Social Hour

**Tuesday, December 5:** 8:30 AM Morning Prayer

6 PM Vespers (St Nicholas)

**Wednesday, December 6:** 9 AM Divine Liturgy (St Nicholas)

**Thursday, December 7:** 8:30 AM Morning Prayer

**Friday, December 8:** 8:30 AM Morning Prayer

**Saturday, December 9:** 4:30 PM Class: "What Happens in the Divine Liturgy?"

6 PM Great Vespers

**Sunday, December 10:** 9:10 AM Hours, 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy and Social Hour

## PRAYER FOR CHURCH GROWTH

Again, we pray to Thee, O Lord our God, that Thou wouldst renew us and this parish by the Power of the Holy Spirit. Fill us with love and longing for Thee. Grant that we would seek not our own will, but to do Thy will in all things and to be willing to lay down our lives out of love for Thee and for our neighbor. Draw thirsty souls to this place and remove their spiritual blindness, granting them through Thy grace to see the beauty of Thy Holy Glory in this place. Fill this community with new life, spiritual vigor, and an insatiable desire to live godly and holy lives. Forgive us all of our sins as we fall down before Thee. Bring us all to a greater repentance and to an amendment of our lives as we look to Thee, the only merciful and loving Lord, Who calls all to salvation. We beg Thee, our merciful Lord, hear us, grant all of these petitions and all of our requests unto salvation: we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

# HOLY APOSTLES ORTHODOX CHURCH LANSING, NEW YORK



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2017  
TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

*Glory to God for all things!*



# THE REAL SAINT NICHOLAS

BY GABE MARTINI

Many words could be written about the true life and legacy of Saint Nicholas.

While most today only consider a fictional, elf-like inhabitant of the North Pole – and his band of flying reindeer – the prototype of this myth is a very real and very important person in the life of the Church.

Born sometime in the latter half of the third century, Nicholas grew up in a wealthy and educated family. He was an only child, and his parents, Theophanes and Nona, lived together with their son in the city of Patara, Lycia. Lycia was a province in the southern region of Asia Minor, or present-day Turkey.



Nicholas was raised as a Christian, and he followed in his uncle's footsteps in his service to the Church. His parents felt blessed by their only child, dedicating his life to the Lord. He was tonsured a monk at the monastery of New Zion, and his uncle – also named Nicholas – served as Bishop of Patara. His uncle eventually had the privilege of ordaining his nephew Nicholas to the priesthood.

At the time of his parents' death, Nicholas received an enormous financial inheritance. Not wanting to leave the ascetic life and his service to the Church, Nicholas donated all of his inherited goods and possessions to the poor and needy. Out of reverence for the words of Christ to "not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing" (Matt. 6:3) when giving alms, he did all of his acts of charity in secret. For example, a father in Patara had once lost all of

his wealth, leaving three daughters without the benefit of a dowry, and fearing the worst. When learning of this, Nicholas one night secretly left three small bags filled with money in an open window for the man to discover the next day.

Over time, and through various changes in custom, these acts of charity by St. Nicholas became the Christmas stocking tradition, where children leave their socks or shoes out to be filled with gifts and candy on the eve of Saint Nicholas' commemoration. While gift-giving for Christmas is commonly tied to the wise magi of Persia and their gifts for the newborn Christ, it is probably mostly derived from the life (and later legends) of St. Nicholas. As Orthodox Christians, we give chocolates or small gifts to our children on the anniversary of his death (Dec. 6) to remind them of the importance of charity, as well as the Christlike example set by St. Nicholas some 1,700 years ago.

Nicholas was appointed archbishop of Myra (in Lycia) by popular demand in the early part of the fourth century. He was then imprisoned during the persecution of Emperor Diocletian (A.D. 284–305), later to be set free when Emperor St. Constantine the Great made Christianity legal under Roman law. That same Constantine summoned the first Ecumenical Council, the

Council of Nicaea (A.D. 325), with Nicholas in attendance.

Santa Claus – that is, the secular or commercialized version of St. Nick – is referred to as a "jolly" fellow, but the real St. Nicholas was a devout and serious man, especially regarding his Christian faith. During the deliberations of the Council of Nicaea, the popular heresy of Arianism was being debated. Arianism – so-called for its founder Arius, a presbyter from Alexandria – denied that Jesus was the only-begotten Son of God, being of one essence with the Father.

When Arius openly rejected the divinity of Christ in the presence of the assembled bishops, Nicholas was filled with righteous indignation, striking Arius on the face. Since it was forbidden for clergy to engage in violent acts, the bishops of the council were conflicted over what action to take. However, Nicholas was soon exonerated after our Lord and his Mother appeared in a vision to the other bishops, telling them to leave Nicholas alone. As a result of the council, Arius and his followers were excommunicated, the Nicene Creed was written, and the orthodox belief of Christ as the only-begotten Son of God was preserved in the life of the Church—thanks in part, at least, to the devotion of St. Nicholas.

On December 6, 343, Nicholas reposed in the Lord. Hundreds, if not thousands of miracles have been attributed to his intercessions since that time, and he was being commemorated as a Saint (along with his uncle) by at least the reign of Emperor St. Justinian the Great (A.D. 527–565). He is considered to be the patron Saint of a number of cities, monasteries, churches, and even entire nations.

When the Muslims conquered Myra in 1034, there was a desire on the part of Latin crusaders to retrieve Nicholas' relics from Saracen captivity. In 1087, Italian soldiers brought Nicholas' relics back from Myra to the city of Bari, Italy, where they remain entombed in a church that bears his name. As a result, the fame of St. Nicholas spread throughout northern Europe, leading eventually to the legends of the Dutch "Sinterklaas," a character that turns into "Santa Claus" in the New World.

But far more poignant and meaningful than any overweight elf, the real St. Nicholas is a Christian example of faith, charity, and love. When both giving and receiving gifts this Nativity season, think back to the charity of St. Nicholas, finding ways to imitate his sacrificial giving to those in need. Do alms in secret, seeking not the glory or approval of the world. Give to the poor as if you were giving to Christ himself, knowing that all human beings are lovingly created in the image of God.

Become like St. Nicholas, and you can become like Christ. And this is the true and enduring gift of St. Nicholas to the world – an example of humility and faith that points us towards a more perfect union with the only-begotten Son of God.

Source: <http://orthochristian.com/66856.html>

## WEEKLY HYMNS FOR SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3

### Troparion, Tone 1 (Resurrection)

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews,  
while the soldiers were guarding Your most pure ^body,  
You rose on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world.  
The powers of heaven therefore cried to You, O Giver of Life:  
“Glory to Your Resurrection, O Christ!  
Glory to Your ^Kingdom!”  
Glory to Your dispensation, O Lover of mankind!”

### Troparion, Tone 2 (Prophet Zephaniah)

We celebrate the memory  
of Your prophet Zephaniah, O Lord;  
through him we beseech You:  
“Save our souls!”

### Kontakion, Tone 1 (Resurrection)

As God, You rose from the tomb in glory,  
raising the world with Yourself.  
Human nature praises You as God, for death has vanished.  
Adam exults, O Master!  
Eve rejoices, for she is freed from bondage and cries to You://  
“You are the Giver of Resurrection to all, O Christ!”

### Kontakion, tone 4 (Prophet Zephaniah)

You have been revealed by the Spirit of God to be brilliant, Prophet Zephaniah,  
for you proclaimed the coming of God:  
“Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion!  
Proclaim Him, O Jerusalem!  
Behold, your King is coming to save mankind!”

### Prokeimenon, Tone 1

Let Your mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set our hope on You!  
v: Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! Praise befits the just!

### Alleluia, Tone 1

v: God gives vengeance unto me, and subdues people under me.  
v: :He magnifies the salvation of the King and deals mercifully with David, His anointed, and his seed forever.

### Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

## ZEPHANIAH CHAPTER 3 (KJV)

*The Prophet Zephaniah prophesied during the reign of King Josiah (641–610 BC). His book is filled with fearful prophecies of the Day of the Lord, and ends with a message of Messianic hope. Here is its final chapter:*

Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city! She obeyed not the voice; she received not correction; she trusted not in the LORD; she drew not near to her God. Her princes within her are roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves; they gnaw not the bones till the morrow. Her prophets are light and treacherous persons: her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law. The just LORD is in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity: every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame. I have cut off the nations: their towers are desolate; I made their streets waste, that none passeth by: their cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, that there is none inhabitant. I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction; so their dwelling should not be cut off, howsoever I punished them: but they rose early, and corrupted all their doings. Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent. From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering. In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me: for then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride, and thou shalt no more be haughty because of my holy mountain. I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the LORD. The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid. Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The LORD hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, even the LORD, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more. In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing. I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly, who are of thee, to whom the reproach of it was a burden. Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee: and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out; and I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame. At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the LORD.