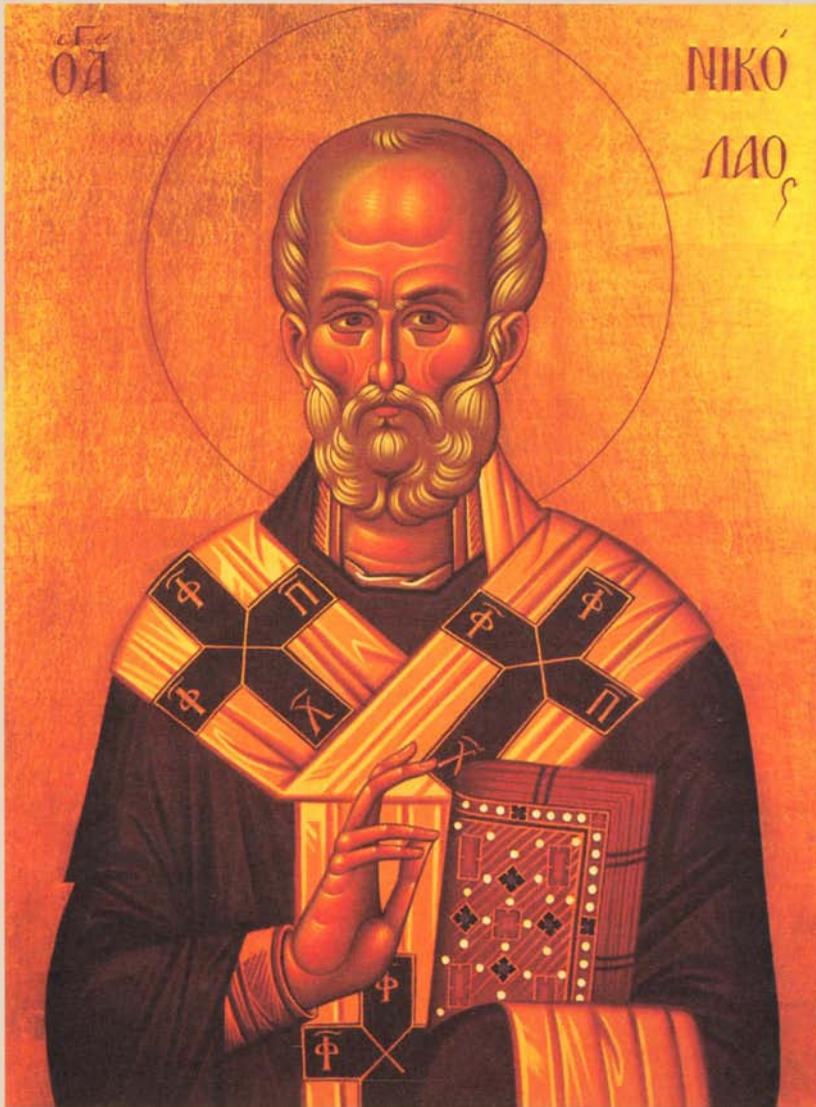


TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Icon of Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra -- December 6th

DECEMBER 6, 2009

FEAST OF ST. NICHOLAS THE WONDERWORKER
TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
TONE 2

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 7 – DECEMBER 13, 2009

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9	9:00 AM LITURGY	FEAST OF THE CONCEPTION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS BY ST. ANNE; IN THANKSGIVING REQ: SR. MARIE ARENDES
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13	9:30 AM LITURGY	SUNDAY OF THE HOLY ANCESTORS <i>FOR ALL PARISHIONERS</i>

Remember in your prayers

Please remember in your prayers those members of our parish, our family and friends who are ailing, are in hospitals, nursing homes and those who are not able to join actively in their community. Remember especially the following: Katherine Andrus, Walter & Isabella Bachynsky, Susie Boyko, Sonya Cronin, Helen Davis, Bohdanchik James, Maria Laszok, Lesya Loznycky, Alice Melnyk, and Sophia Skop. Please let Fr. James know if there is anyone else who should be remembered.



Prayers For Those Serving In The Armed Forces



Let us especially remember in our prayers those family members and friends who are actively serving their countries in the Armed Forces: Luke and Slavamira Haywas, Elizabeth Heltsley, Oksanna Hirniak, Andrew Hrynkiw, Zenon and Susan Keske, Michael Lopes, Vasyl and Volodymyr Lylak, Paul Richelmi and Brian Tuthill. Please give any names of those you would like remembered in the Liturgies to Fr. James.

La Mesa's Christmas In The Village

Come join us this Friday December 11 as we go caroling in downtown La Mesa. We will meet at the church 6:30 PM. Please wear a Ukrainian shirt/blouse for this event.

'Tis the Season Concert

Ticket for the *'Tis the Season* Christmas Concert are selling quickly. If you wish to purchase tickets you should do so soon in order to save on the cost. Please see the flyer in the church hall for information on purchasing your tickets.

Pancake Breakfast and Bake Sale

On Sunday, December 20th will be our annual pre-Christmas Pancake Breakfast and Bake Sale. This will take place after Liturgy.



Let's go Caroling!

Between December 25 and February 2 we will be organizing visits to our parishioners, shut-ins, and nursing homes. If you are interested in participating or you would like to be visited or you know of someone who would like to be visited, please contact Fr. James.

Church Decorating

Please come on Monday, December 21st at 10:00 AM to help decorate the Church for the feast of the Nativity of our Lord.

Christmas Items

Christmas Cards and other items are for sale in the Church Hall. Please see Mary Kitt to purchase.

The Future Of Our Church Begins Today

Today is the official launch of St. Nicholas Eparchy's Ukrainian Catholic Appeal 2009-2010. Its theme is "THE FUTURE OF OUR CHURCH BEGINS TODAY." It will be conducted in all of our 47 parishes and missions beginning today through April 25th 2010. You have heard much about the Appeal in the last few years. Please receive this one warmly and kindly consider Bishop Richard's request. It is only through the participation of each of us that we can truly be successful. Each parish and mission has been given a goal to reach to help Bishop Richard plan for the future growth of our Eparchy and meet current eparchial expenses. Now more than ever, we must remember to give thanks for the past, and reach out to touch the future with our faith and vision for tomorrow. With this Appeal, together we take a bold step toward preparing for our future. Our parish goal is \$5000.00. If each household were to donate 1% of its annual income or even \$250.00 we will be well on our way to achieving this goal. Your letters should arrive in your mailbox during this or next week. Please mail your contributions to the Bishop's Chancery or place them in the collection basket during the coming weeks of the appeal. Thank you for your generosity!

Сьогодні офіційно розпочинається проведення **Українського Католицького Заклику 2009-2010**. Цей заклик буде проведено в усіх наших 47-0X парафіях і місіях починаючи від сьогодні аж до 25-го квітня 2010 року.

ТУТ МОЖНА ЗАЧИТАТИ ПРО ТЕ, ЧОМУ МИ ПРОВОДИМО ЗАКЛИК 2009- 2010, І ЯКІ Є СУЧАСНІ ПОТРЕБИ ЕПАРХІЇ СВЯТОГО МИКОЛАЯ.

Кожній парафії і місії потрібно зібрати частку, щоб допомогти Владиці Ришардові покрити ВИЩЕЗГ АДАНІ епархіяльні витрати і таким чином планувати майбутній ріст нашої Епархії. Наша парафіяльна частка складає \$5000.00. Будь-ласка, коли Ви отримаєте лист владики, вишліть Ваш внесок поштою, або покладіть його в кошик для недільних збірок в час проведення Заклику, і ми відішлемо його за вас. ***Щиро дякуємо за Вашу щедрість!***

About St. Nicholas

The Apolytikion (Hymn) of St. Nicholas

An example of the Faith and a life of humility, as a teacher of abstinence you did inspire and lead your flock, and through the truthfulness of your deeds were exalted by greatness, through your humility uplifting all and by poverty gaining wealth. Father and hierarch Nicholas, intercede with Christ our God that our souls may be saved.

Who is St. Nicholas?

More than 1,700 years ago, in the year 270 AD, St. Nicholas was born not far from Myra, in a land that is now part of the country of Turkey. In those days Christians were persecuted for their faith. It wasn't easy to be a Christian. Many of them were tortured and executed because they believed in Christ.

Nicholas was taught by his parents to love the Lord with his whole mind, heart, soul, and with all his strength. When they died he inherited their money. He used this to help the poor, the hungry, and the sick. Whenever he helped anyone he did it secretly, so that only God would know, He did not want praise from people; he wanted his reward to be only in Heaven.

After he gave away the money his parents had left him he decided to become a monk. He went to a monastery where he lived and worked and prayed, intending to spend the rest of his life repenting of his sins. But soon it became clear that God wanted him to be a priest, and so he began to study the Law of God.

St. Nicholas became the parish priest of a village church after his ordination. He worked very hard, instructing his flock and helping those in need. He also performed all the Divine Services and was a spiritual father to all.

He Becomes Archbishop

One day the Archbishop of Myra died. The other bishops, as well as the priests and people of the town, gathered to choose a successor. They couldn't decide who should be their new archbishop. They kept a vigil and prayed all night long in the cathedral, begging God to guide them. God revealed to one of the bishops that the first priest to enter the church in the morning should be chosen as the new archbishop. At sunrise, a simple priest, Father Nicholas, came quietly into the cathedral to say his morning prayers. In this way the Lord God revealed His choice for archbishop.

A Church Council

In the year 325 a great Council of the undivided Church was held in the city of Nicea. 317 bishops from all over the world came. At this Council part of the Creed we sing in every Divine Liturgy was written down and St. Nicholas had a wonderful opportunity to defend the teachings of the Church against Arius who denied that Jesus Christ was God in the flesh and was leading many people astray by his false teaching.

A Wonderworker

St. Nicholas followed the words of our Lord, Lay up treasure for yourself in Heaven, by saying his prayers every day, by fasting, and by performing many good deeds. God was so pleased that He worked many miracles through him. Because he was able to calm storms on the sea he became known as the patron saint of sailors. Because he protected children (he even raised 3 children from the dead!), he is also a patron of young people. He was able to multiply food, just as our Saviour did with the fish and loaves, and in this way he once kept a whole city from starving. People began to call him a "wonderworker" (a person who works wonders or performs miracles). They were so inspired by his life of service to others that many of them, too, began to lead holy lives, filled with good deeds.

The most famous story about St. Nicholas concerns a man who, because of extreme poverty, had agreed to sell his three daughters into slavery. St. Nicholas heard about it and came in the night, leaving behind him a bag with enough gold in it to save one of the children. Three times he came secretly so that the man would not know from where the money came. On the third night, the man saw him and asked for the Saint's forgiveness because he had nearly sold his children as slaves. Because of this and similar acts, St. Nicholas became the patron saint of children and the type of the cheerful giver of good gifts.

After a long life, God called his slave home to heaven on December 6, 343. He was buried in his cathedral, but in the year 1087 the remains of his holy body (relics) were taken to Italy to save them from the Turks who were persecuting Christians and destroying churches and holy objects, and they remain to this day in the city of Bari. The Eastern Church celebrates this translation of his relics on May 9, St. Nicholas led a life so pleasing to God, that God glorified His saint even after his death, As a sign of God's grace, a fragrant substance called "myrrh" comes from the relics of St. Nicholas and many sick people anoint themselves with it and receive healing. There is an Orthodox church in Bari whose priest frequently celebrates services before the relics, asking St. Nicholas to pray for us before the throne of God.

People all over the world know and love St. Nicholas. Children in America, Germany, Holland, and many other countries know about him. Unfortunately very few know that he was a Bishop of the Church. American children don't know that Santa Claus is St. Nicholas (Santa comes from the Latin for "saint"; Claus is a nickname for "Nicholas"). They know mostly about his gift giving to children; they don't realize that he was so generous because he loved Christ more than anything else and wanted to serve Him by helping others.

UNPRECEDENTED COALITION OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS CALL AMERICANS TO STAND FOR SANCTITY OF LIFE, MARRIAGE, AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Washington D.C., Nov 20, 2009 / 06:21 am (CNA) – An unprecedented coalition of prominent Christian clergy, ministry leaders, and scholars has crafted a 4,700-word declaration addressing the sanctity of life, traditional marriage, and religious liberty. The declaration issues “a clarion call” to Christians to adhere to their convictions and informs civil authorities that the signers will not “under any circumstance” abandon their Christian consciences.

The statement, called “the Manhattan Declaration,” has been signed by more than 125 Catholic, Evangelical Christian, and Orthodox leaders, and will be made fully public at a noon press conference in the National Press Club in Washington DC on Friday.

“We are Christians who have joined together across historic lines of ecclesial differences to affirm our right—and, more importantly, to embrace our obligation—to speak and act in defense of these truths. We pledge to each other, and to our fellow believers, that no power on earth, be it cultural or political, will intimidate us into silence or acquiescence,” the statement says.

“We recognize the duty to comply with laws whether we happen to like them or not, unless the laws are gravely unjust or require those subject to them to do something unjust or otherwise immoral,” the signatories explain.

But they also made clear that “we will not comply with any edict that purports to compel our institutions to participate in abortions, embryo-destructive research, assisted suicide and euthanasia, or any other anti-life act; nor will we bend to any rule purporting to force us to bless immoral sexual partnerships, treat them as marriage or the equivalent, or refrain from proclaiming the truth,

as we know it, about morality and immorality and marriage and the family.”

The Manhattan Declaration is the result of several months of dialogue among Orthodox, Catholic, and evangelical Christian leaders culminating in a gathering of approximately 100 leaders in New York City on September 28, 2009.

Attendees considered an early draft of the “Manhattan Declaration, A Call of Christian Conscience,” but the document was entrusted to a drafting committee that included Dr. Timothy George of Beeson Divinity School at Samford University, Dr.

Robert P. George of Princeton University, and renowned Evangelical leader Charles Colson.

The signatories explained that they speak now because in order “to defend principles of justice and the common good that are now under assault.”

“We will fully and ungrudgingly render to Caesar what is Caesar’s, but we will under no circumstances render to Caesar what is God’s.”

The signatories of the Manhattan Declaration explain that although public sentiment has moved in a pro-life direction, “pro-abortion ideology prevails in many places of power and influence.”

“Our government promotes and funds scientific research in which the lives of tiny human beings in the early embryonic states of development are treated as disposable research material.”

They also contend that “public policies contribute to the weakening of the institution of marriage, including the discredited idea of unilateral divorce,” while “influential individuals and organizations are seeking to redefine marriage to embrace same-sex partnerships and to recognize multiple-party sexual unions that are beyond same-sex marriage.”



HOW TO READ / SIGN THE MANHATTAN DECLARATION

The Manhattan Declaration is available online for review in its entirety at <http://www.manhattandeclaration.org>. The number of signatures has grown rapidly since the document's release on Friday November 20 2009.



THE CONCEPTION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

From the Synaxarion – December 9th

In accordance with the eternal purpose of God, who willed to prepare a most pure habitation for Himself in order to take flesh and dwell among men, Joachim and Anna were prevented from having children for many years. Their barren old age was symbolic of human nature itself, bowed down and dried up under the weight of sin and death, yet they never ceased begging God to take away their reproach. Now when the time of preparation determined by the Lord had been fulfilled, God sent an Angel to Joachim in solitude on a mountain, and to Anna in her affliction weeping in her



garden, to tell them that the ancient prophecies were soon to be fulfilled in them: a child would be born to them, who was destined to become the veritable Ark of the new Covenant, the divine Ladder, the unburnt Bush, the uncut

Mountain, the living Temple where the Word of God would take up His abode. Through the conception of Saint Anna, the barrenness of human nature itself, separated from God by death, has on this day been brought to an end; and by the wondrous birth-giving of her who had remained childless until the age when women can no longer bear fruit, God announced and testified to the more astonishing miracle of the Conception without seed, and of the immaculate coming to birth of Christ

within the heart and womb of the Most Holy Virgin and Mother of God.

Even though the birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary took place though a miraculous action of God, she was conceived by the union of man and woman in accordance with the laws of our human nature, which has fallen through Adam's transgression and became subject to sin and corruption. As the chosen Vessel and precious Shrine prepared by God since the beginning of time, she is indeed the most pure and the most perfect of mankind, but even so, she has not been set apart from our common inheritance nor from the consequences of the sin of our first parents. Just as it was fitting that Christ, in order to deliver us from death by His own voluntary death, should by His Incarnation be made like to men in all things except sin; so it was meet that His Mother, in whose womb the Word of God would unite with human nature, should be subject to death and corruption like every child of Adam, lest we be not fully included in Salvation and Redemption. The Mother of God has been chosen and preferred among all women, not arbitrarily, but because God foresaw that she would preserve her purity and keep it perfect: conceived and born like all of us, she has been worthy to become the Mother of the Son of God and the mother of us all. So in her tenderness and compassion she is able to intercede for us with her Son.

Just as the Lord Jesus Christ was the fruit of the virginity of the holy Mother of God, so she herself was the fruit of the chastity of Joachim and Anna. And by following the same path of chastity we too, monks and Christian married people, can bring Christ to be born and grow in us.

Українська Католицька Парафія Матері Божої Неустаючої Помочі

Церква Святого Йоана Хрестителя

Ukrainian Catholic Parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Help

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Парох: о. Яків БЕНЬКСТОН

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[Patristic Wisdom on the Lord's Prayer Continued]

A Prayer that Contains the Fullness of Perfection

The "Our Father" is a short formula, a model prayer. It does not contain requests for riches, or any suggestion of honors sought. There are no demands for authority or power. There is no mention of the health of the body or of temporal life. The Architect of eternity does not want us to ask for anything fleeting, and it would be an insult to His generosity to neglect the riches of eternal life and ask for something transitory instead. Such baseness of mind would earn the wrath rather than the favor of the Judge. The "Our Father" prayer contains all the fullness of perfection, inasmuch as the Lord Himself has given it to us, both as a model and also as a precept. Those who are familiar with this pray are raised by it to a very lofty condition, namely that "prayer of fire" which very few know by direct experience and which it is impossible to describe. The "prayer of fire" transcends all human feeling. There are no longer sounds of the voice, no movements of the tongue, no articulated words. The soul is completely imbued with divine light. Human language, always inadequate, is no use any more. But in the soul is a spring bubbling over, and prayer gushing out from it leaps to God. The soul expresses in a single instant many things which could only be described or remembered with difficulty when it has returned to its normal condition. Our Lord has traced an outline of this mystical state in this formula, the "Our Father" that contains various supplications, and also in the hours He spent alone on the mountain side, and in the silent prayer of His agony in the moment when He even sweated blood through the unique intensity of His unity with the Father.

St. John Cassian