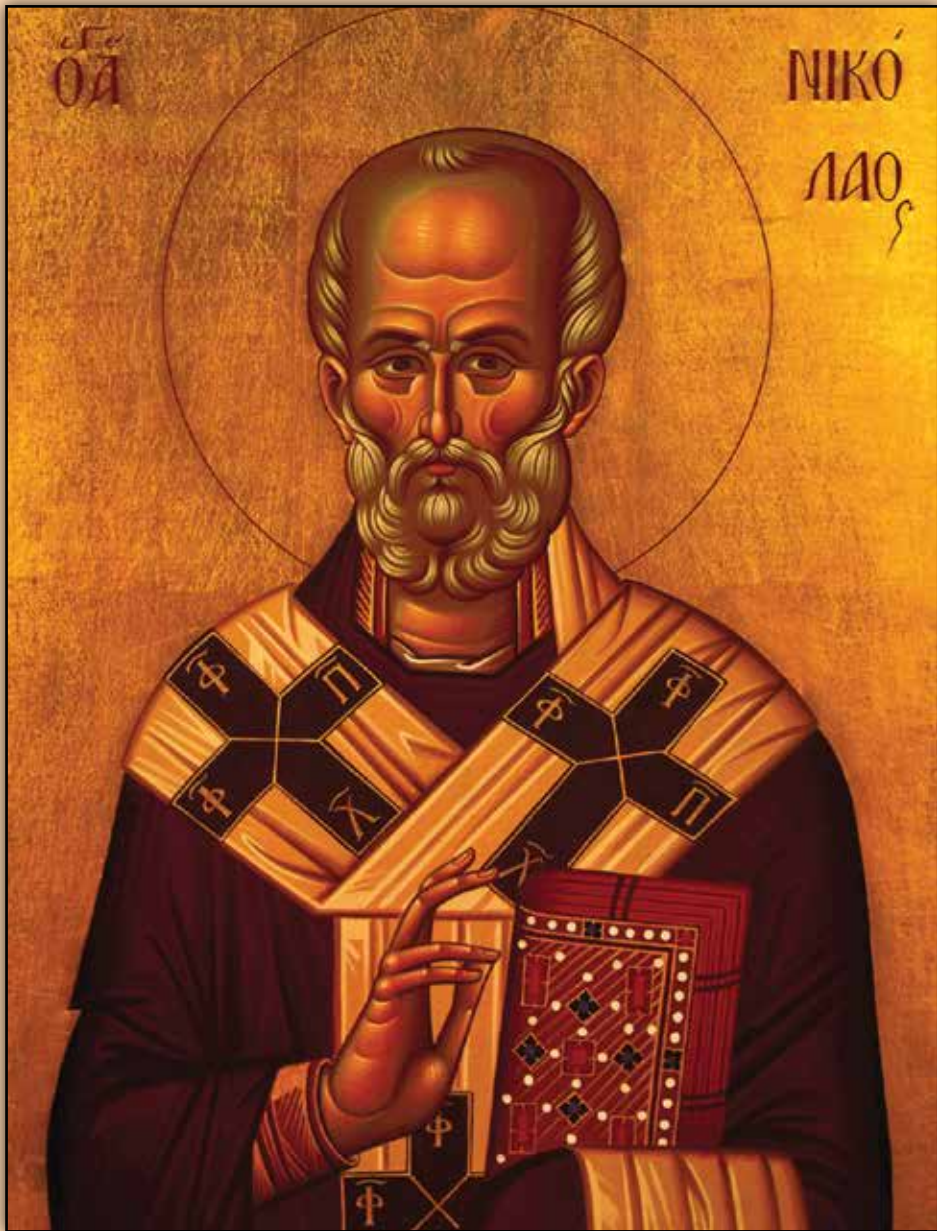


TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Icon of Saint Nicholas -- December 6th

Dec. 3, 2023: Twenty Seventh Sunday After Pentecost

Epistle: Eph. 6: 10-17

Gospel: Lk. 18: 18-27

This Weekend

4:00 + Michael & Rose (Carol)

10:30 For Our Parishioners; Baptism: Deklan Yearing

Mon., Dec. 4

No Divine Liturgy

Tues., Dec. 5

9:00 + Helen & Andrew Kollar (Family)

Wed., Dec. 6

St. Nicholas (Solemn Holy Day)

9:00 + Nicholas Zinsky (Wife, Dorothy)

Thurs., Dec. 7

No Divine Liturgy

Fri., Dec. 8

9:00 + Roman Kushner (Frank & Susan Lesnefsky)

Sat., Dec. 9

No Morning Divine Liturgy

No Confessions Today

4:00 pm + Frank (Carol)

Sun., Dec. 10

10:30 For Our Parishioners; Baptism: Alexandra Hartman

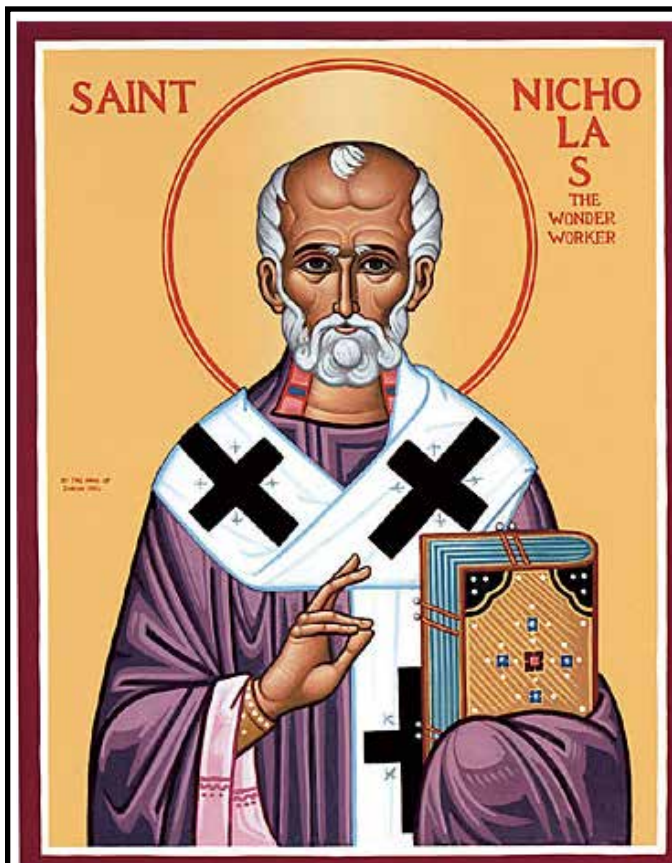
THE FEAST OF ST. NICHOLAS,

ARCHBISHOP OF MYRA, WONDERWORKER

St. Nicholas stands out in the Church as a “model of faith and an example of virtue.” Nicholas was Archbishop of Myra in Lycia in the fourth century. He is called the Wonderworker. His greatness lies neither in theological works nor in writing. He is a personification of a shepherd, a defender, and an intercessor. For us, Nicholas is a man of faith. He shows us what humility is and teaches us the values of moderation and poverty. All

generations have acknowledged him as a holy bishop.

St. Nicholas, called “of Bari”, was bishop of Myra in the fourth century. The great veneration with which this saint has been honored for many ages and the number of altars and churches which have been everywhere dedicated in his memory are testimonials to his holiness and of the glory which he enjoys with God. He is said to have been born at Patara in Lycia, a province



of Asia Minor. Myra, the capital, not far from the sea, was an episcopal see, and this church falling vacant, the holy Nicholas was chosen bishop, and in that station became famous by his extraordinary piety and zeal and many astonishing miracles.

The Greek histories of his life agree that he suffered imprisonment for the faith and made a glorious confession in the latter part of the persecution

raised by Diocletian, and that he was present at the Council of Nicaea and there condemned Arianism. He died at Myra, and was buried in his cathedral.

The Icon of St. Nicholas brings him into our life. He is shown with his right hand raised in blessing and his left hand clasping a scroll. As bishop, he blesses his people in the name of Christ and brings the Word of Truth to them. The Icon encloses the image of Christ holding the Gospel Book on one side of the Saint, and the Mother of God holding the Bishop's omophorion on the other side. This is an obvious reference to his choice as Bishop of Myra. It

is common for events from the lives of the Saints to be shown in their icons. In a vision prior to his election as Bishop, Nicholas beheld Christ handing him the Book of Gospels, and the Mother of God placing the omophorion on his shoulders.

The celebration of the Feast of St. Nicholas, on December 6, is a holy day celebrated with much joy in Ukraine,

where it is a traditional custom to visit and distribute gifts. Many Ukrainian communities continue this old tradition, which helps Ukrainian children remember that before Santa Claus there was a holy man called Nicholas.

Named the patron saint of children, Nicholas was the son of a wealthy bishop and shared his fortune with the poor. He was said to have secretly

left bags of gold in the night for those who could not afford dowries for their daughters. Legend says that maidens need only pray to the patron saint and they will have good husbands in the future.

With St. Nicholas we stand in faith and worship, seeing him as a model for our Christian lives and a model for Christian leadership. We ask him to pray to Christ for us.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

The following was written by Ben Stein and recited by him on CBS Sunday Morning Commentary. The article is quite long but certainly is worth reading.

I am a Jew, and every single one of my ancestors was Jewish. And it does not bother me even a little bit when people call those beautiful lit up, bejeweled tress, Christmas trees... I don't feel threatened... I don't feel discriminated against... That's what they are, Christmas trees.

It doesn't bother me a bit when people say, "Merry Christmas" to me. I don't think that they are slighting me or getting ready to put me in a ghetto. In fact, I kind of like it. It shows that we are all brothers and sisters celebrating this happy time of year. It doesn't

bother me at all that there is a manger scene on display at a key intersection near my beach house in Malibu... If people want a crèche, it's just as fine with me as is the Menorah a few hundred yards away. I don't like getting pushed around for being a Jew, and I don't think Christians like getting pushed around for being Christians. I think people who believe in God are sick and tired of getting pushed around, period. I have no idea where the concept came from, that America is an explicitly atheist country. I can't find it in the Constitution and I don't like it being shoved down my throat.

Or maybe I can put it another way: where did the idea come from that we should worship celebrities and we aren't allowed to worship God as

we understand Him? I guess that's a sign that I'm getting old, too. But there are a lot of us who are wondering where these celebrities came from and where the America we knew went to.

In light of the many jokes we send to one another for a laugh, this is a little different: This is not intended to be a joke; it's not funny, it's intended to get you thinking.

Billy Graham's daughter was interviewed on the Early Show and Jane Clayson asked her: "How could God let something like this happen?" (regarding Hurricane Katrina). Anne Graham gave an extremely profound and insightful response. She said: "I believe God is deeply saddened by this, just as we are, but for years we've been telling God to get out of our schools, to get out of our government and to get out of our lives. And being the gentleman He is, I believe He has calmly backed out. How can we expect God to give us His blessing and His protection if we demand He leave us alone?"

In light of recent events... terrorist attacks, school shooting, etc... I think that it started when Madeleine Murray O'Hare complained she didn't want prayer in our schools, and we said OK.

Then some of you better not read the Bible in school. The Bible says thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not steal, and love your neighbor as yourself. And we said OK.

Then Dr. Benjamin Spock said we shouldn't spank our children when they misbehave, because their little personalities would be warped and we might damage their self-esteem. (Dr. Spock's son committed suicide). We said an expert should know what he's talking about. And we said OK.

Now we're asking ourselves why our children have no conscience, why they don't know right from wrong, and why it doesn't bother them to kill strangers, their classmates, and themselves. Probably, if we think about it long and hard enough, we can figure it out. I think it has a great deal to do with "WE REAP WHAT WE SOW."

Funny how simple it is for people to trash God and then wonder why the world's going to hell. Funny how we believe what the newspapers say, but question what the Bible says. Are you laughing yet? Funny how we can be more worried about what other people think of us than what God thinks of us.

But, if you discard this thought process, don't sit back and complain

about what bad shape the world is in. respectfully.
My Best Regards, Honestly and re-

OUR CONDOLENCES

In your Christian Charity, please remember the soul of + **Dorothy Loden** who fell asleep in the the Lord on Monday, November 20th. +Dorothy was buried from St. Cyril's on Tuesday, November 28th. May her memory be eternal! Vichnaya Pamyat!

OUR CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations and best wishes to **Deklan Yearing**, along with his parents Steven and Molly, on the occasion of his Initiation into the flock of Jesus Chris (Baptism, Chrismation and Eucharist) during the 10:30 Divine Liturgy. Deklan, we welcome you into our Parish Family and pray that God may grant you many Happy and Blessed yours. Mnohaya Leeta!

PARISH MEMBERSHIP AND EXPECTATIONS

What then does it mean to be a parishioner? What are the expectations?

As a result of my baptism, in practicing my Christian discipleship, I am expected as a registered member of my parish to:

- regularly attend and participate in the Sunday Divine Liturgy, together with my family;
- regularly participate in the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church;
- develop and practice an ongoing personal/family prayer life;
- witness to the teachings of the Church by the manner of my living life;
- practice stewardship of my time, talent and treasure in service to the mission of the Church;
- acknowledge, as a registered member, that I am to be a participant in serving the mission of the parish rather than being only a spectator; and
- realize the necessary and ongoing importance of love, generosity, faith and family.

‘TIS THE SEASON! DECORATING ST. CYRILS CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS 2023



**SAVE THE DATE: Sunday DE-
CEMBER 3, 2023.**

Christmas will be here before we know it! We will be decorating St. Cyril's Church today (Sunday, December 4th) following the Divine Liturgy at approximately 12:00 noon. All Parishioners are invited to volunteer, as windows, iconostas, vestibule, the Royal Doors, the Main Altar, manger, choir loft, outdoors, etc... are decorated for the Christmas season.

2024 CHURCH CALENDARS

The 2024 Church Calendars are available in back of the Church. The

Calendars are free, but any donations will be appreciated.

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA FUNDRAISER

Our Parish will, once again, be hosting a Christmas Poinsettia Sale. We will be taking orders for the 6½" potted poinsettias from Jerry's For All Seasons until December 6th. They are being sold for \$12 each and will be

delivered on December 20th. Order forms may be found in the church vestibule. Please take a few and distribute them to your friends and neighbors.

COLLECTION PROCESSING TEAM...

The Collection Processing Team for the month of December 2023 is Team

#4: Ron Barkofsky, Steve & Jeannie Cucura.

Sunday Collection for November 25 & 26, 2023: \$

Ss. Cyril & Methodius Ukrainian Catholic Church

135 River St., Olyphant, PA 18447-1435

Telephone: 570-291-4451 Fax: 570-489-6918



Web Site: stcyrils.weconnect.com

E-Mail: sscyrilandmethodius@comcast.net

Rev. Nestor Iwasiw, Pastor

The Legendary Saint Nicholas

The absence of the “hard facts” of history is not necessarily an obstacle to the popularity of saints, as the devotion to St. Nicholas shows. Both the Eastern and Western Churches honor him, and it is claimed that, after the Theotokos, he is the saint most pictured by Christian artists. And yet, historically, we can pinpoint only the fact that Nicholas was the fourth-century bishop of Myra, a city in Lycia, a province of Asia Minor.

As with many of the saints, however, we are able to capture the relationship which Nicholas had with God through the admiration which Christians have had for him – an admiration expressed in the colorful stories which have been told and retold through the centuries.

Perhaps the best-known story about Nicholas concerns his charity toward a poor man who was

unable to provide dowries for his three daughters of marriageable age. Rather than see them forced into prostitution, Nicholas secretly tossed a bag of gold through the poor man’s window on three separate occasions, thus enabling the daughters to be married. Over the centuries, this particular legend evolved into the custom of gift-giving on the saint’s feast. In the English-speaking countries, St. Nicholas became, by a twist of the tongue, Santa Claus – further expanding the example of generosity portrayed by this holy bishop.

The critical eye of modern history makes us take a deeper look at the legends surrounding St. Nicholas. But perhaps we can utilize the lesson taught by his legendary charity, look deeper at our approach to material goods in the Christmas season and seek ways to extend our sharing to those in real need.