

ST. GEORGE *Chronicle*

Rev. Christopher Morris
Pastor

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF ST GEORGE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH
KEARNEY, NEBRASKA

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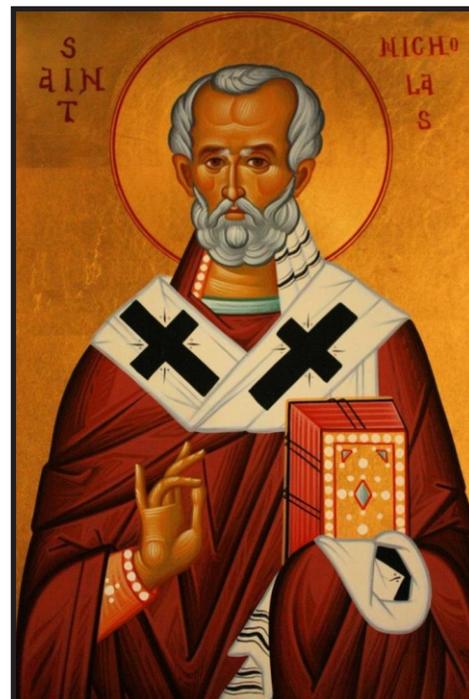
January 6, 2016

THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST INTO THE TEMPLE

February 2, 2016

St. Nicholas The Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra Feast Day, December 6

Saint Nicholas lived during the reign of Saint Constantine the Great, and reposed in 330. As a young man, he desired to espouse the solitary life. He made a pilgrimage to the holy city Jerusalem, where he found a place to withdraw to devote himself to prayer. It was made known to him, however, that this was not the will of God for him, but that he should return to his homeland to be a cause of salvation for many. He returned to Myra, and was ordained bishop. He became known for his abundant mercy, providing for the poor and needy, and delivering those who had been unjustly accused. No less was he known for his zeal for the truth. He was present at the First Ecumenical Council of the 318 Fathers at Nicaea in 325; upon hearing the blasphemies that Arius brazenly uttered against the Son of God, Saint Nicholas struck him on the face. Since the canons of the Church forbid the clergy to strike any man at all, his fellow bishops were in perplexity what disciplinary action was to be taken against this hierarch whom all revered. In the night our Lord Jesus Christ and our Lady Theotokos appeared to certain bishops, informing them that no action was to be taken against him, since he had acted not out of passion, but extreme love and piety. The Dismissal Hymn for holy hierarchs, "The truth of things hath revealed thee to thy flock" ... was written originally for Saint Nicholas. In time his fame in northern Europe as a saintly bishop began changing to that of a giver of gifts to children, usually done on December 6. He is the patron of all travelers, and of sea-farers in particular; he is one of the best known and best loved Saints of all time.

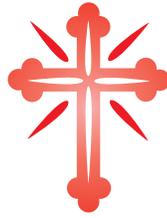


*Holy Father, Bishop Nicholas, intercede with Christ our God
that our souls may be saved.*

 **A note from Fr. Christopher . . .**

Dear Members, Friends and Benefactors of Saint George,

I hope and pray that you are all having a Blessed Advent as we keep this holy time in preparation for the celebration of our Lord's birth in the flesh!



One of the many beautiful things I love about Holy Orthodoxy is how we celebrate Christmas. All around us, the "celebrations" are already in high gear. People are putting up Christmas lights, decorating Christmas trees, and doing their Christmas shopping. There are Christmas goodies to eat, Christmas parties to attend, and Christmas songs to hear. And Christmas isn't even here yet!

These are not bad things in and of themselves (except for the gluttony). In fact, when done with the right spirit, we can sanctify many of these things and make them part of our deeper celebration of Christmas.

The sad thing, however, is that by the afternoon of Christmas Day, the rest of the world will be over with Christmas. Done. Finished. Kaput. Such a big build-up—accompanied by too much splurging and lots of over-indulging—and it's all gone in a puff of smoke (or in a huge bundle of wrapping paper stuffed in the garbage, as the case may be).

As Orthodox Christians, we celebrate Christmas differently.

During this time, we are preparing—first and foremost—our hearts. By increasing our prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, we are striving to make a **worthy place in the manger of our hearts** for the Lord of Glory to come and dwell! And the great thing is, after this time of preparation, we REALLY celebrate Christmas.



Though our preparation is already underway, our celebration starts on Christmas Day, and goes on from there! It lasts all the way to early January, right before the feast of Theophany. Almost two weeks of celebrating this glorious feast when the rest of the world will have already moved on!

If we prepare diligently this year, we will have a most blessed feast. And it will last not only a few hours on Christmas morning. Nor even the whole "Twelve Days of Christmas." The Lord whom we are welcoming into our hearts this Christmastime will come to dwell there all year long!

In anticipation of the feast: Christ is born! Glorify Him!

May you all have a very *Merry Christmas!* Fr. Christopher



**UPDATE
on our
LOAN
CHALLENGE**



EXCITING NEWS!

Just a month ago, we received our first matching challenge to help pay down our debt . . . And as of today, by God's grace and your generosity, we have received enough donations to **pay off** our over \$18,000 loan!

Many, many THANKS to all of our incredible benefactors!!!



Anyone who still wishes to make a contribution may direct their gift to our building fund which helps with on-going maintenance and repairs to our beloved (and almost 100 year old) St. George building.

Once again, many heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped wipe out our debt!

***May God richly bless you
for your generosity!***

***Thank
You!***





Saint Porphyrios - Feast Day Dec. 2

“Our religion is perfectly and profoundly conceived. What is simple is also what is most precious. Accordingly, in your spiritual life engage in your daily contest simply, easily, and without force. The soul is sanctified and purified through the study of the Fathers, through the memorization of the psalms and of portions of Scripture, through the singing of hymns and through the repetition of the Jesus Prayer. Devote your efforts, therefore, to these spiritual things and ignore all the other things.”

— Saint Porphyrios, *Wounded by Love*

Holy Father Porphyrios, pray for us!

“TWO ADAMS, TWO EVES, ONE RULE, TWO TREES”

Midwest Orthodox Women’s Retreat 2015 by Sarah Fothergill

On November 13th and 14th, five ladies from St. George Church drove to Abilene, Kansas for the annual **Midwest Orthodox Women's Retreat**, hosted by St. George Cathedral. Our attendees this year were Kh. Anastasia Morris, Kim Rehtus, Ashley Maloley, Margaret Morris, and Sarah Fothergill.

So...what exactly happens at a Women's Retreat? A nice day at the spa? Manicures? Foot massages? Well....that's not the kind of retreat we attended! (Although, I'm happy to accompany anyone to one of those!!) Our retreat refreshed and reinvigorated our spiritual health. **It was a perfect way to start the Nativity Fast.**

The retreat began with a fun four hour car ride to Abilene. We enjoyed this time to fellowship and strengthen our friendships. When we arrived in Abilene we checked into our hotel and then met with the other ladies (approximately 40 others, including our dear friend **Linda Maloley!**) for dinner at the retreat location. **Fr. Joseph Huneycutt from Houston, Texas** gave an opening talk following dinner. He introduced himself and shared some fun stories about how he became a priest. He then gave opening remarks about the retreat topic Defeating Sin. This weekend, we focused on discussing the passions (pride, anger, lust, envy, gluttony, avarice, and sloth) and the virtues (humility, patience, chastity, contentedness, moderation, liberality, and diligence). With this, we discussed the fall of Adam and Eve and the impact on us. We learned that due to our fallen nature we must repent and rid ourselves of the passions. **The darkness in our lives must be removed for the light to enter.** We often fall towards the passions, but we have so many angels, saints, and our spiritual brethren willing and ready to help us toward the virtues. Fr. Joseph gave us excellent tips and advice for leading our lives with the virtues in mind. He also gave tips on attending confession, fasting, and other aspects of our lives.

The weekend also allowed for some free time which was spent getting to know the other women, checking out books from the Eighth Day Bookstore display, and yes, some shopping time in downtown Abilene. The weather was perfect and the company was even better. Ashley Maloley commented, “I had an amazing time and felt so blessed to be surrounded by so many women that truly loved and cared for me. Conversation was amazing and constructive not gossiping-I’m ready to go again!” We had a fun-filled getaway and had a chance to grow in our relationship with the Lord and each other. We hope to continue this tradition of renewal and refreshment next year!



FROM OUR READERS . . .

Many thanks to the Wolf family for providing our family and guests with a completely delicious and memorable Greek dinner as a result of the October Mystery Basket Raffle! Your amazing food and wonderful stories were complemented by your warm and generous hospitality. It was an evening we will not soon forget!

Love in Christ,
Gerald, Kim, Rachel & Emma Rehtus

Thank You!

Jeff and I would like to send this small gift towards the roof repayment fund, in gratitude for all the blessings in our lives. We love our **St. George family** and hope the debt can be eliminated soon.

With love,
Jeff and Sidonya Fulton



We are so happy to share our exciting news with you, our St. George parish family! Congratulations on the engagement of our daughter, *Amanda Shada to Zane Williamson.*

Save the date - October 15, 2016

Love in Christ,
Tim & Tracey Shada



"Crown them with Glory"



Birthdays

December 8
Sande Buchman

December 20
Matthew Brailita

December 22
Fr. Philip Vreeland

December 23
Gerald Rehtus



HAPPY Anniversary

December 17
Tim & Tracey Shada

In Memory of

In Memory of June Koepp, a donation to **St. George Orthodox Church** from Mark & Joanie Klein

In Memory of Mircea Constantin Brailita and the suffering victims of the club fire in Romania, a donation to **St. George Orthodox Church** from Daniel and Dora Brailita

May God bless you all for your generosity!

Thank you for your generosity to St. George. When sending your donation (or placing it in the offering tray) please include a note to designate your gift, and if you desire your name to be published in the Chronicle or made anonymous. These forms are also available on the candle table. Thank you.

Donations *Gratefully Received*

Donation to the **St. George Orthodox Church** from Franca Fullmer

Donation to the **Hail Loan** from Varthie and LeeAnn Eliakis

Donation to the **Hail Loan** from Jim and Kelly Shada

Donation to **St. George Orthodox Church** in honor of Bill & Millie Rempel Baptism, from Mark & Joanie Klein

Donation to the **Hail Loan** from Jeff and Sidonya Fulton

Several donations to the **Hail Loan** from anonymous donors

Donation to the **Chronicle**, from Anonymous Donor

Donation to the **Beautification Fund** in honor of Saint Porphyrios Feast day, by Anonymous Donor

Please send any additions or corrections to the editor at stgeorgechronicle@yahoo.com thank you



Our **Fall Bake Sale**, held on Sat. **Nov. 21st** was a huge success! **Many thanks to all of you** who gave your time by baking your wonderful treats! We had a great variety of **home-made goodness** - Pies, Cakes, Cookies, Candy, Breads, Cinnamon Rolls and our traditional Lebanese offerings of Flat bread, Rice, Meat Pies, Green Beans, and Cabbage Rolls and Baklava! Thanks also for your very nice packaging, decorations and labels. Many of the items were ready for our buyers to give as gifts, and that helped with sales.

The **Baklava Holiday Fund raiser** has begun. Deadline for orders will be **Monday, Dec. 7th**. Please remember to turn in your orders and payment to Kim Rehtus or Tracey Shada by Monday. *If you are wanting to purchase Baklava for yourself or family, you will need to fill out an order form as well.* These orders are necessary to help us determine how much Baklava we need to prepare (**sold per dozen only**).

Please see **red folder** (in basement) for the committee **sign-up sheets** and ways you can volunteer, and helping us prepare the Baklava.

Many thanks to those who have distributed order forms, and flyers, to help us advertise this fund-raiser event for St. George.



Upcoming Sunday School Activities

December 6th - To celebrate St. Nicholas Day, immediately following potluck the kids will complete a craft and hear the story of St. Nicholas.

December 20th - Please join us for a **soup lunch and a parish-wide Christmas Program** in the basement. The Sunday School children will kick off the program with a group song they have been practicing and are excited to share!

No Sunday School December 27.



ST. GEORGE YOUTH GROUP

The **St. George Youth Group** has been very active this fall. Our latest gatherings have included **helping the 20/40 group serve a meal** at Crossroads Shelter, **movie nights, making treats** for the church bake sale, picking up **Win Bins**, and attending **Vespers on Wednesdays**.



We enjoy meeting for our **weekly prayer and fellowship time**. This spring, we hope to raise money to help us attend **Parish Life Conference and Camp St. Raphael**. Stay tuned for some fun upcoming fundraisers!



We hosted a **pancake lunch** for the parish after Liturgy, on November 4th, complete with scrambled eggs and ham, 4 different kinds of pancakes, and plenty of yummy toppings! Thanks to everyone who helped to prepare, cook and clean-up.

A special thanks to all of those at St. George who **contributed to our collection** for Crossroads Homeless Shelter of Kearney. We raised almost \$200 and used the funds to purchase ingredients for a **chili dinner**, that we provided to the shelter on November 15th.

Approximately 25 clients of the shelter were served a warm chili dinner with various side dishes, including **homemade cinnamon rolls** by members of the 20/40 group. It was a wonderful opportunity to serve and interact with these members of our community. All of the remaining funds were then **donated to Crossroads** so that they will be able to purchase needed supplies as **they bring glory to God through the helping of people**.



We will meet on Mondays in December, the **7th and 21st** from 4:00 - 5:00. All ladies are welcome!

ST. GEORGE BULLETIN BOARD

Christmas Program



Sign up now for our
Annual Parish Talent Show!



Please join us for lunch and a Christmas program/talent show on **Sunday, December 20th**. The Sunday School students and parents will be providing a **soup luncheon** for the parish following Liturgy. **The entire parish is invited to participate in the program following lunch.**

The children will begin the program with a song they have been learning in Sunday School. We would love to have many others share their talents as well. **Singers, pianists, instrumentalists, solos, duets, poem readers, card tricks...you name it!** We would like this to be a little more formal than last year, so please sign up in the parish hall if you would like to participate. **This is open to all ages!** If you have questions, please see Sarah Fothergill or Kim Rehtus.



**HOW COME THE
WAITRESS GETS 15% AND
GOD ONLY GETS 10%**

5th Annual Holiday BAKLAVA FUNDRAISER



Baklava baking week is here!

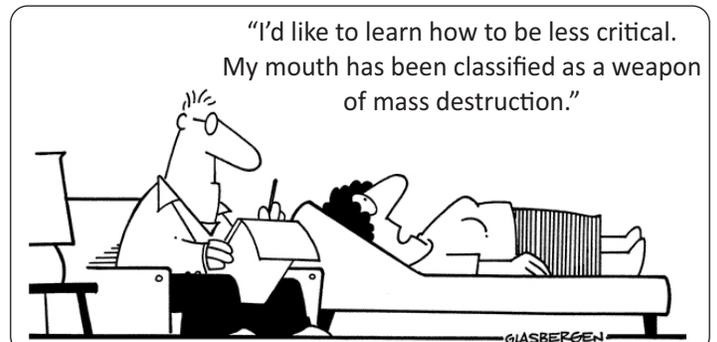
We have received orders for over 100 dozen so far, and we're counting on the willingness of the St. George family to once again help with this important fundraiser. Even if you have no prior baklava experience, please **sign-up in the red book downstairs**, and we will teach you what you need to know. This is a great opportunity to work together and experience the truth of "**many hands makes light work**". *Thank you.*

Many thanks to all who purchased **raffle tickets** for the



November Mystery Basket. This month's lucky winner, was Margo Maloley. Thank you to Virginia Suleiman for donating her lovely, hand-made Casserole carrier that will come in handy on pot-luck Sundays. Money raised will go to our **St. George Youth Group** to help fund their projects and meals for fellowship after Wed. services.

thank you!





ST. GEORGE SCRAPBOOK

We're Makin' Memories

**WE GIVE
THANKS**



FOR OUR

Parish
Family



AT ST. GEORGE!

WOMEN'S RETREAT - 2015
with Fr. Joseph Honeycutt

ST. GEORGE *Chronicle*

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The Right Rev. BASIL, bishop

The Rev. Christopher Morris,
pastor
stgeorgekearney@yahoo.com

Editor, Sbdn. John F. Wolf
Design & Layout, Joanie Klein
Contact:
stgeorgechronicle@yahoo.com

Church Office Phone:
(308) 234-6969

Church website:
www.saintgeorgekearney.com

Year-to-date Giving
for St. George in 2015

FINANCIAL REPORT

As of **Nov. 30** - We have received
\$77,909 of the \$81,055 we have
budgeted for pledges.

As of **Nov. 30** - We have received
\$17,319 of the \$17,000 we have
budgeted for trays and candles.

Thank you! Thank you!

PLEASE NOTE

*Articles and photos for the Chronicle
are due on the 24th of the month,
prior to the month of the desired
publication.*

*Please submit content to:
stgeorgechronicle@yahoo.com*

*The Chronicle is the monthly
newsletter of St. George
Orthodox Christian Church of
Kearney, Nebraska.*



Lord, I call upon Thee, hear me.
Hear me, O Lord. Let my prayer
arise in Thy sight as incense. And
let the lifting up of my hands be an
evening sacrifice. Hear me, O Lord.
(Psalm 141:1-2).

DECEMBER FASTING

The Nativity Fast began Nov. 15th
and is divided into two periods:
The 1st period is Nov. 15th through
Dec. 19th when the traditional fasting
discipline (no meat, poultry, eggs,
dairy, fish, wine and oil) is observed
on Monday, Wednesday and Friday,
but with katalysis for wine and oil on
Tuesday and Thursday (some permit
fish also in this first period) and for
fish, wine and oil on Saturday and
Sunday.

The 2nd period is December 20th
through the 24th (the period of the
Forefeast) when the traditional
fasting discipline (no meat,
poultry, eggs, dairy, fish,
wine and oil) is observed
Monday through Friday,
but with katalysis for wine
and oil on Sat. and Sun.



**TO BE A
CHRISTIAN
MEANS TO
FORGIVE
THE INEXCUSABLE
BECAUSE
GOD HAS
FORGIVEN THE
INEXCUSABLE
IN YOU**

- C.S. LEWIS



Visit our website for helpful
information about
St. George and our timeless
orthodox faith.
Keep up with important dates
by using the **calendar** that
is published monthly
and updated often.
www.saintgeorgekearney.com