



Weekly Bulletin

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

A Community of the Orthodox Church in America

Witnessing to the Apostolic Faith in Lake County for over 35 Years

Father Andrew Clements, Pastor

Volume 24

2010

Number 2

Sunday	Jan 10	<i>31st Sunday after Pentecost / Tone 6 / Sunday after Theophany</i>	
		9:00 am	Church School
		10:00 am	Divine Liturgy Coffee Hour
Saturday	Jan 16	<i>Martyr Danax the Reader</i>	
		6:30 pm	Vigil Confession
Sunday	Jan 17	<i>32nd Sunday after Pentecost / Tone 7 / Sunday of Zacchaeus</i>	
		Readings:	1 Tim 4:9-15 Luke 19:1-10
		9:00 am	Church School
		10:00 am	Divine Liturgy Coffee hour

ATTENDANCE / STEWARDSHIP / DEC 20

Attendance: (Adults 92, Children 24)	116
Operating	\$3,434.00
Expansion	25.00
Uganda Children	120.00
Parking Lot	100.00
Icons	50.00
St Nick Choir	50.00
Other	10.00

ATTENDANCE / STEWARDSHIP / JAN 6

Attendance: (Adults 135, Children 33)	168
Operating	\$3,582.00
Expansion	25.00
Uganda Children	110.00
Parish Charities	150.00
Icons	50.00
Other	10.00

COUNCIL MEETING CORRECTION

The January Council Meeting will take place on Wednesday, the 20th and not on Monday the 18th as indicated on the Calendar.

2010 CONCERNS

Please use the special envelope provided in your packet for the 2010 assessments to the Diocese and the OCA. Your timely response is greatly appreciated.

HOUSE BLESSING NOTE

The blessing of homes is underway. Please sign up in the foyer for your area if you wish to have your home blessed.

YOUNG ADULT GROUP

The Young Adult Fellowship Group will meet this month on Friday, Jan 22 at St. Paul's Greek Church.

Details are in the foyer.

ALTAR BOY RALLY

On Monday, Jan 18 an Altar Boy gathering will take place at St Michael's in Broadview Hgts. The day begins at 9:00 am. Let Fr Andrew ASAP if you are interested. Details are in the foyer.

PRAYER CORNER ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

----- For Healing / Well Being: -----

Child Zachary (Chris J's grndsn), Eleanor Alexander (Tom's mom), Vera Campbell (Deb's mom), Tom Alusheff, Ben Somerlot (Renda frnd), Evelyn Frye (Heim frnd), Peter Vitantonio (Mark J's csn), Connie Dirksin (Darrah frnd), Steve Peterson (Christani frnd), George Ursinyi (Janet's dad), Barbara Hall (Debbie C's sstr), Bill Stearns (Sabol frnd), Corey (Luann D's sn-n-lw), Kerya Brisbane (Clements frnd), Elizabeth Ries (Denise Busch's mom), Randy Moore (Sue C's uncl), Mary J. (Ruth B's frnd), Fr Theodore Shomsky (Fr Andrew's frnd), Diane Smith (Gloria H's frnd), Cheryl Carrol (Denise B's frnd), John Pellack (Peggy W's br, John Grubb (Zorka's frnd).

Expectant Parents

Kristen & Chris, Joe & Kristy

Newly Illumined

Merrick Jacob Wagner

Those who are grieving

Deeb & Munns families

----- Memory Eternal -----

Archbishop Job of Chicago and the Midwest (12/18), Infant Charles (Deeb grndsn, 12/30)

Singing the Soul Away

by Fr Vladimir Berzonsky

“With the saints give rest, O Lord, to the soul of Your servant departed this life and let her memory be eternal” (Funeral hymn)

Vera was part of our spiritual family from our very beginning. Before there was a church, she prayed with us when only the basement of our rectory was converted for worship. Forty-seven years later, she contracted a most fatal form of cancer, a sure fast track to death. Our deacon and I with our wives had been to the hospice to pray the poignant prayer of anointing. Before that the others left her room for her last Confession and Holy Communion. I suggested she lay in bed, but she took my hand to turn in a sitting position. We held hands for a long conversation — technically her confession, with appropriate prayers; however, what didn't I already know about her life? Unlike many in her situation, she talked in a gentle voice of her passing into eternity as if it were an adventure to some foreign location, which of course it would be. The blessing of priesthood is to share the experiences and act as a catalyst of transition in such circumstances. No other career that I know has such a glorious opportunity for providing a Christ-like comfort in such circumstances.

Our choir members traditionally visit our beloved in hospitals and institutions as well as other shut-ins during the Christmas season to sing hymns and carols. They visited the hospice where Vera lay waiting for the inevitable, composed and at rest. The nurse on duty told our carolers that it would be best not to enter her room. For several days there had been no response from Vera, who lay in the semi-dark room with the door ajar. The carolers decided to sing in any case, and then as they softly sang, two young ladies looked in the bed and noticed there was a stirring. They opened the door wider and went beside the bed, engaging in a conversation with Vera. Between their hymns the carolers all had the opportunity to speak with her, an experience they felt to be a gift from the Holy Spirit.

Once a non-Orthodox at the funeral of her father-in-law commented: *“It was as though Dad was being transported on the wings of your songs.”* Precisely. We tend to call the prayers for our beloved deceased a *Requiem*. That term comes from the first word of the Roman Catholic funeral, meaning “quiet rest.” Yet the proper Slavonic term *Otp'evanie* is *ot* meaning “away” and *pevanie* meaning “singing.” Thus, we the Church are “singing away” the soul of one we love; or it could be thought of as singing with the saints and angels. What is happening then is that the soul once baptized alone now makes a journey alone — but not quite alone. She who was part of our family, with whom we had shared the precious gifts of Jesus Christ from the holy chalice, is transitioning to another form of existence. It doesn't mean she is no longer one of the family. We sing her away as if we were at the airport bidding her farewell.

Just as Vera was lying inert on her cot, her attending nurse assuming she was already on her way out of this lifetime and probably didn't want to be disturbed, her mind was not lifeless. She heard the familiar hymns sung outside her doorway. Hearing, as all who have to do with the unconscious and dying know, seems to be the last organ functioning. Many times I've been told by survivors that they heard my prayers but were unable to respond at the time.

So they pass from life as we best know it into life everlasting, the songs of the Church on earth singing them away lest they feel alone and unaccompanied — and then they hear voices on the other side of death's doors singing them in like living beacons, or more conventionally, like the control tower of Heaven. Those who are “*in Christ*” are never truly alone unless they want to be.