

Assumption of the Holy Virgin Orthodox Church

2101 South 28th St. (corner of 28th St. & Snyder Ave.)
Philadelphia, PA 19145 * Church Phone: (215) 468-3535
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Sunday, November 15, 2015 | 24nd Sunday After Pentecost

Tone 7 – Holy Martyrs and Confessors Gurias, Samonas and Abibas
of Edessa (299-306). Beginning of Advent – The Nativity Fast!

V. Rev. Mark W Koczak, Acting Rector

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Parish President – Matthew Andrews

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Weekly Schedule

Friday: November 20 – NO Vespers before Holy Day!

Saturday: November 21 – The Entry of the Most-Holy
Theotokos into the Temple
Divine Liturgy – 10:00AM!

Saturday: November 21 - Great Vespers at 5:00PM!

Saturday: November 21 – Annual Ethnic Festival! – 12p to 4p
Sunday: November 22 – Annual Ethnic Festival! – 12p to 4p
St. Nicholas Church – Philadelphia, PA

Sunday: November 22 – Afterfeast of the Entry of the Most-
Holy Theotokos Into the Temple
Reading of Hours – 9:40am
Divine Liturgy – 10:00am
Fellowship & coffee hour to follow the Divine Liturgy

Texts for the Liturgical Service

Troparion (Tone 7)

By Thy Cross Thou didst destroy death. / To the thief Thou didst open Paradise. / For the Myrrhbearers Thou didst change weeping into joy, / and Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God, / to proclaim that Thou art risen, // granting the world great mercy.

Troparion (Tone 5 – Martyrs)

O Christ our God, Thou hast granted us the miracles of Thy holy martyrs / Gúrias, Samónas, and Abíbas, / as a stronghold and protection. / Through their prayers, strengthen those in authority in ev'ry good deed, // for Thou alone art merciful and lovest mankind!

Kontakion (Tone 7)

The dominion of death can no longer hold men captive, / for Christ descended, shattering and destroying its powers. / Hell is bound, while the Prophets rejoice and cry: / “The Savior has come to those in faith; // enter, you faithful, into the Resurrection!”

Kontakion (Tone 2 – Martyrs)

Ye received grace from on high, O all-praised martyrs, / and ye intercede for those in the midst of temptations. / Therefore, O saints, ye freed a young woman from bitter death, // and are indeed the glory of Edessa and the joy of the world.

Prokeimenon (Tone 7)

The Lord shall give strength to His people. The Lord shall bless His people with peace.
v. Offer to the Lord, O ye sons of God! Offer young rams to the Lord!

Epistle Reading: Ephesians 2:14-22

For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. Alleluia (3x's) (Tone 7)

- v. It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to Thy Name, O Most High. Alleluia (3x's)
- v. To declare Thy mercy in the morning, and Thy truth by night. Alleluia (3x's)

Gospel Reading: Luke 10:25-37

And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" So he answered and said, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.' " And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.' So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves? And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Communion Hymn:

Praise the Lord from the heavens! Praise him in the highest! Alleluia (3x's)

Announcements

Biography of the Very Reverend Mark W Koczak. The resume and biography of our parish priest, Archpriest Mark, are posted on the bulletin boards in the back of the church and in the church basement. This same information is also posted on the parish website under the section "About Us", then scroll down to the "Administration" area. Please take a moment and read about Father Mark's experiences and accomplishments.

Announcements (cont.)

Welcome to all of our visitors & guest worshipping with us today. A warm welcome to all of our visitors and guest who have joined us today in celebrating the Divine Liturgy. Please join us in the church basement for our Fellowship and Coffee Hour.

General Parish Meeting Notice (1st of 3) - December 6th after Divine Liturgy.

According to Article 10, Section 1, of the Parish By-Laws, notice is hereby given in this bulletin of a General Parish Meeting on Sunday, December 6th after Divine Liturgy in the church basement.

In the News...Orthodox Church in America (OCA): oca.org

The new [Statute of the Orthodox Church in America](#), adopted by delegates to the [18th All-American Council](#) in July 2015, became effective November 1.

As detailed in the *Statute's* Article XVIII, dioceses, parishes, monasteries, institutions, offices, and organizations of the Church shall review their governing documents and administrative practices and conform them to the Statute by December 31, 2017. The Diocesan hierarchs will be working with the parishes, monasteries and institutions under their omophoria in the review process as necessary. Speaking of Diocesan review process...(below)

In the News...Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania (DOPEA): dopea.org

The Deaneries are having presentations to discuss the Diocesan Bylaws, the proposed process how parishes will fund the Dioceses in the future, and how Treasurers & Financial Secretaries are to complete the new financial statements sent to the Diocese. Final Deanery presentation is as follows:

Philadelphia Deanery – Sun Nov 22 @ 4pm in Wrightstown, PA (St. Mark's Church)

Poinsettias/Christmas Flowers! We have begun collecting for Christmas flowers. There will be special envelopes available to be used for your offering for flower donations. Please give the envelopes to Debbie Kavalkovich or a member of the parish council. Thank you for your support!

Holiday Basket Brigade! The parish has begun accepting donations for the Holiday Basket Brigade. We will start with the traditional Thanksgiving items. Currently, the parish plans on providing two baskets to families in the community. If you know of a family unable to provide a traditional Thanksgiving Day meal, please inform a parish council member and we will plan accordingly. We have a list available of those items to be donated and the list is attached to the care boxes. The Thanksgiving Baskets will be delivered next Sunday - November 22, after Divine Liturgy!

Announcements (cont.)

Candles and Prayers for the Faithful and Departed

Health for the Living:

Mary & Simon Herbert, Kimberly & Thomas Herbert, Catherine & Albert Kavalkovich, Emelie Albrecht offered by M/M Herbert
Kavalkovich Family offered by Pellack Family
Daria LeRoy offered by Melanie Albrecht
Albert Kavalkovich, Sharon Orr, Ronald Kavalkovich offered by Catherine Kavalkovich
Witiak Family offered by M/M P Witiak
Albert, Anastasia, Catherine, Alexander, Sharon, James, John, Marc, William, William, Daria, Priest John, Emelie, Ronald, Lorraine, David, David offered by M/M K Kavalkovich
May God Grant Them Many Blessed Years!

Memory for the Departed:

Christopher John Homa, Jean Hourahan, Pauline (Hudak) Cardow, Theodore Taninatz offered by M/M Herbert
Irene Kavcsak offered by Nina Patterson
May Their Memories Be Eternal

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Please remember in your prayers: Cantrell Family; Grace Corba; Robert Corba; Albert Kavalkovich, Julia Makara; Helen Riley; Helen Wanenchak; Robert Wanenchak; Annamae Witiak; Father John Udics; Father Vincent Saverino; Father John Bohush and the parishioners of Saint Nicholas Eastern Orthodox Church in Philadelphia; and all those who are serving in our Armed Forces!

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BULLETIN INFO:

If you did not pick up a bulletin because there was none left on the Tetrapod, don't worry...a copy can be made. Please inform Dan Herbert or one of the parish council members that you would like that week's bulletin and a copy will be made for you. We also keep any extra bulletins back in the vestibule from the past three (3) months. They are located on the shelf where the prosfora is placed.
Also, for those who have access to the Internet, bulletins since June 2009 are posted on the parish website for your convenience. Thank you!

Please ensure that your Mobile Phone is set to Silent (or at least set on vibrate) during the Divine Liturgy! Thank You!!!

Announcements (cont.)

Sign up sheets for Coffee Hour, Cleaning and Epistle & Hours Reading. Sign up sheets for the above items are posted on the bulletin board in the church basement. The sheets have been pretty bare over the past few weeks. Please be considerate and volunteer to assist with some of the parish responsibilities. Your time is very much appreciated!

Special weekly collections taken after Gospel or Sermon. In addition to our general collection, the parish takes a special collection each week to fund certain parish projects. Please be generous with your offering. Every little bit counts. The special collections are as follows:

- First Sunday of every month – Kitchen Fund Project
- Second Sunday of every month – Youth Fund
- Third Sunday of every month - Restoration/Maintenance Fund
- Fourth Sunday of every month – Charity Giving

Note: if there is a Fifth Sunday during a month, the special collection is earmarked for the Kitchen Fund Project, unless otherwise noted and stated by the Parish Council.

Cash Flow Activity (November)

| | <u>Week of Nov 2 to Nov 8</u> | <u>November Month-to-Date</u> |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Attendance: | 48 | 37 (average) |
| Funds In: | \$ 3,096.00 | \$4,347.00 |
| Funds Out: | \$ 1,836.58 | \$3,336.58 |
| Net Surplus/(Deficit): | \$1,259.42 | \$1,010.42 |

Shop Rite Gift Cards: If you need to purchase Shop Rite Gift Cards, please see David Pellack to secure them. Your purchase of a Shop Rite Gift Card is an additional fundraising project that helps support the church at no additional expense to the purchaser.

“...to serve our neighbor is to serve Christ himself... Our brother is our salvation. Our brother, our neighbor is also our opportunity to save ourselves.” ~ Archbishop Benjamin – Diocese of San Francisco (OCA)

Calendar of Events

November 21 – Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple (Major Feast Day!)

November 26 – Thanksgiving Day

November 29 – Parish Council Meeting after Divine Liturgy

November 30 – Holy Apostle Andrew the First-called

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church – Philadelphia, PA hosting their 44th Annual Ethnic Festival – Weekend of November 21 & 22.

The parish is located at 817 North 7th Street. Phone # 215.922.9671. The time for both Saturday & Sunday (Nov 21-22) is from 12pm to 4pm.

Tree Cutting and Branch Trimming scheduled for Thursday, December 3 around 9:30am. Please see Lena or Paul to discuss if they need assistance on this day. If so, all work would be “ground work” (no climbing of trees to cut down).

Clean-up Day Outside of Church Property scheduled for Saturday, December 5 at 9:30am. As a result of the Tree Cutting and Branch trimming during the week, the property will be littered with small branches and leaves. Your assistance with cleaning any leftover debris and beautifying the outside property of the church is greatly appreciated!

General Parish Meeting – Sunday, December 6 after Liturgy in the church basement. A general parish meeting is scheduled for this date to discuss this past year and plan for next year. Meeting should take about an hour but will not be longer than 90 minutes. This is NOT the Annual Parish Meeting, which is scheduled for sometime in late January.

Indoor Church Cleaning scheduled for Saturday, December 12th beginning at 10:00AM. Bring your rags and cleaning supplies to assist.

Parish Christmas Decorating and Trimming of the Christmas Tree scheduled for Saturday, December 19th. Time TBD.

Bible Study – December - To Be Determined The Bible Study Group will gather together in December and continue reading and discussing the Book of Genesis.



Holy Martyrs and Confessors Gurias, Samonas and Abibas of Edessa [November 15th]

The Holy Martyrs and Confessors Gurias, Samonas and Habibus: during the persecution against Christians under the emperors Diocletian (284-305) and Maximian (305-311). The two friends Gurias and Samonas, preachers of the Word of God, were arrested in the city of Edessa.

The saints refused to offer sacrifice to the gods, and boldly confessed their faith in Christ. For this they were subjected to cruel tortures: they were beaten, hung up by their hands, heavy weights were tied to their feet, and they were cast into a stifling prison.

The martyrs endured everything with firmness and Samonas uttered a prayer to the Lord, which one of the witnesses to their death wrote down: "O Lord my God, against Whose will not a single sparrow falls into the snare. It was You Who made room for David in his sorrow (Ps. 4:1), Who proved the Prophet David stronger than lions (Dan. ch. 6), and granted a child of Abraham to be victor over torture and flames (Dan. ch. 3, ch. 14). You know also, Lord, the infirmity of our nature, You see the struggle set before us. Our foe strives to snatch us, the work of Your right hand, away from You and to deprive us of the glory which is in You. With Your compassionate eye watching over us, preserve in us the inextinguishable light of Your Commandments. Guide our steps by Your light, and make us worthy of Your Kingdom, for You are blessed unto ages of ages." By night, they took the martyrs out beyond the city and beheaded them (+ 299-306). Christians buried their holy bodies with reverence.

After some years, the last pagan emperor, Licinius (311-324), began a persecution against Christians. Habibus, a deacon of the Church of Edessa whom the emperor ordered to be arrested for his zealous spreading of the true Faith, presented himself before the executioners when he learned they were searching for him. The saint confessed his faith in Christ and was sentenced to be burned alive. The martyr went willingly into the fire and with a prayer surrendered his soul to the Lord. When the fire went out, the mother and relatives of the saint found his body unharmed. They buried the martyr next to Sts Gurias and Samonas.

After the death of the saints, numerous miracles were wrought by them for those who entreated their help with faith and love. Once, a certain Gothic soldier, sent to serve at Edessa, took the pious virgin Euphemia as his wife. Before this the barbarian vowed to her mother Sophia at the graves of the Martyrs Gurias, Samonas and Habibus that he would do his spouse no harm, and would never insult her, but would always love and cherish her.

At the completion of his service in Edessa, he took Euphemia with him back to his native land. It turned out that he had deceived her, for he already had a wife at home, and Euphemia became her slave. Her evil husband threatened to kill her if she revealed to anyone that they were married. Euphemia suffered much abuse and humiliation. When she gave birth to a son, the jealous Gothic woman poisoned him. Euphemia turned with prayer to the holy Martyrs Gurias, Samonas and Habibus, the witnesses to the perjurer's oath, and the Lord delivered Euphemia from her suffering and miraculously returned her to Edessa, where she was welcomed by her mother.

After a certain while the Goth was again sent to serve in Edessa. The whole city learned of his misdeeds after he was denounced by Sophia. The Goth was executed by order of the prefect of the city. In an Akathist, the Holy Church addresses the martyrs: "Rejoice, Gurias, Samonas and Habibus, Heavenly Patrons of honorable marriage." We pray to them for deliverance from family turmoil, and from marital difficulties, especially where one spouse hates the other without cause.