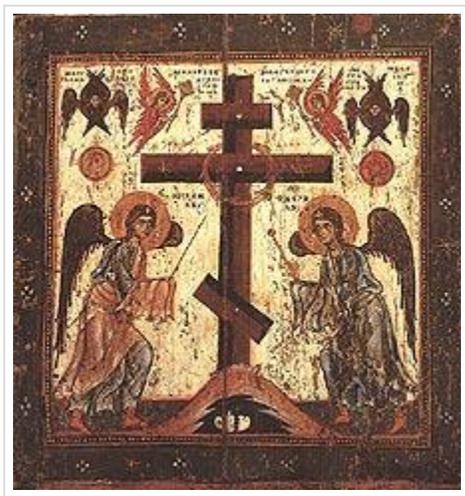


**St. Nikolai Orthodox Mission of Alliance
820 South Linden Avenue, Alliance, Ohio
(at St. Theodore Romanian Byzantine Catholic Church)
Divine Liturgy, 9:30**

**Right Rev. Bishop Alexander, Bulgarian Diocese, Orthodox Church in America
Very Reverend Father Joseph Cervo, Archpriest (AOCANA-retired)
Rev. Protodeacon James Gresh, Mission Administrator (Bulgarian Diocese OCA)
March 15, 2015 Third Sunday of Lent: Veneration of the Holy Cross
Martyr Agapius and those with him**



Welcome to Visitors. Thank you for coming and praying with us today. In the Orthodox Church, Holy Communion is reserved only for Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves through prayer, fasting and confession during the Church fasting seasons. We invite you to introduce yourself to Father Joe and Deacon James at the end of the Liturgy and receive a piece of the blessed bread and join us for fellowship and Christian education at the Jonathan Casteel hall, directly through the alley way behind the church. We look forward to seeing you again and encourage you to learn more about the Orthodox Faith.

Tone 7 Troparion (Resurrection)

By Your Cross You destroyed death. To the thief You opened Paradise.
For the Myrrhbearers You changed weeping into joy.
And You commanded Your disciples, O Christ God,
to proclaim that You are risen, granting the world great mercy.

Tone 1 Troparion (for the Cross)

O Lord, save Your people, and bless Your inheritance!
Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries;
and by virtue of Your Cross, preserve Your habitation!

Tone 4 Troparion (St. Nikolai)

In truth you were revealed to your flock as a rule of faith, an image of humility and a teacher of abstinence; your humility exalted you; your poverty enriched you. Hierarch Father Nikolai, entreat Christ our God that our souls may be saved!

Tone 7 Kontakion (for the Cross)

Now the flaming sword no longer guards the gates of Eden;
it has been mysteriously quenched by the wood of the Cross.
The sting of death and the victory of hell have been vanquished;
for You, O my Savior, have come and cried to those in hell: "Enter again into Paradise!"

(In place of the Trisagion, we sing:)

Before Your Cross, we bow down in worship, O Master,
and Your holy Resurrection, we glorify.

Tone 6 Prokeimenon (Cross)

O Lord, save Your people and bless Your inheritance!
v: To You, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not silent to me!

Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-5:6

Tone 8 Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

v: Remember Your congregation, which You have purchased of old!

v: God is our King before the ages; He has worked salvation in the midst of the earth!

Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1

Instead of "It is truly meet ...," we sing the following Hymn to the Theotokos:)

All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace:

the assembly of Angels and the race of men.

O sanctified temple and spiritual paradise, the glory of virgins,

from whom God was incarnate and became a Child – our God before the ages.

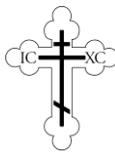
He made your body into a throne,

and your womb He made more spacious than the heavens.

All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace. Glory to you!

Communion Hymn

The light of Your countenance has shone on us, O Lord. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!



Mid-Lent: The Holy Cross

*The Following is an excerpt from **Great Lent**, by Alexander Schmemmann*

From Chapter 4: The Lenten Journey

The third Sunday of Lent is called "*The Veneration of the Cross.*" At the Vigil of that day, after the Great Doxology, the Cross is brought in a solemn procession to the center of the church and remains there for the entire week-- with a special rite of veneration following each service. It is noteworthy that the theme of the Cross which dominates the hymnology of that Sunday is developed in terms not of suffering but of victory and joy. More than that, the theme-songs (*hirmoi*) of the Sunday Canon are taken from the Paschal Service-- "The Day of the Resurrection"-- and the Canon is a paraphrase of the Easter Canon.

The meaning of all this is clear. We are in *Mid-Lent*. On the one hand, the physical and spiritual effort, if it is serious and consistent, begins to be felt, its burden becomes more burdensome, our fatigue more evident. We need help and encouragement. On the other hand, having endured this fatigue, having climbed the mountain up to this point, we begin to see the end of our pilgrimage, and the rays of Easter grow in their intensity. Lent is our self-crucifixion, our experience, limited as it is, of Christ's commandment heard in the Gospel lesson of that Sunday: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Mark 8:34). But we cannot take up our cross and follow Christ unless we have *His* Cross which He took up in order to save us. It is His Cross, not ours, that saves us. It is His Cross that gives not only meaning but also power to others. This is explained to us in the *synaxarion* of the Sunday of the Cross: On this Sunday, the third Sunday of Lent, we celebrate the veneration of the honorable and Life-Giving Cross, and for this reason: inasmuch as in the forty days of fasting we in a way crucify ourselves.... and become bitter and despondent and failing, the Life-Giving Cross is presented to us for refreshment and assurance, for remembrance of our Lord's Passion, and for comfort.... We are like those following a long and cruel path, who become tired, see a beautiful tree with many leaves, sit in its shadow and rest for a while and then, as if rejuvenated, continue their journey; likewise today, in the time of fasting and difficult journey and effort, the Life-Giving Cross was planted in our midst by the holy fathers to give us rest and refreshment, to make us light and courageous for the remaining task.... Or, to give another example: when a king is

coming, at first his banner and symbols appear, then he himself comes glad and rejoicing about his victory and filling with joy those under him; likewise, our Lord Jesus Christ, who is about to show us His victory over death, and appear to us in the glory of the Resurrection Day, is sending us in advance His scepter, the royal symbol-- the Life-Giving Cross-- and it fills us with joy and makes us ready to meet, inasmuch as it is possible for us, the King Himself, and to render glory to His victory.... All this in the midst of Lent which is like a bitter source because of its tears, because also of its efforts and despondency.... but Christ comforts us who are as it were in a desert until he shall lead us up to the spiritual Jerusalem by His Resurrection.... for the Cross is called the Tree of Life, it is the tree that was planted in Paradise, and for this reason our fathers have planted it in the midst of Holy Lent, remembering both Adams bliss and how he was deprived of it, remembering also that partaking of this Tree we no longer die but are kept alive....

Thus, refreshed and reassured, we begin the second part of Lent....

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DAILY SCRIPTURAL READINGS ARE AVAILABLE TO READ ON OUR WEBSITE.

PRAYERS requested

For The Health and Salvation of:

Mother Ana
Father Joe Cervo
Doreen Wishnok (friend of the Krupko's who is battling breast cancer)
George Ralich, (Dan's father)
Stefanie Waseman
Kerri Baugher (friend of the Krupko's who has cancer)
The Knoll Family
Mildred (Peggy) and Walter Borojevich (Wally's Parents)
Stephanie (Father David's Cousin), who suffered a mild heart attack
Mara (Jaga's Sister)
Father Rastko Trbuhovich (Fr. Dragan's Kum).

For The Repose of the Souls of:

Matushka +Mildred Klutchko (friend of Frs. Joe & Dragan)
+Despina Poulos (the mother of Steve Poulos and Bishop Andonios - Greek Archdiocese Chancellor)
+Mary Rossi (parishioner of Christ the Savior OCA Church, Byesville, Oh.)
+Dr. Gregory Spohn, Canton Area Pediatrician and doctor to Tillman Children
+Raymond Corbin (father of Fr. Michael Corbin, St. George Antiochian Church)
+James Kannam (St. George Antiochian Church)
+Candi (Friend of John and Lynette Baier)
+Mary Daymut (Christ the Savior Church, Byesville, Oh.)
+Gloria Lijoi (friend of the Krupkos)

(Please update prayer requests at the beginning of each month. Names will be removed if the request is not renewed.)

COFFEE HOUR:

March 1	-	Jaga Radosevic
March 8	-	Tom and Lana Baier
March 15	-	Dan Ralich
March 22	-	Gresh Family
March 29	-	Dan Ralich

We have received several suggestions that we go to a simpler coffee hour. Please try to keep it to bagels, donuts, coffee cake, etc. Please see Deanna and Larry Dordea if you are interested in hosting a Coffee Hour. There are plenty of dates available. Thank you to Deanna, Larry and Georgie for chairing our Coffee Hours.

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE HOSTED COFFEE HOUR!!!!

DONATIONS:

Please note, any special donations will be added directly to our building fund unless otherwise specified by the donor. God bless all who have generously donated to and support our mission.

SPECIAL DONATIONS WERE RECEIVED IN FEBRUARY FROM:

Jaga Radosevic for the health of her sister Mara
Coursalea Family honoring the anniversary of Helen and George Blebea
Helen and George Blebea for the health of the members of the mission

ADULT EDUCATION:

Sessions begin Saturday, February 28. Please bring your bible and we will meet every Saturday, 5 pm in the Gresh home located at 9135 Gans Ave NE.

BUILDING PROJECT:

We are finalizing plans to begin phase one construction of our mission building project. If you have not made a commitment and would like to, please discuss this with either Father Joe or Deacon James by email or phone and/or by making your check payable to St. Nikolai Orthodox Mission of Alliance. May God Bless all donors for their support of our Mission and purpose in celebrating Orthodoxy.

CHOIR PRACTICES:

Choir Practice will be held on Tuesdays at 7:00 pm at the Gresh Home. Please see Heidi for details

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES:

MARCH BIRTHDAYS:

Presbytera Mira Filipovich – 14th
Josephine White – 17th

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website: www.stnikolaiorthodoxmission.com