

**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)

July 12, 2015/ 6th Sunday after PENTECOST/

Martyrs Proclus and Hilary of Ancyra

Mission Phone # 330 768-7633

Mission Website <http://www.stnikolaiorthodoxmission.com/>

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 5 Troparion (Resurrection)

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, born for our salvation from the Virgin; for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, to endure death, and to raise the dead// by His glorious Resurrection.

Tone 4 Troparion (Martyrs Proclus and Hilary)

Thy holy martyrs Proclus and Hilary, O Lord, through their sufferings have received incorruptible crowns from Thee, Our God.

For having Thy strength, they laid low their adversaries, and shattered the powerless boldness of demons.//Through their intercessions, save our souls!

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 5 Kontakion (Resurrection)

You descended into hell, O my Savior, shattering its gates as Almighty, resurrecting the dead as Creator, and destroying the sting of death. You have delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of Man, //and we cry to You: "O Lord, save us!"

Tone 5 Prokeimenon

You, O Lord, shall protect us and preserve us from this generation forever.

v: Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any that is godly!

Epistle: Romans 12:6-14

Tone 5 Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

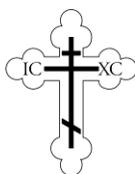
v: I will sing of Your mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Your truth from generation to generation.

v: For You have said: "Mercy will be established forever; My truth will be prepared in the heavens."

Gospel: Matthew 9_1-8

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens! Praise Him in the highest! Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!



The Holy Martyrs Proclus and Hilarion were natives of the village of Kallippi, near Ancyra, and they suffered during the time of a persecution under the emperor Trajan (98-117). St Proclus was put under arrest first. Brought before the governor Maximus, he fearlessly confessed his faith in Christ. The governor decided to compel the saint to submit himself to the emperor and offer sacrifice to the pagan gods. During his tortures, the martyr predicted to Maximus that soon he himself would be compelled to confess Christ as the true God. They forced the martyr to run after the chariot of the governor, heading towards the village Kallippi. Exhausted, St Proclus prayed that the Lord would halt the chariot. By the power of God the chariot halted, and no force could move it from the spot. The dignitary sitting in it became petrified. The martyr told him that he would remain unmoving until such time as he would sign a document with a confession of Christ. Only after this could the chariot continue on its way with the governor.

The humiliated pagan took fierce revenge on St Proclus. He commanded that Proclus be led out beyond the city, tied to a pillar and shot with arrows. The soldiers, leading St Proclus to execution, told him to give in and save his life, but the saint said that they should follow their orders.

Along the way to the place of execution, they met Hilarion, the nephew of St Proclus, who with tears embraced his uncle and also confessed himself a Christian. The soldiers seized him, and he was thrown into prison. The holy Martyr Proclus prayed for his tormentors and surrendered his soul to God beneath a hail of arrows.

St Hilarion was brought to trial and, with the same courage as St Proclus, confessed himself a Christian. After tortures he was sentenced to death. They tied the martyr's hands and dragged him by his feet through the city, wounded and bloody, and then they beheaded him three days after the death of his uncle, the holy Martyr Proclus. Christians buried them together in a single grave.

Here are views from diocesan chancellors on the challenges facing the Orthodox Church in America in preparation for the 18th All-American Council, July 20-24, in Atlanta. Diverse thoughts on mission, proportional giving, funding the central church, collegiality and civility, ethnic dioceses, clergy and parish health, and the vision of being Orthodox in North America.

We're never going to be a mega-church on this continent. People want churches that adapt to and bless their lives as they are and we don't do that. We insist on the truth, and that's hard. So we need to study where new missions belong and give them time to mature before we assign a priest. In our diocese we have a number of steps.

1. We look carefully at the location to consider the demographics, presence of other Orthodox jurisdictions, probability of population growth.
2. We first establish a "chapel community" under the auspices of an established parish that's not too far away.
3. We minister as best we can to the chapel community, using clergy who are retired or who have other full-time work.
4. Over time we monitor how that community is doing and when it might be ready for possible expansion and assignment of a priest. This gives us a chance to test the real commitment of this group of people.

What I've missed is the sense of collegiality among the colleagues, that you can be with them without being judged. On top of this we need to police ourselves better on the appropriate use of social media. Are we using it with grace and kindness, or by being vile to each other? There's too much of that, especially public disparaging of bishops and administration. Where is the professional courtesy, not even to speak of Christian civility?

One of the biggest structural deficiencies in the OCA is our ethnic dioceses. Until the ethnic dioceses become fully integrated into the OCA—and not just financially—we are not truly a model of what an autocephalous (self-governing) church can be.

Biggest challenge? There's nothing really new, it's stuff we're dealing with perennially, like the funding question. Frankly, the "Christian stewardship" model, the "Protestant tithing" type of approach is unrealistic with the parishes we have. Our constituency mainly wants to fund the church *minimally*. Percentage giving doesn't reach them and it's not the best way and it's not equitable because those who do give proportionally will be giving more than those who don't. And therefore the proportion-giving people, parishes and dioceses will be funding a bigger percentage of the OCA than the rest, at least for a while. And that's not fair. It's also artificial. Whether you call it an assessment or a tithe or a proportional gift or stewardship, it still boils down to being a tax. The most equitable system is still the *per person* assessment. Every person then funds the central church in the same way. The truth is that there are parishes that don't want to fund the diocese either and resent every dollar they send outside their own parish. Unfortunately, some of the dioceses have unrealistically low assessments for their own diocesan needs, so no wonder they complain that they are paying too high a percentage to the central church. But if you're only collecting \$35 for the diocese what do you expect? In our diocese we have a reasonable figure that allows us to fund necessary diocesan work as well as cover central administration.

We've tried various church growth programs in the diocese over a number of years. I have a high regard for the people involved but the results are disappointing. Some things about all this are beyond our control, given many societal factors. But I have to admit that part of the problem we have to accept for ourselves is burned out and apathetic clergy. I also know how these burned out priests have gotten beaten up over the years, emotionally and financially. I can be compassionate, but then they should think about retiring. Only they *can't* retire because they have no resources. There are places where nothing is happening, where all the

parishioners are 60+. You need a core of people to get it working. A burned out priest surrounded by burned out people trying to pull the engine doesn't work. I think we need to consolidate parishes, ensure that we can have full-time priests and focus on re-missioning old time parishes rather than just planting new missions.

There's a creative tension between longing for the past while also having to redefine ourselves. How can we transform the present culture while still being faithful to the tradition? They passed the baton to us and we have to pass it to next generation. Father Alexander Schmemmann called the controversy over our autocephaly "a meaningful storm." We have to keep holding up the banner of what we are and the vision for what can be in America. If this vision Metropolitan Leonty expressed, and the unique American qualities which he saw here, coming to America as an immigrant in 1907—its fast pace, energy, collaborative spirit—if he recognized this, how much more is that true now as we are rooted even deeper in America. We must not try to create a culture within a culture, that's sectarianism. Our aim is to transform culture, engage with it while sticking firmly to our faith and piety.

PRAYERS requested

For The Health and Salvation of:

Mother Ana

Doreen Wishnok (friend of the Krupko's who is battling breast cancer)

Stefanie Waseman

The Knoll Family

Archpriest Rastko Trbuhovich (Fr. Dragan's Kum)

Ann Cervo (Fr. Joe's sister-in-law, diagnosed with optical melanoma)

Roland Augspurger

For The Repose of the Souls of:

ADULT EDUCATION:

The Adult Christian Ed study group is taking a short summer break and will resume Saturday, July 25.

COFFEE HOUR:

July 5th - Blebea's and Dan Ralich

July 12th Dan Ralich and Blebea's

July 19th Open

July 26th Open

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.

BUILDING PROJECT:

UPDATE! By the grace of God construction of our chapel is advancing rapidly. The Building is completely under roof and the sub-contractors will continue their work in the coming week. Work on the Icons is under way and we are seeking donors for them, Please see Fr. Joe for further information.

For updated construction pictures please visit our parish website.

We are also still in need of additional funding for the general building project. If you are able to make an initial or additional contribution to the building fund, please see Father Joe or Deacon James.

May the Lord bless all our endeavors to glorify His Holy Name and bring others to the fullness of the truth.

CHOIR PRACTICES:

We will be taking a break for the Summer. Practices will resume in the Fall.

MEMORIAL FUND FOR GEORGE RALICH:

Several people have inquired about donations to the Mission in memory of Dan's father, +George Ralich. We will set aside any donations in +George's memory to purchase an item for the church. Thank you!

JULY BIRTHDAYS:

Alex Ralich – 10th

Kim Krajci – 22nd

Stephanie Novak – 26th

JULY ANNIVERSARIES:

Corbin & Georgie Washington – 6th

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