

St. Nikolai Orthodox Church
Divine Liturgy, [9:30](#) / Saturday Vespers, [4 pm](#).
[9837 State Street, Louisville, Ohio 44641](#)

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*)

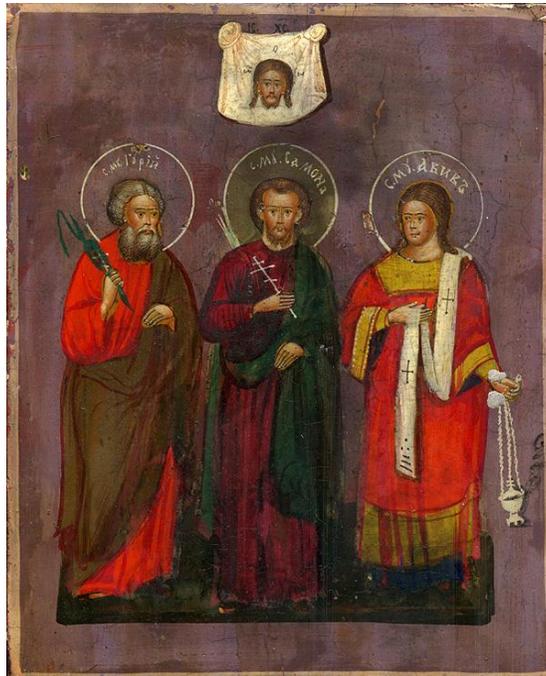
November 15, 2015: 24th Sunday after Pentecost

Holy Martyrs and Confessors Gurias, Samonas and Habibas/ 1st day of Nativity Fast (Advent)

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

Facebook page: www.facebook.com/SaintNikolaiOrthodoxMissionOfAlliance

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. 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 5 **Troparion** (for the Martyrs)

Christ our God, You have granted us the miracles of Your holy martyrs

Gúrias, Samónas, and Habíbas,

as a stronghold and protection.

Through their prayers, strengthen those in authority in ev'ry good deed,//

for You alone are merciful and the Lover of mankind!

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 Nicholai, / entreat Christ our God / that our souls may be saved.

Tone 7 Kontakion (Resurrection)

The dominion of death can no longer hold mankind 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!”

Tone 7 Prokeimenon

The Lord shall give strength to His people. The Lord shall bless His
people with peace.

v: Offer to the Lord, O you sons of God! Offer young rams to the Lord!

Epistle: Ephesians 2:14-22

Tone 7

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

v: It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to Your Name, O Most High.

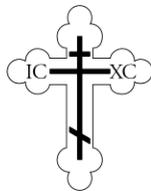
v: To declare Your mercy in the morning, and Your truth by night.

Gospel: Luke 10:25-37

COMMUNION HYMN:

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

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia



ABOUT HOW GOD WHITENS THE REPENTANT SINNERS: by St. Nikolai

“Though your sins be like scarlet, they may be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool” (Isaiah 1:18).

O, the boundless mercy of God! In His greatest wrath upon the faithless and ungrateful people, upon the people “laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters” (Isaiah 1:4), as “princes [rulers] of Sodom” (Isaiah 1:10) and upon the people who have become as the “people of Gomorrah” (Isaiah 1:10) – in such wrath, the Lord does not abandon mercy but rather calls them to repentance. Just as after terrible lightnings, a gentle rain falls. Such is the Lord long-suffering [patient] and full of mercy and “neither will He keep His anger forever” [Psalm 102:9 (103:9)]. Only if sinners cease to commit evil and learn to do good and turn to God with humility and repentance they will become “white as snow.” The Lord is mighty and willing. No one, except Him, is able to cleanse the sinful soul of man from sin and, by cleansing, to whiten it. No matter how often linen is washed in water with ashes and soap, no matter how often it is washed and rewashed, it cannot receive whiteness until it is spread under the light of the sun. Thus, our soul cannot become white, no

matter how often we cleanse it by our own effort and labor even with the help of all legal means of the law until we, at last, bring it beneath the feet of God, spread out and opened wide so that the light of God illumines it and whitens it. The Lord condones and even commends all of our labor and effort, i.e., He wants us to bathe our soul in tears, by repentance to constrain it by the pangs of the conscience to press it, to clothe it with good deeds and in the end of ends, He calls us to Him: "Come now," says the Lord, "and let us reason together" (Isaiah 1:18). That is, I will look at you and I will see if there is Me in you and you will look upon Me as in a mirror and you will see what kind of person you are.

O Lord, slow to anger, have mercy on us before the last wrath of that Dreadful Day.

+ St. Nikolai Velimirovich

THE HOLY MARTYRS & CONFESSORS GURIUS, SAMONAS & HABIBUS (DRAGAN)

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.

PRAYERS requested

For The Health and Salvation of:

Doreen Wishnok
Stefanie Waseman
The Knoll Family
Ann Cervo (Fr. Joe's sister-in-law, diagnosed with optical melanoma)
Roland Augspurger
Leslie and Tim Kocevar
Joan Downey
Beth Plocher
Susan Smith Miller (Heidi' Gresh's sister)
Brenda Grey
Barbara Eline
Janice Raber
Wally and Debby Borojevich and family
Jennifer White
J. P. Cervo
Renee Young
Mother Ana
Julian Farian

For The Repose of the Souls of the newly departed Servants:

Archpriest +Vasilije Sokolovich
Archpriest +Rastko Trbuhovich
+ Walter Borojevich (Walley's father)
+ Robert White (Friend of Kate White)
+Bruce Abraham
+Mildred "Peggy" Borojevich

ANNUAL MEETING:

The annual meeting for our Parish will be held on Sunday, November 22, 2015 following the Divine Liturgy. Please see Father Joe or Deacon James if you have any questions prior to the meeting.

SATURDAY VESPERS:

Vespers will be held every Saturday at 4 pm until the clocks move forward in the Spring.

ADULT EDUCATION:

Book study/Christian Education will follow the vespers service and take place in the fellowship area at the church.

CHOIR PRACTICE:

Choir practice will take place on the next two Tuesdays of November and the first 3 Tuesdays of December to prepare for our Christmas services. We will have our practices at the church at 7 pm. The choir dates are November 7 and December 1, 8, 15.

CAROLING:

The Choir is planning on Christmas Caroling on Saturday, December 19. Please see Helen Blebea to schedule a stop at your home!

COFFEE HOUR AND CHURCH CLEANING:

There will be sign-up sheets posted in the fellowship room for coffee hour and church cleaning. If you have any questions please see Father Joe or Deacon James. We are asking for individuals, families or groups to sign up on a monthly basis to maintain the church. November is covered. If we do not have anyone signed up for coffee hour on any week, we will simply have coffee during fellowship.

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE HOSTED COFFEE HOURS!!!!
A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE DORDEAS AND WASHINGTONS FOR ORGANIZING COFFEE
HOUR FOR THE PAST YEAR!!!!

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS :

Helen (Mimi) Blebea – 10th

Dr, John Blebea –12th

Tom Krupko – 21st

NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES :

Josh and Kate White -18th

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