

**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)**

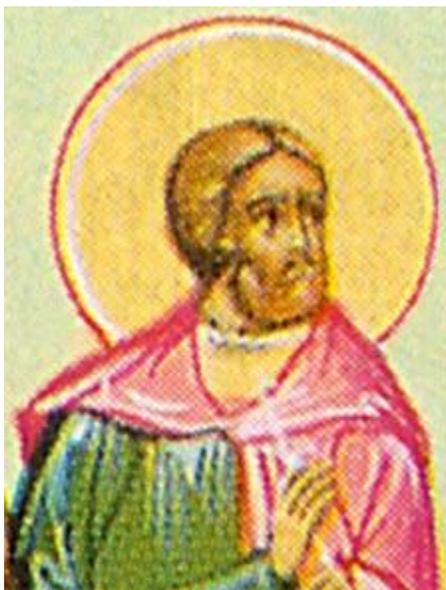
Rev. Protodeacon James Gresh, Mission Administrator (Bulgarian Diocese OCA)

**September 27, 2015: 17th Sunday after Pentecost/
Martyrs Callistratus and those with him**

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 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 8 Troparion (Resurrection)

You descended from on high, O Merciful One!

You accepted the three day burial to free us from our sufferings!//

O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to You!

Tone 3 Troparion (Martyr Callistratus)

In contest you were strengthened by the Holy Spirit, Martyr Callistratus,
and were glorious in casting down the Enemy.

You offered a noble army of athletes as sweet-smelling incense to Christ.//

With them pray for us who praise you with hymns!

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 8 *Kontakion* (Resurrection)

By rising from the tomb, You raised the dead and resurrected Adam.
Eve exults in Your Resurrection,
and the world celebrates Your rising from the dead, O greatly Merciful One!

Tone 8 *Prokeimenon*(Resurrection)

Pray and make your vows before the Lord, our God!
v: In Judah God is known; His name is great in Israel.

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1

Tone 8 Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

v :Come, let us rejoice in the Lord! Let us make a joyful noise to God our Savior!
v :Let us come before His face with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to Him with songs of praise!

Gospel: Luke 5:1-11

Communion Hymn

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



Saint Callistratus was a native of Carthage. An ancestor of St Callistratus, Neochorus, has served under the emperor Tiberius in Palestine, under the command of Pontius Pilate, the procurator of Judea, and was a witness to the suffering on the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, His voluntary death and glorious Resurrection.

The saint's father was a Christian, and he raised his son in faith and piety. Also like his father, St Callistratus became a soldier and excelled among his pagan military comrades by his good conduct and gentle disposition.

At night when everyone slept, he usually stayed up at prayer. Once, a soldier sleeping nearby heard St Callistratus invoking the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and he reported this to the military commander, who in turn summoned Callistratus, interrogated him and wanted to make him offer sacrifice to idols. The saint resolutely refused to do this, so the military commander ordered that the saint be beaten. Then, covered with wounds, the saint was dragged over sharp stones. The beating and the torments did not sway the firm will and brave endurance of the sufferer.

The saint was sewn up in a leather sack and drowned in the sea. By God's mercy, however, the sack struck a sharp rock and was torn open. St Callistratus came to dry land unharmed, carried by dolphins. Viewing such a miracle, forty-nine soldiers came to believe in Christ. Then the military commander threw St Callistratus and the believing soldiers into prison. Before this, all of them were subjected to innumerable floggings.

In jail St Callistatus continued to preach the Word of God to the soldiers and he bolstered their spirits for martyrdom. Summoned again before the military commander, the sufferers firmly confessed their faith in Christ, after which they were bound hand and foot and thrown into a dam. But there their bonds broke, and with bright faces the holy martyrs stood in the water, rejoicing in their Baptism, which coincided with the act of martyrdom.

Beautiful bright crowns appeared over their heads, and all heard a voice: "Be brave, Callistratus, with your company, and come rest in the eternal habitations." At the same time, the earth shuddered and an idol standing nearby fell down and smashed. Seeing this, another 135 soldiers also believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. The military commander, fearing a mutiny in the army, did not put them on trial, but again imprisoned St Callistratus with the others, where they fervently prayed and gave thanks to the Creator for giving them power to endure such sufferings.

At night the martyrs were cut to pieces with swords by order of the military commander. Their holy relics were buried by the 135 soldiers who remained alive. Later, a church was built on the spot of their sufferings, as St Callistatus had foretold.

49 Martyrs with Callistratus

Commemorated on [September 27](#)

These holy martyrs suffered at Carthage with St Callistratus at the beginning of the fourth century. St Callistratus was miraculously saved after his tormentors had tied him up in a sack and cast him into the sea. By God's mercy, however, the sack struck a sharp rock and was torn open. St Callistratus came to dry land unharmed, carried by dolphins. Viewing such a miracle, forty-nine soldiers came to believe in Christ. Then the military commander threw St Callistratus and the believing soldiers into prison. Before this, all of them were subjected to innumerable floggings. In jail St Callistatus continued to preach the Word of God to the soldiers and he bolstered their spirits for martyrdom. Summoned again before the military commander, the sufferers firmly confessed their faith in Christ, after which they were bound hand and foot and thrown into a dam. But there their bonds broke, and with bright faces the holy martyrs stood in the water, rejoicing in their Baptism, which coincided with the act of martyrdom.

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The sixth annual meeting of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the USA drew to a close on Thursday, September 17, 2015.

The hierarchs issued a Message to the Faithful, the full text of which appears below, at the conclusion of the three-day gathering. His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon was among the message's signatories, together with the other US members of the Orthodox Church in America's Holy Synod of Bishops: His Eminence, Archbishop Nathaniel; His Eminence, Archbishop Nikon; His Eminence, Archbishop Benjamin; His Eminence, Archbishop Melchisedek; His Eminence, Archbishop Mark; His Eminence, Archbishop Michael; His Grace, Bishop Alexander; His Grace, Bishop David; His Grace, Bishop Paul; and His Grace, Bishop Daniel.

In other business, the hierarchs, in response to a five-step plan submitted by the Assembly's Legal Affairs Committee, unanimously authorized commencement of the plan's first three steps, by which relevant legal documents of the Assembly's member jurisdictions will be assessed and analyzed. The hierarchs also approved the Assembly's 2016 budget. Assembly minutes and related documents and reports will be posted in the immediate future at www.assemblyofbishops.org.

The seventh annual meeting of the Assembly is tentatively slated to convene in October 2016.

Message to the Faithful

Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the USA

September 17, 2015

To our beloved Orthodox Christian faithful throughout the United States of America:

"We know that for those who love God everything contributes to the good [Romans 8:28].

Beloved brothers and sisters in the Lord,

We, the members of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America, gathered in Chicago, Illinois, for our sixth annual meeting on September 15-17, 2015, greet you with paternal love, as we offer glory and thanksgiving to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Forty-five bishops assembled in order to recognize and affirm our unity in the Orthodox faith, to celebrate our communion in the Holy Eucharist, to recall what has been achieved in fraternal collaboration over the past year and reflect on the challenging work that lies ahead of us.

We express our deep gratitude to all those who labored for this year's Assembly meeting. The Greek Orthodox Church of Saint John the Baptist in Des Plaines, Illinois, welcomed us on behalf of His Eminence, Metropolitan Iakovos of Chicago for the opening Divine Liturgy. A special Pan-Orthodox Doxology was also held at the Holy Resurrection Serbian Orthodox Cathedral in Chicago, Illinois, where we were blessed to sponsor a Youth Event hosted by His Grace, Bishop Longin of New Grachanica and Midwestern America in order to communicate with teens and young adults and address their concerns.

We express our gratitude to Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew for meeting with the Executive Committee of the Assembly earlier this year and for emphasizing our unique responsibility—as a significant and representative segment of the Orthodox Church throughout the world—to provide insights about the work of our Assembly for consideration by our Mother Churches and by the forthcoming Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Autocephalous Churches, which is scheduled to take place in Constantinople on Pentecost 2016.

In the opening session, our chairman Archbishop Demetrios of America underlined our responsibility as bishops in reflecting the Gospel message of love and unity in our own relationships, in our local communities as well as in the broader, global society. After hearing the executive reports from the officers of the Assembly, we turned our attention and deliberation to matters of canonical regional planning.

The Committee for Canonical Regional Planning, which met over the course of the past year, took into consideration the diverse positions of our Churches in the United States of America and drafted recommendations for discussion and deliberation by all the hierarchs. Moreover, during the visit of the Assembly Executive Committee to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, member hierarchs were reminded by His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew that the Mother Churches are still awaiting from our Assembly a “plan to organize all the Orthodox faithful in the region on a canonical basis”, as per the Chambésy Rules of Operation.

Thus, in a spirit of mutual trust and fraternal openness, we had the opportunity to listen to one another and to examine carefully various possibilities and options to assist in resolving the existing canonical anomalies in the United States through the perspective of Orthodox ecclesiology and canon law and with a view to recent immigration trends. In this regard, we confirmed our commitment to working together with greater cooperation and coordination on the future of a more unified Orthodox Church in this nation.

The final sessions were dedicated to pastoral issues and practices related to marriage and divorce in an effort to resolve critical differences that significantly impact the lives of our faithful and their families, as well as to other procedural matters.

Finally, we agreed on the following resolutions:

1. We fervently support the convening of the Holy and Great Council in 2016 and entreat all those responsible for its realization to work in a spirit of unity and harmony in order to reaffirm the conciliarity and collegiality among our Churches.
2. We unequivocally denounce the increasing violence and bloodshed throughout the world. In the Middle East, hostility and brutality are occurring among members of different religions, sometimes supposedly in the name of religion. We pray for peace and justice in the Middle East, for protection of Christian and other minorities in the ancient lands of Syria, Iraq, and Palestine, as well as for the cessation of racial discrimination and religious fanaticism.
3. We strongly implore government and civil leaders in this country and throughout the world to offer refuge to the countless victims of intimidation and displacement; and we express our unconditional solidarity with all those who have been forced to leave their homelands because of

military violence, ethnic persecution and deprivation of natural resources in the Middle East, especially in Syria.

4. We continue wholeheartedly to appeal for the release of our brother bishops in Syria, the Greek Orthodox Metropolitan Paul Yazigi (brother of His Beatitude, Patriarch John X of Antioch), the Syriac Orthodox Archbishop John Ibrahim, as well as all other kidnapped persons.
 5. We pray earnestly for peace and stability in Ukraine, where armed conflict persists among our very own brothers and sisters. We appeal for a humanitarian response to the victims of this conflict. We call upon church officials to be instruments of peace and government leaders to act with restraint in a spirit of reconciliation.
 6. We reaffirm our disagreement with the US Supreme Court case of June 26, 2015, which held a constitutional right for two members of the same sex to marry. We continue to uphold and proclaim the teaching of our Lord that marriage from its inception is a life-long sacramental union of a man and a woman.
 7. We share the deep concern and sadness of all those who in our land grieve over the unspeakable violence that is widespread in our communities, our schools and in our houses of worship. We pray for the victims of violence and their families.
- In conclusion, we continue to pray for all of you that, “being rooted and grounded in love, you may have power to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God [Ephesians 3:18-19]. May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Archbishop Demetrios, Chairman
Bishop John, 2nd Vice Chairman
Bishop Basil, Secretary
Metropolitan Antony, Treasurer
Metropolitan Iakovos
Metropolitan Methodios
Metropolitan Athenagoras
Metropolitan Isaiah
Metropolitan Alexios
Metropolitan Nicholas
Bishop Andonios
Bishop Demetrios
Bishop Sevastianos
Bishop Apostolos
Bishop Daniel
Bishop Ilia
Bishop Gregory
Bishop Thomas
Bishop Alexander
Bishop John
Bishop Anthony
Bishop Nicholas
Metropolitan Hilarion
Archbishop Kyrill
Bishop Peter
Bishop Theodosy
Bishop John
Bishop Nicholas
Bishop Longin
Bishop Maxim
Archbishop Nicolae
Metropolitan Joseph
Bishop Daniil

Bishop Saba
Metropolitan Tikhon
Archbishop Nathaniel
Archbishop Nikon
Archbishop Benjamin
Archbishop Melchisedek
Archbishop Mark
Archbishop Michael
Bishop Alexander
Bishop David
Bishop Paul
Bishop Daniel

**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
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

Father Rasko (Fr. Dragan's Kum) is gravely ill and not expected to survive. Please pray for God's grace "for a peaceful ending of his life" and for God's peace upon his wife Vicki and family.

Heightened prayers are requested for Mother Anna, abbess of Monastery Marcha, Richfield Ohio. She has been diagnosed with inoperable bladder cancer. May God comfort and strengthen her in the days and months ahead.

For The Repose of the Souls of:

Donald Barnhart (Grandfather of Laura Cotterman)
Father +Louis Mahshie, of St. George Antiochian Church, Akron

The Opening of the Doors for St. Nikolai Church is approaching fast!

We are asking members and friends to please sign up to bring appetizers on Saturday, October 17 for the festivities after the service. Please be prepared to have food at the church by 2:30 on Saturday, October 17th. We also need desserts for Sunday, October 18. Please also deliver any desserts for Sunday by 2:30 on Saturday, October 17th. Dessert items should be dry – nothing gooey please! Please see Jaga to sign up. Many thanks if you have already signed up.

Also, please let Georgie Washington (330-635-1715) know if you are planning on attending the service/meals on Saturday and/or Sunday. She also needs to know how many family members or guests you will be bringing. Invitations will not be mailed/given to members of the parish. Invitations are available from Georgie if you would like one or would like to invite additional guests. Reservations must be made with Georgie by October 5.

ADULT EDUCATION:

Our weekly study group at the Gresh house is meetings at 6:00 pm on Saturdays.

COFFEE HOUR:

Sept 6 Deb and Wally Borojevich
Sept 13 Krupkos, Catanias, and Jaga
Sept 20 Washingtons
Sept 27 Cervos

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!!!!

BUILDING PROJECT:

September 23, UPDATE! By the grace of God we are nearing the completion of our chapel building project. Finishing of the floor is underway and expected to be completed this coming week. The plumbing fixtures are being installed. The fellowship area and rest room cabinets are expected to be installed following the completion of the floor staining.

The Pantocrator Icon of Christ was installed on the ceiling this past Tuesday. Thanks to those who assisted Greg Rajsich with the installation. The icons for the Iconostas have been completed.

Thanks to the donors of the large wall icons which have all been donated. We are still in need of donors for 3 festal wall Icons, specific feast requests are on a first come basis. For those wishing to donate an Icon, please see Fr. Joe for further information. Also, if anyone is interested in donating the cost of the cupola and cross adorning the building, please see Tom Baier.

For updated construction pictures please visit our parish website or Facebook page.

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

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.

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

CHOIR PRACTICES:

We are ready to begin practices! Please check with Heidi Gresh for information on times and dates.

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS:

Susan Varga – 1st
Deanna Dordea – 3rd
Heidi Gresh – 19th
Josh Gresh – 30th

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES:

Matt and Amy Catania – 5th
Deacon James and Heidi Gresh -29th

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