

WEEKLY BULLETIN

November 12, 2023, Vol. 40, No. 44

23rd Sunday After Pentecost

THE VOICE



SAINT ELIA ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America

64 W. Wilbeth Rd., Akron, Ohio 44301

Church Hall: 330-724-7129

Office: 330-724-7009

www.saintelia.com

www.facebook.com/sainteliakron

His Eminence Alexander, Archbishop of Toledo, Bulgarian Diocese, OCA

Very Rev. Mitred Archbishop Father Don Anthony Freude, Parish Rector

Rev. Protodeacon James M. Gresh, Attached

SAINT ELIA THE PROPHET PARISH

2023 Parish Council

President: Veronica Bilas

V. President: Sandy Graham

Secretary: Subdeacon Aaron Gray

Treasurer: Reader Joshua Wherley

Members: Subdeacon Terrence Bilas, Bud Graham,
Sarah Niglio

Choir Director: Subdeacon Terrence A. Bilas

Assistant Directors: Anastasia Bohush

Deaconisa Heidi Gresh, Reader Michael Luc

Church School: Anastasia Bohush

Sisterhood of St. Juliana:

President: Anastasia Bohush,

V. President: Sandy Graham

Secretary: Katherine Hodge

Treasurer: Mary Magensky

Workers of St. Elizabeth the New Martyr:

Coordinators: Subdeacon Aaron Gray, Veronica Bilas

Scheduled Readers - 2023

Sunday, November 12 - Hours – Mary Beth Gray

Epistle – Subdeacon Aaron Gray

Sunday, November 19 – Bud Graham

Sunday, November 26 – Sandy Graham

Sunday, December 3 - Reader Michael Luc

Sunday, December 10 – Reader Nicholas Morelli

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

23rd SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 6

St. John the Merciful, Patriarch of Alexandria

Venerable Nilus, the Faster, of Sinai

Saturday, November 11

5:00 pm Great Vesper and Confessions Sunday,

November 12

9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Mary Beth Gray

9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom

Epistle Reader: Subdeacon Aaron Gray

Epistle: Ephesians 2:4-10

Gospel: Luke 10:25-37

BEGINNING OF THE NATIVITY FAST

“The sayings of the prophets are now fulfilled.”

First Day of Advent – the Christmas Fast

Wednesday, November 15

6:00 pm Advent Paraklesis

**Service of Prayer in Preparation for the Feast of the
Nativity of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ**

24th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 7

Prophet Obadiah. Martyr Barlaam of Caesarea

Saturday, November 18

5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions

Sunday, November 19

9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Bud Graham

9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom

Epistle Reader: Bud Graham

Epistle: Ephesians 2:14-22

Gospel: Luke 12:16-21

Saint John the Merciful, Patriarch of Alexandria

Commemorated on [November 12](#)

Saint John the Merciful, Patriarch of Alexandria, was born on Cyprus in the seventh century into the family of the illustrious dignitary Epiphanius. At the wish of his parents he entered into marriage and had children. When the wife and the children of the saint died, he became a monk. He was zealous in fasting and prayer and had great love for those around him. His spiritual exploits won him honor among men, and even the emperor revered him. When the Patriarchal throne of Alexandria fell vacant, the emperor Heraclius and all the clergy begged Saint John to occupy the Patriarchal throne. The saint worthily assumed his archpastoral service, concerning himself with the moral and dogmatic welfare of his flock. As patriarch he denounced every soul-destroying heresy, and drove out from Alexandria the Monophysite Phyllonos of Antioch. He considered his chief task to be charitable and to give help all those in need. At the beginning of his patriarchal service, he ordered his stewards to compile a list of all the poor and downtrodden in Alexandria, which turned out to be over seven thousand men. The saint ordered that all of these unfortunates be provided for each day out of the church's treasury.

Twice during the week, on Wednesdays and Fridays, he emerged from the doors of the patriarchal cathedral, and sitting on the church portico, he received everyone in need. He settled quarrels, helped the wronged, and distributed alms. Three times a week he visited the sick-houses and rendered assistance to the

suffering.

It was during this period that the emperor Heraclius led a tremendous army against the Persian emperor Chosroes II. The Persians ravaged and burned Jerusalem, taking a multitude of captives. The holy Patriarch John gave a large portion of the church treasury for their ransom.

The saint never refused suppliants. One day, when the saint was visiting the sick, he met a beggar and commanded that he be given six silver coins. The beggar changed his clothes, ran on ahead of the Patriarch, and again asked for alms. Saint John gave him six more silver coins. When, however, the beggar sought charity a third time, and the servants began to chase the fellow away, the Patriarch ordered that he be given twelve pieces of silver, saying, “Perhaps he is Christ putting me to the test.”

Saint John the Merciful was known for his gentle attitude towards people. Once, the saint was compelled to excommunicate two clergymen for a certain time because of some offense. One of them repented, but the other fellow became angry with the Patriarch and fell into greater sins. The saint wanted to summon him and calm him with kind words, but it slipped his mind. When he was celebrating the Divine Liturgy, the saint was suddenly reminded by the words of the Gospel: “If you bring your gift to the altar and remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift before the altar ... first, be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift” (Mt. 5:23-24). The saint came out of the altar, called the offending clergyman to him, and falling down

on his knees before him in front of all the people he asked forgiveness. The cleric, filled with remorse, repented of his sin, corrected himself, and afterwards was found worthy to be ordained to the priesthood.

**Venerable Neilos the Ascetic of Sinai Commemorated
on November 12**

Saint Neilos the Ascetic of Sinai, a native of Constantinople, lived during the V century and was a disciple of Saint John Chrysostom, who exerted a tremendous influence upon their lives and their spiritual struggles. After receiving a fine education, the Saint was appointed to the important post of prefect of the capital while still a young man. During this period, Neilos was married and had children, but the couple found courtly life distasteful.

About the year 390, by mutual consent, they decided to abandon the world and entered monasteries. Neilos's wife and daughter went to one of the women's monasteries in Egypt, while he and his son Theódoulos went to Mount Sinai, where they settled in a cave, which they dug out with their own hands. For forty years this cave served as the abode of Saint Neilos. By fasting, vigil, and prayer, he attained a high degree of spiritual perfection. People began coming to him from every occupation and social rank, from the emperor down to the farmer, and all of them received counsel and comfort from the Saint.

On Sinai, Saint Neilos wrote many soul-profiting works to guide Christians on the path of salvation. In one of his letters there is an angry denunciation of the Emperor Arkadios, who had unjustly exiled Saint John Chrysostom. The ascetical writings of Saint Neilos are widely known they are perfectly executed in form, profoundly Orthodox in content, and are clear and lucid in expression. His Ascetic Discourse is found in Volume I of the English *Philokalia*.

Saint Neilos suffered many misfortunes in the wilderness. Once, Saracens captured his son Theódoulos, whom they intended to offer as a sacrifice to their pagan gods. By the Saint's prayers the Lord rescued Theódoulos, and his father found him with the Bishop of Emessa, who had ransomed the young man from the barbarians. This bishop ordained both as presbyters. After ordination they returned to Sinai, where they lived as ascetics together until Saint Neilos reposed. His holy relics were transferred to Constantinople in the reign of Justin II (565-578) and were placed in the church of the Holy Apostles.

The Greek *Philokalia* has a quote from Saint Neilos beneath his icon: "The state of prayer is a passionless, settled disposition of the soul which, by supreme love, transports the wisdom-loving mind to spiritual heights." (See the English *Philokalia*, 153 Sections. Concerning Prayer, # 53).

“Most people are bothered by the parts of the Bible that they don’t understand. What bothers me most, are the parts that I do understand.”

Mark Twain

COME AND SEE

The Christmas Fast is introduced on November 14 with the Feastday of the apostle Philip. For this reason, the Christmas Fast is sometimes called “the fast of Philip.”

John 1:43-51 **Philip and Nathanael**

43The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, “Follow Me.”\

44Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. 45Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

46And Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?”

Philip said to him, “Come and see.”

47Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!”

48Nathanael said to Him, “How do You know me?”

Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.”

49Nathanael answered and said to Him, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”

50Jesus answered and said to him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” 51And He said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”

We must come and see Jesus with the eyes of our heart and know Him as our Savior and the Lover of mankind Who is always present and the Ladder that leads to heaven.

PRAYER FOR ADVENT

O Lord Jesus Christ our God, You have come to us so many times and found no resting place. Forgive us for our overcrowded lives, our vain haste, and our preoccupation with self.

We beseech You to come again, O Lord, and though our hearts are a jumble of voices, and our minds overlaid with fears, find a place, however humble, where You can begin to work Your wonder as You create peace and joy within us. If in some hidden corner, in some out-of-the-way spot, we can clear away the clutter, and shut out the noise and darkness, come to be born again in us, and we shall kneel in perfect peace with the wisest and humblest of men.

Help us to enter into this Christmas Fast with humility, yet with joy. And finally, Lord, give us Christmas from within, that we may share the blessing of Your Birth from without, and to keep Christmas holy.

For You, O Jesus, are our sanctification together with Your Eternal Father and You all-holy good and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen

PARACLESIS:
ADVENT PRAYER SERVICE

On **Wednesday, November 15**, forty days prior to the celebration of the Feast of Christmas, the Holy Orthodox Church begins the Christmas Fast.

This period of six weeks is often called *Advent* which means *The Coming* and refers to the Coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the Mystery of His Holy Nativity.

Advent is a period of fasting, prayer and Scripture reading, a time of silence, more faithful attendance to the sacred Services and participation in the Holy Mystery of Confession to enable us to capture more fully Christ's abiding Presence among us.

“Redeeming from the hands of evil, O Lord, Who lovest mankind, Thou comest wrapped in swaddling bands. I venerate Thy divine condescension.”

A beautiful and meaningful **ADVENT PRAYER SERVICE, in preparation** for the Great Feast of the Nativity-in-the-Flesh of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ, will be served on the first day of Advent:

Wednesday, November 15
6:00 pm.

THE ADVENT WREATH

The Feast of the Nativity of our Lord together with Feast of His Baptism in the Jordan are Feasts of Light celebrating the coming and manifestation of Christ the Light of the world. Nature itself helps us to experience these Feasts of Light.

With the coming of winter, the days get shorter and the nights longer, but once we reach Christmas itself the reverse begins to happen. Nature prepares for the Coming of Christ, the Light in the darkness and so do we during the Holy Season of Advent.

To help in our preparation, we will have an Advent Wreath in Church. The Wreath, made of evergreens, will have six candles on it: one for each Sunday in Advent.

Beginning on Sunday, November 19, we will light the first candle on the wreath along with our Advent Prayers:

Prepare O Bethlehem, for Eden has been opened to all! Adorn yourself O Ephrathah, for the tree of life blossoms forth from the Virgin in the cave! Her womb is a spiritual paradise planted with the Divine Fruit: For if we eat of it, we shall live forever and not die like Adam. Christ comes to restore the image which He made in the beginning.

COME LORD JESUS!

Come Lord Jesus! On Christmas Day we celebrate the coming of the Son of God in flesh at His Birth in Bethlehem.

Come Lord Jesus! As Christians we are always standing in the Hope of His awesome and glorious second coming when He will reign as King of kings and Lord of lords over His own creation.

Come Lord Jesus! In this Holy Season of Advent – a time of prayer, fasting, reflection and silence – we prepare for His coming to us in grace.

What does this mean? Advent is about deepening our relationship with God in *“the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ”* (cf. Romans 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:14). That relationship is one of friendship. We are invited to an intimate, mutual, loving fellowship with our Lord.

Every day we grow in Christ OR we weaken our relationship with Him because of our lack of purpose and commitment. This Advent season before Christmas is given to us by the Church as an opportunity once again to renew ourselves in Christ, to restore His Life in us, to prepare the good soil of our hearts to receive the seed of His Word for His Kingdom to come to us.

Our prayer during Advent can be summed up in the last words and prayer found in the New Testament in the book of The Revelation. *Come Lord Jesus!*

GENERAL PARISH MEETING

A General Parish Meeting will be held **TODAY, Sunday, November 12, 2023**, following the Divine Liturgy, to elect the 2024 Parish Council Members as presented by the **Nominating Committee: Tony Dodovich. Mary Marcin, Tyler McKelvey.**

THANKSGIVING EVE SERVICE

“Let us come into His Presence with thanksgiving.”

A Service of Thanksgiving will be celebrated on the **Eve of Thanksgiving, Wednesday, November 22, at 6:00 pm at St. Elia.** Let us plan now to come together in the joy of this holiday and offer our praise to God for all He has given us.

FOR THE ALASKAN DIOCESE - OCA

*“So let each one give as he purposes in his heart...
God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Cor. 9:6).*

During the month of November, we will make our charitable offerings for Saint Herman’s Seminary in Alaska and for the Alaskan Priests (annual salary \$7,800) serving the Parishes in the Diocese of Alaska.

OUR STEWARDSHIP, November 5, 2023

Candles:	\$ 47.00
Improvement Fund:	5.00
Sunday Offering:	\$ 1,210.00
TOTAL:	\$ 1,262.00
Tithley Donations:	\$ 426.97
TOTAL OFFERINGS:	r\$ 1,688.97

St. Herman Seminary: \$ 194.00

WISH LIST

With the rising costs in almost everything, our Parish of St. Elia, along with everybody else, is also facing financial difficulties in the present and more in the future to meet the daily bills on time. Thank you to all who faithfully donate. If you are able, please consider making special donations of the Parish needs of items listed on the

WISH LIST:

Paper towels

Bathroom Tissues

Kleenex

Dishwasher Soap

Incense (\$20.00 for a half pound)

Censor Charcoal (\$35.50)

4-hour votive candles (\$38.50 a gross)

7 Day Votive Candles (\$52.00 for a case of 12)



THE WISDOM OF ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA

**“When God revealed Himself,
He united Himself.
with our mortal nature
to deify humanity
through this close relation with Deity
Since this is so,
through His Flesh,
constituted by bread and wine,
He implants Himself
in all believers.”**

REMEMBERING OUR CATECHUMENS

Daniel Slife; Kristopher Barnhart

REMEMBERING THOSE SERVING IN THE ARMED FORCES

Subdeacon Anthony Freude, son of Fr Don and
Popadia Donna Freude

Egor Cravcenco, son of Serghei and Ludmila
Cravcenco

REMEMBER OUR SICK AND SHUT-INS

Archbishop Alexander

Archbishop Benjamin

Archbishop Nathaniel

Joseph Boyle (brother of Kathy Gray)

Phyllis (sister of +Rose Marie Vronick)

Florence Lambo

Martin Vronick

Nicoletta (Nikki) Bober

Pani Dolores Zuder

Mitered Archpriest Daniel & Matushka Myra Kovalak

Matushka Christine Zebren

Matushka Laryssa Huntyan

Subdeacon Martin Paluch

Sarah Nigilo









Melissa Trace

Louis Hakim

Daniel Sugden

Deaconisa Heidi Gresh

Gregory Yova (Project Mexico)





St. Elia Parish
TURKEY
BOWL
FOR ALL AGES




FRIDAY, NOV. 24TH 3PM-?

NORTON CHARGER BOWLING LANES
1213 NORTON AVE.
NORTON, OH 44203



ADULT: \$4.00/ YOUTH / SENIOR \$2.00 PER GAME
SHOE RENTAL: ADULT \$4.00/ YOUTH/SENIORS \$2.00
RSVP: SIGNUP SHEET IN HALL FOR RESERVATIONS



**Please see the signup sheet in the hall and
sign in if you are planning to join us for the
“Turkey Bowl”!**