

WEEKLY BULLETIN

December 3, 2023, Vol. 40, No. 47

24th 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,
OVery Rev. Mitred Archpriest 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, December 3 - Reader Michael Luc

Sunday, December 10 – Reader Nicholas Morelli

Sunday, December 17 – Reader Joshua Wherley

Sunday, December 24 - Deaconisa Heidi Gresh

Sunday, December 31 – Hours: Subdeacon Terrence Bilas

Epistle: Anastasia Bohush

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

THE NATIVITY FAST

“The sayings of the prophets are now fulfilled.”

26th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 1

Prophet Zephaniah

Saturday, December 2

5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions

Sunday, December 3

9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Reader Michael Luc

9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom

Epistle Reader: Reader Michael Luc

Epistle: Ephesians 5:9-19 Gospel: Luke 18:18-27

**Panakhida for the repose of the soul of +Gerald Gray
as requested by Subdeacon Aaron Gray and family**

ST. NICHOLAS THE WONDERWORKER, ARCHBISHOP OF MYRA IN LYCIA

Tuesday, December 5

**6:00 pm Vespersal Divine Liturgy of Saint John
Chrysostom**

27th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 2

Martyrs Means, Hermogenes and Eugehnius of Akexandria

Saturday, November 9

5:00 pm Great Vesper and Confessions

Sunday, November 10

9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Reader Nicholas Morelli

9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom

Epistle Reader: Reader Nicholas Morelli

Epistle: Ephesians 6:10-17 Gospel: Luke 17:12-19

MEMORY ETERNAL

+JOSEPH BOYLE, brother of Katherine Gray

+ARCHPRIEST MICHAEL OLEKSA of Alaska

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: Ephesians 5:9-19

⁹ (for the fruit of the ^[a]Spirit *is* in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), ¹⁰ finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. ¹¹ And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather ^[b]expose *them*.

¹² For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. ¹³ But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. ¹⁴ Therefore He says:

“Awake, you who sleep,
Arise from the dead,
And Christ will give you light.”

Walk in Wisdom

¹⁵ See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, ¹⁶ redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

¹⁷ Therefore do not be unwise but understand what the will of the Lord *is*. ¹⁸ And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,

Gospel: Luke 18:18-27

Jesus Counsels the Rich Young Ruler

¹⁸ Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

¹⁹ So Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good but One, *that is*, God. ²⁰ You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not bear false witness,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother.’ ”

²¹ And he said, “All these things I have kept from my youth.”

²² So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” ²³ But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich.

²⁴ And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, “How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”

²⁶ And those who heard it said, “Who then can be saved?”

²⁷ But He said, “The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.”

LOST IN THE DARK

As the November and December nights lengthen and darkness seems to take over so much of our day, the holiday lights brighten and threaten to blind us inviting us to make every day a Black Friday/

The Prophet Isaiah calls out in our darkness: ***“Come, walk in the light of the Lord.”*** (Isaiah 2:5). That’s not a streetlamp. That’s a person: Jesus Christ is the Light of the world and our pathfinder.

God keeps the light on in the window of our real home and is always looking for those who have missed it. And God has very good hearing. Whisper ***“Come, Christ our Light”*** in any situation, and Christ will be there ***shining the lamp for your feet, the light for your path*** (Psalm 119:105).

Think about the holiday demands that stress you most. Picture them as flashing lights. Try to close your eyes to them by imagining the candles on the Advent Wreath in the Church, a reminder of Christ, the light shining in every darkness. As our Lord Jesus for the clarity you need, to assess your options and make good decisions that will bring you home to the heart of the season.

O Father of light, bless me with Thy grace to dispel the darkness so that Christmas will find me joyfully ready to receive our Savior, Jesus Christ in my heart.

SISTERHOOD OF ST. JULIANA MEETING
TODAY, Sunday, **December 3**, St. Elia's Sisterhood of St. Juliana will meet following the Divine Liturgy.

2024 CHURCH CALENDARS

Through the kindness and generosity of Anthony Funeral Home, our Parish Family has been provided with 2024 Church Calendars. They are available on the front pew of the Church to be picked up.

ST. ELIA CHRISTMAS ORNAMENT

A Christmas Ornament, designed by Subdeacon Aaron Gray, as a fundraiser for St. Elia Church, is available for purchase in our bookstore for \$10.00. ***Spread the word!***

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS DONATIONS

With the celebration of Christmas just weeks away, please consider making a donation for poinsettias and decorations. **Christmas Flower Offering Envelopes** are available on the candle desk. Thank you for your generosity. The envelope has a space, if you wish, to make your offering "In Memory."

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, as a Parish Family our charitable offerings for Saint Herman's Seminary in Alaska and for the Alaskan Priests. Our offering of \$1,050.00 will be forwarded to the Alaskan Diocese.

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 have an Advent Wreath in Church. The Wreath, made of evergreens, will have six candles on it: one for each Sunday in Advent. After the homily, the children will come up to light the candles on the wreath each Sunday.

Today, Sunday, December 3, we will light the third 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.

***OUR ANNUAL PARISH FAMILY
SAINT NICHOLAS CELEBBRATION***

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5TH

**6:00 PM VESPERAL DIVINE
LITURGY for the Feast**

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10TH

9:30 AM DIVINE LITURGY

Followed by a Lenten Luncheon

**Main Entre will be provided.
Please bring a meatless covered dish**

AND

A VISIT FROM SAINT NICHOLAS

O who loves Nicholas the saintly,

O who serves Nicholas the saintly,

Him will Nicholas receive

and give help in time of need.

Holy Father Nicholas

St. Nicholas the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia

Commemorated on [December 6](#)

Saint Nicholas, the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia is famed as a great saint pleasing unto God. He was born in the city of Patara in the region of Lycia (on the south coast of the Asia Minor peninsula) and was the only son of pious parents Theophanes and Nonna, who had vowed to dedicate him to God.

From his childhood Nicholas thrived on the study of Divine Scripture; by day he would not leave church, and by night he prayed and read books, making himself a worthy dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. Bishop Nicholas of Patara rejoiced at the spiritual success and deep piety of his nephew. He ordained him a reader, and then elevated Nicholas to the priesthood, making him his assistant and entrusting him to instruct the flock. Constantly at work and vivacious, in unceasing prayer, the priest Nicholas displayed great kind-heartedness towards the flock, and towards the afflicted who came to him for help, and he distributed all his inheritance to the poor.

There was a certain formerly rich inhabitant of Patara, whom Saint Nicholas saved from great sin. The man had three grown daughters, and in

desperation he planned to sell their bodies so they would have money for food. The saint, learning of the man's poverty and of his wicked intention, secretly visited him one night and threw a sack of gold through the window. With the money the man arranged an honorable marriage for his daughter. Saint Nicholas also provided gold for the other daughters, thereby saving the family from falling into spiritual destruction. In bestowing charity, Saint Nicholas always strove to do this secretly and to conceal his good deeds.

The Bishop of Patara decided to go on pilgrimage to the holy places at Jerusalem and entrusted the guidance of his flock to Saint Nicholas, who fulfilled this obedience carefully and with love. When the bishop returned, Nicholas asked his blessing for a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Along the way the saint predicted a storm would arise and threaten the ship. Saint Nicholas saw the devil get on the ship, intending to sink it and kill all the passengers. At the entreaty of the despairing pilgrims, he calmed the waves of the sea by his prayers. Through his prayer a certain sailor of the ship, who had fallen from the mast and was mortally injured, was also restored to health.

When he reached the ancient city of Jerusalem and came to Golgotha, Saint Nicholas gave thanks to the Savior. He went to all the holy places, worshipping at

each one. One night on Mount Sion, the closed doors of the church opened by themselves for the great pilgrim. Going round the holy places connected with the earthly service of the Son of God, Saint Nicholas decided to withdraw into the desert, but he was stopped by a divine voice urging him to return to his native country. He returned to Lycia, and yearning for a life of quietude, the saint entered into the brotherhood of a monastery named Holy Sion, which had been founded by his uncle. But the Lord again indicated another path for him, "Nicholas, this is not the vineyard where you shall bear fruit for Me. Return to the world and glorify My Name there." So he left Patara and went to Myra in Lycia.

Upon the death of Archbishop John, Nicholas was chosen as Bishop of Myra after one of the bishops of the Council said that a new archbishop should be revealed by God, not chosen by men. One of the elder bishops had a vision of a radiant Man, Who told him that the one who came to the church that night and was first to enter should be made archbishop. He would be named Nicholas. The bishop went to the church at night to await Nicholas. The saint, always the first to arrive at church, was stopped by the bishop. "What is your name, child?" he asked. God's chosen one replied, "My name is Nicholas, Master, and I am your servant."

After his consecration as archbishop, Saint Nicholas remained a great ascetic, appearing to his flock as an image of gentleness, kindness and love for people. This was particularly precious for the Lycian Church during the persecution of Christians under the emperor Diocletian (284-305). Bishop Nicholas, locked up in prison together with other Christians for refusing to worship idols, sustained them and exhorted them to endure the fetters, punishment and torture. The Lord preserved him unharmed. Upon the accession of Saint Constantine (May 21) as emperor, Saint Nicholas was restored to his flock, which joyfully received their guide and intercessor.

Despite his great gentleness of spirit and purity of heart, Saint Nicholas was a zealous and ardent warrior of the Church of Christ. Fighting evil spirits, the saint made the rounds of the pagan temples and shrines in the city of Myra and its surroundings, shattering the idols and turning the temples to dust.

In the year 325 Saint Nicholas was a participant in the First Ecumenical Council. This Council proclaimed the Nicean Symbol of Faith, and he stood up against the heretic Arius with the likes of Saints Sylvester the Bishop of Rome (January 2), Alexander of Alexandria (May 29), Spyridon of Trimythontos (December 12) and other Fathers of the Council.

Saint Nicholas, fired with zeal for the Lord, assailed the heretic Arius with his words, and also struck him upon the face. For this reason, he was deprived of the emblems of his episcopal rank and placed under guard. But several of the holy Fathers had the same vision, seeing the Lord Himself and the Mother of God returning to him the Gospel and omophorion. The Fathers of the Council agreed that the audacity of the saint was pleasing to God, and restored the saint to the office of bishop.

Having returned to his own diocese, the saint brought it peace and blessings, sowing the word of Truth, uprooting heresy, nourishing his flock with sound doctrine, and also providing food for their bodies. The face of Saint Nicholas resembled that of an Angel, resplendent with divine grace. A brilliant ray shone from his face, like that which shone from the face of Moses (Exodus 34:29), so that those who looked at him were astonished. Whoever was oppressed by some affliction or passion of the soul had only to behold the Saint, and his sorrow was eased at once. As for those who conversed with him,

Even during his life the saint worked many miracles. One of the greatest was the deliverance from death of three men unjustly condemned by the Governor, who had been bribed. The saint boldly went up to the executioner and took his sword, already suspended over the heads of the condemned. The

Governor, denounced by Saint Nicholas for his wrongdoing, repented and begged for forgiveness. Witnessing this remarkable event were three military officers, who were sent to Phrygia by the emperor Constantine to put down a rebellion. They did not suspect that soon they would also be compelled to seek the intercession of Saint Nicholas. Evil men slandered them before the emperor, and the officers were sentenced to death. Appearing to Saint Constantine in a dream, Saint Nicholas called on him to overturn the unjust sentence of the military officers.

He worked many other miracles and struggled many long years at his labor. Through the prayers of the saint, the city of Myra was rescued from a terrible famine. He appeared to a certain Italian merchant and left him three gold pieces as a pledge of payment. He requested him to sail to Myra and deliver grain there. More than once, the saint saved those drowning in the sea, and provided release from captivity and imprisonment.

Having reached old age, Saint Nicholas peacefully fell asleep in the Lord. His venerable relics were preserved incorrupt in the local cathedral church and flowed with curative myrrh, from which many received healing. In the year 1087, his relics were transferred to the Italian city of Bari, where they rest even now

The Conception by Righteous Anna of the Most Holy Mother of God

Commemorated on [December 9](#)

Saint Anna, the mother of the Virgin Mary, was the youngest daughter of the priest Nathan from Bethlehem, descended from the tribe of Levi. She married Saint Joachim (September 9), who was a native of Galilee.

For a long time Saint Anna was childless, but after twenty years, through the fervent prayer of both spouses, an angel of the Lord announced to them that they would be the parents of a daughter, Who would bring blessings to the whole human race.

Troparion

Today the bonds of barrenness are broken: God has heard the prayers of Joachim and Anna. He has promised them beyond all their hopes to bear the Maiden of God, by whom the Uncircumscribed One was born as a mortal Man; He commanded an angel to cry to her: “Rejoice, you who are full of grace, the Lord is with you!”

Kontakion

Today the universe rejoices, for Anna has conceived the Theotokos through God’s dispensation, for she has brought forth the one who is to bear the ineffable Word.

Help those in need during the Nativity season!

During the month of December our parish charitable group, the *Workers of St. Elizabeth*, will be collecting **SOCKS and GLOVES** for the **Peter Maurin Center**. Located just 5 minutes north of St. Elia at 1096 Old South Main St., the Center serves unsheltered and marginalized individuals and families in the greater Akron area by offering meals, warm clothing and other necessities, and friendship.

Look for the bin located near the Parish Family Christmas Tree in the Hall and drop off your items as you come in each week.

PARISH FAMILY CHRISTMAS TREE

The Parish Family Christmas Tree has been set up in the hall and is waiting for **your Family Ornament**.

Starting a new tradition this year at St. Elia, you are invited to bring an ornament from your family and hang it on the Parish Family Christmas Tree in the Hall.

Please write your family name and this year's date (2023) on the ornament.

OUR STEWARDSHIP, November 26, 2023

Candles:	\$94.00
Christmas Flowers:	45.00
“Wish List”	40.00
Sunday Offering:	680.00
TOTAL:	\$859.00

Tithely Donations:	\$167.87
PayPal Donations:	41.69
TOTAL:	\$209.56

TOTAL OFFERINGS: \$1,068.56

St. Herman Seminary: \$575.00

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)

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

Mavis Sugden

Deaconisa Heidi Gresh

Gregory Yova (Project Mexico)



3ETREAT

A Pan-Orthodox Retreat **ENCOUNTER. EMBODY. ENGAGE.**

JOIN US FOR OUR AKRON, OH 3ETREAT!

Join us for a Pan-Orthodox retreat and learn what it means to: come home to the self, come home to the household of God and be ambassadors of Christ's love in the world.



LOCATION

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church
755 S. Cleveland Ave.
Mogadore, OH 44260



DATES

Dec. 9, 2023



WHO'S INVITED

Adults: Parents, youth workers,
clergy, young adults
Youth: Grades 6-12

REGISTRATION CLOSING DEC. 4. REGISTER TODAY!

TO REGISTER VISIT WWW.THEOYM.ORG/EVENTS OR SCAN HERE



**The Retreat will include a Youth Track –
Grades 6-12 and an Adult Track.
Registration deadline: Tuesday, December 5.
Please pick up a packet of information in the
Church Vestibule**