

CHURCH BULLETIN	V. Rev. Fr. George Veselinovic, Parish Priest Monroeville, Pennsylvania 15146 412.622.4714 (cell) 412.856.8166 (office) dj.veselinovic@yahoo.com www.stnicholasmonroeville.org stnicholasmonroeville@gmail.com	SUNDAY December 23, 2018
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THIRTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Colossians (3:12-16)

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

Gospel: Luke (18:18-27)

Now a certain ruler asked Him saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. 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.' And he said, "All these things I have kept from my youth." 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." But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich. 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! 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." And those who heard this said, "Who then can be saved?" But He said, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God."

TROPARION TONE V

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.

TRANSFER OF THE RELICS OF ST. NICHOLAS, WONDERWORKER

TROPARION TONE IV

The day of the joyous celebration has come; the city of Bari rejoices and with it the whole universe leaps from joy, singing the spiritual songs and psalms. For today, the holy feast, on the occasion of the transfer of the honorable and exceedingly healing relics of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker, has shone forth with the radiant rays, like the sun that does not set, driving

away the darkness of temptations and calamities from those who faithfully exclaim to thee: "Save us, as our protector, O great Nicholas!"

KONTAKION TONE V

You did descend 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 all cry to You: "O Lord, save us!"

KONTAKION TONE III

TRANSFER OF THE HOLY RELICS OF ST. NICHOLAS, WONDERWORKER

Your relics, O Saint Nicholas, came out as a star from the east to the west. The sea was sanctified by your journey, and the city of Bari, through you, has received the grace. For working for us, you have appeared as an excellent, wonderful and merciful Wonderworker.

KONTAKION OF THE THEOTOKOS - TONE VI

Steadfast protectress of Christians, constant advocate before the Creator: do not despise the cry of us sinners, but in your goodness come speedily to help us who call on you in faith. Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, O Theotokos, for you do always protect those who honor you.

SAINTS WE COMMEMORATE TODAY – *Holy Martyr Mennas; St. John of Serbia – Serbian Children's Day!*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

2019 BEAUTIFUL SERBIAN ORTHODOX DIOCESAN CALENDARS HAVE ARRIVED! Please support our church by purchasing these calendars for a minimal \$5.00. Calendars are available at the tutor's desk.

We will be having a Christmas play on Jan. 6th following Divine Liturgy. ALL children will have a role, so all parents need to attend and bring their kids. Also, there will be [mandatory] play practice on Sunday Dec 16th, 23rd, and 30th (last 3 Sundays in December) as well as MANDATORY dress rehearsal on Saturday Jan. 5th from 11-2. Lunch will be served to the children. Also, if anyone has any "Nativity" scene costumes like animals or angels that they would like to donate, please see Protinica Karen.

January 6th - Christmas Eve. Following Divine Liturgy, our beloved children will perform a Christmas play. Lunch will be served.

January 6th - Christmas Eve service will begin at 6.00pm. Traditional lighting of the Yule tree/ Badnjak will follow. A rich and wonderful dinner following the service will be in the church hall with entertainment provided by Srpski Sinovi/ Serbian sons. Invite your family and friends and celebrate the Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. All are welcome/ Dobro do li!

Beautiful Christmas Cards ó Available to purchase at the tutor's desk. \$20/pack or \$2/each.

Last Call! for NOODLE ORDERS for Orthodox Christmas. Call Rose Cheran at (412-824-7609). The ðnoodle makersö will then take a break. Stay tuned!

Purse Bash – A 2nd planning meeting will be held after church on Sunday, December 30th in the Multi-purpose room. The Purse Bash is scheduled for March 2, 2019. Ladies, please plan to attend and help make this event a successful fundraiser. If you have any questions, please contact Sondra Deaunovich at Sondra7890@comcast.net or 412-760-5796.

The Committee for the 2019 SNF Summer Golf Tournament has met and is excited to begin planning for this big event for our church and local SNF lodges. To be successful, we will need everyone's help! There will be many opportunities for you to contribute. The Committee will keep you informed of our progress over the coming months. Pam Matejevich will be coordinating volunteers for the event which will take place August 7-11, 2019. Reach out to Pam or to Chairman Dushan Markoff to offer your help or ask any questions!

Maintenance Group is preparing for winter! Sauerkraut, sour heads, smoked kielbassi, Italian sausage, smoked spare ribs, bacon, pumpkin pie, and organic potatoes will be available very soon to purchase for the upcoming winter months. Details to follow.

REMINDERS

Adult Bible Study – Classes cancelled until further notice.

Vespers ó Saturday evening 6:00 p.m. Confession 6:30 p.m.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT:

It's Not Just About Checking the Boxes

The man in the Gospel lesson desires to have eternal life, and he desires to know exactly what he has to do in order to get it. Jesus tells the man what the Law requires, basically reviews the Ten Commandments with him. The man tells Jesus, ðIöve done all those things.ö Basically, ðIöve checked all those boxes.ö Jesus then tells the man, ðOne thing you still lack. Sell all you have and distribute it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.ö (Luke 18: 22). The man then became sad, because he was very rich. Jesus touched a nerve with him. He challenged the man to not only check boxes but to become vulnerable. In order to attain eternal life, one has to love God. And in order to love, one key ingredient is vulnerability. The man, it seems, had no problem keeping all the commandments at least, according to him. Truthfully, he probably had some problems with some of them. We all do. Jesus, however, gave him the benefit of the doubt, and accepted his statement. However, Jesus challenged the man, to dig deeper, to be vulnerable, so that he could grow in love, in faith, and in his journey to salvation. And sadly, the man could not accept the challenge. In our Christian life, we have to remember that it's not just about checking boxes, but about being

vulnerable to God, and to othersö this builds love, which builds faith, which leads to eternal life.

In the ideal church, all expenses would be paid from the financial offerings of the congregants. The congregation wouldn't be forced to have a festival or a golf tournament or sell pastries to make ends meet. People were not raised knowing how or why we give money to the church, and so this has led to lack of understanding, lack of giving, and a great level of cynicism when it comes to ðgiving my money to the churchö or wondering ðwhat is the church doing with my money?ö Like the rich man in today's story, this understanding of giving sees our offering as checking a box. To truly give means to divest interest and control. We are to see ourselves as stewards, not as shareholders. Giving should be sacrificial. Why? Because nothing worthwhile in life is not gotten through sacrifice. Think of this exampleö what makes your college degree valuable? It is the years you spent attaining it. You know the sacrifices that you made in order to get that degree. If someone just gave you the degree, you wouldn't have the joy, the appreciation or the respect you have for it. In working our way toward salvation, it comes at a price. There IS sacrifice involved. Christ sacrificed for us, in enduring the crucifixion, in order to open the gateway to salvation. We are supposed to sacrifice for Him, in many ways, including sacrificial giving to support the work of His Church. When we see what we have as ours, it is hard to give away what is ours. When we see what we have as a gift from Him, it becomes easier to give back to Him a portion of what He first gave us. The man in the story today had a hard time letting go of any of his riches. He couldn't sacrifice. He wanted to give what HE considered a worthy gift, not what the Lord challenged him to do. When it all comes down to it, we are supposed to not just check boxes, nor give only in the way that is comfortable to us. We are supposed to show vulnerability, in the way we live, and in the way we give. Because vulnerability is what leads to love, love is what leads to faith and faith is what leads to eternal life.

As you consider what you will give back to God this year, think about vulnerability, love, faith and salvation. And don't just check boxesö go to church and worship (not watch), open your heart in prayer (don't just say the words) and give in a way that stretches your comfort zone.

