



# ST. NICHOLAS OF MYRA ORTHODOX CHURCH

A PARISH OF THE AMERICAN CARPATHO-RUSSIAN ORTHODOX DIOCESE OF THE  
ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE OF CONSTANTINOPLE

288 E. 10<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10009



## Sunday Divine Liturgy: 10 AM

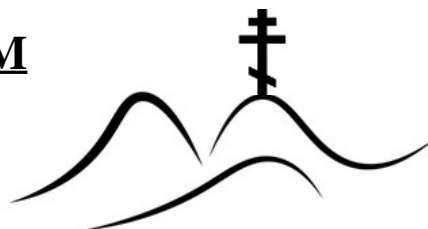
Pastor: Rev. Fr. William Bennett

Cantor & Choir Director: Nicholas Timko

Asst. Cantor: Reader Robert Zizik

Hours: Reader Alexander Ioukliaevskikh

Church Phone #: 212-254-6685



Church Website: [www.stnicholaschurchnyc.org](http://www.stnicholaschurchnyc.org) Church Email: [info@stnicholaschurchnyc.org](mailto:info@stnicholaschurchnyc.org)

## WELCOME, ALL ST. NICHOLAS FAITHFUL & VISITORS!

*For Online Streaming Service: 10 minutes prior to service, visit our website ([www.stnicholaschurchnyc.org](http://www.stnicholaschurchnyc.org)) and scroll down and press play on our live service feed. If using a smartphone, use our YouTube Channel: "St. Nicholas of Myra Orthodox Church NYC"*

*At this time, we will livestream only for Lenten services, Saturday evening Vespers & Sunday morning Divine Liturgy.*

*Follow us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/StNicholas10street](https://www.facebook.com/StNicholas10street) / Follow us on Instagram: "10thSt.Orthodox"*

## SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15th, 2024: Prophet Habakkuk

Epistle: Ephesians 4:1-6 Gospel: Luke 18:18-27 Troparia: p 48 (Tone 8)

### TODAY: SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15th

*THE PROPHET HABAKKUK is referred to as one of the twelve minor prophets of the scriptures. The ages of his prophecies is estimated to be around the year 650 B.C. He foresaw the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple, the Babylonian Captivity, and the later return of the people of God, the captives, to their homeland. He is famously referenced in the Paschal Canon, authored by St. John of Damascus, where he is referenced as being on divine watch like a shining angel. **Holy Prophet Habakkuk, pray to God for us!***

**HOLY COMMUNION** will be distributed toward the end of Divine Liturgy for all repentant Orthodox Christian faithful who are prepared. *If you would like to make a bread offering for a Liturgy, please see Fr. William.*

**VENERATION OF THE HAND CROSS & BLESSED BREAD** will be offered after Divine Liturgy for all faithful and visitors after Divine Liturgy. *May God grant you all many happy & blessed years!*

**ST. NICHOLAS COOKIE WALK! 12 - 3 PM** There will be no formal coffee hour; all are invited to come and participate in the Cookie Walk. God bless all our workers and volunteers who worked all week long! *Please plan to stay until 4:00 to help clean, pack boxes and turn the hall back to its normal configuration. While some decorations remain, we need to get the hall ready for St. Nicholas Day the following weekend.*



***THE NATIVITY FAST CONTINUES!*** As we travel through the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord by fasting from foods, use this time to slow things down, to fast even more from sin, and give special attention to your daily prayers to God while creating more time with Him and reflection.

***SCHEDULE YOUR CONFESSION:*** Make time for Holy Confession with Fr. William. There can be no growth in the Orthodox Faith without Confession, and it is necessary for your membership in God's Holy Church. These past couple years have been difficult to maintain participation together but the Church is open and the time is now. Father will be available before every Divine Liturgy, you can come early, or at Saturday Vespers services.

**\*NO SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS w/ DAWN & STEPHANIE**

**WEEKLY POST-CONFESSION SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS @ 7 PM w/ FR. WILLIAM:** Students will meet in the evening online with Fr. William for a 30-minute session with an activity and a lesson. Fr. William sent out an invitation to all parish families with students by email. If you did not receive that invitation, please contact Fr. William immediately.

### **DURING THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 15th:**

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18th - FESTAL VESPERS & DIVINE LITURGY @ 6 PM - FEAST OF ST. NICHOLAS THE WONDERWORKER**

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21st - DIVINE LITURGY @ 8 AM, ST. MARY'S CHURCH, NYC  
- GREAT VESPERS @ 6 PM**

### **NEXT WEEK: SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22nd, 2024**

**HOLY COMMUNION** will be distributed toward the end of Divine Liturgy for all repentant Orthodox Christian faithful who are prepared. *If you would like to make a bread offering for a Liturgy, please see Fr. William.*

**HOLY FESTIVE ANOINTING (MIROVANIJE) & BLESSED BREAD** will be offered after Divine Liturgy for all faithful and visitors after Divine Liturgy. *May God grant you all many happy & blessed years!*

**ST. NICHOLAS DAY BRUNCH:** The Altar Society will be hosting the Annual St. Nicholas Day festivities on December 22nd. The cost is \$20 for a delicious brunch menu. Children 12 and under are free! We will also have games, a raffle, Christmas caroling and a visit by St. Nicholas. Stay tuned for more details.

**\*NO SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS w/ DAWN & STEPHANIE**

**WEEKLY POST-CONFESSION SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS @ 7 PM w/ FR. WILLIAM**

### **PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**WE ARE CONTINUING TO SUPPORT THE FLEMINGTON AREA FOOD PANTRY!** With the help and arrangement of Elizabeth Krzyzanowski, we are donating our food collection going forward toward the food pantry in Flemington, NY. The parish will continue to make a dedicated push, please look to purchase something extra on your next grocery trip and bring it to our food bin in the #2 Hall.

**BIRTHDAYS/ANNIVERSARIES PRAYER LIST WAS RESET!** There is a birthday/anniversary form in the back of the church for the current church attending and their families. Please fill one out for you and your family to be prayed for in the Divine Liturgy each week when the special occasion comes around. The list was officially reset last Pascha Sunday, May 5th. Submit a copy to the office or hand directly to Fr. William, if you haven't yet.



## HOW TO AVOID MAKING FASTING A FORMALITY

By Priest Alexei Taakh

*Today we're going to talk about observing the fast, or rather, about what fasting should really look like and about what many people have turned it into. While Christ was on Earth, He constantly called the Pharisees hypocrites and denounced their religious formality. And for this (in part) He was then crucified. He preached that faith must be accompanied by works of love. And He was indignant at what we now call Pharisaism: insincere faith in God, based only on the formal performance of actions.*

*This is a broad topic and concerns many moments in the Christian life, but now, in the Nativity Fast, let's focus on what fasting is, how the Church understands it, and, alas, what it's turned into for many people. Fasting is an expression of our love for God and a time for repentance and intense prayer. In fact, fasting is a voluntary feat. We love the Lord, we're grateful to Him for all His mercy and we desire to make at least some effort for Him. Like a child who brings his parents a drawing: so clumsy, unsightly, but made with sincere love. Needless to say, at that moment, the parental heart melts.*

*That's about what our fasting is like before God. It's not ideal. We can't completely give up food for forty days like Christ—such abstinence would only ruin the simple, unprepared man. Therefore, in Orthodoxy, it was decided to make fasting reasonable: to give up some of the pleasures we're used to during the fasting period. And probably we all know that giving up animal products is just the tip of the iceberg. The most interesting thing is the depth. There are many sayings that reveal the whole essence of temperance for us: "Fasting without prayer is just a diet," "Fast with the spirit, not with the belly," "If fasting was in the food, then cows would be saints," and so on.*

*And my favorite phrase: "The most important thing in fasting is not to eat other people," that is, to refrain from resentment, condemnation, irritation, anger, lies, and other evils inside us. In general, we should try to observe such a fast all the time, but in the fasting periods, we should pay increased attention to it. And we all know, of course, about concessions. For the pregnant and breastfeeding, and for the seriously ill, the food fast is canceled—it's better to refrain from the television, from sweets, and other excesses. And those who have a "forced ration" should eat what the Lord has sent. This includes those on the road, those who are visiting, or those who have to eat in the cafeteria at work or school. At home, we fast according to the canons, but there we eat what's available.*

*With regard to all other pleasures, like sweets, favorite TV shows, computer games, music, and other enjoyments, you have to consider them according to your conscience. Everyone determines his own measure of fasting independently in these things, because fasting is a personal feat—it's a relationship between God and man, so fasting can only be voluntary: whoever wants to, keeps the fast. You would think this is all familiar to us, and there are no problems. But quite often I see people for whom fasting isn't a feat of love, but an imposed abuse. Instead of voluntary abstinence for God, people perceive fasting, and even all of Orthodoxy, as a system of prohibitions. The ancient Holy Fathers called such a perception of faith one of the types of demonic prelest, that is, delusion. The devil is able to pervert almost any good, but this happens especially often with fasting.*

*Such people fast not because they love the Lord, but out of fear: “If you don’t abstain from animal products, you’ll burn in hell!” Without love, fasting becomes for them a kind of Jewish kashruth (the teaching about clean and unclean foods, that is, kosher and not kosher). They study the ingredients of the food they buy in detail so as “not to defile themselves,” otherwise they might eat some whey. If you eat such a food you’ll go to hell. At other people’s houses, they pick the meat out of a dish, constantly complaining about it with loved ones, and condemning to the point of hatred anyone who doesn’t follow the same rules in life. And of course, they can’t go without lecturing about how it’s a terrible sin to have fun during a fast.*

*For them, everything and everywhere is a sin. No music, no movies, no fiction books. All of this, in their view, is a road to hell. And if they become the heads of families, it’s a pity for those families—no concessions, even for the pregnant. And it doesn’t matter that this is a canon of the Church, it doesn’t matter that the mother and child can die or get sick from such abstinence. A child reaches for some candy—a slap on the hand and a shout: “Not allowed! It’s the fast!” Someone in the family allows themselves to laugh—the domestic religious tyrant quickly and publicly brings this “sinner” to “repentant” tears. And then they wonder how it happened that their children grew up to be against the Church, to be atheists. Really, how did that happen? But from the child’s point of view, it’s quite simple: He didn’t see Christian love from grandma; he saw only fear before the torments of hell in her, which she read about in a book, and fierce anger towards everyone who doesn’t understand it and tries to object. For children in such families, Orthodoxy is a religion of fear and hatred, and it disgusts them. They don’t see love, but only severity and anger. Everything you want is a sin; any alternative opinion is a sin; basically everything all around is sin, and that means—a road to hell.*

*For such “Orthodox,” who have forgotten about love and frantically fulfill all the rules, there’s no joy in Christ. They inure both themselves and their loved ones to such a formal religion. The morning and evening prayer rules and regular church attendance are heavy burdens for them. They obviously don’t want to do all of this, but they slavishly do it all, lest they “burn in hellfire.”*

*Their life is like an obstacle course: God forbid that you say or think something wrong; that you not cross yourself when passing by an icon; that you accidentally wash yourself with scented soap during the fast; that you accidentally hear secular music during the fast... For them, God is a cruel tyrant, Who will punish anyone who slips up even a little bit in life. And this tyrant, of course, will send them to hell if they don’t denounce all sinners to their faces with rage and hatred, whether they want to or not. Unfortunately, it’s precisely such figures who most often actively speak on the street, in church, and online. There are no authorities for them; they “convict everyone of their sins,” they condemn everyone except themselves, and they hate everyone who thinks differently, and therefore they repel many people from the faith. Actually, this is the plan of satan, who seduces them...*

*...You and I are children of God, although we voluntarily call ourselves His slaves, emphasizing that we faithfully serve our Heavenly Father with the love of children. We live in joy over the fact that God loves us. And all the components of the Christian life, such as prayer, fasting, and alms, are a manifestation of love and joy in the Lord for us. The temptation of laziness, unwillingness to fast and pray periodically overtakes every one of us. Then it’s necessary to remind ourselves who we are and Who we serve with our lives. We arise to pray with love, because this is communication with our loving Creator; we lovingly refrain from excess, because we offer this sacrifice to the Lord as our humble gift, personally made by us for Him. And we know that our Father will overshadow us with His love for these acts of love.*

*The Lord doesn’t force us to fast—this labor must come from us. I sincerely wish everyone to surmount the current period of fasting, as well as all future ones, in love and joy!*

***“The Lord does not force us to fast - this labor must come from us.”***

***“Fasting is an expression of our love for God and a time for repentance and intense prayer.”***

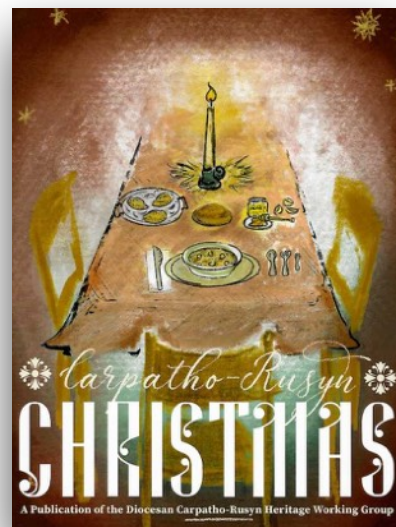
*(Taken from [www.orthochristian.com](http://www.orthochristian.com))*



**LEFT: GET YOUR 100th ANNIVERSARY CHURCH CALENDAR TODAY!** Those at the Kermeš were treated to a calendar designed with the help of Mike Kormanik & Justina Ryan, and were generously printed & donated by the (Patrick) Ryan Family in honor of Anna & Michael Salony's 50th Wedding Anniversary.



**RIGHT: PURCHASE A NEWLY-RELEASED CARPATHO-RUSYN CHRISTMAS BOOK!** Put together by the Diocesan Carpatho-Rusyn Heritage Working Group, headquartered here at the parish, this is a beautiful work. It is for sale at the gift case for \$15.



## ANNOUNCEMENT:

### **CHANGE OF SUNDAY DIVINE LITURGY START TIME, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 5th, 2025: 10:00 AM 9:30 AM**

With the city announcing again the start-up of NYC Congestion Pricing as of Sunday January 5th, regular Sunday Divine Liturgy will be moved up half an hour to 9:30 AM.

Plan to enter southern Manhattan (below 60th St) before 9 AM, when Peak Hours begin with a charge of \$9 for each passenger vehicle, in addition to regular tolls.

Parishioners are also encouraged to travel together whenever possible and to be there for one another if there is a financial burden. Please note that on weekdays, Peak Hour charges begin at 5 AM. During all Peak Hours, E-ZPass holders through the tunnels will receive up a \$3 credit on the \$9 charge. All travelers will be charged only once per day. A Low-Income Discount Plan and a Low-Income Tax Credit for residents was also announced; go to <https://www.portal.311.nyc.gov> and search "Congestion Pricing Program" to learn more.

## LAST WEEK:

May God grant His blessings to the newly-made Catechumen Yoelvi as he embarks on his journey into the Orthodox Faith. May God further bless all our Catechumens in their growing love and learning of our Lord's Liturgy and a life of prayer. Mnohaja i Blahaja L'ita! God grant them many happy & blessed years!

## NEXT WEEK:

Photos from Baking Week & the Cookie Walk will be made available in a special edition of the published bulletin.





## **ST. NICHOLAS PARISH PRAYER LIST**

*For additions or updates, please contact Fr. William directly: [fr.william.bennett@gmail.com](mailto:fr.william.bennett@gmail.com)*

**CONTINUOUS:** Matuska Olga Andrejuk, David Bulko, Kim Busel, Peter & Maria Ceselka, Tony Ceselka, Stephanie Downes, Mary & Tommy Fackovec, Gia Fazio, John Geida, Julius Gontkovsky, Olga Gubinski, Diana Hannan, Todd Henderson, Priest Joseph Hoffmann, Noah Homyak, Aleksandra Horbal, Luke Iera, Magdalena Ilanovska, Jana Johnson-Plutchok, Michael Kerr, Paul Koehler, Joanna Kolaczko, Maria Koneval, Michal Kormanik, Alex & Holly Marchak, Luboš Matlak, Richard McCullough, Christine Merriam, Sean Merriam, Christine & Rick Martines, Lucia Matišinova, Troy Oset, Nadežda Bulikova Petrikova, Deacon Michael Pirich, Gregory Rydzyk, Rastislav Salon, John Salony, Mary Seewald, George & Ondrej Sikorjak, Paul Sikoryak Sr, Toni Sikoryak, George Sipko, Michael Slavkovsky, Miroslav Strenk, Katherine Tam, Teri Upton, Tim Upton, Marek Vattek, Ann Vislocky, Bill Vislocky, Sandy Wagner, Cathryn Walker, Dennis & Cathy Walsh, and Reader Bob & Debbie Zizik.

### **CATECHUMENS:**

Ricardo Sullivan

John Stutts

Rachel Soh Young Yi

Nathan Deutsch

Daniel Lai

Maryam Gueye

Yoelvi Maria

### **EXPECTANT PARENTS:**

Max & Melia Walker

### **DIOCESAN CLERGY:**

Priest David Mastroberte

Priest Luke Mihaly

Protodeacon Emil Gulick

### **DEANERY CLERGY:**

Priest Alexandre Ioukliaevskikh (NY, NY)

Priest David Kossey (Yonkers, NY), for his Health and Salvation

Priest Andrew Gromm (Seaford, NY)

**SEMINARIANS:** Seamus Murray, Ignatios Leonardo, Nicholas Fong, Nicolas Laliberte, & Alexander Hurtsellers. The newly-graduated Nicholas Worobey & Samuel Lopusky! *That God may grant them many more blessed years, and for more vocations to the Priesthood!*

**COLLEGE STUDENTS:** May God bless all of our parish college students both near & far, and members of Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF), especially the NYU OCF & Rutgers OCF. *Mnohaja i Blahaja L'ita!*

**BIRTHDAYS:** May God grant many more happy & blessed years to those celebrating their birthdays this week, especially to John & Kim Busel, Mary Ann Bulko, & Rebecca Clemente. *Mnohaja i Blahaja L'ita!*

### **SPECIAL INTENTIONS:**

For the servant of God Mikulaš Kania, for his health and salvation. *Mnohaja i Blahaja L'ita!*

# **O HOLY FATHER NICHOLAS, PRAY TO GOD FOR US!**



# CHURCH SERVICE & ACTIVITY CALENDAR

**Note from Fr. William:** If you would like anyone remembered or prayed for during the course of the week or would like someone remembered in a memorial service, please see Fr. William or simply email: [fr.william.bennett@gmail.com](mailto:fr.william.bennett@gmail.com)

## DEC 2024 - JAN 2025

\*Shaded areas indicate days of fasting

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
<b>DEC 15</b> <i>Divine Liturgy @ 10 AM</i> - <b>ST. NICHOLAS COOKIE WALK @ 12 PM - 3 PM</b>	16	17	18 <i>Vespers &amp; Divine Liturgy @ 6 PM</i>	19 <i>FEAST OF ST. NICHOLAS OF MYRA</i>	20	21 <i>Divine Liturgy @ 8 AM (St. Mary's)</i> - <i>Great Vespers @ 6 PM</i>
<b>DEC 22</b> <i>Divine Liturgy @ 10 AM</i> - <b>ST. NICHOLAS DAY BRUNCH</b>	23	24	25 <i>*No Services</i>	26	27 <i>OCF COLLEGE CONF.</i>	28 <i>OCF COLLEGE CONF.</i> - <i>*No Services</i>
<b>DEC 29</b> <i>Divine Liturgy @ 10 AM, Served by Fr. Alexandre Ioukliaevskikh</i> - <b>OCF COLLEGE CONF.</b>	30 <i>OCF COLLEGE CONF.</i>	31	<b>JAN 1</b> <i>Vespers, Meal, &amp; Scripture @ 6 PM</i>	2	3	4 <i>Divine Liturgy @ 8 AM (St. Mary's)</i> - <i>Great Vespers @ 6 PM</i>
<b>JAN 5</b> <div style="border: 2px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; text-align: center; margin: 10px auto; width: 80%;"> <b>Divine Liturgy @ 9:30 AM</b> </div> - <i>Nativity Hymns Practice w/ Pani Ileana</i>	6 <i>Royal Hours @ 8 AM</i> - <i>Nativity Eve Vigil @ 7 PM, Holy Night Supper, to follow.</i>	7 <i>FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD</i> - <i>Divine Liturgy @ 9:30 AM</i>	8 <i>Vespers, Meal, &amp; Scripture @ 6 PM</i>	9	10	11 <i>Divine Liturgy @ 8 AM (St. Mary's)</i> - <i>Great Vespers @ 6 PM</i>

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Facebook: [www.facebook.com/acroddioecese](http://www.facebook.com/acroddioecese)

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/acrodnews> YouTube: <https://youtube.com/acroddioecese>





St. Nicholas  
**Cookie Walk**  
**2024**

**Come Early  
for Best  
Selection  
We Can  
Sellout!**

**Saturday**      **Sunday**  
**Dec. 14th**    **Dec. 15th**  
11am - 4pm      12pm - 3pm

**CRAFTS!**

**(family fun)**  
Kids 10 and under can  
make a delicious craft in  
our Little Elves  
Bakery & Workshop

**Free!**

**COOKIES!**

**(fresh baked by us)**  
**60,000+ cookies**  
You fill an empty box  
with your favorites from  
over 65 varieties

**\$25 and \$45**

**CLAUS!**

**(Santa, that is)**  
Take a picture with  
Santa in our photo  
booth complete with  
funny props

**Just \$5**

**ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH**  
288 E. 10th Street (Avenue A) East Village  
**[www.stnicholascookiewalk.com](http://www.stnicholascookiewalk.com)**