



# The Weekly Forerunner

St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church

301 Struthers Liberty Rd

Campbell, OH 44405

OCA - Diocese of the Midwest



## DECEMBER BULLETIN SPONSOR

*In memory of Sveda family and for the good health of Sveda Family  
Given by George & Barbara Kolasar*

### Weekly Liturgical & Events Schedule

#### Sunday, December 10

9:35 AM: Hours

10:00 AM: Divine Liturgy / Annual Yolka / Social

#### Wednesday, December 13

6:00 PM: Fire House Meeting

#### Saturday, December 16

6:00 PM: Vespers / Confessions

#### Sunday, December 17

9:35 AM: Hours

10:00 AM: Divine Liturgy / Monthly Panachida / Social /  
Council Meeting

## DECEMBER SOCIALS

Dec 10 – St Nicholas “O” Club coffee hour

Dec 17 – Sisterhood

Dec 24– Sisterhood

Dec 31 – Fr. Wargo’s 50th Anniversary w/ Archbishop  
Melchizedek

### DECEMBER Liturgical Attendance

Day	Vespers	Divine Liturgy	Communi-cants
Sat. Dec. 2	7		
Sun. Dec. 3		52	35
Tuesday Dec. 5 Vesperal Liturgy		23	

### 40 Day Remembrance

December 24—Protodeacon Nicholas Jannakos

January 7—Paul Graban & MaryJean Dean

## Martyrs Menas, Hermogenes, and Eugraphus, of Alexandria Commemorated on December 10

The Holy Martyrs Menas, Hermogenes, and Eugraphus suffered for their faith in Christ under the emperor Maximian (305-313).

Saint Menas was sent by the emperor from Athens to Alexandria to suppress the riots that had arisen between the Christians and the pagans. Distinguished for his gift of eloquence, Menas instead openly began to preach the Christian Faith and he converted many pagans to Christ. Learning of this, Maximian sent Hermogenes to Alexandria to place the saints on trial. Moreover, he gave orders to purge the city of Christians.

Hermogenes, although he was a pagan, was distinguished by his reverent bearing. And struck by the endurance of Saint Menas under torture and by his miraculous healing after the cruel torments, he also came to believe in Christ. Maximian himself then arrived in Alexandria. Neither the astonishing stoic endurance of Saints Menas and Hermogenes under torture, nor even the miracles manifested by God in this city, mollified the emperor. Instead, they vexed him all the more. The emperor personally stabbed Saint Eugraphus, the secretary of Saint Menas, who had declared himself a Christian upon witnessing the endurance of Saints Menas and Hermogenes; and then gave orders to behead the holy Martyrs Menas and Hermogenes.

The relics of the holy martyrs, cast into the sea in an iron chest, were afterwards found (see February 17) and transferred to Constantinople in the ninth century. The emperor Justinian built a church in the name of the holy Martyr Menas of Alexandria. Saint Joseph the Hymnographer (April 4) composed a Canon in honor of these holy martyrs.

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## **Episcopal Ordination of Bishop Benedict as Bishop of Hartford and New England**

On Saturday, December 2, His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon, hierarchs of the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church in America, and hierarchs of other sister Orthodox Churches gathered at Holy Trinity Cathedral in Boston, MA, along with clergy and faithful of the Diocese of New England for the ordination to the Holy Episcopate of Bishop-elect Benedict (Churchill), as Bishop of Hartford and the Diocese of New England.

The Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America elected Archimandrite Benedict as Bishop-elect of Hartford at their regular Fall Session on November 7, 2023.

On Friday evening, December 1, His Beatitude presided at the Service of Thanksgiving and the Nomination and Proclamation of a Bishop. Before the service began, Archpriest Alexander Rentel, Chancellor of the Orthodox Church in America, read the official announcement of the election. Bishop-elect Benedict offered words of acceptance, reflecting on the sacredness of the episcopal ministry. Following the service, the Bishop-elect served the daily Vespers.

On the morning of December 2, Metropolitan Tikhon presided at the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Concelebrating with His Beatitude were His Grace Bishop John of Worcester of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, His Grace Bishop Irinej of the Diocese of Eastern

America of the Serbian Orthodox Church, His Eminence Archbishop Benjamin of San Francisco and the Diocese of the West, His Eminence Archbishop Melchisedek of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania, His Eminence Archbishop Michael of New York and the Diocese of New York and New Jersey, His Grace Bishop Nikodhim of Boston and the Albanian Archdiocese, His Grace Bishop Andrei of Cleveland and Auxiliary to the Romanian Episcopate, and His Grace Bishop Gerasim of Fort Worth and Auxiliary to the Diocese of the South. Concelebrating were also clergy from the Chancery of the Orthodox Church in America, of the Diocese of New England, and the Diocese of the South, where Bishop Benedict spent the past ten years of his priestly ministry. Among the clergy from the Diocese of the South was Archpriest Marcus Burch, Chancellor, who represented His Eminence Archbishop Alexander of Dallas. Protopresbyter John Maheras, who represented His Eminence Metropolitan Methodios of Boston of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, was also in attendance.

Before the liturgy, Bishop-elect Benedict offered his statement of faith, proclaiming the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, and offered a detailed explanation of the Church's Trinitarian and Christological doctrines in the presence of Metropolitan Tikhon and the assembled hierarchs, clergy, and faithful.

During the Trisagion at the Divine Liturgy, Bishop-elect Benedict was led to the altar for his ordination by Archpriest Alexander Rentel, OCA Chancellor, and Archpriest John Kreta, Chancellor of the Diocese of New England. **Con't Pg 6**

## PRAYER LIST– Updated 12-6-23

**PARISHIONERS:** Achilles Arvan / Audrey Chengelis / Donna Chiarelli / George Horodnic / Irene Horodnic / Pauline Fesz / Mary Fredericks / Paula Kennedy / George Kolesar / Barbara Kolesar / Mary Jane Puskas / Kenny Ruff / Dorothy Shirilla / Julia Simko / Marion Zwinski

**HIERARCHS & CLERGY:** Archbishop Benjamin / Archbishop Alexander / Archbishop Melchizedek / Bishop Matthias / Fr. James Gleason (Fr.) / AP Moses Berry / Fr. Michael Rustic (Fr) / Fr. Mirolyub Ruzik / Sub-deacon Wylie Meath (Fr)

**FAMILY & FRIENDS:** / Bret (Zelinsky) / Chrissy (Fr.) / Donna Chiarelli / Dominic (Centofanti) / Ellen (Clark) / Katie (Garrity) / Basil Glovinsky (Fr.) / Mark Hruban (Fr.) / Ellen (Kessler) / Eleanor Marie (Kidder Paul (Kolesar) / Kathy (Kolesar) / Malakai (Kolesar) / Joe Kollar (Fr.) / Andrew LaChard (Jesko) / Mea (Mahan) / Mary (Mahan) / Pauline Meath (Fr.) / Michelle Nicoloff / Matushka Raissa (Nicoloff) / Eugene (Pallai) / Ksenia and her unborn child (Petrochko) / Matushka Helen (Psinka) / Chris Quotap (Fr.) / Kristianna & infant Mary Louise (Robinson) / William Romanchak (Fr.) / Roxanne (Yannito) / Julia (Shirilla Katherine (Steffaro) / Johanna (Tusinac) / Richard (Tusinac) / Brian (Shirilla) / Joseph (Vansuch) / Eleanor Marie (Vansuch) / Paula (Voytilla) / Mary Ann Bozichovich (Kennedy) / Patty Bozichovich (Vansuch) / Drew (Willison) / Emilia Yannitto / Charlette Zenko / Catherine Zile (Fr.) / Zoland Zile (Fr.)

**MILITARY FAMILY & FRIENDS:** Cory Deaton (Fr.) / Alena Grabavoy (Fr.) / Liam Garrity (Zelinsky)

**MISCELLANEOUS:** Metropolitan Paul (Orthodox Diocese of Aleppo) & Archbishop John (Archdiocese of Aleppo) still being held captive / The UN & IOCC humanitarian aid workers around the world / Those suffering persecution in Syria, Iraq, Israel, Egypt, Ukraine and around the world.

### Saint Macrina Orthodox Institute Offers Spirituality Class December/January

Saint Macrina Orthodox Institute is offering a new cycle of 7 courses focusing on the basics of Orthodox spirituality through important patristic texts. The texts will explain traditional scriptural interpretation and teach the ascetic theology of the Church.

“Through these, students will learn to apply scriptural and liturgical images to our inner life, and identify the virtues and passions as described by the great teachers of the Church,” stated course instructor, Archpriest Elijah Mueller, Ph.D. “This course is a formational foundation of the program, helping us to inculcate the right virtues and the practice of prayer that supports the whole curriculum. Learning about ‘asceticism’ helps to prepare the students to have the right frame of mind for further study of theological subjects that follow in the curriculum.”

The course will be on Sundays (approximately every second Sunday, 4-7pm CT); however, the dates are to be decided by conferral with students. The cost of the course is \$500, with the class taking place on Zoom, and some in-person hybrid sessions for Chicago Deanery students.

Those interested in learning more are asked to contact Fr. Elijah .

### FINAL NOVEMBER FINANCIALS

Expenses .....	\$16,551.16
Income .....	\$13,939
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>-\$2,612.16</b>

Weekly Tithe .....	\$11,948
Weekly Candles .....	\$401
Protection Icon.....	\$90
Iconostasis .....	\$150
Altar Candles .....	\$225
Monthly Flowers.....	\$75
Christmas Card .....	\$635
Missions.....	\$110
Wine .....	\$100
Incense .....	\$25
St. Panteliemon Candles .....	\$30
Bulletin .....	\$50
Christmas Flowers .....	\$86

#### Other Income:

Religious Item .....	\$68
Rectory bed payback.....	\$100
Perpetual Memorial Fund .....	\$5,000

## Christmas Flowers

In order to help supplement our Christmas flowers, flowers are available for purchase (\$10.00 each). They can be *In memory* or *In honor* of family or friends. Every name will be remembered at the Great entrance at the Christmas Divine Liturgy. Please give your money to Cindy and the names to Father Andrew.

### Fr. Andrew (10 flowers)

- \* For the health of all St. John the Baptist parishioners and their families.
- \* For the Health of the Campbell First Responders, especially the fire fighters.
- \* For the health of all my family and friends.
- \* For the health of my Spiritual Father, Archpriest James.
- \* For the health of the City of Campbell, their residents and businesses.
- \* For the Health of His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon, the Holy Synod & all seminarians.
- \* In memory of my ordaining Hierarch, His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas.
- \* In memory of my parents George & Dorothy, my Grandparents, my Godparents, my family & friends.
- \* In memory of the Diptychs of this parish.
- \* In memory of all the hierarchs of the OCA & all the priests who served this community.

### Zenko Family (1 flower)

- \* For the Health of Ron & Charlotte & family Angeby & Sue & Family & Matt Zenko

### Polewan Family (2 flowers)

- \* In memory of Michael & Ethel Dudzik
- \* In memory of Tony and Mary Polewan

### Rusnak Family (5 flowers)

- \* In memory of my wife Laurissa Rusnak & George and Mary Rusnak (parents of subdeacon Walter Vladimir Rusnak)
- \* In memory of George, Jr (brother)
- \* In memory of Ann Sanders (sister)
- \* In memory of Nadine Pallai (sister)
- \* For the health of Joseph (brother & Mary Jane Puskas (sister)

### Cvercko Family (4 flowers)

- \* In memory of Andrew Cvercko
  - \* In memory of Anna & Andrew Cvercko
  - \* In memory of Antonia & Morris Pecuszok
- For the Health of Cvercko Family

### Thompson Family– (2 Flowers)

- \* In memory of William & Helen Bakish
- \* In memory of Margie Zappia

### Moore Family (3 Flowers)

- \* In memory of Anna Graban & George Graban
- \* In memory of Edward Moore & Elsie Moore
- \* In memory of Sandra Graban Whiteard

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## December Candle & Bulletin Sponsors

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**Bulletin:** In memory Sveda family and for the good health of Sveda Family– Given by George & Barbara Kolasar

**Wine:** In honor of my mother Emilia Yannitto on her birthday on December 3 & in memory of my brother Danny Yannitto on December 3– Given by Melanie Yannitto

**Incense:** *Available*

**Iconostasis Candles & Eternal Light:** In memory of our godparents, George & Ruth Libertin, and grandparents, Andrew & Mary Libertin - Given by Charissa Oliphant & Mark Libertin

**Altar Candles:** In memory of my mother Margaret Boldish on the 7th anniversary - Given by Nancy Tusinac / In memory of parents, Nicholas & Mary K. Libertin, & brother, Dr. Nick Libertin - Given by Charissa & Tom Oliphant, Mark & Colette Libertin / In memory of my parents George Vansuch & Olga Vansuch– Given by daughter Sandy & Son in law Jim Bufalini

**Tetrapod Candles:** *Available*

**St. Herman Candles:** **TAKEN**

**St. Panteleimon Icon Candles:** For His Eminence AB Job & His Grace Bishop Boris & for my Family & Friends—Given by Fr. Andrew

**Protection Icon Candles:** *Available*

**St. John the Baptist Candles:** *Available*

**Flowers:** In memory of my mom Eileen Elash who passed away in December of 2009

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<u>\$50 per month</u>	<u>\$30 per month</u>	<u>\$25 per month</u>
Wine	St. Herman candles	Incense
Bulletin	St. Panteleimon Icon	
Iconostasis Candles & Eternal Light	candles	<u>Flowers</u> - \$75
Altar Candles	Protection Icon candles	
Tetrapod Candles	St. John the Baptist candles	

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## REPOSED LIST FOR DECEMBER

- Dan Ivanovich (1929) ©  
1- Sam Zilens Sr (1978) ©  
1- Mary Livoniak (1952) ©  
2- John Gozur (1972) ©  
2- Marian Dunchak (1999) ©  
2- Priscilla Sirilla (2003) ©  
3- John Korchniak (1919) ©  
3- Irene Black (2003) ©  
4- Kathleen Garman (2010) ©  
4- Anakreon John (1923) ©  
5- Mary Bobosh (1975) ©  
5- Michael Evans (1977) ©  
6- Sophie Sasnowchik (1975) ©  
6- Ann Dahulich (2017)  
6- Mary Krajnak (1945) ©  
8- Anna Hastol (1982) ©  
8- Bill Soltis (2014)  
8- George Kotie (1940) ©  
8- Mary Pretko (1947) ©  
8- Anna Papoch (1963) ©  
9- Mary Niznih (1990) ©  
9- Emanuel Ginnis (1954) ©  
9- Joseph Andrasko (1960) ©  
9- Judith Banas (2018) ©  
10- Michael Basala (1991)  
10- Suzanne Marinelli (1999) ©  
12- Pauline Truhan Livosky (2017) ©  
13- Andrew Libertin (1931) ©  
14- Michael Hastal (1984) ©  
14- Susan Marie Sveda (2004) ©  
15- Theodore Fesz (2020) ©  
15- Joseph Graban (2003) ©  
15- Still born Cmur (1924) ©  
15- Catherine Papantonakis (1951) ©  
15- Eugenia Pontikos (1953) ©  
16- Anne Cvercko (1996) ©
- 16- Svetlana Gozur Evanoff (2014) ©  
18- Archbishop Job (2009)  
18- V. Rev. Michael Macura  
19- Edward Malchisky (2001)  
19- Catherine Bondar (2010) ©  
19- Margaret Boldish Feltovich (2016) ©  
20- George Fischu, Sr (1983) ©  
20- Anna Livosky (1946) ©  
20- Loukas Arfaras (1951) ©  
21- John Kotchmar (2022) ©  
22- Susan La Valle (2019)  
22- Peter Alesaudridis (1946) ©  
22- George Roman (1953) ©  
23- Fr. David Sedor (2008)  
23- Anna Volchko (1989) ©  
23- Mary Vansuch (2008) ©  
23- George Matzye (1950) ©  
24- John Feltovich (1981) ©  
25- Stephen Vansuch (2002) ©  
26- Fr. Robert Sally (2002)  
26- Julia Malchisky (1971)  
26- John Joseph Marinelli (1996) ©  
27- Eileen Elash (2009) ©  
27- Adam Nedastup (1920) ©  
28- Fr. John Kuchta (2019)  
28- Julia Zora (2001) ©  
29- Andrew Midlik (1943) ©  
29- John Vansuch (1995) ©  
30- Bishop Boris (2000)  
30- Ed Pehanich, Sr (2019)  
30- Kosta Alesandridis (1928) ©  
30- Christina Chulik (1943) ©  
31- Robert LaVallee (2007)  
31- Hermenegildo Guerrero (2018)  
31- Mary Shirilla (1952) ©  
31- John Niciforos (1964) ©

### Luke 17:12-19 (Gospel)

Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" So when He saw them, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner? And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."

### Ephesians 6:10-17 (Epistle)

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;

## DECEMBER CELEBRATIONS

### *Birthdays*

1-Ileana Bruner, Thomas McDonald  
4-Steven Calzone, Hannah Willison  
5-Ted Fesz & Mat. Laryissa Bremer  
6-Mat. Susan Northrup & Paul Demkosky Sr.  
8-Nicholas Basile  
9-Alexis Jesko, John Koval, Pauline Meath, Angie Dardovsky  
10-Karen Zwinski  
13-Helen Colaluca  
14-Kenny Ruff  
16-George Rusnak  
17-Ann Cvercko  
27-Claudia Moore  
30-Christina Adzima  
31- Ken Krause

### *Anniversaries*

5-2004- AB Mark of Philadelphia  
19-1971 Retired Bishop Seraphim of Sendai  
26- Anthony & Shelia Jesko, Jr.  
31- Jimmy & Christine Billy

### *Episcopal ordination con't from pg 2*

In his homily, Metropolitan Tikhon reflected on the Nativity fast and reminded the faithful that, “To help us, the Lord has given us not only special times of year, but shepherds and overseers to keep watch over us. Just moments ago, Bishop Benedict was consecrated to the holy episcopate and tasked with keeping watch over his flock here in New England. But because the bishop’s flock is one of rational sheep, his task of keeping watch consists primarily of teaching his people to keep watch over themselves, rousing them to Christian zeal and vigilance through his words and, especially, his deeds—his example. Like all Christians, the bishop is tasked first with keeping watch over himself.”

After the Divine Liturgy, the hierarchs and clergy assembled on the ambo where Metropolitan Tikhon welcomed the gathered bishops and addressed the newly-ordained bishop. Metropolitan Tikhon congratulated Bishop Benedict on behalf of the Orthodox Church in America, and welcomed him to the Holy Synod of Bishops. His Beatitude also offered words of gratitude to the clergy and faithful of the Diocese of New England: “Thank you to the clergy and faithful of the Diocese of New England, who have so often welcomed my presence during my locum tenency. I have some degree of sorrow in relinquishing that locum tenency but it is a sorrow that is transformed into joy and an expression of congratulations on the consecration of Bishop Benedict, your new diocesan hierarch.” His Beatitude then presented the pastoral staff to Bishop Benedict, who ascended his cathedra and blessed the clergy

and faithful.

Following the Divine Liturgy, the Diocese of New England hosted a festive banquet at the DoubleTree Hotel in Boston in the presence of various hierarchs, esteemed guests, and clergy and faithful from throughout the Diocese. A number of speakers offered words of congratulations to His Grace Benedict during the afternoon program.

On Sunday, December 3, Metropolitan Tikhon presided at the hierarchical Divine Liturgy at Holy Trinity Cathedral, serving with Bishop Benedict and Bishop Andrei.

### **Thanksgiving Meal served by Chicago Parish Celebrates 10th Anniversary**

On November 22, the faithful of Christ the Savior Church, Chicago, IL, celebrated their 10th anniversary serving a Thanksgiving meal in the Little Village neighborhood of Chicago. The annual meal brings together bereaved families who have lost loved ones through tragic circumstances.

The event began with two days of food preparation and decoration organized by Chef Charlie Baggs, Inc., with the assistance of volunteers from the Christ the Savior and Grupo Consuelo. Priest Esteban Vázquez, Diocesan Vice-Chancellor, and Priest John Kennerk, Rector, served the “Glory to God for All Things” akathist in both Spanish and English. A full Thanksgiving meal with dessert was then served to over 225 people.

The parish wishes to thank especially Fr. Tom Boharic and the faithful of Mother of the Americas Parish for supporting these families and providing their facilities for such a meaningful event.

## A New Deacon Ordained for Missouri Mission

On Sunday, December 3, Annunciation of the Virgin Mary Mission in Saint James, MO welcomed His Eminence Archbishop Daniel of Chicago and the Midwest for a pastoral visit.

On Saturday, the Archbishop was given a tour of the new property where plans are underway for Annunciation's stone temple to be built. The All Night Vigil was served by Priest Joel Wilson, head of the mission.

The following day Archbishop Daniel led the hierarchal Divine Liturgy, and was joined by Fr. Joel Wilson, Priest Matthew McDonald and Deacon Andrew Bender. The Annunciation Children's Choir sang the responses for the liturgy under the direction of Xenia Morris. At the Little Entrance, His Eminence awarded Fr. Joel the Kamlavka and the Gold Cross. The diaconal ordination of Subdeacon John Eller took place after the consecration of the gifts. All in attendance expressed their heartfelt, threefold "Axios!" for the newly ordained deacon.

After the Liturgy, the Annunciation community presented His Eminence with a Cross and Panagia set in gratitude for his archpastoral love and care. A celebratory meal was held in Fr. Joel's home following the Prayers of Thanksgiving, honoring Archbishop Daniel and the newly-ordained Deacon John.

## OCA to take Second Annual Collection for the Diocese of Alaska

December 10, 2023, the Sunday before the feast day of Saint Herman of Alaska, is the second annual collection for the Orthodox Church in America's Diocese of Alaska.

His Grace Bishop Alexei spoke at 20th All-American Council in Baltimore, MD where he detailed the serious challenges facing the OCA's mother diocese. The council passed a resolution to support the Alaskan Diocese in their difficult situation:

"Whereas Alaska is the cradle of Orthodoxy in America: Be it resolved that the 20th AAC asks the Holy Synod of Bishops to designate annually the Sunday closest to the December feast of Saint Herman, for a free-will collection from each parish in the Orthodox Church in America to support the Diocese of Alaska Clergy Endowment."

Your donation goes towards building a \$1M endowment to provide clergy stipends in the diocese. In His Grace's letter of appeal, he updated the faithful that the endowment project has raised \$600,000, over half of the target amount, and will be named the Blessed Matushka Olga Endowment for Clergy Stipends, in honor of her upcoming glorification. An anonymous donor has also agreed to match any donations given up to \$50,000 between now and December 31, 2023.

The Diocese of Alaska is the birthplace of the Orthodox Christianity in North America. The entire Orthodox Church in America owes a debt to the Church in Alaska for its continuous faith and witness since Saint Herman and the first missionaries arrived in 1794. To this day, God is revealing new saints, such as Matushka Olga Michael, who lived in Alaska and now intercede for us before Christ.

In gratitude to the Alaskan faithful, and in love toward our fellow brothers and sisters in need, parishes of the OCA are asked to give generously on December 10, 2023.

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Dear Faithful and Clergy of the Orthodox Church in America,

I am writing to you, brothers and sisters in Christ, in order to express on behalf of the Alaskan Native clergy our deep thankfulness and appreciation for your love, your prayers, your kindness and your generosity to your Mother Diocese of Sitka and Alaska. At the All-American Council in 2022, I asked for your assistance in establishing an endowment for my rural Alaskan clergy with salaries \$26,000 below the poverty line for a family of four. In December of the same year, I sent out an appeal for your help. And by the grace of God touching the human heart, you responded to your brothers and sisters in need as though you were responding to Christ Himself. Glory to God in the highest, I am so happy to report to you that to date we have raised \$600,000 of our initial goal of a million-dollar endowment!

Given the joyous tidings of Blessed Matushka Olga's upcoming glorification, the endowment you have been contributing to will be known as the Blessed Matushka Olga Endowment for Clergy Stipends. We pray that she bless from on high everyone who has given what they can. Blessed Matushka Olga lived in conditions like those of our clergy. She did so with humility, piety, and love for all. She faithfully gave her widow's mite in every way possible to support the Church and those in need. As we move towards the glorification of this holy Matushka, I ask that we honor her by imitating her love, her humility, and her eagerness to give to those in need far and wide. **Con't next pg**

### *Alaska con't from previous pg*

Ours is a God Who works wonders. Ours is God Who is wonderful in His Saints. Ours is a God Who is wonderful in the people of God. I believe it is possible by the grace of God and by the generosity of the faithful across North America that we reach our goal of one million dollars by the feast of Nativity. And so, I humbly ask that you remember Alaska as you each prepare to offer your own offering of gold frankincense and myrrh to the new-born King.

An anonymous donor has generously agreed to match any donations given up to \$50,000 between now and December 31 st thereby doubling the impact of whatever your heart leads you to give. On our stewardship page, you can make your donation by means of Tithely, Paypal, or by sending your check to Diocese of Sitka & Alaska PO BOX 230108, Anchorage, AK 99523. Please remember the Diocese in any way you can, but especially I ask that you remember our priests and matushki who continue to labor for Christ as did the Blessed Matushka Olga and her husband Father Nicholai some fifty years ago. May the blessings of the Alaskan Saints and Matushka Olga be with all of you at Christmas.

With gratitude in the God made flesh of the most Pure Virgin,

+Bishop Alexei  
+Allgiliyaq Kilirnaq  
+Епископ Алексий

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## PREPARATION FOR THE BLESSING OF HOMES

Before the Priest arrives at your home, here are a few reminders on how to prepare:

- \* In the main room of the home, usually the kitchen or dining room, have placed on the table a white cloth, a candle and /or an Icon or cross. You may place a small container of Holy Water on the table. (Note: Father will be bringing his own.)
- \* Make a list of those living in the house including pets and all deceased you want prayed for.
- \* Turn off all TV's, radios, computers, etc. so as to keep focused on the blessing service.
- \* Make sure that pets are heeled or restrained so as not to get underfoot while Father goes through the home.
- \* In some customs, someone (usually a child) takes a candle and leads Father through the house while the rest follow.
- \* If you have any items to be blessed (Icon, Cross, etc.) put them on the table where the blessing will take place.
- \* When the priest arrives, have everyone in the home gather around the table and join in the blessing. PARTICIPATION IS IMPORTANT.
- \* Invite friends or neighbors to participate and witness the beauty of this tradition.

**NOTE: Remember, the invitation to the priest to come and bless your home is an invitation to ask for the mercy of God upon the household. The sprinkling of the Holy Water is a sign of God's presence in the home as an extension of His Holy House, the Church. It is a time to renew our commitment to God as we begin another year in His mercy and love for mankind.**

### HOME BLESSING SCHEDULE

Theophany is but a month away. Please contact Fr. Andrew if you have a certain day and time you would like reserved to have your home blessed. The schedule fills up quickly!

Home Blessings will begin January 8th, 2024.

Office: 330-755-4931 / Cell: 570-212-8747

<https://www.stjohnthebaptist-campbell.org/>

[padrebartek@gmail.com](mailto:padrebartek@gmail.com)