

**SAINT NICHOLAS
ORTHODOX CHURCH**
P.O. Box 777
Barton, OH 43905-0777

*A Parish of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople*

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Very Rev. Father Michael C. Kabel *Pastor & Dean*

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- WEB SITE: www.stnicholasbarton.org
- PARISH FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/St.NicholasBarton>
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MYSTERY OF HOLY CONFESSION: Before & after Saturday evening Vespers. Other Sacraments by appointment.

GOING TO THE HOSPITAL? Please notify Father when you are admitted if you want him to visit. Kindly notify Father also when you are discharged.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 24, 2021 DIVINE LITURGY 10:00 AM
CHRIST IS BAPTIZED! IN THE JORDAN!
CHRISTOS KREŠČAJETSJA! VO JORDAN'I!

THE SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY: Antiphons are from Theophany on pp. 145-146. Tropar for Tone 8 on p. 102. Tropar of Theophany on p. 146. GLORY... NOW & EVER... Kondak of Theophany on p. 146. Remaining Propers can be found on p. 150. Glorification & Irmos are from Theophany on p. 147. The Faithful will be sprinkled with the blessed Jordan Water on this day.

EPISTLE: Ephesians 4:7-13. GOSPEL: Matthew 4:12-17.

THE ETERNAL LAMP burns *in memory* of +**Michael James Ross**. Requested by *Laney & Cindi Ross*.

THE LEFT SIDE ALTAR LAMPS (Prothesis) burn with prayers for **Laney & Anna Ross**. Requested by *Laney & Cindi Ross*.

THE TETRAPOD LAMPS burn with prayers for *Special Intentions*. Requested by *Theresa Reese*.

HOUSE BLESSINGS 2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, His Eminence, Metropolitan Gregory, has instructed our priests NOT to enter parishioners' homes for the traditional blessing with the Jordan Water. The only thing Father Michael could do is to bless your home from the outside. The blessed Jordan Water is available in the baptismal font in the front of the church, and you can take some of the blessed water home with you.

CARDS AND PRAYERS. Family & friends of Virginia Polinsky's brother, **Mike Rose**, might want to send him a card at this time. He is in rehab due to complications of a gallbladder attack, and is awaiting a future surgery.

Heartland Health Care Center
ATTN: Andrew Michael Rose
Room 105, 5401 Sawyer Rd., Sarasota, FL 34233

Sermon for the Sunday after Theophany:

After Christ was baptized, the first words that He said were: 'Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.' Why? Because after we have been baptized, we are always tempted, and the only way to end temptation is to repent. But what exactly do these words mean? What is repentance? What is the Kingdom of Heaven?

In order to understand the meaning of the word 'repentance,' we must first understand the nature of the opposite of repentance, the reason for repentance - sin. Sin comes to us in three stages.

Firstly, we have a thought, a temptation towards evil. Secondly, we entertain that thought and imagine its attraction until it becomes irresistible. Thirdly we act on that thought that we have entertained. These are the three stages of sin.

Repentance also has three stages.

Firstly, our consciences are pricked, we have the thought that what we have done is bad. Secondly, we entertain that consciousness and develop it until action becomes irresistible. Thirdly, we act. These are the three stages of repentance.

Repentance then is not just an idea, a thought, it is above all an action. Repentance is a change of mind which leads to a practical and visible change in our way of life.

Yes, it is true, that often we seem to come to Confession with the same sins as before. Yes, it is true, that often we seem to make no progress, that although we have done wrong yet again, we have no tears, no depth of repentance to make us change our way of life. However, this should not mean that we lose hope, that we despair. That would be to fall to another temptation of the demon, the thought that we are unable to repent and that all our efforts are futile. Merely coming to Confession and saying that we are weak, that we have done wrong yet again, that our repentance lacks depth, is an act of repentance in itself. As the Gospel says, we must forgive even unto seven times seventy. Moreover, by continued repentance and the determination to repent, eventually depth of repentance and tears will come to us.

If this is repentance, what then is the Kingdom of Heaven?

Firstly, the Kingdom of Heaven was Christ Himself Who spoke these words to the people of that time, before whom He stood. The Kingdom of Heaven was indeed at hand, for He stood before them.

Secondly, the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand in another sense, and stands before us in the here and now. The Kingdom of Heaven is here and now, but it depends on our willingness to accept Christ and His Holiness, Mercy and Grace. At this very moment, each one of us is in fact able to meet God and enter into His eternal joy, but only if we wish to do so through deep repentance. The joy of the Kingdom of Heaven, simply the state of contentment with God, our well-being, is open to all who wish to accept Christ, the Word of God.

Yes, it is true that our well-being does to some extent depend on whether we have a job, a roof over our heads, enough money to pay our way in the world. But none of these things is absolutely essential, for there are people who have all these things but are still unhappy, they do not have the Kingdom of Heaven. And there are people who have none of these things and yet they are happy, they have the Kingdom of Heaven.

It also reminds me also of the old folk-tale about happiness, which goes like this:

There was once a King who was very sad. He was told by his advisors that he should send out servants to find someone who was completely happy, take the shirt from his back and put it on. Then the King would be completely happy. So the King sent out his servants and they searched up and down the kingdom. Eventually one of the royal servants found a man who was completely happy. The servant returned to the King with the good news. The King asked impatiently: 'But where then is the man's shirt?' 'Unfortunately,' replied the servant, 'this man who was completely happy was so poor that he did not have a shirt.'

In other words the presence of the Kingdom of Heaven depends ultimately not on our external circumstances but on ourselves, on our interior disposition, on our ability to repent. Indeed it is only if we repent that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.

May God grant us the desire for that repentance. Amen. - *Archpriest Andrew Phillips, Orthodox England*

THE CHURCH will be open from **10 AM to 4 PM** today.

Did You Know...

Our Diocese has a really strong presence on the internet. There are plenty of helpful resources available at the following links...

Diocesan Website: <http://www.acrod.org>

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Twitter: <https://twitter.com/acrodnews>

You Tube: <https://youtube.com/acroddiocese>

MORE COOKIES! Dr. Lazo continues to bring cookies in for us. They are available downstairs in the freezer in the kitchen. Help yourself!

BLESSING SERVICE FOR YOUR HOME. Due to the extraordinary circumstances caused by Covid-19, parishioners may wish to take some of the blessed Jordan Water home, and ask for God's blessings themselves. A special service sheet, adapted from the usual blessing service, is available in the back of church for your convenience. Hopefully, everything will be back to normal by next year!

HOLY WATER BOTTLES and other Theophany-related items are available for purchase in the back of church. Bottles start at \$2.00 each.

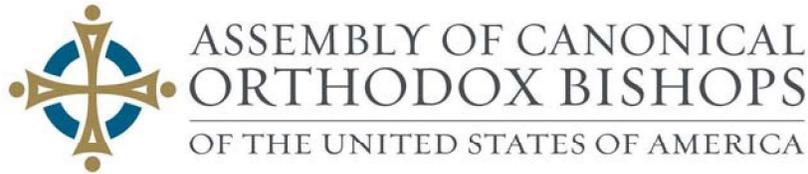
CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Saturday Vespers (1/16) — 3

Theophany Eve Vigil Service (1/18) — 24

Theophany Divine Liturgy (1/19) — 7

Synaxis of Saint John Divine Liturgy (1/20) — 6



January 22, 2021

Statement Regarding Developments in Medicine: COVID-19 Vaccines & Immunizations

*Christ “came not to heal the healthy, but the
sick; not to save the righteous, but sinners”
(Mark 2:17)*

As the world continues to battle COVID-19, we are ever grateful to the frontline workers – including medical professionals, emergency responders, and scientists – for their unwavering dedication to making the world a better place.

In light of the same, given our clergy and lay faithful are seeking archpastoral guidance regarding developments in medicine, such as COVID-19 vaccines and immunizations, we offer the following guidance:

Scripture encourages us to respect and protect the body as the temple of God (1 Cor. 6:19). At the same time, it discourages us from either tempting or testing the Lord (Matt. 4:7). And as your spiritual shepherds, we affirm and assure you that it is neither wrong nor sinful to seek medical attention and advice. In fact, we welcome interventions that provide us more time for spiritual renewal and repentance.

We therefore encourage all of you – the clergy and lay faithful of our Church – to consult your physicians in order to determine the appropriate course of action for you, just as you do for surgeries, medications, and vaccinations, in cancer treatments and other ailments. Indeed, while your own bishop, priest, or spiritual father remains prepared to assist you with spiritual matters, your personal doctor will guide your individual medical decisions.

We trust that whatever course of action you and your doctor decide upon will also benefit the rest of the community. If we work together – in a spirit of sincere compassion and care for one another – we will soon be able to gather together as a *full* community in our

churches once again. We miss you very much and eagerly await the day when we can *all* exchange the kiss of peace in the Divine Liturgy!

Conveying our paternal blessings with love in the Lord,

Archbishop Elpidophoros, Chairman
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

Metropolitan Joseph, Vice-Chairman
Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

Archbishop Michael, Treasurer
Orthodox Church in America

Metropolitan Gregory, Secretary
American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of the USA

Bishop Irinej
Serbian Orthodox Church in North, Central and South America

Metropolitan Nicolae
Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas

Metropolitan Joseph
Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Diocese of the USA,
Canada, and Australia

Bishop Saba
Georgian Apostolic Orthodox Church in North America

Metropolitan Tikhon
Orthodox Church in America