

The Weekly Messenger – December 7, 2014

St. John Chrysostom Albanian Orthodox Church

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Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 5:8-19 Gospel: Luke 13:10-17

If you would like to have someone remembered in prayer or are in need of a Priest, please contact Father Brooks Ledford. He can be reached at 210-461-1956 or fr.brooks@stjohnsphila.org.

Per Shume Vjet Gezuar! Dec 4 Great Martyr Barbara, Dec 6 St. Nicholas, Dec 12 St. Spiridon, Dec 15 St. Eleutherios, Dec 17 Holy Prophet Daniel, Dec 23 St. Naum, Dec 25 Christmas Day, Sunday after Christmas St. Joseph the Betrothed, St. David the King, Dec 27 St. Stephen the Protomartyr.

We are asking for donations of new or gently used blankets, winter jackets/coats, men's and women's clothing. The collected items will be donated to the homeless in Philadelphia. **Thank you** to those who have already made donations.

Sunday school: The students and teachers are working on the Christmas Pageant which will be presented on Sunday, December 21st following the Divine Liturgy. Our Director, Sandi Fiss, has everything under control. We look forward to the pageant with our students using the new sound system. Everyone should be able to hear the presentation this year!

Parishioner Update: Congratulations to Laura Lakuriqi, (daughter of Andon & Miranda Lakuriqi), on her engagement to John Little. Many years! Unfortunately, Grigor Lakuriqi (Laura's brother) was struck by a vehicle and is currently in St. Mary Medical Center, Room 2A, 1201 Langhorne-Newtown Road, Langhorne, PA 19047 215-710-2000.

Reader Schedule: December 7th Edward Kokalari, 14th David Biando, 21st Mark Klus, 28th Michelle Dardaris

Message from Father Brooks: In the Gospel reading for today, Jesus heals a woman on the Sabbath and is criticized by the "religious" leaders for working on that day. Jesus shames them, in his reaction, by calling them hypocrites. We are currently in the Nativity Fast, and as such, let us focus on what we need to do to prepare, not on others...unless we are reaching out to help them. Peace to all.

Upcoming Events:

Dec. 9th Ladies Club Christmas Dinner

Dec. 21st Sunday School Christmas Pageant

Dec. 24th Nativity Liturgy @ 7:00 pm

Dec. 25th Christmas Morning @ **Ss Peter & Paul** Nativity Liturgy 10 am

January 4, 2015 Holy Theophany/ Epiphany and part 1 of our Icon Auction

January 11, 2015 Part 2 of our Icon Auction

Commemorations for the Living: Archbishop Nikon, Father Stephen Siniari, Father Ken James Stavrevsky, Proto Deacon Michael Sochka, Greg Steffon, Elaine Qurias, Ann Gjoka, Christopher Manosis, Sophie, Clive & Dhimitri Miller, Elizabeth Melnik, Katherine Halkedis, Rosemary Notskas, Kim Burdumy, Leslie Sochka, Andigoni Steffa, Mary Croke, Paula Kosta, Candace Pepenelli, Kristin Snow, Dhimiter Ndrecka, Francesca Giansante, Flossie Vissar, Pandeli, Jorgaq, Lefteri, and all of the men and women serving in Armed Forces.

Commemorations for the Departed: Kiki Notskas (16 years), Katherine Kane, Donna Cotto (Linda Biando's Aunt), Margo Craig (Father Stephen's Mother-in-law), Father Deacon Stephen Stefani and those servicemen who have fallen asleep in the Lord in the service of their Country.

Coffee Hour Sponsors: All dates have been filled. Thank you very much

Dec 7th Salavaci Family – Niko's Nameday December 14th Donna & Tim Pappas

Dec 21st Bacuta Family December 28th Sonja Ponoci & Edlira Tegu

The 2015 Coffee Hour Sponsor sign-up sheet is posted in the side vestibule and we are looking for sponsors. Thank you to Jim Bendo for making the poster!

December Giving: Your Christmas Donation – you will receive a letter this coming week.

Pledge Update: The end of 2014 will be here in a few short weeks. We have received 113 Stewardship Pledges totaling \$64,555.00. As of Nov. 30th we received \$57,050.00. The Icon Auction resulted in bids totaling \$14,860.00. As of Nov. 30th we received \$13,135.00. If you have not made a pledge for 2014 you still can, either by going online to <http://www.stjohnsphila.org> or by sending or bringing a check to the church. If you made a pledge and have not fulfilled it please do so by Dec. 31st. Statements are available by emailing treasurer@stjohnsphila.org or contact Michele Anderson. Thank you very much for your financial support.

Icons: Our annual Icon auction will be on Sunday, January 4th and January 11th 2015. Please return your Icons by Sunday, December 21st so that we can prepare for the auction. **Jan 4th** Holy Theophany (Epiphany) blessing of water after the Divine Liturgy.