
Commemoration of the Day:

Father Nikephoros was born in 1890 in a mountainous village in Khania, in Sikari, Kastanohori to the west of the prefecture with a healthy climate, with beautiful forests, rich waters, gorges and caves. His parents were simple and pious villagers, who died when he was still a young child, leaving him as an orphan. So, at the age of thirteen, he left he left his home and his grandfather, who had undertaken to raise him, and he went to Chania to work there.

He found work in a barber shop and began to learn a trade. It was then that he first showed signs of of Hansen's disease, i.e. leprosy. The lepers were isolated on the island of Spinalonga because leprosy was a contagious disease and it was treated with fear and dismay. Nicholas was sixteen years old when signs of the disease began to become more conspicuous, so he left on a boat to Egypt in order to avoid being confined to Spinalonga. He remained in Alexandria, working in a barber shop again, but the signs of the disease became more and more apparent, especially on his hands and face. That is why, through the intervention of a cleric, he went to Chios, where there was a church for lepers at that time, and the priest was Father Anthimos Vagianos, later Saint Anthimos.

Nicholas arrived in Chios in 1914 at the age of twenty-four. In the leper hospital of Chios, which was a complex with many homesteads, there was a chapel of Saint Lazarus, where the wonderworking icon of Panagia Ypakoe was kept. In this space, the course of virtues was opened for Nicholas. Within two years Saint Anthimos considered him ready for the angelic Schema and tonsured him with the name Nikephoros. The disease progressed and evolved in the absence of suitable drugs, causing many large lesions.

Father Nikephoros lived with unquestioning, genuine obedience to his Spiritual Father, and with austere fasting, working in the gardens. He also recorded the miracles of Saint Anthimos, which he had witnessed with his own eyes. Father Nikephoros prayed at night for hours on end making countless metanias, he did not quarrel with anyone, nor injure anyone's heart, and he was the master chanter of the temple. Because of his illness, however, he slowly lost his sight, and so he chanted the troparia and the Epistles from memory.

The Chios leprosarium was closed in 1957 and the remaining patients, together with Father Nikephoros, were sent to Saint Barbara's home for lepers in Athens, in Aigaleo. At that time, Father Nikephoros was about 67 years old. His members and his eyes were completely altered and distorted by the disease.

A crowd of people gathered in the humble cell of the leper Nikephoros, in Saint Barbara in Aigaleo to obtain his prayers. Father Nikephoros reposed on January 4, 1964 at the age of 74. After three years, his holy relics were exhumed and found to be fragrant. Father Eumenios and other believers reported many cases where miracles occurred by calling on Saint Nikephoros to intercede with God.

(Adapted from the OCA website.)

Announcements

Our parish Parish Book Study continues on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month following Vespers. Our next text will be The Art of Myrrh Bearing. The next meeting will be on January the 10th.

January Charity will be directed toward the Diocesan Appeal for Seminarian Support.

January Parish council meeting will be held on January the 11th. The Annual parish meeting is tentatively scheduled for February the 1st, formal announcements will be made in conjunction with the Parish Bylaws.

Just a reminder that the 12th day of Christmas, January the 5th is a strict fast day in recognition of the Eve of Theophany. A list for signing up for house blessings will be posted at the candle desk next week.

Spiritual Food for Thought:

“An unhappy, angry person destroys everything, hurts even the closest and dearest people, while a kind person, creating peace and joy around them, restores what has been destroyed, comforts those who suffer, and helps those in need.”

-St. Seraphim of Sarov

Prayers for the Sick:

Archpriest Vladimir
Archpriest John
Archpriest Gregory
Archpriest John
Archpriest Daniel
Priest Michael
Matushka Gloria
Matushka Myra
John
Thom

Nancy
Joan
James
Thomas
Diane
William
Oliver
Timothy
Joseph
John

Upcoming Services:

January 3rd – Great Vespers – 5:00pm

January 4th – Divine Liturgy – 9:30am

January 5th – Vigil for Eve of Theophany – 6:00pm

January 6th – Divine Liturgy – 9:30am Theophany – 9:30am

Contact Information:

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**30th Sunday after Pentecost;
Sunday Before the Theophany
Forefeast of the Theophany
Synaxis of the Seventy Apostles
January 4th, 2026**



St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

OCA Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania
His Eminence, Archbishop Mark – Hierarch

Rev. Nathan Clausson – Rector
Very Rev. Vladimir Fetcho – Attached
Very Rev. John Nightingale – Attached
Mark Howanetz – Choir Director
Thomas LaTournous – Parish Council President