
Commemoration of the Day:

After the Beheading of the Holy Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John, his body was buried by disciples in the Samaritan city of Sebaste, and his venerable head was hidden by Herodias in an unclean place. Saint Joanna, the wife of King Herod's steward Chuza, secretly took the holy head and placed it into a vessel and buried it on the Mount of Olives in one of Herod's properties.

After many years, this property passed into the possession of a government official who became a monk with the name of Innocent. He built a church and a cell there. When they started to dig the foundation, the vessel with the venerable head of John the Baptist was uncovered. Innocent recognized its great holiness from the signs of grace emanating from it. Thus occurred the First Finding of the Head. Innocent preserved it with great piety, but fearful that the holy relic might be abused by unbelievers, before his own death he again hid it in that same place, where it was found. Upon his death the church fell into ruin and was destroyed.

During the days of Saint Constantine the Great, when Christianity began to flourish, the holy Forerunner appeared twice to two monks journeying to Jerusalem on pilgrimage to the holy places, and he revealed the location of his venerable head. The monks uncovered the holy relic and, placing it into a sack of camel-hair, they proceeded homewards. Along the way they encountered an unnamed potter and gave him the precious burden to carry. Not knowing what he was carrying, the potter continued on his way. But the holy Forerunner appeared to him and ordered him to flee from the careless and lazy monks, with what he held in his hands. The potter concealed himself from the monks and at home he preserved the venerable head with reverence. Before his death he placed it in a water jug and gave it to his sister.

From that time the venerable head was successively preserved by devout Christians, until the priest Eustathius (infected with the Arian heresy) came into possession of it. He beguiled a multitude of the infirm who had been healed by the holy head, ascribing their cures to the fact that it was in the possession of an Arian. When his blasphemy was uncovered, he was compelled to flee. After he buried the holy relic in a cave, near Emesa, the heretic intended to return later and use it for disseminating falsehood. God, however, did not permit this. Pious monks settled in the cave, and then a monastery arose at this place. In the year 452 Saint John the Baptist appeared to Archimandrite Marcellus of this monastery, and indicated where his head was hidden. This became celebrated as the Second Finding. The holy relic was transferred to Emesa, and later to Constantinople.

(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 February the 28th.

February charity will be directed toward the the breadbasket of NEPA. March Charity will be directed toward Providence Pregnancy Center as part of the OC Life National Baby Shower.

March Parish Council meeting will be on March the 8th, after the new parish council is installed at the end of the Divine Liturgy.

Gardners Candy fundraiser is now available. In person orders are due in on March 15th, online orders are due March 22nd. Our group ID# 10-1554.

Great Lent begins. This time of fasting is for our benefit. I highly encourage everyone to participate to the best of their ability.

The Deanery has asked St. Nicholas to host the Mission Vespers service on St. Mary of Egypt Sunday, March 29th. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend.

Our parish will be holding Divine Liturgy for the Memorial Saturday on March 14th. Please give the names of loved ones you would like commemorated to Fr. Nathan.

Spiritual Food for Thought:

“Think nothing and do nothing without a purpose directed to God. For to journey without direction is wasted effort.”

-St. Mark the Ascetic

Prayers for the Sick:

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

Joan
James
Thomas
Diane
William
Oliver
Timothy
Joseph
Agape

Upcoming Services:

February 23rd – Canon of St. Andrew – 6:00pm

February 25th – Pre-Sanctified Liturgy – 6:00pm

February 27th – Moleben to St. Theodore – 6:00pm

February 28th – Great Vespers – 5:00pm

March 1st – Divine Liturgy – 9:30am

Contact Information:

Parish Mailing Address
St. Nicholas Orthodox Church
P.O. Box 142
Olyphant PA 18447

Website
Stnicholasolyphant.org

Phone number:
570-489-3891

Driving Address
600 E. Lackawanna St
Olyphant PA 18447

Email:
Frnathan.clausson@gmail.com

Cheesefare Sunday (Forgiveness Sunday) – The Expulsion of Adam from Paradise First and Second Finding of the Honorable Head of the Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist of the Lord, John February 22nd , 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