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## Commemoration of the Day:

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This great, apostolic man, the Hieromartyr Polycarp was born a pagan. St. John the Theologian brought him to the Christian faith and baptized him. Polycarp was left an orphan in early childhood and a noble widow, Kallista, after a vision in a dream, took him in, rearing and educating him as her own son. Polycarp was God-fearing and compassionate from his early years. He made great efforts to emulate the life of St. Bucolus, the Bishop of Smyrna, and of the Holy Apostles John and Paul. St. John having been among his instructors in the gospel when he was young. St. Bucolus ordained him to the diaconate and eventually the priesthood. Before his own repose the saint asked Polycarp to serve as his heir and guide the flock of the Smyrna. At the funeral of St. Bucolus the bishops assembled consecrated the future Hieromartyr as the next bishop of the region.

From the very beginning of his episcopal ministry he was endued with great power. Receiving a vision of Our Lord Jesus Christ. He was a wonderworker, casting out evil spirits, and once putting out a great conflagration with prayer. He brought rain in times of drought, healed various sicknesses and had the gifts of spiritual insight and prophecy.

He would suffer during the persecution of Christians ordered by the stoic philosopher and emperor Marcus Aurelius. When the soldiers came for him, he went out to them and invited them in to eat. He asked for time to pray, in order to prepare himself for martyrdom. Having been brought to trial, Saint Polycarp firmly confessed his faith in Christ. When the judge urged him to deny Christ and recognize the Roman gods, he replied, "I cannot exchange the better for the worse." When pressed further he stated emphatically, "86 years have I have served him, and he has done me no wrong. How can I blaspheme my King and my Savior?" The Hieromartyr was condemned to be burned alive. The executioners wanted to nail him to a post, but he declared that God would give him the strength to endure the flames, so they could merely tie him with ropes. The flames encircled the saint but did not touch him, coming together over his head in the shape of a vault. Seeing that the fire did him no harm, the pagan judge ordered his executioner to stab him with a lance. So much blood flowed from this wound that it extinguished the flames. The body of the hieromartyr Polycarp was then cremated as a final insult. The Christians of Smyrna reverently gathered up what remained of his holy relics, St. Polycarp earned the martyr's crown on Holy Saturday in the year 167.

(Abridged and adapted from OCA website, The Prologue of Ochrid and other sources.)

## Announcements

February charity is earmarked for St. Herman's Seminary in Alaska.

Perogi snow date has been set as Thursday March the 13<sup>th</sup>. Please plan to attend if possible.

Maslenitsa is next week on Sunday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>. It will follow after Divine Liturgy and Forgiveness Vespers.

We have a vacancy in the position of auditor for the parish. Any person who is willing to serve in this important capacity please talk to Fr. Nathan.

March Parish Council meeting is set for Sunday the 16<sup>th</sup>.

Archbishop Mark will be visiting our sister parish for the Sunday of Orthodoxy. As has been our recent custom, Fr. Paul has invited us to join All Saints for Divine Liturgy on Sunday, March the 9<sup>th</sup>.

Please submit names to Fr. Nathan for commemoration during the Memorial Services of Great Lent.

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### Spiritual Food for Thought:

"Look for and find the poor and father them and help them. This is what God wants and not to go to church and pretend to pray."

+St. Sophia the Fool for Christ in Kleisoura

## **Prayers for the Sick:**

Archbishop Nathaniel  
Archpriest Vladimir  
Priest John  
Archpriest Gregory  
Archpriest John  
Matushka Gloria  
Matushka Myra  
John  
Thom

Nancy  
Joan  
James  
Thomas  
Diane  
William  
Oliver  
Timothy

## **Upcoming Services:**

March 1<sup>st</sup> – Great Vespers – 5:00pm

March 2<sup>nd</sup> – Divine Liturgy, Forgiveness Vespers – 9:30am

March 8<sup>th</sup> – Great Vespers – 5:00pm

March 9<sup>th</sup> – Divine Liturgy – 9:30am, Sunday of Orthodoxy at All Saints

## **Contact Information:**

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# **The Lenten Triodion: Sunday of the Last Judgement; Meatfare Sunday February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025**



## **St. Nicholas Orthodox Church**

OCA Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania  
Archbishop Mark – Hierarch

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