

St. Mary's Orthodox Church
217 First Street – Coaldale Pa 18218-1602
Phone.....570-645-2772
OUR WEBSITE...www.stmarysnativity.org

Rector: V. Rev. James Weremedic
Retired Attached: V. Rev Paul Ropitsky
Choir Director: Wash King

Sunday, December 6, 2020
26th Sunday after Pentecost
St. Nicholas the Wonderworker

Glory Be To Jesus Christ!

Glory Be Forever!

Liturgical Services are cancelled for December 5 and 6, 2020.

We hope to have liturgical services resume December 13 and to have our Annual Parish Meeting on December 13 in the Church Hall.

FISH DINNER IS CANCELLED!

Sat...**December 12**...4:00 PM – tentative – Vespers in **church hall basement** – must wear a mask

Sun...**December 13**...9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy followed by Parastas and **Annual Parish Meeting**

Parastas: In memory of **Wasil Horvath & Wash Yurchak** offered by Helen & George Yurchak

In memory of **Fannie & Michael Yurchak** offered by Helen & George Yurchak

In memory of **Kathryn & Stephan, & Justine Yurchak** offered by Helen & George Yurchak

In memory of **Justine & Kathryn Yurchak** offered by Attorney Robert Yurchak

In memory of **Marlene Cox** offered by Helen & George Yurchak

In memory of **Janet Jupin** offered by the Jupin Family

In memory of **Sophie Herbert** offered by the Herbert Family

In memory of **John O'Shura** offered by the Herbert Family

In memory of **John Fedora** offered by Barbara Faenza & Family

In memory of **Benjamin & Olga Macalush** offered by the Herbert Family

In memory of **Nicholas Teno** offered by Martha Teno

In memory of **Kathryn Puschak** offered by Kate Puschak

NO COFFEE HOUR UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE!

Sat... **December 19**...4:00 PM – tentative - Vespers in **church hall basement** – must wear a mask

Sun...**December 20**...9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy – **NO COFFEE HOUR**

Prayer List: *HEAVENLY FATHER ... Physician of our souls and bodies, Who has sent your only begotten Son to heal every sickness and infirmity, visit us and heal us, Your servants, from all physical and spiritual ailments through the grace of Your Son Jesus Christ; grant to us patience in this sickness, strength of body and spirit, and recovery of health. Lord, You have taught us through Your word to pray for each other that we may be healed. You are the source of healing and to You, we give glory; to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Matushka Lovey Ropitsky, Matushka Lisa Weremedic, Andrew Balliet, Michael Birozik, Clark Bogosh, Theodore Bogosh, Jane Bubernak, Cecil Buchanan, Emmalyn Naomi Buchanan, Evanna Jane Buchanan, Stephanie Chmel, Edward Conarty, Irene Davis, Ilene Devine, Julia Forte, Olga Hebda, Peter Holoviak, John King, Claire Kononchuk, Michael Kulick, John Kushnir, MaryAnn Macenka, Mary Maholick, Alexandra Miller, Britney Miller, Courtney Miller, Isaac Miller, Margaret Miller, Mildred O'Shura, Anna Pisko, Melissa Schmitt, Althea Shellock, Eleanor Sidoriak, Olga Sidoriak, Helen Suda, Martha Stafiniak, Joseph Tosca, Martha Teno, Michael Teno, Nancy Vanno, Elizabeth Warcholak, Russell Wishousky, Russell Yallas, & Richard York.

December Birthdays: 3- Richard York, 9- Odess Remington, 11- Stephanie Chmel (100), 16- Sbdn James Weremedic, 22- Karoline Vavra, 28- Sophia James

If anyone is in need of a priest please call Father James Weremedic at 570-645-2772. Visitation of the Sick and Infirm: If you are going into the hospital for any reason, please inform Fr. James at the Rectory. Emergency Calls: Please call the Rectory (570-645-2772) anytime (day or night) in an emergency.

Financials 11/23-29/20: *Operating Acct:* Offerings 22 – Holy Days 25 – Altar Candles 20 – Donations 0 = Total \$67.00; Poinsettias 0 – Please continue to keep filling your church envelopes. – Thank you!

Candles (December 6):

7-Day Vigils/Altar... In memory of **John P. O'Shura** offered by Millie O'Shura & Family
Altar Candles... In memory of **Julia & Michael Rosahac** offered by Alice (Rosahac) Styler
Eternal Lamp... In memory of **Mary & Andrew Yelsh** offered by William Yelsh
Vigil Crosses ... In memory of **Sister, Mary Solomon** offered by Stephanie Chmel
7-Day Vigils/Tetrapod... In memory of **Helen Scheese** offered by Russell & Geri King
**Decorated Candles/Tetrapod...In memory of all Deceased Veterans &
For the health of all the Living Veterans offered by a Veteran**

If you do not feel comfortable coming to church yet, you may continue to watch On-line Services:
Go to the Diocese of Eastern PA website at the bottom of our church website.

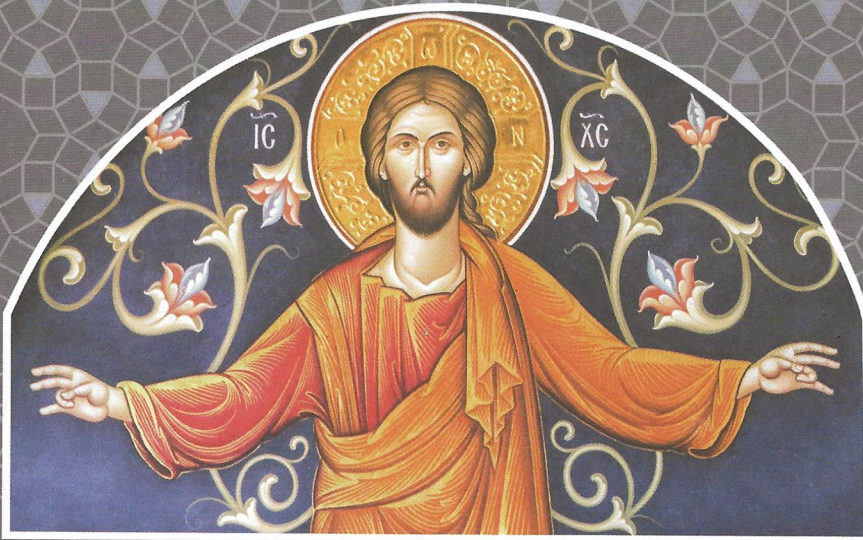
At the top of the page – Click on Live Streaming – Scroll down to church services

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church – Mogadore, OH – You Tube

Services every day of the week – Mon. to Fri. at 8:00 PM

Saturday Vespers – 5:00 PM; Sunday Divine Liturgy – 9:30 AM

Please support St. Mary's Orthodox Church by shopping at Amazon Smile
When you shop at Amazon Smile, Amazon will make a donation to St. Mary's
Orthodox Church. See St. Mary's Facebook page for details



FROM GENTILE TO CHRISTIAN



Around the time of Christ, **ANTIOCH** was a major Greek city. It was settled near the Mediterranean coast of current day Syria. Although the Apostolic Church had begun in Jerusalem, Antioch was destined to become the **SECOND CENTER OF CHRISTIANITY**. How did this come about?

In the early Church, preaching was mainly concentrated on the Jews. The Apostles eventually came to interpret Jesus' instruction "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations . . ." (Matthew 28:19) to include the Gentiles. Understanding and fulfilling His Great Commission was very important for the future growth of the Church. It allowed more people to partake in the universal Gospel of Christ. Gentiles could now be saved and received into the life of the Church. Antioch was the spot that marked this new page in human history.

There are four words that help tell the story of the early Church. They are **PERSECUTION, PREACHING, POWER AND PROOF**. Let us begin by examining each step on this path to the Truth.

PERSECUTION goes back to the stoning of the first martyr, Saint Stephen. This attack was intended to destroy the fledgling movement but the opposite happened. Believers were scattered, only causing more growth.

PREACHING involves missionary work. Enlightened disciples went out, teaching the correct doctrine, guided by the Holy Spirit. To this day, we are asked to go forth and spread the Word to all corners of the earth.

POWER is provided by the guiding hand of our Lord. A large number of pagan idolators began to believe and turned to the message of salvation through Christ.

With God's blessing, the **PROOF** is exciting. Lives were being changed and many noticed it. A new name was bestowed upon the faithful. ***"The disciples were first called CHRISTIANS in Antioch."*** (Acts 11:26) Let me ask you, do others know that you are a follower of Christ? Make it evident that our Lord lives through you each and every day!

His Eminence Archbishop David

November 27, 2020 Anchorage, AK (See OCA Website)

On November 27, 2020, His Eminence, the Most Reverend David (Mahaffey), Archbishop of Sitka and Alaska, fell asleep in the Lord after a grave illness. He was the ruling hierarch of the Diocese of Alaska of the Orthodox Church in America from 2014 until his repose.

Sterry David Mahaffey Jr. was born in Altoona, PA on May 25, 1952. He was raised in the United Methodist Church, where he was actively involved in youth activities and eventually became a lay minister. After graduating from high school, he was employed in various jobs for over two decades, until he devoted himself fully to the Church. At this time, he also studied at Indiana University of Pennsylvania for two years (1970-72) and met Karen Meterko, whom he married on May 5, 1973 at SS. Peter and Paul Church in Urey, PA. The young couple initially attended both Methodist and Orthodox services every Sunday. David Mahaffey was soon drawn to explore the Orthodox faith and after attending the 1975 Memorial Day Pilgrimage at St. Tikhon's Monastery, he decided to seek reception into the Orthodox Church. He was chrismated on November 16, 1975 by Fr. Raphael Rozdilski at his wife's parish, where their wedding had taken place. He soon enrolled in the Late Vocations Program of the Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania, graduating in 1980. Before leaving the Pittsburgh see when he was elected OCA Primate in 1977, Bishop Theodosius (Lazor) tonsured David Mahaffey a reader. Bishop Kyrill (Yonchev) of Pittsburgh would later ordain him a subdeacon and then a deacon on April 12, 1981. Deacon David would serve in various parishes to assist priests or would accompany the bishop for archpastoral visitations throughout the diocese. On occasion, the bishop would send him to serve Typika alone at parishes that did not have a priest.

In 1992, Deacon David was inspired to leave secular employment and to undertake studies at St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary. Having sold their house, his wife and four children lived with her parents for a year as Deacon David began his studies. The family was reunited when Deacon David was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by Archbishop Kyrill on July 31, 1993 and assigned to service St. Michael's Church in Old Forge, PA. After completing his seminary studies with honors in 1997, he was assigned as rector of the parish and would remain there until 2006. At the same time, he continued his education, earning two bachelor degrees (2003), magna cum laude, in theology and philosophy and a master's degree (2005) in theology, all from the University of Scranton.

A year after his assignment to Holy Trinity Church in Pottstown, PA in 2006, Matushka Karen fell asleep in the Lord, after battling cancer. Father David was transferred to St. Nicholas Church in Bethlehem, PA in 2009. Delegates to the Assembly of the Diocese of Alaska on September 15, 2012 nominated Father David to fill the vacant Alaskan see. He was tonsured a Riasophore Monk on September 23, 2012 by Archbishop Tikhon of Philadelphia at St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church. After his subsequent tonsure to the Lesser Schema on February 10, 2013 by Igumen Sergius (Bowyer), Abbot of Saint Tikhon's Monastery, Hieromonk David was released from the pastorate at Saint Nicholas Church and the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania, raised to the rank of Archimandrite and appointed chancellor and administrator of the Diocese of Alaska, effective March 1, 2013. Archimandrite David [Mahaffey] was elected by the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America to fill the vacant Episcopal See of Sitka and Alaska on October 16, 2013.

He was consecrated Bishop of the Diocese of Sitka and Alaska on February 21, 2014. Throughout his diaconate and priesthood, Father David had served as education coordinator at various levels, developing educational software, lecturing and conducting retreats, particularly for youth, in both the Eastern and Western Pennsylvania dioceses. During his priestly service in the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania, he held several administrative positions including district dean and Metropolitan Council member. From 2005 until his departure to Alaska, he taught at St. Tikhon's Seminary and Alvernia University in Philadelphia, PA. During his episcopal tenure in Alaska, Archbishop David traveled tirelessly and worked energetically to inspire and educate the flock consisting largely of the Native peoples of the oldest diocese of the Orthodox Church in America.

Archbishop David is survived by his four children: Nikolas David, Sterry Michael, Seth Robert and Kyra Ann, together with their families, including his beloved grandchildren. He is also gratefully remembered by the faithful flock in the places where he served and taught in Pennsylvania and Alaska.

On Tuesday, December 1 at 3:00 PM, the body will arrive at Holy Trinity Church, Wilkes-Barre, PA. At 3:30 PM a Panikhida will be held, followed by viewing. At 6:00 PM the Funeral Service will be held. The body will depart Church after funeral and will remain at funeral home overnight. Interment, not open to the public due to COVID restrictions, will be at St. Tikhon's Monastery. "Attend" the Panikhida YouTube or Facebook "Attend" the Funeral Service YouTube or Facebook. May Archbishop David's memory be eternal!

26th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 1. St. Nicholas the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia (ca. 345). St Maximus

Ephesians 5:9-19 (Epistle)

(for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.

But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. Therefore, He says: "Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light." See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Therefore, do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.

Luke 17:12-19 (Gospel)

Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!"

So, when He saw them, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God,

and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan.

So, Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner? And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."

Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia

Commemorated on December 6

Troparion — Tone 4

You were revealed to your flock in truth as a rule of faith, / an image of humility and a teacher of abstinence; / because of your lowliness, heaven was opened to you; / because of your poverty riches were granted to you. / O Holy Bishop Nicholas, / pray to Christ our God / that our souls may be saved.

Kontakion — Tone 3

You revealed yourself, O saint, in Myra as a priest, / for you fulfilled the Gospel of Christ / by giving up your soul for your people, / and saving the innocent from death. / Therefore, you are blessed as one become wise in the grace of God.

Saint Nicholas, the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia is famed as a great saint pleasing unto God. He was born in the city of Patara in the region of Lycia (on the south coast of the Asia Minor peninsula), and was the only son of pious parents Theophanes and Nonna, who had vowed to dedicate him to God. As the fruit of the prayer of his childless parents, the infant Nicholas from the very day of his birth revealed to people the light of his future glory as a wonderworker. His mother, Nonna, after giving birth was immediately healed from illness. The newborn infant, while still in the baptismal font, stood on his feet three hours, without support from anyone, thereby honoring the Most Holy Trinity. Saint Nicholas from his infancy began a life of fasting, and on Wednesdays and Fridays he would not accept milk from his mother until after his parents had finished their evening prayers. From his childhood Nicholas thrived on the study of Divine Scripture; by day he would not leave church, and by night he prayed and read books, making himself a worthy dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. Bishop Nicholas of Patara rejoiced at the spiritual success and deep piety of his nephew. He ordained him a reader, and then elevated Nicholas to the priesthood, making him his assistant and entrusting him to instruct the flock.

In serving the Lord the youth was fervent of spirit, and in his proficiency with questions of faith he was like an Elder, who aroused the wonder and deep respect of believers. Constantly at work and vivacious, in unceasing prayer, the priest Nicholas displayed great kind-heartedness towards the flock, and towards the afflicted who came to him for help, and he distributed all his inheritance to the poor. There was a certain formerly rich inhabitant of Patara, whom Saint Nicholas saved from great sin. The man had three grown daughters, and in desperation he planned to sell their bodies so they would have money for food. The saint, learning of the man's poverty and of his wicked intention, secretly visited him one night and threw a sack of gold through the window. With the money the man arranged an honorable marriage for his daughter. Saint Nicholas also provided gold for the other daughters, thereby saving the family from falling into spiritual destruction. In bestowing charity, Saint Nicholas always strove to do this secretly and to conceal his good deeds.

The Bishop of Patara decided to go on pilgrimage to the holy places at Jerusalem, and entrusted the guidance of his flock to Saint Nicholas, who fulfilled this obedience carefully and with love. When the bishop returned, Nicholas asked his blessing for a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Along the way the saint predicted a storm would arise and threaten the ship. Saint Nicholas saw the devil get on the ship, intending to sink it and kill all the passengers. At the entreaty of the despairing pilgrims, he calmed the waves of the sea by his prayers. Through his prayer a certain sailor of the ship, who had fallen from the mast and was mortally injured, was also restored to health. When he reached the ancient city of Jerusalem and came to Golgotha, Saint Nicholas gave thanks to the Savior. He went to all the holy places, worshiping at each one. One night on Mount Sion, the closed doors of the church opened by themselves for the great pilgrim. Going round the holy places connected with the earthly service of the Son of God, Saint Nicholas decided to withdraw into the desert, but he was stopped by a divine voice urging him to return to his native country. He returned to Lycia, and yearning for a life of quietude, the saint entered into the brotherhood of a monastery named Holy Sion, which had been founded by his uncle. But the Lord again indicated another path for him, "Nicholas, this is not the vineyard where you shall bear fruit for Me. Return to the world, and glorify My Name there." So, he left Patara and went to Myra in Lycia.

Upon the death of Archbishop John, Nicholas was chosen as Bishop of Myra after one of the bishops of the Council said that a new archbishop should be revealed by God, not chosen by men. One of the elder bishops had a vision of a radiant Man, Who told him that the one who came to the church that night and was first to enter should be made archbishop. He would be named Nicholas. The bishop went to the church at night to await Nicholas. The saint, always the first to arrive at church, was stopped by the bishop. "What is your name, child?" he asked. God's chosen one replied, "My name is Nicholas, Master, and I am your servant." After his consecration as archbishop, Saint Nicholas remained a great ascetic, appearing to his flock as an image of gentleness, kindness and love for people. This was particularly precious for the Lycian Church during the persecution of Christians under the emperor Diocletian (284-305). Bishop Nicholas, locked up in prison together with other Christians for refusing to worship idols, sustained them and exhorted them to endure the fetters, punishment and torture. The Lord preserved him unharmed. Upon the accession of Saint Constantine (May 21) as emperor, Saint Nicholas was restored to his flock, which joyfully received their guide and intercessor. Despite his great gentleness of spirit and purity of heart, Saint Nicholas was a zealous and ardent warrior of the Church of Christ. Fighting evil spirits, the saint made the rounds of the pagan temples and shrines in the city of Myra and its surroundings, shattering the idols and turning the temples to dust. In the year 325 Saint Nicholas was a participant in the First Ecumenical Council. This Council proclaimed the Nicene Symbol of Faith, and he stood up against the heretic Arius with the likes of Saints Sylvester the Bishop of Rome (January 2), Alexander of Alexandria (May 29), Spyridon of Trimythontos (December 12) and other Fathers of the Council. Saint Nicholas, fired with zeal for the Lord, assailed the heretic Arius with his words, and also struck him upon the face. For this reason, he was deprived of the emblems of his episcopal rank and placed under guard. But several of the holy Fathers had the same vision, seeing the Lord Himself and the Mother of God returning to him the Gospel and omophorion. The Fathers of the Council agreed that the audacity of the saint was pleasing to God, and restored the saint to the office of bishop.

Having returned to his own diocese, the saint brought it peace and blessings, sowing the word of Truth, uprooting heresy, nourishing his flock with sound doctrine, and also providing food for their bodies. Even during his life the saint worked many miracles. One of the greatest was the deliverance from death of three men unjustly condemned by the Governor, who had been bribed. The saint boldly went up to the executioner and took his sword, already suspended over the heads of the condemned. The Governor, denounced by Saint Nicholas for his wrong doing, repented and begged for forgiveness. Witnessing this remarkable event were three military officers, who were sent to Phrygia by the emperor Constantine to put down a rebellion. They did not suspect that soon they would also be compelled to seek the intercession of Saint Nicholas. Evil men slandered them before the emperor, and the officers were sentenced to death. Appearing to Saint Constantine in a dream, Saint Nicholas called on him to overturn the unjust sentence of the military officers.

He worked many other miracles, and struggled many long years at his labor. Through the prayers of the saint, the city of Myra was rescued from a terrible famine. He appeared to a certain Italian merchant and left him three gold pieces as a pledge of payment. He requested him to sail to Myra and deliver grain there. More than once, the saint saved those drowning in the sea, and provided release from captivity and imprisonment. Having reached old age, Saint Nicholas peacefully fell asleep in the Lord. His venerable relics were preserved incorrupt in the local cathedral church and flowed with curative myrrh, from which many received healing. In the year 1087, his relics were transferred to the Italian city of Bari, where they rest even now (See May 9).

The name of the great saint of God, the hierarch and wonderworker Nicholas, a speedy helper and suppliant for all hastening to him, is famed in every corner of the earth, in many lands and among many peoples. In Russia there are a multitude of cathedrals, monasteries and churches consecrated in his name. There is, perhaps, not a single city without a church dedicated to him. The first Russian Christian prince Askold (+ 882) was baptized in 866 by Patriarch Photius (February 6) with the name Nicholas. Over the grave of Askold, Saint Olga (July 11) built the first temple of Saint Nicholas in the Russian Church at Kiev. Primary cathedrals were dedicated to Saint Nicholas at Izborsk, Ostrov, Mozhaïsk, and Zarsk. At Novgorod the Great, one of the main churches of the city, the Nikolo-Dvorischensk church, later became a cathedral.

Famed and venerable churches and monasteries dedicated to Saint Nicholas are found at Kiev, Smolensk, Pskov, Toropetsa, Galich, Archangelsk, Great Ustiug, Tobolsk. Moscow had dozens of churches named for the saint, and also three monasteries in the Moscow diocese: the Nikolo-Greek (Staryi) in the Chinese-quarter, the Nikolo-Perervinsk and the Nikolo-Ugreshsk. One of the chief towers of the Kremlin was named the Nikolsk.

Many of the churches devoted to the saint were those established at market squares by Russian merchants, sea-farers and those who traveled by land, venerating the wonderworker Nicholas as a protector of all those journeying on dry land and sea. They sometimes received the name among the people of "Nicholas soaked." Many village churches in Russia were dedicated to the wonderworker Nicholas, venerated by peasants as a merciful intercessor before the Lord for all the people in their work. And in the Russian land Saint Nicholas did not cease his intercession. Ancient Kiev preserves the memory about the miraculous rescue of a drowning infant by the saint. The great wonderworker, hearing the grief-filled prayers of the parents for the loss of their only child, took the infant from the

waters, revived him and placed him in the choir-loft of the church of Holy Wisdom (Hagia Sophia) before his wonderworking icon. In the morning the infant was found safe by his thrilled parents, praising Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker. Many wonderworking icons of Saint Nicholas appeared in Russia and came also from other lands. There is the ancient Byzantine embordered image of the saint, brought to Moscow from Novgorod, and the large icon painted in the thirteenth century by a Novgorod master.

Two depictions of the wonderworker are especially numerous in the Russian Church: Saint Nicholas of Zaratisk, portrayed in full-length, with his right hand raised in blessing and with a Gospel (this image was brought to Ryazan in 1225 by the future wife of Prince Theodore, the Byzantine Princess Eupraxia, who perished in 1237 with her husband and infant son during the incursion of Batu); and Saint Nicholas of Mozhaisk, also in full stature, with a sword in his right hand and a city in his left. This recalls the miraculous rescue of the city of Mozhaisk from an invasion of enemies, through the prayers of the saint. It is impossible to list all the grace-filled icons of Saint Nicholas, or to enumerate all his miracles.

Saint Nicholas is the patron of travelers, and we pray to him for deliverance from floods, poverty, or any misfortunes. He has promised to help those who remember his parents, Theophanes and Nonna.