

Holy Apostles Orthodox Christian Church

CHURCH AND COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER



NATIVITY OF OUR LORD 2021

To the Clergy, Monastics, and Faithful of the
Orthodox Church in America,

My Beloved Children in the Lord,

CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!

I greet you all today on this Great Feast of our
illumination. At the Vesperal Divine Liturgy of
Saint Basil the Great for this Feast we sing:

When the Lord Jesus was born of the holy virgin,
the whole universe was filled with light. The
shepherds watched in the fields. The wise men
worshiped and the angels sang. But Herod was
troubled, for God had appeared in the flesh. He is
the Savior of our souls! (Third Sticheron at "Lord,
I Call")

HOLY APOSTLES ORTHODOX MISSION

3214 N St, Vancouver, WA
[www. Holy12.org](http://www.Holy12.org)

For Current Calendar of Services
and Office Hours Visit:
<https://holy12.org/calendar>

Rev. Michael Rozdilski, Rector
425-999-0407



UPCOMING EVENTS, FEAST DAYS AND SERVICES

12.26.21
Divine Liturgy - 9:00 am

12.29.21
Great Vespers - 6:00 pm
Inquirers' - 7:00 pm

12.30.21
Divine Liturgy - 9:00 am



The Lord's entry into the world invites us all to pursue this spiritual illumination, which is Christ, the Wisdom of God Himself. In the Gospel we read of the shepherds who leave their pastures to find the Infant Christ. Likewise, Magi, the wise men from the East, traveled in pursuit of true Wisdom, which they found lying in a manger. They came at great cost and with great effort to worship Christ and offer their gifts to Him. In return, the darkness of their hearts was lifted, and they left, refusing to return to Herod, but instead "departed to their own country by another way" (Mt 2:12).

UPCOMING EVENTS CONTINUED

1.1.22

Great Vespers - 6:00 pm

1.2.22

Divine Liturgy - 9:00 am

1.6.22

Eve of the Nativity of Christ

Vigil - 6:00 pm

1.7.22

The Nativity of Christ

Divine Liturgy - 9:00 am

1.8.22

Great Vespers - 6:00 pm

1.9.22

Divine Liturgy - 9:00 am

1.14.22

Circumcision of the Lord

1.15.22

Great Vespers - 6:00 pm

1.16.22

Divine Liturgy - 9:00 am

1.18.22

Eve of Theophany

Vigil - 6:00 pm

1.19.22

The Baptism of Our Lord

Divine Liturgy - 9:00 am

1.22.22

Great Vespers - 6:00 pm

1.23.22

Divine Liturgy - 9:00 am

1.29.22

Great Vespers - 6:00 pm

1.30.22

Divine Liturgy - 9:00 am

But we know that not everyone wants this light that our Lord offers. Herod did not. We remember that he also pursued the Wisdom of God. But instead of seeking illumination from Him, Herod sought His blood, preferring earthly power to heavenly blessings. His vision was too narrow to see that in trying to protect his throne he was keeping himself in the darkness of sin, ignorance, and selfish ambition.

Seeing these examples before us, we need the light of Christ's Nativity in our world darkened with confusion, anxiety, and temptations. We might struggle to see this light in our suffering world, racked by a pandemic, and with societal changes coming at an alarming rate. We acutely feel the words of St. Paul: "We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies" (Rom 8:22–23).

Be encouraged! It is into our world, "groaning in travail," that our Deliverer is born. God in His love for mankind did not leave the world in darkness but came as its Savior. Even today Christ has "shone to the world the light of wisdom" (Nativity Troparion).

We can see this light by unreservedly following the gospel and trading the earthly for the heavenly. Because of the light which shines from the cave this morning, the shadows of ignorance are dispelled and we are able to perceive the world as an object of God's eternal love. For Herod, Christ's Nativity brought anxiety and a troubled heart. For us today, we are offered illumination and joy. Like the shepherds, Magi, and angels let us behold the Incarnation of the Son of God with reverence and pious hope, in full knowledge that the "King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rev 19:16) is born for our redemption.

With all the blessings of the Feast, I remain sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Tikhon

Archbishop of Washington

Metropolitan of All America and Canada

A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION TO OUR ALTAR SERVERS FROM FR. MICHAEL



Everyone in the Church is constantly in God's presence at the services whether they are in the Altar on a particular Sunday or not. As servers, we must always remember this and act accordingly. Sometimes when we are not in the Altar, we forget that we should still be standing, paying attention, singing, and praying.

Don't miss your opportunity! It's a wonderful time to carefully study the service, watch what the priest is doing, listen to the choir and practice standing for longer periods of time (Lent will be here before you know it...even liturgy gets longer). Let's all make a "new year's resolution" to be more attentive during the services whether we are inside the Altar or not.

Here are some tips on what we should all be trying to do on our "days off" (I'm speaking mainly to our young altar servers here, but really, all our young people, and our not-so-young people too, should also consider this).

- **Stand in God's presence as much as possible.**
(At the very least, we should all be standing and paying attention)
 - Any time the Priest or Deacon is among us censuring the Church...He's not only censuring those icons, he's censuring us too.
 - Any time the Priest blesses us
 - At the Small Entrance "O Come Let us Worship
 - During the reading from the Gospel

- During the Cherubic Hymn/ during the Great Entrance
- Singing the Creed (I believe in one God...)
- Singing The Lord's Prayer (Our Father)
- At the Anaphora – This begins with "Let us stand aright, let us stand with fear...."
- **Pay attention to the Service and pray with the Choir and the Priest**
(praying is not just for "older people")
- **Study the Divine Service**
 - Follow along in the book. Especially for altar servers, the time to intently study the book is when you are outside the Altar. When you are inside, you'll be busy paying attention to what's going on around you.
 -
 - Learn all those special names that show up, like Litany, Anaphora, Great Entrance, Trisagion, etc.
 - Pay attention to what Father and the other servers are doing.
 - Try to remember what you would be doing if you were inside the Altar.
 - Think when you're outside so you'll be ready when you're inside!
 - When would you light your candle and go out?
 - When would Father need the censer?
- **Sing**
- **Think about what you learned in Church School...how does it apply to what's happening around you?**
- **Can you remember what the Epistle and the Gospel were about?**

Remember that if you have any questions about what you hear, see or do, don't be afraid to ask our sacristans, the Deacons, or Father about it! But do this after the service if possible...if we're asking too many questions while the service is going on, we could miss something, or be distracting to others who are praying.

One thing that we should really try hard not to do during services, however (whether inside or outside), is to stand or sit with our backs to the Altar at any time or to do "other things" while the service is going on. All of us are guilty of this at one time or another, so the New Year is a good time to be reminded.

If we are old enough to be in the Altar, then we are old enough not to have conversations or to leave the Church for unnecessary "breaks", or to play with toys or read inappropriate books during the services.

We all know that the Altar is a special place and deserves all our attention. The rest of the Church is no different. The little ones in our Church watch us very closely (they really do). That means all of us, not just the adults. If they see us treat the space we are in as "holy space" by giving it our full attention, they will learn to do that (in time!). It is our responsibility to set a good example for them.

Wishing all of you a Happy and Fruitful New Year

- Father Michael



Note to Parents of Servers:

Getting to church in the morning is often a very complicated and hurried affair for families with young children. If at all possible (and I do understand this might not always work out), it is important for servers to arrive before the Liturgy begins. On Sundays especially, everyone who is scheduled to serve should be in the Altar no later than the Kontakia for the Sixth Hour so that they may receive their blessings, vest, and be in the altar ready to go when Liturgy begins.

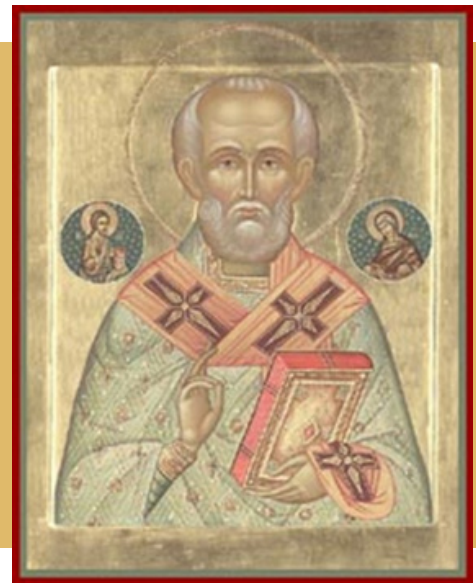
Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia

Commemoration Date: December 6th

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.

Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker Cont.

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."

Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker Cont.

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. The face of Saint Nicholas resembled that of an Angel, resplendent with divine grace. A brilliant ray shone from his face, like that which shone from the face of Moses (Exodus 34:29), so that those who looked at him were astonished. Whoever was oppressed by some affliction or passion of the soul had only to behold the Saint, and his sorrow was eased at once. As for those who conversed with him, they soon found themselves advancing on the path of virtue. Not only were the faithful moved to compassion, but unbelievers as well, and they directed their steps on the path of salvation when they heard him speak. The evil of unbelief which had been implanted in their hearts since childhood was uprooted, and in its place, the word of truth was sown.

Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker Cont.

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, Mozhaisk, 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.

Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker Cont.

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 embroidered 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 Zaraisk, 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. Saint Nicholas is also commemorated on May 9 (The transfer of his relics) and on July 29 (his nativity).

Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker Cont.

In Italy, the relics of Saint Nicholas are in the Roman Catholic Basilica of Saint Nicholas in Bari; and his left arm is in Saint Nicholas Roman Catholic Church of Rimini.

In Russia, relics of Saint Nicholas are to be found in Christ the Savior Cathedral in Moscow, and in the Saint Alexander Nevsky Lavra in St. Petersburg.

The right hand of Saint Nicholas is in the church of Saint George the New in Bucharest, Romania.

In Greece, portions of the Saint's relics are in the Monasteries of Saint Nicholas Apo Bathia in Euboia, and Phaneromenē in Salaminos. A piece of the Saint's left arm is in the Metropolitan church of Volos. One of the Saint's teeth is at Kalabryta Monastery in the Peloponnēsos.

Troparion — Tone 4

The truth of things revealed you to your flock as a rule of faith, / a model of meekness, and a teacher of temperance. / Through humility, you attained the heights; / and through poverty, riches. / O Father and Hierarch Nicholas, intercede with Christ God that our souls may be saved.

Kontakion — Tone 3

You were shown forth in Myra as an officiant of the sacred rites, / for you fulfilled the Gospel of Christ, O Venerable Nicholas, by laying down your life for your people, / and saving the innocent from death. / Therefore, you were sanctified as a great initiate of God's grace.

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The church offers this as a way to support our congregation. We do not endorse any specific businesses advertised here.

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Contributions from the Congregation



ST. PHOCAS THE GARDENER

St. Phocas was a gardener in Sinope, from the same city as the Martyr Phocas, Bishop of Sinope (~117 A.D.), after whom he was probably named. He had a garden which he cultivated himself. He gave the fruits of it to all the people who passed by, and in this way he also fed their souls the Word of God.

Once a prince, who persecuted Christians, heard of St. Phocas and sent soldiers to kill him. He treated them kindly and with love, and they did not want to kill him. However, the saint insisted, and so they beheaded him.

The Blessed Saint suffered in the year 320. We commemorate him on September 22nd (October 5th). St. Phocas is remembered especially for helping sailors.

Holy St. Phocas, pray for us!

Written by Marina Namee - Age 11



St. Alexander Hotovitzky

New Hieromartyr of Russia • Missionary to America

Commemoration Date: December 4th

On February 11, 1872, in the city of Kremenetz, Russia, St. Alexander was born. His father, Alexander, was an archpriest and the rector of the Volhynia Seminary. As a child, his parents taught him the importance of loving everyone and, especially, the Orthodox Church.

After his graduation from St. Petersburg Theological Academy, he began his missionary work in the Diocese of the Aleutians and North America. At that time this was the only diocese which covered all of North America. His first assignment was at St. Nicholas Church in New York City, where he was tonsured a reader.



St. Alexander Hotovitzky Cont.

At the age of twenty-four, following his marriage to Maria Scherbuhina, he was ordained to the diaconate. He was ordained to the priesthood on February 25, 1896 by Bishop Nicholas at the Diocesan Cathedral in San Francisco, California. Only a week after his ordination, he returned to St. Nicholas Church in New York where he accepted the assignment as the parish priest.

St. Alexander was a very successful missionary priest. He loved the people he met while traveling to New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York, and to the many other towns and cities throughout North America. His missionary work was very dangerous. At times he was beaten and jailed because of his love for God, the Church, and for teaching young children religion.

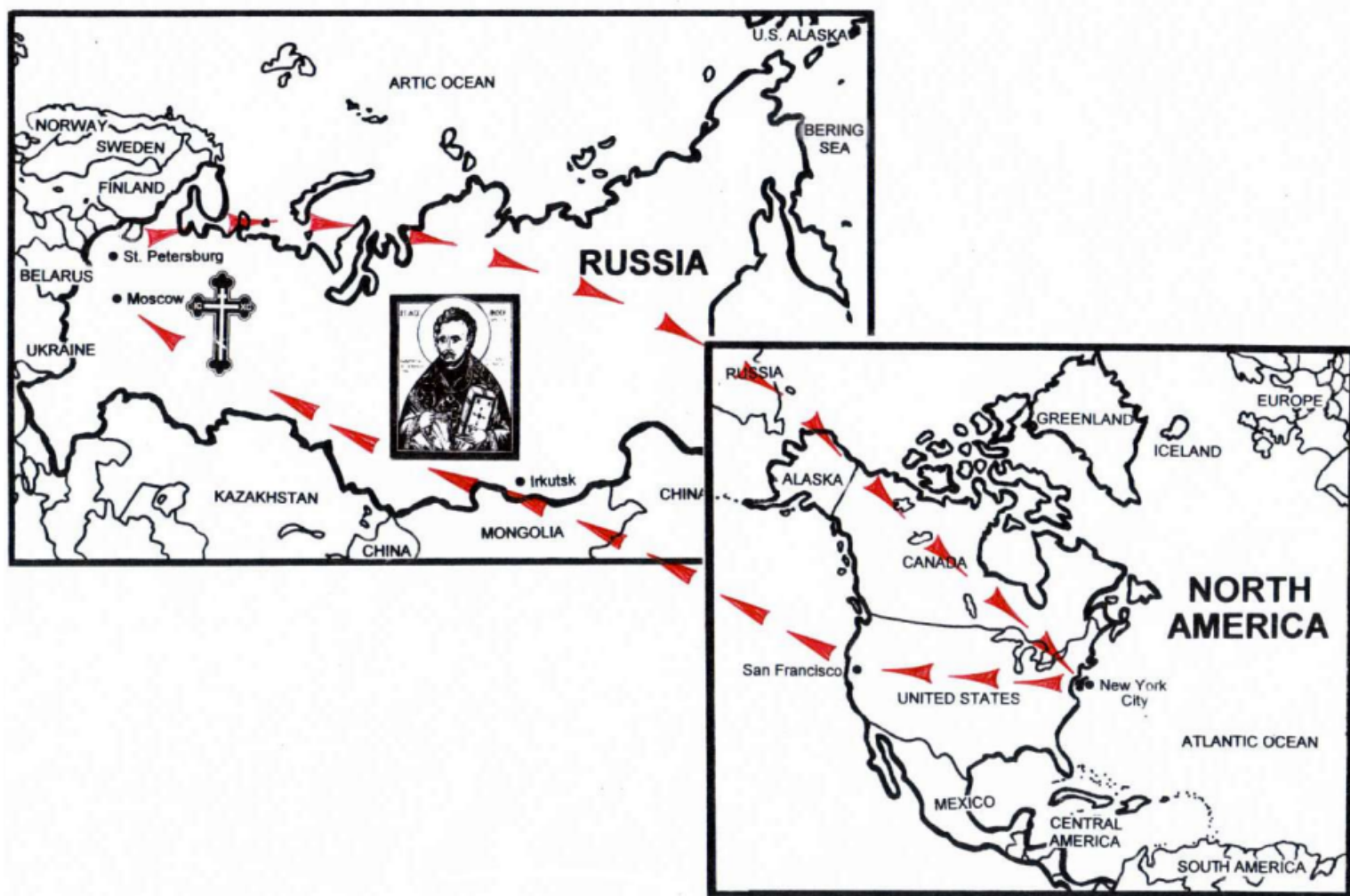
On February 26, 1914, he said good-bye to the Orthodox Churches in North America and traveled to Helsinki, Finland. Three and half years later, he was assigned to Christ the Savior Cathedral in Moscow, Russia. While in Russia, a revolution occurred and the church was in danger. St. Alexander had to help the poor and save the sacred, religious items that were being taken from the churches and given to the government.

St. Alexander continued to fight for the Orthodox Church and in 1937 he was arrested for the last time because of his belief in God. Since his life ended due to his suffering for Christ, many people consider him a martyr.

He died at the age of 65 on August 19, 1937. The glorification services for Saint Alexander were held on December 4, 1994 in Moscow, Russia.

Family Activity

St. Alexander Hotovitsky's Travels



Family Activity

Elimination Game

St. Alexander Hotovitsky

For this activity, follow the directions below. After you are finished, place the remaining words in order on the lines below the instructions to complete the Epistle verse for the Feast of Hieromartyr Alexander.

	A	B	C	D
1	red	let	pizza	green
2	get	are	Philip	giraffe
3	wicked	Peter	banana	met
4	five	dog	John	pleasing
5	sinful	apple	lion	Andrew
6	cat	to	evil	seven
7	set	wrong	James	pasta
8	purple	eleven	God	blue

1. Cross off the colors in each corner.
2. Cross off the odd numbers in rows 4, 6, and 8.
3. Cross off all the animals.
4. Cross off all of the foods.
5. Cross off the 3-letter words that rhyme and end with "et".
6. Cross off the names of some of Jesus' disciples.
7. Cross off the words opposite of "good."

Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices

Hebrews 13:16