

08/12/2019

## **Homily of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America - Feast of Saint Nicholas**



**Homily  
of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America**

**Archieratical Divine Liturgy  
of Saint Nicholas the Wonder-Worker**

**Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Shrine Church  
Flushing, New York  
December 6, 2019**

My beloved brothers and sisters in Christ,

I am pleased to be with you today, at this beautiful Shrine Church, for the celebration of your parish's patron, Saint Nicholas, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia, the

Wonder-worker. I wish you all the blessings of the feast, with many years of life and peace in the love of Christ our God. Chronia Polla se olous!

Saint Nicholas lived so long ago and so many miles away, yet we still feel him to be near to us in our own time and place. We have a strong sense of his presence, his protection, his paternal care. He leads us to follow in the ways of Christ and the words of Scripture.

In the Gospel reading we heard the promises of the Beatitudes: “Blessed are you poor, ... Blessed are you that hunger, ... Blessed are you that weep, ... Blessed are you when men hate you and speak evil of you.” These words sum up the blessed life of Saint Nicholas.

As a young man, he gave up the riches of an inheritance from his parents. For the sake of mercy and love, he became poor, giving away his wealth to those in need. He also suffered persecution for the sake of Christ. In prison, he was starved and beaten. He endured scorn and abuse. He experienced hunger and hatred and many sorrows.

But it was through these things that he saw the promises of Christ fulfilled.

He was poor—but he became an heir of all the riches of the Kingdom of God.

For a time he knew hunger—but he later as a bishop he would have food to share freely.

For a while he had sorrow—but that sorrow turned to joy with his release from prison and his consecration as a bishop.

Throughout his life he experienced hatred and slander—but now his name is spoken throughout the world with love and joy and gratitude.

Blessed indeed was Saint Nicholas! For he proved the truth of Christ’s words. May his blessedness become ours as well.

Later today we will go to the Financial District, and there we will offer prayer with an *Agiasmo* for our Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and National Shrine. We will ask the Lord to remember us in His mercy, and to fulfill in us the promises of the Beatitudes, as He did in the life of Saint Nicholas.

*We are poor*, and in need of every kind of help to complete the work at Ground

Zero.

*We hunger and thirst for justice*, because thousands of our countrymen perished unjustly, and a precious house of worship was taken from us.

*We know sorrow and weeping*, seeing the disgrace of an empty shell where a living, thriving church should be.

*We endure slander and shame*—as an Archdiocese, as a Church, as the *Omogeneia*—for the sad state of our National Shrine.

Therefore, we call upon Saint Nicholas in a special way at his feast today. We ask that he would intercede; that he would show us the power of God; that he would prove to us, again and again, the truth of Christ's words. Sharing his same spirit of faith, "we also believe and we speak."<sup>[i]</sup> We proclaim our faith, that the Lord who glorified Saint Nicholas will raise up his fallen church to glory once more.

Blessed are we! For near and dear to us is the Wonder-worker of Myra, the champion of Nicea, and the true friend of the needy—*Agios Nikolaos*, Saint Nicholas, our protector and provider, our father and our friend.

May God bless you and grant you many more years of service in His glorious name.  
*Χρόνια Πολλά και πάλι!*

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<sup>[i]</sup> 2 Corinthians 4:13.

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— Source: [goarch.org](http://goarch.org)