

**SERBIAN**



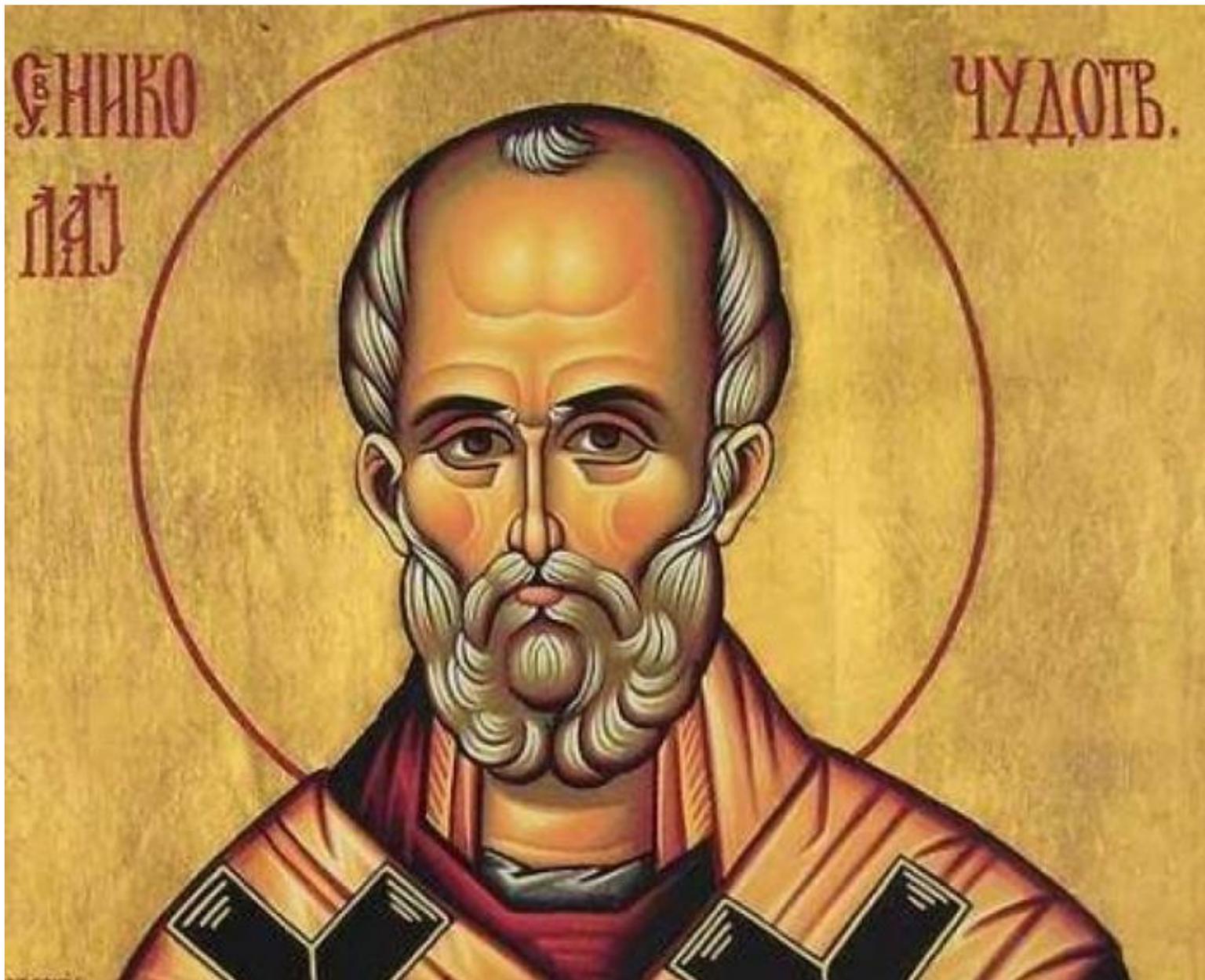
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News of Orthodox parish  
Charlotte

St. Simeon Mirotocivi  
North Carolina

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## MONTH OF DECEMBER



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St. Simeon - Serbian Orthodox Church, Mallard Creek Rd, Charlotte, NC 28262  
Parish priest fr. Nemanja Tesic \* phone: 704/425-3037 \* email: [info@svsimeon.com](mailto:info@svsimeon.com)  
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## OUR HOLY ORTHODOX CHURCH CELEBRATES: DECEMBER

### Presentation of the Holy Virgin



When three years passed from her giving birth, the Blessed Virgin's parents arrived, Joachim and Anne, from Nazareth to Jerusalem, that they handed over to God themselves in service to an earlier promise. Three days time there was from Nazareth to Jerusalem; but going to their God-pleasing work that way was not trying for them. Many relatives of Joachim and Anna assembled to take part in a feast, in which takes part the invisible, and the angels of God. The Virgins went forward with lit candles in their hands, and then Next Idaho device with lit candles in their hands, and then the Holy Mother, led on by one hand her father and with the other, her mother. The Holy Mother was decorated with imperial blessed clothes and ornaments, as befits the Emperor's daughter, the bride of God. Behind them came a host of relatives and friends, all with lit candles. Before the temple was 15 steps. Her parents raised the Holy Mother on the first step, and then she herself quickly went up to the top, where she met the high priest Zechariah, father of St. John the Baptist, and he taking her by the hand to introduce her not only to the temple but in the Saints in the Holiest of Holies, in which no one ever enters except hierarchs, and for them once a year. Sv. Theophylact of Ohrid says that Zechariah "was outside of himself and with God wrapped up" when the Holy Mother was introduced in the most sacred place of the temple, behind another curtain, otherwise he would not have been able to explain his process. Then the parents offered a sacrifice to God, according to the law, and received a blessing from the priest, and they returned home, and the Holy Mother remained in the temple. And she remained in the temple for 9 years. While her parents were alive they visited often, and especially the blessed Ana. When her parents passed, the Holy Mother was like an orphan, and did not move away from the temple even to get married. As this was contrary to the law and custom in Israel, this one by completion of 12 years would be given to a relative of St. Joseph's in Nazareth, that under the guise of lives in virginity, and thus to fulfill his wish and apparently meet the requirements of the law. Because at that time we do not know in Israel if girls were bequeathed to Virginity for life. The Blessed Virgin Mary was the first such life bequeathed to a girl, and after her traces of Christ in the church came thousands of virgins.

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## St. Nicholas the Wonderworker, Archbishop Mirlikijski



This famous saint, celebrated today throughout the world, was the only son to his famous and wealthy parents, Theophanes and None, residents of the city of Patara in Lycia. As the only son, bestowed to them by God, they again devoted themselves to God, and thereby gave it to God as credit. The spiritual life was learned by Saint Nicholas from his uncle Nicholas, a Bishop and a monk in the monastery of New Zion, founded by him. After the death of his parents Nicholas gave away his property to the poor keeping nothing for himself. As a priest in Patara Saint Nicholas was renowned for his mercy, although he carefully hid his charitable work fulfilling the word of the Lord: "Do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing" (Matthew 6: 3). When Saint Nicholas went into solitude, he plotted to do so until his death, but then came a voice from above: "Nicholas, go venture into the crowds, if you want to be my servant." Immediately after this miraculous direction of God, he was then elected Archbishop for the town Mira in Lycia. Merciful, wise, fearless, St. Nicholas was a really good shepherd to his flock. In the time of persecution, Christians under Diocletian and Maximian were put in prison, but in the prison, people were teaching people the law of God. St. Nicholas attended the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea, and, of great zeal for the truth, struck the heretic Arius with his hand. Because of this, he would be removed from Parliament and from the Hierarchal service until several first hierarch in the parliament does not answer I the Lord Christ and Virgin Mary and not publish your blagovolenje according to Nicholas. Protector of the truth of God, this wonderful saint was always a bold protector of justice among the people. Twice he saved three men from an undeserved death penalty. Merciful, truthful, righteous, he walked among the people as an angel of God. Even the life of his people considered him a saint and called upon him to help those pain; and he called, in his sleep and waking hours, those who called upon him, both close and far, and helped all. From his face shone a light as from the face of Moses, and it is their very appearance to bring comfort, tranquility and good will among men. In his old age he would retire in the Lord, and be forever happy in the kingdom of heaven extending to the wonders of the earth helping the faithful and glorified God. He died on 6 December 343 years (v. 9 May).

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## TRADITIONS OF CHRISTMAS

### Childrens



In the third week before Christmas this holiday is celebrated. On this day, early in the morning, or after the arrival to church with worship services, an adult ties together his or other people's children. A belt is commonly used, though sometimes a cord or even a plain rope. The legs or arms are usually tied, and one part of the string is bound to a table or chair. Tying the children, the mother and father, has multiple symbols. The first symbolizes strong family ties, peace, respect and mutual help in all circumstances. Secondly, it refers to household thrift and

perseverance in virtue, because the one who has really earned property and work, easily redeems themselves in all disputes before earthly courts, and especially the last dreadful court, which will only evaluate what good a man in his life has done.

Good children will collect some funds for savings so that the acquisition is an honor and they are somewhat still tied to those who they were tied to.

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## **Mothers**

In the second week before Christmas falls this holiday. This is the biggest Christian holiday of mothers and women. On that day, children prepare string, shawl, scarf or belt and tie their mother to their feet, in the same way as their mother tied Detince. The mother pretends she does not know why they are now linked. Kids congratulate her holiday and the mother then divides the kids' presents. In the same way are bound all married women, with gifts to children: cakes, or other treats.

Feast of the mothers is solemnly celebrated in our temples, especially in the cities. More religious women in consultation with the priest prepares the Academy with the program, in which participating children with appropriate recitations and singing, then bind the children present with older women. Then they give gifts and prepared packages, books, crosses, etc. Then they organize a visit to the hospital, especially hospital wards, where children bear gifts, which gives this holiday full Christian meaning.

## **Fathers**

In the first week before Christmas is celebrated on this holiday. On that day, the same as on Mother's Day, the children tie their fathers, and they give their gifts, same as with the mother.

Fathers, Mother's Day and Children's Day are family holidays and for those days the housewife prepares a luncheon at which gathers the whole family. These holidays, and the customs related to them, contribute to the strengthening of the family, the harmony in it, understanding, respect between parents and children, old and young, all of which make families strong and healthy. And we know that the family is the foundation of a society - the state and the church.

## **Christmas Eve**

The day before Christmas, on January 6, according to the old calendar and on 24 December by the Julian calendar, named Christmas Eve Day. The name comes from the fact that on that day a log is cut Christmas Eve and brought into the house. With this day Christmas celebrations are begun. In the morning early, at dawn, fired their rifles and prangija published departure into the woods after Yule. As soon as the sun comes up, the lodge fire and place it in the hearth. Women in monthly home craft candy and cakes, preparing for the Christmas table.

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What is the Yule Log?

Christmas Eve is usually a young oak tree (in some parts of fir or pine), which is cut in morning on Christmas Eve and brought into the house. In the evening of Christmas Eve, it is cut and prepared as straw and lit into the house.

How to cut the Yule Log?

Before sunrise, on Christmas Eve, the host with his sons or grandchildren go into the woods to cut the Yule Log. Gathered are normal and straight oaklings but if there are none they may find an oak. The oakling should be enough to hoist it on your shoulder and bring it home. When the appropriate wood is found, the host turns east, crosses himself three times, meaning God, his glory and tomorrow's feast, takes an ax in his hands and cuts the Yule Log. Yule Log is cut and with an ax, and to the east side. According to popular belief, the Yule Log has to be cut with three strong impacts. When not cut with three blows from an ax, the fracturing is complete with twisting or blows. The broken part of the Yule Log is called the beard and it is desirable to be on every Yule Log. Care is taken to a tree in the fall fall directly to the ground. It should not, therefore, stop at a tree. Iver by Yule log is taken and placed among the pelvis, that the cream is thick like a splinter. When Yule bring home, straightened up the house, next to the front door, where it stands in the evening.

What is symbolized by the Yule Log?

Yule Log represents wood which shepherds made and that the righteous Joseph had in a cold cave, when Christ was born. The Yule Log and the tree indicates Cross of Christ.

*robber (voice 4):*

*It was written long ago that the Virgin Mary with Elder Joseph, who is from the seed of David, brought to Bethlehem in her womb the seedless conceived Christ. The time of birth was at hand, but there was no place for it: But, just as there are beautiful palaces, so too are there similar caves the Empress shows. Lord Christ is born, to resurrect fallen man.*

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## Christmas Eve

Christmas Eve connects the Eve Day and Christmas. Therefore, in our nation people who are friendly and close related show themselves together "as Christmas and Christmas Eve". In the evening, when it gets dark, the host of the children enter the house with Yule logs and straw. The kindlings are carried over a spit, usually carried between two children and one of them enters the first right foot over the threshold, and greets a housekeeper and a female, saying: "Good evening! Merry Christmas, Christmas Eve!" The hostess and female sprinkle roast and host pecking and wheat, appropriate: "Good evening! Faithful you and your hearth!" The kindlings are brought into the room, where a dinner on Christmas Eve and Christmas lunch, and are put on the east wall, where the icons and lamp are.

Since Yule Log is previously cut with thick end into three parts, its size can fit in a stove or any furnace, and brought into the house. The same is said and done with the hearth. The Yule Log is placed on the hearth, or fireplace because there is no more, or is also placed next to the stove or oven, and immediately a wood box. Where there is no oven or stove, the Yule Log is placed with sausages.

straw

After the Yule log is taken into the house straw is brought in. The host and hostess speak and decide when to bring in the Yule Log and hearth. The straw is spread all over the house. The housewife spreads the straw under the dinner table, along with various sweets, small gifts and toys, which children will seek out. The straw symbolizes the straw in the cave where Christ was born.

Dinner on Christmas Eve

When you bring the hearth, Yule logs and straw, folks all along the apartment will pray, sing a hymn "Christmas yours ...", pray to God, read the prayers that they know, congratulate each other and sit at the table. Dinner is lean, usually prepared baked beans, fresh or dried fish and other meatless meals.

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## PRAYER BOOK

### PRAYER FOR THE OPENING OF MIND

Lord Jesus Christ, the teacher of wisdom, I pray thee, open the eyes of my heart, that I listen to thy word and understand it, and form a world Thy will that it hidden from us sinful and foolish people. Lord God of my salvation, since you came to earth to seek and save the failed, do not hide from me your commandments, because I fall into the darkness of ignorance of Your Law: it will open the eyes of my mind, to understand the wonders of Your teachings, and tell me Your secret wisdom. I trust in you, my God, that You light the knowledge of my mind, that these prayers would not only be read but also performed. I pray you, and with tears I cry corresponding These, Lord, enlighten me, teach me, give me understanding to the world of thy word, and the Life of the Saints Your reading are not sin, but the renewal and enlightenment, the sanctification and salvation of my soul, and the inheritance of eternal life. Amen.

### PRAYER Filaret, Metropolitan of Moscow miracle worker

Lord, I do not know what to ask from You. You only know what I need. You love me more than I know how to love yourself. Father, give Thy servant, what I look for and do not know how. I do not dare look at no baptism, no consolation, but I stand before you, my heart is open to you. You see the need, which I do not know: see and act with me for His mercy. Defeat and heal, lift me up; void and I mute to the world your will and unattainable for me thy judgments. I offer myself to Thee as sacrifice; I surrender to you. I have no desire, but the desire to fulfill Your will. Teach me to pray.. Amen.

### Daily prayer

Lord let me calmly accept everything that is brought this day, and to surrender completely to Your holy will. Train me and anoint every time during this day. Any news that I receive, teach me to receive it quietly and with a firm belief that all things are done according to Thy holy will. Manage my thoughts and feelings and in all actions and words. Do not let them in unforeseen circumstances forget that all comes from You. Teach me how to properly treat parents and neighbors, that nobody is angered or grieved. Lord, give me strength to endure

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fatigue this day and everything that happens during the day. Manage my will and teach me to pray, to believe, to hope, to suffer, to forgive and love. Amen.

### **PRAYER penitent: SV. Simeon the New Theologian**

O Lord, You see everything, and there is nothing you cannot not see. Yes, even if I've done your work, I still have not aligned with your commandments, but I've sinned and did not think that you, my Creator and God, how great and good you are. Now, remembering that, I fear conflict, and I do not know what to do. I feel a conviction of yours, and I do not find the word justification in your mouth. I have no virtues and I did not do any act of repentance, which would merit that I can be forgiven for at least one empty word of my mouth. In addition, the one who has all the virtues and makes all sorts of good works, makes it a servant of the borrower; in all that he will not find atonement for his sin: that is only from the grace of Your affluence. Sin is death, and can those who have died through it resurrect themselves? Truly none can except the only One that died and rose again, because of sin you did not do and no deceit was found in your mouth. And now, O Lord Almighty, committing many evil deeds, I am sorry. And only remorse is powerless to justify me. Repentance is the knowledge of sin and removes them, mercy Yours. You see, Almighty God, that I now do not have anything other than the body; but for me there is no benefit from the fact that I have any wealth. I am all - one wound; I have left no hope for salvation, and hell is done to swallow me alive. You're the only one that can save and heal the suffering of my heart. Your hand can do anything; it reaches to the very depths of the abyss, and all things are done according to Thee. I dare say, have mercy on me, O Lord! Because I am unworthy of Thy grace, as one who rightfully deserves to be suffering. And You, Lord, you know everything, and know Philanthropy through your acts with me, and unworthy of life itself. To be holy Thy will in all things. Amen.

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**Annual Assembly**  
**December 11, 2016**  
**After Divine Liturgy**

Dear parishioners,

We are honored to inform you that on Sunday 11 December after the Divine Liturgy will be held annual Assembly of our Church School.

We invite all parishioners to attend to at that time choose the Church Committee and at the same time address our new challenges. We remind you that the parishioners who have fulfilled their obligations spiritual and material nature to his Church may have the right to vote and be elected to the Church Committee.

Thanks to everyone for their efforts and work and God willing we will see you all 11th December in large numbers.

The priest Nemanja and Management CSO St. Simeon Charlotte.

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