



St Nicholas News

A communication channel to get in touch with the Saint Nicholas' Friends around the World

11

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From Fr. Gerardo Cioffari, o.p. director of the

CENTRO STUDI NICOLAIANI

Bari (Italy)

Update on the Rebuilding of St Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church at Ground Zero

On February 14, 2011, Saint Nicholas Church and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America filed a lawsuit in Federal District Court in Manhattan against the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, in order to foster the rebuilding at Ground Zero of the only house of worship destroyed by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.



The Parish and the Archdiocese would have preferred to rebuild the Church without litigation. However, they have been unable to do so since the Port Authority renounced a long standing agreement with the Church to rebuild at Ground Zero, seized the Church's land, barred the Church from access to it, and refused to talk or meet with the Church or the Archdiocese. Contrary to working cooperatively with the Archdiocese and the Parish, a posture which had prevailed between 9/11 and the Port Authority's abrupt turnabout in March 2009, the Port Authority, without permission, notice or any legal

justification, has sent its bulldozers onto both the land still owned by the Church at its original site at 155 Cedar street, and the land provided to the Church at 130 Liberty street pursuant to its agreement with the Port Authority.

The Port Authority has conducted extensive excavation and other construction work that has kept the Church off of its own property, and has rendered both sites unbuildable by the Church without substantial remedial work. The Parish and the Archdiocese hope that through this lawsuit, just and fair rulings will be made allowing for the prompt reconstruction of St Nicholas at Ground Zero, not only as a Church serving its flock, but also as a greater ministry bringing peace, reconciliation and a sacred space of recollection and remembrance for all people visiting Ground Zero.

Peace, Dialogue and Human Rights in Leipzig's

Evangelical Lutheran

NIKOLAIKIRCHE

The Leipzig Nikolaikirche was founded about 1165. Originally built in the Romanesque architectural style (what is proved by the western façade), in the early XVI century the building was extended and formed a gothic hall. The three steeples received their Baroque decoration in 1731. Worthy of mention is Johann Sebastian Bach's

activity as master and organist of the choir between 1723 and 1750, when distinguished compositions were released for the first time at St. Nicholas. Sandstone extensions altered outside appearance of the church in 1902.

Nikolaikirche was the starting point of the peaceful revolution of the GDR in 1989 with the following fall of the Wall in Berlin, that brought to German reunification on October 3, 1990.

Since 1982 the Pastor organized in the Church regular “Prayers for Peace” with periodical conferences on linked themes, like “Frieden wächst aus Gerechtigkeit”. Leipzig’s St Nicholas Lutheran Church was also chosen for the closing day of the Ecumenical Conference of German Christian Churches (Nov. 18, 1986). In these last years in St Nicholas are given the Leipzig Human Rights Awards “to honor individuals who promote democracy, human rights and common values of Europe”.



Every Sunday are celebrated three main Masses. At 9.30 the Evangelical Lutheran; at 11.15 the Mass for University students, and at 17.00 the Roman Catholic Mass. We are extremely pleased (and grateful to the Pastor) that the name of St Nicholas is linked with such an historical Church open to everybody (*Offen für alle*).

Children Feast, Music, and Ecumenical Awards in FRIBOURG’S StNICHOLAS Catholic Cathedral

St Nicholas’ Cathedral in Fribourg (Switzerland) is one of the most beautiful Gothic Churches in Europe. Built in the year 1283, with its impressive tower, it acted as protagonist throughout the history of the region, characterized by the wars between reformed cities, like Bern, and the catholic Fribourg.

The Masses are celebrated both in French (for the majority of the population) and in German (the minority), scheduled by the Pastor of the Cathedral.



Very spectacular is the Feast of St Nicholas in December, when all the children participate, and St Nicholas (a man in Episcopal vestment) makes joyful speeches and his servants go around distributing gifts.

In these last years the Church has been the theatre of beautiful concerts organized by the Chapel Master Pierre George Roubaty, active in the Cathedral since 1983. He directed a *Missa in honorem Sancti Petri* (by Oscar Moret) and a *Messe Saint Nicolas* (by José Antonio de Almeida Prado).

The Church is also active in the ecumenical field, helped in this by the Dominican Fathers of the Albertinum University. One of the last events has been the ecumenical ceremony for the “Silver Rose of St Nicholas” Award (given to the Armenian Patriarch Mesrob II). All this was possible thanks to the cooperation of the Eastern Churches Institute of Regensburg (whose Director mgr Nikolaus Wyrwoll is the promoter and the soul of the event) and the Ecumenical Institute of the University of Fribourg. Many representatives of Christian Churches (Armenian, Syriac, Catholic, Orthodox and Protestants) have been present to the ceremony.

GREETINGS FROM BARI



**TO ALL ST NICHOLAS’
(ORTHODOX, PROTESTANT AND CATHOLIC)
FRIENDS**