



# St Nicholas News

A paper sent free to the St Nicholas' friends  
all around the world

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## SUBMERGED ST NICHOLAS' CHURCHES BY WATERS OR DANGERS

# 41

## TURKEY, MACEDONIA, RUSSIA AND ITALY

### Kilise Yerine Meydan

[Bodrum Haber](#) | 07 Kasım 2012 | [Gündem](#), [Manşet](#)



#### Haber : Bodrum Baskısı

**Hâlen Bodrum Halk Eğitim Merkezi ve Akşam Sanat Okulu (ASO) Müdürlüğü olarak kullanılan, Ortodoks Kilisesi Aya Nikola'nın yerine yapılan bina yıkılacak. Konuyla ilgili olarak Bodrum Belediyesi ile Muğla Valiliği mutabakat sağladı.**

Denizli Pamukkale Üniversitesi tarafından düzenlenen raporla "çürük" olduğu tespit edilen Bodrum Halk Eğitim Merkezi ve ASO Müdürlüğü'nün kullandığı binanın yıkılması için çalışma başlatıldı.

Konuyla ilgili olarak açıklama yapan Bodrum Belediyesi Meclis Üyesi CHP'li Dursun Göktepe, başkanlığa vekalet ettiği dönemde çalışma yapıldığını belirterek, "Halk Eğitim Merkezi'nin binası hakkında verilen 'çürük olduğuna ilişkin' teknik rapor doğrultusunda yapının ortadan kaldırılması hususunda valilikle ön mutabakat sağlanmıştır." Dedi.

### ST NICHOLAS' CHURCH IN BODRUM (TURKEY)

The TURKISH DAILY RADIKAL reported the news about the decision to demolish the St Nicholas 232-year-old Orthodox Church in the Bodrum, a city on the western coast of Turkey, in the province of Muğla. The news were not expected by the locals, because, on the contrary, they had applied to the authorities to restore the ancient church (Aya Nikolaya).

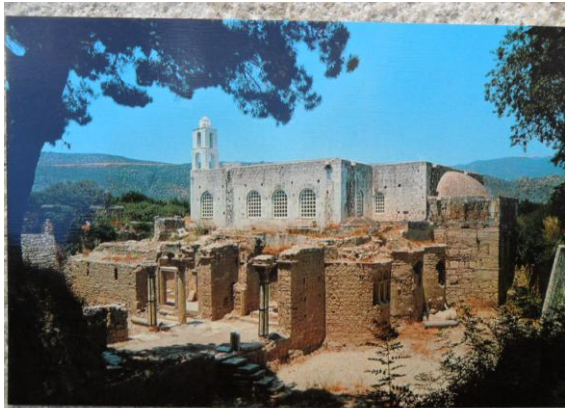
The Bodrum municipality, however, according to a claim by Pamukkale University that declared the church building rotten, decided to demolish it.

The question does not seem to have a religious character. In fact, already since 1965 the St Nicholas' church was transformed and had been used as a storage site, cinema, theater and boat shed. Applying for restoration, therefore, the locals had no intention of giving back the ancient church to the Orthodox, but only to save a very characteristic monument of the city. It could have become a museum, like the ancient church of St Nicholas in Myra.

The decision has been signed by **Dursun Göktepe** of the Republican Party of the People, who was substituting the mayor **Mehmet Kocadon**, in prison under the charge of corruption. It seems that, soon after his going out from jail the mayor has started an opposition against that decision and ordered an investigation.

When the news arrived on Internet, in the space reserved to the comments, you can read these reactions by some readers:

- 1.- If demolished then part of beautiful Istanbul's history is demolished forever.
- 2) Locals should protest to prevent the action (Diren Sesel)



**S. Nicholas' church in Myra** (the roof was built by the Russians in the XIX century). From this church, where St Nicholas was buried around 336 A.D., his body was taken away by the Barian sailors and merchants who brought it to Bari the Sunday afternoon of May 9<sup>th</sup> 1087.



**St Nicholas Church**  
in Bodrum, a city on the western coast, south of Smirne, Turkey).  
It could be raised the question:  
is it more corrupt the mayor  
who wants to save the church  
or the Pamukkale professors  
who want to destroy it  
?

3) The people of the city want it restored, but maybe someone out of greed and business concerns wants the building destroyed, so it can be replaced with something of their liking. This is very corrupt (Basil Keilani).

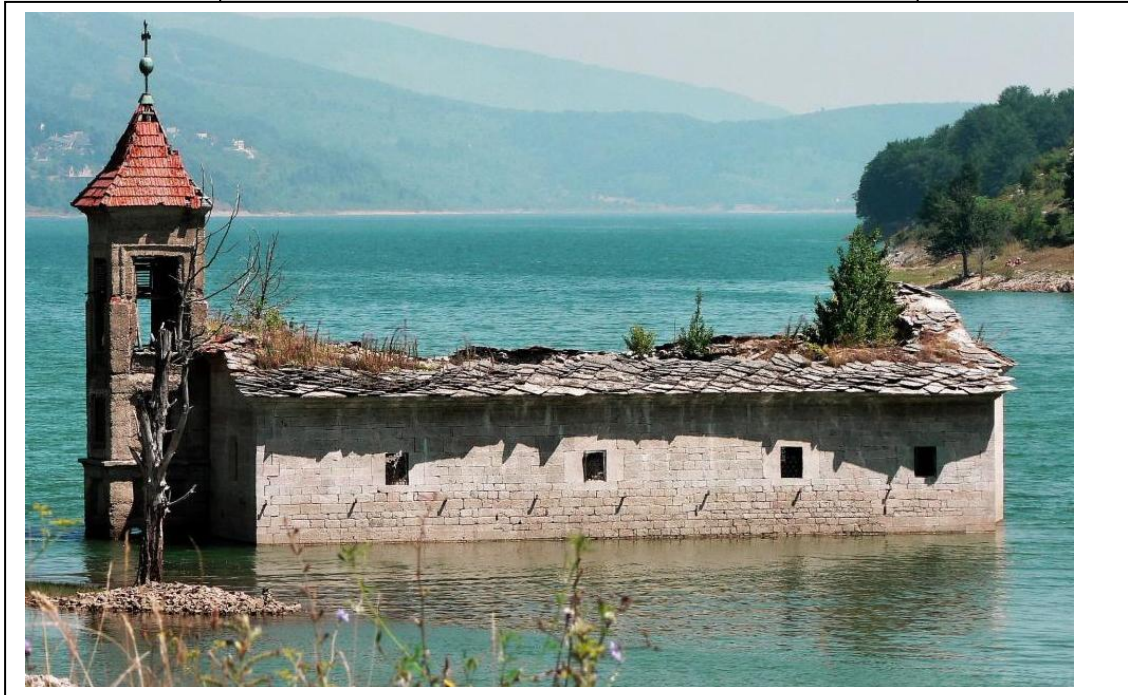
4) It's a pity (Vangelis Denaxas)

5) I hope they do not demolish this beautiful old church. Turkey as such wonderful old sites and they could really increase tourism and create employment for its people by fixing up historical site over the whole country (Cliff Billings)



**The  
Bodrum  
Mosque  
(Turkey)**

## MACEDONIA. MAVROVO. THE ST NICHOLAS' SUBMERGED CHURCH



**Macedonia** is one of the lands with a strong presence of St Nicholas churches (about 70). In Skopje, its capital city, the Serbian emperor Stephen Dušan wrote (August 20, 1346) the beautiful parchment by which donated to our Basilica of St Nicholas in Bari the tributes due to him by the city of Dubrovnik (today in the Museo Nicolaiano). There is also a town named Sveti Nikole with 13.746 inhabitants.

A major touristic attraction is the **St Nicholas Church submerged** by the waters of Mavrovo Lake, at about 100 km from Skopje.

**Very known for its ski center** (*Zare Lazareski*), Mavrovo is a town of north-western Macedonia. Its municipality is together with Rostuša ((Општина Маврово и Ростуше).

According to the last national census from 2002, this municipality has 8,618 inhabitants. Ethnic groups include: Macedonians 4,349, Turks 2,680, Albanians 1,483, others.





**St Nicholas' church** in Маврово (Црквата „Св. Никола“ во Маврово), was built in the year 1850 and functioned for 153 years as the most important in the town. In the year 1953 it was decided to create an artificial lake to meet the necessities of the locals. At the same time, in the town where the waters could not arrive, was built a new beautiful church in honor of our Saint.



Someone has observed: *Is nature or fate trying to tell us something with these reappearances?* The churches might appear to be rising as if by God's hand, refusing to stay put in their watery graves.

St Nicholas did not abandon Mavrovo and its people, as they did not forget him.



The Mavrovo lake lies at an altitude of 1220 m. It is 12 kilometers long and 3 kilometers wide. At one point the church was fully submerged, but, due to droughts in the 21st century, it has largely appeared out of the lake. It keeps rising again, especially in summer.

They showed their devotion by building in his honor such a beautiful church.

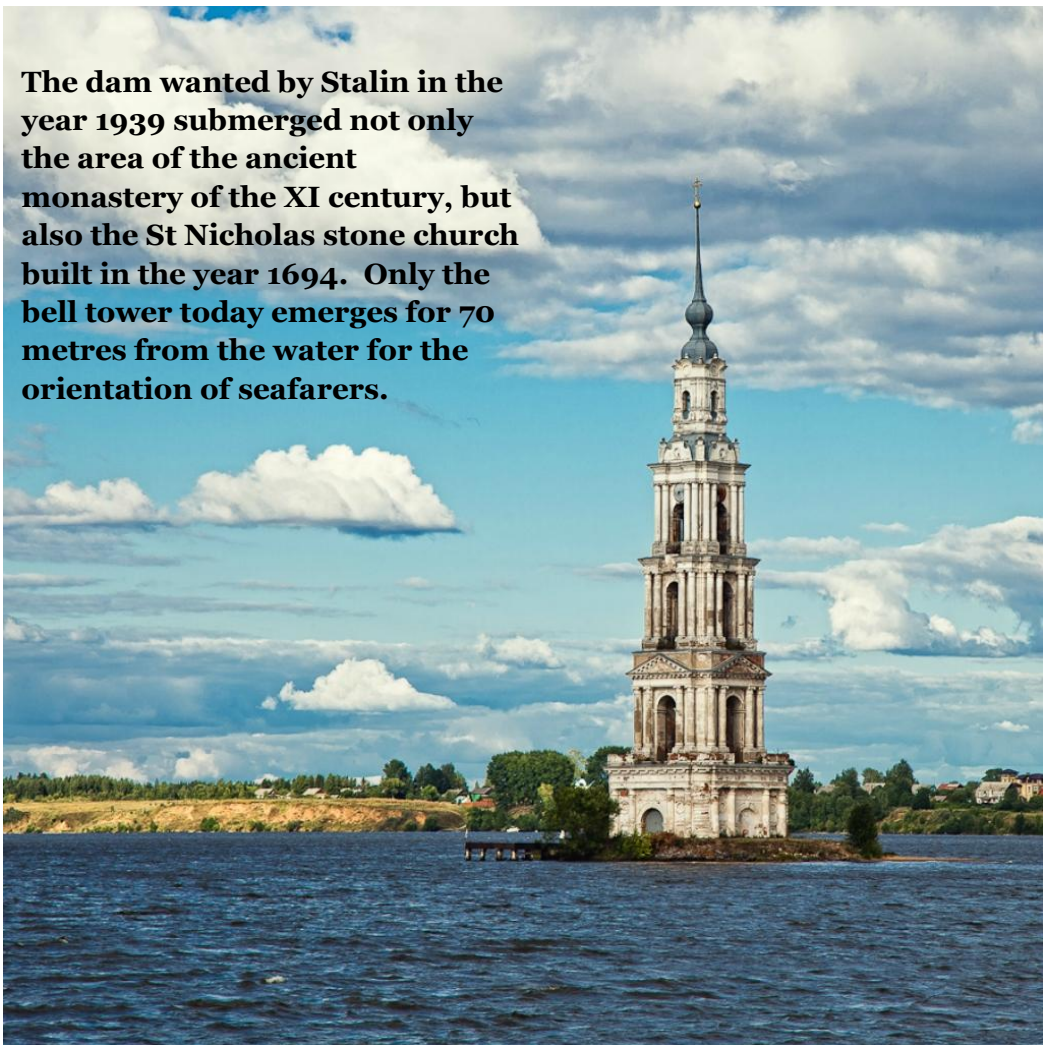
Like the submerged one looks at the past, the new one looks at the future.



**Mavrovo. The new St Nicholas' church.**

**RUSSIA. KALJAZIN  
ST NICHOLAS :  
THE BELL TOWER  
FROM THE WATER  
TO THE SKY**

**The dam wanted by Stalin in the year 1939 submerged not only the area of the ancient monastery of the XI century, but also the St Nicholas stone church built in the year 1694. Only the bell tower today emerges for 70 metres from the water for the orientation of seafarers.**





**A major attraction of Kalyazin**, a town in the region of Tver' (on the right bank of the Volga River) is the **bell tower** (1796) of the ancient **St Nicholas' Cathedral Church** (wooden church XII century mentioned in the Annals, stone church in 1694). The church and much of the town were demolished and submerged by the large lake (Sea of Uglič) created by the dam raised in 1939.

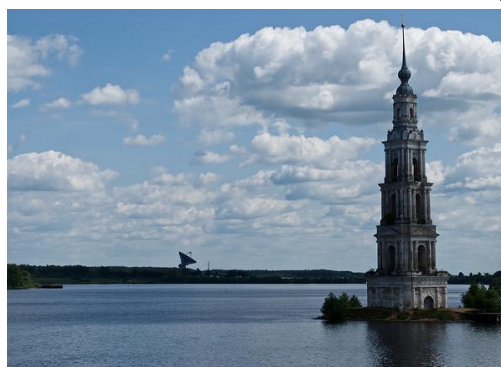
St Nicholas wooden church was built inside a monastery of the XI century, that from the place and the nearby river was called **Nikola-na-Žabne** (Nicholas on the Žabna River). It was named "Nikolaevskij" instead of the most common "Nicol'skij". When in the XV century was built the Holy Trinity monastery (where lived St Macarius of Kalyazin), the monks of St Nicholas left their monastery, although the people went on attending the St Nicholas church. This one however was burnt and destroyed by the Polish invaders in the year 1610, and reopened only January 20, 1630. Finally December the 8<sup>th</sup> of the year 1694 was consecrated the stone church.

**The bell tower, 70 metres** high, with its 5 galleries was built by the peasants of the colonel Vasilij Fiodorovič Ušakov. It had 11 big bells, that with their engraved inscriptions constituted a real Archive of documentation.



For example, the third bell gives this information: *In the year 1756 the 15<sup>th</sup> of November this bell was founded in the district of Kašinski for the church of St*

*Nicholas the miracle worker, in the monastery of Kalyazin at the St Nicholas' quarter, on the initiative, the joy and at the expenses of the locals and faithful laymen (1756 года ноября 15 дня вылит сей колокол в Кашинский уезд Калязина монастыря в Никольскую слободу к церкви Николая Чудотворца, тщанием, радением и вкладом тоя слободы жителей и мирских людей).* On it were engraved the images of St Nicholas, St Sergius of Radonež, the Virgin of Vladimir, the Crucifixion and the Resurrection).



**This church was very much loved** by the people. The atmosphere of well-being was assured by benefactors like the wealthy merchant Suvorov and Peter Svešnikov, as well as by a candle-shop that did a roaring trade, by which it was possible to restore the church whenever it was necessary.

**Great veneration** had the St Nicholas icon with the silver cover and the Virgin admonishing the people going astray (Взыскание погибших). Wonderful was the iconostasis.

At beginning of the XX century very active was the **Association of the gonfalon-bearers** of St Nicholas' Cathedral of Kalyazin (Общество хоругве-носцев Калязинского Николаевского собора).

**In the year 1915**, when its premises hosted various schools (both ecclesiastical and public, like elementary and female schools), services were held by four priests, two deacons and four psalmists.

To the St Nicholas Cathedral used to come from the **neighbouring villages** (Blagunovo, Gorbovo, Dmitrokovno, Il'icyno, Matvejtkovo, Ovsjannikovo, Paulino, Pes'e, Sovaevo, Solonovka, Spirovo, Stepanovo, Tarevo, Čaplino, Čigirevo). One of the most known priests was Ivan Stepanovič Beljustin (1862-1866), author of writings on Liturgy. Among the visitors was also the famous dramaturgist **A. N. Ostrovskij**.

**In the year 1939** was built the dam of Uglič to form a large river basin. A little before the opening of the dam, churches and buildings were demolished. At the moment they had to demolish the St Nicholas' bell-

tower, all of a sudden the dam gave way and the water submerged everything. Hardly the workers saved themselves. In the following days however the idea not to demolish the tall bell-tower prevailed, because it could serve like a navigation instrument for better bearings. Then, to avoid its fall, it was filled all around by soil and today the bell-tower coming out from the water has become a touristic attraction.

A few small bells are still there, but you can hear their ringing only when the wind blows in gusts.

Source: A. G. Kubarev, *The Churches of Kalyazin (an historical sketch)*, Moscow 2007 (Кубарев А.Г. Калязинские храмы (Краткий исторический очерк). - Москва. 2007.)

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**ITALY.**  
**BORGOMANERO (NO)**  
**BY SAVING**  
**ST NICHOLAS**  
**YOU SAVE HISTORY**

About three km from **Borgomanero** (Novara, Italy), along the road to Arona, there is a little church of St Nicholas. The place is called Baraggiola (may be “wastes”).

The historian **Ernesto Lomaglio** (*The origins of Borgomanero and the middle lands of Novara country in the age of the Italian city-states*) examines the hypothesis that this *curtis de Barazzola* was included in the donation of the emperor Otto I to the

canons of St Julius Island (29 July 962 in the city of Orta).

Its **Romanesque structure** permits to suppose that both the church and the nearby tower go back to that time. If it is so, it should be noticed that the church of St Nicholas in the surroundings of Borgomanero is **one of the most ancient** documented **in Italy** with the dedication to our Saint.



**Borgomanero (NO).  
The ancient  
St Nicholas' church  
(X century ?) is  
about to be restored.**

Today has fallen into decay. It remains however the main structure and the posterior apse. In Romanesque style is also the nearby tower, 20 metres tall, made by big squared stones and openings like crenels.

**Otto's donation** took place in the context of his war against Berengarius, king of Italy. After the victory, Otto received in Rome the imperial crown by the young pope John XII (February 2<sup>nd</sup> 962). Back to Germany, he stopped near the Orta Lake, overcoming the resistance of Berengarius' wife. On that occasion he donated the island to the canons of St Julius', instead of giving back to the bishop of Novara, to whom was taken away by Berengarius. Among other places he donated to the canons the courts of Baraggiola and Agrate.

September 25<sup>th</sup> 2011 the **Corriere di Novara** reported the news that Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> a document of dispossession of the two buildings had been signed by **Antonella Manuelli**, head of the urban planning department of the municipality. The owners made no opposition and the two edifices have become public property.

It seems that there should be no problems for the restauration works, because the society "Terna Spa", that is working now to realize the long-distance power line through the Baraggiola area, has promised a contribution of 250.000,00 euro. The project was made by the architect **Giorgio Ingaramo**.



**A GREETING  
FROM BARI TO  
ALL ST NICHOLAS'  
FRIENDS**