



Saint John the Baptist Orthodox Church

A Parish of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese, Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople



Father Dave Urban, Pastor
Very Reverend Father John Brancho, Pastor Emeritus
Timothy Martin, Reader
Matthew Peifer, Stephen Brancho, & John Radick, Cantors
Matthew Peifer, Church Council President
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January 7, 2020

Volume V

Feast of the Nativity of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ

Christ Is Born! (Glorify Him!) Christos Raždajetsja! (Slavite Jeho!)

9:10 – Nativity Canon & Carols (Kol'ady); 9:30 - Divine Liturgy Tone 4 Liturgical Color: Gold
Epistle: Galatians 4:4-7; Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12



SERVICES, SAINTS, AND READINGS FOR THE WEEK

January 8 – Afterfeast of the Nativity / 2nd Day of Christmas / the Synaxis of the Holy Theotokos
Divine Liturgy in Ambridge: 9 am; in Homestead: 9:30 am; in Rankin: 9 am
January 9 – Afterfeast of the Nativity / 3rd Day of Christmas / the Feast of Saint Stephen
Divine Liturgy in Ambridge: 9 am; in Homestead: 9:30 am

The opportunity for the Holy Mystery of Confession is available following every service.

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|-----------|---|---------------------|------------------|
| Tuesday | The Adoration of the Magi: Melchior, Caspar, & Balthasar | Galatians 4:4-7 | Matthew 2:1-12 |
| Wednesday | Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos | Hebrews 2:11-18 | Matthew 2:13-23 |
| Thursday | Holy Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen (34) | Hebrews 10:35-11:7 | Mark 11:27-33 |
| Friday | 20,000 Martyrs of Nicomedia (302) | Hebrews 11:8, 11:16 | Mark 12:1-12 |
| Saturday | 14,000 Infants (Holy Innocents) slain by Herod at Bethlehem | 1 Timothy 6:11-16 | Matthew 12:15-21 |

FAST FREE (Sviatki) until the Forefeast of Theophany

January 12 – 30th Sunday after Pentecost / Afterfeast of the Nativity of Christ

Sunday of the Holy Ancestors: *Righteous Joseph the Betrothed, Holy Righteous David the King, and James the Brother of the Lord*

9:20 – Nativity Canon & Carols (Kol'ady); 9:30 - Divine Liturgy Tone 5 Liturgical Color: Gold
Epistle: Galatians 1:11-19; Gospel: Matthew 2:13-23

Church School

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NATIVITY COMMEMORATIONS (to be remembered at Proskomedia)

Incense for Kadilo (censor) Is Offered By Cindy Pavilonis For Health Of The Pavilonis & Neimer Families

Nativity Bulletin Is Offered By Melanie & Michael Shuster For Health Of The Horbal & Shuster Families

6 Candles In Candelabra Are Offered By Buhonick & Sharpless Families In Memory Of +Nick & +Anna Buhonick

6 Decorated Candles On Altar Are Offered By Eleanor Sanger In Memory Of Family And Friends

2 Small Decorated Candles On Altar Are Offered By Mary Jane Hudak For The Health of Family & Friends And Memory Of Departed Loved Ones

2 Candles On Preparation Table and **4 Candles In Front Of Iconostasis** Are Offered By Melanie & Michael Shuster For The Health Of The Horbal & Shuster Families

2 Decorated Candles On Tetrapod

Are Offered By Juliana & Fred Anton In Memory Of Pitto, Nimick, & Anton Families

Festive Oil Is Offered Anonymously (Bezmena) For The Health And Life Of Our Parish

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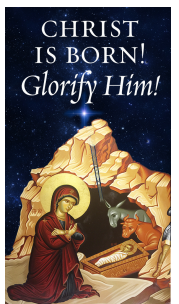
Dear Family of St. John's,

Christ Is Born! (Glorify Him!) Christos Raždajetsja! (Slavite Jeho!)

As I read "The first Christmas was pretty simple. It's okay if yours is too." it struck a chord with me and got me thinking: We are so easily pulled by the hustle and bustle around us. Then I came across this one: "If the house isn't clean, it's still Christmas. If desserts aren't made, it's still Christmas. If there are no decorations, it's still Christmas. If the gifts aren't purchased, it's still Christmas. BUT if it's not about Christ, it's not Christmas." (by Joel Shoemake) This made the Nativity Fast make sense to me. I pray that you were able to 'slow down' and reflect that it is about Christ! As life brings us ups and downs, it's okay as long as we keep our focus on Christ!

As the saying goes, at the end of the day His presence in our life is far more important than any number of presents. May you have a blessed Nativity Season focused on Christ. Keep it simple and hug your loved ones. Tell them that you love them. God loves us so much that He sent His Son to the simple manger to be with us. Be present in the Church and in our loved one's lives and have a joyous year ahead focused on our Savior! Christ Is Born!

With Love, Maria, Sophia, Paņi Alexandra, and Father Dave



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A Warm Welcome To Our Visitors!

Christ Is Born! (*responded with: Glorify Him!*)

Christos Raždajetsja! (*Slavite Jeho!*)

We are happy that you have joined us today! **Please join us downstairs** for coffee and a bite to eat. It is our pleasure to have you in our presence this morning and we wish God's Blessings to all who visit with us today and hope you stop in again soon! **If you have any questions** in regards to our worship or Orthodoxy, please see Father Dave and he will gladly answer any of your questions to the best of his ability. He looks forward to meeting you!

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This Bulletin Is Offered:

If you wish to sponsor a bulletin *In Honor of* (anniversary, birthday, etc.) or *In Memory of* someone, please do so by signing up on the sheet in the vestibule of the Church or by contacting Fr. Dave. An additional stewardship offering to the Church is requested.



PARISH BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS



(Please have submissions for this section to Father Dave by Wednesday.)

Weekly Candle Intentions / Memorials were offered last week by Tim Martin; Viola Peifer; Shuster Family; Lawrence Martin; Kathy Schrmack; Eleanor Sanger; Mary Jane Hudak; Mirilovich Family; Joanne Nelson; Theresa Sharpless; Patty Watson; Cindy Pavidonis

"I am the light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." - John 8:12

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No, Father Does Not Want You To Buy Gift Cards for a Parishioner in Need

Cyber crime has been infiltrating our lives and our homes for years. It is now knocking at the door of our parishes. Parishes are being targeted by a phishing scam via an email or text message where the attacker poses falsely as the priest and asks the recipient for money or gift cards. [This has happened at least 5 times in the past couple months!] I can guarantee that I will never ask you to do something like this! If you receive something out of the ordinary, be sure to call me (412-748-0148) and I will contact the *Federal Trade Commission* and *FBI*. - Fr. Dave Urban

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Prayer requests – During the Great Entrance of the Divine Liturgy, prayers are said for the sick and those celebrating special occasions listed in the bulletin. If silent prayers are requested, they will be offered quietly at the altar at all services. All those listed in the "Prayer Corner" are prayed for during the Proskomedia (*Preparation of the Bread and Wine for Communion*). Prayer requests will remain for (about) 40 days unless requested otherwise. Please let Fr. Dave know if you wish to make additions or subtractions (in the case of answered prayers) to our parish prayer list.

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Thank You! To everyone who donated in December for the FOCUS Christmas Dinner! Your efforts were Greatly Appreciated!

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Changes to our Parish Directory – Has any of your information changed since our 2018 Parish Directory was published? Please contact Father Dave ASAP. Thank you!

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Home Blessings – will begin **1/19/20**. It is **NOT TOO EARLY** to schedule your annual home blessing! Fr. Dave is interested in visiting and catching up with EVERYONE this coming Theophany season. Please catch Father when he has his calendar (*a.k.a. phone*) or email him to plan ahead.

Our Stewardship Gifts To God

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| Stewardship: | \$ 707 |
| Candles/Eternal Lamp: | \$ 166 |
| Envelopes/Stewardship: | \$ 1103 |
| Community Outreach: | \$ 188 |
| Total Collections: | \$ 2164 |
| Relocation Fund: | \$ 2075 |

Give Generously: "For they gave according to their means... and beyond their means, of their own free will." 2 Cor 8:3

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Stewardship is due - The end of the civil calendar year is past. Did you make a financial contribution to your parish? Please fulfill your stewardship responsibility of *time, talent, and treasure*.

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2019 Financial Report:

Donation Income = \$ 79,319

***Expenses = \$ 82,914**

Net Deficit = \$ 3165

**details listed on the church hall bulletin board*
Average at Sunday Divine Liturgies: **42**

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THANK YOU! for your continued generous stewardship support to our parish!

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December Financial Report:

Donation Income = \$ 7125

***Expenses = \$ 6738.09**

Net Income = \$ 386.91

**details listed on the church hall bulletin board*
Average at Sunday Divine Liturgies: **40**

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Envelopes – Interested in 2020 envelopes for the church? Additional boxes are available. When one uses an envelope to make their stewardship offering to the church, you will receive an end of year summary for tax purposes. Please see Theresa Sharpless to get yours today.

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Greeting Cards – Please consider repurposing your greeting cards and prior church calendar icon tops after the season concludes. The collection box is in the vestibule for the *Holy Transfiguration Monastery*. Thank you for giving back!

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Coffee Social Steward Schedule

January 12: **Open / Potluck**
 January 19: **Open / Potluck**
 January 26: **Open / Potluck**

The Divine Liturgy concludes at the final blessing, but the liturgy continues downstairs as we gather in love and fellowship with our parish family and visiting neighbors. (Everyone is also encouraged to help clean up after.) Thank you to all those who support and keep this critical ministry alive in our parish!



When you shop, Amazon gives to

The American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of the USA

BEGIN SHOPPING

AmazonSmile – When Shopping on-line at Amazon.com will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to our diocese! Simply go to the home page of our Diocesan website, www.acrod.org, and click on the AmazonSmiles button in the far left column and then shop as usual (*Same products; same prices; same service*). **Did you know?** Our Diocese recently received a quarterly donation of **\$109.77** thanks to customers shopping on Amazon and designating our diocese as their charity of choice! PLEASE make sure you are set up online to contribute to this easy fundraiser for our diocese.

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ACRY NEWS

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Jr. ACRY is back! We are excited to announce that a local Jr. ACRY chapter is going to restart at our parish in 2020!

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Pill Bottle Collection – Our ACRY continues it's outreach to "Matthew 25: Ministries" who accepts donations of **CLEAN AND EMPTY** plastic medicine pill bottles for inclusion in shipments of medical supplies to countries in need. **PLEASE MAKE SURE THE LABEL IS REMOVED AND IT IS NOT STICKY.** Our pill bottle program fulfills the dual needs of improving medical care in developing countries and caring for our environment. *More information is on the bulletin board in the church hall.*

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Snowed In? Physically unable to make it to church? – Our diocese is blessed with the opportunity to watch our Cathedral's Divine Liturgy every Sunday at 9am. Of course, the best scenario is to attend the Divine Liturgy and receive the Eucharist. When limitations occur, please consider taking the time Sunday morning to pray with our brothers and sisters via the web. Go to www.acrod.org/organizations/cathedral/live/ to watch the *live broadcast*.

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Part Time Work – D car Transportation, operating out of the Northside Pittsburgh, is looking for part

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ORTHODOXY AROUND DA 'BURGH & OUR DIOCESE

FOCUS North America ... Neighborhood Resilience Project – "FOCUS North America announces the creation of a new Pittsburgh-based organization, the Neighborhood Resilience Project (NRP), which will be continuing trauma-informed services launched by FOCUS North America in the Hill District. In the coming month the Pittsburgh Center of FOCUS North America will be transitioning the

time drivers who have a clean driving record, a PA drivers license, are dependable, and customer friendly (having a CDL is a bonus). Anyone looking to make a little extra money driving some high-end clientele around Pittsburgh and back-and-forth to the airport, please call Denny at 412-725-3345.

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LOOKING AHEAD LOCALLY

- ✘ **Tuesday, January 14** – 9:30 Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Circumcision of Our Lord and for the Feast of St Basil the Great
- ✘ **Friday, January 17** – *A Day of Strict Fasting* / 9:30 Royal Hours of the Feast of Theophany
- ✘ **Saturday, January 18** – Vigil Service for the Feast of Theophany: HOMESTEAD: 8pm / AMBRIDGE: 8pm / EAST PITTSBURGH: 7pm
- ✘ **January 19** – 9:30am Divine Liturgy with the Great Blessing of Water on the Feast of Theophany / Annual House Blessings begin
- ✘ **January 20** – Synaxis of the Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist, John
- ✘ **Thursday, January 23** – Parastas for all aborted babies

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Looking FURTHER Ahead

Some 2020 dates of interest:

- Feb. 22 – 1st All Soul's Saturday
- Feb. 23 - Pre-Lenten Breakfast following Liturgy
- Mar. 2 – The Great Fast Begins
- *Wednesday Night Presanctified Liturgies will be at the Hampton Inn off of the Wexford exit of 79 (2622 Wexford Bayne Rd., Sewickley, PA 15143).*
- Mar. 8 – 4:30pm Sunday of Orthodoxy at Holy Trinity
- Mar. 9 – 1st & 2nd Findings of the Head of St. John
- Mar. 14 – 2nd All Soul's Saturday
- Mar. 15 – 3pm Lenten Mission in Ambridge
- Mar. 21 – 3rd All Soul's Saturday
- Mar. 22 – 3pm Lenten Mission in East Pittsburgh
- Mar. 28 – 4th All Soul's Sat. / Diocese Lenten Retreat
- Mar. 29 – 3pm Lenten Mission in **North Side**
- Apr. 4 – Church Spring Cleaning
- Apr. 5 – 3pm Lenten Mission in Rankin
- Apr. 11 – Lazarus Saturday / beginning of Holy Week
- Apr. 19 – Pascha, the Feast of Feasts
- Apr. 26 – Cemetery Grave Blessings
- May 12-14 – 3rd Annual Senior Retreat at CN
- May 13 – Feast of Mid-Pentecost
- May 28 – Feast of Ascension
- May 29-Jun 1 - ACRY Bowling Tournament
- Jun. 6 – 5th All Souls Saturday (*tentative date*)
- Jun. 6 – 4pm Faith Night at PNC Park
- Jun. 5-7 – Family Camp at Camp Nazareth
- Jun. 7 – Family Day at Camp Nazareth
- Jun. 7 – Feast of Pentecost
- Jun. 7 – 3rd Finding of the Head of St. John
- Jun. 15 – Apostles Fast begins
- Jul. 7 – Feast of the Nativity of St John
- Jul. 12 – Church Picnic at "The Cabin" in North Park
- Jul. 26 - Aug. 1 – Pittsburgh Deanery Week at CN
- Aug. 9-15 – Science and Nature Week at CN
- Sep. 20 – 3rd Annual Deanery Family Picnic

Please, Save the Dates!

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majority of its current programs and staff to NRP. Starting in January 2020, the NRP will independently run the programs that provide food, clothing, medical assistance, and trauma-informed care services in the Hill District and elsewhere in Pittsburgh. FOCUS North America is pleased to have supported the creation of these important programs." **More info in the church hall and at:** www.neighborhoodresilience.org.



The International Soup Sampling to benefit IOCC (International Orthodox Christian Charities) will be on Saturday, **February 8th**

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Orthodox Food Pantry – Volunteers are needed every Thursday from 5:15 to 6:45 to assist at **St Cyril of White Lake Food**

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Pantry based out of St. Mary's Orthodox Church (105 S. 19th St, Pittsburgh, Pa). If interested, please contact Fr Patrick at 412-431-6428.

Visit Our Diocese On-Line

Diocesan Website: www.acrod.org
 Camp Nazareth: www.campnazareth.org
 FB: www.facebook.com/acroddiocese
 Twitter: twitter.com/acrodnews
 You Tube: youtube.com/acroddiocese

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

"Of all the afflictions that burden the human race, there is not one, whether spiritual or bodily, that cannot be healed by the Holy Scriptures." +Saint John Chrysostom

Epistle: Galatians 4:4-7

⁴But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷So through God you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then an heir.

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Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12:

The Visit of the Wise Men

²Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, ²"Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him." ³When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it is written by the prophet:



⁶'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will govern my people Israel."

⁷Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star appeared; ⁸and he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." ⁹When they had heard the king they went their way; and lo, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy; ¹¹and going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. ¹²And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

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LIVING ORTHODOXY

Why did Jesus come?

For whom did He come? He came for each of us, for our salvation! Think about all He did only for our benefit. We must remember He was born of a Virgin, took human flesh becoming fully human. He was a child and was raised on His mother's milk. Even though He was from before time, He came in total humility, wrapped in swaddling clothes, born in a smelly stable. As John says, "And the Word was made flesh (Jn 1:14)." Then, when still a small child, He fled from the terror of Herod who wanted to kill Him. Remember when he began teaching how He went from place to place, helping others to awaken to their salvation, without giving concern about His own worldly desires. He was blasphemed, cursed and mocked. He was tortured, suffered, and even betrayed by one of His disciples. Finally, He was led to his death to be hung on a Cross between two lawless evil doers. Why did He do all this? He did it only for our benefit, our salvation. Remember these things.

Many of us have ignored Him and have lived a life for our pleasure. Remember his Blood he shed, all His



suffering, all He did without regard for Himself. Think about His extreme humility. All He asks is that we be uplifted by His example and accept His love. All we need to do is to humble ourselves and repent.

Saint Tikhon writes, "Christ the son of God shows us His coming into the world for his sake in the Gospel. He presents in him His willing self-emptying, His willing poverty, His willing and deep humility, His labors, pains, tribulations, sorrows, sufferings and death, and even a death

on the Cross. And He says to us, "I took all this on myself and endured it for your sake and for your salvation. But you neglect your salvation, and take no thought that you should repent and cease from your sins, to make use of My Blood and live."

Why do we languish in our sinful way of life and make no effort to change when God Himself has come out of love for us to show us the path to be saved? Why do we not understand that He came to help us, not punish us? If we do not heed his word there will be a judgement and we will not find eternal joy, but will be eternally separated from the source of love. We need to awaken to the Truth.

Saint Tikhon says, "Set your salvation on nothing else but on Christ Jesus alone, the Savior of the world. If you truly believe that He suffered and died for you and is your Savior, then love Him as your Savior, and lay and confirm all your hope in Him alone."

His Church was created when He sent the Holy Spirit to empower His disciples. He gave them instruction and guidance on how to nurture our fallen souls so all of us could be united with Him. They created what can be thought of as a spiritual hospital, with Sacraments, beautiful liturgies that lift

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us to heaven, with guidelines for asceticism like fasting and rules for daily prayer. When we awake we will rush to the Church ahead of time seeking to be renewed and nourished by His Body and Blood in the sacrament. We will make time for daily prayer and read daily Scripture and the writings of the Church Fathers.

Remember how He came, how He selflessly gave Himself for our benefit. Make a renewed effort to follow Him and prepare yourself to be worthy of His grace.

Reference: *Journey to Heaven*, by Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk

LIVES OF THE SAINTS

The Adoration of the Magi: Melchior, Caspar, and Balthasar

Commemorated on Jan. 7 / Dec. 25

See Matthew ch. 2. According to the verses of the Feast and most of the Holy Fathers, the Magi were astrologers from Persia or Babylonia (The

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Scripture says only that they came "from the east.") The star which they followed was no inanimate object, but one of the Angelic Powers of heaven, appointed to lead them to the Savior. From the very beginning, the Good News of Christ was proclaimed to the nations.

ST JOHN'S MONTHLY COMMUNITY OUTREACH



This month, through the efforts of our Sr. ACRY, we will be collecting donations for the **Orthodox Christian Network**. (This is the site that Father uses to get the "Children's Word" that is distributed each week.) The Orthodox Christian Network

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(OCN) is an official agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America. **MyOCN is YourOCN!** Visit www.myocn.net to see the variety of materials they provide online! Thank you in advance for your prayers and offerings this month!

PRAYER CORNER

Our Parish Prayer List for Special Intentions and Other Needs *

A Prayer For The Sick: O Christ, You alone are prompt to defend us; quickly visit Your suffering servant **name(s)**.

Through the prayers of the Theotokos, deliver **him/her/them** from sickness and bitter pain. Heal **him/her/them** so that **he/she/they** may sing to You and always praise You for You alone love us. Amen.

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For the Health of... Daniel, Lexi, Susan, John, Alexandra D., Annie, Pañi Marie, Jake, Anna Mae, Eleanor D., Viola, Juliana, Fredrick, Kenneth, Michael, Roberta, Gary, Lino, June, Doug, Joanne ...through the prayers of St. Nectarios the Wonderworker; St. Luke, the Surgeon; and St. Panteleimon, the Healer.

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For the Special Intentions of... Metropolitan Gregory, Pañi Alexandra, Maria, Sophia, Father Dave, Stephen, David, Anastasia, Nicholas, Cassandra, Alexander, Nancy, Andrea, Jason, Tyrone, Sarah, Ameer, Joshua, John, Kathryn, Rose, Charles, Justin our seminarians: Thomas, John, Daniel and Dylan and our Church Council, Curators, and Relocation Committee: Matthew, Lawrence, Timothy, Theresa, Rich, Gina, Robert, Jane, Anthony, Mary Jane, Steven, Kenneth, Jillian, John, Wendy, John, Margaret, John, John, Todd and for those who labor towards our Community Outreach ...through the prayers of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker; St. John the Baptist; the Archangels Michael & Gabriel; and the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary.

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Patronal Feast Days (Name's Day): Stephen Brancho - Holy Protomartyr & Archdeacon Stephen (1/9) (contact Fr. Dave with your Patron Saint)

Birthday Prayers for... Anna Martellotti (belated 1/4), Steven Buhonick (1/7), Jason Shelpman (1/9) ...May God allow them to grow in peace and love all the days of their lives and may He grant them many and blessed years! Na Mnohaja I Blahaja L'ita!

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For our Catechumens & Inquirers... Dustin, Stephen, Daniel, Susan ...through the prayers of St. Paul the Apostle, St. Mary Magdalene, and St. John Maximovitch.

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For those preparing for Marriage... Ashley & Derek ...through the prayers of Sts. Adrian & Natalia and all Holy Martyrs.

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For Pregnant Mothers... Mallory Ann, Caitlenn, Allison, Pañi Stacey, Pañi Ileana, Faith...through the prayers of St. Anna, the mother of the Virgin Mary, & St. Irene Chrysovalantou.

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For those serving in the Armed Forces & Civil Authorities... Thomas R. Dzdovsky, Devin Meegan, and Trevor Meegan ...through the prayers of St. George, the Great-Martyr & Wonderworker.

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For the souls of the newly departed... +Stelian Popescu (12/30), +Archpriest Stephen Shuga (12/16) ...May the Lord God grant them blessed repose where there is no pain sorrow or mourning. May their Memory in God be Eternal

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* This is to be used for the special intentions of our brothers and sisters in Christ and can be inserted as a prayer itself into our daily prayers. Please let Fr. Dave know if you wish to make additions or subtractions (in the case of answered prayers) to our Parish List. The words of the Gospel are true: **it is good to pray for one another.**

Let this be a place where we lay out our concerns and beg the help of our brothers & sisters in Christ. This prayer list is **NOT** limited to only Orthodox Christians.



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