



# ST. 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*  
Subdeacon Ryan Ferko  
Timothy Martin, *Reader*  
Matthew Peifer, Stephen Brancho, & John Radick, *Cantors*  
Lawrence Martin, *Parish Council President*  
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## SERVICES FOR THE WEEK

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19 #NATIVITY FAST

26<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
St. Nicholas the Wonderworker  
9:15 – Icon procession, Litiya Prayers,  
Nativity Canon & Carols (*Kol'ady*)  
9:30 am Divine Liturgy  
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### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 23 #NATIVITY FAST

9:30 am Akathist to St. Nicholas  
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### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26 #NATIVITY FAST

27<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
Sunday of the Holy Forefathers  
St. Herman, Wonderworker Of Alaska (1836) and  
Synaxis Of The 1<sup>st</sup> Martyrs Of The American Land  
9:15 – Nativity Canon & Carols (*Kol'ady*)  
9:30 am Divine Liturgy  
Epistle: Colossians 3:4-11  
Gospel: Luke 14:16-24  
Tone 2; Liturgical Color: **Purple**  
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**Future Services** are listed on our online “Parish Calendar” which is continually updated at: [www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar](http://www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar)  
(Please ask Fr. Dave if you want a printed copy)

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**Live-Broadcast** – If you are unable to attend church on Sunday morning, please pray along with our Cathedral’s services online at **9:00 am.**  
[www.acrod.org/organizations/cathedral/live/](http://www.acrod.org/organizations/cathedral/live/)

## BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wed.)

### Protecting Veil of the Theotokos of Pittsburgh Icons

– In the generosity of St. Nicholas, thank you to the anonymous donor of additional icons of the Protecting Veil of the Theotokos of Pittsburgh for every household of the parish! If you did not get an icon last year, please see Fr. Dave or Larry to take yours home today. May God bless the donor of these icons and may He bless all of the homes where the icons are going!

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**THANK YOU** to everyone who helped in any way with today’s St. Nicholas Breakfast!

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### Nativity Fast Book Suggestion - THE RELIGION OF THE APOSTLES (ISBN: 9781944967550)

Fr. Dr. Stephen De Young presents the Orthodox Christian Church of today as a continuation of the religious life of the apostles, which in turn was a continuation of the life of the people of God since the beginning of creation. To purchased from Ancient Faith Publishing, visit:

[store.ancientfaith.com/the-religion-of-the-apostles/](http://store.ancientfaith.com/the-religion-of-the-apostles/)

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### Spiritual Vitamin:

“We understand you to be a new Noah, a guide of the ark of salvation, O holy Father Nicholas who drives away the storm of all evils by your direction, and bring divine calm out to those that cry with wonder: Rejoice, O Nicholas, Great Wonderworker!” - Akathist to St. Nicholas, Ikos 7

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## A WARM WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS!

Glory be to Jesus Christ!

(responded with: **Glory be forever!**)

**Slava Isusu Christu! (Slava na viki!)**

**We are happy** that you have joined us today! 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 again soon! **If you have any questions** in regards to our worship or Orthodoxy, please see Fr. Dave.

### 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 church hall or by contacting Fr. Dave (email, text, or call). An additional stewardship offering to the Church is requested.

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## A REMINDER TO MAKE TIME FOR YOUR NATIVITY FAST CONFESSION

“Lord, if you will, you can make me clean.” (Lk. 5:12)

Fr. Dave will be available for confessions after ALL services and by appointment.

As we prepare for the Feast of the Nativity, it is time to prepare the “Manger of our soul” for the coming of the Messiah.

“There is more mercy in God than there are sins in us. Confess your sins at once, whatever they may be.” + St Tikhon of Zadonsk

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### Spiritual Vitamin:

St. Nicholas the Wonderworker

*Tropar:*

“The sincerity of your deeds has revealed you to your people as a teacher of moderation, a model of faith, and an example of virtue. Therefore, you attained greatness through humility, and wealth through poverty. O Father and Archbishop Nicholas, ask Christ our God to save our souls.”

*Kondak:*

“You were truly a priestly worker in Myra, O Holy Nicholas, for zealously living the Gospel of Christ, you dedicated your life to your people; you saved the innocent from death. Therefore, you have been sanctified as one who has entered the mystery of God’s grace.”

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**Embrace The Nativity Fast** - This fasting period in the church is referred to as the Nativity Fast, Philip’s Fast (*Filipovka*), or sometimes by it’s Latin roots, Advent. It runs for 40-days until the Eve of the Nativity on Monday, January 6. As in Great Lent, you should establish for yourself a rule of fasting and stick to it. It is often said that the Nativity Fast is so much more difficult because of the nature of society around us. We can enjoy the season with our extended family & friends and still witness to our Faith and keep the spirit of the Fast! Everyone should try, at a minimum, to keep Monday, Wednesday & Friday as fast days, no matter what is happening on the ‘new calendar’. Also, Metropolitan Gregory has offered a “Prayer Challenge” to all of the faithful and especially the youth and young adults of the Diocese to strengthen their spiritual lives. The challenge is to offer a special prayer for the increase in Faith, Hope and Love during your evening prayers every day for 40 days. For more info, visit:

[www.acrod.org/consecration/prayerchallenge/](http://www.acrod.org/consecration/prayerchallenge/)  
If you have any questions, please talk with Father Dave as we **prepare the Manger of our Soul for the coming of the new borne Messiah!**

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**Akathist to Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker** – On Thursday morning at 9:30, we will pray an Akathist to St. Nicholas. (*An Akathist is a hymn (a song of praise or adoration) dedicated to a saint, holy event, icon, or one of the persons of the Holy Trinity.*)

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**Community Outreach** - During the Nativity Fast, we are called to increase our Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving, we are having a **Food Drive Project** for Neighborhood Resilience Project (formerly FOCUS Pittsburgh). *Please bring in non-perishable unexpired food items: canned fruits and vegetables, cereals, canned meats, soups, oatmeal, pasta, peanut butter and jelly, and rice.*

### OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD

Stewardship Offerings:	\$ 325
Candles/Eternal Lamp Stewardship:	\$ 114
Envelope Stewardship:	\$ 1529
Community Outreach:	\$ 70
<b>Total Collections:</b>	<b>\$ 2038</b>
<b>Capital Improvement Fund:</b>	<b>\$ 130</b>
<b>Relocation Fund:</b>	<b>\$ 70</b>

*In faith that God provides:*

“And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work. As it is written, ‘He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures for ever.’ – 2 Cor. 9:8-9

**Weekly Candle Intentions / Memorials** were offered last week by Nelson Family; Lawrence Martin; Tim Martin; Cindy Pavilonis; Kathy Schrmack; Shuster Family; Patty Watson.

*“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*

**The Eternal Lamp** was offered last week by Matthew Peifer in memory of parents, +Jack and +Viola Peifer. May Their Memory Be Eternal!

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**Weekly Offerings to God** – During this time, if you are not yet coming to the church, we request that weekly donations be mailed to Tim Martin (2225 McAleer Rd., Sewickley, PA 15143)



**On-Line Giving** is now available from our parish website! The best option is to come to church and give your offering to God in His Temple (2<sup>nd</sup> best is to mail it in). Now you can also donate from your home and set up a recurring donation to the:

*General Stewardship Fund, Capital Improvement Fund, and/or Relocation Fund.*

If you miss coming to church for a week, this allows you another option to “catch up” on your weekly stewardship. For our parish to continue its ministries, outreach, and general bill paying, we need your generosity to continue.

### SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

*Epistle: Ephesians 5:8-19*

<sup>8</sup>for once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light <sup>9</sup>(for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), <sup>10</sup>and try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. <sup>11</sup>Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. <sup>12</sup>For it is a shame even to speak of the things that they do in secret; <sup>13</sup>but when anything is exposed by the light it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light. <sup>14</sup>Therefore it is said, “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light.” <sup>15</sup>Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, <sup>16</sup>making the most of the time, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup>Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. <sup>18</sup>And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup>addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart.

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*Gospel: Luke 17:12-19*

<sup>12</sup>And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance <sup>13</sup>and lifted up their voices and said, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.” <sup>14</sup>When he saw them he said to them, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went they were cleansed. <sup>15</sup>Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; <sup>16</sup>and he fell on his face at Jesus’ feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. <sup>17</sup>Then said Jesus, “Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? <sup>18</sup>Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?” <sup>19</sup>And he said to him, “Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well.”

*Spiritual Vitamin:*

“He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; said Jesus Christ [John 14:12]. And in truth, the deeds of an Elias, a Moses, the works of a Peter, a Paul, and the wonders of a Panteleimon, a Nicholas, are not a strange thing in the Holy Orthodox Church. The like is repeated again and again in the Church, whether you see it or not.” + St. Sebastian Dabovich

### LIVES OF THE SAINTS

#### SAINTED NICHOLAS, ARCHBISHOP OF MYRA IN LYCIA, AND WONDERWORKER

*Patron Saint Of The Carpatho-Rusyn People, For Children, For Help In Distress Or Poverty, For Travelers (Specifically At Sea), And Of Our Diocesan Church Schools  
Commemorated on December 19/6*

Sainted Nicholas, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia, and Wonderworker is famed as a great saint pleasing unto God. He was born in the city of Patara in the Lycian region (on the south coast of the Asia Minor peninsula), and was the only son of pious parents Theophanes and Nonna, who had given a vow to dedicate him to God. As the fruition of longtime prayer of his childless parents, the infant Nicholas from the very day of his birth revealed to people the light of his future glory as a wonderworker. His mother, Nonna, after giving birth was immediately healed from illness. The newborn infant while still in the baptismal font stood on his feet three times, without support from anyone, indicating by this to honour the MostHoly Trinity. Saint Nicholas from his infancy began a life of fasting, and on Wednesdays and Fridays he accepted milk from his mother only but once, after the evening prayers of his parents.

From the time of his childhood Nicholas thrived on the study of Divine Scripture; by day he would not leave church, and by night he prayed and read books – fashioning in himself a worthy dwelling-place of the Holy Spirit. His uncle, Bishop Nicholas of Patara, rejoiced at the spiritual success and deep piety of his kinsman. He ordained him a reader, and then elevated Nicholas to the dignity of presbyter, making him his assistant and entrusting him to speak instructing the flock. In serving the Lord the youth was fervent of spirit, and in his proficiency with questions of faith he was like an elder / starlets, which aroused the wonder and deep respect of believers. Constantly at work and vivacious, being in unceasing prayer, presbyter Nicholas displayed great kind-heartedness towards the flock, and towards those afflicted coming to him for help, and he distributed all his inheritance to the poor. Having learned about the bitter need and poverty of a certain formerly rich inhabitant of his city, Saint

Nicholas saved him from great sin. Having three grown daughters, the despairing father considered to give them over to profligacy so as to save them from hunger. The saint, grieving lest the man perish a sinner, by night secretly brought him through the window three sacks with gold and by this saved the family from falling into spiritual destruction. In bestowing charity, Saint Nicholas always strove to do this secretly and conceal his good deeds.

In setting off on pilgrimage to the holy places at Jerusalem, the bishop of Patara entrusted the guidance of the flock to Saint Nicholas, who fulfilled this obedience carefully and with love. When the bishop returned, he in turn asked blessing for a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Along the way the saint predicted the onset of a storm threatening the ship with inundation, since he saw the devil itself having got on ship. At the entreaty of the despairing pilgrims, he calmed by his prayers the waves of the sea. Through his prayer also was restored to health a certain sailor of the ship, who had fallen from the mast and was mortally injured.

Having reached the ancient city of Jerusalem and having come to Golgotha, Saint Nicholas offered up thanksgiving to the Saviour of the race of mankind and he made the rounds of all the holy places, doing poklons and making prayers. By night on Mount Sion the closed doors of the church opened by themselves in front of the arriving great pilgrim. Going round the holy places connected with the earthly service of the Son of God, Saint Nicholas decided to withdraw into the wilderness, but he was stopped by a Divine voice, urging him to return to his native country. Having returned to Lycia and yearning for a life of quietude, the saint entered into the brotherhood of a monastery, named Holy Sion. But the Lord again announced another pathway, awaiting him: "Nicholas, this is not the field, on which thou ought to await Mine harvest, but rather turn round and go into the world, and there My Name shall be glorified in thee". In the vision the Lord gave him a Gospel of exquisite workmanship, and the MostHoly Mother of God – an omophor.

And actually, upon the death of archbishop John, he was chosen bishop of Lycian Myra – after one of the bishops of the Council gave a decisive reply on the question of choice of a new archbishop – the

**[Continued on the flip side]**

choice of God as directed him in a vision – Saint Nicholas. Summoned to the flock of the Church in the dignity of archbishop, Sainted Nicholas remained a great ascetic, appearing to his flock as an image of gentleness, kindness and love towards people. This was particularly precious for the Lycian Church during the time of persecution of Christians under the emperor Diocletian (284-305). Bishop Nicholas, locked up in prison together with other Christians, sustained them and exhorted them to bravely endure the fetters, punishment and torture. He himself the lord preserved unharmed. Upon the accession to rule of the holy equal-to-the-apostles Constantine, Saint Nicholas was restored to his flock, which joyfully received back their guide and intercessor.

Despite his great gentleness of spirit and purity of heart, Saint Nicholas was a zealous and ardent warrior of the Church of Christ. Fighting evil spirits, the saint made the rounds of the pagan temples and shrines in the city of Myra and its surroundings, shattering the idols and turning the temples to dust.

In the year 325 Saint Nicholas was a participant in the I OEcumenical Council (Sobor). This Council proclaimed the Nicean Symbol of faith, and he stood up with the likes of saints Sylvester the pope of Rome, Alexander of Alexandria, Spyridon of Trimiphuntum and others of the 318 fathers of the Council against the heretic Arius.

Saint Nicholas, in the heat of denunciation and fired up with zeal for the Lord, even gave the false-teacher a good drubbing on the ears, for which he was deprived of his bishop's omophor and put under guard. But several of the holy fathers shared a vision revealing that the Lord Himself and the Mother of God had made the saint to be bishop, bestowing upon him the Gospel and omophorion. The fathers of the Council, having concurred, that the audacity of the saint was pleasing to god, gave glory to the Lord and restored His holy saint to the dignity of bishop.

Having returned to his own diocese, the saint brought it peace and blessings, sowing the word of Truth, nipping in the bud defective and spurious claims of wisdom, uprooting heresy and healing the fallen and those led astray through ignorance. He was indeed a light in the world and the salt of the earth, wherein his life did shine and his word was mixed

with the salt of wisdom.

Even during his life the saint worked many miracles. Of them the one accorded the greatest fame was the deliverance from death by the saint of three men, unjustly condemned by a greedy city-commander. The saint boldly went up to the executioner and took hold of his sword, already suspended over the heads of the condemned. The city-commander, denounced by Saint Nicholas in wrongdoing, repented himself and begged for forgiveness. During this time there were present three military officers, dispatched by the emperor Constantine to Phrygia. They did not suspect that they soon likewise would be compelled to seek the intercession of Saint Nicholas: it so happened that they had been vilely slandered before the emperor and were come under a sentence of death. Appearing in sleep to the holy equal-to-the-apostles Constantine, Saint Nicholas called on him to dismiss the wrongful death-sentence of the military officers who, now in prison, prayerfully called out for help to the saint. He worked many other miracles, and asceticised many long years at his labour. Through the prayers of the saint, the city of Myra was rescued from a terrible famine. Having appeared in sleep to a certain Italian merchant and having left him as a pledge of payment three gold money-pieces, which the merchant found in his hand upon wakening in the morning, he requested him to sail to Myra and furnish grain there. More than once did the saint save those drowning in the sea, and provide release from captivity and imprisonment.

Having reached old age, Saint Nicholas expired peacefully to the Lord (+345-351). His venerable relics were preserved undecayed in the local cathedral church and flowed with curative myrrh, from which many received healing. In the year 1087 his relics were transferred to the Italian city of Bari, where they rest even now (about the Transfer of Relics see under 9 May).

The name of the great saint of God, the hierarch and wonderworker Nicholas, a speedy helper and suppliant for all hastening to him, is famed in all the ends of the earth, in many lands and among many peoples. In Russia there are a multitude of cathedrals, monasteries and churches consecrated in his name. There is not, probably, a single city without a Nikol'sk temple.

In the name of Sainted Nicholas the

Wonderworker – the first Russian Christian prince Askol'd (+ 882) was baptised in 866 by Patriarch Photios. Over the grave of Askol'd, the holy equal-to-the-apostles Ol'ga (Comm. 11 July) erected the first temple of Sainted Nicholas in the Russian Church at Kiev. Primary cathedrals were dedicated to Saint Nicholas at Izborsk, Ostrov, Mozhaisk, and Zaraisk. At Novgorod the Great one of the main churches of the city – the Nikolo-Dvorischensk church, later became a cathedral. Famed and venerable Nikol'sk churches and monasteries are at Kiev, Smolensk, Pskov, Toropetsa, Galich, Archangelsk, Great Ustiug, Tobol'sk. Moscow was famed by several tens of churches consecrated to the saint, and three Nikol'sk monasteries were situated in the Moscow diocese: the Nikolo-Greek (Staryi) – in the Chinese-quarter, the Nikolo-Perervinsk and the Nikolo-Ugreshsk. One of the chief towers of the Kremlin was named the Nikol'sk. Part of all the churches devoted to the saint were those established at market-squares by Russian merchants, sea-farers and land-goers, venerating the wonderworker Nicholas as a protector of all those journeying on dry land and sea. They sometimes received the name among the people of "Nicholas soaked". Many village churches in Russia were dedicated to the wonderworker Nicholas, reverently venerated by peasants as a merciful intercessor before the Lord for all the people in their work. And in the Russian land Saint Nicholas did not leave off with his intercession. Ancient Kiev preserves the memory about the miraculous rescue of a drowning infant by the saint. The great wonderworker, hearing the grief-filled prayers of the parents in the loss of their only child, by night snatched up the infant from the waters, revived him and placed him in the choir-loft of Saint Sophia church in front of his wonderworking image. And here in the morning the infant was found safe by his thrilled parents, praising with a multitude of the people Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker.

Many wonderworking icons of Saint Nicholas appeared in Russia and came also from other lands. There is the ancient byzantine embroidered image of the saint (XII), brought to Moscow from Novgorod, and the large icon written in the XIII Century by a Novgorod master. Two depictions of the wonderworker are especially distributed in the

Russian Church: Sainted Nicholas of Zaraisk – in full-length, with blessing right hand and with Gospel (this image was brought to Ryazan in 1225 by the byzantine princess Eupraxia, future spouse of Ryazan prince Theodore, and perishing in 1237 with her husband and infant-son during the incursion of Batu); and Sainted Nicholas of Mozhaisk – also in full stature, with a sword in his right hand and a city in his left – in memory of the miraculous rescue, through the prayers of the saint, of the city of Mozhaisk from an invasion of enemies. It is impossible to list all the graced icons of Saint Nicholas. Every Russian city and every church was blessed by suchlike icons through the prayers of the saint.

## LIVING ORTHODOXY



### **St. Nicholas Traditions from Around the World:** *this year we look at ARUBA*

Sinterklaas comes to former Dutch lands in the Caribbean, including Aruba. The boat from Spain arrives in the harbor of Oranjestad, the capital.

People come from all over the island. Parents and children wait along the quay for the steamer to dock. Sinterklaas and his Pieten helpers disembark and process through the streets of Oranjestad. A festive atmosphere pervades the area.

Children in Aruba put their shoes out for Sinterklaas and the Pieten to leave little treats during the time between Sint's mid-November arrival and the primary Sinterklaas celebration the evening of December 5. Sinterklaas is busy during these weeks making school and other visits.

Parties on December 5 are a time when children receive gifts, and sometimes, Sinterklaas and Pieten may even make a visit.

**ORTHODOXY AROUND THE  
'BURGH AND OUR DIOCESE**

**Shopping on-line** – The on-line shopping store, 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](http://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). **Would someone be willing to research how we can set this up for our parish?**

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**Cantor and Choir Director Positions** – St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, Homestead, PA is in need of a fulltime cantor and choir director (filled by one person or two.) Please email Tom Pingor, Parish Council President, at [tpingor@verizon.net](mailto:tpingor@verizon.net) for more information.

**VISIT OUR DIOCESE ON-LINE**

Diocesan Website: [www.acrod.org](http://www.acrod.org)  
Camp Nazareth: [www.campnazareth.org](http://www.campnazareth.org)  
FB: [www.facebook.com/acroddioecese](https://www.facebook.com/acroddioecese)  
Twitter: [twitter.com/acrodnews](https://twitter.com/acrodnews)  
YouTube: [youtube.com/acroddioecese](https://youtube.com/acroddioecese)

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**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...** Fr. Thomas, Maria, Paul, Kathleen, Sophia, Fr. Robert B., Alexandra, Meredith, Lucy, Bryce, Ryan, Dennis, Kasamanda, Robert, Douglas, Christopher, John, Joanne, Barbara, Brian,

Kristina, Sean, Julia, Susan, John, Juliana, Fredrick, Kenneth, Michael, and Roberta ...*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...** His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew, Metropolitan Gregory, Fr. Photios, Fr. Theodore, Deacon Charles, Laura & family, Carlene, Georgia, Eleanora, Mark, Michaleana, Dorell, Elizabeth, Donald, Susan, Stephen, David, Anastasia, Nicholas, Cassandra, Alexander, Nancy, Andrea, Jason, Tyrone, Sarah, Ameer, Joshua, John, Kathryn, Rose, Charles, Justin *our diocesan seminarians*: Nicholas, Dylan, Tom, Samuel, Timothy, Nicholas, Aydin *and our Church Council, Curators, and Relocation Committee*: Lawrence, Matthew, Timothy, Theresa, Rich, Gina, Robert, Jane, Mary Jane, Katherine, Kenneth, John, Wendy, Margaret, John, Patricia, John, Todd *and for those who labor towards our Community Outreaches ...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):** Nicholas Kubis - Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker (12/19) *(contact Fr. Dave with your Patron Saint)*

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**Birthday Prayers for...** Donald P. Gavulich (12/19), Patricia Deluca (12/20), Patricia Donley (12/20), Fr. Nik Ferencz (12/20), Mike Puhac (12/21), Jaydon Maruscak (12/23) ...*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!*

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**For our Catechumens & Inquirers...** Susan, Marilynn, John ...*through the prayers of St. Paul the Apostle, St. Mary Magdalene, & St. John Maximovitch.*

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**For those preparing for Marriage...** Nicole & Dustin ...*through the prayers of Sts. Adrian & Natalia and all Holy Martyrs.*

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**For Pregnant Mothers...** Meredith *(due in Dec)*, Allison *(May)* ...*through the prayers of St. Anna, the mother of the Virgin Mary, and St. Irene Chrysovalantou.*

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

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**For the souls of the newly departed...** +Michael Macura, the Priest (12/18), +John Gido, the Priest (11/25), Pani +Eleanor Polanichka (11/21) ...*May the Lord God grant them blessed repose where there is no pain sorrow or mourning. May they be Eternal in God's Memory.*

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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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*Spiritual Vitamin:*

“Children, I beseech you to correct your hearts and thoughts, so that you may be pleasing to God. Consider that although we may reckon ourselves to be righteous and frequently succeed in deceiving men, we can conceal nothing from God. Let us therefore strive to preserve the holiness of our souls and to guard the purity of our bodies with all fervor. Ye are the temple of God, says the divine Apostle Paul; If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy.”  
+ St. Nicholas of Myra, from *The Great Collection of the Lives of the Saints* by St. Demetrius of Rostov

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**DEVOTIONAL PRAYER FOR THE  
NATIVITY FAST**

**THE CANON OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD  
AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST**

**Ode 1:** Christ is born, glorify him! Christ comes from heaven, meet Him! Christ is an earth, be exalted! O all the earth, sing to the Lord, and sing praises in gladness, all people, for He has been glorified.

**Ode 3:** To the Son Who was begotten of the Father without change before all ages, and in the last times was without seed made flesh of the Virgin, to Christ our God, let us cry aloud: You have raised up our horn, holy are You, O Lord!

**Ode 4:** Rod of the root of Jesse, and flower that blossomed from his stem, O Christ, You have sprung forth from the Virgin. From the mountain overshadowed by the forest You came, made flesh for her that knew not wedlock, O God not formed from matter. Glory to Your power O Lord!

**Ode 5:** As You are God of Peace and Father of mercies, You have sent to us Your Angel of Great Counsel, granting unto us peace. So are we guided towards the light of the knowledge of God. And watching by night, we glorify You, O Lover of mankind.

**Ode 6:** The sea monster spat forth Jonah as it had received him, like a babe from the womb: while the Word, having dwelt in the Virgin and taken flesh: came forth from her yet kept her undefiled. For being Himself not subject to decay. He preserved His Mother free from harm.

**Ode 7:** Scorning the impious decree, the three children brought up together in godliness feared not the threat of fire: but standing in the midst of the flame they sang: “O God of our fathers, blessed are You!”

**Ode 8:** The furnace moist with dew was the image of a wonder past nature. For it burned not the children whom it had received, even as the fire of the Godhead consumed not the Virgin's womb into which It had descended. Therefore in praise, let us sing: let the whole creation bless the Lord, and exalt Him above all forever.

**Ode 9:** I behold a strange and wonderful mystery. The cave has become heaven, the throne of the Cherubim, the Virgin. The manger a noble place where lies Christ our God Who cannot be contained. Let us praise Him in song and magnify You!

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**NATIVITY FAST PRAYER CHALLENGE 2021**

*Metropolitan Gregory asks each member of our Diocese, either as a family or individually, to pray this every evening of the Nativity Fast.*

O Only-Begotten Son and Word of God: I truly believe and confess that You became flesh and dwelt among us for the salvation of the whole world. At Your Nativity, You endured the cold of the manger to enkindle within me love for You. You were bound in swaddling clothes to deliver me from the chains of sin and death. You were nourished with milk and thereby fed the Body which one day would suffer for my sake. During these days of fasting and prayer, forgive me – unworthy as I am – all the sins by which I have offended Your infinite goodness. Renew in me fervent faith, unailing hope, and a charitable desire to serve others. Accept this act of thanksgiving, just as You accepted the gifts and worship of the Wise Men, and preserve us all from dangers that we may adore You and say: Glory to You, O Lord Jesus Christ, forever and ever. Amen!

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**A prayer for our Neighborhoods**

*by Archbishop Demetrios of America*

I pray to you, God, for the families of my neighborhood. Visit them. Throw their troubles out of them and bring hope. Make the daily cares that devour the heart disappear. Present solutions to life’s problems. Settle the disturbed relationships among members of different families whom I know or do not know. O Lord, remind the people of our area that You exist, that You are a strong and loving Protector. Keep away, Lord, anything that causes the disappearance of peace from souls, and the escape of sleep from our eyes. Stay a little while more tonight in our neighborhood. Spread peace along with the night. Let the harshness of the day and its struggles not spread over the night. Amen.

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**A Prayer for our Diocesan Clergy**

O Lord Jesus Christ, Good Shepherd of Your sheep, light the fire of ardent love in the hearts of all Your priests, that they may ever and in all things seek only Your glory. Remember especially, Lord, our Bishop (*name*), and our spiritual father (*name*), and all our diocesan clergy, who are laboring in Your vineyard for the salvation of all those whom You have entrusted to them. Make their lives as holy as the word they preach. Keep them from being discouraged. Hear their prayers for our salvation. Give them wisdom and courage to proclaim Your truth. Make them priests after Your own heart. For You are a merciful God Who loves us and to You we give glory, together with Your eternal Father and Your all-holy, good and life-giving- Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

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**SPIRITUAL CONSIDERATIONS**

*Father is available to meet Monday thru Friday from 8:30am to 3:00pm or by appointment.*

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**Online Community:** Please email Fr. Dave to receive the weekly bulletin via email.

**Parish Phone Tree** - Please call Fr. Dave to be added.

**Emergency Sick Calls** – Please notify Fr Dave when you or a family member are going into the hospital or having a procedure. He will pray with you and you will receive the Mystery of Holy Anointing (Unction) to be fully prepared.

**Mystery of Confession** – Opportunities are available after every service, most Saturdays during fasting periods from 11am to 1pm, OR by appointment.

**Holy Communion/Eucharist** – The reception of the Holy Eucharist is encouraged for all Orthodox Christians who have properly prepared themselves, with fasting from midnight on, regular Confession, and forgiveness for all people. Those who are not Orthodox may receive a blessing from the chalice.

**Lapsed Members** – You are always welcome home and we want you back! Generally speaking, sincere participation in the Mysteries of Confession, Communion, and regular attendance at the divine services are all that is required to begin parish life

anew! See Fr. Dave for specific details.

**Baptisms** – Two God-parents are required, at least one of whom must be Orthodox by faith (and the other a practicing Christian). In the case of infants, the newly-baptized must have one name that is Christian in origin. Parents/grandparents/guardians must also promise to bring the child up in an Orthodox Christian way of life. Please consult Fr. Dave for more details.

**Adult Chrismation** – New parishioners are always welcome! In the case of adults seeking entrance into the Church, a period of prescribed catechism will be established with Fr. Dave before administration of the Mysteries. An Orthodox Christian sponsor is also required.

**Marriages** – are only solemnized on Saturdays or Sundays. They are not performed during fasting periods and certain Feast Days. Please consult Fr. Dave ASAP for more details (*before* arrangements are made for the hall).

**Church Funerals** – are provided for practicing Orthodox Christians who are current in their spiritual responsibilities and their stewardship. Otherwise, burial is from the funeral home. The Church does not permit cremation.

*“The cremation of bodies is not a Christian act. It is a custom of modern times. The body of a Christian has been sanctified with the Grace of the Holy Spirit, and as such may not be burned. God did not create our bodies for burning.” - Elder Thaddeus of Vitovnica*

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**How to stay connected with the departed:**

- ✘ Pray for them during the Divine Liturgy,

- ✘ Remember them in your daily prayers,
- ✘ Organize memorial services for their remembrance on their anniversary,
- ✘ Honor their memory by following their good deeds,
- ✘ Light a candle weekly for your departed loved ones,
- ✘ Give alms on their behalf, and
- ✘ Take care of their tombs [graves].

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