

“THE WEEKLY FORERUNNER” *Our Parish Weekly Bulletin*

O Holy John, Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptizer of the Lord, pray to God for us!

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS!

Glory to Jesus Christ! (*responded with: Glory 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! Please see Fr. Dave if you have any questions in regards to our worship or Orthodoxy.

UPCOMING SERVICES

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25 #NATIVITY FAST
28th Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday of the Holy Forefathers
Saint Spyridon the Wonderworker (348)
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SUNDAY, JANUARY 1 #NATIVITY FAST
29th Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday of the Holy Fathers
Martyr Boniface
9:15 Nativity Canon and Carols (*Kol’ady*)
9:30 Divine Liturgy
Epistle: Hebrews 11:9-10, 32-40
Gospel: Matthew 1:1-25
Tone 4; Liturgical Color: **Purple / Red**
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THURSDAY, JANUARY 5 #NATIVITY FAST
9:30 Prefestive Moleben for the Nativity

FRIDAY, JANUARY 6 #NATIVITY FAST
9:30 Royal Hours of Nativity

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7 #NATIVITY FAST
FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD
9:30 Divine Liturgy
Parish Family Photo
Nativity Pot-Luck Meal
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Mystery of Confession – Father is available to hear Confessions after every service
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Calendar - Future Services are updated online at:
www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar
(Please see Fr. Dave if you want a printed copy)

RELOCATION UPDATE

*** **Car accident at the Parish House** – After 2am on Saturday, December 17, an SUV came down Woodland and did not stop until hitting the house. Thank God, no one was injured! It is a miracle that none of the kids having a sleepover in the living room were injured. Due to the severe damage to the house, Josh and his family are displaced. A GoFundMe page has been set up for those able to donate and support their family: <https://gofund.me/a34435df>
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** The Allison Park Church has extended our contract an additional 30 days to January 13.
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Contact Fr. Dave or Larry Martin if you are interested in being added to the *Construction Committee*.
May God continue to guide our journey to
2201 Duncan Avenue, Allison Park, PA 15101
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As updates are available, they will be shared here.
Please contact Larry or Fr. Dave with any questions
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BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)
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*** **THANK YOU** to everyone who helped with the St. Nicholas Breakfast in our church hall last week!
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*** **Christmas Pot-luck** – Our January 7th Pot-luck meal after the Divine Liturgy will return next month. As the 3 Wise Men brought gifts to the newborn Child, please bring a bite to share with everyone on the Nativity of our Lord.
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Confession – A reminder to make time for you Nativity Fast Confession. Fr. Dave is available after every service as well as by making an appointment. *Prepare the Manger of our Soul for the coming of the new borne Messiah!*

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

Father Dave Urban, *Pastor* +++ 2688 California Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pa 15212
www.OrthodoxPittsburgh.com +++ 412-748-0148 (*Talk or Text*) +++ OrthodoxPittsburgh1932@gmail.com

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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 pray *specifically* for special intentions, “40 Days – 40 Prayers”, during your evening prayers of the Nativity Fast. For more info, visit:

www.acrod.org/metropolitan/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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* **Sr. ACRY NEWS: Lots–O–Luck Calendars** – The National ACRY Lots-O-Luck Calendars are available. \$25 per ticket gets you a years worth of prizes totaling \$10,000! Please see Theresa Sharpless for tickets. (We are able to get more tickets if needed)
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* **Nativity Commemorations** – We offer you the opportunity to sponsor items to be used for Nativity as commemorations: *anonymously, in memory of departed loves ones, OR for the health of loved ones*. If you are interested in making any of these commemorations, please sign up on the sheet in the vestibule (or email Fr. Dave) and give an *additional stewardship free-will offering* to the church.
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** **Broken Windows** – Prior to the morning of Saturday, December 3, two windows were broken at the church (the vent in the glass block window heading to the ladies room and one of the windows in the middle of the glass block in the hall). They were both repaired this past week.
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Live-Broadcast – If you are unable to attend church services, please pray along with our Cathedral online:
www.acrod.org/directories/cathedral//live/
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OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD

Stewardship Offerings:	\$ 645
Candle Stewardship:	\$ 290
Envelope Stewardship:	\$ 149
Community Outreach:	\$ 10
General Fund Total:	\$ 1094

Weekly Candle Intentions / Memorials were offered last week by Nelson Family; Tim Martin; Melanie Shuster; Eleanor Sanger; Patty Watson; Cindy Pavilonis
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Stewardship Offering - The end of the civil calendar year is here. Have you made a financial contribution to your parish yet? Please fulfill your stewardship responsibility of *time, talent, and treasure*.
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On-Line Giving is available from our parish website to donate to the: *General Stewardship Fund, Capital Improvement Fund, and/or Relocation Fund*. The best option is to come to church and give your offering to God in His Temple (2nd best is to mail it in to Tim Martin, 2225 McAleer Rd., Sewickley, PA 15143). If you miss coming to church for a week, online giving allows you another option to “catch up” on your weekly stewardship. You can also set up a recurring donation online. For our parish to continue it’s ministries, outreach, and general bill paying, your generosity and stewardship is needed.
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LIVING ORTHODOXY

WEEK OF HOLY FOREFATHERS

Commemorated on the Sunday that falls between the 11th and 17th of December

On this Sunday, in preparation of the Nativity of our Lord, we remember the Patriarch Abraham and his lineage, ancestors of Christ. The story of Abraham and his faithfulness should be read in the Book of Genesis.

"Through the connection of the holy Ancestors and Patriarchs, Our Saviour Jesus Christ is Himself also, in a way, the fruit of the faith of Abraham. So, when God makes his voice known to each of us while we are still in the strange land of the passions and worldly vanities, we must like Abraham unhesitatingly leave all that is ours, and follow the divine calling with faith until we reach the Promised Land where, in our turn, we shall be able to give birth spiritually to Christ For, planted in us by faith and Baptism, He has to grow in us through the virtues so as to shine in the light of contemplation. We descendants of Abraham, 'children of the promise' as Isaac was, having become 'sons of God' through the gift of the Holy Spirit, out therefore to see Christ form in us... Let us then for our part become forebears of Christ and continue steadfast in the faith, so that we may keep the feast of his Nativity, saying: It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." (*Synaxarion*)

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LIVES OF THE SAINTS

SAINTED SPYRIDON OF TRIMYPHUNTEIA

Commemorated on December 25/12

Our father among the saints Spyridon of Trimythous the Wonderworker (Greek: Σπυρίδων ca. 270-348) was a fourth century bishop who was present at the First Ecumenical Council. He is also commonly referred to in Corfu as Keeper of the City (Greek: ο πολιούχος), since he is also the patron saint of that island (this is where his relics are located and venerated). He is commemorated by the church on December 12.

Spyridon was born in the village of Ashia (askia - "without shade"), Cyprus (270 AD) and died in Trimythous, Cyprus (348 AD). He was a peasant farmer and shepherd and was not educated. Spyridon was married and had a daughter, Irene. After his wife died, he and his daughter both entered into monasticism. He later became the Bishop of Trimythous (during the reign of Constantine the Great) and continued in piety for which he was greatly known.

He is the patron saint of potters (from the miracle of the potsherd).

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MIRACLES

Through simplicity and deep devotion to God, he worked miracles throughout his life and became known as a great wonder-worker, calling forth rain in the midst of drought, casting out demons with a single word, healing the sick and even raising people from the dead, in addition to having the gift of prescience.

When he arrived back home from Nicea a woman told him that she had given his daughter, who had died while he was away, some jewelry for safekeeping. Now that his daughter was dead, no one could find where she had put them. Spyridon went to his daughter's grave, spoke to her, and was able to restore the jewelry to its owner.

Also during a famine Spyridon changed a snake into gold pieces so that a poor man could buy food from a greedy merchant who had cornered the supply.

One day there was only himself and the deacon and readers in church at vespers, and the responses could be heard beautifully chanted by an unseen choir. The music was so beautiful that others, passing by, heard it and saw through the windows what seemed like a large congregation. Entering the church, however, they found only St. Spyridon and his assistants.

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VISIT OUR DIOCESE ON-LINE

Diocesan Website: www.acrod.org
Camp Nazareth: www.campnazareth.org
FB: www.facebook.com/acroddioecese
Twitter: twitter.com/acrodnews
YouTube: youtube.com/acroddioecese

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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: Colossians 3:4-11

⁴When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

⁵Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. ⁶On account of these the wrath of God is coming. ⁷In these you once walked, when you lived in them. ⁸But now put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. ⁹Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices ¹⁰and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

¹¹Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scyth'ian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.

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Gospel: Luke 14:16-24

¹⁶But he said to him, "A man once gave a great banquet, and invited many; ¹⁷and at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for all is now ready.' ¹⁸But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it; I pray you, have me excused.' ¹⁹And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them; I pray you, have me excused.' ²⁰And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' ²¹So the servant came and reported this to his master. Then the householder in anger said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame.' ²²And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.' ²³And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. ²⁴For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.'"

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PRAYER CORNER

For the Health of... Mary Jane, Theresa, Thomas, David, Donna, Gregory, Joshua, George, John, Beverly, Kelly, Paul, Kathleen, Joanne, Marie, Barbara, Brian, Kristina, Sean, Julia, Susan, 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 souls of the newly departed...

The Priest, Protospesbyter +John Duranko (12/8), +Donald Babin (12/6) ...*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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NATIVITY FAST

PRAYER CHALLENGE 2022

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

O Master and Creator, You have made us to know You, to love You, and to serve You in this life, and to be happy with You forever in heaven.

You desire all to be saved and come to knowledge of the truth. For this reason, You sent Your Only-Begotten Son to be born in Bethlehem as our King and Redeemer. As we fast and prepare to celebrate His Nativity, we offer prayers and supplications for all people, and most especially at this time for...

(Now include the daily prayer intention found on the handout, or at

www.acrod.org/metropolitan/prayerchallenge/
and then continue below.)

Look down with merciful eyes upon Your servants. Pardon all their sins committed deliberately or because of human frailty. Protect them against all enemies, visible and invisible, and from every misfortune, distress, and affliction. Keep them in peace, tranquility, and health. We entrust them and ourselves to You, O Lord. Amen.

ONLINE BULLETIN BONUSES

YOU BETTER WATCH OUT—ST. NICHOLAS IS COMING TO TOWN

The seldom-told stories of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker

By Christopher B. Warner, December 05, 2012
Archbishop Nicholas peacefully fell asleep in the Lord on December 6, 343. He was immediately recognized as a saint and as the patron of travelers. He is called upon by Christians round the world for deliverance from flood, poverty, or any misfortune. He has especially promised to help those who remember his parents, Theophanes and Nonna. St. Nicholas' incorrupt relics were venerated for centuries in the local cathedral church of Myra. Like those of many other saints, his bones exude sweet-smelling myrrh. This holy myrrh has been used by Christian faithful to heal all manner of infirmities. During the Middle Ages the Turks conquered Byzantine Asia Minor and hitherto pose a constant threat to Christianity in that region. Because St. Nicholas is the patron saint of sailors, his stories have spread to every Christian nation. In 1087, solicitous for the safety of St. Nicholas' venerable remains, Italian sailors, who were devoted to this saint, plotted to steal the body and bring it back to their home village. St. Nicholas' relics were thus taken from Myra and translated to the city of Bari, where the saint's body continues to exude holy myrrh (in Italian, "sacra manna") 17 centuries after his death.

A thousand years later, Italians are still hardcore devotees. Once a year they commemorate the St. Nicholas, sailing around the harbor at Bari with giant statues of the saint in their boats followed by a solemn harvesting of his tomb oils. Bari's annual "Festival of the Translation of the Relics" is a three-day carnival with fireworks, processions, reenactments, fire-eaters, and Holy Mass, held every May 7-9. On the 9th, the rector of the basilica crawls into a small opening in the crypt to drain the sacra manna out of St. Nicholas' tomb into a glass vial. The manna is diluted with water and serves as an anointing sacramental and souvenir for pilgrims to Bari from across the globe. Irony aside, the biggest problem with a Turkish Santa Claus seems to be that it spoils the best-kept,

sacrosanct secret in America. If children stop believing in the elfin Santa who flies down from the North Pole with his reindeer, won't they stop getting presents? And if I tell my child different St. Nicholas stories, won't it spoil Christmas for someone's precious child when she hears my son tell her at school: "Santa doesn't live at the North Pole. He sleeps by the Adriatic Sea sweating off myrrh for lame pilgrims."

As in Aesop's fable of the father, the son, and the donkey, you can't please everybody. Telling the truth is not being a spoil-sport, it is evangelism, spreading the good news. The wonderful reality of St. Nicholas' life is that he deeply loved Our Lord and so ardently believed Christmas is about the incarnation of God that he was willing to courageously confess it, at the risk of his own life. If out of love he accosted a deceived unbeliever, it's because the real St. Nicholas was a man holy enough to be able to simultaneously defend the divinity of Christ and provide just, charitable reproof to a sinner. It was a privilege to be corrected by such a wise confessor of the faith, even if Arius was too foolish to receive it. "A rebuke goes deeper into a wise man than a hundred blows into a fool" (Proverbs 17:10).

The celebration of St. Nicholas on December 6/19 inspires our moral imagination and our jovial play; and by God's grace it will also inspire us to imitate St. Nicholas' virtues of love, generosity, courage, justice, and evangelism.

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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!

SPIRITUAL CONSIDERATIONS

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

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.

Parishioners in "good standing" are those Orthodox Christians who, as members of Saint John's Orthodox Church, strive to live according to the teachings of the Orthodox Church; participate in the life of the parish through regular attendance of services, regular reception of Holy Communion and periodic Holy Confession (*and receive these Mysteries no less than once a year*); if married, having been married in the Orthodox Church; and share their stewardship of their time, talents, and treasures which includes financially supporting the parish.

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). It is critical that marriages are blessed in our church.

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.

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“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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A SECOND PRAYER CORNER

*Our Parish Prayer List for
Special Intentions and Other Needs**

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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 Special Intentions of... His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew, Metropolitan Gregory, Fr. David S., Fr. Myron, Dcn. Michael L., Laura & family, Carlene, Georgia, Eleanor, Mark, Michaleana, Dorell, Donald, Susan, Stephen, David, Anastasia, Nicholas, Cassandra, Alexander, Andrea, Jason, Tyrone, Sarah, Ameer, Joshua, John, Kathryn, Rose, Charles, Justin *our diocesan seminarians:* Nicholas, Dylan, Thomas, Samuel, Timothy,

Nicholas, Aydin, Subdeacon Seamus, Nicholas, 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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December Namedays:

Caitlinn Brozell, Carol Lorenzi, Katherine Schrmack - Great-martyr Catherine of Alexandria (12/7)
Andrew Mirilovich, Fr. Dave Andrew Urban - Holy & All-praised Apostle Andrew the First-called (12/13)

Barbara Kirish - Great martyr Barbara (12/17)
Nicholas Kubis - St. Nicholas the Wonderworker (12/19)

Patrick Wertz - St. Sturm of Fulda Monastery (12/30)
...May God grant them many and blessed years!

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December Birthdays:

Matthew Hanchulak (12/1)
Stacy (Martin) Dzambo (12/1)
Joshua Winkler (12/1)

Father's Godson, Joseph Sekerak (12/2)
Lucy Jo Blobner (12/4)

His Eminence, Metropolitan Gregory (12/7)
Pañi Eleanor Herbert (12/8)
Deborah Brancho (12/9)
Jim Potoski (12/10)
Alexis Jesko (12/9)

Father's God-sister, Lauren Babbie (12/12)

Brian Gogal (12/15)
Madelyn Spirmak (12/17)
Donald Paul Gavulich (12/19)
Patricia Deluca (12/20)
Patricia Donley (12/20)
Fr Nik Ferencz (12/20)
Mike Puhac (12/21)

Jaydon Maruscak (12/23)
Molly Rose Blobner (12/27)
Caitlin Brozell (12/28)

...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... Tyler, Susan
...through the prayers of St. Paul the Apostle, St. Mary Magdalene, & St. John Maximovitch.

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

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December Anniversaries:

Faith (Sekerak) and Zach Thousands (12/28/19)
...through the prayers of St. Nicholas Planas

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For Pregnant Mothers... Nicole (*due in June*)
...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 *...through the prayers of St. George, the Great-Martyr & Wonderworker.*

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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:

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.”

DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS

A Prayer for Peace

Almighty God and Creator, You are the Father of all people on the earth. Guide, I pray, all the nations and their leaders in the ways of justice and peace. Protect us from the evils of injustice, prejudice, exploitation, conflict and war. Help us to put away mistrust, bitterness and hatred. Teach us to cease the storing and using of implements of war. Lead us to find peace, respect and freedom.

Unite us in the making and sharing of tools of peace against ignorance, poverty, disease and oppression. Grant that we may grow in harmony and friendship as brothers and sisters created in Your image, to Your honor and praise. 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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The Jesus Prayer

(Inhale) O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God,
(Exhale) have mercy on me, a sinner!
(Repeat until your heart is calm...)

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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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WORDS OF THE WEEK

Patron Saint - A **patron saint** is regarded as the intercessor and advocate in heaven of a nation, place, craft, activity, class, or person. Since the time of the early Christians up to the present, a vast number of patron [saints](#) have been recorded.

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To Intercede - to act or interpose in behalf of someone in difficulty or trouble, as by pleading or petition

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Petition - a request made for something desired, especially a respectful or humble request, as to a superior or to one of those in authority; a supplication or prayer:

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DECEMBER SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2 #NATIVITY FAST
9:30 Paraklis of the Nativity Fast
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3 #NATIVITY FAST
11-1 Mystery (Sacrament) of Confession offered
4:00 Feast Day Vespers
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4 #NATIVITY FAST
FEAST OF THE ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS
9:30 Divine Liturgy followed by Church School
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6 #NATIVITY FAST
9:30 Akathist to St. Nicholas
followed by Decorating for Christmas
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8 #NATIVITY FAST
9:30 Moleben for the Nativity Fast
followed by Decorating for Christmas
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10 #NATIVITY FAST
11-1 Mystery (Sacrament) of Confession offered
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11 #NATIVITY FAST
9:30am Divine Liturgy *(Nativity Canon begins)*
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14 #NATIVITY FAST
9:30 Paraklis of the Nativity Fast
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16 #NATIVITY FAST
9:30 Akathist for the Nativity Fast
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18 #NATIVITY FAST
9:30am Divine Liturgy (and Youth Sunday)
followed by St. Nicholas Breakfast
7:00 *in Homestead* Feast Day Vespers
MONDAY, DECEMBER 19 #NATIVITY FAST
FEAST OF SAINT NICHOLAS
9:30 Divine Liturgy
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23 #NATIVITY FAST
9:30 Moleben for the Nativity Fast
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25 #NATIVITY FAST
9:30am Divine Liturgy

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STEWARDSHIP SNIPPET

Stewardship of Treasure Guide

Weekly offering to God through the Sunday Offertory - Will you take a step up?

Weekly Income	Beyond a Tithe			Tithe			Upper Range Giving			Middle Range Giving			Lower Range Giving		
	15%	12%	10%	9%	8%	7%	6%	5%	4%	3%	2%	1%			
\$200	\$30	\$24	\$20	\$18	\$16	\$14	\$12	\$10	\$8	\$6	\$4	\$2			
\$300	\$45	\$36	\$30	\$27	\$24	\$21	\$18	\$15	\$12	\$9	\$6	\$3			
\$400	\$60	\$48	\$40	\$36	\$32	\$28	\$24	\$20	\$16	\$12	\$8	\$4			
\$500	\$75	\$60	\$50	\$45	\$40	\$35	\$30	\$25	\$20	\$15	\$10	\$5			
\$600	\$90	\$72	\$60	\$54	\$48	\$42	\$36	\$30	\$24	\$18	\$12	\$6			
\$700	\$105	\$84	\$70	\$63	\$56	\$49	\$42	\$35	\$28	\$21	\$14	\$7			
\$800	\$120	\$96	\$80	\$72	\$64	\$56	\$48	\$40	\$32	\$24	\$16	\$8			
\$900	\$135	\$108	\$90	\$81	\$72	\$63	\$54	\$45	\$36	\$27	\$18	\$9			
\$1,000	\$150	\$120	\$100	\$90	\$80	\$70	\$60	\$50	\$40	\$30	\$20	\$10			
\$1,100	\$165	\$132	\$110	\$99	\$88	\$77	\$66	\$55	\$44	\$33	\$22	\$11			
\$2,000	\$300	\$240	\$200	\$180	\$160	\$140	\$120	\$100	\$80	\$60	\$40	\$20			
\$3,000	\$450	\$360	\$300	\$270	\$240	\$210	\$180	\$150	\$120	\$90	\$60	\$30			

1. Find where YOU are on the chart (your weekly income/giving).
2. Move one block to the left to determine what GROW ONE% would be.

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