



# 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*  
Subdeacon Ryan Ferko, Stephen Brancho, & John Radick, *Cantors*  
Lawrence Martin, *Parish Council President*  
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## 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, FEBRUARY 5 - TRIODION BEGINS**  
Hieromartyr Clement bishop of Ancyra (296)  
Church School

### A FAST FREE WEEK

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6**  
9:30am Akathist to St. Xenia of St. Petersburg  
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**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12**  
SYNAXIS OF THE THREE HIERARCHS  
9:30 am Divine Liturgy  
Tone 2; Liturgical Color: **Gold**

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15** (*40 days after Nativity*)  
FEAST OF THE MEETING OF OUR LORD  
9:30am Festal Divine Liturgy  
Blessing of Candles

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18 - ALL-SOULS** (*1<sup>ST</sup> OF 5*)  
9:30am Divine Liturgy & Panachida (*Zadušna Subota*)  
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**Mystery of Confession** – Father is available to hear Confessions after every service

**Calendar** - Future Services are updated online at:  
[www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar](http://www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar)  
(Please see Fr. Dave if you want a printed copy)

**Live-Broadcast** – If you are unable to attend church services, please pray along with our Cathedral online:  
[www.acrod.org/directories/cathedral/live/](http://www.acrod.org/directories/cathedral/live/)

## RELOCATION UPDATE

\*\*\* The Allison Park Church has extended our **contract** for two weeks  
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\*\*\* **Insurance Adjustor** has said that the report is almost finished and we will receive it soon.  
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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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\*\*\* **Great Lent 2023** - Our Journey To Pascha has begun! Today we begin the series of Sundays known as the Triodion. These weeks are meant to prepare us for Great Lent (*to prepare us for Holy Week to prepare us for Pascha*). Please reach out to Fr. Dave if you have questions about this important fasting period that is around the corner.  
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## “THE VOICE” Our Parish Monthly Newsletter

John the Baptist said, “I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ (Jn 1:23)

Fast - Free Week  
**FEBRUARY 5th**



**Publican and the Pharisee**

Epistle: 2 Timothy 3:10-15  
Gospel: Luke 18:10-14

Show compassion on the poor and distressed. Trust in God, not yourself and ask for His help before every task this week.

Normal Fast Week  
**FEBRUARY 12th**



**The Prodigal Son Returns!**

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20  
Gospel: Luke 15:11-32

Schedule a Confession. Every morning say, “Today I will be humble.” Use up/freeze meats this week.

Meatfare  
**FEBRUARY 19th**  
FAREWELL TO MEAT TODAY



**The Last Judgement**

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2  
Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46

Pray facing East this week. Christ is returning from the East and we wait for Him! Use up/freeze dairy this week.

\*\*\* **Fast-Free Week** - There are only a few weeks out of the year that are completely fast-free on the church calendar, and this week is one of those weeks! It comes after the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee as we should not be proud of our fasting (but we fast in secret). It also comes in the spirit of purging our kitchen cabinets and refrigerators of all those things from which we will fast from during the approaching Great Fast, lest the food go to waste.

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### Parish Council Meeting Highlights

\*\* **Parish House Condemned** - Extension of citation from the City of Pittsburgh Inspector was denied. A second citation was received. (After a third citation the church could start to be fined.) Citations will keep coming until permits are requested for the repairs of the parish house.

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\*\* **Adjustor** - We are still waiting for the reports from the insurance adjustor and bids from the restoration company and contractors for the repairs of the parish house. Once reports and estimates are received, the Allison Park Church will review them and negotiations could be finalized quickly.

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\*\* **Bowling Outing** – Before we begin Great Lent, let's get together and bowl together! Plans are being finalized for the afternoon of **Sunday, February 26.**

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\*\*\* **Akathist to St. Xenia with holy anointing** – This Akathist covers many topics. Within it, Orthodox Prayers are offered to Save a Marriage, for the Healing of Mental Illness, to Find a Spouse, a Home, or a Job! (*St Xenia is the patron saint for finding employment.*) Whether any of these areas are a concern for you or not, come and pray on **Monday, February 6** for those who it will benefit!

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**Souper Bowl of Caring** – On **Sunday, February 12<sup>th</sup>** we ask that you bring in unexpired cans of soup for our February Community Outreach collection for Saint Cyril of White Lake Food Pantry at St Mary's Orthodox Church on the South Side.

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\*\* **Pre-Lenten Breakfast** will be on **February 19.** Please sign up in the hall so we have a rough idea of a count.

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\*\*\* **All-Soul Saturday (Zadušna Subota)** Liturgies and Panachidas for 2023 will be on Saturdays, **February 18, March 4 (DATE CHANGE), 18, 25, and June 3.** On these days, we especially pray for the departed loved ones of our families. If you are not working on a Saturday, come to church, pray with us, and light two candles for your living and departed loved ones. **Please inform Fr Dave if there are any additions to be made to your Commemoration Diptychs (Hramoty).** Offering Envelopes and cards are available in the vestibule.



\*\*\* **Blessing of Candles** – As is customary, candles will be blessed following the Feast Day Divine Liturgy on **Tuesday, February 15** as well as on **February 19**, the Sunday after the Feast of the Meeting of Our Lord, the 40<sup>th</sup> day after Nativity (Christmas) that remembers the presentation of the infant Jesus into the Temple. It is recorded in the Gospel of Luke (2:22-39) that on this day the elder Simeon recognized the infant Jesus as “a light for revelation to the Gentiles”. Thus we highlight the use of candles, as they remind us that Christ is the true Light of the World. There will be candles available for a donation and all are encouraged to bring in candles from home to be blessed after these two Liturgies. Please place your candle(s) on the table near the iconostasis. Let’s light up the world with our blessed candles!

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**Calling all scouts!** For our youth in Scouting and to our Adult Leaders, please send Fr. Dave your Unit Number, location, current rank, and any office or position you hold in your organization by **February 15<sup>th</sup>**.

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\* **Resignation** – Recently Matt Peifer resigned from his position of Vice-President of the Parish Council and his role as cantor of the parish. The hour drive traveling from New Castle caught up to him and it influenced this difficult decision for him. May God grant him many blessed years after his many years of service and stewardship to our parish!

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\*\*\* **Presanctified Liturgies** – Our Wednesday services will be at 6:00pm at the church along with Fridays at 9:30am.

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**Speaking With Your Priest** - Please know you can call me anytime if there is something troubling you. It is not a sign of weakness to share something that may be heavy on your heart or mind. As a priest and Father to our parish, I am here for you. Please call if you need someone to listen or to pray with you. Every heart has a cross and you do not need to carry it alone. Please also call if you have an idea for the growth of our parish. I am praying for you and am grateful for your prayers. With love in Christ, Fr. Dave

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### Holy Water Reminders

\* **2023 Holy Water Available To Take Home** - Please plan to take our Theophany Holy Water home with you! Bring in a container (or pick up a *Holy Water Bottle* from our bookstore), fill it up, and use it. Drink Holy Water every morning (or at least when you are feeling under the weather). Throw a splash into your cooking. Also, together with the sign of the Cross, you may bless one another with it prior to tests for our children in school, big days at the office, before doctor appointments, etc.

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\* **Holy Water Reminders: *Do Not Hoard It!*** While Holy Water does not “go bad”, it is best to refresh your water each year. Holy Water from the previous year(s) should be poured outside (*preferably on the corner of your house or in a garden where people are not going to walk on it*). The best scenario is to **use the water**: take a drink every morning, use in your cooking, etc. We will bless the new Jordan Water on Wednesday. All are encouraged to bring their Holy Water bottle the next time you come to church to refill with the New Jordan Water for your home

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**1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Banns of Marriage are Announced** for Ashley Wertz and Derek Andrekovich who will be united together in the Mystery of Holy Matrimony at St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church on Saturday, February 18, 2023. If anyone has canonical reason why this Mystery should not be administered, please relay the objection to Father.

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\*\* **Framed Icons** – Please consider framing your previous church calendar tops: cut them out, use a 5x7 frame, and hang them on your walls. Each year you can add an icon to another room in your home. This is also a nice project to do with our youth!

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\*\* **Greeting Cards** – Please repurpose your greeting cards (*and if you do not frame them, calendar icons*) 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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\*\*\* **Lenten Mission** – Our deanery mission will be on the North Side on **Sunday, March 26**.

### OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD

Stewardship Offerings:	\$ 60
Candle Stewardship:	\$ 136
Envelope Stewardship:	\$ 114
Community Outreach:	\$ 50

**Total Collections: \$360**  
**Relocation Fund: \$ 50**

*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

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**Weekly Candle Intentions / Memorials** were offered last week by Nelson Family; Olga Foight; Lawrence Martin; Tim Martin; Melanie Shuster; John Radick; Eleanor Sanger; Patty Watson

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\*\*\* **On Lighting Candles in the Church** – In lighting our two candles, the first thing we should do is make an offering for them. Everything that we have is from God and the first step is to give back to Him for all of His many blessings. The next step is to venerate the icons that guard the candles and lift our prayers to God on high. Next, we light a candle, remembering all of our loved ones who are sick (or who we just want to pray for) and then a candle for our loved ones who have passed into the next life. We beseech God to have mercy on their souls. Lastly, as we light the candles, we quietly say “Lord have mercy,” repenting for our own sinfulness while at the same time “re-igniting” our own flame and recommitting our whole life to God. Thus we begin again to live as light, helping others see the Way in a world of darkness. The importance of lighting our own candles is that you are able to say a prayer for your loved ones. “We light candles for the forgiveness of sins of **both** those who light the candles and of those for whom the candles are lit.” (*holy father Nicodemus of Mount Athos*) “Let light shine out of darkness, [and] Who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.” (1 Cor. 4:6)

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**January Financial Report:**  
**General Stewardship = \$ 7116.26**  
*(includes \$ 453.26 from online stewardship)*  
**\*Expenses = \$ 9976.98**  
**Net Deficit = \$ 2810.72**  
**Relocation Fund = \$ 290**  
**Capital Improvement Fund = \$ 50**  
 Average at Sunday Divine Liturgies: 22  
*\*details listed on the church hall bulletin board*

**Fiscal Year-to-Date Financial Report:**  
*(September through last month)*  
**General Stewardship = \$ 34,121**  
**\*Expenses = \$ 31,148**  
**Net Surplus = \$ 2973**  
*\*details listed on the church hall bulletin board*  
 Average at Sunday Divine Liturgies: 25


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\* **2023 Envelopes** – Our new envelopes have arrived and are on the table in the church hall. If you had previously not had envelopes and wish to have these stewardship reminders, please see Larry Martin. Now is a good time to catch up on past offerings.

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\*\* **2022 Summary** - If you would like a copy of your 2022 SJB Donation Summary, please contact Rich Mirilovich at 412-523-1848 or [jrmrsqrd@gmail.com](mailto:jrmrsqrd@gmail.com).

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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 (2<sup>nd</sup> 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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**Spring 2023 Camp Nazareth Events:**

- ✘ February 17-19 - OCF Retreat
- ✘ March 10-12 - ACRY Spring Encounter
- ✘ March 17-19 - Young Adult Retreat
- ✘ April 28-30 - Religious Education Conference
- ✘ May 1-3 - Sts. Joachim and Anna Seniors Retreat

*More information available at*

*www.campnazareth.org or contact Fr. Dave*

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**Additional Church Curators Needed –**

A synonym for *curator* is *steward*. Our curator list needs expanded! If anyone is interested in being a *steward of their time* and be “on-the-door”, please see Larry Martin or Theresa Sharpless.

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**Bulletin Sponsor –** If you wish to sponsor a bulletin In Honor of (nameday, birthday, anniversary, etc.) or In Memory of someone, please sign up on the sheet in the vestibule or by contacting Fr. Dave (email, text, or call). An additional stewardship offering to the Church is requested. *Remember, sponsoring a bulletin in memory of someone does not replace having a Panachida (short Memorial Service) for them.*

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

\* **Pan Orthodox Choir of Pittsburgh** will be rehearsing for the Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers (March 5, 2023 at St George Antiochian Orthodox Cathedral in Oakland). Remaining Saturday rehearsals are on: February 11, 25, and March 4 from 12-noon to 2:00 pm at St Nicholas Orthodox Church (320 Munson Ave., McKees Rocks PA 15136). If interested in singing, please contact Fr. Dave.

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\* **Neighborhood Resilience Project Volunteers Needed** to help pack weekend meals for children in local schools and the Hill District. All ages are welcome on Mondays and Tuesdays from 10 am to 2 pm (or contact them for a different time). Call 412-261-1234 or visit [www.neighborhoodresilience.org](http://www.neighborhoodresilience.org).

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**\*\* OMG Ministry –** Did you know that there is an Orthodox Mom’s Group here in Pittsburgh! Over 100 women are on the email distribution list. They organize a monthly play date and a periodic mom nights out. Contact Fr. Dave for more information.

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**\*\* The Saint Constantine School -** In 2023, new and exciting developments will come that will help move towards welcoming The Saint Constantine School’s first branch campus in the fall of 2024 - bringing outstanding, classical, Christian education to Pittsburgh’s children. If you are interested in getting more involved, please email [pittsburgh@saintconstantine.org](mailto:pittsburgh@saintconstantine.org). For more info, visit: [www.saintconstantine.org/pittsburgh](http://www.saintconstantine.org/pittsburgh)

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**FEBRUARY SCHEDULE OF SERVICES**

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5 - TRIODION BEGINS**

9:30 Divine Liturgy (and Church School)

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6**

9:30am Akathist to St. Xenia of St. Petersburg

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12**

SYNAXIS OF THE THREE HIERARCHS: ST. BASIL THE GREAT, ST. GREGORY THE THEOLOGIAN, AND ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM.

9:30 Divine Liturgy

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15 (40 days after Nativity)**

FEAST OF THE MEETING OF OUR LORD

9:30am Festal Divine Liturgy

Blessing of Candles

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18 - ALL-SOULS (1<sup>ST</sup> OF 5)**

9:30am Divine Liturgy & Panachida (*Zadušna Subota*)

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19**

9:30 Divine Liturgy, Youth Sunday,

Blessing of Candles, and Church School

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24 (DATE CHANGE)**

9:30 Moleben to the Theotokos

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26**

9:30 Divine Liturgy

Forgiveness Sunday Prayers

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27 #GreatFast**

THE GREAT FAST BEGINS

9:30am Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28 #GreatFast**

9:30am Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew

**MINISTRY OF THE MONTH**

**Food Drive –** This month, through the efforts of our Sr. ACRY, we will be collecting unexpired food and donations in order to make a delivery to **St. Cyril of White Lake Food Pantry** (at Holy Assumption of St. Mary Orthodox Church, 105 S. 19<sup>th</sup> St., Pgh, PA 15203). Volunteers are needed on Thursdays from 5:15 to 6:45 to assist in the distribution of these goods. (If interested, please contact Fr Patrick first at 412-431-6428) Thank you in advance for your prayers and offerings this month! Here is a list of food items that they are looking for:

- ✓ Ready to eat canned fruit or vegetables
- ✓ Peanut Butter
- ✓ Jelly
- ✓ Canned Soups
- ✓ Canned Chili
- ✓ Macaroni & Cheese
- ✓ Spaghetti Sauce
- ✓ Pasta
- ✓ Noodle/Rice Mixes
- ✓ Small Package of Rice or Noodles
- ✓ Canned Stews
- ✓ Canned or Pouches of Tuna, Salmon or Chicken
- ✓ Boxed Meals ready to be prepared
- ✓ Baked Beans
- ✓ Canned and Boxed 100% Juice
- ✓ Crackers
- ✓ Tuna Helper Box
- ✓ Instant Cereal
- ✓ Boxed Cereal
- ✓ Canned Pastas (Chef Boyardee, Ravioli, etc.)
- ✓ Canned Meats

[stmaryorthodoxchurch.net/stcyrilfoodpantry.html](http://stmaryorthodoxchurch.net/stcyrilfoodpantry.html)

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**SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS**

*Epistle:* 2 Timothy 3:10-15

<sup>10</sup>Now you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, <sup>11</sup>my persecutions, my sufferings, what befell me at Antioch, at Ico’num, and at Lystra, what persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. <sup>12</sup>Indeed all who desire to live a godly

life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, <sup>13</sup>while evil men and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceivers and deceived. <sup>14</sup>But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it <sup>15</sup>and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus

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*Gospel:* Luke 18:10-14

<sup>10</sup>“Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. <sup>11</sup>The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank thee that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. <sup>12</sup>I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I get.’ <sup>13</sup>But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ <sup>14</sup>I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for every one who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

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**ORTHODOX WORDS OF THE WEEK**

**Triodion -** The Lenten Triodion is the service book of the Orthodox Church that provides the texts for the divine services for the pre-Lenten weeks of preparation, Great Lent, and Holy Week. The Lenten Triodion is the title of a classic and popular English book translated with an extensive and helpful introduction by Metropolitan Kallistos and Mother Mary; it provides many (but not all) of the texts necessary to observe the great fast. In Greek and Slavonic it is simply called the triodion. It is called the triodion because the canons appointed for Matins during this period are composed of three odes each.

The weeks of preparation, and especially the Sunday gospel readings, serve to exercise the mind, whereas the fasting of Great Lent focuses on the body, and Holy Week’s services exercise the spirit.

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## LIVES OF THE SAINTS

### THE PRIESTMARTYR CLEMENT

*Commemorated on January 23*

The PriestMartyr Clement was born in the Galatian city of Ancyra in the year 258, from a pagan father and a Christian mother. In infancy he lost his father, and at twelve years of age also his mother, who predicted for him a martyr's death for belief in Christ. A woman adopting him named Sophia raised him in the fear of God. During the time of a terrible famine in Galatia several pagans cast out their own children, not having the wherewithal to feed them, and Sophia gathered up also these hapless ones, she fed and clothed them, and Saint Clement assisted her in this. He taught the children and prepared them for Holy Baptism. Many of them died as martyrs for the faith in Christ.

For his virtuous life Saint Clement was made a reader, and later a deacon, and at age eighteen he received the dignity of presbyter, and at age twenty he was ordained bishop of Ancyra. Soon afterwards there flared up the persecution against Christians under Diocletian (284-305). Bishop Clement was arrested under denunciation and had also to answer for himself. The governor of Galatia, Dometian, tried to sway the saint to the worship of the pagan gods, but Saint Clement firmly confessed his faith and valiantly endured all the tortures, which the cruel official subjected him to. They suspended him on a tree, and tore at his body such that the bare bones could be seen, they struck him fiercely with clubs and stones, and they turned him about on a wheel and burned at him with a low fire. The Lord preserved His sufferer and healed his lacerated body. Then Dometian dispatched the saint to Rome to the emperor Diocletian himself, with a report that Bishop Clement had been fiercely tortured, but had proven unyielding. Diocletian, seeing the martyr completely healthy, did not believe the report and subjected him to still yet crueler tortures, and then had him locked up in prison.

Many of the pagans, seeing the bravery of the saint and the miraculous healing of his wounds, believed in Christ. People flocked to Saint Clement in prison for guidance, healing and Baptism, such that the prison was literally transformed into a

church. Many of these people, when reported about, were executed by the emperor. Diocletian, struck by the amazing endurance of Saint Clement, sent him off to Nicomedia to his co-emperor Maximian.

On the ship along the way, the saint was joined by his disciple Agathangelos, who had avoided being executed with the other confessors, and who now wanted to suffer and die for Christ together with Bishop Clement.

The emperor Maximian in turn sent off Saint Clement and Agathangelos to the governor Agrippina, who subjected them to such inhuman torments, that even among the pagan on-lookers there was felt a sense of pity for the martyrs and they began to pelt the torturers with stones.

Having been set free, the saints healed an inhabitant of the city with a laying on of hands and they baptised and instructed people, thronging to them in multitudes. Arrested again on orders of Maximian, they were sent off home to the city of Ancyra, where the Ancyra prince Cyrenius had them put to torture, and then dispatched them off to the city of Amasia to the official Dometius, known for his especial cruelty.

In Amasia the martyrs were thrown into molten lime, they spent a whole day in it and remained unharmed. They flayed their skin, beat them with iron rods, they set them on red-hot beds and poured sulfur. All this failed to harm the saints, and they were sent off to Tarsis for new tortures. In the wilderness along the way Saint Clement in prayer had a revelation, that he would suffer another 28 years for the Name of Christ. And then having endured a multitude of tortures, the saints were locked up in prison.

After the death of Maximian, Saint Agathangelos was beheaded with the sword. Ancyra Christians set free Saint Clement from prison and they took him to a cave church. There, after celebrating Liturgy, the saint announced to the faithful the soon impending end of the persecution and his own approaching demise. The holy martyr soon actually was killed by soldiers from the city, who stormed the church. They beheaded the saint during the time of his offering the Bloodless Sacrifice (+ c. 312).

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## LIVING ORTHODOXY

### CANDLES:

#### The Candles Represent the Light of Christ

The Orthodox Church from its very inception has always used oil lamps (or lampadas) and candles during its worship and prayers. The burning of candles and oil lamps have always been the traditional source of lighting in God's churches, and we must forgo the artificial light that comes from electricity.

Candles and oil are offered to God from material goods that He has given us, as pure beeswax, because bees make the wax by collecting the pollen from various flowers. For this reason, some of the saints have taught that a candle reminds us of not only how hard-working the bee is but also the fact that it collects the good and rejects the polluted. Furthermore, the Church has taught that the use of pure beeswax candles produced by virgin bees represents the human nature of Christ which came from the Holy Virgin Mary.

But first and foremost, the candle represents the Light of Christ in our midst, because, as it burns, it illuminates the darkness. Candles represent the deification of our souls because the candle is mixed with fire, representing the Light of Christ. They represent the love and peace which are attributes each Christian should have because the candle burns and comforts everyone with its light in the darkness. Lighting a candle reminds us we must remember to live in the light we received with our baptism.

This light is renewed every time we participate in the Divine Liturgy, every time we receive the Holy Mysteries, and every time we offer prayers. At the end of every celebration of the Divine Liturgy we sing: "We have seen the True Light! We have received the Heavenly Spirit! We have found the True Faith! Worshiping the Undivided Trinity, Who has saved us." The candle also reminds us of how Fire, that is, the Triune Deity Himself, unites with the malleable soul and then softens and illuminates both it, and all those who come into contact with it.

When we as Christians sacrifice ourselves for the love of God, we enlighten our fellow human beings and show them the way of salvation. And just as the candles we light at the baptism represent the spiritual

light received by the newly baptized person, so too the candles we hold and light during funerals, at memorial services, and those placed on the tomb of the reposed represent the light of Christ, which we wish the deceased receive.

Just as we light candles for the living and the dead we should always accompany them by offering words of prayer. For the living we ask for God's mercy and protection. For the dead we ask for God's compassion and eternal rest.

With love in Christ,  
Abbot Tryphon

## FEAST DAY FEATURES OF THE MONTH

### "Three Holy Hierarchs" – the Assemblage (Sobor, Synaxis) of the Holy Ecumenical Teachers of the Church and Sainted-Hierarchs: Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostomos

*Commemorated on Feb. 12 / Jan. 30*

"Three Saints" – the Assemblage (Sobor, Synaxis) of the Holy Ecumenical Teachers of the Church and Sainted-Hierarchs: Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and John Chrysostomos: At Constantinople for a long time there raged disputes about which one of the three sainted-hierarchs should be accorded the primacy of honour. One faction of the people preferred St Basil (Comm. Jan. 14/1), others stood forth for St Gregory the Theologian (Comm. Feb. 7 / Jan. 25), while a third revered St John Chrysostomos (Comm. Nov 26/13).

From this arose among church factions amongst Christians: some called themselves Basilians, others – Gregorians, and the third – Johannites.

In accord with the will of God, in the year 1084 the three sainted-hierarchs appeared to the Eucharistic Metropolitan John, and in declaring that they were equal before God, they gave orders that the disputes should stop and that a day in common celebration of their memory should be established.

### 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/acroddioocese](https://www.facebook.com/acroddioocese)  
Twitter: [twitter.com/acrodnews](https://twitter.com/acrodnews)  
YouTube: [youtube.com/acroddioocese](https://youtube.com/acroddioocese)

### On the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord

*Commemorated on February 15/2*

On the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord, the Church commemorates an important event in the earthly life of our Lord Jesus Christ (Lk 2: 22-40). On the 40th day after birth the God-Infant was taken to the Jerusalem Temple – the centre of religious life of the God-chosen nation. By the Law of Moses (Lev 12) a woman, having given birth to a child of the male gender, was forbidden for 40 days to enter into the Temple of God. After this interval the mother came to the Temple with the child, so as to offer to the Lord thanksgiving and a purification sacrifice. The MostHoly Virgin, the Mother of God, did not have need for purification, since without defilement she had given birth to the Source of purity and sanctity, but in profound humility she submitted to the precepts of the Law.

At this time there lived at Jerusalem the righteous elder Simeon (the account about him is located under the day of his commemoration – 3 February). It had been revealed to him that he would not die until he should behold Christ the Saviour. By inspiration from above, the pious elder went to the Temple at that very moment when the MostHoly Mother of God and Righteous Joseph had brought there the Infant Jesus, so as to fulfill the ritual ceremony of the Law. The God-Bearer Simeon took the God-Infant in his arms, and having given thanks to God, he uttered a prophecy about the Saviour of the world: "Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart, O Lord, with peace according to Thy word, wherefore hath mine eyes beheld Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples, a light to the enlightening of gentiles and the glory of Thy people Israel" (Lk 2: 29-32). Righteous Simeon said to the MostHoly Virgin: "Behold, This One is set for the fall and rising up of many in Israel and for the sign spoken against, and for Thee Thyself a sword shalt pierce the soul, so that the thoughts of many hearts might be revealed" (Lk 2: 35).

At the Temple also the 84 year old widow Anna the Prophetess, daughter of Phanuel (Comm. 3 February), "who did not leave the temple, serving God both day and night in fasting and prayer. And she also at that time, having drawn near, glorified the

Lord and spake about Him (the God-Infant) to all awaiting deliverance at Jerusalem" (Lk 2: 37-38).

Before the Birth of Christ, all righteous men and women lived by faith in the Future Messiah the Saviour of the world, and they awaited His coming. The final righteous ones of the closing Old Testament – Righteous Simeon and the Prophetess Anna – were deemed worthy to meet at the Temple the Bearer of the New Testament, in the Person of Whom both Divinity and humanity do meet.

The Feast of the Meeting of the Lord is among the most ancient feasts of the Christian Church. It is known, that on the day of this solemnity were proclaimed sermons by Sainted Bishops Methodios of Patara (+ 312), Cyril of Jerusalem (+ 360), Gregory the Theologian (+ 389), Amphylokios of Iconium (+ 394), Gregory of Nyssa (+ 400), and John Chrysostom (+ 407). But in spite of its early origin, this feast was not so solemnly celebrated until the VI Century. During the reign of Justinian in the year 528, a catastrophe befell Antioch – an earthquake, in which many people perished. And upon this misfortune there followed others. In the year 544 there appeared a pestilential plague, daily carrying off several thousand people. During these days of widespread travail, it was revealed to a certain pious christian that the celebration of the Meeting of the Lord should be done more solemnly.

When at the day of the Meeting of the Lord the all-night vigil was finally made with church procession, the disasters at Byzantium ceased. In thanksgiving to God, the Church established in 544 that the Meeting of the Lord should be done more solemnly.

Church melodists adorned this feast with many a church work of song: in the VII Century – Sainted Andrew Archbishop of Crete; in the VIII Century – Sainted Cosma Bishop of Maium, Monk John Damascene, Sainted Germanos Patriarch of Constantinople; and in the IX Century – Sainted Joseph the Studite, Archbishop of Thessalonika.

With the event of the Meeting of the Lord is associated the icon of the MostHoly Mother of God named: "the Softening of Evil Hearts" or "Simeon's Prophecy", which it is necessary to distinguish from the icon "Seven Arrows".

The icon "Simeon's Prophecy" symbolises the fulfillment of the prophecy of the righteous elder Simeon: "for Thee Thyself a sword shalt pierce the soul" (Lk 2: 35).

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### 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.

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**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 in the church. 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 the 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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### 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 Health of...** Maria, Sharon, Karen, Octavian, Anna Mae, David, Donna, Gregory, Joshua, George, Beverly, Kelly, Marie, Barbara, Brian, Kristina, Sean, Julia, Susan, Juliana, Fredrick, Kenneth, and Michael  
...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. David S., Fr. Myron, Dcn. Dean, Michael L., Laura & family, Carlene, Georgia, Eleanora, 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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**February Namedays:**

Timothy Martin, Reader – Apostle Timothy of the 70 (2/4)

Dolores Bowser - Virgin-martyr Dorothea (2/19)  
*Father's Godson, Zachariah Kalaluhi – Prophet Zachariah (2/21)*

...May God grant them many and blessed years!

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**February Birthdays:**

Anthony Winkler (2/1), Fr. Marc Wisnosky (2/1), Fr. Edward Pehanich (2/4), *Pañi's mother*, Alexandrina Liana Popescu (2/6), Charles Kretchek (2/8), Richard Gedid (2/9), Harmonie Torchia (2/11), Pañi Buczak (2/11), Fr. James Gleason (2/12), Matthew Peifer (2/13), *Father's niece*, Samantha Ditmore (2/14), Pañi Christyn Dranginis (2/14), W. Dylan Mushinsky (2/17), James Hanchulak (2/17), John Petrovich (2/18), Eleanor Sanger (2/19/33), Carly Anton (2/21),

Barbara Kirish (2/22), Theresa Sharpless (2/22), *Father's nephew*, Brian Verbanick, Jr (2/22), Fr Stephen Krivonak (2/23), Fr William Bennett (2/28), His-All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew I (2/29/40)  
...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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**February Anniversaries:**

Cynthia & Jeffrey Morrison (2/5)  
...through the prayers of *St. Nicholas Planas*

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**For Pregnant Mothers...** Erica (*due in April*), Lindsay, Nicole (*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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**For the souls of the newly departed...** Louis Jones (1/29), Gus Miller (1/15)  
...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.*

**DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS OF THE MONTH**

**A Prayer before consuming Antidoron and (or) Holy Water**

O Lord my God, may Your holy gift and Your holy water be for the enlightenment of my mind, for the increase of my spiritual and bodily strengths, for the health of my soul and body, for the taming of my passions and weaknesses, through Your boundless mercy, through the prayers of Your Most-holy Mother and of all Your Saints. Amen.

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**A Prayer When Lighting A Candle**

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and forever. Amen.*  
Set our hearts on fire with love for You, O Christ our God, so that in its flame we may love You with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our soul, and with all our strength, and our neighbors as ourselves, so that by keeping Your commandments we may glorify You, the giver of all good gifts. 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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[*“By the Waters of Babylon” is the entire Psalm 137, sung to a plaintive melody, during Matins (the morning service). It is only sung in church the three Sundays that precede Great Lent: Sunday of the Prodigal Son, The Last Judgment (Meatfare), and Forgiveness (Cheesefare).]*

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**A Prayer in Exile (Psalm 137): Longing for Zion in a Foreign Land**

By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion.  
<sup>2</sup> On the willows there we hung up our harps.  
<sup>3</sup> For there our captors required of us songs, and our tormentors, mirth, saying, “Sing us one of the songs of Zion!”  
<sup>4</sup> How shall we sing the LORD's song in a foreign land?  
<sup>5</sup> If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither!  
<sup>6</sup> Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I do not remember you, if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy!  
<sup>7</sup> Remember, O LORD, against the sons of Edom the day of Jerusalem, how they said, “Raze it, raze it! Down to its foundations!”  
<sup>8</sup> O daughter of Babylon, you who are devastated! Happy shall he be who requites you with what you have done to us!  
<sup>9</sup> Happy shall he be who takes your little ones and dashes them against the rock!

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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 ...*)

### 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.



### 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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## ONLINE BULLETIN BONUSES

### 12 Reasons Orthodox Christians Light Candles in Church. Worshipping in Spirit and Truth.

In order to truly worship in Spirit and Truth, Orthodox Christians should **know the meaning of** whatever they do in Church or in private prayer. Below are 12 symbolisms of lighting candles in Church.

St. Symeon gives these six symbolisms:

1. The candle symbolizes the purity of the soul because it is purely made from beeswax.
2. Since we can easily carve anything into a candle, the candle symbolizes how our soul can be easily imprinted (with good or bad).
3. The candle symbolizes God's Grace as wax is made from blooming flowers that give forth fragrance.
4. Just as the candle gives food to the flame, so by Theosis our nature is made into flame that burns sin and gives light.
5. The candle symbolizes the light of Christ which gives light in the darkness.
6. The candle symbolizes the light and peace that every Christian must have. When the candle burns it enlightens and comforts mankind giving light in the darkness.

Our holy father Nicodemus of Mount Athos gives us these 6 explanations:

1. We light candles for the glory of God who is the true and only light that enlightens every man.
2. We light candles to disperse the darkness of the night to comfort ourselves from the fear of darkness.
3. We light candles to show the joy that is in our hearts.
4. We light candles to honor saints and martyrs of our Faith just as early Christians lit candles at the graves of the martyrs.
5. We light candles to symbolize our good works, as the Lord says, "Thus let your light shine before men that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in the heavens".
6. We light candles for the forgiveness of sins of **both** those who light the candles and of those for

whom the candles are lit. For this reason, in churches in many places, there are separate candle stands for the living and other ones for the dead.

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### Looking into Orthodoxy through the internet?

#### RESOURCES TO USE ONLINE:

- the official website of any canonical Orthodox jurisdiction
- website of the Assembly of Orthodox Bishops of the USA ([www.assemblyofbishops.org](http://www.assemblyofbishops.org))
- Ancient Faith Ministries, and any of its affiliated blogs and podcasts ([www.ancientfaith.com](http://www.ancientfaith.com))
- Orthodox Christian Network ([www.myocn.net](http://www.myocn.net))
- YouTube channels affiliated and non-divisive such as Theoria, Trisagion Films, Protecting Veil, Patristic Nectar, and Bible Illustrated

#### RESOURCES TO AVOID ONLINE:

- Orthodoxy In Dialogue
- Public Orthodoxy
- The Wheel
- Orthodox Ethos
- websites for jurisdictions with the words "True" or "Traditional" in their title
- websites for groups who prominently feature their stance on a single issue as their defining characteristic (e.g. old/new calendars, current geopolitical strife, etc.)
- most any person's independent blog

This is not an exhaustive list. There are far more good and useful resources than bad ones, but remember that "a little leaven leavens the whole lump."

And the sooner you can stop looking into Orthodoxy on the internet and start looking into it in a local Orthodox church, do so.

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### Spiritual Vitamin:

"The candles lit before icons of saints reflect their ardent love for God for Whose sake they gave up everything that man prizes in life, including their very lives, as did the holy apostles, martyrs and others. These candles also mean that these saints are lamps burning for us and providing light for us by their own saintly living, their virtues and their ardent intercession for us before God through their constant prayers by day and night. The burning candles also stand for our ardent zeal and the sincere sacrifice we make out of reverence and gratitude to them for their solicitude on our behalf before God."  
+St. John of Kronstadt, My Life in Chris

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## STEWARDSHIP SNIPPET

**Treasure, Rust and Thieves** "...lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal." (Matthew 5:21 RSV)

So many of God's people have come under the complete control of the spirit of this world. Thereby

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**Stewardship of Treasure Guide**

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

Weekly Income	Beyond a Tithe 15%	Tithe 12%	Upper Range Giving 10%	9%	8%	7%	Middle Range Giving 6%	5%	4%	Lower Range Giving 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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**SPIRITUAL VITAMINS**

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