

“THE WEEKLY FORERUNNER” *Our Parish Weekly Bulletin*
O Holy John, Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptizer of the Lord, pray to God for us!

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

UPCOMING SERVICES

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Rite of Forgiveness
CLEAN MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27 #TheGreatFast
GREAT LENT BEGINS
A Day Of Strict-Fasting

CLEAN TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28 #TheGreatFast
9:30am The Great Canon of Repentance

CLEAN WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1 #TheGreatFast
6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
with community meal following

CLEAN THURSDAY, MARCH 2 #TheGreatFast
9:30am The Great Canon of Repentance

CLEAN FRIDAY, MARCH 3 #TheGreatFast
9:30am Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

ALL-SOULS SATURDAY, MARCH 4 #TheGreatFast
9:30am Divine Liturgy & Panachida (2nd of 5)
(Zadušna Subota) **Please note the date change**
11 am – 1 pm Confessions Offered

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SUNDAY, MARCH 5 #TheGreatFast

Venerable Leo bishop of Catania in Sicily (ca. 780)
9:30 Divine Liturgy
Tone 5; Liturgical Color: **Gold**
Procession of Icons (*Bring an icon to church*)
4:30 pm Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers at St. George

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8 #TheGreatFast
6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
with community meal following

FRIDAY, MARCH 10 #TheGreatFast
9:30am Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

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RELOCATION UPDATE

***** Motion Passed** - After the Insurance Report and Restoration Estimate were received, conversations then happened with the Allison Park Church of God (APCOG). Knowing where we are and hearing their thoughts, on February 22, 2023, the following motion was unanimously approved by the St. John the Baptist Parish Council and passed along to APCOG:

For St. John the Baptist Church to purchase the Duncan Avenue property for \$330,000 and to include in the sale our church properties in an as is condition.

***** and Approved** - On February 25, the APCOG approved the change in contract and are ready to close!
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***** Glory to God! Slava Bohu!** This has been a roller-coaster with many ups and downs, but this past week was quite active and the following proposed schedule has been made to APCOG:

Monday, March 13 – Closing on the property
Week of March 13 – Miscellaneous items moved through the week

Tuesday, March 14 at 7 pm – Lesser Blessing of Water service in Allison Park and blessing of the new church

Wednesday, March 15 at 6 pm – Presanctified Liturgy on the North Side

Friday, March 17 at 10 am – Last Liturgy on the North Side with Metropolitan Gregory: Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts followed by the deconsecration

Saturday, March 18 – Major moving day: All hands on deck (*the All-Soul Liturgy will be rescheduled*)

Sunday, March 19 – First Liturgy in Allison Park (*with the portable Altar and possibly in the Church Hall*)

Week of March 20 – Moving the iconostasis, pews, stained glass windows, and last miscellaneous items.

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May God continue to guide our journey to 2201 Duncan Avenue, Allison Park, PA 15101!

Cheesefare
FEBRUARY 26th
FAREWELL TO CHEESE TODAY



Adam and Eve are cast from Paradise!
FORGIVENESS SUNDAY
Epistle: Romans 13:11-14:4
Gospel: Matthew 6:14-21

Ask each other for forgiveness each evening this week before bed.

1st Sunday of Lent
MARCH 5th



GREAT LENT BEGINS WITH FORGIVENESS VESPERS
SUNDAY of ORTHODOXY
Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 32:12:2
Gospel: John 1:43-51

Bring an icon to church for a procession.

BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

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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.

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***** Great Lent 2023: Our Journey To Pascha** – Let’s pray that we begin the Great Fast on the right foot: taking the step of forgiveness together. Also, please reach out to Fr. Dave with your questions about this important fasting period that has arrived.

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***** 48-Days to the Great Day** – This Daily Lenten Meditation book was sent to our Diocesan households. IF you did not receive this book, please let Fr. Dave know ASAP.

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**** “Clean Week” Services** – The first week of the Great Fast is known as “Clean Week”. We will have services in the evenings and mornings (see schedule in the first column). All are encouraged to come to as many services as your schedule allows. **The Great Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew of Crete** was “written in the 7th century, *The Great Canon still maintains relevance for the modern age. It is the backbone of Orthodox services for the first week of Great Lent and sets the tone for a Christian's self reflection and repentance appropriate to the season.*”

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**** Bowling Outing** – The previously discussed bowling outing has been postponed until after Pascha.



***** Suggested Lenten Reading** – This year's suggested book for the Great Fast is **“The Trial of Job”** by Patrick Reardon. Forgive me for the last minute decision! (I was debating between a few books...) It can be found online from Ancient Faith at

<https://store.ancientfaith.com/the-trial-of-job/> or search elsewhere online. *“The Book of Job always constituted essential and formative reading about the ways of the soul. Yet, for some reason, the figure of Job is elusive to us possibly because he seems so comfortably distant; or perhaps because he seems so frightfully close. What Fr. Patrick Reardon achieves with this book is to render Job comprehensible (to those of us who are still lay readers of scripture), tangible (to those who have not yet tasted the way of darkness and despair), and accessible (to those who have already experienced any form of brokenness and broken-heartedness). Ultimately, all of us identify with one or another aspect of Job’s life. As life inevitably informs and as this book intuitively confirms, one cannot sing Psalms without having read Job!”* -Fr. John Chryssavgis

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Read the Psalter - Our diocese has shared a calendar for reading the Book of Psalms throughout the Great Fast. This is a wonderful way to increase our prayer during this time! The Book of Psalms in our Orthodox Study Bible is perfect to use for this occasion. If you wish, you can search “Psalter” or “Psalms” at <https://store.ancientfaith.com/> for other wonderful translations to use. Copies of the schedule are available in the hall.

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***** Bring an Icon to Church** – Next week, on **Orthodoxy Sunday, March 5**, you are encouraged to bring an icon from home to hold during the Divine Liturgy and to use in our procession of icons.

**** Sunday of Orthodoxy Service** - The Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood of Greater Pittsburgh is hosting the annual Sunday of Orthodoxy Service and Celebration on **March 5** at 4:30 pm at St. George Cathedral (3400 Dawson St, Pittsburgh, PA 15213)

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***** Anderson Candy Sale** - The booklets are in the church hall for this year's candy sale. Orders are due by **March 24th**. Please see Tim Martin with any questions.

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**** Fellowship Meals** - Got Soup? A 't'radition in many Orthodox parishes is to have soup (or other light meal) following the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts during the Great Fast. We will have this meal after our Wednesday evening services. A sign up sheet is in the church hall for those interested in bringing in food.

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**** Lenten Coin Boxes** - "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Mt 28:19) Coin boxes are available in the Church Hall to collect your spare change throughout the Great Fast for our Community Outreach next month (OCMC). More information is available at www.ocmc.org. "Let them do good, that they may be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share" (1 Tim 6:18)

stmaryorthodoxchurch.net/stcyrilfoodpantry.html

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*** All-Soul Saturday (Zadušna Subota)** Liturgies and Panachidas for 2023 will continue on Saturdays, **March 4 (DATE CHANGE), 25, and June 3** (Mar. 18 will be rescheduled). 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.

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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 (Please see Fr. Dave if you want a printed copy)



Icon by K. Tikhonovskaya

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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***** 31 Books of March Sale^{XL}** - The Ancient Faith Store will most likely be offering different books for 50% off each day of the month of March! Visit the site daily (or sign up for their emails) and keep an eye out for a book that will help you along your Spiritual Journey! (Contact Fr Dave with any questions.) Visit: store.ancientfaith.com/31-books-of-march/

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**** Food Drive** - Thank you to everyone who brought in items for our annual February Food Drive for St. Cyril of the White Lake Food Pantry on Pittsburgh's South Side. If anyone would like to delivery them, please let Fr. Dave know.

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Deanery Lenten Mission Schedule

Confessions starting at 3:30, Vespers at 4:00, and Fellowship Meal following

March 12 - St John's Ambridge
 March 19 - St John's East Pittsburgh
 March 26 - St John's Northside
 April 2 - St Michael's Rankin

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**** Many Years! and Congratulations** to Ashley (Wertz) and Derek Andrekovich who yesterday were united together in the Mystery of Holy Matrimony. Through the prayers of Saints Adrian & Natalia and all Holy Martyrs, May God grant you many years!

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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

OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD	
Stewardship Offerings:	\$ 305
Candle Stewardship:	\$ 187
Envelope Stewardship:	\$ 164
Total Collections:	\$ 656

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Weekly Candle Intentions / Memorials were offered last week by Nelson Family; Mary Jane Hudak; Lawrence Martin; Tim Martin; Melanie Shuster; Kathy Schrmack; Eleanor Sanger; Patty Watson; Melanie Paieski; Cindy Pavilonis

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The Eternal Lamp was offered last week by Cindy Pavilonis in memory of parents, +Anna Louise and +Joseph Pavilonis; and by Melanie Paieski IMO her mother, +Catherine Gaydos. May Their Memory Be Eternal! Vičnaya Pamyat!

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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: Romans 13:11-14:4

An Urgent Appeal

¹¹Besides this you know what hour it is, how it is full time now for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed; ¹²the night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; ¹³let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Do Not Judge Another

¹⁴As for the man who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not for disputes over opinions. ²One believes he may eat anything, while the weak man eats only vegetables. ³Let not him who eats despise him who abstains, and let not him who abstains pass judgment on him who eats; for God has welcomed him. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Master is able to make him stand.

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Gospel: Matthew 6:14-21

¹⁴For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; ¹⁵but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Concerning Fasting

¹⁶"And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ¹⁷But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, ¹⁸that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Concerning Treasures

¹⁹"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

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LIVING ORTHODOXY

WHY HAVE KOLIVA FOR MEMORIALS?

Kollyva (Greek: *Κολλοβα*, (kólliva); Serbian: *κοливо*, (koljivo); Romanian: *colivă*; Bulgarian: *коливо*, (kolivo); Rusyn, Ukrainian, and Russian: *кутя* (kutya or kutia)) is an offering of boiled wheat that is blessed liturgically in connection with the **Memorial Services** in Church for the benefit of one's departed, thereby offering unto God, as it were, a sacrifice of propitiation (atonement) for the dead person, and in honor of the Sovereign Lord over life and death.

The Kollyva are symbolic of the resurrection of the dead on the day of the Second Coming of the Lord. St. Paul said, "**what you sow does not come to life unless it dies**" (I Corinthians 15:36), and St. John, "**unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit**" (John 12:24).

Thus, as the wheat is buried in the soil and disintegrates without really dying but is later regenerated into a new plant that bears much more

fruit than itself, so the Christian's body will be raised again from the very corruptible matter from which it is now made; however, it will be raised not in its previous fleshy substance but in an incorruptible essence which "will clad the mortal body with an immortal garment", in the words of St. Paul (I Corinthians 15:53).

The Kollyva then, symbolize the Apostolically rooted hope in the resurrection of the dead as the only eventuality that gives meaning and attains the longed perfection on the part of the individual who takes his life to be a divinely ordained meaningful living forever.

There are many varieties to the recipe. Many people will bring kollyva to Memorial Liturgies or Panachidas (Memorial Services). Here are a few recipes to look up and try (each culture tends to have different ingredients):

Antiochian:

<https://www.stnicholasar.org/koliva/>

Greek:

<https://www.greekboston.com/food/koliva-recipe/>

Romanian:

<https://www.bylena.com/recipe/587/Romanian-Coliva-or-Barley-Porridge/>

Serbian:

<http://www.beyondthepall.com/blog/mamas-serbian-zito-zhito-koliva-recipe>

Cooking Tip: Get 10-minute Farro from Trader Joe!

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ORTHODOX WORDS OF THE WEEK

PROSTRATION - Full prostration, also simply called prostration, in the church is an act of distributing one's weight on the knees, feet, and hands, touching the forehead to the floor, staying in the position as long as desired or necessary, then standing up. One usually makes the Sign of the Cross *before or after* the movement.

Interestingly, the use of the word prostration in this way is different than common English usage, where prostration means to pronate oneself or lay completely flat. The full prostration is sometimes called kneeling. Again, this word usage is different than the English usage of kneel, which means to distribute one's weight on the knees and feet only.

Prostration is known by other various names: Full reverence, great reverence, earthly reverence, "reverence down to the ground" (Slavonic: zemnoy poklon); Great metania

Prostration is associated with penance, submission, and obeisance. According to custom and tradition, prostration is assumed (or not assumed) at different times in the services and church calendar. The twentieth canon of the First Ecumenical Council forbids kneeling on every Sunday and the fifty days between Pascha and Pentecost.

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LIVES OF THE SAINTS

THE MONK MARTINIAN

Commemorated on February 26/13

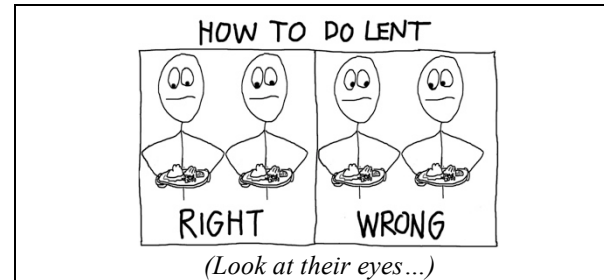
The Monk Martinian at age 18 settled into the wilderness, somewhat off from the city of Palestinian Caesarea, where he dwelt in ascetic deeds and silence for 25 years, and he was granted a graced gift of healing illness. But the enemy of the race of man would not stop bothering the hermit with various temptations. One time a profligate woman got into a wager with some dissolute people, as to whether she could seduce Saint Martinian, the fame of whose virtuous life had spread throughout all the city. She came to him at night-time under the guise of a wandering suppliant asking night lodging. The saint let her enter, since the weather outside was inclement. But here the wicked guest changed over into her good clothes and began to tempt the ascetic. The saint thereupon rushed out of the cell, set alight a fire and put his bare feet upon the burning coals. He said such as this to himself: "It is hard enough for thee, Martinian, to suffer this temporal fire, now then wilt thou instead suffer the eternal fire, prepared for thee by the devil?" The woman, shaken by the spectacle, became repentant and besought the saint to guide her onto the way of repentance. At his directing she set off to Bethlehem, to a monastery of Saint Paula, where she dwelt for 12 years in strict ascetic deeds until her blessed end. The name of this woman was Zoa.

Having recovered from his scorching, Saint Martinian set off to an uninhabited rocky island, and lived on it under the open sky for several years,

nourished by the victuals brought by a certain sailor from time to time, and in return the monk weaved baskets for him.

One time a powerful storm wrecked a ship, and to the island of Saint Martinian the waves carried on the ship debris a maiden named Photinia. Saint Martinian helped her to survive the island. "Remain here, – said he to her, – for here is bread and water, and in two months a boat will come", – and he jumped into the sea and swam off. Two dolphins carried him to dry land. Thereafter Blessed Martinian began to lead the life of a wanderer. And so passed two years. One time, having come to Athens, the saint fell ill, and sensing the nearness of his end, he went into church and lay upon the floor, and calling out to the bishop he besought him to give his body over to burial. This occurred in about the year 422.

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PRAYER CORNER

For the Health of... Robert, David, Karen, Anna Mae, David, Donna, 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 souls of the newly departed... Paul Shoemaker, Sr (2/27) ...*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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from the Lenten Triodion

Open to me the doors of repentance, O Life-Giver; for my spirit hastens early towards Your holy temple, bearing the temple of my body all defiled; but in Your compassion purify me by Your gracious mercy. Amen.

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THE PRAYER OF SAINT EPHRAIM THE SYRIAN

(in the Ruthenian tradition as found in St. Peter Mogila's 1639 Liturgikon (Sluzhebnik))

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of laziness, despair, lust for power, and vain talking. + [Prostration]

But give to me, Your servant, the spirit of purity, humility, patience, and love. + [Prostration]

Yes, Lord and King, grant me to see my own sins, and not judge my brother, for blessed are You forever and ever. Amen. + [Prostration]

The following triplet is recited 4 times (making a total of 12 bows):

O God, be merciful to me, a sinner. [bow]

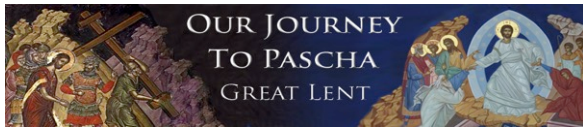
O God, cleanse me of my sins and have mercy on me. [bow]

O Lord, forgive me, for my sins are many. [bow]

Then the prayer again with only one prostration:

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of laziness, despair, lust for power, and vain talking. But give to me, Your servant, the spirit of purity, humility, patience, and love. Yes, Lord and King, grant me to see my own sins, and not judge my brother, for blessed are You forever and ever. Amen. + [Prostration]

ONLINE BULLETIN BONUSES



To assist the faithful in making the most of this holy season, additional resources have been added to our Diocesan Website at:

www.acrod.org/prayercorner/lentenresources/
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SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR THE GREAT FAST (GREAT LENT):

We are called to increase our *Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving* during this time...

PRAYER:

- ✘ Attend as many of the services as possible and be strengthened in community prayer.
- ✘ Come to the Mystery of Confession (*offered after every service, on most Saturdays during the Great Fast, or by appointment*).
- ✘ Approach the Chalice to receive the Holy Eucharist as often as possible.
- ✘ Also, add additional prayers to your personal *Prayer Rule* at home. (See the attached about reading the Book of Psalms during Great Lent.)

FASTING:

- ✘ The Great Fast begins tomorrow, March 8. This is a day of strict fasting (no meat or dairy products). Likewise, strict fast on Great & Holy Friday (4/22) and Great & Holy Saturday (4/23)
- ✘ The tradition of the Orthodox Church is a strict fast (*no meat or dairy products eaten*) by all of the faithful for the entire 40 days of the Great Fast and for all of Holy Week.
- ✘ If you cannot physically do this, adopt a fasting rule and stick to it for the duration of the Great Fast (*see Father for some guidance*). Here are a few examples:
 - o a) strict fast on certain days of the week while keeping a meat fast on the others;
 - o b) fast only from meat;
 - o c) fast from meat for certain weeks (*Clean Week, Cross Week, and Holy Week*); or
 - o d) fast from meat on Wednesdays, Fridays, and all of Holy Week (*April 18-23*).

- ✘ The more effort you put forth in your fasting, the more spiritually uplifting your Lenten Season will be!
- ✘ A minimum three (3) hour fast from all food and drink for those receiving Communion at the evening Pre-sanctified Liturgy (*the regular "midnight Fast" is called for the Liturgies of St. John Chrysostom & St. Basil the Great*)
- ✘ The sick and infirm are not bound by the fast at any time.
- ✘ Those requiring medications or certain prescribed diets are to follow their physician's instructions.
- ✘ Lastly, the Great Fast is not a "40 day diet program" or simply a "dietary adjustment" (or "label Lent").

ALMSGIVING:

- ✘ Find a way to give more of your time, talent, and treasures.

A general guideline for the Great Fast is this:

Try to do more than last year.

Please reach out if you have questions about this important fasting period that we are blessed with. May our journey to Pascha be a spiritually beautiful one! – Fr. Dave

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A Note About The Mystery Of Confession

Confessions will be heard in the first pew in front of the Icon of Christ. Confessions will be heard *following every service, from 11am – 1pm* on most Saturdays during Great Lent (*the side door will be open*), and at other times by appointment: please contact Fr. Dave to arrange this. If you have a regular Spiritual Father, or wish to go to another Orthodox priest to have your confession heard, please let Fr. Dave know. Do not wait to plan for your confession! Confessions will only be heard *through Holy Wednesday*.

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Being an Orthodox Christian

The Orthodox Church is not just another organization, club or fraternal society. It is the Body of Christ, and a life-giving relationship with God. The Orthodox Church is a continuation of the Christian Church from the time of Christ until the present. As Orthodox Christians, we do not have a relationship with Christ in isolation, but alongside other Orthodox Christians.

With these things in mind, Orthodox Christians are expected to:

- ✘ Strive daily to live a Christian life, according to the teachings of Our Lord in the Gospels, and the tradition of the Church.
- ✘ Regularly participate in the Divine Liturgy on Sundays (and on holy days as permitted by your employment).
 - o *Those who are homebound and/or physically unable to attend services on a regular basis are asked to spiritually join in prayer on Sundays and holy days. The priest will visit with the Sacraments periodically throughout the year, as requested.*
- ✘ Regularly receive Holy Communion and participate in the Mystery of Holy Confession. (The minimum is no less than once a year for each, but at least four times a year is better.)
- ✘ Offer your whole life to Christ, and offer the "Three T's" - time, talent and treasure - to sustain the church (your stewardship).
 - o Participate in parish ministries and activities.
 - o Volunteer to help.
 - o Give monetary support.
 - o Our parish does not survive on stewardship, we "thrive" on this form of voluntary giving of who we are. If we are unable to donate monetarily, there are many other ways to give with time and talents.

If you have any questions about Stewardship or any of the above, please reach out to Fr Dave or Larry Martin (Parish Council President)

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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.

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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.

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 #2

*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. Dean, Michael L., Laura & family, Carlene, Georgia, Eleanora, Mark, Michaleana, Dorell, Donald, Susan, Stephen, David, Anastasia, Nicholas, Cassandra, Alexander, Andrea, Jason, Tyrone, Sarah, Amee, 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 Kalaluhī – 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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* 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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DEVOTIONAL PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

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.

A Prayer Of Repentance (Psalm 50/51)

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your great mercy; And according to the multitude of Your compassions, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my iniquity, And my sin is continually before me. Against You only have I sinned, And done this evil before You. That You might be justified in Your words, And prevail when You judge. For behold, I was conceived in iniquities, And in sins did my mother bear me.

For behold, You have loved truth; The hidden and secret things of Your wisdom You have made clear to me. You shall sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be made clean; You shall wash me and I shall be made whiter than snow. You shall make me to hear joy and gladness, The bones which have been humbled shall rejoice. Turn Your face away from my sins, And blot out all my iniquities.

Create a clean heart in me, O God, And renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Your presence, And take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And with Your governing Spirit establish me. I shall teach transgressors Your ways, And the ungodly shall turn back to You.

Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, who are the God of my salvation, My tongue shall rejoice in Your righteousness. O Lord, You shall open my lips, And my mouth shall declare Your praise.

For if You had desired sacrifice, I would have given it; With whole burnt offerings You shall not be pleased. A sacrifice to God is a broken spirit, A heart that is broken and humbled God will not despise. Do good, O Lord, in Your good pleasure to Zion; And let the walls of Jerusalem be built Then shall You be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with oblation and whole burnt offerings; Then shall they offer bullocks upon Your altar.

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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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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 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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