



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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UPCOMING SERVICES

SUNDAY, JULY 30, 2023

8th Sunday after Pentecost
Commemoration of the Holy Fathers of the
First Six Ecumenical Councils
Great-martyr Marina (Margaret) of Antioch (4th c.)
Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry Awareness Sunday
Annual Blessing of Chariots (*Cars, Trucks, Boats,*
Bicycles, and other modes of transportation)

SUNDAY, AUGUST 6, 2023

9th Sunday after Pentecost
Martyr Christina of Tyre (300)
9:30 am Reader's Service
Epistle: 1 Cor. 3:9-17; Gospel: Matthew 14:22-34
Tone 8; Liturgical Color: **Gold**

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***Mystery of Confession** – Father is available to hear
Confessions after every service or by appointment.

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***Live-Broadcast** – If you are unable to attend church
services, please pray along with our Cathedral online:

www.acrod.org/directories/cathedral/live/

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***Calendar** - Future Services are updated online at:

www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar

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

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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

AUGUST SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 2

FEAST OF THE HOLY GLORIOUS PROPHET ELIAS

SUNDAY, AUGUST 6

9:30 am Reader's Service

SUNDAY, AUGUST 13

9:30 am Divine Liturgy

Lesser Blessing of Water and Blessing of Honey

MONDAY, AUGUST 14 #DormitionFast

FEAST OF THE PROCESSION OF THE CROSS (in 1164)

9:30 am Akathist in Honor of the Dormition

Dormition Fast Begins

Home Blessings begin

FRIDAY, AUGUST 18 #DormitionFast

6:30 pm Feast Day Vespers

SATURDAY, AUGUST 19 #DormitionFast

FEAST OF THE TRANSFIGURATION

9:30 am Festal Divine Liturgy & Blessing of Grapes
and First-Fruits (and vegetables)

Confessions offered after Liturgy

SUNDAY, AUGUST 20 #DormitionFast

9:30 am Divine Liturgy

Youth Sunday

Blessing of Grapes and First-Fruits (and vegetables)

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 23 #DormitionFast

9:30 am Paraklis to the Theotokos

FRIDAY, AUGUST 25 #DormitionFast

9:30 am Moleben to the Theotokos

12-Noon Overdose Awareness Prayer Service at Trinity

Episcopal Cathedral (325 Oliver Ave, Pgh, PA 15222)

SUNDAY, AUGUST 27 #DormitionFast

9:30 am Divine Liturgy

Blessing of Students and Teachers

6:30 pm Feast Day Vespers

“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)

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.

BULLETIN IS OFFERED:

In Memory Of

+Peter and +Katherine Silon
May their memory be eternal!

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*** **Anonymous Donation** – St. John's has been blessed to find out that someone will be making a \$120,000 anonymous donation to the church to cover the costs of our new roof, air conditioners, and boiler! Prayer is a powerful tool! For those who were concerned as to how things were going to happen, God provided and will continue to provide for us as we strive to do His Will! May God Bless our founders and benefactors! Glory to God for all things!

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*** **August: A Month of Special Blessings!** – Live the Orthodox Faith and plan ahead for the many special blessings that are offered in August (*plus a bonus in July as we anticipate his Feast day*):

July 30: Blessing of Chariots (Vehicles)

August 13: Lesser Blessing of Water & Blessing of Honey

August 19 & 20: Blessing of the First-Fruits (and vegetables)

(tentative) **Aug. 27:** Blessing of Students & Teachers

Aug. 28 and Sept. 3: Blessing of Flowers & Herbs

Life is full of blessings! Orthodoxy is awesome!

Let's focus on the blessings in our lives!

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*** **Home Blessings** – Our Annual Home Blessings will begin on **Sunday, August 14** after the Lesser Blessing of Water. Fr. Dave is looking forward to visiting *every home* this August, September, or October. **It is not too early to schedule with Fr. Dave today.**



MONDAY, AUGUST 28

FEAST OF THE DORMITION

9:30 am Divine Liturgy

Blessing of Flowers & Herbs

THURSDAY, AUGUST 31

6:30 pm Akathist to the Inexhaustible Cup and

Panachida for those departed who have overdosed

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BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

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*** **Fr Dave not available** – For the next 12 days, Fr. Dave will not be available. If an emergency occurs, please contact

Fr Nik Ferencz: 724-953-6046 or

Fr Bob Teklinski: 412-694-2822 or

Fr Marc Wisnosky: 412-407-5102

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** **Church Building Update** – When we purchased the property on Duncan Avenue in March, we knew certain jobs needed to be taken care of right away. Here is a brief update on a few things:

✘ We are currently having services downstairs in the hall as the AC units are not working.

✘ A contract has been signed to have our roof replaced in August.

✘ The Parish Council is zoning in on which HVAC company we will be going with for new AC units and a new boiler.

✘ A representative from *Tree Pittsburgh* came to visit recently and brainstorming continues as to how we will beautify the outside grounds.

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OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD

Stewardship Offerings:	\$ 305
Candle Stewardship:	\$ 254
Envelope Stewardship:	\$ 1095
Total Collections:	\$ 1744
Capital Improvement Fund:	\$ 90

Weekly Candle Intentions / Memorials were offered last week by Juliana & Fred Anton; Brian Gogal; Carol & Tom Lorenzi; Renee & Rich Mirilovich; Melanie Paieski; Cindy Pavilonis; Kathy Schrmack.

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The **Eternal Lamp** was offered last week by Julia Lanick in memory of departed from the Lanick Family. May their memory be eternal!

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The **Christ Cross** was offered last week by Julia Lanick IMO +John Gaydos, Sr.. May his memory be eternal!

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The **Theotokos Cross** was offered last week by Julia Lanick for the health of the Lanick Family. Many Years!

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Giving at the Church – The “flow of traffic” is a little different in Allison Park, but the ways to give your stewardship treasures has not changed. One can:

- ✘ hand their offering to the curator who sits at the desk in the vestibule (to the right after you enter from the parking lot),
- ✘ there are multiple baskets around the church for you to drop your offering in, or
- ✘ when lighting your candles, put your donation in the box in the candle stand.

We will continue to not “pass the basket” which interrupts our focus on our prayers.

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On-Line Giving is available from our parish website to donate to the: *General Stewardship Fund, Capital Improvement Fund, and/or Relocation Fund*. The best option is to come to church and give your offering to God in His Temple (2nd best is to mail it in to Tim Martin, 2225 McAleer Rd., Sewickley, PA 15143). If you miss coming to church for a week, online giving allows you another option to “catch up” on your weekly stewardship. You can also set up a recurring donation online. For our parish to continue it’s ministries, outreach, and general bill paying, your generosity and stewardship is needed.

COFFEE SOCIAL STEWARDS

Please sign up in the multi-purpose room or by contacting Fr. Dave

August 6:	Liz Radomsky
August 13:	_____
August 20:	_____

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* **Summer Travels** – As we are in the summer vacation season, please do not forget about our parish. We continue to function even when you are away. If possible, mail your regular offering in or ‘catch up’ when you return. It is all a part of stewardship!

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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 (Memorial Service) for them.*

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#Dormition Fast – This is our lead-in to the great Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos. This 2-week Fast (from August 14-27) is one of the four fasting periods of the year when we are called to a special time of increasing our prayer, fasting, and charity. Increase your prayer by coming to confession (offered after any of the services).

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New School Year Blessing – We will have additional prayers on Sunday, **August 27th** for students and teachers who are heading back to school. *If you are leaving for college prior to 8/7, please let Fr. Dave.*

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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

*** **Who Will Minister to Them?** - Did you know that there are Orthodox Christians trying to practice their faith in prison? Or that there are non-Orthodox prisoners who are ready to repent of their crimes and embrace the fullness of Orthodoxy? St. George Men’s Ministry will host a presentation on Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry on **Saturday, August 26** that will include:

Session 1: 10-11am The Rev Fr. Stephen Powley and The Very Rev. Fr. John Kowalczyk, OCPM Co-Directors of Training and Spiritual Care

A Light Lunch

Session 2: 12:30-2:30pm Nicholas Petrogeorge, OCPM Executive Director and Mark Santana, OCPM Church Programs Director

Register online at tinyurl.com/ocpmevent2023

See you at 3400 Dawson St., Pittsburgh, PA 15213

2023 Home Blessings

How to prepare for your home blessing?

1. See Fr. Dave, email him

(fr.sleepless@gmail.com), call or text him (412-748-0148) today with your preferred windows of time for him to visit.

2. Have a white cloth placed on the dining room or kitchen table, an icon and/or a cross, and a candle to be lit. (*Fr Dave will provide the Holy Water for the blessing.*)

3. Have a list of names of those who live in the home (*including your pets*) and a list of the departed members of your family and friends you wish to have prayed for during the service.

4. Have all TVs, radios, and cell phones turned off.

5. Have on the table anything to be blessed (such as an Icon, Cross, etc.).

6. Participation is important! Have everyone in the family gather around the table and join in the blessing. Invite neighbors and friends over to be a part of this beautiful tradition as well!

7. If you need to discuss a personal matter, this is a good time to do so!

Home blessings will take place from August 14 through October 14

It would be ideal if Father could come on a weekday between 8:30am and 3:30pm. IF this is not possible, certain evening, Saturday, and Sunday times will be available. Fr Dave looks forward to spending this time with your family!

AUGUST COMMUNITY OUTREACH



This month, through the efforts of our Sr. ACRY, we will be collecting donations for the **Distinguished Diocesan Donors (DDD) Program**. “The Distinguished Diocesan Donors program strives to provide the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese with the necessary resources to bring a resurgence of life and an abundance of growth to its apostolates and ministries.” For more information, visit www.acrod.org/ministries/dddprogram/. We ask that you make an additional offering by the end of the month for this outreach effort. *Thank you in advance for your prayers and offerings this month!*

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*** **Distinguished Diocesan Donors (DDD)** – We invite you to join with other St John’s faithful in giving individually to the annual DDD program. This program greatly supports our ministry at Camp Nazareth and other programs in our diocese. For more information, please get a brochure in the vestibule, see Larry Martin (*our local ambassador*) or Fr. Dave, or visit www.acrod.org/ministries/dddprogram/. Checks payable to: Distinguished Diocesan Donors can be mailed to: Diocesan Chancery, 312 Garfield St., Johnstown, PA 15906.

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*** Do you have a clean coat or two that you have not worn since before our last coat drive but it is still in good condition? We are now collecting clean coats and jackets to donate to the Neighborhood Resilience Project (NRP) [*Formerly FOCUS Pittsburgh (who provide Food, Occupation, Clothing, Understanding, and Shelter to those who are in need)*]. Please place your clean coat(s) on the coat rack in the hall during the month of August.

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ORTHODOXY AROUND THE 'BURGH AND OUR DIOCESE

*** **Holy Transfiguration Monastery** – Each year the monastery, located at *321 Monastery Lane, Ellwood City, PA 16117*, hosts its Patronal Feast Day Celebrations and Pilgrimage on **August 5th & 6th** for the Transfiguration of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (*Revised Calendar Dates*). Here is the schedule:

Saturday, August 5 - 6:00 pm Festal Vigil Service;
Sunday August 6 - 9:00 am Akathist and procession;
10:00 Primatial Liturgy (with Metropolitan Tikhon);
12:00 Catered Luncheon; 2:30 Holy Unction (Anointing) with Paraklesis

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** **Trek4Missions** - Please join us for the annual OCMC Trek4Missions held from **August 6 to September 17!** This event is the Orthodox Christian Mission Center's largest virtual fundraiser that challenges participants to be physically active while raising awareness and financial support for our mission work to unite the world to Jesus Christ and His Church. If anyone is interested in spearheading and leading a local team (our previous team's name was **Pittsburgh Forerunners**), please contact Fr. Dave so that we can begin together on August 6th.

The Trek4Missions is an opportunity for individuals and parish communities to unite and demonstrate our commitment to Christ's Great Commission "to make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19). Plan to walk, run, ride your bike, and more to show your support for Christ's call to each of us.

Everyone who registers will receive a free Trek4Missions t-shirt! There are no fees to register.

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ACRY Convention 2023 - Holy Resurrection ACRY Chapter #25, Potomac, MD, is delighted to be your hosts for the 78th National ACRY Convention this Labor Day weekend. All information is now out and up online: www.acrod.org/organizations/senioracry/ ALL deadlines are August 12th! If you have any questions, please contact Dan Breno, chairperson, at 301-703-5626 (land line), 443-562-8971 (cell) or dabreno@gmail.com.

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** **Upcoming Festivals** – Pittsburgh's calendar is filled with festivals throughout the summer! Here are a couple that may be of interest:

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** **McKeesport's International Village** will be on **August 15-17** from 3 to 9 pm at Eden Park Boulevard and University Drive, McKeesport, PA 15132. Admission is \$2 at the gate with numerous food booths and performances each night. More information can be found on their website:

www.internationalvillage.info/

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** **Greek Food Festival** – Holy Trinity will have their festival from **August 31 to September 3** at 985 Providence Blvd., Pittsburgh. Visit their website for more information: www.HolyTrinityPgh.org

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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:10-18

Divisions in the Church

¹⁰I appeal to you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree and that there be no dissensions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment. ¹¹For it has been reported to me by Chlo'e's people that there is quarreling among you, my brethren. ¹²What I mean is that each one of you says, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apol'los," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ." ¹³Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? ¹⁴I am thankful that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Ga'ius; ¹⁵lest any one should say that you were baptized in my name. ¹⁶(I did baptize also the household of Steph'anas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized any one else.) ¹⁷For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

Christ the Power and Wisdom of God

¹⁸For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

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Epistle: Hebrews 13:7-16 (for Holy Fathers)

⁷Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God; consider the outcome of their life, and imitate their faith. ⁸Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever. ⁹Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings; for it is well that the heart be strengthened by grace, not by foods, which have not benefited their adherents. ¹⁰We have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to eat. ¹¹For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. ¹²So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. ¹³Therefore let us go forth to him outside the camp, and bear the abuse he endured. ¹⁴For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city which is to come. ¹⁵Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. ¹⁶Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

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Gospel: Matthew 14:14-22

¹⁴As he went ashore he saw a great throng; and he had compassion on them, and healed their sick. ¹⁵When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves." ¹⁶Jesus said, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." ¹⁷They said to him, "We have only five loaves here and two fish." ¹⁸And he said, "Bring them here to me." ¹⁹Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass; and taking the five loaves and the two fish he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. ²⁰And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. ²¹And those who ate were

about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Jesus Walks on the Water

²²Then he made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds.

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Gospel: John 17:1-13 (for Holy Fathers)

Jesus Prays for His Disciples

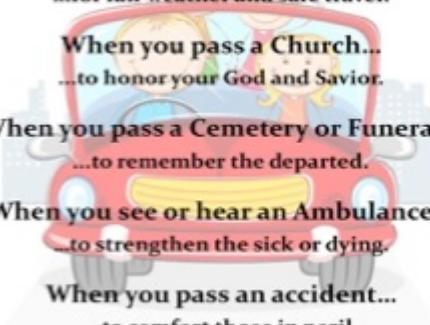
¹⁷When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify thy Son that the Son may glorify thee, ²since thou hast given him power over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom thou hast given him. ³And this is eternal life, that they know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. ⁴I glorified thee on earth, having accomplished the work which thou gave me to do; ⁵and now, Father, glorify thou me in thy own presence with the glory which I had with thee before the world was made.

⁶"I have manifested thy name to the men whom thou gave me out of the world; thine they were, and thou gave them to me, and they have kept thy word. ⁷Now they know that everything that thou hast given me is from thee; ⁸for I have given them the words which thou gave me, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from thee; and they have believed that thou didst send me. ⁹I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world but for those whom thou hast given me, for they are thine; ¹⁰all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them. ¹¹And now I am no more in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to thee. Holy Father, keep them in thy name, which thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. ¹²While I was with them, I kept them in thy name, which thou hast given me; I have guarded them, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled. ¹³But now I am coming to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves

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LIVING OUR ORTHODOX FAITH

As we bless “chariots” this week, here are **6 Times to Make the Sign of the Cross in the Car**

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- When you get in the car...
...for fair weather and safe travel.
 - When you pass a Church...
...to honor your God and Savior.
 - When you pass a Cemetery or Funeral...
...to remember the departed.
 - When you see or hear an Ambulance...
...to strengthen the sick or dying.
 - When you pass an accident...
...to comfort those in peril.
 - When you pass a police car...
...to protect them (and to avoid a ticket).

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FMS

FEAST DAY FEATURES OF THE MONTH

The Holy Prophet Elias (Ilias or Elijah)

Commemorated on August 2 / July 20

We bless vehicles in honor of the Feast of the Holy Prophet Elias who was carried to heaven in a fiery chariot (see 2 Kings chapter 2 in the Old Testament).



Annual Blessing of Chariots – Fr Dave will bless vehicles at our Parish Picnic today, after the Divine Liturgy on **Tuesday, August 2**, OR another time if those do not work for you.

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The Procession (Carrying-forth) of the Venerable Wood of the Life-Creating Cross of the Lord

Commemorated on August 14/1

"By reason of the sicknesses, often everywhere occurring in August, from of old (~1164), customarily

it was done at Constantinople to carry out the Venerable Wood of the Cross along the roads and streets for the sanctifying of places and for the driving away of sicknesses. On the eve of the Feast, carrying it out from the imperial treasury, they placed it upon the Holy Table [Altar] of the Great Church (Hagia Sophia – the Wisdom of God). From this feastday up to the Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God, making litija throughout all the city, they then placed it forth for all the people to venerate." (1897 Greek Orologion)



In the Russian Church this feast is combined also with a remembrance of **the Baptism of Rus'**, on August 1, 988. In the "Account about the making of services in the holy catholic and apostolic great church of the Dormition", compiled in 1627 by order of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus' Philaret, there is provided suchlike an explanation of the feast: "And on the day of the procession of the Venerable Cross there occurs a church-procession for **the Lesser Sanctification of Water** and for the enlightenment of the people, throughout all the towns and places".



Together with the Blessing of Waters, there is made a **Blessing of Honey** (i.e. first-honey for the Saviour: "Saviour of the Water", "Saviour Moisture"). And from this day the newly harvested honey is blessed and tasted. *The origin is that in some climates, such as in Ukraine, the hives are ready to be "robbed" at this time of the year.* **Bring your honey to be blessed on Sunday, August 13**

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The Transfiguration Of Our Lord God And Saviour Jesus Christ

Commemorated on August 19/6



"The Christian practice to bless the fruits in church can be traced back to Apostolic times. There is a Prayer of Thanksgiving for the new fruits in the work of St. Hippolytus, *the Apostolic Tradition*, composed in about 220. St. Hippolytus mentions the following fruits usually blessed: grapes, figs, pomegranates, pears, mulberries, peaches, and almonds. The sixth Ecumenical Council, celebrated in Constantinople (680-681), prescribed that the new "wheat and grapes" were to be blessed in church on the

feast of the Holy Transfiguration (canon 28)." **We will bless our grapes and 'first fruits' from our gardens** (or purchased from the grocery store) **on Saturday, August 19 (and Sunday, August 20)**. Everyone is encouraged to bring in a bowl, basket, or bushel of fruits and/or vegetables!

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The "Falling-Asleep" ("Dormition", "Uspenie", "Koimesis") Of The Theotokos, Our Most-Holy Lady Mother Of God And Ever-Virgin Mary

Commemorated on August 28/15

Holy Tradition tells us that all the Apostles, with the exception of St. Thomas, were transported mystically to Jerusalem in order to be with the Mother of God – the Theotokos – as she reposed, and to be present at her burial. When the Apostle Thomas arrived the next day, the Apostles opened the tomb so that he could kiss her farewell. As the tomb was opened, the body of the Most Pure Virgin was missing, and the cave was filled with flowers and the sweet fragrance of Paradise. This was a sure sign of her great purity and holiness to the faithful.

Therefore as part of our celebration of Dormition on **Monday, August 28 (and Sunday, September 3)** we **bless flowers and fragrant herbs** – and the faithful traditionally keep them in their homes. The herbs, used as natural medicine, are blessed in commemoration of the numerous healings and the extraordinary grace bestowed on the pilgrims at the blessed tomb of the Mother of God. **Everyone is encouraged to bring in a bouquet or basket of flowers and/or herbs from your garden or the store to be blessed!**

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STEWARDSHIP SNIPPET



6 REASONS WHY TITHING IS GOOD FOR AN ORTHODOX PARISH

Excerpt from Fr Andrew Stephen Damick

Tithing is good for the Orthodox Christian and therefore good for the Orthodox parish. So why don't more Orthodox Christians tithe?

We know the usual reasons: We're not used to it. Back in the old country the government paid for the church. The parish was founded on the "dues" model.

Tithing is "Protestant." Orthodox people are stingy. We just don't have it in our culture.

Those things are all true in one way or another, but I don't think those are the real reasons that we do not tithe very much as Orthodox Christians. There are some who do, of course, but it's not very many of us. So what is the reason why we're so terrible at tithing?

I believe that it is because we don't know why we tithe. And because we don't know why, we don't do it. And when we don't do it, then we come up with the various reasons given above as the cause of our non-tithing. But those aren't the real reasons. It's because we don't know why we should tithe.

Now, the reasons I am going to list below are not all equally important. Indeed, if I had to answer the question, "Why should I tithe?" I would answer only with #1. That's the real reason. #2 through #6 are essentially useful effects of tithing that should help us to focus on #1.

So here are six of my reasons. #1 is the most important and really the point of all of it.

1. TITHING ENABLES US TO BE SAVED

As Christians, we want to be saved. We want to be healed. We want to "go to heaven" rather than to hell when we die (setting aside for the moment all the details). We want to become like Christ. Tithing doesn't purchase all that for us, but tithing is a powerful way that we give of ourselves, that we turn over what we have to God so that we are opened to receiving His healing and blessing.

It's a basic principle of Christian spiritual life that we cannot receive God's blessing if we are holding back on Him. Why? We can't be filled with God if we remain full of ourselves. Tithing helps us to empty ourselves.

Don't get me wrong—giving money is not the *only* way that we work out our salvation and become open to receiving blessings. But whatever we have, we have to give to God. And if we have money, then we have to give money. If we don't have money, then of course we don't have to give it. But we have to give what we have, whatever it is, and with the way our culture is so grasping and possessive about money, it really is one of the *best* things for us to give if we can.

Money is one of the places where we spiritually hurt the most! So we need to pay attention to that wound.

2. TITHING SHOWS THAT WE'RE SERIOUS

When I speak of tithing here, I am referring most obviously to giving 10% of income, but for this article, you can define tithing as **serious giving**. 10% is serious for most of us. For some of us who are more affluent, 10% is not that serious, and we should do more because we can. And for some of us, 10% is unaffordable, so we need to be serious with another percentage. But the point is to be serious. So if you're not serious, get serious.

How do you know if you're serious? Well, to start with, if you're spending more on cable TV or other forms of entertainment every month than you're giving to the Church, it's a safe guess that you're not being serious about giving.

I love the phrase "put your money where your mouth is." It's definitely true. Jesus says almost exactly the same thing when He says, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt. 6:21, Luke 12:34). Where we put our money proves where our hearts are. Where is *your* heart?

3. TITHING IS ABSOLUTELY ORTHODOX

Some people say that tithing is not Orthodox. This is nonsense. Giving is Orthodox. Asceticism is Orthodox. Generosity is Orthodox. Ministry is Orthodox. Discipline is Orthodox.

The purpose in tithing is not because it is an "absolute requirement" in order to be saved. It's not. But how can we be saved if we do not nurture a truly generous heart? And how can we nurture that generous heart without becoming disciplined about giving all that we have? The Orthodox Church understands how to become disciplined. We understand asceticism. This is one of the best ways to do it.

Tithing was a *minimum* set up in the Old Covenant (and there were multiple tithes, equaling about 23%). 100% is the standard in the New Covenant (Acts 4), and when the Fathers talk about tithing, they say that because the New is superior to the Old, we give *more* than the Old Covenant people did.

So perhaps it's true that "tithing is not Orthodox." But that's not because we give *less* than 10%, but because we give *more* than 10%.

God is merciful, of course, and if we're not ready to meet that standard, we can work toward it. But are we working toward it? If not, let's get on it.

4. TITHING BECOMES MINISTRY

There are things that a parish would love to do but just can't because they don't have the money for it. Perhaps they could improve or repair the building or build a new one. They could start that iconography project. They could get an assistant priest. They could hire a youth director. They could give to charities. They could fund continuing education for the priest, the choir director, or other parish workers. They could bring in special speakers. They could sponsor kids to summer camp. They could sponsor people to go on pilgrimages. They could do a lot more outreach. They could feed the hungry and clothe the naked.

The possibilities really are almost endless. The point is that God takes what we give, blesses it, and then returns it to us for our sanctification. When we give our money, God turns it into *ministry*.

And sometimes ministry is just the most basic things, like keeping the priest from having an outside secular job, keeping health insurance in place for him and his family, paying the parish's utility bills, buying supplies, etc.

When we tithe, that's what God does with our money. It doesn't go to lining anyone's pockets. Most clergy—not just Orthodox, but all clergy—are actually rather underpaid for their level of education, experience and the labor they put in. And almost none of them ever get a raise for preaching about tithing. *And a lot of them are tithing themselves.* In many parishes, the priest is one of the top givers, and he usually does it on a salary far below the parish average.

5. TITHING ENDS MONEY PROBLEMS FOR THE PARISH, ONCE AND FOR ALL

If a mission parish has 25 tithing families who each make roughly the national average (\$50k/yr.), the collective income for the parish would be \$125k, which is usually plenty for a mission to function on.

If a parish has 50 tithing families who make that average, pledge income would be \$250k. We are now well above the income of most medium to small parishes.

If there are 100 families who tithe like that, the income would be \$500k. And they're probably about to burn any mortgage, buy new land, build something new or start a new mission. Or maybe they're hiring a

couple more clergy, a secretary, etc. How many 100-family parishes have half a million dollars to use every year?

Even if half the families in a parish start tithing or even if that same half started giving just 5%, the parish would probably never have any more money problems ever.

6. TITHING CHANGES A PARISH CULTURE

Related to #5, I sometimes hear that, if only the membership knew all the money problems in their parish, they would be inspired to give a little bit more. But usually the people who say that, knowing full well the financial situation of their parish, have not themselves increased their pledge. Giving information and insight to the unmotivated usually doesn't accomplish much.

But what if we started thinking about parish life in a whole new way?

What if we stopped talking and worrying about paying for things and started thinking about why each of us needs to become generous, serious givers? We have to put the horse before the cart: We don't develop a culture of generosity by complaining about money problems. We develop a culture of generosity, and our money problems go away.

A tithing parish sees itself as a group of people ministering to one another, not as a group of people who are paying for something or expect to get something. And that's the kind of parish that's truly Christian, because they have love for each other (John 13:35).

From: <https://blogs.ancientfaith.com/roadsfromemma-us/2015/10/27/6-reasons-why-tithing-is-good-for-an-orthodox-parish/>

Stewardship of Treasure Guide												
Weekly offering to God through the Sunday Offertory - Will you take a step up?												
Weekly Income	Beyond a Tithe	Tithe	Upper Range Giving				Middle Range Giving			Lower Range Giving		
	15%	12%	10%	9%	8%	7%	6%	5%	4%	3%	2%	1%
\$200	\$30	\$24	\$20	\$18	\$16	\$14	\$12	\$10	\$8	\$6	\$4	\$3
\$300	\$45	\$36	\$30	\$27	\$24	\$21	\$18	\$15	\$12	\$9	\$6	\$5
\$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.

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 prepared or not of the Orthodox Faith may receive a *blessing* from the chalice.

How to receive - Please remember the following helpful hints aimed at helping to preserve the solemnity and safety of the Holy Mystery. Anyone wearing lipstick should remove it before receiving. Be sure to offer your baptismal name to the priest before receiving. Please take great care that the red cloth held by the acolytes (servers) is fully under your chin (*you should not hold it*), then use the centuries-old practice of receiving: please fully open your mouth, tilt your head back, receive the Holy Gifts, wait until they are securely in your mouth and so that none of the holy and precious Body and Blood of Christ is accidentally spilled. Thank you for your cooperation, and may God have mercy on us all!

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.

“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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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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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... Mary Jane M., Kyah, Octavian, Cecelia, Thomas, Jolin, Marianne, Melissa, Kellie, Carlene, David, Donna, George, Beverly, Kelly, Marie, Brian, Sean, Julia, 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, 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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August Namedays:

Patricia Watson - St Patricia (8/22)
Lawrence Martin - Blessed Laurence, fool-for-Christ at Kaluga (8/23)
Father’s sister, Suzanne Verbanick – Holy Martyress

Susanna the Virgin (8/24)

Pañi Alexandra Urban - Saint Alexander (8/30 NC)
...May God grant them many and blessed years!

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August Birthdays: Sharon Dzadony (8/2), Robert ‘Bobby’ Paieski (8/03), Steven Anton (8/4), Joseph Mainolfi, Jr. (8/4), Nicholas Dzambo (8/5), John Gaydos Jr. (8/6), Rylie Winkler (8/7), Michael Tongel (8/11), Nicole Martellotti (8/12), Lindsay Matolyak-Ferraz (8/12), Jim Schrmack (8/12), Jane Gaydos (8/13), Wade Winkler (8/14), Craig Bowser (8/16), Emma Martellotti (8/18), *Fr. Paul Herbert’s son-in-law*, Ernest Pido (8/20), Ana Karen Peña-Juarez (8/21), Maria Urban (8/21), Sophia Urban (8/21), Everly Torchia (8/22), Igumen Patrick (8/23), Renee Mirilovich (8/24), Fr. Michael Kabel (8/27), Meredith Blobner (8/28), Adam Zak (8/28), Lucillia Mainolfi (8/29), Claudia (Herbert) Pido (8/29)

...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
...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...*through the prayers of Sts. Adrian & Natalia and all Holy Martyrs.*

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August Anniversaries:

Steve & Elaine Buhonick (8/6)
Robert & Gina Fall (8/6/17)
Ben & Tina Scherer (8/7/82)
Ana Karen & W. Dylan Mushinsky (8/22/15)
Sharon & Ryan Dzadony (8/25/12)
...through the prayers of St. Nicholas Planas

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For Pregnant Mothers... Hailey (*due in September*), Lauren (*December*)...*through the prayers of St. Anna, the mother of the Theotokos, and St. Irene Chrysofantou.*

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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...

Susan (Kostelnik-Winters) Waugh (7/28)

...May the Lord God grant them blessed repose where there is no pain sorrow or mourning. May they be Eternal in God's Memory!

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* This is to be used for the special intentions of our brothers and sisters in Christ and can be inserted as a prayer itself into our daily prayers. Please let Fr. Dave know if you wish to make additions or subtractions (in the case of answered prayers) to our Parish List. The words of the Gospel are true: **it is good to pray for one another.** Let this be a place where we lay out our concerns and beg the help of our brothers & sisters in Christ. *This prayer list is NOT limited to only Orthodox Christians.*

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An Orthodox Prayer Before A Journey

Lord Jesus Christ my God, be my Companion, guide and protector during my (our) journey. Keep me (us) from all danger, misfortune and temptation. By Your divine power grant me (us) a peaceful and successful journey and safe arrival. In You I (we) place my (our) hope and trust and You I (we) praise, honor and glorify, together with Your Father and Holy Spirit now and forever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

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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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ONLINE BONUS

My Big Fat Greek Wedding 3 – It's back... Enjoy "My Big Fat Greek Wedding 3" with the Holy Trinity Orthodox family for the worldwide premiere on **Friday, September 8.** "My Big Fat Wedding 3" follows Toula as she honors her father's last wish and takes the whole family to the village where he grew up in Greece. As she tries to track down her father's childhood best friends, she winds up learning a lot more about her roots and her family along the way. Celebrate the newest release of this movie franchise in great Greek style with the Holy Trinity Orthodox community! The Philoptochos is presenting a special Greek Dinner and Movie Night celebration starting with dinner at Holy Trinity Church and then the movie up the hill at the Cinemark Theater. Holy Trinity's Greek Night package includes 6:00pm Greek dinner at Holy Trinity Church followed by a 7:15pm "Greek Flag Parade" up to the theater for the movie, then back to the Church for dessert & music. We have bought out the entire theater, but **TICKETS ARE LIMITED!** Tickets must be purchased in advance and are available at HolyTrinityPgh.org/events. Opa!

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Nativity of the Theotokos Monastery Feast Day - Gerontissa Theophano and the Sisters warmly welcome you to the Nativity of the Theotokos Monastery's Feast Day on **Saturday, September 9** beginning at 9:00am at 121 St. Elias Ln, Saxonburg, PA 16056. "Please come with family and friends and spend the day at the Monastery. Browse our icons and handiwork for sale, pastries, as well as frappes at our cafe." Please RSVP so that the Monastery can prepare adequate hospitality. Kindly call 724-352-3999 or email info@NativityoftheTheotokosMonastery.org. Visitors should be modestly dressed; women are asked to wear long skirts and men are asked to wear long pants.

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Ukrainian Relief Dinner – On Sunday, **September 24**, the IOCC (*International Orthodox Christian Charities*) is holding a second prayer service and fundraising dinner to benefit our Ukrainian brothers and sisters. It will be held at St. Nicholas Orthodox

Cathedral in Oakland. Tickets are \$50. RSPV by September 19. If interested, please contact Fr. Dave. Upcoming Future IOCC events include:

* **Oktoberfest - October 19** - Rusty Gold Brewing Co - Canonsburg, PA

* **Bourbon Tasting - November 2** - McMurray, PA

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Holy Trinity Consecration – Join the Holy Trinity Family and Friends to celebrate the Consecration of their Church and the Centennial of their Parish on **November 3, 4 & 5, 2023.** Tickets and Centennial commemorative items are now available at HolyTrinityPgh.org/centennial, with more information to come over the summer.

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2022-23 SJB PARISH COUNCIL OFFICERS

President: Lawrence Martin

Vice-President: Subdeacon Ryan Ferko

Treasurer: Timothy Martin, Reader

Financial Secretary: Rich Mirilovich

Recording Secretary: Elizabeth Radomsky

Chief Auditor: Robert Fall

Auditors: Gina Fall, Mary Jane Hudak, Kathy Schrmack, (the 4th and 5th positions are vacant)

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LIVES OF THE SAINTS

THE HOLY GREATMARTYRESS MARINA

Commemorated on July 30/17

The Holy GreatMartyress Marina was born in Asia Minor, in the city of Antioch, into the family of a pagan priest. In infancy she lost her mother, and her father gave her over into the care of a nursemaid, who raised Marina in the Orthodox faith. Upon learning that his daughter had become a Christian, the father angrily disowned her. During the time of the persecution against Christians under the emperor Diocletian (284-305), Saint Marina at fifteen years of age was arrested and locked up in prison. With firm trust in the will of God and His help, the young prisoner prepared for her impending fate. The governor Olymbrios, charmed with the beautiful girl, tried to persuade her to renounce the Christian faith and become his wife. But the saint, unswayed, refused his false offers. The vexed governor gave the holy

martyress over to torture. Having beaten her fiercely, they fastened the saint with nails to a board and tore at her body with tridents. The governor himself, unable to bear the horror of these tortures, hid his face in his hands. But the holy martyress remained unyielding. Thrown for the night into prison, she was granted Heavenly aid and healed of her wounds. Tied to a tree, they scorched the martyress with fire. Barely alive, the martyress prayed: "Lord, Thou hast granted me to go through fire for Thine Name, grant me also to go through the water of holy Baptism".

Hearing the word "water", the governor gave orders to drown the saint in a large barrel. The martyress besought the Lord, that this manner of execution should become for her holy Baptism. When they plunged her into the water, there suddenly shone a light, and a snow-white dove came down from Heaven, bearing in its beak a golden crown. The fetters put upon Saint Marina of themselves came apart. The martyress stood up in the fount of Baptism glorifying the Holy Trinity – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Saint Marina emerged from the fount completely healed, without any trace of burns. Amazed at this miracle, the people glorified the True God, and many came to believe. This brought the governor into a rage, and he gave orders to kill anyone, who might confess the Name of Christ. There then perished 15,000 Christians, and the holy Martyress Marina was beheaded. The sufferings of the GreatMartyress Marina were described by an eyewitness of the event, named Theotimos.

Up until the taking of Constantinople by Western crusaders in the year 1204, the relics of the GreatMartyress Marina were situated in the Panteponteia monastery. According to other sources, they were located in Antioch until the year 908 and from there transferred to Italy. Her venerable hand was transferred to Athos, to the Batopedeia monastery.

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SPIRITUAL VITAMINS

“If, even after we have heard such words from Him, trials and temptations arise, and the tempests of evil spirits blow mightily, raging against us and afflicting us, and we are a little upset by the waves and their fury, the Lord will reproach our faint-heartedness, but will also stretch out His hand to us and grant us complete calm. If we desire with our bodies and souls to receive this, and not to be disturbed at all times by every wind of adversity, nor upset by the billows stirred up by men who gloat over other’s misfortunes, we (must) know how very stormy the sea of life is, and what malice is aroused and seethes therein, and never let faith and hope in God be far from our minds.”

+St. John Chrysostom

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A prayer for our Neighborhoods

by Archbishop Demetrios of America

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

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A Prayer for our Diocesan Clergy

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