

“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)

Meatfare
MARCH 10th
FAREWELL TO MEAT TODAY



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

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

Cheesefare
MARCH 17th
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.

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS!

Glory be 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. 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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UPCOMING SERVICES

SUNDAY, MARCH 10, 2024

Sainted Porphyrios, Archbishop of Gaza (420)
Panachida - Monthly Memorial: +Most Reverend Metropolitan Nicholas (13-yr), +Anna Pitto, +Katherine Crispen, +Olga Tongel, +Gary Bowser
Pre-Lenten Pot-Luck Brunch
Sr. ACRY Meeting

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13

ANNIVERSARY IN ALLISON PARK
6:30 pm Parish Council Meeting

FRIDAY, MARCH 15

6:30 pm Akathist to the Inexhaustible Cup
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SUNDAY, MARCH 17

Translation of the relics of Martyr Wencslaus
9:15 am Third Hour; 9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Tone 8; Liturgical Color: **Gold → Purple**
Youth Sunday
Rite of Forgiveness then Church School

CLEAN MONDAY, MARCH 18 #TheGreatFast

THE GREAT FAST BEGINS
6:30 pm Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew

CLEAN TUESDAY, MARCH 19 #TheGreatFast

6:30 pm Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew

CLEAN WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20 #TheGreatFast

6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
with community meal following

CLEAN THURSDAY, MARCH 21 #TheGreatFast

6:30 pm Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew

CLEAN FRIDAY, MARCH 22 #TheGreatFast

* 9:30 am Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
OR * 6:30 pm Lenten Service

CLEAN SATURDAY, MARCH 23 #TheGreatFast

11 am – 1 pm Confessions Offered
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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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Mystery of Confession – Father is available to hear Confessions after every service or by appointment.
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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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SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2

⁸ Food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. ⁹ Only take care lest this liberty of yours somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. ¹⁰ For if any one sees you, a man of knowledge, at table in an idol’s temple, might he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols? ¹¹ And so by your



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, Kris Carlisle, Reader, Timothy Martin, Reader

Stephen Brancho, Subdeacon Ryan Ferko, & John Radick, *Cantors*

Lawrence Martin, *Parish Council President*

www.facebook.com/pg/St-John-the-Baptist-Orthodox-Church-Allison-Park

2201 Duncan Avenue, Allison Park, Pa 15101

www.OrthodoxPittsburgh.com

412-748-0148, *Talk or Text*

OrthodoxPittsburgh1932@gmail.com

Instagram: SJB_Orthodox_Pittsburgh

Twitter: @SJB_OrthodoxPGH

knowledge this weak man is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died. ¹² Thus, sinning against your brethren and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. ¹³ Therefore, if food is a cause of my brother’s falling, I will never eat meat, lest I cause my brother to fall.

The Rights of an Apostle

9 Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are not you my workmanship in the Lord? ² If to others I am not an apostle, at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.



Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46

The Judgment of the Nations

³¹ “When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. ³² Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, ³³ and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left. ³⁴ Then the King will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; ³⁵ for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see thee hungry and feed

thee, or thirsty and give thee drink? ³⁸ And when did we see thee a stranger and welcome thee, or naked and clothe thee? ³⁹ And when did we see thee sick or in prison and visit thee?’ ⁴⁰ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.’ ⁴¹ Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; ⁴² for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ ⁴⁴ Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see thee hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to thee?’ ⁴⁵ Then he will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me.’ ⁴⁶ And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

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*** **Great Lent 2024** - Our Journey To Pascha has begun! We are in the series of Sundays known as the Triodion. These weeks are meant to prepare us for Great Lent (which prepares us for Holy Week... which prepares us for Pascha). Please reach out to Fr. Dave with your questions about this important fasting period that is around the corner. **Today is Meatfare Sunday**, traditionally the last day for meat before the Great Fast. Begin to prepare yourself for the 40-day journey that begins in one week on **March 18**.

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**** Candy Sale** – We are selling Anderson’s Candy and the catalogs are in the church hall. Orders are due by **March 15** (sorry for the short notice! There was a weird delay this year...). Candy will be delivered March 23. * Please try and sell some! We need to sell \$500 worth of candy to get the 30% profit from this fundraiser. Please see Tim Martin with any questions.

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***** Akathist to the Icon of the “Inexhaustible Cup”** – This is a Prayer Service for Those Who Struggle with Addiction and for their Friends & Family. We will offer this service on **Friday, March 15** at 6:30 pm on behalf of those who suffer from alcoholism and other addictions. *The Pittsburgh Clergy Brotherhood has organized that this Akathist be served at 3 other Orthodox Churches around Pittsburgh (we are the northern representation).* We encourage those who have friends or family members who struggle with addiction, as well as those who work in the field of recovery, to come and pray with us!

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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/
If You Would Like To Buy Something For The Church Library Or If You Are Looking To Add A Couple Dollars To Your Order To Get Free Shipping, Please Call or Text Father Dave As He Has A Couple Suggestions That Are Small And Would Be Helpful To Our Church.

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***** Rite of Forgiveness** – After the Divine Liturgy next **Sunday, March 17**, we will have prayers from Vespers and the Rite of Forgiveness as a community immediately following the Liturgy. **Let’s pray that we begin the Great Fast on the right foot: taking the step of forgiveness together.**

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***** “Clean Week” Services** – The first week of the Great Fast is known as “Clean Week”. We will have services each evening. 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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***** Fellowship Meals** - Got Soup? A small ‘t’ tradition 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 at our parish and when we travel to the other North Hills Orthodox parishes. A sign up sheet is in the church hall for those interested in bringing in food.

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**** Presanctified Liturgies** – The schedule for our Wednesday services will be different this year. With the growing Orthodox Christian presence in the area, instead of each week having the service here, we will take two weeks and pray at our sister Orthodox Parishes in the North Hills! In the desire to provide a greater fellowship among our parishes and communities, we will be sharing in three Wednesday Presanctified Liturgies. Our schedule will be thus:

March 20 at 6:00 pm at St. John the Baptist

March 27 at **** 7:00** pm at St. Alexander Nevsky OCA Cathedral (1600 Guyton Rd., Allison Park)

April 3 at **** 6:30** pm at Holy Trinity GOA Church (985 Providence Blvd., Pittsburgh)

April 10 at 6:00 pm at St. John the Baptist with the other parishes coming to us

April 17 & 24 at 6:00 pm at SJB

**** Please note the different times when we travel ****

All our parishioners are invited to attend all the services. What a wonderful way to build Orthodox fellowship and a stronger connection among our sister parishes in the North Hills. Each service will be followed by a Lenten meal.

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***** Sunday of Orthodoxy Service** - The Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood of Greater Pittsburgh is hosting the annual service on the Sunday of Orthodoxy on **Sunday, March 24** at 4:30 pm at Holy Trinity (985 Providence Blvd., Pittsburgh)

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***** Deanery Lenten Mission Schedule**

All are again encouraged to attend services at our sister parishes this spring. Not only is it beautiful fellowship with other Orthodox, but each church is unique and you get to see the differences first hand.

Confessions start at 3:30, Vespers at 4:00, and

Fellowship Meal following

March 31 - St John the Baptist

211 Cable Ave., **East Pittsburgh**, PA 15112

April 7 - St Michael the Archangel

146 Third Ave., **Rankin**, PA 15104

April 14 - St John the Baptist

2201 Duncan Ave., **Allison Park**

April 21 - St John the Baptist

450 Glenwood Ave., **Ambridge**, PA 15003

How many services will you be able to make?

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**** Lenten Retreat** – Save the date for the Central Region Lenten Retreat on **Saturday, April 20** at St. Nicholas the Wonderworker (903 Ann St., Homestead, PA 15120)

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***** Spring Maintenance Morning** – With the Lenten Retreat falling on the Saturday that we normally had our spring maintenance morning, a creative reschedule may happen... stay tuned!

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**** Nameday, Birthday, and Anniversary Prayer Lists are being reset** – Our parish prayer list of key dates and special occasions in our lives will be reset going forward (starting 3/1/24). Please contact Fr. Dave with any questions.

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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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CHURCH BUILDING UPDATE

Here is a brief update from the past few weeks:

- ✘ ******* Installation of our **pews** will occur this week (contact Fr. Dave if you want to help)
- ✘ ******* The installation of our new **windows** is complete - Glory to God! Come see the light! (cost was \$28,000 - covered by an anonymous donor)
- ✘ ******* The **chandelier** that was generously donated to our parish will not be installed. After seeing first-hand the state of the aged electrical and supports, it was reconsidered. Other options are being explored.
- ✘ * Quotes for a new **electrical panel** are being received. IF You Have An Electrician You Would Recommend – Please Contact Fr. Dave. (covered by an anonymous donor)

Glory to God for All Things!

Through your generosity and dedication, all of this will come together – one thing at a time!

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*** Attention Singers** – Soon we will be having the Liturgy of St. Basil on Sundays and the Presanctified Liturgy on Wednesday evenings -- Would anyone like to practice some of these melodies before we start the services? Please contact Fr. Dave if interested...

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THIRD HOUR

Please let Fr. Dave know if you are interested in reading or chanting the Third Hour at 9:15 am

March 17 :	_____?
March 24 :	_____?
March 31 :	_____?

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**** St Constantine School** – After over 2 years searching for a place to call home, a location has been found! In just under 6 months, the St. Constantine School will be opening their doors and welcoming students, faculty, and families into 934 Forest Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15202 located on the south side of Ross Township. Stay tuned for more information about this new Orthodox School in Pittsburgh!

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***** 2024 Parish Picnic** – Save the date for our Parish Family Picnic at *The Cabin* on **Sunday, September 8**

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OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD

Stewardship Offerings:	\$ 381
Candle Stewardship:	\$ 169
Envelope Stewardship:	\$ 828
Community Outreach:	\$ 50
Total Collections:	\$ 1428
Capital Improvement Fund:	\$ 0

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Weekly Candle Intentions / Memorials were offered last week by the Nelson Family; Lawrence Martin; Tim Martin; Kathy Schrmack; Juliana and Fred Anton; Mary Jane Hudak; Carol Lorenzi; Eleanor Sanger; Rich and Renee Mirilovich; Cindy Pavilonis; Melanie Paieski

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The **Christ Cross** was offered in memory of departed family and friends of St. John the Baptist. May their memory be eternal!

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December Financial Report:

General Stewardship = \$ 4537.22

(includes \$ 214.72 from online stewardship)

***Expenses = \$ 5618.29**

Net Deficit = \$ 1081.07

Capital Improvement Fund = \$ 425

Average at Sunday Divine Liturgies: 36

**details listed on the church hall bulletin board*

Fiscal Year-to-Date Financial Report:

(September through last month)

General Stewardship = \$ 50,054

***Expenses = \$ 38,293**

Net Income = \$ 11,761

**details listed on the church hall bulletin board*

Average at Sunday Divine Liturgies: 31

Church Financial Account Balances:

Balances as of the end of last month

General Stewardship = \$ 84,235

includes the "Fundraising Account"

Capital Improvement Funds = \$ 70,448

of which \$ 49,102 in this fund is borrowed

*** **Kardiotissa Icon** – The Kardiotissa Icon will be traveling to our sister parish in Monongahela on **Friday, April 5**. More details will be coming...

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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 vestibule 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)

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*** **Bookstore Coordinator** – Would you be willing to take care of our bookstore? The process is easy and will not take up much of your time. If interested or if you have any questions, please contact Fr. Dave.

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** **Thank you!** to everyone who brought in physical or monetary donations for St. Cyril of White Lake Food Pantry. If anyone would like to deliver our donations to the South Side, please contact Fr. Dave.

COFFEE SOCIAL STEWARDS

Please sign up by the kitchen or by contacting Fr. Dave

March 17 (* meatless): _____?

March 24 (* meatless): _____?

March 31 (* meatless): _____?

SUGGESTED LENTEN READINGS

Below you will find suggested readings for the Great Fast. Each of the books are available in our bookstore for a reasonable donation. If you have questions about any book – please do not hesitate to ask Fr. Dave!

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When You Fast: The Why and How of Christian Self-Discipline by Joseph Letendre.

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Pilgrimage to Pascha: A Daily Devotional for Great Lent by Archpriest Steven John Belonick.

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Thinking Orthodox: Understanding and Acquiring the Orthodox Christian Mind by Eugenia Constantinou.

[more details coming next week...]

PRAYER CORNER

*Our Parish Prayer List for Special Intentions & 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... Matthew, Paul, Thomas, Cheryl, Mary, Lawrence V., Christopher, Robert, Joanne, Patricia, Jason, Carlene, David, Donna, George, Kelly, Marie, 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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March Birthdays:

Alisha Zak (3/1), Matthew Wensel (3/3), Lillian Fucsko (3/4), Christopher Kubis (3/6), Fr Daniel Mahler (3/6), Randall Paieski (3/9), *Father's nephew*, Michael Verbanick (3/9), *Father's God-mother*, Andrea Babbie (3/10), Allen Dzambo (3/11), Noella Gaydos (3/14), Fr David Cochran (3/18), Pañi Alison Archer (3/21), Marianne Kubis (3/29), Ben Anton (3/30) ...*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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March Anniversaries:

Lindsay & AJ Matolyak-Ferraz (3/6/21) ...*through the prayers of St. Nicholas Planas*

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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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[“By the Waters of Babylon” is the entire Psalm 137, sung to a plaintive melody, during Matins (the morning service). It is only sung in church the three Sundays that precede Great Lent: Sunday of the Prodigal Son, The Last Judgment (Meatfare), and Forgiveness (Cheesefare).]

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

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

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ONLINE BONUSES

Actions and Habits

Third Sunday of Triodion—Sunday of the Last Judgment

Published by Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis

There are three very important lessons to be taken from this Sunday's Gospel reading on the Last Judgment. The first is that when we die, we will all face a judgment before God, as to whether we are worthy to "inherit the Kingdom prepared. . . from the foundation of the world." (Matthew 25:34) It seems to me that the judgment is either "overstated"—i.e. God is going to rain hellfire and brimstone on everyone—or "understated"—i.e. God is going to just rubber stamp everyone and let all come in. There are others who will say, "I'm for sure going to heaven," as if there is no judgment or somehow they get to bypass it.

What can be said for certain is that there will be a judgment on all people, and those whom God deems worthy will enter into the Kingdom of heaven, while those not deemed worthy will depart "into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels." (25:41) The prospect of a judgment seems a little daunting. I've often wondered, "Just how merciful or judgmental is God going to be?" As for those who think that God will admit everyone—i.e. God wouldn't discriminate, would He?—the answer is clearly that He will not admit everyone, only those that HE (not we) has deemed worthy.

The judgment will be based on not only our beliefs but our actions, the second lesson of today. Christianity is a faith of action, not of theory or theology. The most basic action is to love in a way that honors God and serves others. Love is an action, not a theory. There are some specific actions that Christ calls us to take.

We are to feed those who are hungry—this includes those who are hungry for food, (I.e. donating food for food drives or working at a soup kitchen) hungry for attention, (offering time) hungry for encouragement, hungry to belong, hungry to feel love.

We are to give drink to those who are thirsty—this includes again providing food and drink to those who

are hungry (i.e. helping our local charities that provide food), thirsty for knowledge (helping a co-worker), or for knowledge of God (teaching your children about God), or thirsty for hope (again, providing encouragement).

We are to welcome the stranger—this includes the new person who has joined our church, the new neighbor who moved in next door, the new co-worker who just started a job, and the new student who just moved to a school.

We are to clothe the naked—this includes donating clothes to those who are poor, but also building up people who have no self-esteem and who feel "naked" when it comes to confidence.

We are to visit the sick—this is the easiest one to understand. Visit hospitals, visit people at home who are sick.

We are to come to those in prison—this is the one that is easiest to do but most often overlooked. This refers not only to those who are incarcerated—it is not easy to get cleared to visit a prison and we may not even know someone who is incarcerated. But there are people who live in prisons of poverty, of disease, or learning disabilities, etc. Are we kind and compassionate to them? These are all actions that show love for others, and bring God's love to others. Being a Christian is not just about piling up good deeds, but showing love under the umbrella of faith in God.

Many of us are familiar with the Frank Outlaw quote:

Watch your thoughts, they become words;

Watch your words, they become actions;

Watch your actions, they become habits;

Watch your habits, they become character;

Watch your character, for it becomes your destiny.

This quote certainly rings true in today's Gospel lesson. For the actions of the righteous became habits, so much so, that in doing them they didn't even realize they were loving God. Love and service were so natural to them. And the inactions of the unrighteous also became habits, so much so that when Christ confronted them about not serving Him because they did not serve others, they didn't realize that by being indifferent to others they were being indifferent to Him. Indeed, the habits of both shaped not only their character, but their eternal destiny. This

is the third lesson. That we should build up good habits, when it comes to serving others. Service to others and love for others should become as natural as breathing. Building and maintaining Godly habits will shape a Godly character, which will lead to a destiny to spend eternity with God.

When You come down to the earth, O God, in Your glory, all things will cower tremulous, and a river of fire will draw before Your Judgment Seat; the books shall be opened up, and public knowledge will things hidden be. Rescue me, then, I pray, from unquenchable fire, and count me worthy to stand at Your right hand, O You, the most righteous judge. (Kontakion, Sunday of the Last Judgement, Trans. by Fr. Seraphim Dedes)

Make it a goal to serve in at least one of the six ways stated in today's Gospel today and every day!

<https://myocn.net/third-sunday-of-triodion-sunday-of-the-last-judgment-actions-and-habits/>

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VISIT OUR DIOCESE ON-LINE

Diocesan Website: www.acrod.org

Camp Nazareth: www.campnazareth.org

FB: www.facebook.com/acroddioocese

Twitter: twitter.com/acrodnews

YouTube: youtube.com/acroddioocese

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LIVES OF THE SAINTS

SAINTED PORPHYRIOS, ARCHBISHOP OF GAZA

Commemorated on March 10 / February 26

Sainted Porphyrios, Archbishop of Gaza, was born in about the year 346 at Thessalonika in Macedonia. His parents were people of substance, and this allowed Saint Porphyrios to receive a fine education. Having the inclination for monastic life, at twelve years of age he left his native region and set off to Egypt, where he asceticised in the Nitreian desert under the guidance of the Monk Makarios the Great (Comm. 19 January). There also he met Blessed Jerome (Comm. 15 June), who was then visiting the Egyptian monasteries; he set off with him to Jerusalem on pilgrimage to the holy places and to reverence the Life-Creating Cross of the Lord

(Comm. 14 September), after which he resettled into the Jordanian wilderness for prayer and ascetic deeds. There Saint Porphyrios fell under a serious malady. For healing he decided to go to the holy places of Jerusalem. One time, when fully paralysed he lay half-conscious at the foot of Golgotha, the Lord sent His servant into a salvific sleep-vision. Saint Porphyrios beheld Jesus Christ, descending with the Cross and turning to him with the words: "Take this Wood and preserve it". Awakening, he sensed himself healthy. The words of the Saviour were soon fulfilled: the Patriarch of Jerusalem ordained Saint Porphyrios to the priestly dignity and appointed him curator of the Venerable Wood of the Cross of the Lord. And it was during this time that Saint Porphyrios received his portion of an inheritance from his parents – 4 thousand gold coins. All this he gave away to the needy and for the embellishing of the churches of God.

In 395 the bishop of the city of Gaza (in Palestine) died. The local Christians set out to Caesarea to the Metropolitan John with a request to provide them a new bishop, who would be able to contend against the pagans, which were predominant in their city and were harassing the Christians there. The Lord inspired the Metropolitan to summon the Jerusalem presbyter Porphyrios. With fear and trembling the ascetic accepted the dignity of bishop, and with tears he prostrated himself before the Life-Creating Wood and then set off to fulfill his new obedience.

In Gaza he found all of only three Christian churches, but of the pagan temples and idols – there were a great many. During this time there had occurred a long spell without rain, causing a severe drought. The pagan-priests brought offerings to their idols, but the woes did not cease. Saint Porphyrios imposed a fast for all the Christians; he then made the all-night vigil, followed by going round all the city in a church procession. Immediately the sky covered over with storm clouds, thunder boomed, and abundant rains poured down. Seeing this miracle, many a pagan cried out: "Christ is indeed the One True God!" As a result of this, there came to be united to the Church through Holy Baptism 127 men, 35 women and 14 children, and soon after this, another 110 men.

But the pagans just like before still harassed the Christians, passed them over for public office, and burdened them down with taxes. Saint Porphyrios and the Metropolitan of Caesarea John set off to Constantinople, to seek redress from the emperor. Saint John Chrysostom (Comm. 14 September, 27 and 30 January) received them and rendered them active assistance.

Saints John and Porphyrios were presented to the empress Eudoxia who at that time was expecting a child. "Intercede for us, – said the bishops to the empress, – and the Lord will send thee a son, who shalt reign during thine lifetime". Eudoxia very much wanted a son, since she had given birth only to daughters. And actually through the prayer of the saints an heir was born to the imperial family... In consequence of this, the emperor in the year 401 issued an edict directing the destruction of the pagan temples in Gaza and the restoration of privileges to Christians. Moreover, the emperor bestowed on the saints the means for the construction of a new church, which was to be built in Gaza on the locale of the chief pagan-temple there.

Saint Porphyrios to the very end of his life upheld Christianity in Gaza and guarded well his flock from the vexatious pagans. Through the prayers of the saint there occurred numerous miracles and healings. Over the course of 25 years the archpastor guided veritable flock and reposed at an advanced age, in the year 420.

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MARCH SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SATURDAY, MARCH 2, 2024 * RESCHEDULED *****

ALL-SOULS (1ST OF 5) (Zadušna Subota)

9:30am Divine Liturgy & Panachida

SUNDAY, MARCH 3, 2024

9:15 am Third Hour

9:30 am Divine Liturgy

Church School

SATURDAY, MARCH 9 – FEAST OF THE FIRST AND SECOND FINDINGS OF THE HEAD OF ST JOHN

SUNDAY, MARCH 10

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS

9:15 am Third Hour

9:30 am Divine Liturgy

Panachida - Monthly Memorial

Pre-Lenten Pot-Luck Brunch

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13

ANNIVERSARY IN ALLISON PARK

6:30 pm Parish Council Meeting

FRIDAY, MARCH 15

6:30 pm Akathist to the Inexhaustible Cup

SUNDAY, MARCH 17

9:15 am Third Hour

9:30 am Divine Liturgy

Youth Sunday

Rite of Forgiveness

Church School

CLEAN MONDAY, MARCH 18 #TheGreatFast

THE GREAT FAST BEGINS

6:30 pm Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew

CLEAN TUESDAY, MARCH 19 #TheGreatFast

6:30 pm Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew

CLEAN WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20 #TheGreatFast

6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

with community meal following

CLEAN THURSDAY, MARCH 21 #TheGreatFast

6:30 pm Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew

CLEAN FRIDAY, MARCH 22 #TheGreatFast

* 9:30 am Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

OR * 6:30 pm Lenten Service

CLEAN SATURDAY, MARCH 23 #TheGreatFast

11 am – 1 pm Confessions Offered

SUNDAY, MARCH 24 #TheGreatFast

9:15 am Third Hour

9:30 Divine Liturgy

Procession of Icons (*Bring an icon to church*)

4:30 pm Sunday of Orthodoxy at Holy Trinity

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27 #TheGreatFast

7:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts at

St. Alexander Nevsky OCA Cathedral

(1600 Guyton Rd., Allison Park)

with community meal following

FRIDAY, MARCH 29 #TheGreatFast

* 9:30 am Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

OR * 6:30 pm Lenten Service

ALL-SOUL'S SATURDAY (Zadušna Subota),

MARCH 30 #TheGreatFast

9:30 am Divine Liturgy & Panachida (2nd of 5)

11 am – 1 pm Confessions Offered

SUNDAY, MARCH 31 #TheGreatFast

9:15 am Third Hour

9:30 pm Divine Liturgy

4:00 pm Deanery Lenten Mission in East Pittsburgh

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ADDITIONAL BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

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*** **Special Intentions** – Did you ever wonder for what reasons would a person's name go under "For the Special Intentions of..." on our Prayer Page? A special intention request is very diversified! It could be when one is under extreme job stress, struggling with spiritual issues, infertility, dealing with the loss of a loved one... the list goes on. As with the other lists on our page, one does not have to be Orthodox to be added.

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*** **Prayer requests** – During the Great Entrance of the Divine Liturgy, prayers are said for the sick and those celebrating special occasions listed in the bulletin. If silent prayers are requested, they will be offered quietly at the Altar at all services. All those listed in the "Prayer Corner" are prayed for during the Proskomedia (*Preparation of the Bread and Wine for Communion*). Prayer requests will remain for (about) 40 days unless requested otherwise. Please let Fr. Dave know if you wish to make additions or subtractions (in the case of answered prayers) to our prayer list.

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

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2023-24 SJB PARISH COUNCIL OFFICERS

President: Lawrence Martin

Vice-President: Subdeacon Ryan Ferko

Treasurer: Timothy Ryan, Reader

Financial Secretary: Rich Mirilovich

Recording Secretary: Elizabeth Radomsky

Chief Auditor: Robert Fall

Auditors: Gina Fall, John Kirish, Mary Jane

Hudak, Kathy Schrmack (5th position open)

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AROUND OUR DIOCESE & DA 'BURGH

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

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*** **Kardiotissa Icon** – The Kardiotissa Icon will be traveling to our sister parish in Monongahela on **Friday, April 5**. More details will be coming...

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** **Make plans to go to Camp Nazareth Events!**

✘ April 5-7 - ACRY Spring Encounter

✘ April 9-11 - Sts. Joachim & Anna Seniors Retreat (*age 55 and over*)

✘ April 12-14 - Young Adult Retreat

✘ May 31 – June 2 - Family Camp

✘ June 2 - Family Day

✘ July 28- Aug 3 - Pgh Deanery Camping Week

✘ August 4-10 - Science & Nature Camp (ages 8-18)

✘ October 25-27 - Young Adult Retreat

✘ November 8-10 - ACRY Encounter

Please, Save the Dates and head to

339 Pew Road, Mercer, PA 16137

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STEWARDSHIP SNIPPET

TIME, TALENT, AND TREASURES

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Additional Church Curators Needed – A synonym for *curator* is *steward*. Please see Larry Martin if you are interested in being a *steward of their time* and be "on-the-door". Our curator list needs expanded!

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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 its ministries, outreach, and general bill paying, your generosity and stewardship is needed.

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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 your offering to the curator who sits at the desk in the vestibule (to the right after you enter),
- ✘ there are multiple baskets around the church for you to drop your offering in, or
- ✘ when saying your prayers and lighting 2 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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A Prayer of Stewardship

Lord Jesus Christ, You are the good steward, who redeemed Adam and Eve of their failed stewardship by offering Yourself for the life of the world. You did teach us in the feeding of the multitudes that whatever we give to God is returned to us multiplied. You did praise those good and faithful servants in the parable of the talents who returned to the Master their gifts. So

help us to learn the joy of stewardship, remembering that everything we have comes from You and belongs to You. We know, Lord, that we often live in fear of the future and insecurity. Help us to remember the lilies of the field and so to trust in Your providence. Grant to us a cheerful and generous spirit. Enkindle in the hearts of all Your people a zealous love for You. For You are the Good Steward, and to You we give thanks, praise and glory, together with Your Father and Your all holy good and life-giving Spirit now and ever and onto the ages of ages. Amen.

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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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Stewardship of Treasure Guide

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

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

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

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FEAST DAY FEATURES OF THE MONTH

First (4 C.) & Second (452) Discovery Of The Head Of The Prophet, Forerunner And Baptist John
Commemorated on March 9 / February 24

After the cutting off of the Head of the Prophet, ForeRunner and Baptist John (Comm. 29 August), his body was buried by disciples in the Samaritan city of Sebasteia, and the venerable head was hidden by Herodias in an unclean place. Pious Joanna, wife of king Herod's steward Chuza (there is made mention about him by the holy evangelist Luke – Lk 8: 3), secretly took the holy head and placed it into a vessel and buried it on the Mount of Olives – in one of the properties of Herod. After many years this property passed into the possession of the dignitary Innocentius, who began to build a church there. When they dug a trench for the foundation, the vessel with the venerable head of John the Baptist was uncovered. Innocentius recognised the great holiness of it from the signs of grace occurring from it. Thus occurred the First Discovery of the Head. Innocentius

preserved it with great piety, but before his own death, fearful so that the holy relic should not be abused by unbelievers, he again hid it in that same place, where it was found...Upon his death the church fell into ruin and was destroyed.

During the days of Equal-to-the-Apostles Constantine the Great (+ 337, Comm. 21 May), when the Christian faith began to flourish, the holy ForeRunner himself appeared twice unto two monks journeying to Jerusalem on pilgrimage to the holy places, and he revealed the location of his venerable head. The monks uncovered the holy relic and, placing it into a sack of camel-hair, they proceeded homewards. Along the way they encountered an unnamed potter and gave him to carry the precious burden. Not knowing what he was carrying, the potter continued on his way. But the holy ForeRunner himself appeared to him and ordered him to flee from the careless and lazy monks, together with that which was in his hands. The potter concealed himself from the monks and at home he preserved the venerable head with reverence. Before his death he sealed it into a water-carrying vessel and gave it over to his sister. From that time the venerable head was successively preserved by pious christians, until the priest Eustathios infected with the Arian heresy – came into possession of it. He seduced a multitude of the infirm, healed by the holy head, adding abundance to the heresy. When his blasphemy was uncovered, he was compelled to flee. Having buried the holy relic in a cave, near Emessus, the heretic intended to afterwards return and again take possession of it for disseminating falsehood. But God did not permit this. Pious monks settled into the cave, and then at this place arose a monastery. In the year 452 Saint John the Baptist in a vision to the archimandrite of this monastery Marcellus indicated the place of concealment of his head. This became celebrated as the Second Discovery. The holy relic was transferred to Emessus, and later to Constantinople.

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Icon of Christ's Extreme Humility

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SPIRITUAL CONSIDERATIONS

Father is available to meet Monday thru Friday from 8:30am to 2:30pm 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 to come back! Generally speaking, sincere and regular participation in the Sunday Divine Liturgy and in the Mysteries of Confession and Communion 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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The Jesus Prayer

(*Inhale*) O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God,
(*Exhale*) have mercy on me, a sinner!

(*Repeat until your heart is calm...*)

ONLINE PRAYER CORNER

*Our Parish Prayer List for Special Intentions & 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. Stephen B., Fr. Thomas B., Protodeacon Gregory B., Michael L., Laura & family, Carlene, Georgia, Stephen, David, Anastasia, Nicholas, Cassandra, Alexander, Andrea, Jason, Tyrone, Sarah, Ameer, Joshua, John, Kathryn, Rose, Charles, Justin *our diocesan seminarians:* Dcn Peter S, Nicolas W., Seamus M., Samuel L., Timothy P., Nicholas L., Alexander H., *and our Parish Council and Curators:* Lawrence, Subdeacon Ryan, Timothy, Rich, Elizabeth, Robert, Gina, John, Mary Jane, Katherine, Kenneth 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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***** NAMEDAY, BIRTHDAY, and ANNIVERSARY PRAYER LIST IS BEING RESET** – Our parish prayer list of key dates and special occasions in our lives will be reset going forward (starting 3/1/24). Please see Fr. Dave with any questions!

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March NAMEDAYS:

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

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March BIRTHDAYS:

Alisha Zak (3/1), Matthew Wensel (3/3), Lillian Fucsko (3/4), Christopher Kubis (3/6), Fr Daniel Mahler (3/6), Randall Paieski (3/9), *Father’s nephew,*

Michael Verbanick (3/9), *Father’s God-mother,* Andrea Babbie (3/10), Allen Dzambo (3/11), Noella Gaydos (3/14), Fr David Cochran (3/18), Pañi Alison Archer (3/21), Marianne Kubis (3/29), Ben Anton (3/30)

...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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March ANNIVERSARIES:

Lindsay & AJ Matolyak-Ferraz (3/6/21)

...through the prayers of St. Nicholas Planas

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For Pregnant Mothers... Ashley (*due in March*) *...through the prayers of St. Anna, the mother of the Theotokos, and St. Irene Chrysovalantou.*

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

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For the souls of the newly departed...

...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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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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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 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.