

“THE WEEKLY FORERUNNER” *Our Parish Weekly Bulletin*

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

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

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UPCOMING SERVICES

SUNDAY, MARCH 24 #TheGreatFast

St. Sophronios, Patriarch of Jerusalem (638)
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

6:30 pm Paraklis to the Theotokos

ALL-SOUL'S SATURDAY (Zadušna Subota),

MARCH 30 #TheGreatFast

9:30 am Divine Liturgy & Panachida (2nd of 5)
11 am – 1 pm Confessions Offered
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SUNDAY, MARCH 31 #TheGreatFast

9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 pm Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
Tone 2; Liturgical Color: **Purple**
4:00 pm Deanery Lenten Mission in East Pittsburgh

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3 #TheGreatFast

6:30 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts at
Holy Trinity GOA Church
(985 Providence Blvd., Pittsburgh)
with community meal following

FRIDAY, APRIL 5 #TheGreatFast

9:30 am OR 6:30 pm Akathist Hymn to the Passion
of our Lord

ALL-SOUL'S SATURDAY (Zadušna Subota),

APRIL 6 #TheGreatFast

9:30 am Divine Liturgy & Panachida (3rd of 5)
11 am – 1 pm Confessions Offered
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A WARM WELCOME TO OUR GUESTS!

Glory be to Jesus Christ! (responded with: Glory forever!) 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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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 11:32-12:2

²⁴By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, ²⁵choosing rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. ²⁶He considered abuse suffered for the Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he looked to the reward. ³²And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— ³³who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, ³⁴quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. ³⁵Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. ³⁶Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. ³⁷They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated— ³⁸of whom the world was not worthy—wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. ³⁹And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, ⁴⁰since

1st Sunday of Lent
MARCH 24th



GREAT LENT BEGINS WITH FORGIVENESS VESPERS

SUNDAY of ORTHODOXY

Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2
Gospel: John 1:43-51

Bring an icon to church
for a procession.

2nd Sunday of Lent
MARCH 31st



ST GREGORY PALAMAS

Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3
Gospel: Mark 2:1-12

Bring a prayer rope to be
blessed today!
Use it and pray the Jesus Prayer
each day this week.

God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

The Example of Jesus

12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, ²looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

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Gospel: John 1:43-51

Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael

⁴³The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. And he found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." ⁴⁴Now Philip was from Beth-sa'ida, the city of Andrew and Peter. ⁴⁵Philip found Nathanael, and said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." ⁴⁶Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." ⁴⁷Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" ⁴⁸Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." ⁴⁹Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" ⁵⁰Jesus answered him, "Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these." ⁵¹And he said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

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BULLETIN SPONSORED

In memory of +Lawrence Martin (26-years)
May he be remembered in God's Memory
forever! Eternal Memory!

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BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

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**** Great Lent 2024** – It's hard to imagine the journey that our parish has been on over the past year. We can reflect back over this year and see things that worked for our parish, things that we missed, and things that we could have done differently. This is true for our soul as well. As our journey through the Great Fast is here, we can reflect back and see things that worked in our lives, things that we missed, and things that we could have done differently. In this season of repentance, let's go to the Mystery of Confession and cleanse our souls as we prepare for Pascha! Please reach out to me with any questions about this great fasting period that we are in. I am thankful that our God is merciful and forgives. I humbly ask for your forgiveness for the many wrongs that I have done. *With love in Christ*, Fr. Dave

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

Diocesan Website at:

www.acrod.org/orthodox-christianity/articles/lent/

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***** Presanctified Liturgy** – A reminder that our Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts this week will be **Wednesday, March 27 at 7:00 pm** at St. Alexander Nevsky OCA Cathedral (1600 Guyton Rd., Allison Park) with a Lenten meal afterwards.

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SUGGESTED LENTEN READINGS

The following suggested readings for the Great Fast are available in our Bookstore for a reasonable donation (about 50% off).

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When You Fast: The Why and How of Christian Self-Discipline by Joseph Letendre (\$6)

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Pilgrimage to Pascha: A Daily Devotional for Great Lent by Archpriest Steven John Belonick (\$7)

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Thinking Orthodox: Understanding and Acquiring the Orthodox Christian Mind

by Eugenia Constantinou (\$12)

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In Addition To the above books, another option is to use our borrowing Library located in the Multi-Purpose Room. This is a great option for our youth as there are many books for them to take advantage of! If you have questions about any book - please do not hesitate to ask Fr. Dave!

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**** Weeping Icon** – The Kardiotissa (*Tender Heart*) Icon will be traveling to St. Nicholas (314 6th St., Monongahela, PA 15063) on **Friday, April 5** at **7:00 pm**. Please contact Fr. Dave with any questions.

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***** Monthly Memorial Reminder** – We will offer a Panachida on the 2nd Sunday of each month. If you would like to remember the anniversary of a departed loved one next month, please fill out the envelope that is on the curator's desk in the vestibule and give it to Fr. Dave by **April 7**, the 1st Sunday of that month.

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***** Flower Wreath for the Holy Cross** – If you are interested in making the flower wreath for the Holy Cross for **Sunday, April 7th**, please let Fr. Dave know. (Or if you are interested in learning how...)

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***** Palms & Pussywillows** – We are collecting in the Church Hall our Palms and Pussywillows from prior years. These will not be simply thrown away, but they will respectfully disposed of. *Please bring yours in so that your home will be ready for the new ones in a few weeks!*

*** A Note About The Mystery Of Confession -

They will be heard in front of the Icon of Christ. Confessions will be heard *following every* service, from **11am – 1pm** on Saturdays during Great Lent, and at other times by appointment: please contact Fr. Dave to arrange this. If you have a regular Spiritual Father, or wish to go to another Orthodox priest to have your confession heard, no problem! but please let Fr. Dave know. Do not wait to plan for your confession! Confessions will only be heard *through Holy Wednesday*.

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***** Suggested Guidelines For The Great Fast (Great Lent):** We are called to increase our *Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving* during this time... A general guideline for the Great Fast is this: Try to do more than last year. Please reach out to Fr. Dave if you have questions about this important fasting period that we are blessed with. This is an opportunity, not an obligation. May our journey to Pascha be a spiritually beautiful one!

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

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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

**** 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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***** Lenten Retreat** – The Central Region Diocesan Lenten Retreat will be from 10 am to 5 pm on **Saturday, April 20** at St. Nicholas the Wonderworker (903 Ann St., Homestead, PA 15120)

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OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD

Stewardship Offerings:	\$ 1345
Candle Stewardship:	\$ 122
Envelope Stewardship:	\$ 403
Community Outreach:	\$ 3
Total Collections:	\$ 1873
Capital Improvement Fund:	\$ 5

Weekly Candle Intentions / Memorials were offered last week by the Nelson Family; Tim Martin; Lawrence Martin; Kathy Schrmack; Eleanor Sanger; Rich and Renee Mirilovich; Cindy Pavilonis

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The **Eternal Lamp** was offered by Cindy Pavilonis in memory of her father, +Joseph Pavilonis. May his memory be eternal!

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PRAYER CORNER

For the Health of... James, John, Thomas, Paul, Cheryl, Mary, Christopher, Robert, Joanne, Jason, Carlene, David, Donna, George, Kelly, Marie, Juliana, Fredrick, Kenneth, and Michael ...*through the prayers of St. Nectarius the Wonderworker; St. Luke, the Surgeon; and St. Panteleimon, the Healer.*

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For the souls of the newly departed...

+Michael Matolyak Jr (3/11)

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

THE PRAYER OF SAINT EPHRAIM THE SYRIAN

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

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of laziness, despair, lust for power, and vain talking. + *[Prostration]*
But give to me, Your servant, the spirit of purity, humility, patience, and love.

+ *[Prostration]*

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

+ *[Prostration]*

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

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

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

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

Then the prayer again with only one prostration:

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

A Prayer Of Repentance (Psalm 50/51)

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

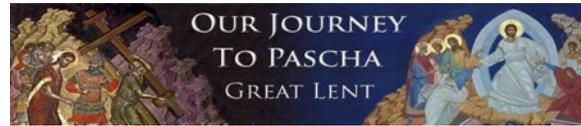
For behold, You have loved truth; The hidden and secret things of Your wisdom You have made clear to me. You shall sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be made clean; You shall wash me and I shall be made whiter than snow. You shall make me to hear joy and gladness, The bones which have been humbled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

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

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

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

ONLINE BONUSES



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

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A Note About The Mystery Of Confession

Confessions will be heard in front of the Icon of Christ. Confessions will be heard *following every* service, from **11am – 1pm** on most Saturdays during Great Lent, and at other times by appointment: please contact Fr. Dave to arrange this. If you have a regular Spiritual Father, or wish to go to another Orthodox priest to have your confession heard, no problem! but please let Fr. Dave know. Do not wait to plan for your confession! Confessions will only be heard *through Holy Wednesday*.

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Habitual

When We do the Wrong Thing Habitually
That we must struggle with our passions is a given. All the holy fathers counsel us to do battle with the passions, yet we continue committing the same sins over and over. Sometimes it is because we've allowed ourselves to fall into the habit of submitting to the same passions time and again. We stole an item from the office and got away with it, so the next time we think we need an extra pen, we take it. Perhaps we have twenty such corporate pens in a large mug, sitting on the counter in our kitchen. Do we need all of them, or do we ever even use any of them? Yet the count continues, because we've gotten into the habit of taking them from the office.

Do we think our job in a restaurant gives us the right to smuggle out food at the end of our shift, and does our low salary make us excuse such theft? Or perhaps we switch a high end bulk coffee into the low end store brand bag, paying three dollars less per pound than we should, because we could get away with it? Perhaps we find we snap at our spouse, or our children, even when we are not angry. Or, we drive in

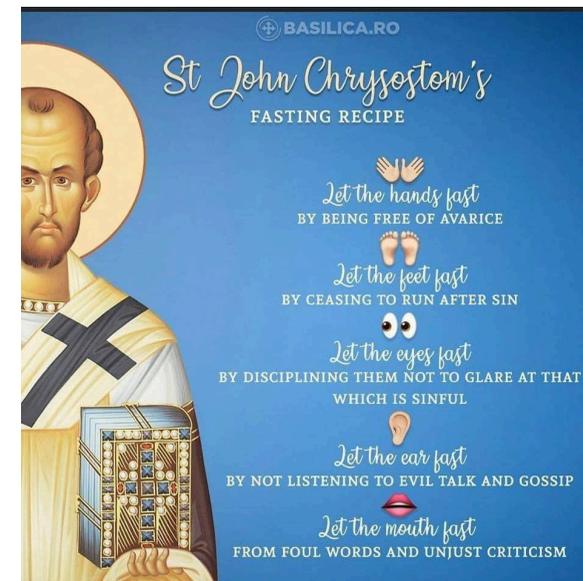
Passions:

an aggressive manner, thinking we need to be ahead of someone driving the speed limit, all because we've been doing so on work days. Maybe we are verbally abusive with our employees because we have the power to do so, given the economy (where are they going to work, if not here).

These are all examples of sinful behavior that can become habitual, and should be addressed directly if we are ever to be freed from our passions. We can start by slowly returning the pens to the office, two by two, until they've all been returned. We can arrive early at the restaurant job, and stay beyond our shift, paying for the stolen food with our extra hours of service. We can purchase a money order and anonymously pay back the grocery store the amount we've stolen from them over the years. We can choose to drive in the slow lane, on a daily basis, leaving early enough to reduce the temptation for aggressive driving. We can use our iPod to hear a talk by Father Thomas Hopko on Ancient Faith Radio, making the end of the day a time of spiritual reflection, all the while driving in the slow lane.

With love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon

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SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR THE GREAT FAST (GREAT LENT):

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

PRAYER:

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

FASTING:

- ✘ The Great Fast begins tomorrow, March 8. This is a day of strict fasting (no meat or dairy products). Likewise, strict fast on Great & Holy Friday (4/22) and Great & Holy Saturday (4/23)
- ✘ The tradition of the Orthodox Church is a strict fast (*no meat or dairy products eaten*) by all of the faithful for the entire 40 days of the Great Fast and for all of Holy Week.
- ✘ If you cannot physically do this, adopt a fasting rule and stick to it for the duration of the Great Fast (*see Father for some guidance*). Here are a few examples:
 - a) strict fast on certain days of the week while keeping a meat fast on the others;
 - b) fast only from meat;
 - c) fast from meat for certain weeks (*Clean Week, Cross Week, and Holy Week*); or
 - d) fast from meat on Wednesdays, Fridays, and all of Holy Week (*April 18-23*).
- ✘ The more effort you put forth in your fasting, the more spiritually uplifting your Lenten Season will be!
- ✘ A minimum three (3) hour fast from all food and drink for those receiving Communion at the evening Pre-sanctified Liturgy (*the regular "midnight Fast" is called for the Liturgies of St. John Chrysostom & St. Basil the Great*)
- ✘ The sick and infirm are not bound by the fast at any time.

- ✘ Those requiring medications or certain prescribed diets are to follow their physician's instructions.
- ✘ Lastly, the Great Fast is not a "40 day diet program" or simply a "dietary adjustment" (or "label Lent").

ALMSGIVING:

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

A general guideline for the Great Fast is this:

Try to do more than last year.

Please reach out if you have questions about this important fasting period that we are blessed with. This is an opportunity, not an obligation. May our journey to Pascha be a spiritually beautiful one!
 – Fr. Dave



Icon of Christ's Extreme Humility

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LIVES OF THE SAINTS

SAINTED SOPHRONIOS, PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM

Commemorated on March 24/11

Sainted Sophronios, Patriarch of Jerusalem, was born in Damascus. From his youthful years he distinguished himself by his piety and his love for the classical sciences. He advanced especially in philosophy, for which they were wont to call him the Wise. But the future hierarch sought out an higher wisdom in the monasteries, and in conversations with the wilderness-dwellers. He arrived in Jerusalem at the monastery of Saint Theodosios, and there he became close with the PriestMonk John Moskhos, becoming his spiritual son and devoting himself to him in obedience. They journeyed together through the monasteries, and they wrote down descriptions of

the lives and precepts of the ascetics found there. From these jottings was afterwards compiled their reknown book, the "Leimonarion" or "Spiritual Meadow", which was highly esteemed at the Seventh OEcumenical Council.

To save themselves from the devastating incursions of the Persians, Saints John and Sophronios quit Palestine and withdrew to Antioch, and from there they went to Egypt. In Egypt Saint Sophronios became seriously ill. During this time he also decided to become a monk and so he accepted tonsure from the Monk John Moskhos. After the return to health of Saint Sophronios, they both decided to remain in Alexandria. There they were fondly received by the holy Patriarch John the Merciful (Comm. 12 November), to whom they rendered great aid in the struggle against the Monophysite heresy. At Alexandria Saint Sophronios' eyesight was afflicted, and he recoured with prayer and faith to the holy UnMercenaries Cyrus and John (Comm. 31 January), and he received healing in a church named for them. In gratitude, Saint Sophronios then wrote the Vita of these holy unmercenaries.

When the barbarians began to threaten Alexandria, the holy Patriarch John, accompanied by Saints Sophronios and John Moskhos, set out for Constantinople, but along the way he died. Saints John Moskhos and Sophronios with eighteen other monks then set out for Rome. At Rome the Monk John Moskhos also died (+ 622). His body was conveyed by Saint Sophronios to Jerusalem and buried at the monastery of Saint Theodosios.

In the year 628 the Jerusalem patriarch Zacharias (609-633) returned from the Persian Captivity. After his death, the patriarchal throne was occupied for a space of two years by Saint Modestos (633-634, Comm. 18 December). After the death of Saint Modestos, Saint Sophronios was chosen patriarch. Sainted Sophronios toiled much for the welfare of the Jerusalem Church as its primate (634-644).

Towards the end of his life, Saint Sophronios with his flock lived through a two year siege of Jerusalem by the Mahometans. Worn down by hunger, the Christians finally consented to open the city gates, on the condition that the enemy spare the holy places.

But this condition was not fulfilled, and holy Patriarch Sophronios died in deep grief over the desecration of the Christian holy places.

Written works by Patriarch Sophronios have come down to us in the area of dogmatics, and likewise his "Excursus on the Liturgy", the Vita of the Nun Mary of Egypt (Comm. 1 April), and also about 950 tropars and stikhi-verses from Pascha to the Ascension. While still a priestmonk, Saint Sophronios made review and corrections to the "ustav-rule" of the monastery of the Monk Sava the Sanctified (Comm. 5 December). And the "tri-odic song" of the saint for the Holy Forty Day Great Lent is included in the composition of the contemporary Lenten Triodion.

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VISIT OUR DIOCESE ON-LINE
 Diocesan Website: www.acrod.org
 Camp Nazareth: www.campnazareth.org
 FB: www.facebook.com/acroddioecese
 Twitter: twitter.com/acrodnews
 YouTube: youtube.com/acroddioecese

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COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

National Jr. ACRY Project / local ZOE for Life chapter

ADDITIONAL BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

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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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COFFEE SOCIAL STEWARDS
Please sign up by the kitchen or by contacting Fr. Dave
 * March 31: Matt and Kim Opsitos
 * April 7: _____?_____
 * April 14: _____?_____
 * *meatless during the Great Fast*

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** **Thank you!** Many stewards keep coming to the church and working very hard to make improvements. Most recently the pews from the North Side were installed. A LOT of cleaning has occurred as well – Thank You! May God grant you many years!

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** **Church Messenger** – Our monthly publication of the *Church Messenger* is sent to all of our Diocesan households. IF you do not receive this, please let Fr. Dave know ASAP.

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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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- ** **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

- ✘ **Aug. 4-10** - Science & Nature Camp (ages 8-18)
- ✘ **October 25-27** - Young Adult Retreat
- ✘ **November 8-10** - ACRY Encounter

Please, Save the Dates and go to camp!
339 Pew Road, Mercer, PA 16137

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

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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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***** 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 Martin, 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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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE GREAT FAST THROUGH BRIGHT WEEK

FORGIVENESS 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
- A DAY OF STRICT FASTING
- 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

- 6:30 pm Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew

CLEAN SATURDAY, MARCH 23 #TheGreatFast

- 11 am – 1 pm Confessions Offered

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SUNDAY, MARCH 24 #TheGreatFast

- SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY
- 9:15 am Third Hour
- 9:30 Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
- 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

- 6:30 pm Paraklis to the Theotokos

ALL-SOUL’S SATURDAY (*Zadušna Subota*),

- MARCH 30 #TheGreatFast
- 9:30 am Divine Liturgy & Panachida (*2nd of 5*)
- 11 am – 1 pm Confessions Offered

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SUNDAY, MARCH 31 #TheGreatFast

- ST. GREGORY PALAMAS
- 9:15 am Third Hour
- 9:30 pm Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
- 4:00 pm Deanery Lenten Mission in East Pittsburgh

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3 #TheGreatFast

- 6:30 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts at Holy Trinity GOA Church (985 Providence Blvd., Pittsburgh)
- with community meal following

FRIDAY, APRIL 5 #TheGreatFast

- 9:30 am OR 6:30 pm Akathist Hymn to the Passion of our Lord

ALL-SOUL’S SATURDAY (*Zadušna Subota*),

- APRIL 6 #TheGreatFast
- 9:30 am Divine Liturgy & Panachida (*3rd of 5*)
- 11 am – 1 pm Confessions Offered

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SUNDAY, APRIL 7 #TheGreatFast

- FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION
- SUNDAY OF THE HOLY CROSS
- 9:15 am Third Hour
- 9:30 pm Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
- 4:00 pm Deanery Lenten Mission in Rankin

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10 #TheGreatFast

- 6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts at SJB (*hosting the other two parishes*)
- with community meal following

FRIDAY, APRIL 12 #TheGreatFast

6:30 pm Moleben to the Holy Cross

ALL-SOUL'S SATURDAY (Zadušna Subota),

APRIL 13 #TheGreatFast

9:30 am Divine Liturgy & Panachida (4th of 5)

11 am – 1 pm Confessions Offered

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SUNDAY, APRIL 14 #TheGreatFast

SUNDAY OF ST. JOHN OF THE LADDER

9:15 am Third Hour

9:30 pm Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

Panachida - *Monthly Memorial*

4:00 pm Deanery Lenten Mission in Allison Park

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17 #TheGreatFast

6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts at SJB

with community meal following

FRIDAY, APRIL 19 #TheGreatFast

9:30 am OR 6:30 pm Akathist Hymn to the Theotokos

SATURDAY, APRIL 20 #TheGreatFast

10 am to 5 pm Lenten Retreat at St. Nicholas
(903 Ann Street, **Homestead**, PA 15120)

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SUNDAY, APRIL 21 #TheGreatFast

SUNDAY OF ST. MARY OF EGYPT

9:15 am Third Hour

9:30 pm Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

4:00 pm Deanery Lenten Mission in Ambridge

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24 #TheGreatFast

6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts at SJB

with community meal following

FRIDAY, APRIL 26 #TheGreatFast

6:30 pm Lenten Vespers

SATURDAY, APRIL 27 #LAZARUS SATURDAY

9:30 pm Divine Liturgy

Palm Cross Making following

11 am – 1 pm Confessions heard

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SUNDAY, APRIL 28 #PALM(FLOWERY)SUNDAY

FEAST OF THE ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM

9:15 am Third Hour

9:30 pm Divine Liturgy

Blessing of Branches (Palms and Willows)

12:00 pm Bridegroom Matins

GREAT AND HOLY PASSION WEEK

HOLY MONDAY, APRIL 29 #HolyWeek

6:30 pm Bridegroom Matins and Confessions

HOLY TUESDAY, APRIL 30 #HolyWeek

6:30 pm Bridegroom Matins and Confessions

HOLY WEDNESDAY, MAY 1 #HolyWeek

* *Final opportunity for Confession until after Pascha*

6:00 pm Mystery of Holy Unction (Anointing)

with community meal following

HOLY THURSDAY, MAY 2 #HolyWeek

9:30 am Vespers Liturgy (*Mystical Last Supper*)

6:30 pm Matins with the 12 Passion Gospels

Setting of the Lord's Tomb follows

HOLY & GOOD FRIDAY, MAY 3 #HolyWeek

A DAY OF STRICT FASTING

9:30 am Royal Hours

6:30 pm Vespers and outdoor Burial Procession

with the Holy Shroud (*Plašćanitsa*)

HOLY SATURDAY, MAY 4 #HolyWeek

A DAY OF STRICT FASTING

9:30 am Vespers Liturgy of St. Basil

changing from dark to light colors

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SUNDAY, MAY 5 #Pascha

THE FEAST OF FEASTS

9:00 am Resurrection Matins with

outdoor procession

~9:40 am Paschal Divine Liturgy

Blessing of Artos Bread (*with children assisting*)

Blessing of Paschal Baskets (*upstairs in the church*)

Paschal Potluck Meal

BRIGHT WEEK: A FAST FREE WEEK

MONDAY, MAY 6 #BRIGHTWEEK

FEAST OF ST. GEORGE

9:30 am Paschal Liturgy with outdoor

Gospel Procession

THURSDAY, MAY 9 #BRIGHTWEEK

6:30 pm Paschal Vespers

FRIDAY, MAY 10 #BRIGHTWEEK

9:30 am Paschal Divine Liturgy

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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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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 it’s 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 into the ages of ages. Amen.

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Stewardship of Treasure Guide

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

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

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

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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, Amee, 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. Dzadoovsky ...*through the prayers of St George, the Great-Martyr & Wonderworker.*

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For the souls of the newly departed...

+Michael Matolyak Jr (3/11)

...*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.*

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 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.