

"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 31 #TheGreatFast

St. Cyril of Jerusalem (386)

4:00 pm Deanery Lenten Mission in East Pittsburgh
(211 Cable Ave., East Pittsburgh, PA 15112)

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

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

Tone 3; Liturgical Color: **Blue**

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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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 1:10-2:3

¹⁰And, "Thou, Lord, didst found the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of thy hands; ¹¹they will perish, but you remain; they will all grow old like a garment, ¹²like a mantle thou wilt roll them up, and they will be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years will never end." ¹³But to what angel has he ever said, "Sit at my right hand till I make thy enemies a stool for thy feet"? ¹⁴Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation?

Warning to Pay Attention

2 Therefore we must pay the closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. ²For if the message declared by angels was valid and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, ³how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard him,

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Gospel: Mark 2:1-12

Jesus Heals a Paralytic

2 And when he returned to Caper'na-um after some days, it was reported that he was at home. ²And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room for them, not even about the door; and he was preaching the word to them. ³And they came, bringing to him a

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.

3rd Sunday of Lent
APRIL 7th



VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

HALF WAY TO PASCHA!

Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-5:6

Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1

Wear your cross to church and kiss the cross each morning with a bow!

paralytic carried by four men. ⁴And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and when they had made an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic lay. ⁵And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "My son, your sins are forgiven." ⁶Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, ⁷"Why does this man speak thus? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" ⁸And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question thus in your hearts? ⁹Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your pallet and walk'?" ¹⁰But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins"-he said to the paralytic- ¹¹"I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home." ¹²And he rose, and immediately took up the pallet and went out before them all; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

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BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

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*** **Thank You!** Thanks to everyone who helped make my senior project a success with your monetary and donated items! I truly appreciate all your support! - *Matthew Mirilovich*

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*** **Presanctified Liturgy** – A reminder that our Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts this week will be **Wednesday, April 3 at 6:30 pm** at HOLY TRINITY GOA CHURCH (985 Providence Blvd., Pittsburgh) with a Lenten meal afterwards.

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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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* **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...)

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

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** **Palms & Pussywillows** – We are collecting in the 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 soon!*

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** **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

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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: | \$ 167 |
| Candle Stewardship: | \$ 135 |
| Envelope Stewardship: | \$ 453 |
| Total Collections: | \$ 755 |
| Capital Improvement Fund: | \$ 500 |

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

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*** **Paschal Commemorations** – We offer you the opportunity to sponsor items to be used during Holy Week and Pascha as Special Intentions: *anonymously, for the health of OR in memory of departed loved ones*. Please sign up on the sheet in the Vestibule by **Palm Sunday (April 28)** and give an *additional free-will stewardship offering* to the Church.

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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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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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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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PRAYER CORNER

For the Health of... Thomas, Paul, Cheryl, Mary, Christopher, Robert, Joanne, 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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For the souls of the newly departed...

+John Ferraz (3/24), +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 (Sluzhebrik))

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.

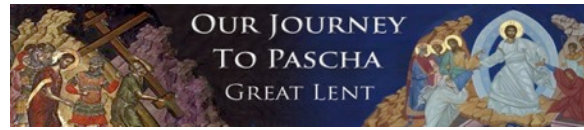
For behold, You have loved truth; The hidden and secret things of Your wisdom You have made clear to me. You shall sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be made clean; You shall wash me and I shall be made whiter than snow. You shall make me to hear joy and gladness, The bones which have been humbled 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:

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

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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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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

Saint Cyril, Archbishop Of Jerusalem

Commemorated on March 31/18

Saint Cyril, Archbishop of Jerusalem, was born in Jerusalem in the year 315 and was raised in strict Christian piety. Having reached the age of maturity, he became a monk, and in the year 346 he became a presbyter. In the year 350, upon the death of archbishop Maximos, he succeeded him upon the Jerusalem cathedra-seat.

In the dignity of Patriarch of Jerusalem, Saint Cyril zealously fought against the heresies of Arius and Macedonias. In doing so, he brought upon himself the animosity of the Arianising bishops, who sought to have him deposed and banished from Jerusalem.

In the year 351 at Jerusalem, on the feastday of Pentecost at the 3rd hour of the day, there occurred a miraculous portent: the Holy Cross appeared in the heavens, shining with a radiant light. It stretched forth from Golgotha over the Mount of Olives. Saint Cyril reported about this portent to the Arian emperor Constantius (351-363), hoping to convert him to Orthodoxy.

The heretic Akakios – deposed by the Council of Sardica, was formerly the metropolitan of Caesarea, and in collaboration with the emperor he resolved to have Saint Cyril removed. An intense famine struck Jerusalem, and Saint Cyril went through all his own wealth on acts of charity. But since the famine did not abate, the saint began to pawn off church items, buying on the money in exchange wheat for the

starving. The enemies of the saint mongered about a scandalous rumour, that they had apparently seen a woman in the city dancing around in clergy garb. And taking advantage of this rumour, the heretics by force threw out the saint.

The saint found shelter with bishop Siluan in Tarsus. After this, a Local Council gathered at Seleucia, at which there were about 150 bishops, and among them Saint Cyril. The heretical metropolitan Akakios did not want to allow him to take a seat, but the Council would not consent to this. Akakios thereupon quit the Council and in front of the emperor and the Arian patriarch Eudoxios he denounced both the Council and Saint Cyril. The emperor had the saint imprisoned.

When the emperor Julian the Apostate (361-363) ascended the throne, seemingly out of piety he repealed all the decrees of Constantius, directed against the Orthodox. Saint Cyril returned to his own flock. But after a certain while, when Julian had become secure upon the throne, he openly apostacised and renounced Christ. He permitted the Jews to start rebuilding the Jerusalem Temple that had been destroyed by the Romans, and he even provided them a portion of the means for the building from state monies. Saint Cyril predicted, that the words of the Saviour about the destruction of the Temple down to its very stones (Lk. 21: 6) would undoubtedly transpire, and the blasphemous intent of Julian would come to naught. And thus one time there occurred such a powerful earthquake, that even the solidly set foundation of the ancient Solomon Temple shifted in its place, and what had been erected anew fell down and shattered in dust. When the Jews nevertheless started construction anew, a fire came down from the heavens and destroyed the tools of the workmen. Great terror seized everyone. And on the following night there appeared on the garb of the Jews the Sign of the Cross, which they by no means could extirpate.

After this Heavenly confirmation of the prediction of Saint Cyril, they banished him again, and the cathedra-seat was occupied by Saint Kyriakos. But Saint Kyriakos soon suffered a martyr's death (+ 363, Comm. 28 October).

After the emperor Julian perished in 363, Saint

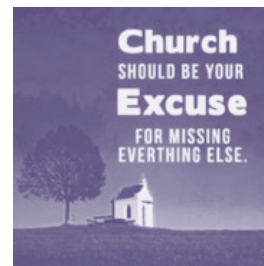
Cyril returned to his cathedra-seat, but during the reign of the emperor Valens (364-378) he was sent into exile for a third time. It was only under the holy emperor Saint Theodosius the Great (379-395) that he finally returned to his archpastoral activity. In the year 381 Saint Cyril participated in the Second OEcumenical Council, which condemned the heresy of Macedonias and affirmed the Nicea-Constantinople Credal-Symbol of Faith.

Of the works of Saint Cyril, particularly known are 23 Instructions (18 are Catechetical for those preparing to accept Holy Baptism, and 5 are for the newly-baptised) and 2 Discourses on Gospel themes: "About the Paralytic" and "Concerning the Transformation of Water into Wine at Cana".

At the basis of the Catechetical Instructions is a detailed explanation of the Symbol of Faith. The saint suggests that the Christian should inscribe the Symbol of Faith upon "the tablets of the heart". "The articles of the faith, – teaches Saint Cyril, – were compiled not through human cleverness, but has therein gathered everything most important from all the entire Scripture, and as such it is compiled into a single teaching of faith. Just as the mustard seed within its small kernel has within it contained all its plethora of branches, thus precisely also does the faith in its several declarations combine all the pious teachings of the Old and the New Testaments".

Saint Cyril died in the year 386.

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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 ACRY Stewardship Project

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ADDITIONAL BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

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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** – Thank you to Nick Ditmore for offering his time to be our new Bookstore Coordinator. Many Years!

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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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** **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 #LAZARUSSATURDAY

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 Vespertal 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 Vespertal 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.

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 onto 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 Tithel | 15% | 12% | Tithel | 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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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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April Namedays:

Steven Zerby – St John of the Ladder (4/14)
Pañi’s brother Florin Popescu and Pañi’s mother Liliana Popescu – Palm (Flowery) Sunday (4/28)
...May God grant them many and blessed years!

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April Birthdays:

Sonia Kretchek (4/1), Tristan Bowser (4/5), Kris Carlisle, Reader (4/14), Bryce Blobner (4/10), Rich Mirilovich (4/13), Melanie Paieski (4/14), Father’s

Uncle Dan Urban (4/15), Father’s Father Dave Urban (4/15), John Kirish (4/18), Father’s Brother-In-Law Christopher Ditmore (4/19), Dr. Lawrence Martin (4/20), Max Anton (4/22), Donald J. Gavulich (4/23), Fred Anton (4/24), Fr Peter Paproski (4/24), Donna Tongel (4/24), Fr Jonathan Bannon (4/29), Maryhelen Hoffman (4/29)

...May God allow them to grow in peace and love all the days of their lives and may He grant them many and blessed years!

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For our Catechumens & Inquirers... Tyler *...through the prayers of St. Paul the Apostle, St. Mary Magdalene, & St. John Maximovitch.*

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For those preparing for Marriage... Francis & Alexandra *...through the prayers of Sts. Adrian & Natalia and all Holy Martyrs.*

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April Anniversaries:

...through the prayers of St. Nicholas Planas

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For Pregnant Mothers... Allison (*due in October*) *...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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* 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.