

“THE WEEKLY FORERUNNER” *Our Parish Weekly Bulletin*

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

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

Father Dave Urban, *Pastor* +++ 2201 Duncan Avenue, Allison Park, Pa 15101

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UPCOMING SERVICES

SUNDAY, APRIL 7 #TheGreatFast

FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION

SUNDAY OF THE HOLY CROSS

4:00 pm Vespers at Deanery Lenten Mission

146 Third Ave., Rankin, PA 15104

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 Liturgy of St. Basil

Tone 4; Liturgical Color: **Purple**

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

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

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

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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: Hebrews 2:11-18 (Feast Day)

¹¹ For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified have all one origin. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brethren, ¹² saying,

“I will proclaim thy name to my brethren, in the midst of the congregation I will praise thee.”

¹³ And again,

“I will put my trust in him.”

And again,

“Here am I, and the children God has given me.”

¹⁴ Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage. ¹⁶ For surely it is not with angels that he is concerned but with the descendants of Abraham. ¹⁷ Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ For because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted.

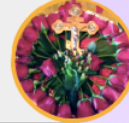
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Gospel: Luke 1:24-38 (Feast Day)

²⁴ After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she hid herself, saying, ²⁵ “Thus the Lord has done to me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men.”

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!

4th Sunday of Lent

APRIL 14th



ST JOHN of the LADDER

Epistle:

Hebrews 6:13-20

Gospel:

Mark 9:17-31

Every time you climb stairs this week ask St. John to help you reach Paradise with the sign of the cross!

The Birth of Jesus Foretold

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, “Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you!” ²⁹ But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.

³² He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High;

and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David,

³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

³⁴ And Mary said to the angel, “How shall this be, since I have no husband?” ³⁵ And the angel said to her,

“The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.

³⁶ And behold, your kinswoman Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. ³⁷ For with God nothing will be impossible.” ³⁸ And Mary said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

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Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-5:6

Jesus the Great High Priest

¹⁴ Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵ For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our

weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

⁵ For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. ² He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. ³ Because of this he is bound to offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people. ⁴ And one does not take the honor upon himself, but he is called by God, just as Aaron was.

⁵ So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, “*Thou art my Son, today I have begotten thee*”; ⁶ as he says also in another place, “*Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchiz'edek.*”

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Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1

³⁴ And he called to him the multitude with his disciples, and said to them, “If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ³⁵ For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. ³⁶ For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? ³⁷ For what can a man give in return for his life? ³⁸ For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.” ⁹ ¹ And he said to them, “Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see that the kingdom of God has come with power.”

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BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

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*** **Mid-Lenten Checkup** – We have reached the middle of the Great Fast. How are you doing? When we want to improve - remember that we need to do some work! Have you been able to maintain your spiritual goals for increasing your prayer, fasting, and charity? If not, restart today! If your goal was to read one of our book suggestions for Great Lent, how is that going? Or was it the Book of Psalms (*the Psalter*). Every day try to read scripture, pray the St Ephraim Prayer, and/or Psalm 50. No matter what you do, try and do more than last year on your Lenten Spiritual Journey through the Great Fast! Don't forget to put in your schedule going to Confession. 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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** **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! They will only be heard *through Holy Wednesday*.

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*** **Presanctified Liturgy** – A reminder that our Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts this week will be **Wednesday, April 10 at 6:00 pm** here at SJB with a Lenten meal afterwards. IF you are able to help with cooking in the kitchen or serving the meal – please contact Liz. IF you are able to assist with parking cars in the lot before the service – please contact Larry. Let's work together as a family as we welcome the other parishes to our little "village" church!

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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 **today, April 7**.

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*** **St Constantine School** – After over 2 years searching for a place to call home, 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. The next open house will be this **Saturday, April 13** from 10am - 12-noon.

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*** **Orthodoxy on Tap – Café Edition** – The Pittsburgh Orthodox Young Adults (POYA) have organized a get together on **Sunday, April 21** at 5 pm at Fresh Start Café in Canonsburg. The speaker will present on "How do we make Holy Week more meaningful?" Contact Fr Dave for more information.

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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

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). Please sign up on the sheet in the hall by **April 13** so we can send in one RSVP from our parish.

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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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** **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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** **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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** **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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COFFEE SOCIAL STEWARDS

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

* April 14: _____?_____
* April 21: _____?_____
* April 28: _____?_____

* *meatless during the Great Fast*

OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD

Stewardship Offerings:	\$ 1120
Candle Stewardship:	\$ 55
Envelope Stewardship:	\$ 170
Community Outreach:	\$ 55
Total Collections:	\$ 1400
Capital Improvement Fund:	\$ 40
Anonymous CAP Fund donation towards a new sign by the street:	\$ 1000

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

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March Financial Report:

General Stewardship = \$ 6713.97
(includes \$ 244.72 from online stewardship)

***Expenses = \$ 5497.30**

Net Deficit = \$ 1216.67

Capital Improvement Fund = \$ 425

Average at Sunday Divine Liturgies: 33

*details listed on the church hall bulletin board

Fiscal Year-to-Date Financial Report:

(September through last month)

General Stewardship = \$ 56,768

***Expenses = \$ 44,090**

Net Surplus = \$ 12,678

*details listed on the church hall bulletin board

Average at Sunday Divine Liturgies: 31

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

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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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* **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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CHURCH BUILDING UPDATE

Here is a brief update from the past few weeks:

✘ *** The reconfiguring of things in our kitchen is nearly complete.

✘ *** The Sanctuary floor is also nearly complete

✘ * 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 is coming together – one thing at a time!

Thank you! Many stewards keep coming to the church and working very hard to make improvements. May God grant you many years!

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

✘ **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)

Please, Save the Dates and go to camp!

339 Pew Road, Mercer, PA 16137

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from the Lenten Triodion

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

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**** Church 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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* **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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PRAYER CORNER

For the Health of... David, Thomas, Paul, 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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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 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!*

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THE PRAYER OF SAINT EPHRAIM THE SYRIAN

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

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

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

O God, be merciful to me, a sinner. + *[bow]*
O God, cleanse me of my sins and have mercy on me. + *[bow]*

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

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

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.

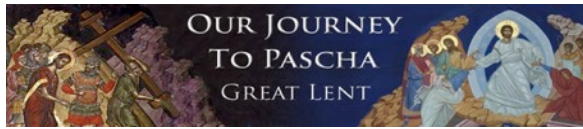
For behold, You have loved truth; The hidden and secret things of Your wisdom You have made clear to me. You shall sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be made clean; You shall wash me and I shall be made whiter than snow. You shall make me to hear joy and gladness, The bones which have been humbled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

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VISIT OUR DIOCESE ON-LINE

Diocesan Website: www.acrod.org
Camp Nazareth: www.campnazareth.org
FB: www.facebook.com/acroddioocese
Twitter: twitter.com/acrodnews
YouTube: youtube.com/acroddioocese

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COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

OCMC - This month, through the efforts of our Sr. ACRY, we will be collecting donations for the **Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC)**. This is the organization that puts out the Coin Boxes that we have been using through the Great Fast. Please bring in your coin boxes on Pascha. (There will also be an additional offering requested on our regular last Sunday of the month.) "*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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Icon of Christ's Extreme Humility

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LIVES OF THE SAINTS

St. Senouphios of Latomos

Commemorated on April 7 / March 25

Sometime in the reign of the iconoclastic emperor Leo V the Armenian (813–820), a monk named Senouphios "in the hills of Nitria in Egypt" heard a voice from heaven directing him to go "to the monastery in Thessaloniki called 'of the Stonecutters' (Latomon)." Senouphios "had been begging God for a long time to be allowed to see Him as He would come to judge the earth"; and having heard a clear answer to his prayer, he set off at once with only his cloak and staff. After many adventures he arrived in the distant metropolis, only to be told by the monks that there was no image in Thessaloniki like the one he was seeking. Dejected by the thought that he had been deceived by the devil, the old monk returned to Egypt, only to have the heavenly oracle repeated more urgently.

Once more he trudged the long way back to Thessaloniki. This time he was rewarded. As he sat alone one day in the sanctuary of the Stonecutters' Monastery, "Suddenly there was a storm and an earthquake and, moreover, thunder and such a disturbance that it seemed the very foundations of the sanctuary were shaken. And immediately the mortar and the brickwork with the ox hide that overlay the sacred representation of the Lord were stripped off and fell to the earth. Those sacred features of Christ appeared, shining with a fiery appearance like the sun in the midst of the cloud. When the old monk, standing in the midst of the sanctuary, saw this, he cried aloud, 'Glory to you, O God, I thank you,' and relinquished his blessed soul."

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**ADDITIONAL
BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS**

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

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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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***** 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
+++
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
+++

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 Vesperal 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 (*Plasčanitsa*)

HOLY SATURDAY, MAY 4 #HolyWeek

A DAY OF STRICT FASTING

9:30 am Vesperal 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

**The Annunciation Of Our Most Blessed Lady
Mother Of God And Ever-Virgin Mary**

Commemorated on April 7 / March 25

Introduction

The Feast of the Annunciation of Our Most Holy Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary is celebrated on March 25 each year. The Feast commemorates the announcement by the Archangel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Son of God, would become incarnate and enter into this world through her womb.

Biblical Story

The biblical story of the Feast of the Annunciation is found in the first chapter of the Gospel of Luke (1:26-

39). The Archangel Gabriel appeared to the Virgin Mary, who was living in Nazareth, and said to her, "Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you." Mary was perplexed and wondered what kind of greeting this was.

The angel told her not to be afraid, for she had found favor with God. He said, "You will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there will be no end."

Mary responded to the angel by asking how this could happen since she had no husband. The angel told her that the Holy Spirit and the power of God would come upon her, and that the child to be born of her would be called holy, the "Son of God."

The angel then proceeded to tell the Virgin Mary that her cousin Elizabeth had conceived a son in her old age (John the Baptist), and affirmed that with God nothing is impossible.

In faith and obedience to the will of God, Mary replied to the angel, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be according to your word." Upon her response, the angel departed.

It is on the Feast of the Annunciation, that Orthodox Christians commemorate both the divine initiative of God, whereby He took on flesh from the Virgin for our salvation, and the human response, whereby Mary freely accepted the vocation offered to her. He elected to become man, and He desired to do this with the willing agreement of her whom He chose as His mother. Mary could have refused, for she was not a passive instrument, but an active participant with a free and positive part to play in God's plan for our salvation. Thus, when on this and other feasts the Orthodox Church honors the Theotokos, the Mother of God, it is not just because God chose her but also because she herself chose to follow His will.

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**The Entry of the Lord into Jerusalem (Palm
Sunday / Flowery Sunday)**

April 28

Introduction

On the Sunday before the Feast of Great and Holy

Pascha and at the beginning of Holy Week, the Orthodox Church celebrates one of its most joyous feasts of the year. Palm Sunday is the commemoration of the Entrance of our Lord into Jerusalem following His glorious miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead. Having anticipated His arrival and having heard of the miracle, the people went out to meet the Lord and welcomed Him with displays of honor and shouts of praise. On this day, we receive and worship Christ in this same manner, acknowledging Him as our King and Lord.

Biblical Story

The biblical story of Palm Sunday is recorded in all four of the Gospels (Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-10; Luke 19:28-38; and John 12:12-18). Five days before the Passover, Jesus came from Bethany to Jerusalem. Having sent two of His disciples to bring Him a colt of a donkey, Jesus sat upon it and entered the city.

People had gathered in Jerusalem for the Passover and were looking for Jesus, both because of His great works and teaching and because they had heard of the miracle of the resurrection of Lazarus. When they heard that Christ was entering the city, they went out to meet Him with palm branches, laying their garments on the ground before Him, and shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is he that comes in the Name of the Lord, the King of Israel!"

At the outset of His public ministry Jesus proclaimed the kingdom of God and announced that the powers of the age to come were already active in the present age (Luke 7:18-22). His words and mighty works were performed "to produce repentance as the response to His call, a call to an inward change of mind and heart which would result in concrete changes in one's life, a call to follow Him and accept His messianic destiny. The triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem is a messianic event, through which His divine authority was declared.

Palm Sunday summons us to behold our king: the Word of God made flesh. We are called to behold Him not simply as the One who came to us once riding on a colt, but as the One who is always present in His Church, coming ceaselessly to us in power and glory at every Eucharist, in every prayer and sacrament, and in every act of love, kindness and mercy. He comes to free us from all our fears and

insecurities, "to take solemn possession of our soul, and to be enthroned in our heart," as someone has said. He comes not only to deliver us from our deaths by His death and Resurrection, but also to make us capable of attaining the most perfect fellowship or union with Him. He is the King, who liberates us from the darkness of sin and the bondage of death. Palm Sunday summons us to behold our King: the vanquisher of death and the giver of life.

Palm Sunday summons us to accept both the rule and the kingdom of God as the goal and content of our Christian life. We draw our identity from Christ and His kingdom. The kingdom is Christ - His indescribable power, boundless mercy and incomprehensible abundance given freely to man. The kingdom does not lie at some point or place in the distant future. In the words of the Scripture, the kingdom of God is not only at hand (Matthew 3:2; 4:17), it is within us (Luke 17:21). The kingdom is a present reality as well as a future realization (Matthew 6:10). Theophan the Recluse wrote the following words about the inward rule of Christ the King:

"The Kingdom of God is within us when God reigns in us, when the soul in its depths confesses God as its Master, and is obedient to Him in all its powers. Then God acts within it as master 'both to will and to do of his good pleasure' (Philippians 2:13). This reign begins as soon as we resolve to serve God in our Lord Jesus Christ, by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Then the Christian hands over to God his consciousness and freedom, which comprises the essential substance of our human life, and God accepts the sacrifice; and in this way the alliance of man with God and God with man is achieved, and the covenant with God, which was severed by the Fall and continues to be severed by our willful sins, is re-established."

The kingdom of God is the life of the Holy Trinity in the world. It is the kingdom of holiness, goodness, truth, beauty, love, peace and joy. These qualities are not works of the human spirit. They proceed from the life of God and reveal God. Christ Himself is the kingdom. He is the God-Man, Who brought God down to earth (John 1:1,14). "He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, yet the world knew Him not. He came to His own home, and His own people received Him not" (John 1:10-11). He

was reviled and hated.

Palm Sunday summons us to behold our king - the Suffering Servant. We cannot understand Jesus' kingship apart from the Passion. Filled with infinite love for the Father and the Holy Spirit, and for creation, in His inexpressible humility Jesus accepted the infinite abasement of the Cross. He bore our griefs and carried our sorrows; He was wounded for our transgressions and made Himself an offering for sin (Isaiah 53). His glorification, which was accomplished by the resurrection and the ascension, was achieved through the Cross.

In the fleeting moments of exuberance that marked Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the world received its King, the king who was on His way to death. His Passion, however, was no morbid desire for martyrdom. Jesus' purpose was to accomplish the mission for which the Father sent Him.

“The Son and Word of the Father, like Him without beginning and eternal, has come today to the city of Jerusalem, seated on a dumb beast, on a foal. From fear the cherubim dare not gaze upon Him; yet the children honor Him with palms and branches, and mystically they sing a hymn of praise: ‘Hosanna in the highest, Hosanna to the Son of David, who has come to save from error all mankind.’” (A hymn of the Light.)

“With our souls cleansed and in spirit carrying branches, with faith let us sing Christ's praises like the children, crying with a loud voice to the Master: Blessed art Thou, O Savior, who hast come into the world to save Adam from the ancient curse; and in Thy love for mankind Thou hast been pleased to become spiritually the new Adam. O Word, who hast ordered all things for our good, glory to Thee.” (A Sessional hymn of the Orthros)

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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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Stewardship of Treasure Guide

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

Weekly Income	Beyond a Tithe		Tithe				Upper Range Giving				Middle Range Giving			Lower Range Giving			
	15%	12%	10%	9%	8%	7%	6%	5%	4%	3%	2%	1%					
\$200	\$30	\$24	\$20	\$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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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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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... Allison & Michael, 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...

Carly (*due in June*), Allison (*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.*

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.

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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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