

# “THE WEEKLY FORERUNNER” *Our Parish Weekly Bulletin*

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

## A WARM WELCOME TO OUR GUESTS!

Glory be to Jesus Christ! (*responded with:* Glory forever!) Slava Isusu Christu! (Slava na viki!) We are happy that you have joined us today! It is our pleasure to have you in our presence this morning. We wish God’s Blessings to all who are with us today and hope you come again soon! Please see Fr. Dave if you have any questions in regards to our worship or Orthodoxy.

## UPCOMING SERVICES

**SUNDAY, JULY 7, 2024** #APOSTLESFAST vol. X

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 10** #APOSTLESFAST

**Canceled: 6:30 pm Parish Council Meeting**

**THURSDAY, JULY 11** #APOSTLESFAST

6:30 pm Feast Day Vespers

**FRIDAY, JULY 12**

FEAST OF SAINTS PETER AND PAUL

9:30am Festal Divine Liturgy

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**SUNDAY, JULY 14, 2024**

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday of Regional Saints (*American and Rusyn*)

9:15 am Third Hour

9:30 am Divine Liturgy

Epistle: Romans 5:1-10 Gospel: Matthew 6:22-33

Tone 2; Liturgical Color: **Green**

Monthly Memorial Panachida

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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/](http://www.acrod.org/directories/cathedral/live/)

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

[www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar](http://www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar)

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

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## SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

**Epistle:** *Romans 2:10-16*

<sup>10</sup> but glory and honor and peace for every one who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. <sup>11</sup> For God shows no partiality.

<sup>12</sup> All who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. <sup>13</sup> For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified. <sup>14</sup> When Gentiles who have not the law do by nature what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. <sup>15</sup> They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or perhaps excuse them <sup>16</sup> on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

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**Gospel:** *Matthew 4:18-23*

**Jesus Calls the First Disciples**

<sup>18</sup> As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. <sup>19</sup> And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” <sup>20</sup> Immediately they left their nets and followed him. <sup>21</sup> And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zeb’edee and John his brother, in the boat with Zeb’edee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. <sup>22</sup> Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

**Jesus Ministers to Crowds of People**

<sup>23</sup> And he went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people.

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## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

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[www.OrthodoxPittsburgh.com](http://www.OrthodoxPittsburgh.com) +++ 412-748-0148 (*Talk or Text*) +++ [OrthodoxPittsburgh1932@gmail.com](mailto:OrthodoxPittsburgh1932@gmail.com)

## BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

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**\*\*\* The Holy Apostles’ Fast (Peter and Paul Fast)**

This is one of the four fasting seasons of the Orthodox Christian year that culminates with our celebration of Saints Peter & Paul on July 12th.

**Apostles Fast** (by Fr. Ed Pehanich) We are now in the middle of the Apostles’ Fast. While many ignore this fast it has a very important purpose for us. St. Leo the Great in the 5<sup>th</sup> century wrote:

*After the Feast of Pentecost, fasting is especially necessary to purify our thoughts to render us worthy to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit.*

We engage in increased prayer and fasting in order to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, self-control. Need these in your life? Work at increased prayer and fasting during these weeks.

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**\*\*\* Holy Mystery of Confession** – A common practice in Orthodoxy is to go to Confession during each of the fasting periods. Fr Dave is available for Confession after every service or contact him to set up another time.

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**\*\*\* Feast Day Vespers** – In the Orthodox Church, Vespers is prescribed to be done on a daily basis (*which happens in a lot of monasteries*). Great Vespers is appointed to be served on Saturday nights and on the eve of Feast Days (*ranked higher than Fourth Class*). We will offer this service on **Thursday at 6:30 pm** on the eve of the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul.

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**\* Garden Blessing** – The time of year has come for getting our gardens blessed. (*The format of the blessing is similar to our annual home blessing.*) Please contact Fr. Dave if you are interested.

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**\*\*\* Thank You** to Fr. Bob Prepelka for serving the past two Sundays and to everyone for your prayers for our safe travels!

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**\*\* Last Call** for 2024 Palms and Pussywillows. They are located in the vestibule at this time.

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**\*\*\* Monthly Memorial** – Our July Panachida will be on Sunday, **July 14**. Please give Fr. Dave the envelope from the vestibule with any names to be remembered.

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**\* Front 9 - Golf anyone?** The St. Alexander Nevsky Annual Golf Outing will be on **Monday, July 15** at Connoquenessing Country Club (Ellwood City) with Shotgun start at 9:30 am. Deadline to register is June 28. Please contact Alex Glisan (724-831-6466) with any questions.

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**\*\*\* CANCELED** – The **Christmas in July Craft Market** at St. Nicholas in Homestead scheduled for **Saturday, July 20** has been canceled.

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**\*\* Back 9 - Golf anyone?** The 48<sup>th</sup> Bob Perevuznik Sr. Memorial Golf Outing will be on **Saturday, August 3** at Meadowink Golf Course (Murrysville) sponsored by the St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church, East Pittsburgh. Deadline to register is July 20. Call or text Bob Perevuznik Jr. (412) 952-6962 if interested.

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**ACRY Convention 2024** – St Michael’s ACRY Chapter #40, Binghamton, NY, is delighted to be your hosts for the 79<sup>th</sup> National ACRY Convention & 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Jr. ACRY this Labor Day weekend from **Aug 30 to Sep 2**. All information is online at: <https://bit.ly/24ACRYRegistration> Please contact [BinghamtonACRY@gmail.com](mailto:BinghamtonACRY@gmail.com) with any questions. Key Deadlines include:

*July 30th* - DoubleTree Hotel Reservations

*August 9th* - Booklet ads, Patrons, and Boosters

*August 16th* – Meals and Golf Registration

**VISIT OUR DIOCESE ON-LINE**  
 Diocesan Website: [www.acrod.org](http://www.acrod.org)  
 Camp Nazareth: [www.campnazareth.org](http://www.campnazareth.org)  
 FB: [www.facebook.com/acroddioocese](https://www.facebook.com/acroddioocese)  
 Twitter: [twitter.com/acrodnews](https://twitter.com/acrodnews)  
 YouTube: [youtube.com/acroddiocese](https://youtube.com/acroddioocese)

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**2024 Camp Nazareth Wishlist** – Please sponsor one of the items on the list (or even part of one) and help Camp fulfill its Wishlist goal for 2024. Some of the items are related to the Campers, some to the Staff, some to the Kitchen, some to the Camp Church, and some for Programming and New Internship Positions. The Camp Wishlist is a great way for you to support the Camp in its mission. You can access the Wishlist by clicking this link: [2024 Camp Nazareth Wishlist](#). Once you sponsor/reserve an item (or part of an item), you will be sent an email with instructions about how to give towards the item. You will be directed to the "Donate" Tab or the "Support Camp Nazareth" Button on the Camp Website ([campnazareth.org](http://campnazareth.org)) to make your contribution. Please put in the Memo line the name of the item you are sponsoring. Again, please help us make it to our goal of having each item sponsored by visiting the Wishlist link above.

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\*\*\* **Thank You** to everyone who brought in donations or gave for our June Community Outreach, **Holy Transfiguration Monastery** (321 Monastery Lane, Ellwood City, PA 16117). If anyone would like to deliver the donations, please let Fr Dave or Larry know. Glory to God for this outreach ministry of the church, which is very important to our parish!

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\* **Grass Maintenance** – The new shed is up and the donated lawnmower and weedwhacker will be here this week. Please contact Fr. Dave if you are interested in being a part of a rotation of folks who will maintain the grass throughout the summer.

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\* **Kitchen Crew** – Please see Fr. Dave if you would be willing to be on a committee to organize and clean the kitchen and storage room and then help keep it organized, stocked, and clean.

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\*\* **Garbage and Recycling** – Did you ever notice that we do not have a dumpster at the church? Being non-residential without pick up in Allison Park, all of our garbage and recycling heads to stewards' houses. If you would be willing to stick around at the end of coffee social and take a bag, please let Larry know. *(please grab the coffee grounds before taking the bag)*

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\*\*\* **Media Ministry** – Do you have experience with FB, Instagram, X, and / or website programming? Could you help our parish in this area? Please contact Fr. Dave for more details...

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

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**COFFEE SOCIAL STEWARDS**  
*Please sign up by the kitchen or by contacting Fr. Dave*  
 July 14: Lynn Mainolfi  
 July 21: \_\_\_\_\_?  
 July 28: \_\_\_\_\_?

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**THIRD HOUR**  
*Please let Fr. Dave know if you are interested in reading or chanting the Third Hour at 9:15 am*  
 July 14: \_\_\_\_\_?  
 July 21: \_\_\_\_\_?  
 July 28: \_\_\_\_\_?

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**Bulletin Sponsor** - If you wish to sponsor a bulletin *In Honor of* (nameday, birthday, anniversary, etc.) or *In Memory of* someone, please sign up on the sheet in the vestibule or by contacting Fr. Dave (email, text, or call). An additional stewardship offering to the Church is requested. *Remember, sponsoring a bulletin in memory of someone does not replace having a Panachida (Memorial Service) for them.*

**OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD**  
**Sunday, June 23**  
 Stewardship Offerings: \$ 70  
 Candle Stewardship: \$ 1261  
 Envelope Stewardship: \$ 850  


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**Total Collections: \$ 2181**  
**Capital Improvement Fund: \$ 0**  
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**Sunday, June 30**  
 Stewardship Offerings: \$ 700  
 Candle Stewardship: \$ 277  
 Envelope Stewardship: \$ 78  
 Community Outreach: \$ 10  


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**Total Collections: \$ 1065**  
**Capital Improvement Fund: \$ 0**

**Weekly Candle Intentions / Memorials** were offered the past 2 weeks by the Nelson Family; Carol Lorenzi; +Eleanor Sanger; Rich and Renee Mirilovich; Cindy Pavilonis; Tim Martin; Lawrence Martin; Mary Jane Hudak; Juliana and Fred Anton

The **Vigil Lamp** was offered the past 2 weeks by Joanne and Ronald Nelson in memory of +Eleanor Sanger; and by Tim Martin IMO his father, +Lawrence Martin, and Godfather, +Clifford Enslin. May Their Memory Be Eternal!

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**June Financial Report:**  
**General Stewardship = \$ 6578.72**  
*(includes \$ 294.72 from online stewardship)*  
**\*Expenses = \$ 5570.53**  
**Net Income = \$ 1008.19**  
**Capital Improvement Fund = \$ 515**  
 Average at Sunday Divine Liturgies: 35  
*\*details listed on the church hall bulletin board*

**Fiscal Year-to-Date Financial Report:**  
*(September through last month)*  
**General Stewardship = \$ 77,348**  
**\*Expenses = \$ 62,406**  
**Net Income = \$ 14,942**  
 Average at Sunday Divine Liturgies: 34

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**THIS MONTH'S SERVICE SCHEDULE**

**MONDAY, JULY 1** #APOSTLESFAST  
 APOSTLES' (PETER AND PAUL) FAST BEGINS

**SATURDAY, JULY 6** #APOSTLESFAST  
 6:30 pm Feast Day Vespers  
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**SUNDAY, JULY 7** #APOSTLESFAST  
 FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST  
 9:15 am Third Hour 9:30 am Divine Liturgy

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 10** #APOSTLESFAST  
 6:30 pm Parish Council Meeting *(All are welcome to come and listen to the discussions at the meeting)*

**THURSDAY, JULY 11** #APOSTLESFAST  
 6:30 pm Feast Day Vespers


**FRIDAY, JULY 12** FEAST OF SAINTS PETER AND PAUL  
 9:30am Festal Divine Liturgy  
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**SUNDAY, JULY 14**  
 Sunday of Regional Saints *(American and Rusyn)*  
 9:15 am Third Hour; 9:30 am Divine Liturgy  
 Monthly Memorial Panachida

**SUNDAY, JULY 21**  
 9:15 am Third Hour; 9:30 am Divine Liturgy  
 Youth Sunday

**SUNDAY, JULY 28**  
 Commemoration of the Holy Fathers of the First Six Ecumenical Councils  
 9:15 am Third Hour; 9:30 am Divine Liturgy

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY**

 This month, through the efforts of our Sr. ACRY, our additional collection will be for **Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry (OCPM)** whose mission is to serve those who are incarcerated and their families, and provides resources, training and support to our ministry partners so that lives are transformed and God is glorified. **Core values:** Accept that each person is made in the image and likeness of God; Love with compassion and respect; Integrity; Committed to excellence; Team-oriented  
 For more information on this organization, please visit: [www.theocpm.org](http://www.theocpm.org). Thank you in advance for your prayers and offering this month!



## LIVES OF THE SAINTS

### The Monk Antonii (Anthony) Of Dymsk

*Commemorated on July 7 / June 24*

The Monk Antonii (Anthony) of Dymsk was born at Novgorod in about the year 1157. Upon a time once hearkening in church to the words of Christ: "Whoso wouldst to follow Me, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and come follow Me" (Mt. 16: 24), the saint resolved to leave the world and take monastic vows under Saint Varlaam of Khutynsk (Comm. 6 November) at his monastery. When he was dying, the Monk Varlaam established Saint Antonii as monastery head in his place; but Antonii, shunning glory, left the monastery and settled at the shores of Lake Dyma, in the outskirts of the city of Tikhvin. Here he founded a monastery and asceticised at it until the end of his own life. According to tradition, the Monk Antonii made a journey to Constantinople and through the holy places. The Monk Antonii died in the year 1224 on 24 June (on this day is made his memory). In the year 1330 his relics were uncovered undecayed, and from that time they were glorified by many miracles.

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## FEAST DAY FEATURES OF THE MONTH

### The Nativity Of The Holy Forerunner And Baptist Of The Lord, John:

*Commemorated on July 7 / June 24*

The Nativity of the Holy Forerunner and Baptist of the Lord, John: The Gospel (Lk. 1: 57-80) relates that the righteous parents of Saint John the Baptist – the Priest Zachariah and Elizabeth, lived in the ancient city of Hebron, and reached old age being childless, since Elizabeth was barren. One time, Saint Zachariah was making Divine services at the Jerusalem Temple and saw the Archangel Gabriel, standing on the right side of the incense offertory. He predicted, that Saint Zachariah would father a son, who would announce the Saviour – the Messiah, awaited by the Old Testament Church. Zachariah was troubled, and fear fell upon him. He had doubts that in old age it was possible to have a son, and he asked for a sign. And it was given to him – it appeared at the

same time as a chastisement for his unbelief: Zachariah was struck speechless until the time of the fulfillment of the archangel's words.

Saint Elizabeth came to be with child, and fearing derision over the lateness of her pregnancy, she kept it secret for five months, until there came visiting her distant relative the All-Blessed Virgin Mary, to share with her Her own joy. Elizabeth, at the prompting of the Holy Spirit, was the first to greet the Virgin Mary as the Mother of God. And together with her Saint John also – in the womb of his mother Righteous Elizabeth – did greet "with leaps as in song" the MostHoly Virgin Mary and the Son of God incarnated within Her.

It became time, and Saint Elizabeth gave birth to a son, and all the relatives and acquaintances rejoiced together with her. On the eighth day, in accord with the law of Moses, was made the circumcision. His mother named him John. Everyone was amazed, since no one in their family had been named such. When they asked Saint Zachariah about this, he motioned for a tablet and wrote on it: "John is his name" – and immediately the binding of his tongue at the prediction of the archangel was unbound, and Saint Zachariah, at the prompting of the Holy Spirit, glorified God and pronounced the words of prophecy about the Advent-Coming into the world of the Messiah, and about his own son John – the Forerunner of the Lord.

After the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ and the worship of the shepherds and the Magi, wicked king Herod gave orders to kill all the infants. Hearing about this, Saint Elizabeth fled into the wilderness and hid in a cave. Saint Zachariah as a priest was at Jerusalem and was doing his priestly service in the Temple. Herod sent soldiers to him to find out the abode of the infant John and his mother. Zachariah answered, that their whereabouts were unknown to him, and he was killed right there in the Temple. Righteous Elizabeth continued to live in the wilderness with her son and she died there. The lad John, protected by an Angel, dwelt in the wilderness until such time, when he came preaching about repentance and was himself vouchsafed worthy to baptise the Lord Who was come into the world.

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### The Holy, Glorious And All-Praised Leaders Of The Apostles, Peter And Paul

*Commemorated on July 12 / June 29*

#### The Holy Apostle Peter

The son of Jonah and brother of Andrew the First-Called, of the tribe of Simeon and the town of Bethsaida, he was a fisherman and was at first called Simon, but the Lord was pleased to call him Cephas, or Peter (JN 1:42). He was the first of the disciples to give clear expression to his faith in the Lord Jesus, saying, "*Though art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.*" (MT 16:16) His love for the Lord was very strong and his faith in Him went from strength to strength. When the Lord was put on trial, Peter denied Him three times, but he needed only one look into the face of the Lord and Peter's soul was filled with shame and repentance. After the descent of the Holy Spirit, Peter became a fearless and powerful preacher of the Gospel. After his first sermon in Jerusalem, about 3,000 souls were converted to the Faith. He preached the Gospel throughout Palestine and Asia Minor, in Italy and in Illyria. Peter was condemned to death on the order of the wicked Emperor Nero. After installing Linus as Bishop of Rome and exhorting and encouraging the flock of Christ there, Peter went to his death with joy. When he saw the cross before him, he asked the executioner to crucify him upside-down, because he felt himself to be unworthy to die in the same way as his Lord. And so, this great servant of the greatest Master went to his rest and received a crown of eternal glory!

#### The Holy Apostle Paul

Born in Tarsus and of the tribe of Benjamin, he was formerly called Saul and studied under the teacher Gamaliel. He was a Pharisee and fierce persecutor of Christians. Saul was wondrously converted to the Christian Faith by the Lord Himself, who appeared to him on the road to Damascus. He was baptized by the Apostle Ananias, named Paul and enrolled in the great work of the Apostles. He preached the Gospel everywhere with burning zeal, from the borders of Arabia to the land of Spain, among both the Jews and Gentiles (heathens) and receiving the title '*Apostle to the Gentiles*'. His fearful sufferings were matched only by his superhuman endurance. Through all the years of preaching, he hung from day to day like a

thread between life and death. Filling his days and nights with toil and suffering for Christ, organizing the Church in many places and reaching a high level of perfection, he was able to say, "*It is not I who lives, but Christ who lives in me.*" (Galatians 2:20) Paul was brutally beheaded in Rome in the reign of Nero, at the same time as St. Peter.

## PRAYER CORNER

**For the Health of...** Helen, Cynthia, Barbara, Nicholas, Patrick, Thomas, Paul, Mary, Cheryl, 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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#### July Namedays:

Rich Mirilovich - St. John the Baptist (7/7)  
Craig Bowser - All-glorious Apostle Peter (7/12)  
Margaret/Peggy Rusnak - Great Martyr Marina (7/30)  
...*May God grant them many and blessed years!*

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#### July Birthdays:

Joanna Delaney (7/2), Pañi Stacey Mihaly (7/5), Felix Matolyak-Ferraz (7/6), Charles Deluca (7/8), *Father's Godfather*, Richard Babbie (7/9), *Pañi's Grandmother*, Maria Alexa (7/11), Emilia Zak (7/11), Jean Zak (7/12), Ben Scherer, Sr. (7/14), Pañi Joanna Ferencz (7/17), Mark Tongel (7/17), Alaina Anton (7/18), Fr Michael Chendorain (7/18), Fr Luke Mihaly (7/18), *Father's Godson*, Nathaniel Salio (7/21), Jennifer Brancho (7/22), Robert Fall (7/22), Lynn Mainolfi (7/23), Carol Fucsko (7/27), Barbara Gedid (7/27), Ryan Gogal (7/27), Demetrie Ernest Pido (7/27), Samuel Schrmack (7/27), Doug Delaney (7/28), Fr Stephen Lopusky (7/28), Luke Tongel (7/30), *Pañi's brother*, Florin Popescu (7/30), Fr. George Ellis (7/31) ...*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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#### July Anniversaries:

Fred & Juliana Anton (7/20/63)  
Alexei & Patrick Wertz (7/24/21)  
...*through the prayers of St. Nicholas Planas*

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***For the souls of the newly departed...***

+Mary Evelyn Steiner (5/25)

*...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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## ONLINE BONUSES

### **The Nativity of St. John the Baptist**

*By St. John Of San Francisco & Shanghai*

Among the Church's feasts, there are three in honor of God's saint which in their significance stand out from the others devoted to the saints and are numbered among the great feasts of the Church of Christ. These feasts glorify the economy of God for our salvation. These three feasts are the Nativity of St. John the Forerunner, his Beheading, and the feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul.

The apparition of the holy Archangel Gabriel to the priest Zacharias in the Temple, with the announcement of the birth to him and the righteous Elizabeth, of a son who would prepare the way for the Lord, the Savior of the world, and the subsequent fulfillment of this premise, are the first of the events related by the Evangelists. The announcement of the holy Archangel Gabriel to Zacharias in the Temple begins the New Testament Gospel.

The announcement of the same Archangel Gabriel six months later in Nazareth to the Virgin Mary concerning the birth from Her of the Son of God, Who was to become incarnate, is a continuation of the revelation of the Pre-eternal Counsel concerning the salvation of the human race. Three months after, the Annunciation, St. John the Forerunner was born "in a city of Judah," and six months after him Christ Himself was born in Bethlehem.

These events are closely bound together. "The glorious conception of the Forerunner proclaimeth beforehand the King Who is to be born of a Virgin" (Exapostilarion, Sept. 23, Feast of the Conception of John the Baptist). The announcement of the Archangel Gabriel in the Temple, announced later to all living nearby by Zacharias, in the magnificent hymn, which he sang after the birth of the child, John and the restoration to him of the gift of speech (Luke

1:67-79), is the forerunner of the angelic hymn: "Glory to God in the highest;" which was sung in Bethlehem by the angels when they announced to the shepherds the Nativity of Christ.

The Nativity of John the Baptist is the first joy sent down by God to the human race, the beginning of its deliverance from the power of the devil, sin and eternal death.

It is true that even before the Forerunner, the Most Holy Virgin Mary was born, and angels announced Her birth to Her parents. However, at that time, only Her parents knew of the exalted lot that was prepared for the Virgin Who was born, and they themselves were not fully aware of what had been announced to them beforehand. Therefore, it was only they, who celebrated at the birth of their Daughter, while the rest of the world only later understood the joy that had been announced (to it), by this birth.

For this reason, the feasts of the Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos and Her Entrance into the Temple were established in the Church and began to be solemnly celebrated significantly later than the other great feasts, whereas the Nativity of John the Forerunner is one of the most ancient and most venerated of Christian feasts. Sermons on this feast have been preserved from the first centuries.

From the day of the Nativity of John the Forerunner, the preparation of the human race begins for meeting the Son of God on earth. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for He hath visited and redeemed His people . . . And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Most High: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways (Luke 1:68, 76). These God-inspired words of the priest Zacharias, after he had regained the gift of speech, were made known in all the land of Judea, causing disturbance to all living there, who asked each other in astonishment: What manner of child shall this be? (Luke 1:66).

Involuntarily the thought arose: Is this not the Messiah Himself? Judea was in an especially tense state of expectation of the Savior. Thus, the child John prepared the way for the Lord by his very birth; and even while he was still in the womb of His mother, by his leaping (Luke 1:41) he announced the coming birth of the Child Jesus, as if crying out: "Christ is born, give ye glory. Christ comes from

heaven, meet ye Him" (Irmos, Canticle One of the Canon, Feast of the Nativity of Christ).

Being born exactly half a year before Christ, John the Forerunner by the exact time of his birth depicted his mission of preparing the way for the Lord. He was born at the time of the year (June 24) when the day begins to grow shorter after the summer solstice, whereas the Nativity of Christ occurs (December 25) when the day begins to grow longer after the winter solstice. These facts are an embodiment of the words spoken later, by the Forerunner, after the beginning of Christ's preaching: He must increase, but I must decrease (John 3:30).

*"The herald of the Sun, the Forerunner" was John the Baptist, who was like the morning star that announces the rising of the Sun of Righteousness in the East.*

Just as the very event of the Nativity of John the Baptist was the antechamber of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, so also the feast of the Nativity of John the Forerunner is also the antechamber of the feast of the Nativity of Christ. *"The star of stars, the Forerunner, is born on earth today, from a barren womb, John the beloved of God, and manifests the dawning of Christ, the Orient from on high"* (Glory at Lauds, of the Feast, June 24). "O Prophet and Forerunner of the coming of Christ, we who venerate thee with love, are in perplexity how worthily to praise thee; for the barrenness of her who bore thee and the dumbness of thy father are loosed by thy glorious and precious nativity, and the incarnation of the Son of God is preached to the world" (Troparion of the Feast).

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## LIVING THE ORTHODOX FAITH

### **Societal Decay**

*By Fr. Vladimir Berzonsky*

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void~ and darkness was upon the face of the deep. . . And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." (Gen. 1:1-2)

Sometimes it happens that even for those who believe in God, who agree that He created heaven and earth, the world is a place of darkness and confusion. Indeed, we have almost something similar in the first

phrases.. of the Holy Bible. We learn that "God created . . ." but "the earth was without form, and void: and darkness was on the face of the deep." It is as though much remains undone, and that is the case. After the initial act of creation, the earth is still formless, empty and dark. All is yet potential. Light, shape and whole-someness are to be manifest further in the story. Creation is the mere inauguration of life, and not its completion.

We would do well to remember that life is in itself, like creation, not the whole story. The past two decades we have been invited by those in our society, especially certain youth groups, to celebrate life. The Age of Aquarius calls us to let the sunshine in, to live in a series of ongoing liberations from rules and standards of the past, to reject all moral restraints.

We, on the other hand, hold in reserve our celebration of life because we opt for the quality of life. It is not enough just to live, if life has no meaning or direction. We would trade a momentary celebration for the continual joy that only comes with knowing from whence we came, what we are about, and where we are heading. Many of our contemporaries, looking at a world that has substantially lost its former standards, which is very much like that described above: "Without form and void," pervaded by darkness, react to that gloom within and without by escaping through revelry, drugs and alcohol.

Is there an alternative? Look at the next scriptural sentence:

"the Spirit of God moved..." The Creator had not stopped His work with creation. Not only is there a potential form and substance to life, God's Holy Spirit is everywhere bringing it into being. For us humans it means that not by our reason or will alone, not through our efforts will light and meaning come into existence, but only by opening ourselves to that Spirit hovering over the earth and penetrating every molecule of material being. The Holy Spirit of God is still moving, leading those who will follow Him towards Jesus Christ, the Light of the world, the Sense,(Logos), and the fullness of life.

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**ADDITIONAL BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS**



\*\*\* **Joining the ACRY** – If you would like to become a part of our philanthropic organization of the ACRY (American Carpatho-Russian Youth), which is open to all ages, please contact Subdeacon Ryan Ferko at 484-744-2771 or rferko85@yahoo.com.

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**CHURCH BUILDING UPDATE**

Here is a brief update from the past few weeks:

- ✘ \*\*\* The Construction Committee will be starting various little projects around the church in the upcoming weeks (around vacations and summer schedules). Please contact Fr. Dave if you have an idea of an improvement that we should look into.
- ✘ upcoming contractor projects include an outdoor sign, new doors, and possibly putting drywall on the ceiling in the nave of the church
- ✘ \* The old push-matic electrical panel has been replaced (*donated 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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**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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\***Mystery of Confession** – Father is available to hear Confessions after every service *or* by appointment.

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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 (*5<sup>th</sup> position open*)

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**STEWARDSHIP SNIPPET**

**TIME, TALENT, AND TREASURES PARISH STEWARDSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:**

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\*\* **Ride Share** – We have received a couple requests from people who are interested in getting a ride to the church. Please contact Fr. Dave or Larry if you would be willing to bring someone to the church.

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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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**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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**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 (2<sup>nd</sup> 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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\*\*\* **Summer Travels** – As we are in the midst of summer vacations and time away, please do not forget about our parish. We continue to function even when you are away. If possible, mail your regular offering in or ‘catch up’ when you return. It is all a part of our stewardship!

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**Stewardship of Treasure Guide**

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

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

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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**Bulletin Sponsor** - If you wish to sponsor a bulletin *In Honor of* (nameday, birthday, anniversary, etc.) or *In Memory of* someone, please sign up on the sheet in the vestibule or by contacting Fr. Dave (email, text, or call). An additional stewardship offering to the Church is requested. *Remember, sponsoring a bulletin in memory of someone does not replace having a Panachida (Memorial Service) for them.*

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**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 Vitamin:*

“Prayer, fasting, vigil and all other Christian practices, however good they may be in themselves, do not constitute the aim of our Christian life, although they serve as the indispensable means of reaching this end. The true aim of our Christian life consists in the acquisition of the Holy Spirit of God.”

**+St. Seraphim of Sarov**

*The Acquisition of the Holy Spirit: Chapter 3, The Little Russian Philokalia Vol. 1; Saint Herman of Alaska Brotherhood pg. 79, 19th century*

## 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...)

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## ONLINE PRAYER CORNER

**Return to Kneeling in Prayer** – At the Vespers service Sunday evening on Pentecost, the kneeling prayers are recited. The Orthodox community now returns to kneeling in prayer (*except on Sundays*) and reciting *O Heavenly King*.

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### O Heavenly King (*Carju Nebesnyj*)

O heavenly King, the Comforter; the Spirit of Truth, Who are in all places and fill all things; Treasury of blessings and Giver of life, come and dwell within us and cleanse us from every blemish and save our souls, O blessed One. Amen.

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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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### July Namedays:

Rich Mirilovich - St. John the Baptist (7/7)  
Craig Bowser - Holy & All-glorious Apostle Peter (7/12)

Margaret (Peggy) Rusnak - Great Martyr Marina of Antioch (7/30)

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

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### July Birthdays:

Joanna Delaney (7/2), Pañi Stacey Mihaly (7/5), Felix Matolyak-Ferraz (7/6), Charles Deluca (7/8), *Father’s Godfather*, Richard Babbie (7/9), Pañi’s *Grandmother*, Maria Alexa (7/11), Emilia Zak (7/11), Jean Zak (7/12), Ben Scherer, Sr. (7/14), Pañi Joanna Ferencz (7/17), Mark Tongel (7/17), Alaina Anton (7/18), Fr Michael Chendorain (7/18), Fr Luke Mihaly (7/18), *Father’s Godson*, Nathaniel Salio (7/21), Jennifer Branco (7/22), Robert Fall (7/22), Lynn Mainolfi (7/23), Carol Fucsko (7/27), Barbara Gedid (7/27), Ryan Gogal (7/27), Demetrie Ernest Pido (7/27), Samuel Schrmack (7/27), Doug Delaney (7/28), Fr Stephen Lopusky (7/28), Luke Tongel (7/30), Pañi’s *brother*, Florin Popescu (7/30), Fr. George Ellis (7/31)

*...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...

Alexandra & Maxwell Anton, Allison & Michael, Francis & Alexandra *...through the prayers of Sts. Adrian & Natalia and all Holy Martyrs.*

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### July Anniversaries:

Fred & Juliana Anton (7/20/63)  
Alexei & Patrick Wertz (7/24/21)

*...through the prayers of St. Nicholas Planas*

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**For Pregnant Mothers...** Carly (due in June), Lexi (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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**For the souls of the newly departed...**

+Mary Evelyn Steiner (5/25)

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

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

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**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 Proskomedie (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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#### **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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