

“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 14, 2024 vol. X
3rd Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday of Regional Saints (*American and Rusyn*)
Monthly Memorial Panachida
+++

SUNDAY, JULY 21
4th Sunday after Pentecost
Holy GreatMartyr Procopius (303)
9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Epistle: Romans 6:18-23
Gospel: Matthew 8:5-13
Tone 3; Liturgical Color: **Green**
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
Tone 4; Liturgical Color: **Gold**
+++ +++ +++

***Live-Broadcast** – If you are unable to attend church services, please pray along with our Cathedral online:
www.acrod.org/directories/cathedral/live/
+++ +++ +++

***Calendar** - Future Services are updated online at:
www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar
(Please see Fr. Dave if you want a printed copy)

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: Romans 5:1-10

Results of Justification

5 Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. **2** Through him we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God. **3** More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, **4** and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, **5** and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us.

6 While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. **7** Why, one will hardly die for a righteous man—though perhaps for a good man one will dare even to die. **8** But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. **9** Since, therefore, we are now justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. **10** For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

Gospel: Matthew 6:22-33

The Sound Eye

22 “The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light; **23** but if your eye is not sound, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

Serving Two Masters

24 “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Do Not Worry

25 “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

Father Dave Urban, *Pastor* +++ 2201 Duncan Avenue, Allison Park, Pa 15101
www.OrthodoxPittsburgh.com +++ 412-748-0148 (*Talk or Text*) +++ OrthodoxPittsburgh1932@gmail.com

life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? **26** Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? **27** And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit [*~18 inches*] to his span of life? **28** And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; **29** yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. **30** But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O men of little faith? **31** Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ **32** For the Gentiles seek all these things; and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. **33** But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well.

+++ +++ +++

BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

+++ +++ +++

***** Congratulations!** to Carly (Anton) and Kyle Jozwiakowski and their families on the birth of Wade Thomas born on June 20th (8 lb 3 oz).

“Preserve her and this child which she has borne. Cover her with the shelter of thy wings from this day until her final end, through the prayers of the most Holy Theotokos and of all the saints. Amen” – from *Prayers for a Woman on the First Day after Childbirth*

+++ +++ +++

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

+++ +++ +++

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

*** 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.

+++ +++ +++

**** Golf anyone?** The 48th Bob Pervuznik 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 Pervuznik Jr. (412) 952-6962 if interested.

+++ +++ +++

**** ACRY Convention 2024** – St Michael's ACRY Chapter #40, Binghamton, NY, is delighted to be your hosts for the 79th National ACRY Convention & 40th 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 with any questions. Key Deadlines include:

July 30th - DoubleTree Hotel Reservations

August 9th - Booklet ads, Patrons, and Boosters

August 16th – Meals and Golf Registration

+++ +++ +++

**** 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, or Staff, or the Kitchen, or the Camp Church, or 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) 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.

+++ +++ +++

*** **New Refrigerator** – We are exploring the idea of upgrading our refrigerator. If you are interested in donating one or donating towards one – please contact someone on the Building Committee (Fr. Dave, Larry, Kathy, or Bob).

+++ +++ +++

** **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!

+++ +++ +++

** **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...

+++ +++ +++

*** **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!

+++ +++ +++

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.*

+++ +++ +++

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

+++ +++ +++

COFFEE SOCIAL STEWARDS	
<i>Please sign up by the kitchen or by contacting Fr. Dave</i>	
July 21:	_____?
July 28:	_____?
August 4:	_____?

+++ +++ +++

OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD	
Stewardship Offerings:	\$ 205
Candle Stewardship:	\$ 40
Envelope Stewardship:	\$ 80
Total Collections:	\$ 325
Capital Improvement Fund:	\$ 0

Weekly Candle Intentions / Memorials were offered last week by the Nelson Family; Cindy Pavilonis; Kathy Schrmack; Margie Sanger

+++ +++ +++

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. *Thank you in advance for your prayers and offering this month!*

+++ +++ +++

LIVES OF THE SAINTS

The Holy Martyrs, Wonderworkers And Unmercenarys Cosmas And Damian
Commemorated on July 14/1, November 14/1

The Holy Martyrs, Wonderworkers and UnMercenarys Cosmas and Damian – were brothers by birth, born at Rome, and physicians by profession. They accepted a martyr's death at Rome under the emperor Carinus (283-284). They were brought up by

their parents in the rules of piety, they led strict and chaste lives, and they were granted by God the graced gift of healing the sick. By their good and unselfish attitude towards people, combined with their exceptional kindness, the brothers converted many to Christ. The saints usually said to the sick: "It be not by our power that we treat the sick, but by the power of Christ, the True God. Believe in Him and be healed". For their unselfish doctoring of the infirm, the holy brothers were called "unmercenary physicians".

Their active service towards neighbour and spiritual influence on the surroundings, leading many into the Church, attracted the attention of the Roman authorities. Soldiers were sent after the brothers. Hearing about this, Christians implored Saints Cosmas and Damian to hide themselves away for a while until they could render them help. But the soldiers, not finding the brothers, arrested instead other Christians of the settlement, where the saints lived. Saints Cosmas and Damian then came out of hiding and delivered themselves over into the hands of the soldiers, asking them to set free those arrested because of them.

At Rome, the saints were at first locked up in prison, and then were taken for trial. The saints openly confessed before the Roman emperor and the judge their faith in Christ God, having come into the world to save mankind and redeem the world from sin, and they resolutely refused to offer sacrifice to the pagan gods. They said: "We have caused evil for no one, we have not involved ourselves with the magic or sorcery, of which you accuse us. We doctor the infirm by the power of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and we do not take any sort of recompense for rendering aid to the sick, because our Lord commanded His disciples: "Freely ye have received, freely give" (Mt. 10: 8).

The emperor however continued with his demands. Through the prayer of the holy brothers, imbued with the power of grace, God suddenly struck Carinus blind, so that he too in his own experience might know the almightiness of the Lord, not forgiving blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. The people, beholding the miracle, cried out: "Great is the Christian God and no other is God, except Him!" Many of those that believed besought the holy brothers to heal the emperor, and he himself implored

the saints, promising to convert to the True God Christ the Saviour. The saints healed him. After this, Saints Cosmas and Damian were with honour set free and again they set about doctoring the sick.

But what the hatred of the pagans and the ferocity of the Roman authorities could not do, was done by black envy, one of the strongest passions of the sinful nature of man. An older physician – an instructor, under whom in their time the holy brothers had studied the medical craft, became jealous of their fame. Driven to madness by this malice, and all overcome by passion, he summoned the holy brothers, formerly his most beloved students, that they should all get together for a gathering of various medicinal herbs, and setting far off into the mountains, he murdered them, throwing their bodies into a river.

Thus as martyrs ended the earthly journey of these holy brothers – the Unmercenary Healers Cosmas and Damian. They had devoted all their life to a Christian service to neighbour, having escaped the Roman sword and prison, but treacherously murdered by a teacher.

The Lord glorified His God-pleasing ones. And now through the prayers of the holy Unmercenarys Cosmas and Damian is received healing from God for all, who with faith recourse to their saintly intercession.

+++ +++ +++

PRAYER CORNER

For the Health of... Petra, Andrea, Alexandra, Robert, Helen, Cynthia, Barbara, Patrick, Thomas, Paul, Mary, Cheryl, Christopher, Robert, Joanne, Jason, Carlene, Kelly, Marie, Juliana, Fredrick, Kenneth, and Michael ...*through the prayers of St. Nectarios the Wonderworker; St. Luke, the Surgeon; and St. Panteleimon, the Healer*

+++ +++ +++

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

ONLINE BONUSES

How do I live my life in the post truth era?

By Fr. Chris Metropulos

One, two, three, now breathe!

Not so easy living a post truth world is it?

Hope is a foundational concept in Orthodox Christian theology. It is the belief that, despite the challenges and struggles we face in this world, there is always reason to remain hopeful because of the promises of God. In a post-truth era, where lies and deception seem to be prevalent, it can be easy to lose hope and feel overwhelmed by the darkness that surrounds us.

However, as Orthodox Christians, we are called to trust in God's promises and hold onto hope. One of the key teachings of the Orthodox Church is the belief in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This event is seen as the ultimate expression of hope, as it demonstrates the triumph of light over darkness, life over death, and truth over falsehood. The resurrection assures us that no matter how bleak the circumstances may seem, there is always the possibility of renewal and transformation. As we live in a world where truth is often obscured and distorted, the resurrection serves as a beacon of hope, offering us a glimpse of the ultimate victory that awaits us.

In the Orthodox Christian tradition, hope is closely connected to faith and love. We are called to have faith in God's promises and to trust that He is always working for our good, even when we cannot see it. This faith is not blind, but is grounded in the knowledge of God's love for us and His desire for our ultimate well-being. It is a faith that enables us to see beyond the darkness of this world and to believe in the possibility of a brighter future.

Hope also requires love. As the apostle Paul writes in his letter to the Corinthians, "And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love" (1 Corinthians 13:13). Love is the foundation of our hope, as it is through love that we are able to see the potential for goodness and beauty in the world. Love enables us to look beyond the hatred and division that characterize our society and to believe in the possibility of reconciliation and healing. It is love that gives us the strength to persevere in the face of adversity and to hold onto hope even when all seems lost.

In a post-truth era, where lies and deception seem to be rampant, it can be easy to lose sight of hope. The constant barrage of false information and distorted narratives can make it difficult to discern the truth and to trust in the promises of God. However, as Orthodox Christians, we are called to be a light in the darkness, to bear witness to the truth and to hold onto hope even in the face of uncertainty and confusion. It is our faith in God's promises and our love for His creation that sustains us in these challenging times and enables us to remain hopeful in the midst of chaos.

One of the key teachings of Orthodox Christianity is the concept of theosis, or the process of becoming more like God. This process is one of growth and transformation, as we strive to align our will with God's will and to live according to His commandments. Theosis is a journey towards union with God, in which we become more and more like Him in our thoughts, words, and actions. This process of transformation is a source of hope, as it reminds us that we are not alone in our struggles and that God is always working for our ultimate good.

Theosis is also a reminder of the ultimate goal of our existence, which is to be united with God in love and communion. This union is the fulfillment of our hope, as it is the realization of our deepest longings and desires. In a post-truth era, where superficiality and materialism often prevail, the concept of theosis offers us a vision of a higher reality, where truth, love, and beauty reign supreme. It is a vision that reminds us of the transient nature of this world and points us towards the eternal Kingdom of God, where all things will be made new.

In the Orthodox Christian tradition, hope is not a passive feeling, but an active commitment to trust in God and to work for His Kingdom. It is a hope that is grounded in the knowledge of God's faithfulness and His promises, and that compels us to live according to His will. This hope is a source of strength and courage, enabling us to face the challenges of this world with resilience and perseverance. It is a hope that empowers us to be agents of change and transformation, bringing the light of Christ into the darkest corners of our society.

As Orthodox Christians, we are called to be witnesses

to the truth and to be bearers of hope in a world that is often characterized by cynicism and despair. We are called to proclaim the message of the resurrection, to remind others of the ultimate victory that awaits us, and to inspire them to hold onto hope even in the face of adversity. It is our faith in the promises of God and our love for His creation that sustains us in these challenging times and enables us to remain hopeful in the midst of uncertainty and confusion.

Finally, hope is a central tenet of Orthodox Christian theology. It is the belief that, despite the challenges and struggles we face in this world, there is always reason to remain hopeful because of the promises of God. In a post-truth era, where lies and deception seem to be prevalent, it is more important than ever for us to hold onto hope and to trust in God's faithfulness. So if you feel like you are running out of breath and the world is causing you to have great anxiety remember who you are in God's plan.

As Orthodox Christians, we are called to be beacons of light in the darkness, to bear witness to the truth, and to inspire others to believe in the possibility of a brighter future. May we always remember that our hope is not in the things of this world, but in the promises of God, who is faithful and true.

<https://myocn.net/how-do-i-live-my-life-in-the-post-truth-era/>

+++ +++ +++

LIVING THE ORTHODOX FAITH

PARTICIPATION IN THE DIVINE LITURGY*

by Father Lucas Christensen

What does participation in worship look like for the people, for the laity?

In the liturgical order of Christian worship, participation is effected by engaging in the liturgical ministry proper to one's specific order.¹ The orders whose liturgical ministry are immediately obvious are the three major orders of clergy, followed by the minor orders,² especially the cantors.³ These are not, however, the numerical majority of liturgical ministers in Christian worship:⁴ the order of the People⁵ is a distinct and important liturgical order with its own ministry. A given liturgical ministry has its proper activity within the tapestry of Christian

worship, and usually has its proper spatial situation within sacred architecture. Thus, the bishop has the throne⁶ and the place before the altar, the presbyters have the bench of the synthronon next to the bishop's throne as well as the places around the altar, the deacons have the place beside the bishop, the cantors have the analogia (cantors' stands), and the people have the nave. It must be noted that, unfortunate developments in contemporary church architecture notwithstanding, the nave is not an auditorium for a theatre or a concert hall—it is a proper, active ritual space and it is considered the analogue to the Holy Place of the Tabernacle/Temple wherein the priests ritually offered prayers to God. Within each order's ritual space that order fulfills its proper liturgical ministry: the bishop presides; the presbyters assist the bishop (and preside in the bishop's absence); the deacons assist the bishop and presbyters, and they call the people and clergy to prayer and ritual performance; the cantors sing; AND THE PEOPLE PRAY.⁷

If we examine the text of the services, the People are constantly being directed by the deacons to their proper liturgical ministry—that of prayer. What does this look like? The very first thing that happens in the received practice of the Orthodox Christian Divine Liturgy⁸ following the opening blessing is that the deacon (or presbyter if there is no deacon) calls the people to their liturgical ministry—he directs them to pray, and specifically for what they are meant to pray. There is a magnificent passage in Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, wherein the author gives us a beautiful example of what this ought to look like. After the ingenue has made a colossal mess of things through some bad life choices, she is in the Divine Liturgy. In response to each of the fixed petitions of the Great Litany⁹ she responds with a concrete inward prayer for that very thing—for specific family members, for rulers by name, for those she has wronged and those who have wronged her, again by name. So, following this good example, when the deacon directs the People to pray for the bishop, we should offer a concrete, specific, inward prayer for our own bishop. When he directs us to pray for our country and its leadership, we ought to inwardly offer a prayer for

them, specifically. Later in the Divine Liturgy the People are explicitly directed to pray for the Gifts that have just been set upon the altar. Shortly thereafter, the People are directed to pray for the Gifts which have been consecrated. Think about that! It is not only the presider whose liturgical ministry it is to pray for the Gifts, but it is written into the structure of the Divine Liturgy itself that the People also have, as their proper liturgical ministry, prayer over the Gifts. The fact is, if the People are not praying the petitions of prayer that they are directed to offer throughout the Divine Liturgy, THEN NO ONE IS. This is because the clergy are offering distinct, complementary, prayers at the same time, the cantors have sacrificed the ability to focus on prayer in order to sing, the deacon is making sure he is directing the People correctly (by intoning the petitions); so if the People are checked out—and this happens whether or not you phona the response, “Lord, have mercy,” which I know all too well—then nobody is actually offering these crucial prayers.

An aside, for the liturgically distracted: What about when we find ourselves fixed on a particular hymn or prayer, and we have lost the flow of the service? I am of the opinion that this is no problem at all—our worship is repetitive on purpose. On the one hand, liturgical repetition is an icon of eternity within linear time, but on the other liturgical repetition demonstrates that our participation in the timeless celestial Divine Liturgy works in the aggregate over decades of entry and re-entry. It may be that this hymn or this prayer is appropriately demanding our attention *this time*.

In summary, where does that leave us in answer to the question? Participation is, as I said above, engagement in the proper liturgical ministry of one’s order within the Church. If you are one of the People, then your liturgical ministry is to pray, particularly when directed to do so by the clergy. If there are hymns (this is especially the case at Orthros and Vespers), then you attend to those hymns and allow them to form your consciousness and the manner of your prayer. If we really attend to the prayers we are called to, we will find ourselves exhausted by the end of the Divine Liturgy—attentive prayer is taxing as we learn to practice it. We will not ask whether we

participated, we will know we absolutely did, because we spent the whole of the liturgy praying and attending, which is no small feat. And how does this manifest God’s Work for the sake of His People?¹⁰ Because, as St. Paul tells us, it is the Holy Spirit who prays through us—in this way, as vehicles of prayer for one another, the Church, and all creation the People are the instruments of God’s action for the life of the world and for its salvation.

+++

¹ Τάξις “taxis,” in the Greek, may refer both to the overall order within liturgical worship as well as an individual order of liturgical ministry.

² The three major orders are bishops (“overseers”), presbyters (“elders”), and deacons (“servants”); the minor orders still in use, depending on context, are subdeacons, taper bearers (usually called altar servers), readers (and, v.i. for cantors).

³ “Choirs” are, properly speaking, simply collective groups of cantors (defined according to function if not formal tonsure). There is no formal distinction between “singing” and “chanting” in the Church.

⁴ Although, to be realistic, at the beginning of Orthros and at other midweek services the major clergy and cantors may actually be the majority in attendance, but it’s not supposed to be this way.

⁵ Λαός τοῦ Θεοῦ, “People of God,” whence we get “laity,” which I will capitalize throughout to emphasize its use as a technical term. The word “lay” or “layman/-woman/-person” has unfortunately become corrupted in English usage, now synonymous with “amateur” at best or “ignorant” at worst. This has, it must be emphasized, nothing to do with the original meaning. In the historical and proper sense of this word as reflected in the scriptures and the writings of the Church, however, it is considered profound and powerful to be the People of God. The theologian and bishop John Zizioulas of Pergamos has famously noted that, “there is no such thing as ‘non-ordained’ persons in the Church. Baptism and especially confirmation (or chrismation) as an inseparable aspect of the mystery of Christian initiation involves a ‘laying on of hands,’” in his seminal work, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (Crestwood: St.

Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1985), 215–216.

⁶ His proper throne is at the apex of the apse, the easternmost point of the altar area (see Revelation chs 4-5, which also describes the synthronon of the presbyters); in the usage of the Great Church of Constantinople he also has a secondary throne near the iconostasion on the south side.

⁷ Do the People sing, too? This is a really hotly-contested question; how much did the people actually sing before the modern period? It is hard to say. Suffice it to say that in contemporary practice it depends on context. Theologically, it is neither necessary for the People to sing aloud, nor is there anything wrong if they do. From a Ritual perspective, there are arguments to be made for the benefits of the People singing at least the fixed portions of the services and well-known hymns, so long as it is not a distraction to inward prayer which, I argue, is the fundamental liturgical ministry proper to the People. Further, it is because of this ministry of specific prayers, prompted by the text of Divine Liturgy itself, that it is not appropriate to focus on the Jesus Prayer during the Divine Liturgy. It is not that the Jesus Prayer or its practice is somehow inimical to worship, but because the action of prayer is meant to be directed toward the promptings of the service itself. (A minor point, but if one practices the Jesus Prayer as it is meant to be done, throughout one’s day, it will become self-activating even as one is focused on the petitions of the Divine Liturgy anyway, so there is no need to direct one’s attention to it during the Divine Liturgy in any case.)

⁸ I have been referring to ‘received practice’ because earlier in the life of the Divine Liturgies of Basil and Chrysostom this litany used to come later in the service; it moved to the beginning after a period of development.

⁹ See here, labeled “The Litany of Peace or Great Litany” <https://www.goarch.org/.../the-divine-liturgy-of-saint...>

¹⁰ This phrase is the actual meaning of “Divine Liturgy,” as opposed to the errant folk etymology, “work of the people”

+++ +++ +++

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

+++

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

+++

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

+++ +++ +++

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.

+++ +++ +++

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.

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.

+++ +++ +++

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*)

Glorify 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!

+++ +++ +++

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

+++ +++ +++

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

+++ +++ +++

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*)

+++ +++ +++

STEWARDSHIP SNIPPET

TIME, TALENT, AND TREASURES PARISH STEWARDSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

+++ +++ +++

*** **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!

+++

** **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.

+++

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.

+++

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)

+++ +++ +++

**** 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!

+++ +++ +++

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.

+++ +++ +++

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.

+++ +++ +++



+++ +++ +++

THIRD HOUR

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

July 21: _____?
July 28: _____?
August 4: _____?

+++ +++ +++

Stewardship of Treasure Guide

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

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

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

+++ +++ +++

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.

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.

+++

“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

+++ +++ +++

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*

+++ +++ +++

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.

+++ +++ +++

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, David, Donna, George, *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.*

+++ +++ +++

*** **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.*

+++ +++ +++

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!

+++ +++ +++

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!

+++ +++ +++

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

+++ +++ +++

For those preparing for Marriage...

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

+++ +++ +++

July Anniversaries:

Fred & Juliana Anton (7/20/63)

Alexei & Patrick Wertz (7/24/21)

...through the prayers of St. Nicholas Planas

+++ +++ +++

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

+++ +++ +++

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

+++ +++ +++

For the souls of the newly departed...

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

+++ +++ +++

* 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.*

+++ +++ +++

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.

+++ +++ +++

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.

+++ +++ +++

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.

+++ +++ +++



+++ +++ +++

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.

+++ +++ +++

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.

+++ +++ +++