

“THE WEEKLY FORERUNNER” *Our Parish Bulletin*

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

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR GUESTS!

Christ is Born! (*responded with: Glory Him!*)

Christos Raždajetsja! (*Slavite Jehu!*) 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, JANUARY 12, 2025

vol. X

29th Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday after Nativity and before Theophany

Sunday of the Holy Ancestors (*Righteous Joseph the Betrothed, Holy Righteous David the King, and James the Brother of the Lord*)

Monthly Memorial (Panachida) for Paňi +Emily Molchany (28-year), +Dorothy Martin (140-yr), Mother Alexandra (34-yr), +Father Michael Shuster (5-yr), +John Mirilovich (22-yr), +Stephen Teplica (5-yr), +Melanie Kurtz (5-yr), +Andrew Wensel (34-yr), Paňi +Patricia Patrick (6-yr)

take down the Manger Scene after Coffee Social

~~canceled: Sr. ACRY Meeting~~

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FAST FREE until the eve of Theophany
(*Sviatki – “Holy Days”*)

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MONDAY, JANUARY 13

Leavetaking (*Apodosis*) of the Nativity of Christ
No Vespers Scheduled

TUESDAY, JANUARY 14

FEAST OF THE CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD
FEAST OF SAINT BASIL THE GREAT

~~*Canceled: 9:30 am Divine Liturgy*~~

FRIDAY, JANUARY 17

9:30 am Royal Hours of Theophany

SATURDAY, JANUARY 18 ## STRICT FAST DAY

~~*Canceled: 2nd Holy Night Supper*~~

6:30 pm Great Compline (Velikij Povečerije)

Vigil Service with the Great Blessing of Water

SUNDAY, JANUARY 19, 2025

vol. X

FEAST OF THE THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD

30th Sunday after Pentecost; Tone 5

9:15 am Theophany Canon

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

Epistle: Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7

Gospel: Matthew 3:13-17

Liturgical Color: **Gold**

Youth Sunday

MONDAY, JANUARY 20

FEAST OF THE SYNAXIS OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

~~*Canceled: 9:30 Divine Liturgy*~~

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BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

**** Seasonal Greeting** - The greeting used amongst Orthodox Christians for the period from the Nativity until Theophany is “Christ is born!” with the response “Glorify Him!”

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***** 2024 Summary** – If you would like a statement of your 2024 SJB Donation Summary, please contact Rich Mirilovich at 412-523-1848 or jrmrsqrd@gmail.com.

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**** Thank You** to everyone who brought items in for our Nativity Pot-Luck community meal!

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**** Fast-Free Period** – There is rejoicing in the celebration of the Birth of Christ! The Church reminds us of this as no fasting is required from **January 7th until January 17th**. We fasted - now we feast (*in moderation*). This is a time of joy when the Christ-Child, our Savior, is Born! Enjoy!

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**** Framed Icons** – Please consider framing your previous church calendar tops: cut them out, use a 5x7 frame, and hang them on your walls. Each year you can add an icon to another room in your home. This is also a nice project to do with our youth!

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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

OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD

JANUARY 5

Stewardship Offerings:	\$ 195
Candle Stewardship:	\$ 90
Envelope Stewardship:	\$ 565
Community Outreach:	\$ 5

Total Collections: **\$ 855**

Capital Improvement Fund: **\$ 0**

Participating Souls - Sunday Liturgy: 38

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JANUARY 7

Stewardship Offerings:	\$ 681
Candle Stewardship:	\$ 299
Envelope Stewardship:	\$ 2950

Total Collections: **\$ 3930**

Capital Improvement Fund: **\$ 23**

Participating Souls - Monday Vigil: 41

Nativity Liturgy: 68

Weekly Candle Intentions or Memorials were offered last week by the Nelson Family; Lawrence Martin; Tim Martin; Mary Jane Hudak; Rich and Renee Mirilovich; Cindy Pavilonis; Margie Sanger Petrucci; Carol and Tom Lorenzi; Melanie Paieski

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The **Eternal Lamp** was offered last week by Matthew Peifer in memory of his parents, +Jack and +Viola Peifer.. May Their Memory Be Eternal! Vičnaya Pamyat!

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**** A Carpatho-Rusyn Christmas** –



The new book, *Carpatho-Rusyn Christmas*, is a publication of the Diocesan Carpatho-Rusyn Heritage Working Group. It contains Rusyn and American Christmas Carols (Koljady) in English and Rusyn plus the text for the Holy Night Supper (Svjatyj Večer) prayer service (Velija). Cost is \$10 per book and will be available soon in our bookstore.

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TODAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Galatians 1:11-19

Paul's Vindication of His Apostleship

¹¹For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not man's gospel. ¹²For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. ¹³For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it; ¹⁴and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. ¹⁵But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, ¹⁶was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, ¹⁷nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus.

¹⁸Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. ¹⁹But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother.

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Matthew 2:13-23

The Escape to Egypt

¹³Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." ¹⁴And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, ¹⁵and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt have I called my son."

The Massacre of the Infants

¹⁶Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the wise men. ¹⁷Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:

¹⁸"A voice was heard in Ramah,
wailing and loud lamentation,

Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be consoled,
because they were no more."

The Return from Egypt

¹⁹But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, ²⁰"Rise, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." ²¹And he rose and took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. ²²But when he heard that Archelaus reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. ²³And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

LIVING THE ORTHODOX FAITH

The Tradition of the Vasilopita (with Recipe)

Source: <http://www1.antiochian.org/node/18684>

From DOWAMA St. Raphael Clergy Brotherhood

The tradition of baking and cutting a special "pita" (which can mean a loaf of bread, a cake, or even a pie) each year on January 1st is observed in honor of our holy father Basil the Great, archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia-- hence its name "Vasilopita" meaning "St. Basil's Bread." This tradition is observed in both parish churches and in the homes of the faithful. What is the meaning of this tradition and how did it begin?

For centuries upon centuries, parents, grandparents and godparents have related the following to Orthodox children about St. Basil and the Vasilopita. One year, during a time of terrible famine, the emperor levied a sinfully excessive tax upon the people of Caesarea. The tax was such a heavy burden upon the already impoverished people that to avoid debtors' prison each family had to relinquish its few remaining coins and pieces of jewelry, including precious family heirlooms. Learning of this injustice upon his flock, St. Basil the Great, the archbishop of Caesarea, took up his bishop's staff and the book of the holy Gospels and came to his people's defense by fearlessly calling the emperor to repentance. By God's grace, the emperor did repent! He canceled the tax and instructed his tax collectors to turn over to St. Basil all of the chests containing the coins and jewelry which had been paid as taxes by the people

of Caesarea. But now St. Basil was faced with the daunting and impossible task of returning these thousands of coins and pieces of jewelry to their rightful owners. After praying for a long time before the icons of our Master Christ and His All-Holy Mother, St. Basil had all the treasures baked into one huge pita. He then called all the townspeople to prayer at the cathedral, and, after Divine Liturgy, he blessed and cut the pita, giving a piece to each person. Miraculously, each owner received in his piece of Vasilopita his own valuables. They all joyfully returned home, giving thanks to God who had delivered them from abject poverty and to their good and holy bishop St. Basil the Great! In remembrance of that miracle wrought by God as a result of St. Basil's love and defense of his people, Orthodox Christians have observed the tradition of the Vasilopita each year on January 1st-- the date on which St. Basil reposed in the Lord in the year 379.

In some places the Vasilopita is prepared as a loaf of rich bread (like that used for Artoklasia), while in other places it takes the form of a spicy sheet cake (without frosting). But no matter what form a Vasilopita may take, they all have one thing in common-- each contains a single coin. After placing the bread dough or cake batter in the proper baking pan, the baker makes with the foil-wrapped coin the sign of the Cross over it, closes his/her eyes, and then secretly places it into the unbaked Vasilopita. After the Vasilopita is baked and cooled, it is blessed and cut following Divine Liturgy for the feast of St. Basil on January 14/1.

A SIMPLE RECIPE FOR VASILOPITA

Ingredients

- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 extra-large eggs
- Grated rind of 2 large oranges
- Grated rind of 2 large lemons
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed/powdered sour cherry pits (*Arabic* mahleb, *Greek* makhlepi)
- 2 teaspoons crushed/powdered gum mastic (*Arabic* miski, *Greek* mastikha)
- 4 cups flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 egg yolk blended with 1 tablespoon milk

- sesame seeds
- blanched almonds
- a clean coin wrapped in silver or gold foil

Preparation

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Thoroughly butter a 10-inch round spring form pan.
2. In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter until it is light and fluffy. Beat in the sugar and beat until the mixture is light. Beat in the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in the orange and lemon rinds, and the crushed/powdered sour cherry pits and gum mastic.
3. In a separate bowl, sift together three cups of the flour, the baking powder and salt.
4. With the mixer on low speed, gradually beat in the dry mixture alternately with the milk. The batter will be very thick. Using a wooden spoon, gradually blend in the remaining flour, beating well until completely smooth.
5. Spread the batter into the pan, press the coin into the dough until it is completely covered (don't let anyone see where you place it!), and then smooth the top. Brush the top evenly with the egg and milk mixture and sprinkle with sesame seeds. Gently press the blanched almonds into the top to make a Cross and spell out the date of the new year.
6. Bake for 45 minutes, until golden brown (if it browns too quickly, cover the top with aluminum foil). Cool in the pan for 15 minutes before removing from spring form and thoroughly cool before slicing.

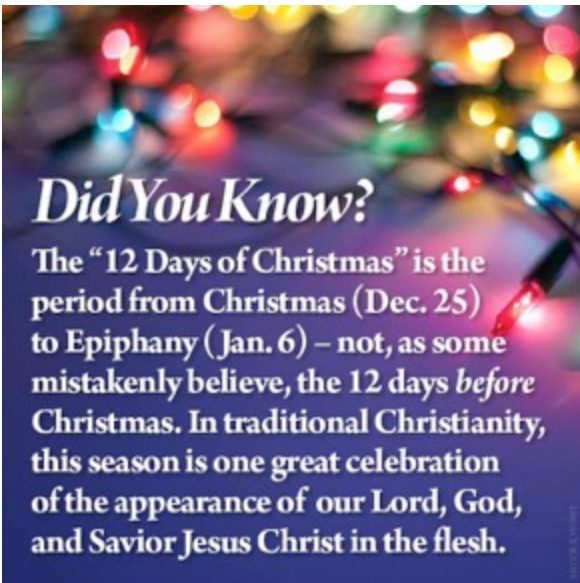
PRAYER CORNER

For the Health of... Felix, Bella, Reed, Maria O., Cheryl, Christina, Carol, Daniel, Elizabeth, Robert, Matthew, David, Suzanne, William, Boyd, Millicent, Barbara, Paul, Robert, Kelly, Juliana, Fredrick, Kenneth, and Michael ...*through the prayers of St. Nectarios the Wonderworker; St. Luke, the Surgeon; and St. Panteleimon, the Healer*

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For the souls of the newly departed... +George Lavra (1/11), +Warren Hern, +Michael Miklos, the Priest (1/3), +Norman Teklinsky, Jr. (12/2), +Ralph Parks (12/2) ...*May the Lord God grant them blessed repose where there is no pain sorrow or mourning. May they be Eternal in God's Memory!*

ONLINE BONUSES



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

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ADDITIONAL BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

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COFFEE SOCIAL STEWARDS

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

January 19: Sr. ACRY

January 26: _____?

February 2: _____?

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**** Random Tidbits...** Father Dave 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 (Sacrament) of Holy Anointing (Unction) to be fully prepared.

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

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

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

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Calendar - Future Services are updated online at:

www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar

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

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“Code” for reading the bulletin:

*** = new news ** = 2nd time in the bulletin

* = at least the 3rd time in the bulletin

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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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2024-25 SJB PARISH COUNCIL OFFICERS

President: Lawrence Martin

Vice-President: Elizabeth Radomsky

Treasurer: Timothy Martin, Reader

Financial Secretary: Rich Mirilovich

Recording Secretary: Gina Fall

Chief Auditor: Robert Fall

Auditors: Subdeacon Ryan Ferko,

John Kirish, Kimberly Opsitos,

Matthew Opsitos, and Kathy Schmack

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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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CHURCH BUILDING UPDATE

Here is a brief update from the past few weeks:

✘ * The building committee and Parish Council continue to discuss our plan of action going forward with work in the church proper. Please be patient with us! Also, remember that for a project like the one that we are undertaking, work goes top down so the ceiling and walls will be done before the floor. As mentioned, please be patient with us!

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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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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%	Tithe 9%	Upper Range Giving 8%	Upper Range Giving 7%	Middle Range Giving 6%	Middle Range Giving 5%	Middle Range Giving 4%	Lower Range Giving 3%	Lower Range Giving 2%	Lower Range Giving 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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A Prayer of Stewardship

Lord Jesus Christ, You are the good steward, who redeemed Adam and Eve of their failed stewardship by offering Yourself for the life of the world. You did teach us in the feeding of the multitudes that whatever we give to God is returned to us multiplied. You did praise those good and faithful servants in the parable of the talents who returned to the Master their gifts. So help us to learn the joy of stewardship, remembering that everything we have comes from You and belongs to You. We know, Lord, that we often live in fear of the future and insecurity. Help us to remember the lilies of the field and so to trust in Your providence. Grant to us a cheerful and generous spirit. Enkindle in the hearts of all Your people a zealous love for You. For You are the Good Steward, and to You we give thanks, praise and glory, together with Your Father and Your all holy good and life-giving Spirit now and ever and onto the ages of ages. Amen.

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STEWARDSHIP SNIPPET



TIME, TALENT, AND TREASURES

*** **STEWARDS**, translated from the Greek word *oikonomos*, means *a caretaker, a faithful manager of all of God's gifts*. As Stewards, each of us are called upon to respond to God's gifts through offering our

gifts of time, talent and treasure. This is our form of supporting our parish and it leaves us with the question, "How will I respond to God's gifts this year?" Our gifts represent who we are and how we care about God and His Church. How can we live with the framework of being a caretaker of the blessings God gives us?

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PARISH STEWARDSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

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*** **ACRY Meeting** – The next meeting will be this **Sunday, January 12**, following the Coffee Social.

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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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Why Should I Join the Local ACRY?

The ACRY is an Orthodox Christian family fellowship dedicated to the purpose of encouraging spiritual growth through charitable and apostolic missionary works, prayer and fellowship for the Glory of God and the building up of the Church and our Diocese. The local ACRY focuses on outreach to the community in various forms and fellowship within. This could be a fundraiser or family event at the church grounds to introduce people to our parish, or the volunteering of our time to help support a community event. In addition to these, the ACRY has the opportunity to branch out and meet other members of our diocesan ACRY community through deanery and nation events and partake in outreach at a broader level.

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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 (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 its ministries, outreach, and general bill paying, your generosity and stewardship is needed.

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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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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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JAN. COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY



This month, through the efforts of our Sr. ACRY, we will be collecting donations for the **Orthodox Christian Network**. (This is the site that Father uses to get the "Children's Word" that is distributed each week.) The Orthodox Christian Network (OCN) is an official agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America. **MyOCN is YourOCN!** Visit www.myocn.net to see the variety of materials they provide online! *Thank you in advance for your prayers and offerings this month!*

LIVING THE ORTHODOX FAITH

Why a Virgin Birth?

By Bishop Kallistos Ware: The Orthodox Way

"In the New Testament it is clearly stated that Jesus Christ's mother was a virgin (Matthew 1:18,23,25). Our Lord has an eternal Father in heaven, but no father on earth. He was begotten outside time from the Father without a mother, and he was begotten within time from the Mother without a father. This belief in the Virgin Birth does not, however, in any way detract from the fullness of Christ's humanity. Although the Mother was a virgin, yet there was a real human birth of a genuinely human baby.

Yet why, we ask, should his birth as a man have taken this special form? To this it may be answered that the mother's virginity serves as a "sign" of the Son's uniqueness. This it does in three closely connected ways:

First, the fact that Christ has no earthly father means that he points always beyond his situation in space and time to his heavenly and eternal origin. Mary's child is truly man, but he is not only man; he is within history but also above history. His birth from a virgin emphasizes that, while immanent, he is also transcendent; although completely man, he is also perfect God.

Secondly, the fact that Christ's Mother was a virgin indicates that his birth is to be ascribed in a unique manner to the divine initiative. Although he is fully human, his birth was not the result of sexual union between man and woman, but it was in a special way the direct work of God.

Thirdly, Christ's birth from a virgin underlines that the Incarnation did not involve the coming into being of a new person. When a child is born from two human parents in the usual fashion, a new person begins to exist. But the person of the incarnate Christ is none other than the second person of the Holy Trinity. At Christ's birth, therefore, no new person came into existence, but the preexistent person of the Son of God now began to live according to a human as well as a divine mode of being. So the Virgin Birth reflects Christ's eternal preexistence."

FEAST DAY FEATURES OF THE MONTH

KONDAK HYMNS OF THE FEASTS:

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Feast Of The Nativity According To The Flesh Of Our Lord, God And Saviour Jesus Christ.

Commemorated on January 7 / December 25

The Virgin today gives birth to the highest Being; and the earth provides the Inaccessible One with a cave. The angels with the shepherds glorify Him; the Wise Men journey with the star, because for our sake is born a little Child, the Pre-Eternal God.

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Synaxis (Sobor-Assemblage) Of The Most Holy Theotokos, Mother Of God

Commemorated on January 8 / December 26

He Who before the morning star was begotten without mother of the Father, is today without father made flesh of you upon earth. A star announces the good tidings to the Magi, while angels with shepherds sing the praises of your undefiled child-bearing, O you who are full of grace.

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Feast of the Circumcision of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Commemorated on January 14 / 1

The Lord of All endures circumcision and His goodness purifies the sins of men and grants salvation to the world today. Therefore, Basil the priest and torchbearer of the Creator, the divine mystic of Christ, rejoices on high.

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Feast of the Holy Theophany of Our Lord, God, and Saviour Jesus Christ (Baptism of the Lord)

Commemorated on January 19 / 6

You have appeared today to the inhabited earth, and Your light, O Lord, has been marked upon us, who with knowledge sing Your praise. You have come, You are made manifest, the Light that no man can approach.

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Synaxis Of The Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner And Baptist, John

Commemorated on January 20 / 7

Your presence in the flesh terrified the Jordan River,

and it reversed its course from fear. John, hesitated in fear, to baptize You even though it was foretold by the prophets. The angels were overtaken with wonder when they saw You being baptized as a Man. All those who were in darkness, enlightened, sang praises to You, O Lord, Who appeared and shed Your Light upon all.

MONTHLY SCHEDULE

SUNDAY, JANUARY 5, 2025 #NATIVITYFAST

Sunday before the Nativity of our Lord
Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ
Sunday of the Holy Fathers
9:15 am Nativity Canon & Carols (*Koljady*)
9:30 am Divine Liturgy
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MONDAY, JANUARY 6 #NATIVITYFAST

A Day of Strict Fasting
Canceled: 9:30 Royal Hours of Nativity
7:00 pm Great Compline (Velikij Povečerije)
Vigil of the Nativity of our Lord

TUESDAY, JANUARY 7

FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD
9:15 am Nativity Canon & Carols (*Koljady*)
9:30 am Festal Divine Liturgy
Parish Family Photo
Nativity Pot-Luck Meal
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FAST FREE until the eve of Theophany
(Sviatki – “Holy Days”)

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8 – 2ND DAY OF CHRISTMAS

FEAST OF THE SYNAXIS OF THE THEOTOKOS

THURSDAY, JANUARY 9 – 3RD DAY OF CHRISTMAS

FEAST OF SAINT STEPHEN
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SUNDAY, JANUARY 12 #NATIVITYFAST

Sunday after Nativity and before Theophany
Sunday of the Holy Ancestors (*Righteous Joseph the Betrothed, Holy Righteous David the King, and James the Brother of the Lord*)
9:15 am Nativity Canon & Carols (*Koljady*)
9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Monthly Memorial (Panachida)
Sr. ACRY Meeting

MONDAY, JANUARY 13

Leavetaking (*Apodosis*) of the Nativity of Christ
No Vespers Scheduled

TUESDAY, JANUARY 14

FEAST OF THE CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD
FEAST OF SAINT BASIL THE GREAT
9:20 am Theophany Canon
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
take down the Manger Scene after Coffee Social

FRIDAY, JANUARY 17

9:30 am Royal Hours of Theophany

SATURDAY, JANUARY 18 ## STRICT FAST DAY

5:00 pm 2nd Holy Night Supper
6:30 pm Great Compline (Velikij Povečerije)
Vigil Service with the Great Blessing of Water
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SUNDAY, JANUARY 19

FEAST OF THE THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD
9:20 am Theophany Canon
9:30 Divine Liturgy
Youth Sunday

MONDAY, JANUARY 20

FEAST OF THE SYNAXIS OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
9:30 Divine Liturgy

?? WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22 (OR 29TH)

6:30 pm Parastas (Memorial) for aborted babies
7:00 pm Exploring Orthodox 101
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SUNDAY, JANUARY 26

9:20 Theophany Canon
9:30 Divine Liturgy

?? WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29 (OR 22ND)

6:30 pm Parastas (Memorial) for aborted babies
7:00 pm Exploring Orthodox 101
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Spiritual Vitamin:

“Such splendor of heavenly glory was revealed to the simple shepherds of Bethlehem. Up until then, such glory could only be seen by chosen individuals, and this is the first instance that we find in Holy Scripture of a whole group of mortal men clearly seeing and hearing the immortal, angelic host. This is a sign that, with Christ’s coming to earth, heaven is wide open to all who seek it in purity of heart.”
+St. Nikolai Velimirovich

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SPIRITUAL CONSIDERATIONS

Father is available to meet Monday thru Friday from 8:30am to 3:30pm 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

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 Proskomedion (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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Our Parish Prayer List for Special Intentions *

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A Prayer For The Sick: O Christ, You alone are prompt to defend us; quickly visit Your suffering servant(s) **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., Stephanie B, Kevin, 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., 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). If one of your special days is missing – please let Fr Dave know ASAP. See Fr. Dave with any questions.

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January NAMEDAYS:

Juliana Anton – Virgin-martyr Juliana of Nicomedia (1/3)

Stephen Brancho - Holy Protomartyr & Archdeacon Stephen (1/9)

Ashley Wertz Andrekovich - Venerable Anthony the Great (1/30)

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

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January BIRTHDAYS:

Carol Lorenzi (1/2), Joshua Mainolfi (1/3), Elizabeth

Fucsko (1/7), Jason Shelpman (1/9), Pañi Kathy Fester (1/13), Fred G. Anton (1/16), Pañi Fedornock (1/16), *Father's Godson*, Alex Schreiber (1/18),

Father's Goddaughter, Jenna Schreiber (1/18), Kevynn Christina Anton (1/19), Nicholas Ditmore (1/19), Fr Joseph Fester (1/19), Katherine Schrmack (1/22), *Father's niece*, Abigeal Verbanick (1/22), Thomas Lorenzi (1/23), Mary Ann Brady (1/26), Fr Frank Miloro (1/26), Allison Kretchek (1/29)

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

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For our Catechumens & Inquirers...

Raymond, Kathryn, Maxwell, Barbara, Tyler ...through the prayers of St. Paul the Apostle, St. Mary Magdalene, & St. John Maximovitch.

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For those preparing for Marriage...

Allison & Michael ...through the prayers of Sts. Adrian & Natalia and all Holy Martyrs.

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January Anniversaries:

...through the prayers of St. Nicholas Planas

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For Pregnant Mothers...

Mallory (*due in March*), Lindsay (*April*)

...through the prayers of St. Anna, the mother of the Theotokos, and St. Irene Chrysovalantou.

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

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

THE CANON OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST

Ode 1: Christ is born, glorify him! Christ comes from heaven, meet Him! Christ is an earth, be exalted! O all the earth, sing to the Lord, and sing praises in gladness, all people, for He has been glorified.

Ode 3: To the Son Who was begotten of the Father without change before all ages, and in the last times was without seed made flesh of the Virgin, to Christ our God, let us cry aloud: You have raised up our horn, holy are You, O Lord!

Ode 4: Rod of the root of Jesse, and flower that blossomed from his stem, O Christ, You have sprung forth from the Virgin. From the mountain overshadowed by the forest You came, made flesh for her that knew not wedlock, O God not formed from matter. Glory to Your power O Lord!

Ode 5: As You are God of Peace and Father of mercies, You have sent to us Your Angel of Great Counsel, granting unto us peace. So are we guided towards the light of the knowledge of God. And

watching by night, we glorify You, O Lover of mankind.

Ode 6: The sea monster spat forth Jonah as it had received him, like a babe from the womb: while the Word, having dwelt in the Virgin and taken flesh: came forth from her yet kept her undefiled. For being Himself not subject to decay. He preserved His Mother free from harm.

Ode 7: Scorning the impious decree, the three children brought up together in godliness feared not the threat of fire: but standing in the midst of the flame they sang: "O God of our fathers, blessed are You!"

Ode 8: The furnace moist with dew was the image of a wonder past nature. For it burned not the children whom it had received, even as the fire of the Godhead consumed not the Virgin's womb into which it had descended. Therefore in praise, let us sing: let the whole creation bless the Lord, and exalt Him above all forever.

Ode 9: I behold a strange and wonderful mystery. The cave has become heaven, the throne of the Cherubim, the Virgin. The manger a noble place where lies Christ our God Who cannot be contained. Let us praise Him in song and magnify You!

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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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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