

“THE WEEKLY FORERUNNER” *Our Parish Bulletin*

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

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

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A WARM WELCOME TO OUR GUESTS! Glory 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 pray for 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, MARCH 9, 2025 vol. X
TRIUMPH OF ORTHODOXY
Procession of Icons (*Bring an icon to church*)
Panachida - *Monthly Memorial*
4:30 pm Sunday of Orthodoxy at Holy Cross
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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12 #TheGreatFast
7:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts at
St. Alexander Nevsky OCA Cathedral
(1600 Guyton Rd., Allison Park)
with community meal following

THURSDAY, MARCH 13 #TheGreatFast
9:30 – 11:30 am church open for personal prayer

FRIDAY, MARCH 14 #TheGreatFast
6:30 pm Paraklis to the Theotokos
ALL-SOUL’S SATURDAY (*Zadušna Subota*),
MARCH 15 #TheGreatFast
9:30 am Divine Liturgy & Panachida (*2nd of 5*)
11 am – 1 pm Confessions Offered
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SUNDAY, MARCH 16 #TheGreatFast
ST. GREGORY PALAMAS
9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 pm Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
with responses sung by Tzar Lazar Male Choir
Tone 5; Liturgical Color: **Purple**
Youth Sunday
4:00 pm Deanery Lenten Mission in Rankin

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19 #TheGreatFast
6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts at SJB

(*hosting the other two parishes*)
with community meal following
FRIDAY, MARCH 21 #TheGreatFast
6:30 pm Akathist Hymn to the Passion of our Lord
ALL-SOUL’S SATURDAY (*Zadušna Subota*),
MARCH 22 #TheGreatFast
9:30 am Divine Liturgy & Panachida (*3rd of 5*)
11 am – 1 pm Confessions Offered
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BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

*** **Great Lent 2025** - Our Journey To Pascha has begun! To assist the faithful in making the most of this holy season, additional resources have been added to our Diocesan Website at:
www.acrod.org/orthodox-christianity/articles/lent/
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*** **Church School** – Our Spring Church School program will begin NEXT week, **Sunday, March 16**. Please contact Fr. Dave if your child will or will not be at church next week.
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** **Guest Choir** – The Tzar Lazar Orthodox Male Choir will sing the responses to the Divine Liturgy on **Sunday, March 16**. This 20-member choir has been in the Greater Pittsburgh area for decades and will fill the church with inspiring beautiful harmonies.
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OUR 2025 JOURNEY TO PASCHA

Created by Fr. Jonathan Bannon

SUNDAYS

THEMES & READINGS

HOW TO PARTICIPATE:

1st Sunday of Lent
MARCH 9th



GREAT LENT BEGINS WITH FORGIVENESS VESPERS

SUNDAY of ORTHODOXY

Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2
Gospel: John 1:43-51

Bring an icon to church
for a procession.

2nd Sunday of Lent
MARCH 16th



ST GREGORY PALAMAS

Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3
Gospel: Mark 2:1-12

Bring a prayer rope to be
blessed today!
Use it and pray the Jesus Prayer
each day this week.

*** **Collection Project** - It's about that time for spring cleaning! If you have any **books, DVDs, or puzzles** that you can pass on, our Sr. ACRY is collecting them to bring to low income assisted living facilities in the area. (*A bin is in the vestibule.*) We want to freshen up their activity areas, and it will freshen up your home space at the same time - win, win! Thank you so much for your donations!

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*** **Flower Wreath for the Holy Cross** – If you are interested in making the flower wreath for the Holy Cross for **Sunday, March 23rd**, please let Fr. Dave know. (Or if you are interested in learning how...)

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*** **Palms & Pussywillows** – We are collecting in the Church Hall our Palms and Pussywillows from prior years. These will not be simply thrown away, but they will respectfully disposed of. *Please bring yours in so that your home will be ready for the new ones in a few weeks!* **ALSO** – If You Have Pussywillow Trees At Home – Check To See If They Are Ready To Harvest!!

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** **Soups Needed** – At last week’s Parish Council meeting it was decided that we will have a variety of soups when we host the Deanery Lenten Mission on **Sunday, March 23**. If you would be interested in making a soup, please contact Liz R. or Kathy S.

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*** **Scout Sunday** – We will recognize and honor our youth who are in Scouting on **Sunday, March 23** (*rescheduled*).

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*** **A Note About The Mystery Of Confession** - They will be heard in front of the Icon of Christ. Confessions will be heard *following every* service, from **11am – 1pm** on Saturdays during Great Lent, and at other times by appointment: please contact Fr. Dave to arrange this. If you have a regular Spiritual Father, or wish to go to another Orthodox priest to have your confession heard, no problem! but please let Fr. Dave know. Do not wait to plan for your confession! Confessions will only be heard *through Holy Wednesday*.

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*** **Suggested Guidelines For The Great Fast (Great Lent):** We are called to increase our *Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving* during this time... A general guideline for the Great Fast is this: Try to do more than last year. Please reach out to Fr. Dave if you have questions about this important fasting period that we are blessed with. This is an opportunity, not an obligation. May our journey to Pascha be a spiritually beautiful one!

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*** **Read the Psalter this Lent** - Our diocese has shared a calendar for reading the Book of Psalms throughout the Great Fast. This is a wonderful way to increase our prayer during this time! The Book of Psalms in our Orthodox Study Bible is perfect to use for this occasion. If you wish, you can search *Psalter* or *Psalms* at <https://store.ancientfaith.com/> for other wonderful translations to use. Copies of the schedule are available from Fr. Dave.

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**** Very Rev. Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko 10th Anniversary of his Falling Asleep** - Join us on **Saturday, March 22** at **Transfiguration Monastery** (321 Monastery Ln, Ellwood City, PA 16117) for:

9:30am Divine Liturgy followed by Memorial Service
12 noon - Memorial Luncheon

1:30pm Reflections and Remarks (Serge Schmemmann and V.Rev. Alexander Garklavs)

3:30pm Great Vespers with Procession of the Cross
See flyer in hall for details. (Services and Reflections will be streamed on our YouTube Channel)

www.orthodoxmonasteryellwoodcity.org/

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*** Presanctified Liturgies** – The schedule for the Wednesday services will be similar to last year. With the growing Orthodox Christian presence in the area, instead of each week having the service here, we will take two weeks and pray at our sister Orthodox Parishes in the North Hills! In the desire to provide a greater fellowship among our parishes and communities, we will be sharing in three Wednesday Presanctified Liturgies. Our schedule will be thus:

March 12 at * **7:00** pm at St. Alexander Nevsky OCA Cathedral (1600 Guyton Rd., Allison Park)

March 19 at **6:00 pm** at SJB with the other parishes coming to us

March 26 at * **6:30** pm at Holy Trinity GOA Church (985 Providence Blvd., Pittsburgh)

April 2 & 9 at 6:00 pm at SJB

All our parishioners are invited to attend all the services - *what a wonderful way to build Orthodox fellowship and a stronger connection among our North Hills sister parishes.* Each service will be followed by a Lenten meal. ** Please note the different times when we visit*

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***** Faith Night** – The 2025 Pgh. Pirate’s Faith Night will be on **Saturday, May 10** at 4:05pm. In years past, we had a great time going to a game together. If you are interested in organizing a parish family event at the ballpark, please contact Fr. Dave ASAP.

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“Code” for reading the bulletin:

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

* = at least the 3rd time in the bulletin

*** Deanery Lenten Mission Schedule** – All are encouraged to attend services at our sister parishes this spring. Not only is it beautiful fellowship with other Orthodox, but each church is unique and you get to see the differences first hand.

Confessions start at 3:30, Vespers at 4:00, and Fellowship Meal following

March 16 - St Michael the Archangel

146 Third Ave., **Rankin**, PA 15104

March 23 - St John the Baptist

2201 Duncan Ave., **Allison Park**

March 30 - St John the Baptist

450 Glenwood Ave., **Ambridge**, PA 15003

April 6 - St John the Baptist

211 Cable Ave., **East Pittsburgh**, PA 15112

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*** Lenten Retreat** – Save the date for the Central Region Lenten Retreat on **Saturday, April 5** starting at 10 am at St. Nicholas the Wonderworker (903 Ann St., Homestead, PA 15120)

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*** Lenten Coin Boxes** – Coin boxes are available in the vestibule to collect your spare change throughout the Great Fast for our upcoming Community Outreach (OCMC). Visit www.ocmc.org for more information. *“Let them do good, that they may be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share” (1 Tim 6:18)*

SUGGESTED LENTEN READINGS

The following suggested readings for the Great Fast are available in our Bookstore for a reasonable donation (about 50% off).

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***** Adults: Face to Face: Knowing God Beyond Our Shame** by Fr. Stephen Freeman (\$9)

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***** Youth: The Good Samaritan: A Children’s Catechism** by Fr. Michael Shanbour (\$12)

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Additional Books Are Available

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In Addition To the above books, another option is to use our Lending Library located in the Multi-Purpose Room (next to the bookstore). This is a great option **for our youth** as there are many books for them to take advantage of! If you have questions about any book – please do not hesitate to ask Fr. Dave!

*** Candy Sale** – We are selling Anderson’s Candy and the catalogs are in the church hall. Orders due date will be coming soon. * Please try and sell some! *Last year we needed to sell \$500 worth of candy to get the 30% profit from this fundraiser.* Please see Tim Martin with any questions.

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**** Registration is Open!** You can now register your child (aged 8-18) for Camp Nazareth this summer. Don’t delay! If financial assistance is needed, please let Fr. Dave know. Let’s get our kids to camp!

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*** Welcome!** to Ray and Kathy as they recently entered into the Catechumenate! May God continue to guide you in your steps on your journey! Many Years!

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CHURCH BUILDING UPDATE

Here is a brief update from the past few weeks:

✘ **** Kitchen Update** – The stainless steel wall behind the stove is almost complete! Also, LED lights have replaced the previous lighting. Pop your head in to the kitchen to see the changes.

✘ **** Hall Lights** – Speaking of LED – 16 LED lights have replaced the lights in the church hall. These lights have 3 light color options, 3 lumen options, and are dimmable.

✘ **** Church Proper** – Not much has changed in the nave of the church. Most focus of late has been on electrical upgrades, the kitchen, and the hall. *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!

OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|
| Stewardship Offerings: | \$ 327 |
| Candle Stewardship: | \$ 100 |
| Envelope Stewardship: | \$ 300 |
| Total Collections: | \$ 727 |
| Capital Improvement Fund: | \$ 235 |

Participating Souls – Sunday Liturgy:

Monday Great Canon: 6

Tuesday Great Canon: 7

Wednesday Presanctified: 22

Thursday Great Canon: 7

Friday (morning) Great Canon: 4

Weekly Candle Intentions or Memorials were offered last week by the Nelson Family; John and Barb Kirish; Lawrence Martin; Tim Martin; Rich and Renee Mirilovich; Mary Jane Hudak; Sharon Peifer; Melanie Paieski; Cindy Pavilonis

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January Financial Report:

General Stewardship = \$ 4050.64

(includes \$ 317.64 from online stewardship)

***Expenses = \$ 6507.87**

Net Loss = \$ 2457.23

Capital Improvement Fund = \$ 126

Average at Sunday Divine Liturgies: 33

**details listed on the church hall bulletin board*

Fiscal Year-to-Date Financial Report:

(September through last month)

General Stewardship = \$ 43,062

***Expenses = \$ 39,365**

Net Gain = \$ 7,748

Average at Sunday Divine Liturgies: 36

SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: *Hebrews 11:24-26, 11:32-12:2*

²⁴By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, ²⁵choosing rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. ²⁶He considered abuse suffered for the Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he looked to

the reward. ³² And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets—³³ who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. ³⁵ Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. ³⁶ Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated—³⁸ of whom the world was not worthy—wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. ³⁹ And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, ⁴⁰ since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

The Example of Jesus

12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

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Gospel: John 1:43-51

Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael

⁴³ The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. And he found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.” ⁴⁴ Now Philip was from Beth-sa’ida, the city of Andrew and Peter. ⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael, and said to him, “We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” ⁴⁶ Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” ⁴⁷ Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!” ⁴⁸ Nathanael said to him, “How do you know me?” Jesus answered him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw

you.” ⁴⁹ Nathanael answered him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” ⁵⁰ Jesus answered him, “Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these.” ⁵¹ And he said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.”

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PRAYER CORNER

For the Health of... Carlene, Jason, Denise, Gary, Lindsay, Luca, Linda, Joseph, Shawn, John, Valerie, Jon, Bella, Reed, Maria O., Cheryl, Christina, Daniel, Elizabeth, Robert, 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...

+Patricia Law (2/19)

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

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A Prayer for the Beginning of the Great Fast

O God, Hope of all the ends of the earth and of those far away at sea or in the air, Who foretold these holy days of fasting in the Law, the Prophets and the Evangelists: Grant all of us to proceed in purity along the course of the Fast, to keep the Faith undivided and to preserve Your commandments all the days of our lives.

Command an angel of peace to preserve our comings-in and goings-out for all good works, being obedient together and serving together for a perfect communion of Your Most-pure Mysteries. Accept, O Master, the bending of the knees and the fasting of Your servants, granting to them spiritual blessings, and to all of us, in

Christ Jesus our Lord, with Whom You are blessed, together with Your Most-holy, Good and Life-creating Spirit, now and ever and onto the ages of ages. Amen.

THE PRAYER OF SAINT EPHRAIM THE SYRIAN

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

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of laziness, despair, lust for power, and vain talking. + *[Prostration]*
But give to me, Your servant, the spirit of purity, humility, patience, and love.

+ *[Prostration]*

Yes, Lord and King, grant me to see my own sins, and not judge my brother, for blessed are You forever and ever. Amen.

+ *[Prostration]*

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

O God, be merciful to me, a sinner. *[bow]*

O God, cleanse me of my sins and have mercy on me. *[bow]*

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

Then the prayer again with only one prostration:

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

+ *[Prostration]*

A Prayer Of Repentance (Psalm 50/51)

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your great mercy; And according to the multitude of Your compassions, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my iniquity, And my sin is continually before me. Against You only have I sinned, And done this evil before You. That You might be justified in Your words, And prevail when You judge. For behold, I was conceived in iniquities, And in sins did my mother bear me.

For behold, You have loved truth; The hidden and secret things of Your wisdom You have made clear to me. You shall sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be made clean; You shall wash me and I shall be made whiter than snow. You shall make me to hear joy and gladness, The bones which have been humbled shall rejoice. Turn Your face away from my sins, And blot out all my iniquities.

Create a clean heart in me, O God, And renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Your presence, And take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And with Your governing Spirit establish me. I shall teach transgressors Your ways, And the ungodly shall turn back to You.

Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, who are the God of my salvation, My tongue shall rejoice in Your righteousness. O Lord, You shall open my lips, And my mouth shall declare Your praise.

For if You had desired sacrifice, I would have given it; With whole burnt offerings You shall not be pleased. A sacrifice to God is a broken spirit, A heart that is broken and humbled God will not despise. Do good, O Lord, in Your good pleasure to Zion; And let the walls of Jerusalem be built Then shall You be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with oblation and whole burnt offerings; Then shall they offer bullocks upon Your altar.

ONLINE BONUSES

Answering the question, what is the significance of Great Lent

Published on www.myocn.net by Fr. Chris Metropulos on March 3, 2025

I have been asked many times over the course of my priestly ministry, Father Chris, can you share with me the significance of Great Lent and its meaning to me in my spiritual journey? This brief article should assist in answering that question and more as we enter this sacred period of our Church calendar.

Great Lent is a significant time in the Orthodox Christian calendar, a period of reflection, repentance, and spiritual renewal. With the hustle and bustle of daily life, it can be challenging to navigate these weeks meaningfully. Here are some key areas to concentrate on during Great Lent that can help you cultivate a spiritually enriching experience amidst your busy life:

The foundation of the Lenten journey is prayer. As life becomes extraordinarily busy, it's vital to carve out intentional moments for prayer. Establish a routine, even if it means starting small. Consider beginning or ending your day with a brief prayer. The Jesus Prayer ("Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner") can be particularly helpful, as it is both simple and profound.

Additionally, read the daily scripture readings assigned for the Lenten period. Many find inspiration and guidance in the Psalms, which emphasize repentance, humility, and trust in God. Consider keeping a prayer journal to document your prayers and reflections, allowing you to track your thoughts and spiritual growth.

Fasting is a significant aspect of Great Lent. It's not merely about abstaining from certain foods but about cultivating self-control and prioritizing spiritual life over physical cravings. In our busy modern world, consider what forms of fasting resonate with you. This includes the traditional dietary restrictions (abstaining from meat and dairy) but can also extend to other areas, such as giving up certain activities or distractions, like excessive screen time or social media.

The purpose of fasting is to redirect your focus towards God and reflect on one's relationship with Him and others. Approach fasting not as a burden, but as a liberating practice that opens up space for God's grace.

Lent is a time for deep introspection and acknowledging our shortcomings. Use this period to identify persistent sins or hardships in your life and bring them before God. Regular confession is a valuable sacrament in the Orthodox faith, serving as a means of grace and reconciliation. Setting aside time to meet with a priest for confession can help cleanse your spirit and deepen your reliance on God's mercy.

When approaching confession, prepare yourself by reflecting on your actions, thoughts, and commitments. This can cultivate humility and a desire to grow closer to God, fostering a sense of accountability that can be particularly beneficial in a chaotic life.

An essential component of the Lenten journey is almsgiving and charity. Amidst a busy life, it may seem daunting to add more obligations, but acts of kindness can be integrated into your daily routine. Look for opportunities to serve those around you—perhaps through volunteering, helping a neighbor, or lending a listening ear to a friend in need.

Additionally, consider how you can support the church community or those less fortunate. Even small gestures can create a ripple effect of kindness and love, embodying the spirit of Christ's teachings and significantly impacting the world around you.

Isolation can exacerbate the chaos of life, so it's crucial to lean into the community during Lent. Engage more actively in church services, especially during Holy Week, to deepen your connection with fellow believers. Participating in church events, study groups, or prayer gatherings can bolster your spiritual journey, providing support and encouragement from others walking the same path.

Fellowship can also enhance the shared experience of sacrifice through communal fasting and acts of service. Committing to a Lenten discipline alongside others can foster accountability and deepen relationships with fellow parishioners.

In our busy lives, mindfulness is crucial to maintain spiritual focus. Regularly take a few moments

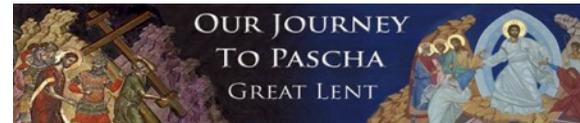
throughout your day to pause and reflect on your thoughts and intentions. This practice can help you reconnect with your spiritual objectives and maintain awareness of your spiritual state.

Consider setting aside time, perhaps weekly, to assess your Lenten journey. Journal about your experiences, noting moments of grace, struggles with fasting, or revelations in prayer. Reflecting on these experiences can be a powerful and grounding practice that enhances your overall spiritual health.

Thus my dear friends, Great Lent offers a transformative opportunity to embrace a deeper relationship with God despite the chaos of life. By concentrating on prayer, fasting, repentance, charity, community, and mindfulness, you can cultivate an enriching spiritual experience that not only enriches your faith but can also positively influence your daily life. While the world may be tumultuous, remember that every small step taken in faith contributes to a more profound journey of love, grace, and hope in Christ. Embrace this sacred time, allowing it to guide you toward spiritual renewal and peace.

...a blessed Great Lent to you.

LIVING THE ORTHODOX FAITH



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A Note About The Mystery Of Confession

Confessions will be heard in front of the Icon of Christ. Confessions will be heard *following every service*, on most Saturdays during Great Lent from **11am – 1pm**, and at other times by appointment (please contact Fr. Dave to arrange this). If you have a regular Spiritual Father, or wish to go to another Orthodox priest to have your confession heard, no problem! but please let Fr. Dave know. Do not wait to plan for your confession! Confessions before Pascha will only be heard *through Holy Wednesday*.

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SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR THE GREAT FAST (GREAT LENT):

We are called to increase our *Prayer, Fasting, and*

Almsgiving during this time...

PRAYER:

- ✘ Attend as many of the services as possible and be strengthened in community prayer.
- ✘ Come to the Mystery of Confession (*offered after every service, on most Saturdays during the Great Fast, or by appointment*).
- ✘ Approach the Chalice to receive the Holy Eucharist as often as possible.
- ✘ Also, add additional prayers to your personal *Prayer Rule* at home. (See the attached about reading the Book of Psalms during Great Lent.)

FASTING:

- ✘ The Great Fast begins tomorrow, **March 3**. This is a day of strict fasting (no meat or dairy products). Likewise, strict fast on Great & Holy Friday (4/18) and Great & Holy Saturday (4/19)
- ✘ The tradition of the Orthodox Church is a strict fast (*no meat or dairy products eaten*) by all of the faithful for the entire 40 days of the Great Fast and for all of Holy Week.
- ✘ If you cannot physically do this, adopt a fasting rule and stick to it for the duration of the Great Fast (*see Father for some guidance*). Here are a few examples:
 - a) strict fast on certain days of the week while keeping a meat fast on the others;
 - b) fast only from meat;
 - c) fast from meat for certain weeks (*Clean Week, Cross Week, and Holy Week*); or
 - d) fast from meat on Wednesdays, Fridays, and all of Holy Week (*April 18-23*).
- ✘ The more effort you put forth in your fasting, the more spiritually uplifting your Lenten Season will be!
- ✘ A minimum three (3) hour fast from all food and drink for those receiving Communion at the evening Pre-sanctified Liturgy (*the regular "midnight Fast" is called for the Liturgies of St. John Chrysostom & St. Basil the Great*)
- ✘ The sick and infirm are not bound by the fast at any time.
- ✘ Those requiring medications or certain prescribed diets are to follow their physician's instructions.

✘ Lastly, the Great Fast is not a “40 day diet program” or simply a “dietary adjustment” (or “label Lent”).

ALMSGIVING:

✘ Find a way to give more of your time, talent, and treasures – *give more of yourself to others.*

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A general guideline for the Great Fast is this:

Try to do more than last year.

Please reach out if you have questions about this important fasting period that we are blessed with. This is an opportunity, not an obligation. May our journey to Pascha be a spiritually beautiful one!

– Fr. Dave

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LIVES OF THE SAINTS

FIRST (4 C.) AND SECOND (452) DISCOVERY OF THE HEAD OF THE PROPHET, FORERUNNER AND BAPTIST JOHN

Commemorated on February 24

After the cutting off of the Head of the Prophet, ForeRunner and Baptist John (Comm. 29 August), his body was buried by disciples in the Samaritan city of Sebasteia, and the venerable head was hidden by Herodias in an unclean place. Pious Joanna, wife of king Herod's steward Chuza (there is made mention about him by the holy evangelist Luke – Lk 8: 3), secretly took the holy head and placed it into a vessel and buried it on the Mount of Olives – in one of the properties of Herod. After many years this property passed into the possession of the dignitary Innocentius, who began to build a church there. When they dug a trench for the foundation, the vessel with

the venerable head of John the Baptist was uncovered. Innocentius recognised the great holiness of it from the signs of grace occurring from it. Thus occurred the First Discovery of the Head. Innocentius preserved it with great piety, but before his own death, fearful so that the holy relic should not be abused by unbelievers, he again hid it in that same place, where it was found... Upon his death the church fell into ruin and was destroyed.

During the days of Equal-to-the-Apostles Constantine the Great (+ 337, Comm. 21 May), when the Christian faith began to flourish, the holy ForeRunner himself appeared twice unto two monks journeying to Jerusalem on pilgrimage to the holy places, and he revealed the location of his venerable head. The monks uncovered the holy relic and, placing it into a sack of camel-hair, they proceeded homewards. Along the way they encountered an unnamed potter and gave him to carry the precious burden. Not knowing what he was carrying, the potter continued on his way. But the holy ForeRunner himself appeared to him and ordered him to flee from the careless and lazy monks, together with that which was in his hands. The potter concealed himself from the monks and at home he preserved the venerable head with reverence. Before his death he sealed it into a water-carrying vessel and gave it over to his sister. From that time the venerable head was successively preserved by pious Christians, until the priest Eustathios infected with the Arian heresy – came into possession of it. He seduced a multitude of the infirm, healed by the holy head, adding abundance to the heresy. When his blasphemy was uncovered, he was compelled to flee. Having buried the holy relic in a cave, near Emessus, the heretic intended to afterwards return and again take possession of it for disseminating falsehood. But God did not permit this. Pious monks settled into the cave, and then at this place arose a monastery. In the year 452 Saint John the Baptist in a vision to the archimandrite of this monastery Marcellus indicated the place of concealment of his head. This became celebrated as the Second Discovery. The holy relic was transferred to Emessus, and later to Constantinople.

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MARCH COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

National Jr. ACRY Project

Details coming soon –

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FEAST DAY FEATURES OF THE MONTH

KONDAK HYMNS OF THE FEASTS:

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Coming Soon...

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ADDITIONAL BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

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* **31 Books of March Sale** ^{XL} – The Ancient Faith Store will most likely be offering different books for 50% off each day of the month of March! Visit the site daily (or sign up for their emails) and keep an eye out for a book that will help you along your Spiritual Journey! (Contact Fr Dave with any questions.) Visit: store.ancientfaith.com/31-books-of-march/ *If You Would Like To Buy Something For The Church Library Or If You Are Looking To Add A Couple Dollars To Your Order To Get Free Shipping, Please Call or Text Father Dave Before Ordering As He Has A Couple Suggestions That Are Small And Would Be Helpful To Our Church.*

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** **Church Messenger** – Our monthly publication of the *Church Messenger* is sent to all of our Diocesan households. IF you do not receive this, please let Fr. Dave know ASAP.

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** **Coffee Creamer** – Does your workplace use powdered coffee creamer? Please take one of the three containers that we have collected in the hall.

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** **Real-Break Fundraiser** - This May, through the grace of God and the OCF (Orthodox Christian

Fellowship), Nicholas Ditmore has been given an amazing opportunity to travel to Romania through their *Real Break Program*. In order to go on this trip, he is asking for your prayers and your consideration in donating for his trip. If you are able to make a financial donation, please leave it at the curator desk or give it directly to him. He is grateful for your support! A presentation will be shared on **March 23**.

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** **LAST CALL Food Drive** – For the month of February we will be collecting unexpired food and donations in order to make a delivery to **St. Cyril of White Lake Food Pantry on Pittsburgh's South Side**. Thank you in advance for your prayers and offerings this month! The list of food items they are looking for is available in the previous Feb. bulletins, in the online bulletin, or

stmaryorthodoxchurch.net/stcyrilfoodpantry.html

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**  **meal train** **Food Ministry at Church:**

Meal Train – when someone in our community cannot get to the grocery store or make their own meals (after a major surgery, a new baby, or for any other reason is in need), this program will help allow us to help them! Here is an example: *Someone has a major surgery and will not be able to cook for themselves for 2 weeks. They notify Father Dave of this and he sets up an account for them on this website. Someone else from the parish decides to make a big pot of soup and freeze some for the one in need. They can then either deliver the food to their house or bring it to the church on Sunday and someone else will deliver it through the week.* The idea is this: that through our stewardship we will help each other out when we are able to! Please visit: www.MealTrain.com to learn more about it. Here are some basic terms from their website:

❖ **Meal Train:** Organized meal giving around a significant life event. One meal from one person per day.

❖ **Organizer:** The person who sets up the meal train.

❖ **Recipient:** Those who will receive the meals.

❖ **Participant/Giver:** The person who will make and take a meal.

We will figure this new system out together!

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* **Fellowship Meals** - Got Soup? A small 't' tradition in many Orthodox parishes is to have soup (*or other light meal*) following the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts during the Great Fast. We will have this meal after our Wednesday evening services at our parish and when we travel to the other North Hills Orthodox parishes. A sign up sheet is in the church hall for those interested in bringing in food.

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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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COFFEE SOCIAL STEWARDS

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

March 16: (meatless) ACRY

March 23: (meatless) _____?

March 30: (meatless) _____?

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* **Make plans to go to Camp Nazareth in 2025!**

✘ May 2-4 - Sts. Joachim & Anna Seniors Retreat (age 55 and over)

✘ May 30 - June 1 - Family Camp

✘ June 1 - Family Day

✘ July 20-26 - Pgh Deanery Camping Week

✘ Aug 10-13 - Science & Nature Camp (ages 8-18)

✘ October 10-12 – CN Alumni Weekend

✘ Oct 31-Nov 2 - Young Adult Retreat (ages 18-35)

✘ November 7-9 - Fall Encounter (ages 8-18)

Please, Save the Dates and head to

339 Pew Road, Mercer, PA 16137

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** **Pittsburgh Marathon - Walk or Run with Team IOCC** - Help change lives around the world! Join us on **Saturday, May 3** at the Pittsburgh Marathon Weekend. Choose a Race as a Solo Participant or Form Your Own Team! (5K, 4-Mile Fitness Challenge, Kids Marathon, Pet Walk, Toddler Trot, Champions Mile) SIGN UP NOW AT iocc.org/pgh.

Questions? Contact Dean Stambolis at DeanStambolis@verizon.net or 412.874.9572.

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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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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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* **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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Icon of Christ's Extreme Humility

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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 Schrmack

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STEWARDSHIP SNIPPET



TIME, TALENT, AND TREASURES

*** **STEWARD**, 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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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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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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| 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 | \$90 | \$60 | \$40 | \$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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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE GREAT FAST

FORGIVENESS SUNDAY, MARCH 2

9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Rite of Forgiveness

CLEAN MONDAY, MARCH 3 #TheGreatFast

THE GREAT FAST BEGINS

A DAY OF STRICT FASTING

6:30 pm Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew
CLEAN TUESDAY, MARCH 4 #TheGreatFast

6:30 pm Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew
CLEAN WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5 #TheGreatFast

6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
with community meal following

CLEAN THURSDAY, MARCH 6 #TheGreatFast

6:30 pm Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew
CLEAN FRIDAY, MARCH 7 #TheGreatFast

9:30 am Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew
CLEAN SATURDAY, MARCH 8 #TheGreatFast

11 am – 1 pm Confessions Offered

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SUNDAY, MARCH 9 #TheGreatFast

TRIUMPH OF ORTHODOXY

9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
Procession of Icons (*Bring an icon to church*)
Panachida - *Monthly Memorial*

4:30 pm Sunday of Orthodoxy at Holy Cross
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12 #TheGreatFast

7:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts at
St. Alexander Nevsky OCA Cathedral
(1600 Guyton Rd., Allison Park)
with community meal following

FRIDAY, MARCH 14 #TheGreatFast

6:30 pm Paraklis to the Theotokos
**ALL-SOUL'S SATURDAY (Zadušna Subota),
MARCH 15 #TheGreatFast**
9:30 am Divine Liturgy & Panachida (*2nd of 5*)
11 am – 1 pm Confessions Offered

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SUNDAY, MARCH 16 #TheGreatFast

ST. GREGORY PALAMAS
9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 pm Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
with responses sung by Tzar Lazar Male Choir
Youth Sunday
4:00 pm Deanery Lenten Mission in Rankin

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19 #TheGreatFast

6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts at SJB
(*hosting the other two parishes*)
with community meal following

FRIDAY, MARCH 21 #TheGreatFast

6:30 pm Akathist Hymn to the Passion of our Lord

ALL-SOUL'S SATURDAY (Zadušna Subota),

MARCH 22 #TheGreatFast
9:30 am Divine Liturgy & Panachida (*3rd of 5*)
11 am – 1 pm Confessions Offered

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SUNDAY, MARCH 23 #TheGreatFast

SUNDAY OF THE HOLY CROSS
9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 pm Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
4:00 pm Deanery Lenten Mission in Allison Park

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26 #TheGreatFast

6:30 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts at
Holy Trinity GOA Church
(985 Providence Blvd., Pittsburgh)
with community meal following

FRIDAY, MARCH 28 #TheGreatFast

6:30 pm Moleben to the Holy Cross
**ALL-SOUL'S SATURDAY (Zadušna Subota),
MARCH 29 #TheGreatFast**
9:30 am Divine Liturgy & Panachida (*4th of 5*)
11 am – 1 pm Confessions Offered

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SUNDAY, MARCH 30 #TheGreatFast

SUNDAY OF ST. JOHN OF THE LADDER
9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 pm Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
4:00 pm Deanery Lenten Mission in Ambridge

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2 #TheGreatFast

6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts at SJB
with community meal following
FRIDAY, APRIL 4 #TheGreatFast
6:30 pm Akathist Hymn to the Theotokos

SATURDAY, APRIL 5 #TheGreatFast

10 am to 5 pm Lenten Retreat at St. Nicholas
(903 Ann Street, **Homestead**, PA 15120)

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SUNDAY, APRIL 6 #TheGreatFast

SUNDAY OF ST. MARY OF EGYPT
9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 pm Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
4:00 pm Deanery Lenten Mission in East Pittsburgh

MONDAY, APRIL 7 #TheGreatFast

FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION
6:30 pm Vespertal Liturgy of St. John

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9 #TheGreatFast

6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts at SJB

with community meal following
FRIDAY, APRIL 11 #TheGreatFast
6:30 pm Akathist to St. Panteleimon with anointing
SATURDAY, APRIL 12 #LAZARUSSATURDAY
9:30 pm Divine Liturgy
Palm Cross Making following
11 am – 1 pm Confessions heard

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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 Proskomedia (Preparation of the Bread and Wine for Communion). Prayer requests will remain for (about) 40 days unless requested otherwise. Please let Fr. Dave know if you wish to make additions or subtractions (in the case of answered prayers) to our prayer list.*

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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, Amee, 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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March Namedays:

Fr. Dave Urban – St. David of Wales (3/14)
Steven Zerby – St John of the Ladder (3/30)
...May God grant them many and blessed years!

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March Birthdays:

Alisha Zak (3/1), Matthew Wensel (3/3), Lillian Fucsko (3/4), Christopher Kubis (3/6), Fr Daniel Mahler (3/6), Randall Paieski (3/09), *Father’s nephew*, Michael Verbanick (3/9), *Father’s God-mother*, Andrea Babbie (3/10), Allen Dzambo (3/11), Noella Gaydos (3/14), Fr David Cochran (3/18), Pañi Alison Archer (3/21), Ken Dzadovsky (3/28), Marianne Kubis (3/29), Ben Anton (3/30)
...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... Nicholas &

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

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March Anniversaries:

Lindsay & AJ Matolyak-Ferraz (3/6/21)
...through the prayers of St. Nicholas Planas

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For Pregnant Mothers...

Mallory (*due in March*), Lindsay (*April*), Caitlin
...through the prayers of St. Anna, the mother of the Theotokos, and St. Irene Chrysovalantou.

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

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

A Prayer for 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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