

“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, APRIL 13, 2025 vol. X

Blessing of Branches (Palms & Willows)

Youth Sunday

12:00 pm Bridegroom Matins

GREAT AND HOLY PASSION WEEK

HOLY MONDAY, APRIL 14 #HolyWeek

6:30 pm Bridegroom Matins and Confessions

HOLY TUESDAY, APRIL 15 #HolyWeek

6:30 pm Bridegroom Matins and Confessions

HOLY WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16 #HolyWeek

6:00 pm Mystery of Holy Anointing (Unction)

with community meal following

* *Final opportunity for Confession until after Pascha*

HOLY THURSDAY, APRIL 17 #HolyWeek

9:30 am Mystical (Last) Supper Vespertal Liturgy

6:30 pm Matins with the 12 Passion Gospels

*** *then setting of the Lord’s Tomb*

HOLY & GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 18 #HolyWeek

A DAY OF STRICT FASTING

9:30 am Royal Hours *** *then decorating the Tomb*

6:30 pm Vespers and outdoor Burial Procession

with the Holy Shroud (*Plaschanitsa*)

until 10 pm Reading of the Psalter

HOLY SATURDAY, APRIL 19 #HolyWeek

A DAY OF STRICT FASTING

8:00 am Reading of the Psalter

9:30 am Vespertal Liturgy of the Resurrection

*** *then changing from dark to light colors*

*** *Please let Fr. Dave know if you are able to assist after the Thursday, Friday, or Saturday services*

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SUNDAY, APRIL 20 #Pascha

THE FEAST OF FEASTS

9:00 am Resurrection Matins with outdoor procession

~9:40 am Paschal Divine Liturgy

Liturgical Color: **White**

Blessing of Artos Bread (*with children assisting*)

Blessing of Paschal Baskets (*upstairs in the church*)

Paschal Potluck Meal

Children’s Candy Hunt

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BRIGHT WEEK: A FAST FREE WEEK

MONDAY, APRIL 21 #BRIGHTWEEK

9:30 am Paschal Liturgy with outdoor Procession

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23 #BRIGHTWEEK

6:00 pm Akathist to the Holy Resurrection

6:30 pm Parish Council Meeting (*All are welcome to come and listen to the discussions at the meeting*)

FRIDAY, APRIL 25 #BRIGHTWEEK

9:30 am Paschal Divine Liturgy

11:00 am Bacon Breakfast (*See Father Dave*)

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SUNDAY, APRIL 27 #THOMASUNDAY

9:15 am Paschal Canon

9:30 pm Divine Liturgy

Breaking of the Artos

Monthly Memorial Panachida

12:00 pm Blessing of Graves

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FLOWERY (PALM) SUNDAY!

APRIL 13th

GREAT WEEK BEGINS



GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY

APRIL 18th



FEAST OF FEASTS!

APRIL 20th

NO FASTING!



GREAT AND HOLY WEEK

ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM

Epistle: **Philippians 4:4-9**

Gospel: **John 12:1-18**

GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY

JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

CHECK WITH YOUR PARISH FOR

ROYAL HOURS AND VESPERS SCHEDULE

BRIGHT WEEK

HOLY PASCHA! (CHRIST IS RISEN!)

Epistle: **Acts 1:1-8** Gospel: **John 1:1-17**

Place your palm branches and pussywillows behind an icon at home and in your car!

Refrain from TV, Internet & Phones to honor Christ’s Death.

Greet everyone with “CHRIST IS RISEN!” & say it before

good morning and goodnight!

SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: Philippians 4:4-9

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.

⁵ Let all men know your forbearance. The Lord is at hand.

⁶ Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

⁷ And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

⁹ What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, do; and the God of peace will be with you.

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Gospel: John 12:1-18

Mary Anoints Jesus

¹² Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Laz’arus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.

² There they made him a supper; Martha served, and Laz’arus was one of those at table with him.

³ Mary took a pound of costly ointment of pure spikenard and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment.

⁴ But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was to betray him), said,

⁵ “Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii [a day’s wage] and given to the

poor?” ⁶ This he said, not that he cared for the poor but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box he used to take what was put into it.

⁷ Jesus said, “Let her alone, let her keep it for the day of my burial.

⁸ The poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me.”

The Plot to Kill Lazarus

⁹ When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came, not only on account of Jesus but also to see Laz’arus, whom he had raised from the dead.

¹⁰ So the chief priests planned to put Laz’arus also to death, ¹¹ because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus.

Jesus’ Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem

¹² The next day a great crowd who had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem.

¹³ So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!”

¹⁴ And Jesus found a young ass and sat upon it; as it is written,

¹⁵ “Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on an ass’s colt!”

¹⁶ His disciples did not understand this at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that this had been written of him and had been done to him.

¹⁷ The crowd that had been with him when he called Laz’arus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead bore witness.

¹⁸ The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign.

BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

*** **Great Lent 2025** – We have arrived to the holiest week in the Liturgical Calendar. A service will be offered every day this week. Remember the phrase: Salvation is Transformation. It’s okay if you have never been to a service before – come and see! Here is this message one more time: A general guideline for the Great Fast is this: Try to do more than last year. This is an opportunity, not an obligation. May our journey to Pascha be a spiritually beautiful one together!

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** **Fasting Before Holy Anointing** – It is common around the world to fast prior to the Mystery of Holy Anointing (Unction). Please follow the minimum 3-hour fast as we do prior to the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts before coming to the Unction service on Holy Wednesday. We will have a pizza with the community afterwards (sponsored by the ACRY).

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** **Red Eggs** – The suggestion was made (last year) to hard boil red eggs for the parish during Holy Week after one of the services. In your cooking at home – please save any RED ONION peels or BEET skins for us to naturally dye the eggs.

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* **Reading of the Psalms on Good Friday Evening and Holy Saturday Morning** – Starting this year, faithful are asked to sign up and commit to reading the Psalms at the Tomb of our Lord. We will begin immediately after the Vespers Service and Burial Procession on Good Friday, continue until 10 pm, then restart Holy Saturday morning at 8 am until the start of the Vesperal Liturgy (at 9:30 am). Shifts will be 20-minutes long. May these words from the Gospel of Matthew when Jesus prayed in Gethsemane inspire all of us: *And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, “So, could you not keep awake with me one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”* (Matthew 26:40-41)



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*** **Why Guard the Tomb?** – An ancient tradition in the Orthodox Church is the Vigil at the tomb of Christ. *After our Lord died on the Cross, Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea took the body of Jesus, bound it in linen cloths with spices and buried Him in a new tomb. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary sat opposite the tomb watching as their Lord was buried.* The Church over the centuries has joined with these two women in keeping watch over Jesus’ tomb.

The Vigil at Christ’s tomb is our opportunity to help keep watch over the Lord’s Body as He descends into hell to loosen the bonds of death. There is no better way to understand the death and resurrection of Jesus than to participate in the Vigil by His tomb.

A sign-up sheet to participate and read the Psalter (readings will be prepared and available for you) before the tomb is on the curator desk in the vestibule. Times are set up in 20-minute blocks. Do not pass up this wonderful opportunity and blessing.

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** **Pot-Luck Paschal Meal** – Our next community pot-luck meal will be following the services on Pascha. All families are encouraged to sign up and bring something to share.

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** **Blessing of Graves** – Our annual grave blessings at the N.S. cemeteries will be on **April 27**. We will celebrate a Panachida after Liturgy and then head to the North Side after the coffee social. *** *If your loved ones are not at one of the two cemeteries on the North Side, please schedule a time with Fr. Dave to meet (if possible) before the Feast of Ascension.*

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** **Panachida Offerings** – Reminder: Panachidas (Memorial Services for the Departed) cannot be served on the Major Feast Days of our Lord including Palm Sunday and Holy Pascha (as well as Lazarus Saturday).

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COFFEE SOCIAL STEWARDS	
Please sign up by the kitchen or by contacting Fr. Dave	
April 20:	Community Pascha Pot-Luck
April 27:	_____?
May 4:	_____?

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*** **2025 Sts. Joachim and Anna “Senior” Retreat**
Our Diocese is pleased to announce its sixth annual Sts. Joachim and Anna “Senior” Retreat which will take place at Camp Nazareth Retreat and Conference Center in Mercer, PA from May 2-4. The Retreat will feature keynote addresses by Very Rev. Nicholas Ferencz. [[Fr. Nik’s biography here](#)] His Eminence Metropolitan Gregory is inviting all our Diocesan “Seniors”, ages 55 and over, to join him for 2 days of fellowship, prayer, and fun. The Theme of the Retreat – **Matthew 22: The BIG Questions We should ALL want to Talk about and Answer!** The schedule will include worship, fellowship, learning, fun, time for reflection and relaxation, time spent with our Diocesan Hierarchy, and great activities! Online Registration is now open through *Friday, April 25*. Visit [2025 Senior Retreat](#) to register for the event. Visit [campnazareth.org](#) for more information. You may also call (724-662-4840) or email the Camp at campnazareth@acrod.org for more information.

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* **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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* **Welcome to the Newly-Baptized!** Last Sunday, **Patrick Dean Wertz** was baptized and initiated into the Orthodox faith. May God give strength to him as he begins his Christian life and bless him, his parents, God-Parents, and families! Many Years!

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* **Congratulations!** to Lindsay & AJ and their families on the birth of **Avalise Marie Matolyak-Ferraz** born on March 26, 2025 (7 lb 6 oz). Welcome to our Parish Family! Many Years!

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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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*** **Faith Night with Metropolitan Gregory** – UPDATE ON FAITH NIGHT - The 2025 Pittsburgh 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. This year, Metropolitan Gregory will be joining us at the ballpark (**and on Sunday, May 11 for our first Hierarchical Divine Liturgy in Allison Park**). Baseball ticket prices are still being finalized, but we are looking at under \$20 per ticket. ALL TICKETS WILL BE PREPAID. Please contact Fr. Dave if you are coming to the ballpark with us as a list is started in his phone. *(If you are interested in taking the lead on this fellowship event, also please contact Fr. Dave!)*

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** **Bright Bites** – Join the Pittsburgh IOCC for a night of fellowship and celebration of Pascha around the world with Greek, Italian, and Middle Eastern hors d’oeuvres, as well as red and white wines, for *Bright Bites: Food & Fellowship* on **Sunday, April 27** from 4:00 to 6:00 pm at Stamoolis Brothers (2020 Penn Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15222. Tickets are \$35. RSVP by April 22 to Alexis Cross at 412-780-2790 or azkcross@hotmail.com (walk in guests are also welcome).

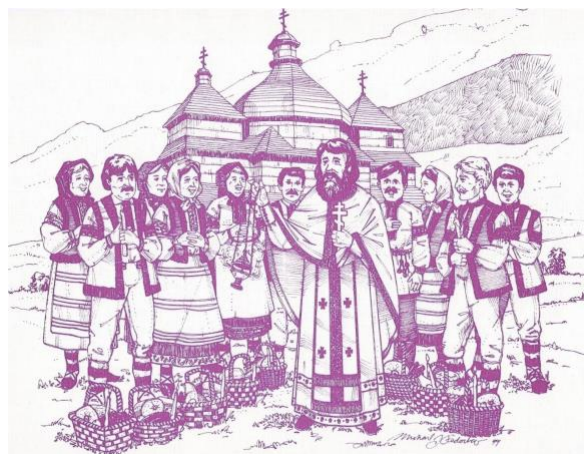
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OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD	
Stewardship Offerings:	\$ 199
Candle Stewardship:	\$ 79
Envelope Stewardship:	\$ 955
Community Outreach:	\$ 105
Total Collections:	\$ 1338
Capital Improvement Fund:	\$ 22
<i>Participating Souls – Sunday Liturgy: 47</i>	
<i>Monday Feast Day Liturgy: 6</i>	
<i>Wednesday Presanctified: 15</i>	
<i>Friday Akathist: 14</i>	
<i>Lazarus Saturday Divine Liturgy: 12</i>	

Weekly Candle Intentions or Memorials were offered last week by the Nelson Family; Lawrence Martin; Tim Martin; Rich and Renee Mirilovich; Sharon Peifer; Margie Sanger Petrucci; Cindy Pavilonis

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LIVING THE ORTHODOX FAITH



Why the Orthodox Bless Paschal Food
*from the bulletin of Holy Ghost Orthodox Church,
 Phoenixville, PA (1999)*

One practice quite essential to the understanding of the Resurrection of Christ is the blessing of food. Unfortunately, many have, in recent years, either perverted the understanding of the underlying spiritual meaning of blessing of food, making it merely a "quaint old-world custom" or else having completely dropped the practice. The question of blessing foods at Pascha (or fruit or flowers or candles or water at other Feasts, for that matter) is a tradition we should retain primarily because it is a testimony to the spiritual reality itself which we are celebrating. Consider these following points:

We, As Orthodox, firmly believe that when Adam & Eve sinned and were cast out of Paradise, not only did mankind fall, but in fact, all creation with it. Not only was humanity thrown into the depths of sin, all creation was. Not only was mankind lowered into a life radically different from the world which God created, but likewise, all creation, too. We see very clearly in Scripture, especially in the letters of St Paul, that "While Christ thus became the new Adam, having come into this world as man in order to trample down that sin and death and corruption brought into the world by the old Adam, all creation becomes new creation." "Everything-mankind, animals, flowers, food-everything is thus part of this

new creation made possible by the glorious Resurrection of Christ. Our liturgical hymns point this out. On Holy Pascha, we directly refer to the participation of all creation in Christ's Resurrection, triumphantly singling that Christ has led everything "from death to life," "from earth to heaven." This means that not only are people created anew by participating in the victory of Christ over death and corruption, but that all creation, including the very food we eat, participates in this world-wide renewal. Just as we ask Christ for His victorious blessings for ourselves, so we like-wise ask that this same blessing may be extended to every facet of this life.

We as Orthodox believe that just as man was radically changed from his original state as a result of the sin of Adam, so, too, was all creation. When we pray, when we bless ourselves, when we receive the Eucharist, we reaffirm constantly that we wish to be lifted up from this life of corruption and be "reinstated", so to speak. To that position which mankind held before the fall of Adam and Eve. So, too, when we bless things, we likewise express the real desire to return them to their original state, to consecrate them and return them to their real purpose as created by God. Certainly, when we bless food at Pascha, we have this reality in mind. This food is no longer "ordinary" food, which in fact, can lead to sinfulness when used Improperly (such as the sin of gluttony), 'but 18 now, rather, food which has been restored to its original purpose, its original meaning, its original "creation."

The real tragedy of not having our food blessed at Pascha is that we are in fact denying the spiritual realities outlined above. We hear such things as "Sure it's a quaint old custom, but, after all, this 18 America." What a denial of the whole Christian life! Do not the Scriptures clearly state that we are citizens of heaven, of the Kingdom of God, first? And equally tragic Is the situation of having our food blessed for the wrong reasons — because baba used to; because it's "our way;" and the like. In true Christian spirit, there's no such thing as "our Way" or "their way;" there is only Christ's way. And when we are called to participate In His Resurrection — when all creation, in fact, is called — we must respond to that calling, lest we forsake the privilege of being called "Christians."

So, let's open ourselves and all creation to that great Feast of the re-incarnation of all things — Holy Pascha. Let's put the way of Christ before "our" way or "their" way. Let's realize that when we're asked to have things blessed, whether it be food, flowers, water, or whatever, that it is primarily an expression of a deeper spiritual conviction which all Christians must have in order to be really Christian.

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PRAYER CORNER

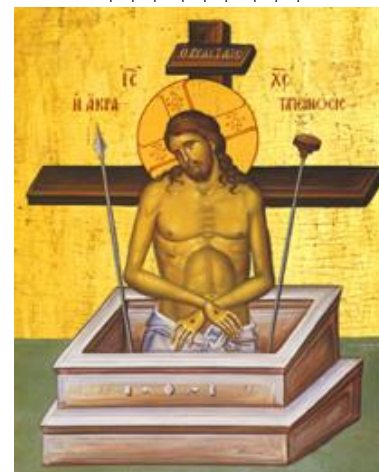
For the Health of... Joseph, Lilian, Elizabeth, Christine, Brian, Rhonda, Patrick, Melanie, Carlene, Jason, Lindsay, Linda, Bella, Cheryl, Daniel, David, Suzanne, Barbara, Paul, Robert, Kelly, Juliana, Fredrick, and Michael ...*through the prayers of St. Nectarios the Wonderworker; St. Luke, the Surgeon; and St. Panteleimon, the Healer*

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For the souls of the newly departed...
 +Pani Donna Smoley (4/11), +Kenneth Parks (3/31),
 +Peter Mercurio (3/28), +Dn. Robert Conjelko (3/26),
 +Janet Riding (3/19), +Gary Fall (3/14),
 +Robert Archer (3/8)

...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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Icon of Christ's Extreme Humility

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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.

THE PRAYER OF SAINT EPHRAIM THE SYRIAN
(in the Ruthenian tradition)

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]

ONLINE BONUSES



Assembling A Traditional Easter Basket

One begins with a straw basket filling with foods each holding symbolic significance:

1. Easter Bread (Pascha)

A sweet yeast bread rich in eggs and butter, symbolic of Christ “the Living Bread”. Usually a round loaf with a golden crust and decorated with a braid and cross. Pascha comes from the word Pasch, meaning

Passover. In English we use it to refer to the Easter season. In Slavonic the word paska is used to refer to Christ “the new lamb”.

2. Cheese (Rusyn: Hrudka or Sirec)

A special cheese made from egg and milk shaped into a ball having a rather bland but sweet taste indicative of the moderation that Christians should have in all things. It is often decorated with cloves in the form of a cross.

3. Ham (Šunka)

The meat popular with the Slavs as the main dish because of its richness and symbolism of the great joy and abundance of Easter. Some may prefer lamb or veal.

4. Sausage (Kolbasi)

A spicy pork product flavored with garlic, indicative of God’s favor and generosity.

5. Butter (Maslo)

This favorite dairy product is often shaped into a lamb or small cross. Symbolic of Christ the lamb who was offered upon the altar of the Cross for the life of the world.

6. Bacon (Slanina)

Uncooked bacon cured with spices. Symbolic of the overabundance of God’s mercy to us.

7. Salt (Sol)

Symbolizes the Truth of the message of Christ. Just as salt preserves food, so the teaching of Christ preserves our eternal life.

8. Horseradish (Chrin)

Horseradish mixed with grated red beets. Symbolic of the Passion of Christ still in our minds but sweetened with some sugar because of the Resurrection. A bittersweet red colored mixture reminds us of the sufferings of Christ.

9. Decorated Eggs (Pysankŷ)

Hard boiled eggs brightly decorated with symbols and markings made with beeswax. Eggs were always considered as symbols of the resurrection, the emergence of new life.

*** We are not limited to only having these items in our basket (nor do we have to have all of them). We fast for 40 days and a tradition is to bring what you have fasted from to the church to bless it before having some again (i.e. chocolate, or gum, or pop, or beer, etc.)



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.

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

To assist the faithful in making the most of this holy season, additional resources have been added to our Diocesan Website:

www.acrod.org/orthodox-christianity/articles/lent/

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FASTING SUGGESTIONS:
(source unknown)

FAST from self-concern and
FEAST on compassion for others.

FAST from discouragement and
FEAST on hope.

FAST from lethargy and
FEAST on enthusiasm.

FAST from suspicion and
FEAST on truth.

FAST from thoughts that weaken and
FEAST on promises that inspire.

FAST from shadows of sorrow and
FEAST on the sunlight of serenity.

FAST from idle gossip and
FEAST on purposeful silence.

FAST from problems that overwhelm you and
FEAST on prayer that sustains.

FAST from criticism and
FEAST on praise.

FAST from self-pity and
FEAST on joy.

FAST from ill-temper and
FEAST on peace.

FAST from resentment and
FEAST on contentment.

FAST from jealousy and
FEAST on love.

FAST from pride and
FEAST on humility.

FAST from selfishness and
FEAST on service.

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LIVES OF THE SAINTS

Sainted Innocent, Metropolitan Of Moscow And Kolomensk

Commemorated on April 13/March 31

Sainted Innocent (Innokentii) (Veniaminov), Metropolitan of Moscow and Kolomensk (26 August 1797 - 31 March 1879), was glorified in canonisation by the Russian Orthodox Church on 6 October 1977. He was born in the village of Anginsk in the Irkutsk diocese. The Apostle of America and Siberia bespoke his good-news "even to the ends of the earth": in the Aleutian islands (from 1823), in the six dialects of the local tribes on the island of Sitka (from 1834), amongst the Kolosh (Tlingit); in the remotest settlements of the extensive Kamchatka diocese (from 1853); amidst the Koryak, Chukchei, Tungus in the Yakutsk region (from 1853) and North America (in 1857); in the Amur and the Usuriisk region (from 1860).

Having spent a large part of his life in journeys, Saint Innocent translated into the Aleutian language a Catechism and the Gospel, and in 1833 he wrote in this language one of the finest works of Orthodox missionary activity – "A Directive of the Way to the Kingdom of Heaven". In 1859 the Yakut first heard the Word of God and Divine-services in their own native language. Twice (in 1860 and 1861) Sainted Innocent met with the Apostle to Japan – Sainted Nikolai (Comm. 3 February), sharing with him his spiritual experience.

A remarkable preacher, Sainted Innocent said: "Exactly that, whosoever aboundeth in faith and love, can have mouth and wisdom, and the heart cannot resist their serving it".

Having begun apostolic work as a parish priest, Saint Innocent closed with it upon the cathedra of Moscow First-Hierarchs (5 January 1868 - 31 March 1879). He was devoted to the Will of God during all the course of his life, and he left behind a testimonial of faith to his successors decreed in the words of the prophet: "From the Lord are the footsteps of man directed" (Ps. 36: 23). The memory of Saint Innocent is celebrated twice during the year: on 23 September (6 October) and on 31 March (13 April).

About Sainted Innocent – in the "Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate": 1949.

ADDITIONAL BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

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*** **Congratulations!** to Mallory and Jonathan Knoll who were blessed with the birth of Levi Edward on March 8 (7lb 9oz 20 ¼"). Many Years!

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*** **Bacon Breakfast** – What is the Bacon Breakfast listed on Bright Friday? Last year after the Friday Paschal Liturgy, all those in attendance went out for breakfast to a diner. Being Friday of Bright Week – there was no fasting, so we jokingly called it the Bright Friday Bacon Breakfast. Come join us this year as we start a fun tradition!

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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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2025 Sts. Joachim and Anna Senior Retreat

Our Diocese is pleased to announce its sixth annual Sts. Joachim and Anna Senior Retreat which will take place at Camp Nazareth Retreat and Conference Center in Mercer, PA from May 2-4, 2025. The Retreat will feature keynote addresses by Very Rev. Nicholas Ferencz. You can read [Fr. Nik's biography here](#). His Eminence Metropolitan Gregory is inviting all our Diocesan Seniors, ages 55 and over, to join him for 2 days of fellowship, prayer, and fun. The Theme of the Retreat – **Matthew 22: The BIG Questions We should ALL want to Talk about and Answer!** The schedule will include worship, fellowship, learning, fun, time for reflection and relaxation, time spent with our Diocesan Hierarch,

and great activities!

Online Registration is now open!! Visit [2025 Senior Retreat](#) to register for the event. Visit [campnazareth.org](#) for more information. You may also call (724-662-4840) or email the Camp at [campnazareth@acrod.org](#) for more information.

Don't miss out on our sixth annual Sts. Joachim and Anna Senior Retreat! Register today! Registration closes Friday, April 25, 2025.

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Camp Nazareth Family Camp 2025: Friday, May 30 – Sunday, June 1

Our Diocese is pleased to announce its 11th annual Family Camp at Camp Nazareth this year in conjunction with Family Day. The event is exactly what it sounds like. Families "camping" together in the Camp cabins and participating in a weekend of services, games, discussions, activities and challenges that are all designed to help families deepen their relationship with God and with one another.

This year's theme – *The "Puzzle" that is Your Family... Discovering why God has put us Together!*

Our families were given by God. He has joined the "pieces" of our family's "puzzle" together. Come discover what all the "pieces" mean to your family and what they mean to a world in need of your family! The schedule includes time to pray together, have fun together, relax together and learn together.


In addition, kids and parents will also have their own activities and discussions separate from one another as well. This year's Keynote Speaker for the adults is

Rev. Timothy Paproski, our parish priest at St. Nicholas Church in Warren, OH. This year's leader for the kids is Pani Hailey Paproski. We are excited to have both of them as part of this year's Family Camp! Come enjoy time with your family and with other Diocesan families in the beautiful environment of the Camp! Each year we have a wonderful time together! Come, be a part of it!

Don't miss out on this opportunity for you and your family. Space is limited, so be sure to register soon! Online Registration is NOW OPEN! Visit the following link to register:

[2025 Family Camp](#). Visit [campnazareth.org](#) for more information.

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*  **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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* **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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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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** **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 ioccc.org/pgh. Questions? Contact Dean Stambolis at DeanStambolis@verizon.net or 412.874.9572.

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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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VISIT OUR DIOCESE ON-LINE

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

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APRIL COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

This month, through the efforts of our Sr. ACRY, we will be collecting donations for the **Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC)**. This is the organization that puts out the Coin Boxes that we have been using through the Great Fast. Please bring in your coin boxes on Pascha. (There will also be an additional offering requested on our regular last Sunday of the month.) *“Let them do good, that they may be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share” (1 Tim 6:18)*

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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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CHURCH BUILDING UPDATE

Here is a brief update from the past few weeks:

❖ ** **Multi-Purpose Room Update** – The latest room to be updated is the Multi-Purpose Room. It is now prepared and ready to hold a meeting, Church School class, have music lessons, hold our Lending Library and Bookstore, or play Ping-Pong.

❖ * **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!

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

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

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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 REST OF THE GREAT FAST, HOLY WEEK, AND BRIGHT WEEK

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

9:30 am (**time change**) Vespers 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
Movie “Man of God” to follow

SATURDAY, APRIL 12 #LAZARUSSATURDAY

9:30 pm Divine Liturgy
Palm Cross Making following

11 am – 1 pm Confessions heard

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SUNDAY, APRIL 13 #PALM(FLOWERY)SUNDAY

FEAST OF THE ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM

9:15 am Third Hour

Blessing of Branches (Palms and Willows)

9:30 pm Divine Liturgy

12:00 pm Bridegroom Matins

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GREAT AND HOLY PASSION WEEK

HOLY MONDAY, APRIL 14 #HolyWeek

6:30 pm Bridegroom Matins and Confessions

HOLY TUESDAY, APRIL 15 #HolyWeek

6:30 pm Bridegroom Matins and Confessions

HOLY WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16 #HolyWeek

6:00 pm Mystery of Holy Anointing (Unction) with community meal following

* *Final opportunity for Confession until after Pascha*

HOLY THURSDAY, APRIL 17 #HolyWeek

9:30 am Mystical (Last) Supper Vespers Liturgy
6:30 pm Matins with the 12 Passion Gospels

*** *then setting of the Lord’s Tomb*

HOLY & GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 18 #HolyWeek

A DAY OF STRICT FASTING

9:30 am Royal Hours

*** *then decorating the Lord’s Tomb*

6:30 pm Vespers and outdoor Burial Procession with the Holy Shroud (*Plaschanisa*)

until 10 pm Reading of the Psalter (sign up in the vestibule)

HOLY SATURDAY, APRIL 19 #HolyWeek

A DAY OF STRICT FASTING

8:00 am Reading of the Psalter

(sign up in the vestibule)

9:30 am Vespers Liturgy of the Resurrection

*** *then changing from dark to light colors*

*** *Please let Fr. Dave know if you are able to assist after the Thursday, Friday, or Saturday services*

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SUNDAY, APRIL 20 #Pascha

THE FEAST OF FEASTS

9:00 am Resurrection Matins with

outdoor procession

~9:40 am Paschal Divine Liturgy

Blessing of Artos Bread (*with children assisting*)

Blessing of Paschal Baskets (*upstairs in the church*)

Paschal Potluck Meal

Egg Hunt

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BRIGHT WEEK: A FAST FREE WEEK

MONDAY, APRIL 21 #BRIGHTWEEK

9:30 am Paschal Liturgy with outdoor Procession

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23 #BRIGHTWEEK

6:00 pm Akathist to the Holy Resurrection

6:30 pm Parish Council Meeting (*All are welcome to come and listen to the discussions at the meeting*)

FRIDAY, APRIL 25 #BRIGHTWEEK

9:30 am Paschal Divine Liturgy

11:00 am Bacon Breakfast (*See Father Dave*)

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SUNDAY, APRIL 27 #THOMASUNDAY

9:15 am Paschal Canon

9:30 pm Divine Liturgy

Breaking of the Artos

Monthly Memorial Panachida

12:00 pm Blessing of Graves

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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, 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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April Namedays:

Bonnie Carlisle – St. Mary of Egypt
Pañi’s brother Florin Popescu and Pañi’s mother Liliana Popescu – Palm (Flower) Sunday
Subdeacon Ryan Ferko – St. Thomas Sunday
Thomas Lorenzi – St. Thomas Sunday
...*May God grant them many and blessed years!*

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April Birthdays:

Sonia Kretchek (4/1), Tristan Bowser (4/5), Bryce Blobner (4/10), Rich Mirilovich (4/13), Kris Carlisle, Reader (4/14), Melanie Paieski (4/14), Father’s Uncle Dan Urban (4/15), Father’s Father Dave Urban (4/15), John Kirish (4/18), Father’s Brother-In-Law Christopher Ditmore (4/19), Dr. Lawrence Martin (4/20), Max Anton (4/22), Donald J. Gavulich (4/23/19), Fred Anton (4/24), Fr Peter Paproski (4/24), Donna Tongel (4/24), Fr Jonathan Bannon (4/29), Maryhelen Hoffman (4/29), Sharon Peifer (4/29)

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

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For our Catechumens & Inquirers...

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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April Anniversaries:

...through the prayers of St. Nicholas Planas

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For Pregnant Mothers...

Lindsay (due in June), 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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