



# Saint John the Baptist Orthodox Church

A Parish of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese, Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople



Father Dave Urban, Pastor  
Very Reverend Father John Brancho, Pastor Emeritus  
Timothy Martin, Reader  
Matthew Peifer, Stephen Brancho, & John Radick, Cantors  
Matthew Peifer, Church Council President  
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Volume IV

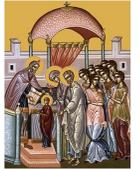
## 27<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost / 9<sup>th</sup> Lukan Sunday / Prophet Obadiah (Abdias) (9th c. B.C.)

9:15am – 3<sup>rd</sup> Hour; 9:30 – Divine Liturgy Tone 2

Liturgical Color: **Purple**



Epistle: Ephesians 6:10-17; Gospel: Luke 12:16-21  
Panachida for +Michaelene Paulick (1 year anniversary) and the Priest, +Protopresbyter Michael Hanas (11/30/96)



### SERVICES, SAINTS, AND READINGS FOR THE WEEK

**Tuesday**, December 4 – 9:30am Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple

**Thursday**, December 6 – 9:30am Akathist Hymn to St. Nicholas

**Saturday**, December 8 – 9a-12p Winter Clean-Up and Nativity Decorating / 11a-1p Confession offered

*The opportunity for the Holy Mystery of Confession is available following every service.*

# Monday	Venerable Gregory Decapolites (816)	2 Timothy 2:20-26	Luke 17:20-25
# Tuesday	New Martyr Priest Alexander of New York (1937)	2 Timothy 3:16-4:4	Luke 17:26-37
# Wednesday	Apostle Philemon (ca. 109)	2 Timothy 4:9-22	Luke 18:15-17,26-30
# Thursday	St. Alexander Nevsky (1263)	Titus 1:5-2:1	Luke 18:31-34
# Friday	Great-martyr Catherine of Alexandria (305)	Titus 1:15-2:10	Luke 19:12-28
# Saturday	Hieromartyr Clement, pope of Rome (101)	Ephesians 1:16-23	Luke 10:19-21

# During the Nativity Fast (Philip's Fast/Filipovka/Advent), lets imitate Christ & the Saints & Fast as they did!

**Sunday**, Dec. 9 – 27<sup>th</sup> Sun. after Pentecost / 9<sup>th</sup> Sun. of Luke / Venerable James the Solitary of Syria (457)

9:20am – Canon of Nativity; 9:30 – Divine Liturgy Tone 3

Liturgical Color: **Purple**

Epistle: Colossians 1:12-18; Gospel: Luke 13:10-17

*Additional collection for our Capital Improvement Fund / Special Parish Meeting*

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### A Warm Welcome To Our Visitors!

**Glory Be To Jesus Christ! (Glory Be Forever!)**  
**Slava Isusu Christu! (Slava Na Viki!)**

We are happy that you have joined us today! Please join us downstairs for coffee and a bite to eat. It is our pleasure to have you in our presence this morning and we wish God's Blessings to all who visit with us today and hope you stop in again soon!

If you have any questions in regards to our worship or Orthodoxy, please see Father Dave and he will gladly answer any of your questions to the best of his ability. He looks forward to meeting you!

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#### This Bulletin Is Offered:

If you wish to sponsor a bulletin In Honor of (anniversary, birthday, etc.) or In Memory of someone, please do so by signing up on the sheet on the table in the Vestibule of the Church or by contacting Fr. Dave. An additional stewardship offering to the Church is requested.



### LOOKING AHEAD LOCALLY



**Monday**, December 10 – 9:30am Moleben for the Nativity Fast

**Thursday**, December 13 – 9:30am Akathist Hymn to the Nativity of Christ

**Sunday**, December 16 – YOUTH Sunday / St Nicholas Breakfast following the Divine Liturgy

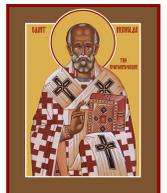
**Tuesday**, December 18 – 7pm Vespers for the Feast of St Nicholas in Homestead

**Wednesday**, December 19 – 9:30am Divine Liturgy for the Feast of St. Nicholas

**Friday**, December 21 – 9:30am Advent Paraklis to the Theotokos

**Saturday**, December 22 – 11a-1p Mystery of Confession offered

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### PARISH BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS



*(Please have submissions for this section to Father by Wednesday.)*

**Nativity Fast Services** – Looking further ahead, the rest of the Nativity Fast schedule is:

Wednesday, Jan. 2 – 9:30 Pre-festive Moleben

Friday, Jan. 4 – 9:30 Royal Hours / Strict Fast

Saturday, Jan. 5 – 11-1 Mystery of Confession

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**Winter Church Clean-Up & Nativity Decorating**

– will be **THIS Saturday, December 8<sup>th</sup>** from 9am to noon(ish). A sign up sheet and to-do list is on the desk in the church hall.

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**New Parish Community Directory** - Please check the copy in the Church Hall for mistakes.

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**Nominations** – Effective January 1, 2019, the Church Council position of Financial Secretary will be open. Nominations are now being accepted by Matt or Larry. A special meeting to vote on this will be on **Sunday, December 9<sup>th</sup>** following the Divine Liturgy.

**Weekly Candle Intentions/Memorials** were offered last week by Tim Martin; Viola Peifer; Melanie Shuster; Lawrence Martin; Pañi Brancho; Barbara Kirish; Olga Radick; Deborah Brancho; Don Gavulich; Joanne Nelson; Theresa Sharpless; Patty Watson; Cindy Pavilionis.

***"I am the light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*** - John 8:12

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**Relocation Update** – A little thought about financial responsibility of parishioners: According to PA state law, the members of a church are not personally liable for the debts of the church. *Out of our stewardship and commitment to Christ though, we are each responsible for paying off the debts of the church.* Please continue to go to the Relocation Committee or Father with any thoughts or concerns about our next steps in our journey together. (Committee includes: Sharon P, Larry M, Carol L, John K, John Righetti, Lynn M, Matt P, Peggy Rusnak, Rich M, Sharon D, Tim M, & Todd Tusick)

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**The Nativity Fast (Philip's Fast / Filipovka / Advent) Has Begun** - The Fast runs until the Eve of the Nativity on Sunday, January 6. As in Great Lent, you should establish for yourself a rule of fasting and stick to it. It is often said that the Nativity Fast is so much more difficult because of the nature of society around us (*and being on the Old Calendar, the false thought of celebrating 'two Christmases'*). We can enjoy the season with our extended family & friends and still keep the spirit of the Fast. Everyone should try, at a minimum, to keep Monday, Wednesday & Friday as fast days, no matter is happening on the 'new calendar.' **Prepare the Manger of your Soul for the coming of the new borne Messiah!**

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A REMINDER TO MAKE TIME FOR YOUR NATIVITY FAST CONFESSION: DON'T WAIT  
*"There is more mercy in God than there are sins in us. Confess your sins at once, whatever they may be."*  
 +St Tikhon of Zadonsk

Fr. Dave will be available for confessions after ALL services, on Saturdays Dec. 8<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, & Jan. 5<sup>th</sup>, and by appointment. Let us begin to shine in spirit once again, being made free of the weight and stain of our own faults!  
*"Lord, if you will, you can make me clean."* (Luke 5:12)



**Medovniki Cookies** – The Homestead St. Nicholas Sr. ACRY is selling Medovniki Cookies: \$2 each or \$10 for a half dozen. *Cookies will be individually wrapped with a special treat from St Nicholas himself!* Pre-order by 12/12; pickup 12/15 after 4 or 12/16 10a-2p. Contact Aaron Zak to place orders ([aarondzak@gmail.com](mailto:aarondzak@gmail.com) / 724-910-9719)

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**Christmas at FOCUS** – We have offered to donate 4 sheet cakes, 300 bottles of water, napkins, & plasticware sets to FOCUS Pittsburgh for their annual Christmas Dinner. In addition, they are asking for \$25 gift cards from Target. Please see **Kathy Schmack** if you are able to make a physical or monetary donation towards this wonderful event which will be held on **Sat, Dec 22<sup>nd</sup>**. *Your prayers & stewardship are greatly appreciated!*

**Our Stewardship Gift To God**

Stewardship/Dues:	\$ 889
Candles/Small C./Eternal Lamp/C. box:	\$ 184
Envelopes: Sunday/Feast Day/Special:	\$ 466
Community Outreach, IOCC:	\$ 400
ACRY Tithe:	\$ 55

**Total Collections:** \$ 1994  
**Relocation Fund:** \$ 220

*Give Generously: "For they gave according to their means... and beyond their means, of their own free will." 2 Cor 8:3*



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**ACRY NEWS**



**Thank You!** The ACRY will like to thank all of those who made delicious soups or chili and those who purchased them on November 18<sup>th</sup> at the sale. All of the soup sold bringing in \$372.

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**ACRY Annual / Diocesan Yearbook** - This will be the 1<sup>st</sup> year that the Annual will be published in COLOR. It will also be provided for the 1<sup>st</sup> time in a digital format online for worldwide accessibility. Non-ACRY members can purchase an Annual for \$15. Please contact Theresa Sharpless if you are interested.

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**Pill Bottle Collection** – Our ACRY is starting a new outreach. "Matthew 25: Ministries" accepts donations of clean empty plastic medicine pill bottles for inclusion in shipments of medical supplies and for shredding and recycling. Our pill bottle program fulfills the dual needs of improving medical care in developing countries and caring for our environment. *More information is on the bulletin board in the church hall.*

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**Snow Removal Team** – as temperatures have begun to drop, we are reminded that snow is on it's way. Just a reminder that we will be looking for folks, as in the past, to offer some of their time prior to people getting to church on Sundays to help with snow removal. *Please let Father know if you will be able to come earlier to Church to assist with keeping the sidewalks clear.* Ideally we will have a rotation of people so that the same person is not doing it each snowfall.



**Coffee Social Steward Schedule**

- December 9: Available to you
- December 16: St Nicholas Breakfast
- December 24: Available to you

*The Divine Liturgy concludes at the final blessing, but the liturgy continues downstairs as we gather in love and fellowship with our parish family and visiting neighbors. (Everyone is also encouraged to help clean up after.) Thank you to all those who support and keep this critical ministry alive in our parish!*

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**Visit Our Diocese On-Line**

- Diocesan Website: [www.acrod.org](http://www.acrod.org)
- Camp Nazareth: [www.campnazareth.org](http://www.campnazareth.org)
- FB: [www.facebook.com/acroddiocese](https://www.facebook.com/acroddiocese)
- Twitter: [twitter.com/acrodnews](https://twitter.com/acrodnews)
- You Tube: [youtube.com/acroddiocese](https://youtube.com/acroddiocese)

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## ORTHODOXY AROUND DA 'BURGH

“**Spiritual Fatherhood and Parish Ministries**” – The Society of St. John Chrysostom will have this presentation by Fr. Radu Bordeianu, Ph.D. on **Saturday, December 8<sup>th</sup>** from 10am to Noon at Saints Cyril and Methodius Seminary (3605 Perrysville Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15214).

*Most Orthodox theologians understand the local eucharistic assembly to be the diocese gathered around its bishop in the Eucharistic celebration. But the diocese does not celebrate a single, unifying Eucharist. Instead, the eucharistic celebration happens in the parish, which gathers the priest and the Church community in order to send it on mission to live out the Kingdom of God. Orthodox theology needs to present a consistent theology of the parish and the parish priest as the faithful actually experience them: a eucharistic, missionary, charismatic community guided by the spiritual fatherhood of the priest. In the lived Orthodox reality, the parish, the priest, and (especially in Orthodox communities located in the West) the lay ministries are not merely parts of a larger fullness, namely the diocese and the episcopacy; they have their own intrinsic value, which in turn results in a re-imagination of the bishop’s role. These elements are necessary ingredients in an exciting ecclesiology, relevant to our faithful and the world.*

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**FOCUS Christmas Concert** – The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Nativity Concert of Orthodox Choirs from the Pittsburgh area to support the work of FOCUS Pittsburgh will be on **Sunday, December 16<sup>th</sup>** at 6:30pm at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church in Mt. Lebanon across from the Galleria Mall (123 Gilkeson Rd., Pittsburgh, Pa 15228). A free will offering will be taken. A reception will follow the concert at the church hall.



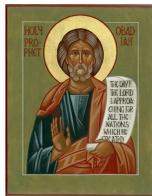
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## LIVES OF THE SAINTS

Source: [www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar/orthodox-calendar](http://www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar/orthodox-calendar) © 1996-2001 by translator Fr. S. Janos

### **The Holy Prophet Obadiah (or Avdi)** *Commemorated on Dec 2 / Nov 19*

The Holy Prophet Obadiah (or Avdi) was from the 12 Minor Prophets, and he lived during the IX Century B.C. He was a native of the village of Betharam, near Sicheim, and he served as house-governor of the impious Israelite king Ahab. In these times the whole of Israel had turned away from the True God and had begun to offer sacrifice to Baal. But Obadiah-Avdi in secret faithfully served the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. When the impious and dissolute Jezebel, the wife of Ahab, set about the exterminating of all the prophets of the Lord, Obadiah-Avdi meanwhile in turn gave them shelter and food (3 [1] Kings 18:3ff). Ahab's successor king Okhoziah (Ahaziah)



sent 3 detachments of soldiers to arrest the holy Prophet Elias (Elijah or Ilias, Comm. 20 July). One of these detachments was headed by Saint Obadiah-Avdi. Through the prayer of Saint Elias, two of the detachments were consumed by Heavenly fire, but Saint Obadiah-Avdi and his detachment were spared by the Lord (4 [2] Kings 1). From this moment Saint Obadiah resigned military service and became a follower of the Prophet Elias. Afterwards he himself received the gift of prophecy. The God-inspired work of Saint Obadiah-Avdi – the Book of Prophecies under his name, is the fourth in order of the Books of the Twelve Minor Prophets in the Bible. It contains predictions about the New Testament Church. The holy Prophet Obadiah-Avdi was buried in Samaria.

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## SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

*“Of all the afflictions that burden the human race, there is not one, whether spiritual or bodily, that cannot be healed by the Holy Scriptures.” +Saint John Chrysostom*

**Epistle:** Ephesians 6:10-17

### **The Whole Armor of God**

<sup>10</sup>Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. <sup>11</sup>Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. <sup>12</sup>For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup>Therefore take the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. <sup>14</sup>Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, <sup>15</sup>and having shod your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace; <sup>16</sup>besides all these, taking the shield of faith, with which you can quench all the

flaming darts of the evil one. <sup>17</sup>And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

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**Gospel:** Luke 12:16-21

<sup>16</sup>And he told them a parable, saying, “The land of a rich man brought forth plentifully; <sup>17</sup>and he thought to himself, ‘What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?’ <sup>18</sup>And he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns, and build larger ones; and there I will store all my grain and my goods. <sup>19</sup>And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, be merry.’ <sup>20</sup>But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ <sup>21</sup>So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”

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## LIVING ORTHODOXY

### EMBRACING CHANGE THIS NATIVITY FAST

By Sister Vass from Wednesday, November 28

“And leaving Nazareth he went and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: ‘The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned.’ From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, ‘Repent (*Metanoya*) Change your mind/focus, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’” (Mt 4: 13-17)

As those of us on the Old Calendar begin the Nativity Fast today, along with the changes it

brings to our daily routine, I am reminded of the very first words spoken to us by our Lord Jesus Christ. They are a call to change: “Repent! (*Metanoya*)” He says, which means “Change your mind” or your “focus!”

Today I embrace change, and re-focus on the “great Light” that is soon to “dawn” upon us, in Bethlehem. As I make healthy adjustments to my daily prayer, eating, sleeping, and exercise schedules today, I thank You, Lord, for ever-challenging my life with positive change. A blessed Nativity Fast (or Advent) everyone! Onwards and forwards! “Now have I made a beginning; this change has been wrought by the right hand of the Most High.” (Ps 76/77: 10, LXX)

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## SAINT JOHN’S MONTHLY COMMUNITY OUTREACH



During the Nativity Fast, we are called to increase our Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving. This month, through the efforts of our Sr. ACRY, we will be

- reaching out to **our homebound** parishioners,
- collecting for **Christmas at FOCUS** (see note in the bulletin board section), as well as
- collecting donations for the **ACRY Stewardship Campaign: Empowering the Saints for Ministry** (our community outreach collection at the end of the month).

The National ACRY’s goal is \$15,000 by February 10<sup>th</sup>. Please see the letters on the bulletin board in the church hall for more information. *Thank you in advance for your prayers and offerings this month!*

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## SPIRITUAL VITAMINS FOR THE WEEK

### SUNDAY

“Let the mouth also fast from disgraceful speeches and railings. For what does it profit if we abstain from fish and fowl and yet bite and devour our brothers and sisters? The evil speaker eats the flesh of his brother and bites the body of his neighbor.” +St John Chrysostom

### MONDAY

“We must begin with thanksgiving for everything. The beginning of joy is to be content with your situation.” +St Ambrose of Optina

### TUESDAY – FEAST OF THE ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS INTO THE TEMPLE



Who can describe Thy power, Lord, or who can give proper praise of all the good Thou have done for our sakes? For Thou wished to reveal the Mystery hidden from the ages, the Mystery of Thy only-begotten Son becoming man for the salvation of mankind. Thou wished to bring to its appointed end that which the Prophet David announced. For this Thou chose Thy Mother as a dwelling for the manifestation of Thyself according to the flesh. From her Thou came among men as a man and saved Thy fellow men. From her Thou assumed all that belongs to man and made it new.

Today we celebrate the feast of her entrance into the Temple. We thank Thee, for Thou have given us all that is good. Through her we pray that Thou show Thy face to us, and make known to us how we can please Thee. Deliver us from the deceits of the evil one and show us the way to salvation through repentance. Keep us joyful as we celebrate this holy feast. – Amvon Prayer for the Feast

### WEDNESDAY

“Hell can’t be made attractive, so the Devil makes attractive the road that leads there.” +St. Basil the Great

### THURSDAY

“Reading, vigils and prayer -- these are the things that lend stability to the wandering mind.” - Evagrius Ponticus

### FRIDAY

“By the self-control which limits the passions, man reestablishes the limits and freedom of his spirit. But in so doing, he awakens within himself the factor which sees in the world something else besides objects to satisfy these passions...So disrespect for the world isn’t shown in self-control, but rather the will to discover the entire majesty of the world; self-control isn’t a complete turning away from the world, to see God, but a turning away from a world narrow and exaggerated by the passions, to find a...world which itself becomes a mirror of God...” - Fr Dumitru Staniloae

### SATURDAY

“A sure sign of the deadening of the soul is the avoidance of church services.” +St John Climacus

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## PRAYER CORNER

*Our Parish Prayer List for Special Intentions and Other Needs \**

**A Prayer For The Sick:** O Christ, You alone are prompt to defend us; quickly visit Your suffering servant name. Through the prayers of the Theotokos, deliver him/her from sickness and bitter pain. Heal him/her so that he/she may sing to You and always praise You for You alone love us. Amen.

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**For the Health of...** Julie, Jane, Mildred, Anna Mae, Eleanor D., Viola, Juliana, Fredrick, Kenneth, Michael, Roberta, Gary, Lino, David, Louis, June, Helen, Steven, Doug, Joanne, Lynn, Mary, Kathy N., Danielle ...*through the prayers of St. Nectarios the Wonderworker; St. Luke, the Surgeon; & St. Panteleimon, the Healer.*

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**For the Special Intentions of...** Bishop Gregory, Marianne, Steve, Christopher, Nicholas, Stephen, David, Anastasia, Nicholas, Cassandra, Alexander, Nancy, Andrea, Jason, Tyrone, Sarah, John S., Ameer, Joshua, John, Kathryn, Rose *our seminarians:* Michael and Daniel, *and our Church Council, Curators, and Relocation Committee:* Matthew, Lawrence, Timothy, Patricia, Theresa, Rich, Gina, Robert, Donald, Jane, Eleanor, Steven, Kenneth, Jillian, John, Wendy, John, Olga, John, Melanie, Michael, John, John, Margaret, Todd *and for those who labor towards our Community Outreach, IOCC ...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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**Patronal Feast Days (Name's Day):** Carol Lorenzi and Katherine Schrmack - Great-martyr Catherine of Alexandria (12/7) (*contact Fr Dave with your date*)

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**Birthday Prayers for...** *Father's Godson,* Joseph Sekerak (12/2), Lucy Blobner (12/4/15), His Eminence, Metropolitan Gregory (12/7), Pañi Herbert (12/8) ...*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! Na Mnohaja I Blahaja L'ita!*

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**For our Catechumens & Inquirers...** Ashley, Patrick, and Dustin  
...*through the prayers of St. Paul the Apostle, St. Mary Magdalene, and St. John Maximovitch.*

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**Anniversary Prayers for...** ...*May God fill them with His grace that they may continue to live in unity with Him!*

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**For Expectant Mothers...** Lindsay, Elyse, Lauren, Pañi Marianna, Faith, Pañi Eleni, Hayley, Carley  
...*through the prayers of St Anna, the mother of the Virgin Mary, and St Irene Chrysovalantou.*

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

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

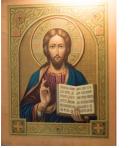
...*May the Lord God grant them blessed repose where there is no pain sorrow or mourning. Eternal Memory!*

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\* This is to be used for the special intentions of our brothers and sisters and can be inserted as a prayer itself into our daily prayers. Please let Fr. Dave know if you would 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 Orthodox Christians.

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## DEVOTIONAL PRAYER FOR THE NATIVITY FAST:



### Prayer for Peace - 2018 NATIVITY FAST PRAYER CHALLENGE



*Metropolitan Gregory asks each member of our Diocese, either as a family or individually, to pray this **Prayer for Peace** every evening of the Nativity Fast.*

O Lord, You told us through the Psalmist David to be still and know that You are God. (*Psalm 46:10*) Yet, in our weakness, that stillness is far from our hearts and minds. We are restless in soul and body. The constant noise of the world drowns out Your still, small voice. (*1 Kings 19:12*) Even as we prepare during this season to remember Your Birth, we are diverted by many cares. We are anxious and troubled, neglecting the one thing needful. (*Luke 10:41- 42*)

Holy Master, keep us away from those things which distract us from knowing Your Presence. Grant us the stillness, silence, peace, and calm that only comes from You. Help us to be diligent in prayer and attentive to the needs of others.

As Your Holy Mother beheld the great mystery of Your Incarnation, she silently pondered it in her most-pure heart. (*Luke 2:19*) Allow us to reach the celebration of Your coming in the flesh so that, silently contemplating it in our own hearts, we too may be filled with every grace and blessing and give glory to You forever. Amen.