



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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November 24, 2019

Volume V

23rd Sunday after Pentecost / Martyr Menas of Egypt (304)

9:15 - Third Hour; 9:30 - Divine Liturgy Tone 6 Liturgical Color: **Gold**

Epistle: Ephesians 2:4-10; Gospel: Luke 10:25-37 (8th Sunday of Luke)

Additional Collection for our Community Outreach (on IOCC Sunday) / Panachida for +Protopresbyter Michael Hanas (11/30/96) and the recently departed / Church School / 3pm Turkey Bingo



SERVICES, SAINTS, AND READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Thursday, November 28 (Thanksgiving) – Nativity Fast Begins – 9:30am Moleben of Thanksgiving & Stewardship

Saturday, November 30 – 11-1 Mystery of Holy Confession offered

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

Monday	St. John the Merciful (620)	1 Thessalonians 2:20-3:8	Luke 14:12-15
Tuesday	St. John Chrysostom (407)	1 Thessalonians 3:9-13	Luke 14:25-35
* Wednesday	Holy and All-praised Apostle Philip	1 Thessalonians 4:1-12	Luke 15:1-10
# Thursday	Holy Martyr & Confessor Abibus of Edessa (322)	1 Thessalonians 5:1-8	Luke 16:1-9
# Friday	Holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew (60)	1 Thess. 5:9-13,24-28	Luke 10:38-42,11:27-28
# Saturday	St. Gregory the Wonderworker (266)	2 Corinthians 11:1-6	Luke 9:57-62

* Let us Imitate Christ and the Saints and Fast as they did! # Nativity (Philip's) Fast (Advent)

December 1 – 24th Sunday after Pentecost / Martyr Platon of Ancyra (266)

9:15 - Third Hour; 9:30 - Divine Liturgy Tone 7 Liturgical Color: **Purple**

Epistle: Ephesians 2:14-22; Gospel: Luke 12:16-21 (9th Sunday of Luke)

Godparent / Godchild(ren) Sunday / Church School

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A Warm Welcome To Our Visitors!

Glory Be To Jesus Christ! (responded with: **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:

In Honor of
John Gaydos Sr.'s
Birthday (11/26/32).
May God Grant Him
Many Years!

PARISH BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

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Godparents / Godchild(ren)

Sunday – Our Annual Godparents celebration will be **NEXT Sunday, DECEMBER 1st**, a day to honor them and to encourage the growth of this spiritual relationship. **Personally invite** your Godparents (or those of your children) and/or invite your Godchildren to come to Church and share this day with you. Please prepare yourself and join them in receiving the Eucharist (Holy Communion) on this day. We need to keep the Spiritual bonds alive with our God-parents and God-children. Even more important, we need to keep our life united with our Lord, Jesus Christ. This unites us with one another. Contact Fr Dave if you have ideas for the day or a desire to be involved in planning our Godparents Sunday.

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St Nicholas Charity Dinner

for the Pittsburgh Deanery will be on **Sunday, December 8th** at Edgewood Country Club (100 Churchill Rd., Pittsburgh, PA 15235). Doors open at 4pm with a Buffett Dinner at 5. This annual dinner benefits our *Christ the Saviour Seminary*. Adults - \$35; Teens 13-18 - \$10; 12 and Under - Free. (Please make checks payable to "Pittsburgh Deanery".) Please see Fr Dave by **December 1st** for your ticket(s). *Auction Prize Donations* (*which may be combined with other donations*) to be raffled off at the dinner can be given to Father. Come meet the seminarians, enjoy the fellowship, carol sing-a-long, and a special guest!

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Winter Church Clean-Up and Nativity Decorating – will be on **Saturday, December 7th** from 9am to noon(ish). A sign up sheet and tentative to-do list is on the desk in the hall.

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Weekly Candle Intentions / Memorials were offered last week by Tim Martin; Viola Peifer; Shuster Family; Kirish Family; Olga Radick; Eleanor Sanger; Mary Jane Hudak; Mirilovich Family; Joanne Nelson; Michael Puhac; Theresa Sharpless; Patty Watson.

"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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Fall Exploring Orthodoxy (Adult Continuing Education) – Thank you to everyone who came to any of the discussions the past few weeks! The topics were random but, God-willing, educational.

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The Nativity (Filipovka) Fast (Advent) Begins this Thursday, November 28 - The Fast runs until the Eve of the Nativity on Monday, 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 what is happening on the 'new calendar.' If you have questions, please talk with Father Dave. **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, from 11-1 on Saturdays Nov. 30, Dec. 7, 14, 21, & Jan. 4, 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)

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 **#GivingTuesday** is a global day of giving fueled by the power of social media and collaboration. Celebrated **Tuesday, December 3rd** following Thanksgiving after the widely recognized shopping events *Black Friday* and *Cyber Monday*, #GivingTuesday kicks off the charitable season, when many focus on their holiday and end-of-year giving. Please remember the Orthodox organizations if you will be donating online.

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Christmas at FOCUS – We have again offered to donate 4 sheet cakes, 300 bottles of water, 300 napkins, and 300 plastic-ware sets to FOCUS Pittsburgh for their annual Christmas Dinner for those in need. In addition, they are asking for \$25 gift cards from Target. Please see **Kathy Schrmack** if you are able to make a physical OR monetary donation towards this wonderful event which will be held on **Saturday, December 22nd**. *Your prayers and stewardship are greatly appreciated!*

Our Stewardship Gifts To God

Stewardship:	\$ 575
Candles/Eternal Lamp:	\$ 161
Envelopes/Stewardship:	\$ 540
Total Collections:	\$ 1276
Capital Improvement Fund:	\$ 15
Relocation Fund:	\$ 215

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



2020 Yearbook, A.C.R.Y. Annual - If you would like to include a patron, booster, or memorial listing in this Year Book of the activities of our God-saved Diocese, a sign-up sheet has been placed in the Church Hall. Patron & Memorial listings are \$6, and Booster listings are \$3. Please see Theresa Sharpless with any questions. Deadline to sign-up is **December 1st**.

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Pill Bottle Collection – Our ACRY continues it's outreach to "Matthew 25: Ministries" who accepts donations of **CLEAN AND EMPTY** plastic medicine pill bottles for inclusion in shipments of medical supplies to countries in need. **PLEASE MAKE SURE THE LABEL IS REMOVED AND IT IS NOT STICKY.** 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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Reader of the Third Hour:

December 1: *Available to you*
December 8: *Chanting of the Nativity Canon*
This should begin by 9:15 and can be read or chanted. Please contact Fr Dave if you are interested in participating in this wonderful stewardship prayer opportunity!

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Coffee Social Steward Schedule

December 1: **Open / Meat-Free Potluck**
December 8: **Open / Meat-Free Potluck**
December 15: **Parish St. Nicholas Breakfast**

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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LOOKING AHEAD LOCALLY

- ✘ **Tuesday**, December 3 – Giving Tuesday
- ✘ **Wednesday**, December 4 – 9:30am Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos
- ✘ **Friday**, December 6 – 9:30am Akathist to Saint Nicholas
- ✘ **Saturday**, December 7 – 9a-12p Winter Clean-Up and Nativity Decorating / 11a-1p Confessions offered
- ✘ **Sunday**, December 8 – St. Nicholas Deanery Charity Dinner (Edgewood Country Club)
- ✘ **Tuesday**, December 10 – 9:30 Morning Moleben
- ✘ **Thursday**, December 12 – 9:30 Morning Moleben
- ✘ **Saturday**, December 14 – 11a-1p Confessions



Looking **FURTHER** Ahead

Some 2019/2020 dates of interest:

- Dec. 15 – St. Nicholas Breakfast
- Jan. 6 – 9:30am Royal Hours of Nativity
- Jan. 7 – 9:30am Nativity Divine Liturgy
- Jan. 17 – 9:30am Royal Hours of Theophany
- Jan. 19 – Great Blessing of Water on Theophany and Annual Home Blessings Begin
- Feb. 2 – Zacchaeus Sunday

- Feb. 15 – Feast of the Meeting of our Lord in the Temple and Blessing of Candles
- Mar. 2 – The Great Fast Begins
- Wednesday through Lent – Presanctified Liturgy at the Hampton Inn, Wexford (Franklin Park)
- Mar. 13-15 – Young Adult Retreat at Camp Nazareth
- Apr. 3-5 – OCF Mid-Atlantic Retreat at CN
- Apr. 12 – Palm Sunday (Western Easter)
- Apr. 19 – Pascha, the Feast of Feasts

Please, Save the Dates!

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ORTHODOXY AROUND DA 'BURGH & OUR DIOCESE

Free Community Dinner – On Saturday, **November 30th**, from 4-5pm St. Nicholas (320 Munson Ave., McKees Rocks, PA 15136) will offer a free community dinner for anyone in need of one. If you have any questions, please contact Ashley.loboda@gmail.com or 412-715-2163.

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Visitation of the Wonderworking Saint Anna Icon – The Icon will be at St. Alexander Nevsky Orthodox Cathedral (8290 Thompson Run Rd., Pittsburgh, PA 15237 / 412-366-4647) on **Saturday, December 7** (5pm Great Vespers, moleben, and presentation on “Acquiring the mind of Christ.”) and **Sunday, December 8** (10am Divine Liturgy). Times for veneration and

prayer will be abundant around the scheduled services. The icon has been manifested as being miraculous in helping those with cancer, family needs and especially for married couples having difficulty with conception. Each day, Father Archimandrite Sergius will offer talks on the icon. All are welcome to venerate and pray before this holy icon.

Visit Our Diocese On-Line

Diocesan Website: www.acrod.org
 Camp Nazareth: www.campnazareth.org
 FB: www.facebook.com/acroddioocese
 Twitter: twitter.com/acrodnews
 You Tube: youtube.com/acroddioocese

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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 2:4-10

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God— 9 not because of works, lest any man should boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

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Gospel: Luke 10:25-37

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

²⁵ And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” ²⁶ He said to him, “What is written in the law? How do you read?” ²⁷ And he answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” ²⁸ And he said to him, “You have answered right; do this, and you will live.”

²⁹ But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” ³⁰ Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. ³¹ Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and

when he saw him he passed by on the other side. ³² So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion, ³⁴ and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; then he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵ And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, ‘Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.’ ³⁶ Which of these three, do you think, proved neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?” ³⁷ He said, “The one who showed mercy on him.” And Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”



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LIVES OF THE SAINTS

Source: www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar/orthodox-calendar © 1996-2001 by translator Fr. S. Janos

The Holy Great Martyr Menas

Commemorated on November 24/11

The Holy Great Martyr Menas, an Egyptian by birth, was a soldier and served in the city Kotuan under the centurion Firmilian during the reign of the emperors Diocletian and Maximian (284-305). When the co-emperors began the then fiercest persecution against Christians in history, the saint lost all desire to serve these persecutors and, having left the service, he withdrew to a mountain, where he asceticised in fasting and prayer. Once during the time of a pagan feastday he happened to arrive in the city, in which earlier he had served. At the climax of the festal games, which all the city had come out to see, rang out the



accusing voice of the saint of God, preaching faith in Christ, the Saviour of the world.

At trial before the governor Pyrrhos the saint bravely confessed his faith and said, that he had come hither, in order to denounce all of impiety. Saint Menas spurned he suggestion to offer sacrifice to the pagan gods, and he was put to cruel tortures, after which he as beheaded. This occurred in the year 304. The body of the holy martyr as ordered to be burnt. Christians by night gathered up from the burnt-out fire the undestroyed remains of the martyr, which later were installed in a church in his name, built after the cessation of the persecution at the place of the suffering and death of the Great Martyr Menas.

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LIVING ORTHODOXY

When Thankfulness Is Hard

Most often, I am truly thankful when I am not trying to be. There's a sensation of gratitude overflowing in the soul when an unexpected blessing comes my way or when I happen to avoid an accident by some providential circumstance.

But when set occasions for thankfulness come around, such as the Eucharist or this holiday we call Thanksgiving, I find it difficult to replicate sincere gratitude which comes unexpectedly. Sure, I can always afford a few moments to say the prayer before devouring an inordinate amount of food on Thanksgiving. But deep down, I am painfully aware that this is not the same thankfulness that brings tears to my eyes after moments of crisis. It feels artificial, wrong even. Aware as I am of the fact that I am privileged beyond belief, there is no pain in my heart for those who are not. Tragically, I simply accept it as the reality and carry on, offering my lip service as though it is the best I have.

But this is not enough.

This is merely Cain's offering, and we should strive to be like Abel, offering the best of ourselves to God. We are human beings endowed with spiritual faculties, not just lips. We were *made* for thanksgiving, as we are instructed in the holy Scriptures to "give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thess. 5:18).

As Christians, we ought to approach this American holiday not as an occasion to be proud of the relative prosperity we enjoy in this country but as a call to aspire to the state of humility, love, and thanksgiving which Christ intends for us to exist in perpetually.

So what do we do when we find ourselves stuck in this thanklessness? How can we get ourselves out? Perhaps what makes this state of thanklessness so frustrating is exactly the point: *we cannot get ourselves out*. There is no thanksgiving without love, and love is a gift. We do not "think" love into existence whenever we happen to have a need for it. In order to be thankful, we must accept

the gift of love from Christ who is Love. If our hearts are closed to this gift, we will have nothing to offer God when we attempt to give thanks.

This realization highlights two important details about thanksgiving. The first is that thanksgiving is not merely gratitude for the opportunity to consume large quantities of material possessions. St. Basil the Great reminds us that our material excess does not belong to us at all: *"The bread you are holding back belongs to the hungry; the coat you guard in your locked storage-boxes belongs to the naked; the shoes wasting away in your closet belong to those who have no shoes. The silver you hide in safekeeping belongs to the needy one."*

Should we find ourselves in a state of material abundance, it is important that we understand God's gift of love is revealed in part through His provision for our needs, and with excess comes the responsibility and the opportunity to participate fully in His gift of love through giving. Mercy is itself an active part of thanksgiving.

The second detail is that in contemplating Christ's gift of love for us, we understand that like love, thanksgiving has both a subject and an object. Almost every religion values gratitude in some way. Even secular self-help literature tells us of the psychological benefits of practicing gratitude in meditation. This is not a bad thing *per se*, but I wonder: just *who* are we to be thankful *to*? We cannot be thankful *for* without someone to be thankful *to*. **As Christians, we do not offer up our thanksgiving to some impersonal abstraction of causality, but to a person, Christ.**

So let's remember when we come to the table this Thanksgiving and bow our heads to pray: thanksgiving is not a mere obligation but a **perpetual** state of being to which we have been called, made possible by love of our Christ our God, who has brought us out of non-being into existence and provides for our needs so that we may continue to exist, always commending ourselves and our whole life to Him.

From: www.ocf.net By: Daniel Bishop, OCF Blogger

SPIRITUAL CONSIDERATIONS

Father can meet M-F 9:30a–4p or by appointment.
Online Community: Please email Fr. Dave to receive the weekly bulletin via email.
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 so he can pray with you and you may receive the Anointing 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 Orthodox may receive a *blessing* from the chalice.
Lapsed Members – You are always welcome home and we want you back! Generally speaking, sincere participation in the Mysteries of Confession, Communion, and regular attendance at the divine services are all that is required to begin parish life

anew! See Fr. Dave for specific details.
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 Father 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. They are not performed during fasting periods and certain Feast Days. Please consult Father ASAP for more details (*before* arrangements are made for the hall).
Church Funerals – are provided for practicing Orthodox Christians who are current in their spiritual and financial obligations; otherwise burial is from the funeral home. The Church does not permit cremation.



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PRAYER CORNER

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

For the Health of... Annie, Kelly, Aislinn, Emily, Fr. Dcn. Artemius, Pañi Marie, Michael, Daniel, Jake, Anna Mae, Eleanor D., Viola, Juliana, Fredrick, Kenneth, Michael, Roberta, Gary, Lino, Louis, June, Helen, Doug, Joanne ...*through the prayers of St. Nektarios the Wonderworker; St. Luke, the Surgeon; and St. Panteleimon, the Healer.*



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For the Special Intentions of... Metropolitan Gregory, Stephen, David, Anastasia, Nicholas, Cassandra, Alexander, Nancy, Andrea, Jason, Tyrone, Sarah, Ameer, Joshua, John, Kathryn, Rose, Charles, Justin *our seminarians:* Thomas, John, Daniel and Dylan *and our Church Council, Curators, and Relocation Committee:* Matthew, Lawrence, Timothy, Theresa, Rich, Gina, Robert, Jane, Anthony, Mary Jane, Steven, Kenneth, Jillian, John, Wendy, John, Margaret, John, John, 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): Cindy Pavilonis - Saint Cyntianus (11/28), Matthew Mirilovich - Holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew (11/29)
(please contact Fr. Dave with your Patron Saint)

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Birthday Prayers for... Father's sister, Suzanne

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DEVOTIONAL PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:



IOCC Thanksgiving Prayer for Those in Need

O Heavenly King, Comforter, who grants all blessings, we thank You for Your abundant grace and mercies. Help us to be good stewards of Your treasury through the ministry of IOCC. Help us to strip ourselves of our earthly adornment, so that the poor may be sufficiently clothed and fed. And, by so loving our neighbor, adorn us with the everlasting pearls of virtue instead. Where there is suffering, help us to bring Your mercy; where there is despair, Your hope. Where there is war, allow us to present You who are the Prince of Peace; where there is pain, You who are the Comforter; Where there is hatred, You who are Love; where there is death and destruction; You who are the Resurrection and Life. Daily guide our work in and through IOCC so that we may do all things, in every place and at all times, for Your glory. Amen.