



# 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  
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5th Sunday of Lent

APRIL 5th



## ST MARY of EGYPT

Epistle: Hebrews 9:11-14  
Gospel: Mark 10:32-45

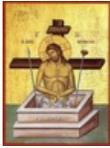
Ask the Theotokos to offer you  
and the world pure thoughts  
and ideas this week.

ONLINE: Liturgy of St. Basil

Tone 1

Liturgical Color: Purple

SERVED BY PRIEST & CANTOR ONLY with Additional Prayers for COVID-19, Coronavirus



## SERVICES, SAINTS, AND READINGS FOR THE WEEK



Please try and watch as many online services as you can this week (see note in the bulletin board)

Tuesday, April 7 – Feast of the Annunciation

Thursday, April 9 – 8a to 8p Moleben to St. Nectarios every ½ hour from around our Diocese (NS at 2pm)

Saturday, April 11 – Lazarus Saturday

** Mon	Ven. Zacharias the Recluse of Egypt (4th c)	Isaiah 48:17-49:4	Genesis 27:1-41	Proverbs 19:16-25
** Tue	Venerable Parthenius of the Kiev Caves (1855)	Isaiah 49:6-10	Genesis 31:3-16	Proverbs 21:3-21
** Wed	Synaxis of the Archangel Gabriel	Isaiah 58:1-11	Gen. 43:26-31; 45:1-16	Proverbs 21:23-22:4
** Thu	St. Matrona of Thessalonica (4th c.)	Isaiah 65:8-16	Genesis 46:1-7	Proverbs 23:15-24:5
** Fri	Venerable Stephen the Wonderworker (815)	Isaiah 66:10-24	Genesis 49:33-50:26	Proverbs 31:8-31
** Sat	Martyr Mark, bishop of Arethusa (364)		Hebrews 12:28-13:8	John 11:1-45

\*\* The Great Fast - Let us imitate Christ & the Saints & fast as they did!

FLOWERY (PALM) SUNDAY!

APRIL 12th

GREAT WEEK BEGINS



## GREAT AND HOLY WEEK

### ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM

Epistle: Philippians 4:4-9  
Gospel: John 12:1-18

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

Liturgical Color: Gold

ONLINE Divine Liturgy

Tone 2

Distribution of Blessed Palms and Pussy Willows will take place after we are able to gather together again

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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:

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 in the vestibule of the Church or by contacting Fr. Dave. An additional stewardship offering to the Church is requested.

## GUEST SERMON SNIPPET

"Jesus has many to share his Feast but few to share his Fast." - Thomas A Kempis.

Dear Faithful and Friends:

Glory be to Jesus Christ!

At this juncture coming up on the fifth week of Great Lent I cannot help but compare our present situation with an incident in the life of Mary of Egypt whom we commemorate this Sunday.

St. Mary of Egypt, an attractive prostitute from Alexandria, out of curiosity and boredom joined a group of pilgrims to Jerusalem. (In the ancient world people did not take vacations in the modern sense – but a pilgrimage was an acceptable act.)

After arriving at the Church of the Holy Resurrection in Jerusalem a powerful force kept her from entering no matter how hard she tried. She suddenly realized it was her dark and cynical soul, worn out by the depravity of human passion, that kept her out.

Saying a prayer, she retired to the desert beyond the Jordan and lived alone as a hermit for decades until discovered by a monk coming out to pray during Great Lent. Mary attained great sanctity through repentance and the door to Paradise was opened again to her.

Like Mary of Egypt we are deprived of the comfort of the Divine Liturgy, the freedom granted by confession

and repentance at this most sacred time of the year. We now find ourselves "over Jordan" in the desert of the heart and feel its aridity, its sameness, its boredom and emptiness – the absence of God.

Our sinfulness, our spiritual apathy, have locked us out of the Kingdom – the Church. Like Mary of Egypt before the door of the Church of the Resurrection, like Adam and Eve before the locked gates of Paradise we stand before our locked church doors and ask the Lord for mercy and forgiveness. The Coronavirus is not the cause but only the means by which God is reminding us to come to our senses.

It is this loss of the Church and its mysteries and fellowship that helps us to realize how important those things are to us. It is an Orthodox saying that "when you are saved you are saved in the group, when you fall, you fall alone."

"Falling alone" in our isolation is exactly what we have been doing these past weeks. To help find the comfort of the Church again, try the following:

1) Reach out and talk to people from the Church; visit via telephone or internet with fellow church members. Another true saying, "Our Life is with our brother."

2) Use your time wisely; start the day with a prayer and a Psalm; make a point to read each day one

chapter from the Gospel of Matthew, Mark or Luke. Don't worry if you don't understand everything. Practice the Prayer of St. Ephraim. Your priest would love to hear from you to answer any questions! Remember this has a toll on those who serve also!

3) Keep the fast as best you can! In the close living forced upon us it would be really good if we fast with our tongue and refrain from bickering and pettiness with family members especially and with others outside the house. Be reconciled and work to stay that way. Recall the words of St. Augustine: "There is no greater invitation to love than loving first."

4) Remember that even though we are not having services join the Cathedral Liturgy on the Diocesan website and Lenten services as well.

5) Also remember that even though we are not having services the Church still has expenses! Please every week send your treasurer your offering!

6) Lastly, Look for the Resurrection! Not outside of yourself but inside your heart and know that through it the world will be healed of sin and the Doors to

Paradise will be opened again!

Remember that this closing of services is not a test of faith. It is not a time for lamenting our loss of our ability to come and go but to lament our sins and truly experience what it is like to be "out of the Kingdom." The air is even heavy with doubt and uncertainty as it must have been at the Crucifixion.

Metropolitan Anthony Bloom wrote in his book on prayer that: *True prayer begins in the absence of God.* Perhaps this Great Lent and Pascha will more than any other *by their absence* teach us the real meaning of the Fall of Humanity and the Message of the Cross. Through their absence perhaps we will come together with a new sense of purpose and renewed love for His Church by all of us near to God or far from Him.

But we know that after Golgotha and its suffering come the joy of the Empty Tomb and the Resurrection: *Christ is Risen and we are raised with Him!*

*Sochrani viru!* Keep the Faith!

Fr. Lawrence Barriger, St. Michael's, Freeland, PA

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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:** Hebrews 9:11-14

<sup>11</sup> But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) <sup>12</sup> he entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. <sup>13</sup> For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, <sup>14</sup> how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

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**Gospel:** Mark 10:32-45

**A Third Time Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection**

<sup>32</sup> And they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them; and they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. And taking the twelve again, he began to tell them what was to happen to him, <sup>33</sup> saying, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and deliver him to the Gentiles; <sup>34</sup> and



they will mock him, and spit upon him, and scourge him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise."

**The Request of James and John**

<sup>35</sup> And James and John, the sons of Zeb'edee, came forward to him, and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." <sup>36</sup> And he said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" <sup>37</sup> And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory."

<sup>38</sup> But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" <sup>39</sup> And they said to him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; <sup>40</sup> but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared." <sup>41</sup> And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John. <sup>42</sup> And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. <sup>43</sup> But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, <sup>44</sup> and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. <sup>45</sup> For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

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## PARISH BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS



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



**Reminders:** Please keep up with "The 48 Days to the 'Great Day'" and continue to drink your Holy Water everyday! (IF you are running low, please contact Fr. Dave today)

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**Having flu-like symptoms? PLEASE KEEP FR. DAVE POSTED ON ANY ILLNESSES SO TO BE ADDED TO OUR PRAYER LIST!**

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**"20 seconds" of Prayer** – Following the CDC recommendations, as you wash your hands, instead of singing your ABCs, pray! It takes roughly 20-seconds to pray *The Lord's Prayer*, sing *O Heavenly King*, pray *Hail Mary (twice)*, sing *You are truly deserving*, or say the *Jesus Prayer* (5 times).

**Theatrical Stage Production of JESUS** - Filmed in front of a live audience, JESUS is a state-of-the-art theatrical stage production that has been seen by more than one million people. Witness some of the most awe-inspiring, miraculous events in the gospels as Jesus sets sail with fishermen, challenges the Pharisees, and heals the hurting. From the bustling streets of Jerusalem to the raging Sea of Galilee, experience the greatest rescue story of all time as Sight & Sound Theatres® spectacular original production comes to life in this special worldwide television debut - exclusively on TBN. Available on demand the weekend of **April 10-12 only.** <https://watch.tbn.org/sight-sound-theatres-presents-jesus>

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**Weekly Candle Intentions / Memorials** were offered last week by ...

*"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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**Candles in Church** – If you wish for Father to light your weekly candles, please email or call him with your intentions and mail your candle donation to Tim Martin.

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**Cathedral Live-Broadcast** - Our diocese is blessed with the opportunity to watch our Cathedral's Divine Liturgy every Sunday at 9am (and other services). The best scenario is to attend the Divine Liturgy and receive the Eucharist, but with these current limitations, please take the time Sunday morning, Wednesday evening, and throughout the week to pray with our brothers and sisters via the *live broadcast* on the web. [www.acrod.org/organizations/cathedral/live/](http://www.acrod.org/organizations/cathedral/live/)

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**Pan-Orthodox Live-Streaming Services** - Ancient Faith Radio is offering a selection of live, video-streaming services during Great Lent, Holy Week, and Pascha, representing a variety of jurisdictions at: [www.ancientfaith.com/live-services](http://www.ancientfaith.com/live-services)

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**Praying with online services from your domestic-church** - Sunday Liturgies at St. John's will be celebrated **BUT WITH ONLY THE PRIEST AND CANTOR IN ATTENDANCE**. This comes from the Protocol from our Metropolitan. We will pray for our parish and the world. PLEASE watch services online! Here are the words of Fr. Matthew Dutko concerning watching services online:

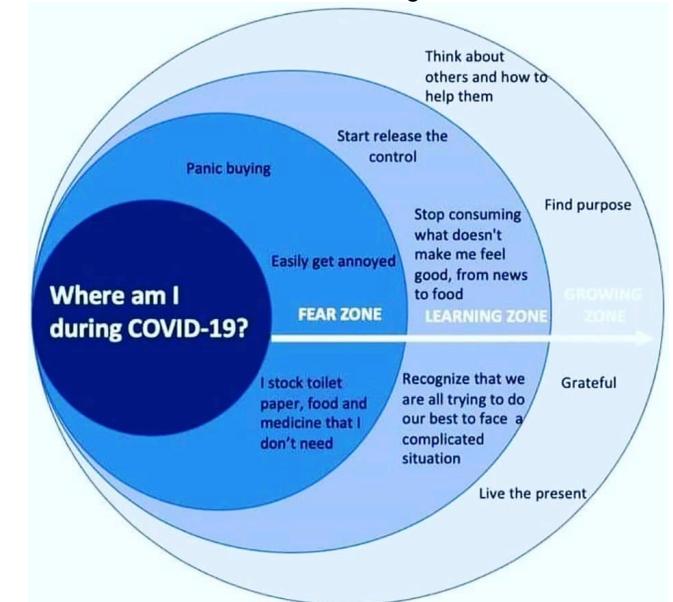
- "Wake up at the normal time that you always do on a Sunday. If you have kids, wake them up. Shower, get dressed in your Sunday finest and gather together in front of a computer screen.

- Light a candle and burn some incense [if you do not have any, contact Fr. Dave who can recommend online sites to order from]. When the Liturgy begins, pray and sing as you always do.

- Even though you will be in your home-church, don't let the distractions of being in your own home get in the way. For that hour or so, you will be with your parish family in prayer. I know it's not the same, but we will still be praying to our Lord, all together, all at the same time; just like we always do."

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**Now On Instagram** (stjohnthebaptistnspgh) – Our Parish now has an Instagram page! Father will need some time to figure this out, but more details coming soon...



**Fear Zone → Learning Zone → Growing Zone**  
Please share with Father Dave things that you have become grateful for. Anonymous inspirations will be in future bulletins...

**Our Stewardship Gifts To God**

Stewardship:	\$ 150
Parish House Donation:	\$ 200
Candles/Eternal Lamp:	\$ 0
Envelopes/Stewardship:	\$ 150
Community Outreach:	\$ 25
<b>Total Collections:</b>	<b>\$ 525</b>
<b>Relocation Fund:</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>

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

**Weekly Offerings to God** – During this time that we are in, we request that all weekly donations be mailed to:

Tim Martin  
2225 McAleer Road  
Sewickley, PA 15143

For our parish to continue it's ministries, outreach, and general bill paying, we need your generosity to continue.

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**Paschal Commemorations** – We offer you the opportunity to sponsor items to be used during Holy Week and Pascha as commemorations: *anonymously, for the health of loved ones, OR in memory of departed loved ones*. If you are interested in making any of these commemorations, PLEASE EMAIL or CALL Fr. Dave **BY NEXT WEEK (April 12)** and send in an *additional free-will stewardship offering* to the church. These items are still available:

- ✳ Processional Candles
- ✳ ~~Incense for Censer~~
- ✳ Charcoal for Censer
- ✳ Priest's Triple Paschal Candle
- ✳ Vesperal Loaves
- ✳ Sacramental Wine
- ✳ Eucharist Bread
- ✳ Pascha Bulletin
- ✳ ~~2 Decorated Candles on Altar~~
- ✳ 2 Candles on Preparation Table
- ✳ 4 Candles in front of Iconostasis
- ✳ Festive Oil

*Thank you in advance for your prayers and support of our parish community!*

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**Holy Week from Home** – A couple priests in our diocese put together this awesome guide for spending Holy Week at home! Please follow along all next week. [www.acrod.org/news/2020-press/holyweekhome](http://www.acrod.org/news/2020-press/holyweekhome)

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**Pascha cover-dish coffee social** is POSTPONED until PENTECOST

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**Census Forms:** If you have not done your census form yet... when you fill it in, check the box for your race then type in or print Carpatho Rusyn. (Not just Rusyn) There is no guarantee the census bureau will lump the two together. Please pass this on to ALL your Carpatho Rusyn friends and family members.



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**LOOKING AHEAD LOCALLY**

- ✳ Holy Week on the NS – TBD
- Upcoming Cathedral Online Schedule of Services:**
  - Monday – 6pm – Feast Day Vespers
  - Tuesday - 9am - Feast of the Annunciation Divine Liturgy
  - Wednesday – 7pm – Paraklis
  - Friday – 7pm – Presanctified Liturgy
  - Lazarus Saturday – 9am – Divine Liturgy
  - 6pm – Feast Day Vespers
  - Palm (Flowery) Sunday – 9am – Divine Liturgy

**A Song of Trust in God Alone: Psalm 62:5-8**

Yes, my soul, find rest in God; my hope comes from him. Truly he is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will not be shaken. My salvation and my honor depend on God; he is my mighty rock, my refuge. Trust in him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.

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**ORTHODOXY AROUND DA 'BURGH & OUR DIOCESE**

**Continuous Moleben to St. Nectarios Thursday** - The Diocese is sponsoring the live streaming of the **Moleben to St. Nectarios** every half hour for at least twelve hours on Thursday starting at 8am. This will stream from a different parish every half hour. You can follow the services from the Diocesan FB page at [www.facebook.com/acroddioocese/](http://www.facebook.com/acroddioocese/) and from [www.ACROD.org](http://www.ACROD.org). It will be a good chance for you to see other priests in our Diocese serve - what an awesome opportunity! Join in when you can and as often as you can to pray with the rest of our diocese.

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**DIOCESE FAMILY MINISTRY: "SPF50":** Praying together and reading Scripture together are pillars of a Christ-centered Orthodox Christian family. While families may desire to have these activities in their home, they may not be sure how to start.

SPF50 intends to help our families bridge that gap. SPF stands for "**Scripture, Prayer, Family**" and is designed to equip families to read the scriptures and pray together at home. **HOW ARE YOU DOING WITH THIS? PLEASE EMAIL FATHER DAVE. IF YOU DID NOT PICK UP THE INITIAL MATERIALS, PLEASE LET FATHER DAVE KNOW ASAP.** Each issue will be available both in hard-copy and digital form. A section of the Diocesan website dedicated to SPF50 will also

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contain supplemental resources to help families get started and maintain participation.

*Quality time with our Lord is hard to come by.  
Quality time with your family is hard to come by.  
SPF50 intends to help families have both.*

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**Purse Bash** hosted by St. Nicholas that was scheduled in May has been POSTPONED.

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**National ACRY Bowling Tournament** scheduled for Memorial Day Weekend to be hosted by Elizabeth, NJ has been CANCELLED.

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**Camp Nazareth Updates:**

Diocesan Seniors Retreat is rescheduled from May 12-14 to October 13-15, 2020  
Family Camp (June 5-7) is Cancelled  
Family Day (June 7) is Cancelled

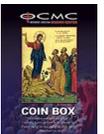
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**Visit Our Diocese On-Line**  
Diocesan Website: [www.acrod.org](http://www.acrod.org)  
Camp Nazareth: [www.campnazareth.org](http://www.campnazareth.org)  
FB: [www.facebook.com/acroddioocese](http://www.facebook.com/acroddioocese)  
Twitter: [twitter.com/acrodnews](http://twitter.com/acrodnews)  
You Tube: [youtube.com/acroddioocese](http://youtube.com/acroddioocese)

**ST JOHN'S MONTHLY COMMUNITY OUTREACH**



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 Lenten Fast.* There is a Community Outreach envelope in our boxes that can be sent to Tim Martin (see above for his address). *"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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**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 MonkMartyr Nikon**

*Commemorated on April 5 / March 23*

The MonkMartyr Nikon was born at Neapolis (Naples). His father was a pagan, and his mother – a christian. Having reached maturity, Nikon remained a pagan. He served as a soldier and showed unusual courage and strength. One time, Nikon with his military company was surrounded by enemies. In deadly peril, he remembered the christian precepts of his mother and, signing himself with the sign of the cross, he prayed to God, vowing in the event of being saved to be baptised. He managed to escape inescapable death and, having returned home, with the blessing of his mother he set off in search of a priest, – which in this time of persecution was no easy thing to do. Saint Nikon reached the island of Chios on a ship. He went up on an high mountain there and spent 8 days in fasting and prayer, entreating the Lord to help him. In a dream vision an Angel of God appeared to Saint Nikon, showing him the way. Saint Nikon set off to Mount Ganos, where many monks were hidden, headed by Theodosios the bishop of Kyzikos. Saint Nikon received from the bishop both the mystery of Baptism and the Angelic form (ie. monasticism). Having settled at the cave-church,

Saint Nikon became an exemplar for all the brethren. When the monk Nikon had dwelt on the mountain for three years, it was revealed to the bishop by an Angel, – that he should ordain the monk Nikon to the dignity of bishop, and should order him to re-settle with all the monks to the province of Sicily. Bishop Theodosios fulfilled this and, having entrusted the 190 monks to Saint Nikon, he died. Having buried bishop Theodosios, Saint Nikon sailed off with the brethren to Sicily, thereby being saved from approaching barbarians. But through Divine Providence, Sainted Nikon came to his native city Neapolis / Naples. He found his mother there among the living, and he remained together with her for the final day of her life. His mother, seeing him, collapsed on his chest with tears of joy and kissed him. Making a poklon (prostration) to the ground, she said: "I do give thanks to Thy MostHoly Name, O Lord, in that Thou hast granted me to behold my son in Angelic form and in bishop's dignity; and now, my Lord, my Lord hear me Thy servant, and accept my soul into Thine hand". Having made this prayer, the righteous woman died. Those present glorified God and buried her with psalmody.

Rumours about the arrival of Saint Nikon spread through the city, and ten soldiers – his former companions, came to see him. After conversing with the saint they believed and were baptised, and proceeded with him to Sicily. Having arrived on the island, Saint Nikon settled together with the monks in a desolate area, called Gigia, not far from the river Asinum. Many years passed, and again there began a persecution against Christians. The governor of Sicily Quintilian was informed that bishop Nikon lived with many monks not far away. All 199 monks were seized and beheaded, but they left Sainted Nikon among the living, so as to give him over to torture. They burned him with fire, but he remained unharmed; they tied him by the legs to wild horses to be dragged over the ground, but the horses would not budge from the spot.

They cut out the saint's tongue, beat him with stones, and finally they beheaded him. The body of the priest-martyr Nikon was thrown to be devoured by wild beasts and birds. A certain shepherd, possessed of by an evil spirit, went to that place, and finding the body of the saint, he immediately fell on his face to the ground because of the unclean spirit – having been vanquished by the power of the saint – had thrown him to the ground and gone out from him with a loud shriek: "Woe is me, woe is me, whither might I flee, from the face of Nikon?"

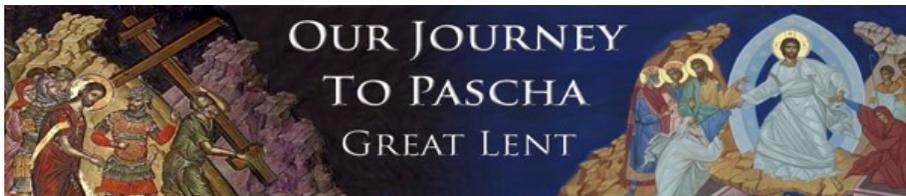
The healed shepherd told about this to the neighbouring people. The bishop of the city of Messina learned also about this, and together with his clergy he buried the bodies of the priest-martyr Nikon and his disciples.

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**The Divine Shepherd: Psalm 23:1-4**  
 The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters, He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

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## LIVING ORTHODOXY



To assist the faithful in making the most of this holy season, additional resources have been added to our Diocesan Website at: [www.acrod.org/prayercorner/lentenresources/](http://www.acrod.org/prayercorner/lentenresources/)

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**SPIRITUAL BENEFITS OF THE PANDEMIC: *Let us make this Covid-19 pandemic the basis of a renewed foundation in our spiritual life***

For all of us, this pandemic can serve as a good jumpstart for our faith. Since most of us cannot attend services in our parishes, this is the perfect time to build up the domestic church. Since we can't take our children to services, let us bring the services into the midst of our family life.

We can start by lighting our lampadas (oil lamps) or candles before our family icons, and if you do not have an icon corner, now is the perfect time to set one up. Activate the domestic church by saying the morning and evening prayers together. They are available in our personal prayer books [found in the back of the Orthodox Study Bible and on our diocesan website: <https://www.acrod.org/prayercorner/prayer/>].

In the meantime, start praying together as a family, as well as individually. One very traditional Orthodox practice, for example, is the reading aloud from the book of Psalms. There is much peace and spiritual strength to be gained when reading from the Psalter. It is equally important that each family member privately nourishes their souls through reciting the "Jesus Prayer" [O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner].

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**About Marking our Doors with A Cross Tonight**

Brothers and sisters, unfortunately this story was found to be a hoax. Reporters contacted Mount Athos and the monks categorically denied it.

People need hope in these times and this is why these stories spread like wild fire. Mind you, whoever created this urban myth, probably had the best intentions in mind. It's never a bad thing to pray or put a cross on your door. Indeed, why don't we put crosses on our doors as Christians?

When joining with family members in these home services, we should also read the assigned scripture readings, all of which are available online, or by consulting your parish calendar [or on the first page of the bulletin]. For those on the Julian Calendar, I provide these daily readings on my blog, "The Morning Offering", hosted by Ancient Faith Radio.

As well, the family can read aloud from the lives of the saints, and from the many spiritual and inspirational Orthodox books that are published by the Church's countless publishing houses, available in our parish bookstores, or from the online stores. Our own monastery has an online gift shop, where you can order any of these items from the safety of your home (<https://www.vashonmonks.com>).

Meanwhile, let us all take this pandemic as an opportunity to repent before God, while committing ourselves anew to living the gospels, and making Christ the center of our lives. Remembering the words both of the Apostle Paul who counseled the Christians of Ephesus to "redeem the time" (Eph. 5:16), and those of another saint of our times, Blessed Seraphim of Platina, who said: "It is later than you think - hasten, therefore, to do the work of God".

With love in Christ, Abbot Tryphon

However, in regards to this particular story, there is a caution. The specificity of the instructions have made people, desperate for a sign in these perilous times, think that something will happen by tonight - a sign from God, a miracle. And the danger is that when nothing does happen people will feel disappointed and then have the temptation to blame the Virgin Mary or the Holy Mountain [Mt. Athos]. That's the problem. And this is why the monks caution against listening to any announcements unless they come from the official church authorities.

Perhaps this hoax, even though it may not be real, has reminded us all that we need to be more vocal about our faith and take to heart Christ's call to preach the Gospel in all places at all times. I myself will put a cross on my door, not because I'm waiting for some type of supernatural miracle to deliver us from the

tribulation which besets us, but because I think it's important to emphasize our ultimate faith in God no matter what comes our way.

In Orthodoxy,

Fr. Theodore Paraskevopoulos

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## PRAYER CORNER

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

**A Prayer For The Sick:** O Christ, You alone are prompt to defend us; quickly visit Your suffering servant *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 Health of...** Fr. Michael Ellis, Candice, Gregory, Nicholas, Misha, Pañi Eleanor, Fr. Michael Rustick, Ella, Lexi, Daniel, John, Susan, John, Alexandra D., Pañi Marie, Sonja, Anna Mae, Eleanor D., Viola, Juliana, Fredrick, Kenneth, Michael, Roberta, Lino, June, for all those battling viruses ...through the prayers of *St. Nectarios 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 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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**Patronal Feast Days (Name's Day):**  
*(contact Fr. Dave with your Patron Saint)*

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**Birthday Prayers for...** Tristan Bowser (4/5), Milena Petrovich (4/5), Bryce Blobner (4/10), Jenelle Specca (Petrovich) (4/10) ...*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 Mnohaya I*

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*Blahaya L'ita!*

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

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**For those preparing for Marriage...**  
Lauren & Corey, Ashley & Derek ...*through the prayers of Sts. Adrian & Natalia and all Holy Martyrs.*

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**For Pregnant Mothers...** Pañi Ileana (April), Faith (June), Mallory Ann (July) ...*through the prayers of St Anna, the mother of the Virgin Mary, & 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.*

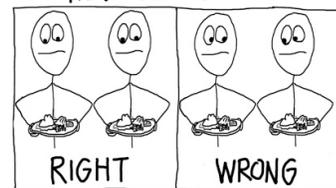
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**For the souls of the newly departed...**  
+Jack Scherer (4/2), +Phyliss Stienstra (3/28), *mother of Fr. Dcn. Stienstra*, +Harry (3/23), +Ron (3/19), and those who have passed from the coronavirus ...*May the Lord God grant them blessed repose where there is no pain sorrow or mourning. May their Memory in God be Eternal! Vičnaya Pamyat!*

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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.*

HOW TO DO LENT



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## DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS FOR THE WEEK:

### A PRAYER TO THE MOTHER OF GOD DURING THIS TIME OF THE CORONAVIRUS

*With the Blessing of Metropolitan Gregory (ACROD) – 3-31-2020*

O Most-Holy Ever-Virgin Mary, Theotokos: receive this heartfelt supplication from us, your unworthy servants. We run to you tearfully, O Sovereign Lady, as this dreadful illness spreads through the whole world. Listen to the much-afflicted sighs of your ailing people and grant healing of soul and body. As a loving Mother, cover your suffering children everywhere with your protecting veil. In times of despair, console the faint-hearted, strengthen the weak, and enlighten those with embittered hearts. Guide the minds and hands of our doctors and nurses, that they may serve as instruments of the all-powerful Physician, Christ our Savior. You are the strong intercessor for our city, our country, and the whole world, O Queen of All. Present our prayers before the throne of the King of Glory, your Son and our God, that He may be merciful towards us and grant His grace to those who honor you and bow before your holy icon with faith and love.

O joy of the sorrowful and consolation of the afflicted, stretch out your hands which are full of health and cures, so that having quickly received your wondrous help, we may glorify the Life-giving and Undivided Trinity: the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.



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### A Prayer in Time of Epidemic

Lord our God, You who are rich in mercy, and who, with careful wisdom, direct our lives, listen to our prayer, receive our repentance for our sins, bring an end to this new infectious disease, this new epidemic, just as you averted the punishment of your people in the time of David the King. You, who are the Doctor of our souls and bodies, grant restored health to those who have been seized by this illness, raising them from their bed of suffering, so that they might glorify You, Merciful Savior, and to those who are healthy keep them from every sickness. By your grace, Lord, bless, strengthen, and preserve, all those who out of love and sacrifice care for the sick, either in their homes or in the hospitals. Remove all sickness and suffering from your people, and teach us to value life and health as gifts from You. Give us Your peace, O God, and fill our hearts with unflinching faith in Your protection, hope in Your help, and love for You and our neighbor. For Yours it is to have mercy on us and save us, O our God, and to You we give glory: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and forever, to the ages of ages. Amen.

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### THE PRAYER OF SAINT EPHRAIM THE SYRIAN

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

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

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



O God, be merciful to me, a sinner. **[bow]**  
O God, cleanse me of my sins and have mercy on me. **[bow]**  
O Lord, forgive me, for my sins are many. **[bow]**



*Then the prayer again with only one prostration:*

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