



Saint John the Baptist Orthodox Church

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



Reverend Dave Urban, *Pastor*
Very Reverend John Brancho, *Pastor Emeritus*
Timothy Martin, *Reader*
Matthew Peifer, Stephen Brancho, & John Radick, *Cantors*
Matthew Peifer, *Church Council President*
www.facebook.com/pg/St-John-the-Baptist-Orthodox-Church-of-Northside-Pittsburgh-169297619784149

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January 7, 2018

Volume III

Nativity of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ / 31st Sunday after Pentecost

9:15am - Canon & Carols (*Kol'jady*) 9:30am - Divine Liturgy of St. Basil Tone 6 Liturgical Color: **Gold**

Epistle: Galatians 4:4-7; Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12



SERVICES, SAINTS, AND READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday, January 8 – Afterfeast of the Nativity - 2nd Day of Christmas -

9:30am Divine Liturgy for the Synaxis of the Holy Theotokos

Tuesday, January 9 – Afterfeast of the Nativity - 3rd Day of Christmas -

9:30am Divine Liturgy for the Feast of Saint Stephen

The Holy Mystery of Confession is available following every service.

Monday	Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos	James 2:14-26	Mark 10:46-52
Tuesday	Holy Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen (34)	James 3:1-10	Mark 11:11-23
Wednesday	20,000 Martyrs of Nicomedia (302)	James 3:11-4:6	Mark 11:23-26
Thursday	14,000 Infants (Holy Innocents) slain by Herod at Bethlehem	James 4:7-5:9	Mark 11:27-33
Friday	Apostle Timon the Deacon (1st c.)	Hebrews 13:7-16	Mark 12:1-12
Saturday	St. Peter Mogila, metropolitan of Kiev (1646)	1 Thess 5:14-23	Lk. 2:20-21, 40-52

A Fast Free Period

Sunday, January 14 – 32nd Sunday after Pentecost / 8th Day of Christmas / Sunday after the Nativity and before the Baptism of Our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ / Feast of the Circumcision of

Our Lord Jesus Christ / St. Basil the Great, archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia (379)

9:30 am – Divine Liturgy of St. Basil

Tone 7

Liturgical Color: **Gold**

Epistle: Galatians 4:4-7; Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

Add'l Collection for our Capital Improvement Fund

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A Warm Welcome To Our Visitors!

Christ Is Born! (*Glorify Him!*)

Christos Raždajetsja! (*Slavite Jeho!*)

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 Fr. 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 Memory of* someone or *In Honor of* (anniversary, birthday, new job, etc.), 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

Thursday, January 18 – Vigil Service for the Feast of Theophany (*A Day of Strict Fasting*):

AMBRIDGE: 8pm / HOMESTEAD: 8pm / EAST PITTSBURGH: 7pm

Friday, January 19 – 9:30am Divine Liturgy for the Feast of Theophany with the Great Blessing of Water / Annual House Blessings begin

Saturday, January 20 - 9:30am Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Synaxis of St John the Baptist

Sunday, January 21 – Zacchaeus Sunday / YOUTH Sunday

Thursday, January 25 – 9:30am Akathist to the "Inexhaustible Cup"

Sun., Jan. 28 – Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee / Add'l collection for our community outreach

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BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

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



Dear Family of St. John's,

*Christ Is Born! (*Glorify Him!*) Christos Raždajetsja! (*Slavite Jeho!*)* As we greet each other this coming week with the Nativity greeting, may the miracle of that holy night fill your heart and home with peace and joy! Thank you for your many kind thoughts, your prayers, and your cards! May you have a blessed Nativity Season and a joyous year ahead! Many Years!

With Love, Maria, Sophia, Pañi Alexandra, and Father Dave

Weekly Candle Intentions/Memorials were offered last week by Tim Martin; Lawrence Martin; Linda Gavulich; Mary Jane Hudak; Olga Radick; Carol Lorenzi; Don Gavulich; Theresa Sharpless; Viola Peifer; Winkler Family.

"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

The Eternal Lamp was offered last week by John Gaydos, Jr., in Memory of Mother, Catherine. May Her Memory Be Eternal! Vičnaya Pamjat!


New Parish Phone Number – We have changed our phone carrier and also changed the number in the process. (This will save the parish almost \$500 over the year.) Our new number is: **412-748-0148**. (The old number will still be active for a few more weeks.)

2018 Calendars have arrived and are in the Church Vestibule to be picked up.

Cards – Please consider repurposing your greeting cards and prior church calendar icon tops after the season concludes. The collection box is in the vestibule for the *Holy Transfiguration Monastery*. Thank you for giving back!

House Blessings – will begin **January 19th**. Fr Dave is interested in visiting and catching up with everyone this coming Theophany season.

Soup or Chili Sale – Our ACRY will be selling soup for \$4 a pint on **Sunday, January 21st**. Plan to take home a couple varieties to keep you warm.

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

- ❖ **Meal Train:** Organized meal giving around a significant life event. One meal from one person per day.
- ❖ **Organizer:** The person who sets up the meal train.
- ❖ **Recipient:** Those who will receive the meals.
- ❖ **Participant/Giver:** The person who will make and take a meal.

We will figure this new system out together!

Parish Stewardship Opportunities...

As you wish that men would do to you, do so to them.
(Luke 6:31)

- Bring in a bag of CALCIUM CHLORIDE
- Take a Coffee Social week
- Offer your time to help with possible snow

Our Stewardship Gift To God

Stewardship/Dues:	\$ 1881
Candles/Small C./Eternal Lamp/C. box:	\$ 108
Envelopes: Sunday/Feast Day/Special:	\$ 745
Community Outreach:	\$ 100
Total Collections:	\$ 2834
Collection for the Saints: "On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper." 1 Cor 16:2	

December Financial Report:
Donation Income = \$ 10,472
***Expenses = \$ 4,706.52**
Net Income = \$ 5,765.48

**details listed on the church hall bulletin board*
Average at Sunday Divine Liturgies: **39**

THANK YOU! for your continued generous stewardship support of our parish!

2017 Financial Report:
Donation Income = \$ 83,238
***Expenses = \$ 77,274**
Net Income = \$ 5,964

**details listed on the church hall bulletin board*
Average at Sunday Divine Liturgies: **39**

Stewardship/Dues are due - The end of the civil calendar year has past. Did you make a contribution to your parish? Please fulfill your financial responsibility to your Church.

Cranberry Outreach / Relocation Update – We are continuing to explore and pray about the idea of moving north into the 79 corridor. Our recent *Exploring Orthodoxy* discussions in Wexford were nicely attended! We are also continually in contact with a relator as we look for land.
+ **If you have any thoughts or questions about our outreach**, please talk with Matt Peifer, Church Council President (pgh.heman@verizon.net / 412-389-4398) and/or Fr Dave, Spiritual Advisor.

Snow Removal Team – 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.

Shopping on-line – The on-line shopping store, Amazon.com, will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to our diocese! Simply go to the home page of our Diocesan website, www.acrod.org, and click on the AmazonSmiles button in the far left column and then shop as usual (Same products; same prices; same service).





- Feb. 10 – 1st All Soul's Saturday
- Feb. 11 – Pre-Lenten Breakfast following Liturgy
- Feb. 15 – Feast of the Meeting of our Lord
- Feb. 19 – The Great Fast Begins
- Mar. 3 – 2nd All Soul's Saturday
- Mar. 10 – 3rd All Soul's Saturday
- Mar. 17 – 4th All Soul's Sat. / Pgh. Lenten Retreat
- Mar. 24 – Church Spring Cleaning
- Mar. 31 - Lazarus Saturday / beginning of Holy Week
- Apr. 7 – Feast of the Annunciation
- Apr. 8 – Pascha, the Feast of Feasts
- May 2 – Feast of Mid-Pentecost
- May 17 – Feast of Ascension
- May 25-28 - ACRY Bowling Tournament (in Perth Amboy, NJ)
- May 26 – 5th All Souls Saturday
- May 27 – Feast of Pentecost
- Jun. 1-3 – Family Camp at Camp Nazareth
- Jun. 3 – Family Day at Camp Nazareth
- Jun. 4 – Apostles Fast begins
- Jun. 24-27 – Young Women's Encounter *AND* Altar Boy's Retreat
- Jul. 7 – Feast of the Nativity of St John
- Jul. 8 – Church Picnic at "The Cabin" in North Park
- Jul. 12 – Feast of Saints Peter and Paul
- Jul. 29 - Aug. 4 – Pittsburgh Deanery Week at CN
- Aug. 5-11 – Science and Nature Week at CN

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

*Thank you to all those who support this
critical ministry of our Church!*

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Presanctified Liturgies – this year will be at the **Hampton Inn** off of the Wexford exit of 79 (2622 Wexford Bayne Road, Sewickley, PA 15143).

⁴But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷So through God you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then an heir.

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The Visit of the Wise Men

2 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, ²“Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him.” ³When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it is written by the prophet:

6 ‘And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who will govern my people Israel.’”

7 Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star appeared;⁸ and he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him bring me word, that I too may come and worship him."⁹ When they had heard the king they went their way; and lo, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was.¹⁰ When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy;¹¹ and going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.¹² And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

INCARNATE - From Latin, meaning “to become flesh.” Christ is God Incarnate: He became flesh, that is, a Man. Thus, Jesus Christ is perfect God and perfect Man in one Divine Person. (Lk 1:26-38; Jn 1:1-14; Php 2:5-7)

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ST JOHN'S MONTHLY COMMUNITY OUTREACH



This month, through the efforts of our Sr. ACRY, we will be collecting donations for the **Orthodox Christian Network**. (This is the site that Father uses to get the "Children's Word" that is distributed each week.) The Orthodox Christian Network (OCN) is an official agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America. **MyOCN is YourOCN!** Visit www.myocn.net to see the variety of materials they provide online! *Thank you in advance for your prayers and offerings this month!*

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ORTHODOXY AROUND DA 'BURGH



Orthodox Food Pantry – Volunteers are needed every Thursday from 5:15 to 6:45 to assist at **St Cyril of White Lake Food Pantry** based out of St. Mary's Orthodox Church (105 S. 19th St, Pittsburgh, Pa). If interested, please contact Fr Patrick at 412-431-6428.

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Orthodoxy on Tap - The Pittsburgh Orthodox Young Adults (POYA) will gather on **Sunday, January 21st** at 6:00 pm on the Waterfront (specific location TBD). All young adults ages 21-39(ish) are welcome! *Save the date!*

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The International Soup Sampling to benefit IOCC (*International Orthodox Christian Charities*) will be on Saturday, **February 3rd** from 11am-2pm at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church in Mt. Lebanon across from the Galleria Mall (123 Gilkeson Rd., Pittsburgh, Pa 15228). *Sample five homemade soups for \$10 and then take a quart home for a \$10 donation.* Youth Groups & Children's Ministries

from all jurisdictions will be assembling health kits. All area youth are invited! Donations are needed to purchase bulk health kit supplies. To sponsor kits, call Nick Terezis at 724-282-5198. You can register to purchase soup at: iocc.org/Pittsburgh

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A Journey through Serbian Song & Dance: "Ruku pod ruku" - Saturday, **February 17th**, 7pm at the University of Pittsburgh, Bellefield Hall. Featuring performances by: *Sumadija Serbian Folk Dance Ensemble (from Milwaukee, WI), Academy of Serbian Folk Dancing Association "Miroslav Bata Marcetic" (Toronto, Canada), and Carica Milica Choir (Pittsburgh, PA). Tickets for the concert are \$15. Tickets for the concert and the post-concert reception at the Serb Club are \$20. (23% of our online ticket sales profits go towards LifeLine Humanitarian Organization - Chicago!) Tickets may be purchased at: www.talentshadows.events/event/sumadija-and-academy-of-serbian-folk-dance. For further information and questions, please call Aleksandra Sretenović at 440-520-9064.

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LIVING ORTHODOXY

meditating on the awesome miracle of the Son of God taking on flesh and becoming one of us

The Triune Mystery of Our Salvation: Incarnation, Cross, & Resurrection

Source: "Life Transfigured" A Journal of Orthodox Nuns, Vol. 49 #3, Nativity 2017.

www.orthodoxmonasteryellwoodcity.org/life-transfigured

When reading the names of these three feasts, three very different images come to mind—especially as we remember the scenes of each in iconography. And yet, praying before the icon of the Nativity, we are able to glimpse in it all three of these dimensions of our salvation.

In his book *Meditations for Advent: Preparing for Christ's Birth* (V. Papavassiliou, Ancient Faith Publishing, 2013, p.104) the author tells us that "the crib in which the baby Jesus is laid is depicted as a tomb, and the swaddling clothes resemble a burial shroud....The Church makes a comparison between the virgin womb and the virgin tomb, between the cave in which Christ is born and the grave from which He rises again."

Holy Week and Pascha are months away and yet listening to the Nativity hymnody we can hear resounding echoes of Pascha. Consider this striking comparison of the Royal Hours hymns for Christmas Eve and Holy and Great Friday (the first verse of each couplet is from Nativity, the second from Pascha):

Today, He Who holds creation in the palm of His hand is born of a virgin.

Today, He Who hung the earth upon the waters is hung upon a tree.

He Who in His being cannot be handled is as a mortal wrapped in swaddling-clothes.

He Who wraps the heavens in clouds is wrapped in the purple of mockery.

He Who rained manna on the people in the desert is nourished with milk from the breast.

He Who freed Adam in the Jordan is struck on the face.

The Bridegroom of the Church summons the Magi.

The Bridegroom of the Church is affixed to the Cross with nails.

The Son of the Virgin accepts their gifts.

The Son of the Virgin is pierced by a spear.

We worship Your birth, O Christ.

We worship Your Passion, O Christ.

Show us also Your divine Theophany.

Show us also Your glorious Resurrection.



From the cave, the cross and the tomb, the Light of the King of Glory is revealed: “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it....The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world” (Jn. 1:4-5, 9). The Light of the Incarnate Christ is the same Light that “illuminates all” in the Presanctified Liturgy, and the Light “never overtaken by night” on Pascha.

In awe, with the shepherds and the wise men, “we tremble at this Light that chases out the darkness and the cold....The Babe in the manger is asleep and resting, but soon He will awaken and with His wounded love will warm the frozen earth” (V. Guroian, *Inheriting Paradise: Meditations on Gardening*. Eerdmans Publ., 1999, pp.86, 92).

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Keep Bringing Them

From the blog, *Orthodox Motherhood*, by Sarah Wright
On Christmas morning, our family walked over to the chapel at Holy Cross seminary. My husband went back to serve and was told that our oldest son, Andrew, could also serve that day. It was Andrew's first time serving and he was so excited to help out.
Now, when Andrew was two-years-old and literally running around the church throughout the entire

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14 New Year’s Resolutions for Orthodox Christians (1st in a series)

From the Blog, *Roads from Emmaus*,
by Fr Andrew Stephen Damick

Around this time of year, many people start thinking about ways they can change for the better. While New Year’s resolutions are not particularly a feature of the Orthodox faith, change certainly is, and resolving to change based on times and seasons is certainly part of our liturgical tradition. So adapting the cultural custom of New Year’s resolutions to become a better Orthodox Christian seems perfectly fine to me. Anyway, here are some suggestions for Orthodox Christians resolving to change for the better in the New Year, things every Orthodox Christian can do.

(Obviously, adjust as needed according to the direction of your father-confessor and pastor.)

1. get serious about coming to church (more).
While many who read this are no doubt at least every-Sunday attenders at church, it is statistically true that **only 26% of Orthodox Christians in America come to church weekly** (the statistic is drawn from people who are actually involved in parish life, not from anyone who was ever baptized Orthodox; that statistic would be much worse). That’s really a horrible percentage. If

A traditional and much-loved British carol, “The Holly and the Ivy,” also resonates these themes:

The holly bears a blossom, as white as lily flower,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ, to be our sweet Savior.

The holly bears a berry, as red as any blood,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ for to do us sinners good.

The holly bears a prickle, as sharp as any thorn,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ on Christmas Day in the morn.

The holly bears a bark, as bitter as any gall,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ for to redeem us all.

Fr. Thomas Hopko notes that we celebrate the Incarnation “in the darkness of wintertime, when the light is just starting to shine more brightly and the nights begin to shorten” (*The Winter Pascha*, SVS Press, 1984, pp.10, 49). The Light of Christmas foreshadows the Light of Pascha!

Christ is born! Glorify Him!
+ Christ is risen! Indeed He is risen!

Liturgy, I could never have imagined that one day he would so calmly and seriously perform the duties of an altar server.
My point? Mamas, if your young ones are causing you to spend more time outside of the Liturgy than inside of it, do not despair. **Keep bringing them. Keep being faithful.** Even when it is hard and seems to bear no fruit. Because God is at work in ways that we cannot see or understand. And his ways are beautiful. Praise the Lord.

2018 Theophany Home Blessings

Home blessings will take place from
January 19 thru February 18.

It would be ideal if I were able to come between 9:30am and 4pm on a weekday. If this is not possible, some Saturday and Sunday times will be available. I will call or email you a couple days before I will be in your area.

How to prepare for your house blessing?

- ✓ Have a white cloth placed on the table,
- ✓ with an icon and/or a cross,
- ✓ and a candle to be lit.
- ✓ please have a list of names of all those who live in the home (including your pets)
- ✓ and a list of the departed members of your family and friends you would wish to have remembered during the service.
- ✓ (I will provide the Holy Water.)

During the service, please have all televisions and radios turned off with cell phones placed on vibrate. I look forward to spending this time with your family! - Fr Dave

you're not coming to church weekly, why not? There are probably some good reasons out there, but most of those 74% almost certainly do not have good reasons. **If you're not serious about coming to church weekly, it's time to get serious.** This is eternal life we're talking about, not a religious club.

And if you're already coming to church weekly, **consider adding at least one service per week.** Most parishes are doing Vespers and/or Matins at least once a week (usually Saturday night or Sunday morning). What are you normally doing when those services are going on? Your priest and other parishioners are there praying, including praying for you. Why don't you join them? You won't regret it.

And while we're at it...

2. come to church on time.

It's kind of an in-joke that Orthodox people are always late to church. But why is that?

We too often accept the excuse that we function on "Greek time" or "Syrian time," etc., but even Greeks and Syrians (and whoever else; insert your preferred culture here) seem to be able to adapt to show up to nearly everything else on time. Why can we show up on time for work, sporting events, movies, doctor's appointments, etc., but reserve our tardiness for an encounter with the King of Kings?

There are some kinds of events for which it doesn't much matter if you come at a particular time—parties, various kinds of social gatherings,

etc.—**but church services aren't one of them.** There is a definite beginning and a definite ending. If you show up late, you are late. And if you leave early, you are skipping out.

What you show up on time for tells the world what you find important. It's what you find indispensable. And when you show up late to church, it also tells your fellow parishioners that you don't consider church very important.

And it also communicates it to your kids. And you can be assured that they will imitate you.

Come at least 10 minutes early. That says you are serious. You know what also says you're serious?

To Be Continued With...

- 3. *tithe...*
- 4. *pray at home...*
- 5. *sing along at church. and stand more...*
- 6. *memorize a psalm...*
- 7. *encourage your priest...*
- 8. *invite someone to church...*
- 9. *visit a monastery...*
- 10. *read the old testament...*
- 11. *attend an adult education class...*
- 12. *volunteer...*
- 13. *go to confession...*
- 14. *read a spiritual book...*

Source: <https://blogs.ancientfaith.com/roadsfromemmaus/2014/12/14/14-new-years-resolutions-orthodox-christians/>

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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, Saturdays during fasting periods from 11:00am to 1:00 pm, OR by appointment.
Holy Communion/Eucharist – The reception of the Holy Eucharist is encouraged by 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 – Please consult Father for 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 not performed during fasting periods and certain Feast Days. Please consult Father ASAP for 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.

"The cremation of bodies is not a Christian act. It is a custom of modern times. The body of a Christian has been sanctified with the Grace of the Holy Spirit, and as such may not be burned. God did not create our bodies for burning." - Elder Thaddeus of Vitovnica

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SPIRITUAL VITAMINS FOR THE WEEK

SUNDAY – 1ST DAY OF CHRISTMAS

"The Virgin today gives birth to the highest Being; and the earth provides the Inaccessible One with a cave. The angels with the shepherds glorify Him, the Wise Men journey with the star, because for our sake is born a little Child, the Pre-Eternal God." – *Kondak* for the Feast of The Nativity

MONDAY – 2ND DAY OF CHRISTMAS

"Only those who have interior prayer and watch over their souls receive the gifts of grace." +*St. Seraphim of Sarov*

TUESDAY – 3RD DAY OF CHRISTMAS

"He who has realized love for God in his heart is tireless, as Jeremiah says, in his pursuit of the Lord his God, and bears every hardship, reproach and insult nobly, never thinking the least evil of anyone." +*St Maximos the Confessor*



WEDNESDAY – 4TH DAY OF CHRISTMAS

“He who desires to see the Lord within himself endeavors to purify his heart by the unceasing remembrance of God.” +*St. Isaac the Syrian*

THURSDAY – 5TH DAY OF CHRISTMAS

“We will recognize that, whether we like it or not, what happens happens; to be upset about it is useless, and moreover deprives us of the crown of patience and shows us to be in revolt against the will of God.” +*St. Peter of Damaskos*

FRIDAY – 6TH DAY OF CHRISTMAS

“The nurturing of a child begins with pregnancy. If a pregnant mother is agitated and worried, the embryo she's carrying in her womb is agitated. If the mother prays and lives a spiritual life, the child in her womb is sanctified.” +*St. Paisios of Mount Athos*

SATURDAY – 7TH DAY OF CHRISTMAS

“Fear of God is fear of separation from God.” – *Elder Sergei of Vanves*

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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... Mildred, Anna Mae, Julie, Jane, Eleanor D., Mark, Viola, Juliana, Katie, Kenneth, Michael, Roberta, Fredrick, Helen B., Wendy, Gary, Barbara, Matthew, Patricia, Lino, Fr. Jonathan Tobias, Pañi Marsha Tobias, Mary ...*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... Bishop Gregory, Stephen, David, Joshua, Anastasia, Nicholas, Cassandra, Alexander, Nancy, Amee, Andrea, Jason, Tyrone, Sarah, John S., *and our Church Council, Curators, and Relocation Committee:* Matthew, John, Timothy, Patricia, Theresa, Lawrence, Donald, Jane, Cynthia, Katherine, Eleanor, Kenneth, Gina, Robert, Jillian, Wendy, Olga, John, Melanie, Michael, John, Richard, John, Margaret, Sarah, Patricia, *and for those working towards our Community Outreach, Orthodox Christian Network (OCN) ...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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Birthday Prayers for... Steven Buhonick (1/7) and Jason Hudak (1/9) ...*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 those preparing for Marriage... Nicole & Seminarian Nathaniel and Kristyn & Seminarian Vince ...*through the prayers of Sts. Adrian & Natalia & all Holy Martyrs.*

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For Expectant Mothers... Pañi Ileana, Amee, Ashley, Katie, Meredith, Brittany, Harmonie ...*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... ...*through the prayers of St George, the Great-Martyr & Wonderworker.*

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

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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. Memory eternal!*

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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 PRAYERS OF THE WEEK:

A Prayer Upon Entering a Church

I will come into Your house in the greatness of Your mercy: and in fear I will worship toward Your holy temple. Lead me, O Lord, in Your righteousness because of my enemies; make Your way straight before me, that with a clear mind I may glorify You forever, One Divine Power worshiped in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

A Prayer Upon Leaving a Church: The Hymn of Saint Simeon

Now let Your servant depart in peace, O Master, according to Your Word. For my eyes have seen Your Salvation, which You have prepared before the face of all people. The Light of revelation for the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people, Israel. Amen.

