



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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December 9, 2018

Volume IV

28th Sunday after Pentecost / 10th Lukan Sunday / Venerable James the Solitary of Syria (457)

9:20am – Canon of Nativity & Carols (Kol'ady); 9:30 – Divine Liturgy Tone 3 Liturgical Color: **Purple**
Epistle: Colossians 1:12-18; Gospel: Luke 13:10-17

Additional collection for our Capital Improvement Fund / Special Parish Meeting



SERVICES, SAINTS, AND READINGS FOR THE WEEK

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

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

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

# Monday	Great Martyr James the Persian (421)	Heb 3:5-11, 17-19	Luke 19:37-44
# Tuesday	Martyr Stephen the New of Mt. St. Auxentius (767)	Hebrews 4:1-13	Luke 19:45-48
# Wednesday	Venerable Acacius of Mt. Latros (6th c.)	Hebrews 5:11-6:8	Luke 20:1-8
# Thursday	Holy and All-praised Apostle Andrew the First-called (62)	Hebrews 7:1-6	Luke 20:9-18
# Friday	Prophet Nahum (7th c. B.C.)	Hebrews 7:18-25	Luke 20:19-26
# Saturday	Prophet Habakkuk (Abbacum) (7th c. B.C.)	Hebrews 13:17-21	Luke 6:17-23

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

Sunday, December 16 – 29th Sun. after Pentecost / 11th Sun. of Luke / Prophet Zephaniah (635 B.C.)

9:20am – Canon of Nativity & Carols (Kol'ady); 9:30 – Divine Liturgy Tone 4 Liturgical Color: **Purple**
Epistle: 1 Timothy 1:15-17; Gospel: Luke 18:18-27

YOUTH Sunday / St Nicholas Breakfast following the Divine Liturgy

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A Warm Welcome To Our Visitors!

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

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

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

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LOOKING AHEAD LOCALLY



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

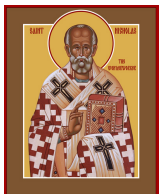
Wednesday, December 19 – 9:30am Divine Liturgy for the Feast of St. Nicholas

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

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

Sunday, December 30 – Reception of Ashley Wertz & Patrick Wertz into the Orthodox Faith /
Additional collection for our Community Outreach

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PARISH BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS



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

Coffee Social Ministry / St. Nicholas Breakfast

– Next week is our annual St. Nicholas Breakfast in our church hall. Help from the whole community in cleaning up will be much appreciated! The following week we will return to our family offered or community Coffee Socials. We need more families to step up and host a coffee social! Please consider being a steward of your time to this important ministry of the church!

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Thank You! to a former parishioner who has offered a donation of half of our first month's rent in Wexford!

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 on Saturdays Dec. 8th, 22nd, & Jan. 5th, by appointment, or after ALL services. 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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Weekly Candle Intentions/Memorials were offered last week by Tim Martin; Viola Peifer; Melanie Shuster; Lawrence Martin; Olga Radick; Joanne Nelson; Theresa Sharpless; Patty Watson; Rich Mirilovich; Cindy Pavilonis.

"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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Thank You! to all who helped with our Winter Church Clean-Up & Nativity Decorating yesterday!

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Relocation Updates – Our original goal of moving to Wexford following Sunday, January 13th is not going to happen. The start date in Wexford is still not set as the attorneys are still finalizing the lease and construction has not begun.

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A little thought about financial responsibility of parishioners: According to PA state law, the members of a church are not personally liable for the debts of the church. *Out of our stewardship and commitment to Christ though, we are each responsible for paying off the debts of the church.*

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Please continue to go to the Relocation Committee or Father with any thoughts or concerns about our next steps in our journey together. *(Committee includes: Sharon P, Larry M, Carol L, John K, John Righetti, Lynn M, Matt P, Peggy Rusnak, Rich M, Sharon D, Tim M, & Todd Tusick)*

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Snowed In? Physically unable to make it to church? – Our diocese is blessed with the opportunity to watch our Cathedral's Divine Liturgy every Sunday at 9am. Of course, the best scenario is to attend the Divine Liturgy and receive the Eucharist. When limitations occur, please consider taking the time Sunday morning to pray with our brothers and sisters via the web. Go to www.acrod.org/organizations/cathedral/live/ to watch the *live broadcast*.

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

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ORTHODOXY AROUND DA 'BURGH



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

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Christmas Sale – Our sister parish of **St John's in Ambridge** is currently taking orders for their Christmas Sale on **December 22nd**. Orders can be picked up between 10a and 4p. Flyers with the menu are located in the church hall. Call or Text Tim Polas at 724-462-3942 with questions or to pre-order.

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Our Stewardship Gift To God

Stewardship/Dues:	\$ 120
Candles/Small C./Eternal Lamp/C. box:	\$ 136
Envelopes: Sunday/Feast Day/Special:	\$ 750
Parish House Rental Offering:	\$ 140
Matching Community Outreach:	\$ 625
Total Collections:	\$ 1771
Relocation Fund:	\$ 150

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

November Financial Report:

Donation Income = \$ 5369.91

***Expenses = \$ 5139**

Net Income = \$ 231

**details listed on the church hall bulletin board*
Average at Sunday Divine Liturgies: 42



ACRY Annual / Diocesan Yearbook -

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

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Pill Bottle Collection –

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

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Coffee Social Steward Schedule

December 16: **St. Nicholas Breakfast**
December 23: *Available to you*
December 30: *Available to you*

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

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Visit Our Diocese On-Line

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



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

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Orthodoxy on Tap - We are starting the new year off trying a couple different things - The Pittsburgh Orthodox Young Adults (POYA) will have the “Orthodoxy on Tap” on a weeknight and in a different location. Plan to be there **Thursday, January 3rd** at 7pm at The Clubhouse Gibsonia (5301 Ranalli Drive, Gibsonia, PA 15044 / 724-449-9090 / www.theclubhousegibsonia.com). Guest speaker will be Fr Stevo Rocknage who will have an interactive discussion on “*The Great Commission Of Our Lord: What Does It Mean For Your Life?*”. All young adults 21-39 are welcome! Come for fellowship and to learn more about your faith!

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LIVES OF THE SAINTS

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

The Monk Alypios the Pillar-Dweller
Commemorated on Dec 2 / Nov 26

The Monk Alypios the Pillar-Dweller was born in the city of Adrianopolis in Paphlagonia. His mother, a Christian, early on became a widow, and she gave over her son for education to bishop Theodore, while she herself, having distributed her substance to the poor, began to asceticise nearby the church and was deigned worthy of the vocation of deaconess.

Saint Alypios from the time of his early years wanted to devote his life to God and yearned for the solitary life, although bishop Theodore would not give him permission to do so. One time, when Saint Alypios was accompanying his Vladyka to Constantinople, the holy Martyress Euthymia appeared to him in a vision, summoning Saint Alypios to return to Adrianopolis and found a church in her name. On the means offered by believers in Adrianopolis, Saint Alypios did build a church in the name of the holy Martyress Euthymia, on the spot of a dilapidated pagan temple, infested by legions of devils. Alongside the church, and under the open sky, atop a pagan tomb the saint erected a pillar. For fifty-three years



the Monk Alypios asceticised upon the pillar, praying to God and teaching the many that came to him. The demons, which infested the pagan cemetery, by night fell upon the ascetic and pelted him with stones. Saint Alypios, wanting nothing to stand in the way of the attacks of the spirits of darkness, then even destroyed the light lean-to which protected him from the rain and wind. In face of the conquering steadfastness of the saint, the demons quit this place forever, which had been sanctified by his deed of voluntary martyrdom. A mere 14 years before his death Saint Alypios was no longer able to stand and he was compelled through the weakness of his legs to lay upon his side, enduring grievous sufferings with humble thankfulness. Around the pillar of the monk gradually there arose two monasteries: on the one side – a men's monastery, and on the other – a women's monastery. The Monk Alypios introduced for both monasteries strict ustavs (monastic rules) and until his death he directed both monasteries. The monk died in the year 640, at age 118. The body of the venerable pillar-dweller was buried in the church founded by him in honour of the holy Martyress Euthymia. The relics of the saint of God healed many that came in faith.

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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: Colossians 1:12-18

¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. ¹³ He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

The Supremacy of Christ

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; ¹⁶ for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent.

Gospel: Luke 13:10-17

Jesus Heals a Crippled Woman

¹⁰ Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. ¹¹ And there was a woman who had had a spirit of infirmity for eighteen years; she was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. ¹² And when Jesus saw her, he called her and said to her, “Woman, you are freed from your infirmity.” ¹³ And he laid his hands upon her, and immediately she was made straight, and she praised God. ¹⁴ But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the sabbath, said to the people, “There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be healed, and not on the sabbath day.” ¹⁵ Then the Lord answered him, “You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his ass from the manger, and lead it away to water it? ¹⁶ And ought not this woman,

a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?" ¹⁷As he said this, all his adversaries were put to shame; and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.

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LIVING ORTHODOXY

Shame: Holding on to guilt and shame

There are many people who cling to memories of past sins, holding on to guilt and shame, reliving things long ago confessed, as though they happened yesterday. They struggle with regrets, often revisiting shame as though they were archeologists, digging for historical artifacts that must be preserved.

Such is not the case with God, for His interest is not in our past, but in our future. Confessed sins are counted as nothing, for God looks with interest on the transformed heart that has been made anew, with contrition. God looks to our future, for His loving mercy is upon the man who has confessed his sin, and that sin is counted as

nothing. God is interested in what we are doing with our future, and as a loving Father takes pleasure in the steps we take in our journey towards Him.

For us to look back is to reject the very role of confession, for if we cling to past regrets, we are rejecting the very meaning of repentance, which means a change of heart and taking a direction that is all about the future.

Transformation is not something that happens in an instant, but is a journey towards holiness, and as long as we look to the future with hope, transformation of the heart continues, and our past becomes but a fading memory.

Love in Christ, Abbot Tryphon

ORTHODOX WORD OF THE WEEK

Philotimo – (from the Greek words ‘filos’ = friend; and ‘timi’ = honor) “a perfect word, one that embodies character, duty, honor, a higher calling, compassion, empathy, humility, love of family and country, a way of life, a feeling towards humanity, knowing to do what is right and honorable even in facing personal peril, a truly unique word.”

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SPIRITUAL VITAMINS FOR THE WEEK

SUNDAY

On Philotimo: “The righteous Christian does not practice good acts for his own benefit, i.e. in order to be rewarded or to avoid hell and gain paradise, but rather because he prefers good to evil. Everything else is a natural consequence of the good that fills our soul without having asked for it. This way, good has dignity; otherwise, it originates from the cheap attitude of ‘give and take.’” +St. Paisios

MONDAY

"Think of the Father as a spring of life begetting the Son like a river and the Holy Ghost like a sea, for the spring and the river and sea are all one nature. Think of the Father as a root, and of the Son as a branch, and the Spirit as a fruit, for the substance in these three is one. The Father is a sun with the Son as rays and the Holy Ghost as heat." +St. John of Damascus

TUESDAY

“In order to live spiritually and draw breath from grace, we must continually exhale the ashes of sin.” +St. Ignatius Brianchaninov

WEDNESDAY

“Only the foolish think that suffering is evil. A sensible man knows that suffering is not evil but only the manifestation of evil and healing from evil. Only sin in a man is a real evil, and there is no evil outside sin. Everything else that men generally call evil is not, but is a bitter medicine to heal from evil. The sicker the man, the more bitter the medicine that the doctor prescribes for him. At times, even, it seems to a sick man that the medicine is worse and more bitter than the sickness itself! And so it seems at times to the sinner: the suffering is harder and more bitter than the sin committed. But this is only an illusion – a very strong self-delusion. There is no suffering in the world that could be anywhere near as hard and destructive as sin is. All the suffering borne by men and nations is none other than the abundant healing that eternal Mercy offers to men and nations to save them from eternal death. Every sin, however small, would inevitably bring death if Mercy were not to allow suffering in order to sober men up from the inebriation of sin; for the healing that comes through suffering is brought about by the gracefilled power of the Holy and Life-giving Spirit.” +St. Nikolai Velimirovich

THURSDAY

"The foundation of prayer is the yearning of the image towards its prototype" +St. John Kronstadt

FRIDAY

“When someone is cursing, blaspheming, or being impudent, it is better to pretend to be busy and not listening and to say the Jesus Prayer. For, if he sees that you are paying attention to him, he may continue to curse all the more, and you can then become a cause for his demonic influence. If, however, one is not impudent but is conscientious and curses out of a bad habit, you can say something to him. If, again, one is conscientious but has a great deal of egoism, you must be careful not to speak sternly to him but, rather, you have to be as humble as you can and speak to him with love.” +St Paisios

SATURDAY

“Among the virtues there is not only an ontological order, but also a chronological one. The first among them is faith.” +Venerable Justin of Chelije in Serbia

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PRAYER CORNER

Our Parish Prayer List for Special Intentions and Other Needs *

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

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

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For the Special Intentions of... Metropolitan Gregory, Marianne, Steve, Christopher, Nicholas, Stephen, David, Anastasia, Nicholas, Cassandra, Alexander, Nancy, Andrea, Jason, Tyrone, Sarah, John S., Amee, Joshua, John, Kathryn, Rose *our seminarians:* Michael and Daniel, *and our Church Council, Curators, and Relocation Committee:* Matthew, Lawrence, Timothy, Patricia, Theresa, Rich, Gina, Robert, Donald, Jane, Eleanor, Steven, Kenneth, Jillian, John, Wendy, John, Olga, John, Melanie, Michael, John, John, Margaret, Todd *and for those who labor towards our Community Outreach, National ACRY ...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): Andrew Mirilovich - Holy and All-praised Apostle Andrew the First-called (12/13) *(contact Fr Dave with your date)*

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Birthday Prayers for... Deborah Brancho (12/9), *Father's God-sister,* Lauren Babbie (12/12), Brian Gogal (12/15) ...*May God allow them to grow in peace and love all the days of their lives and may He grant them many and blessed years! Na Mnohaja I Blahaja L'ita!*

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

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For those preparing for Marriage... ...*through the prayers of Sts. Adrian & Natalia and all Holy Martyrs.*

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

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

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

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

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* This is to be used for the special intentions of our brothers and sisters and can be inserted as a prayer itself into our daily prayers. Please let Fr. Dave know if you would wish to make additions or subtractions (in the case of answered prayers) to our Parish List. The words of the Gospel are true: **it is good to pray for one another.** Let this be a place where we lay out our concerns and beg the help of our brothers & sisters in Christ. This prayer list is NOT limited to Orthodox Christians.

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DEVOTIONAL PRAYER FOR THE NATIVITY FAST:



Prayer for Peace - 2018 NATIVITY FAST PRAYER CHALLENGE

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



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

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

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