



ST. 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*
 Subdeacon Ryan Ferko
 Matthew Peifer, Stephen Brancho, & John Radick, *Cantors*
 Lawrence Martin, *Parish Council President*
www.facebook.com/pg/St-John-the-Baptist-Orthodox-Church-of-Northside-Pittsburgh-169297619784149

2688 California Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pa 15212
 412-748-0148, *Talk or Text*
OrthodoxPittsburgh1932@gmail.com
www.OrthodoxPittsburgh.com
Instagram: SJB_Orthodox_Pittsburgh



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! 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 again soon! **If you have any questions** in regards to our worship or Orthodoxy, please see Fr. Dave.

BULLETIN IS OFFERED:

In memory of
 +George Huron
 on the 59th anniversary
 of his passing.
 May his memory be eternal!
 Vičnaya Pamyat!

SERVICES FOR THE WEEK

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6 #NATIVITY FAST

26th Sunday after Pentecost
 St. Amphilochius
 9:15 – 3rd Hour; 9:30 – Divine Liturgy
 Epistle: Ephesians 5:8-19
 Gospel: Luke 12:16-21 (9th Sunday of Luke)
 Panachida for the newly departed

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8 #NATIVITY FAST

9:30am Akathist Hymn to St. Nicholas
(please enter from the side door)

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10 #NATIVITY FAST

9:30 Moleben of the Nativity Fast

Saturdays December 12 and 19 #NATIVITY FAST

11a-1p Mystery of Holy Confessions offered

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13 #NATIVITY FAST

27th Sunday after Pentecost
 Holy Apostle Andrew
 9:15 – Nativity Canon & Carols (*Kol'ady*);
 9:30 – Divine Liturgy
 Epistle: Ephesians 6:10-17
 Gospel: 13:10-17 (10th Sunday of Luke)
 Tone 2; Liturgical Color: **Purple**
 Panachida for +Olga Radick (40-day)

Diocesan Day of Prayer:

Continuous Moleben for the Nativity Fast
THIS Thursday, December 10th,

from **8am to 8pm** Diocesan parishes will be offering continuous Molebens to increase prayer during this troublesome time. (North Side will be at 9:30am.) They can be accessed on the Diocesan Facebook page.

BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wed.)

+++ +++ +

Subdeacon Ryan Ferko – We welcome Subdeacon Ryan Ferko into our parish family! He has recently moved to Pittsburgh (Cranberry) and wished to transfer to our parish. Ryan works at Amazon as an Operations Manager. Welcome to our parish family, Many Years!

+++ +++ +

Parish Precautions – If you were curious, here are a few of the precautions that the parish has been taking and will continue to take as we err on the side of caution with Covid:

- the open pews, door handles, and light switches are sanitized weekly,
- pans on top of the radiators are being filled with water to increase the humidity in the air (denser air falls to the ground faster taking germs with it)
- the ceiling fans run on low pushing the heat down (and preventing the air to be stagnant)
- 4 windows are cracked in the nave of the church (bringing in fresh air)
- we also continue to wear our masks and keep safe-distancing

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Father or a member of the Parish Council. And as always, if you are feeling ill or have a fever, please stay home and let Father know so that we can pray for you!

+++ +++ +

Nativity Commemorations – We offer you the opportunity to sponsor items to be used for Nativity as commemorations: *anonymously, in*

memory of departed loves ones, OR for the health of loved ones. If you are interested in making any of these commemorations, please sign up on the sheet in the Vestibule (or email Fr. Dave) and give an *additional free-will stewardship offering* to the Church.

+++ +++ +

Godparents / Godchild(ren) Sunday – Our Annual Godparent Sunday celebration will be **Sunday, DECEMBER 20th,** a day to honor them and to encourage the growth of this spiritual relationship. Personally invite your Godparents (or those of your children) and/or invite your Godchildren to come to Church and share this day with you. Please prepare yourself and join them in receiving the Eucharist (*Holy Communion*) on this day. *We need to keep the Spiritual bonds alive with our God-parents and God-children. Even more important, we need to keep our life united with our Lord, Jesus Christ. This unites us with one another.*

+++ +++ +

Nativity Fast - This Fast runs for 40-days until the Eve of the Nativity on Wednesday, January 6. As in Great Lent, you should establish for yourself a rule of fasting and stick to it. It is often said that the Nativity Fast is so much more difficult because of the nature of society around us, but we can still keep the spirit of the Fast. Everyone should try, at a minimum, to keep Monday, Wednesday & Friday as fast days, no matter what is happening on the 'new calendar.' If you have questions, please talk with Father Dave. **Prepare the Manger of your Soul for the coming of the new borne Messiah!**

A REMINDER TO MAKE TIME FOR YOUR NATIVITY FAST CONFESSION

"Lord, if you will, you can make me clean." (Lk. 5:12)

Fr. Dave will be available for confessions after ALL services, from 11-1 on Saturdays Dec. 12 & 19, or by appointment.

As we prepare for the Feast of the Nativity, it is time to prepare the "Manger of our soul" for the coming of the Messiah.

"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

+++ +++ +

OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD

Stewardship:	\$ 70
Candles/Eternal Lamp Offerings:	\$ 87
Envelope Stewardship:	\$ 257
Community Outreach:	\$ 300

Total Collections: \$ 714

Relocation Fund: \$ 70

We must give in trust that God will use it to produce fruit: "He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your sowing (resources) and increase the harvest of your righteousness (benevolence)." - 2 Cor. 9:10

November Financial Report:

General Offerings = \$ 5453.45

***Expenses = \$ 3901.83**

Net Income = \$ 1551.62

**details listed on the church hall bulletin board*
Average at Sunday Divine Liturgies: 19

+ + + + +

Weekly Candle Intentions / Memorials were offered last week by Joanne Nelson; Shuster Family; Tim Martin; Lawrence Martin; Eleanor Sanger; Patty Watson; 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

The **Eternal Lamp** was offered last week by Susan Waugh in Memory of her mother, +Anna Kostelnik. May Her Memory Be Eternal! Vičnaya Pamyat!

+ + + + +

Anonymous \$10,000 Donation – Thanks be to God, we received an anonymous \$10,000 donation this past week for our parish general fund! Their generosity is amazing. May God bless them with good health and a long life! Many years!

+ + + + +

Weekly Offerings to God – During this time, if you are not coming to the church, we request that all weekly donations be mailed to Tim Martin (2225 McAleer Rd., Sewickley, PA 15143) For our parish to continue it's ministries, outreach, and general bill paying, we need your generosity to continue.

+ + + + +

Live-Broadcast – We are blessed with the opportunity to watch our Diocesan Cathedral's services online (9:00 am Sunday Divine Liturgy). The best scenario is to attend the Divine Liturgy and receive the Eucharist, but in the current scenario, please take the time Sunday morning and throughout the week to pray via the *live broadcast* on the web at: www.acrod.org/organizations/cathedral/live/

+ + + + +

LOOKING AHEAD LOCALLY

✠ **Tuesday, December 15** – 9:30am Moleben of the Nativity Fast

✠ **Thursday, December 17** – 9:30am Nativity Fast Paraklis to the Theotokos

✠ **Friday, December 18** – 7pm Vespers for the Feast of St. Nicholas at St. Nicholas (903 Ann Street, Homestead, PA)

✠ **Saturdays December 19** – 9:30 Divine Liturgy on the Feast of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker 11a-1p Mystery of Holy Confessions offered

+ + + + +

DEC. COMMUNITY OUTREACH

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

- Having a monetary collection for the **ACRY Stewardship Campaign** (our community outreach collection at the end of the month). In this 3rd year of having their Stewardship Campaign, the National ACRY is setting a goal of raising \$10,000 to help support the ACRY Scholarship Fund, Camp Nazareth, Youth Workers' Conference Fund, Ambassador Fund, and Lenten Retreat Fund,
- **Food Drive Project** for Neighborhood Resilience Project (formerly FOCUS Pittsburgh). *Please bring in non-perishable food items: canned fruits and vegetables, cereals, canned meats, soups, oatmeal, pasta, peanut butter and jelly, and rice.*),
- And reaching out to **our homebound** parishioners.

Thank you in advance for your prayers and offerings this month!

ORTHODOXY AROUND THE 'BURGH AND OUR DIOCESE

SPF50 (Scripture, Prayer, Family): A Diocese Family Ministry - The 4th Issue of SPF50 is available! (If you are already participating, please contact Fr. Dave.) If you did not start with us on March 1, consider joining now. Make a commitment to reading Scripture and Praying together with your family. (Please contact Fr Dave to fill out the Commitment Card.) Visit the Diocesan SPF50 web page at www.acrod.org/ministries/acrod-family/spf50 to find out more about SPF50 and how to help your family read Scripture and Pray together at home.

+ + + + +

Christmas Food Festival at Holy Virgin Russian Orthodox Church (214 Mansfield Blvd., Carnegie, Pennsylvania 15106) will be on **December 12th**. Order in advance for pick-up only between 10a – 2p in the rear of the Church. Order at: <https://hvroc.org/foodfestival>

+ + + + +

VISIT OUR DIOCESE ON-LINE

Diocesan Website: www.acrod.org
Camp Nazareth: www.campnazareth.org
FB: www.facebook.com/acroddioecese
Twitter: twitter.com/acrodnews
YouTube: youtube.com/acroddioecese

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: Ephesians 5:8-19

⁸ for once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), ¹⁰ and try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹ Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹² For it is a shame even to speak of the things that they do in secret; ¹³ but when anything is exposed by the light it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light. ¹⁴ Therefore it is said, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light." ¹⁵ Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, ¹⁶ making the most of the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart.

+ + + + +

Gospel: Luke 12:16-21

¹⁶ And he told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man brought forth plentifully; ¹⁷ and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' ¹⁸ And he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns, and build larger ones; and there I will store all my grain

and my goods. ¹⁹ And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, be merry.' ²⁰ But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' ²¹ So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

LIVES OF THE SAINTS

Sainted Amphylokhios, Bishop of Iconeia
Commemorated on Dec 6 / Nov 23

St. Amphilochius was a Bishop born in Caesarea in Cappadocia, a city which has given the world some of the greatest teachers of the Orthodox Faith. He was first cousin to St. Gregory the Theologian and close friend to St. Basil the Great. He was their disciples and follower, having a like mind. St. Amphilochius toiled hard in the field of Christ. He lived in the wilderness as a strict ascetic for about 40 years, until the time when the Lord called him to the Episcopacy. He encountered angels, who called him directly to become a Bishop. He departed peacefully to the Lord in the year 394 AD.

ORTHODOX WORDS OF THE WEEK

AKATHIST – a hymn (*a song of praise or adoration*) dedicated to a saint, holy event, icon, or one of the persons of the Holy Trinity. The word akathist itself means "not sitting".

+ + +

MOLEBEN - a supplication prayer service in honor of either our Lord Jesus Christ, the Theotokos, or a particular saint or martyr. It is a Slavic service, but closely related to the Paraklis service.

+ + +

PARAKLIS – a service of supplication specifically for the living (*as opposed to a Panachida (Memorial Service), which is a supplication for the departed*). This service is most often addressed to the Theotokos (*the Virgin Mary*), but may be used to seek the intercessions of any saint. It is appropriate to be served at any time of need.

LIVING ORTHODOXY

The Poor and Hungry in Our Midst: And our response as authentic Orthodox Christians

The Church, if she is authentic in her Christian witness, must grapple with the challenges of society starting from its most marginalized sector. If the Church does not teach with a loud voice that the Nativity Fast is about more than refraining from certain foods, she will be failing in her duty to preach the fullness of Christ's Gospel. The Church's ministry must include service to the poor and downtrodden, for her role does not stop with her liturgical services, but begins there. Saint John Chrysostom teaches that fasting without accompanying good deeds is like a ship going from port to port without cargo. Saint John Chrysostom, perhaps the greatest preacher of all time, told us, "Do you wish to honor the Body of the Savior? Do not despise it when it is naked. Do not honor it in church with silk vestments while outside it is naked and numb with cold. He who said, "This is my body," and made it so by his word, is the same who said, 'You saw me hungry and you gave me no food. As you did it not to the least of these, you did it not to me.' Honor him then by sharing your property with the poor. For what God needs is not golden chalices but golden souls."

The Nativity Fast is the perfect time for us to enter into collaboration and support with charitable organizations. Every community has local food banks that are in desperate need of donated food, as the numbers of the poor and homeless grow at an astounding rate. Never before has there been a time when the Church and her people have been faced with a need that offers us the chance to commit to reflection on the cultural and spiritual issues related to charity. With the ever growing numbers of people who have found themselves without jobs, and those who are now facing homelessness because of the economic downturn, what with the closure of thousands of businesses and restaurants across the nation, it is increasingly necessary that we Orthodox Christians restore the centrality of acts

of charity for the poor in our midst.

"At the Last Judgement I will not be asked whether I satisfactorily practiced asceticism, nor how many bows I have made before the divine altar. I will be asked whether I fed the hungry, clothed the naked, visited the sick, and the prisoner in his jail. That is all I will be asked (Saint Maria of Paris)."

With love in Christ, Abbot Tryphon

"A man is not saved by having once shown mercy to someone, although, if he scorns someone but once, he merits eternal fire. For 'hungered' and 'thirsty' is said not of one occasion, not of one day, but of the whole life. In the same way 'ye gave me meat', 'ye gave me drink', 'ye clothed me', and so on, does not indicate one incident, but a constant attitude to everyone. Our Lord Jesus Christ said that He Himself accepts such mercy from His slaves in the person of the needy." +St Sophrony of Essex

NATIVITY FAST BOOK SUGGESTION

LET ALL CREATION REJOICE: Reflections for Advent, the Nativity and Epiphany by Fr. Stavros N. Akrotirianakis (ISBN 9781498484077) Let All Creation Rejoice: Reflections for Advent, the Nativity and Epiphany is a series of short daily reflections on the scripture readings of the season, to be read during the Orthodox Nativity season between November 28 and January 20. Spending a few minutes each day reading and reflecting on these scriptures will not change your status. It will change your heart. You will better understand the "good news of a great joy," and why "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us."

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(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.

+ + + + +

For the Health of... Maryhelen, Brian, Fr. Andrew F. Irene, Kristina, Georgia, Steve, Pañi Kathy D., Fr. Patrick C., Fr. George L., Brian, Douglas, Dacia, Sean, Julia, Theresa, John, Susan, John, Alexandra 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.

+ + + + +

For the Special Intentions of... Metropolitan Eleanora, Mark, Michaleana, Dorell, Elizabeth, Gregory, Donald, Susan, Stephen, David, Anastasia, Nicholas, Cassandra, Alexander, Nancy, Andrea, Jason, Tyrone, Sarah, Amee, Joshua, John, Kathryn, Rose, Charles, Justin *our seminarians:* Daniel, Dylan, Thomas, and Nicholas *and our Church Council, Curators, and Relocation Committee:* Lawrence, Matthew, 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.*

+ + + + +

Patronal Feast Days (Name's Day): Caitlinn Brozell, Carol Lorenzi, and Katherine Schrmack - Great-martyr Catherine of Alexandria (12/7) *(contact Fr. Dave with your Patron Saint)*

+ + + + +

Birthday Prayers for... His Eminence, Metropolitan Gregory (12/7), Pañi Eleanor Herbert (12/8), Deborah Brancho (12/9), Jim Potoski (12/10), Alexis Jesko (12/9), *Father's God-sister,* Lauren Babbie (12/12) *...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!

+ + + + +

For our Catechumens & Inquirers...

Dustin, Stephen, Susan, Marilynn, John *...through the prayers of St. Paul the Apostle, St. Mary Magdalene, and St. John Maximovitch.*

+ + + + +

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

+ + + + +

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

+ + + + +

Anniversary Prayers for...

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

+ + + + +

For Pregnant Mothers... Elaine (*due in November*), Marilynn (*April*) *...through the prayers of St. Anna, the mother of the Virgin Mary, & St. Irene Chrysovalantou.*

+ + + + +

For the souls of the newly departed...

+Alexander Salio (11/30), +Mark Bodnar (11/19), +Donald Bodnar, Sr (11/18), +Olga Radick (11/4), +Metropolitan Maximos (11/2), 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*

+ + + + +

* 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.***

+++ +++ +++

**DEVOTIONAL PRAYER FOR THE
NATIVITY FAST**

**NATIVITY FAST
PRAYER CHALLENGE 2020**

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

O Physician of Souls and Bodies: we pray
that You continue to come to our aid now
during the global spread of the Coronavirus.

May the sick regain their strength and health,
and as they worry and grieve, defend them
from further illness and despair. We offer
thanks to You for those who have recovered.

Grant rest to those who have reposed. Be
with the families of those who are sick and
those who have died.

Heal us from our fear, which prevents
nations from working together and neighbors
from helping one another. Remove from us
all pride, which can make us claim immunity
to a disease that knows no borders.

Give wisdom and strength to our President,
our federal government, our state
governments, together with the leaders of all
nations, and give them foresight to act with
charity and true concern for the well-being
of the people they serve.

Be with the doctors, nurses, researchers and
all medical professionals who seek to heal
those affected and who put themselves at
risk in the process.

Whether we are home or abroad, surrounded
by many people suffering from this illness or
only a few, we pray that You stay by our
side and grant us courage and peace.

AMEN.