



# 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*  
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4th Sunday of Lent

**APRIL 11th**



**ST JOHN of the LADDER**

Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20  
 Gospel: Mark 9:17-31

Every time you climb stairs this week  
 ask St. John to help you reach  
 Paradise with the sign of the cross!

## SERVICES FOR THE WEEK

**SUNDAY, APRIL 11** #THE GREAT FAST  
 PriestMartyr Mark, Bishop of Arethuseia (364)  
 9:30 – Divine Liturgy of St. Basil  
 Panachida: +Philip Fall (1-year); +Darlene  
 Labas (1-year)

**TUESDAY, APRIL 13** #THE GREAT FAST  
 9:30am Canon of Repentance

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14** #THE GREAT FAST  
**6:00 pm** Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts

**THURSDAY, APRIL 15** #THE GREAT FAST  
 9 to 11 am Church open for personal prayer  
*(enter from the side door)*

**FRIDAY, APRIL 16** #THE GREAT FAST  
 9:30am Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts

**SATURDAY, APRIL 17** #THE GREAT FAST  
*Parish Spring Maintenance Morning*  
 11 am – 1 pm Mystery of Holy Confession

**SUNDAY, APRIL 18** #THE GREAT FAST  
 Martyrs Theodulus, Reader, and Deacon  
 Agathopodes of Thessalonica (303)  
 9:30 – Divine Liturgy of St. Basil  
 Tone 4; Liturgical Color: **Purple**

*Monday's Spiritual Vitamin:*

“As with the appearance of light, darkness  
 retreats; so, at the fragrance of humility,  
 all anger and bitterness vanishes.”  
 +St. John of the Ladder (Climacus)

## BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

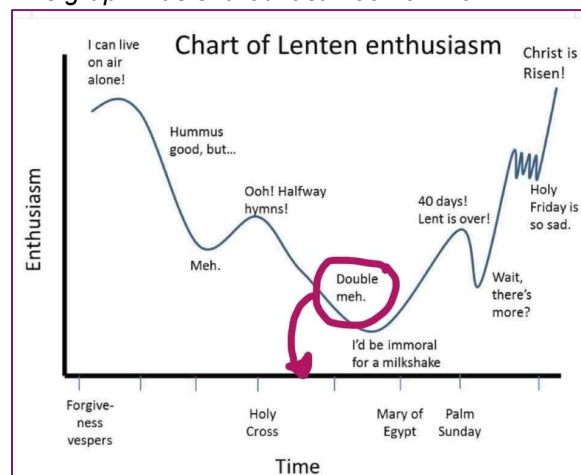
*(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wed.)*

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**Great Lent 2021:**

**We Are In This Journey Together!**

*We are halfway through our Journey To Pascha.  
 This graph was shared last week online:*



*It is time to review what your goals were for the  
 Great Fast. Please reach out to Fr. Dave if you  
 have questions about this important fasting  
 period that is upon us.*

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**A WARM WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS!**

**Glory be to Jesus Christ!**

*(responded with: **Glorify 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:**

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 church hall or by  
 contacting Fr. Dave (email, text, or  
 call). An additional stewardship  
 offering to the Church is requested.

5th Sunday of Lent

**APRIL 18th**



**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.



**Spring Parish Maintenance Day**  
 will be **THIS Saturday, April 17**.  
 Please sign up in the church hall (or  
 call Kathy Schrmack) if you are able  
 to share your time and talent on this day.

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**Panachida Offerings** – Reminder: Panachidas  
 (Memorial Services for the Departed) CANNOT  
 be served on the Major Feast Days of our Lord  
 including Palm Sunday (4/25), Holy Pascha  
 (5/2), as well as on St. Thomas Sunday (5/9).

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**Palms & Pussywillows** – We are collecting in  
 the Church Hall our Palms and Pussywillows  
 from prior years. These will not be simply thrown  
 away, but they will respectfully be taken care of.  
*Please bring yours in so that your home will be  
 ready for the new ones in a few weeks!*

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**The Mystery of Confession** - Confessions will be  
 heard in the first pew in front of the Icon of Christ.  
 Confessions will be heard *following every* service,  
 from **11am – 1pm on Saturdays** during Great Lent  
*(the side door will be open)*, and at other times by  
 appointment: please contact Fr. Dave to arrange  
 this. If you have a regular Spiritual Father, or wish to  
 go to another Orthodox priest to have your  
 confession heard, please let Fr. Dave know.  
 Confessions will only be heard *through Holy  
 Wednesday. Do not wait to plan your confession!*

**Live-Broadcast** – If you are unable to make it to  
 church on Sunday morning, please pray at along  
 with our Cathedral's services online at **9:00 am**.

[www.acrod.org/organizations/cathedral/live/](http://www.acrod.org/organizations/cathedral/live/)

The best scenario is to attend the Divine Liturgy and  
 receive the Eucharist, but in the current scenario,  
 please take the time Sunday morning to pray via the  
*live broadcast* on the web. Their bulletin has the  
 schedule of weekday services to be broadcast.

[www.acrod.org/organizations/cathedral/bulletins/](http://www.acrod.org/organizations/cathedral/bulletins/)

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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 commemorations, please sign up on  
 the sheet in the Vestibule or by emailing Fr. Dave  
 (fr.sleepless@gmail.com) **by Palm Sunday (4/25)**  
 and give an *additional free-will stewardship offering*  
 to the Church. These items are still available:

- ✕ Processional Candles
- ✕ Charcoal for Censer
- ✕ Vespertal Loaves
- ✕ Eucharist Bread (*Prosphora*)
- ✕ Bouquet of flowers on Altar
- ✕ 4 Candles in front of Iconostasis
- ✕ Bouquet of flowers on Tetrapod

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

### OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD

Stewardship:	\$ 545
Candles/Eternal Lamp Offerings:	\$ 68
Envelope Stewardship:	\$ 460
<b>Total Collections:</b>	<b>\$ 1073</b>
<b>Relocation:</b>	<b>\$ 150</b>

*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*

### March Financial Report:

**General Stewardship = \$ 6255.49**

*(includes \$ 438.07 from online stewardship)*

**\*Expenses = \$ 7959.74**

**Net Deficit = \$ 1704.25**

*\*details listed on the church hall bulletin board*  
**Average at Sunday Divine Liturgies: 24**

**Weekly Candle Intentions / Memorials** were offered last week by Nelson Family; Shuster Family; Tim Martin; John Radick; Lorenzi Family; Patty Watson; Cindy Pavidonis

***"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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**Weekly Offerings to God** – During this time, if you are not yet coming to the church, we request that weekly donations be mailed to Tim Martin (2225 McAleer Rd., Sewickley, PA 15143)



**On-Line Giving** is now available from our parish website! The best option is to come to church and give your offering to God in His Temple (2<sup>nd</sup> best is to mail it in). Now you can also donate from your home and set up a recurring donation to the:

- ✧ General Stewardship Fund,
- ✧ Capital Improvement Fund, or
- ✧ Relocation Fund.

If you miss coming to church for a week, this allows you another option to "catch up" on your weekly stewardship. For our parish to continue it's ministries, outreach, and general bill paying, we need your generosity to continue.



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**Palm Crosses** – On **Saturday, April 21<sup>st</sup>**, following the Divine Liturgy, we will be making crosses out of the palms. This activity is geared towards the youth, but all are welcome to come!

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### LOOKING AHEAD LOCALLY

- ✧ **Tues. 4/20** 9:30am Paraklis to the Theotokos
- ✧ **Wednesday 4/21** 6:00pm Presanctified Liturgy
- ✧ **Friday 4/23** 9:30am Presanctified Liturgy

### Holy Week

- ✧ **Lazarus Saturday 4/24** 9:30am Divine Liturgy with Palm Cross making following 11:00 – 1:00 Confessions offered
- ✧ **Palm Sunday 4/25** Blessing of Branches
- ✧ **Holy Monday 4/26** 6:00pm Bridegroom Matins
- ✧ **Holy Tuesday 4/27** 6:00pm Bridegroom Matins
- ✧ **Holy Wednesday 4/28** 6:00pm Mystery of Holy Unction (and Anointing) \*\*\* *(Final opportunity for Confession until after Pascha)*
- ✧ **Holy Thursday 4/29** 9:30am Vespereal Liturgy 6:00pm Matins with the 12 Passion Gospels
- ✧ **Holy & Good Friday 4/30** 9:30am Royal Hours 6:00pm Vespers & Procession of the Holy Shroud
- ✧ **Holy Saturday 5/1** 9:30am Vespereal Liturgy
- ✧ **Pascha – the Feast of Feasts 5/2** 9:00 am Resurrection Matins ~9:30 am Paschal Divine Liturgy Blessing of Baskets

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### Tuesday's Spiritual Vitamin:

"Wrath is a reminder of hidden hatred, that is to say, remembrance of wrongs.

Wrath is a desire for the injury of the one who has provoked you.

Irascibility is the untimely blazing up of the heart. Bitterness is a movement of displeasure seated in the soul.

Anger is an easily changeable movement of one's disposition and disfiguration of soul."

+St. John of the Ladder (Climacus)

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### ORTHODOXY AROUND THE 'BURGH AND OUR DIOCESE

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**SPF50 (Scripture, Prayer, Family): A Diocese Family Ministry** - The 6<sup>th</sup> Edition of SPF50 is available! *(If you are already participating, please contact Fr. Dave.)* If you did not start with us last year, 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](http://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.

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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](https://www.facebook.com/acroddioocese)  
Twitter: [twitter.com/acrodnews](https://twitter.com/acrodnews)  
YouTube: [youtube.com/acroddioocese](https://youtube.com/acroddioocese)

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### SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

### Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20

### The Certainty of God's Promise

<sup>13</sup>For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, <sup>14</sup>saying, "Surely I will bless you and multiply you." <sup>15</sup>And thus Abraham, having patiently endured, obtained the promise. <sup>16</sup>Men indeed swear by a greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. <sup>17</sup>So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he interposed with an oath, <sup>18</sup>so that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible that God should prove false, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to seize the hope set before us. <sup>19</sup>We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner shrine

behind the curtain, <sup>20</sup>where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest for ever after the order of Melchiz'edek.

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### Gospel: Mark 9:17-31

<sup>17</sup>And one of the crowd answered him, "Teacher, I brought my son to you, for he has a dumb spirit; <sup>18</sup>and wherever it seizes him, it dashes him down; and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid; and I asked your disciples to cast it out, and they were not able." <sup>19</sup>And he answered them, "O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him to me." <sup>20</sup>And they brought the boy to him; and when the spirit saw him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth. <sup>21</sup>And Jesus asked his father, "How long has he had this?" And he said, "From childhood. <sup>22</sup>And it has often cast him into the fire and into the water, to destroy him; but if you can do anything, have pity on us and help us." <sup>23</sup>And Jesus said to him, "If you can! All things are possible to him who believes." <sup>24</sup>Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, "I believe; help my unbelief!" <sup>25</sup>And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You dumb and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again." <sup>26</sup>And after crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse; so that most of them said, "He is dead." <sup>27</sup>But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. <sup>28</sup>And when he had entered the house, his disciples asked him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" <sup>29</sup>And he said to them, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer."

### Jesus Again Foretells His Death and Resurrection

<sup>30</sup>They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And he would not have any one know it; <sup>31</sup>for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of man will be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him; and when he is killed, after three days he will rise."

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*Wednesday's Spiritual Vitamin:*

Freedom from anger is an insatiable appetite for dishonor, just as in the vainglorious there is no unbounded desire for praise. Freedom from anger is victory over nature and insensibility to insults, acquired by struggles and sweat.

+St. John of the Ladder (Climacus)

**LIVES OF THE SAINTS**

**The PriestMartyr Mark, Bishop of Arethuseia**  
*Commemorated on April 11 / March 29*

The PriestMartyr Mark, Bishop of Arethuseia, suffered for his faith in Christ under the emperor Julian the Apostate (361-363). By order of the Equal-to-the-Apostles emperor Constantine (306-337, Comm. 21 May), Saint Mark had once destroyed an idolatrous temple. When Julian came upon the throne, he began to persecute Christians and to restore paganism, and his enemies decided to take revenge on Saint Mark. The old bishop at first hid himself from the persecution, but learning, that the pagans in search of him had put many people to torture, he voluntarily gave himself up. Amidst abuse and jeers the holy elder was led throughout all the city and given over to torture. They tore out his hair, lacerated his body, dragged him along the street, dumped him in a swamp, tied him up bound and cut at him with knives. Demanding from the holy bishop repayment for the destruction of the pagan-temple, the persecutors invented ever newer and newer torments: they squeezed the elder in a foot-press, they cut off his ears with strong linen cords and finally, having smeared the body of the holy martyr with honey and grease, they hung him up in a basket in the hot mid-day as prey for the bees. But the holy elder as it were did not notice the pain, and this irritated the tormentor all the more. The inhabitants of the city of Arethuseia, beholding the unshakable firmness of the saint, set him free. Many of them later under the influence of his talks were converted to Christ. Sainted Gregory the Theologian (Comm. 25 January) tells about the sufferings of Saint Mark in his First Discourse against Julian.

**LIVING ORTHODOXY**



**Great Lent 2021:**

**We Are In This Journey Together!**

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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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**HOW DO WE CLIMB THE LADDER?**

*This week's reflection is written by Rev. Father Gregory Hohnholt, of Holy Trinity Cathedral in Carmel, Indiana*

**A Ladder from Earth to Heaven**

As ever-blooming fruits, you offer the teachings of your God-given book, O wise John, most blessed, while sweetening the hearts of all them that heed it with vigilance; for it is a ladder from the earth unto Heaven that confers glory on the souls that ascend it and honor you faithfully. — *Kondak of St. John of the Ladder (Climacus)*

St. John Climacus entered the ascetic arena in his teenage years, struggled as a hermit for 40 years, and then became abbot of the monastery in Sinai. He wrote the Ladder of Divine Ascent in the sixth century.

The Ladder of Divine Ascent is most likely the foremost ascetical text in the Orthodox Church. We often think of the ascetical life as individual effort; an examination of conscience, a striving against the fallen passions, or sinful habits, to be formed more in the image of Christ. The ascetical life is often and rightly associated in our minds with the monastic life, though it is not the exclusive purview of monks and nuns, **for all Christians are called to live the ascetical life.**

And yet, one of the greatest ascetics of all time and the father of monastics, St. Anthony the Great, said, **"Our life and death is with our neighbor."** The ascetical life, as given to us by St. John, is indeed focused on our interior

struggle against the flesh, the world, and the devil. However, the ascetical life is not an end itself. The highest rung is love, and love primarily is about our neighbor. That is the end to which the ascetical life is given to us, **so that we might overcome ourselves to better love God and our neighbor.**

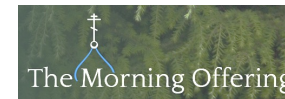
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*Thursday's Spiritual Vitamin:*

"A friend of God is the one who lives in communion with all that is natural and free from sin and who does not neglect to do what good he can. The self-controlled man strives with all his might amidst the trails, the snares, and the noise of the world, to be like someone who rises above them."

+St. John of the Ladder (Climacus)

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**When Our Prayer Becomes Dry:**

**Being real with God is far more important than being emotional**

When we find ourselves struggling with prayer, and feel that it has become dry and lifeless, we are sometimes tempted to stop praying. When our prayer has become a struggle, it is good to remember that God knows our needs, and even knows what we want to say when we don't seem to know. This is the time we need to just pray without worrying about it. When we find we can't keep our minds focused on the formal morning and evening prayers, as found in our prayer book, it is perfectly acceptable to simply light our lampada (hanging oil lamp), sit quietly before our icons, and let silence be our voice.

God wants to enter into our heart, and requires only our permission and cooperation. This relationship does not require an emotional response, for, like all relationships, we are not always open to an emotional response. Being real with God is far more important than being emotional, since emotions can be contrived and fleshly. As in all relationships, there are times

when we do feel moved by emotions, but the lack of such feelings in no way represents a lack of love for God, because God cares for us, and God knows we love him, even when suffering in those dry times.

With love in Christ, Abbot Tryphon

**FASTING SUGGESTIONS:**

*(source unknown)*

FAST from self-concern and  
FEAST on compassion for others.

FAST from discouragement and  
FEAST on hope.

FAST from lethargy and  
FEAST on enthusiasm.

FAST from suspicion and  
FEAST on truth.

FAST from thoughts that weaken and  
FEAST on promises that inspire.

FAST from shadows of sorrow and  
FEAST on the sunlight of serenity.

FAST from idle gossip and  
FEAST on purposeful silence.

FAST from problems that overwhelm you  
and FEAST on prayer that sustains.

FAST from criticism and  
FEAST on praise.

FAST from self-pity and  
FEAST on joy.

FAST from ill-temper and  
FEAST on peace.

FAST from resentment and  
FEAST on contentment.

FAST from jealousy and  
FEAST on love.

FAST from pride and  
FEAST on humility.

FAST from selfishness and  
FEAST on service.

*Friday's Spiritual Vitamin:*

“Innocence, abstinence, temperance – these make a fine thrice-firm foundation. Let all infants in Christ begin with these, taking real infants as their example; for among children no evil is found, nothing deceitful, no insatiable greed or gluttony, no flaming lust.”  
+St. John of the Ladder (Climacus)

**ORTHODOX CHURCH ETIQUETTE**

*an excerpt from:*

**On Standing In Orthodox Churches**

[www.saintjohnchurch.org/standing-orthodox-church/](http://www.saintjohnchurch.org/standing-orthodox-church/)

More often than not, you will find Orthodox Christians standing during church services. In fact, if you travel to “Orthodox countries” in Europe and the Middle East, you won’t find any pews at all! You may see a few chairs or benches scattered along the walls for the elderly, sick, infirm, and for pregnant and nursing mothers, but that’s it. But why do we stand so much? When is it okay to sit? And how do we know when to kneel, bow, or prostrate?

**Why do we stand in Orthodox churches?**

Christians stood during worship for nearly sixteen centuries. It wasn’t until the Protestant Reformation that the focus of Christian worship in the West changed from the Eucharist (communion) to the sermon. In the Orthodox tradition, we continue to stand as our predecessors did, maintaining the tradition **set forth in Scripture** (*Isaiah 6:2; 1 Kings 22:19; Daniel 7:10; II Chronicles 5:12; 6:2; 20:5; 1 Ezra 3:10; Nehemiah 9:4-5; 8:7*), **professed by Christ Himself** (*Mk 9:25*), and **practiced by the early Church** (*Mt 6:5; Lk 17:10; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20*).

Remember: worshiping God is not about us. It is about Him. We are God’s humble servants. And we must be ready, attentive, and willing to serve Him. We must acknowledge that we are in the presence of God, and should stand in awe and respect.

Worshippers should stand for the entire service if they can physically manage to do so. If you go to

an Orthodox service, and you do stand the whole time, please consider finding a place toward the sides of the church. This way, you won’t block the view of those elderly or infirm sitting behind you.

**Is it okay to sit sometimes?**

Of course it is! However, you need to think about the reason behind your sitting down. Is it because you have a health issue? Is it because of your age? Do you not know what’s going on and fear looking silly just standing there? Or is it simply because you don’t feel like standing all that time? Because worship is all about God, we should make every effort to stand as long as our bodies are able. ...

In many parishes, the Divine Liturgy books in the pews may contain suggested times when you may sit. Whenever a hierarch (like a bishop or metropolitan) visits the parish, out of respect follow his example. Stand and sit when he does. Bottom line? **When in doubt, stand.** You can never go wrong there!

**Leg crossing**

In modern American culture, we cross our legs a lot when sitting. Usually we do this to get more comfortable. When we get settled into our favorite chair at home, we lean back, cross our legs, and let our minds wander while we read, watch TV, or socialize. Is this sort of etiquette appropriate for church?

No. We refrain from crossing our legs because doing so is too casual and relaxed. Remember, we go to church to worship God, not to “hang out” like we do at a friend’s house. Remember, too, sitting in church is a concession of human weakness, not the norm for prayer or worship. Should we need to sit for health reasons, we must do so attentively, with our feet flat on the ground.

**Do you ever kneel in an Orthodox church?**

If you’ve ever visited a Catholic church, you have probably seen “kneelers” attached to the pews. But in Orthodox churches, we typically do not kneel all that often.

In some Orthodox cultures, the faithful kneel during the Consecration of the Holy Gifts and other parts of the Liturgy. However, the Church Canons prohibit kneeling during the Paschal

season (Pascha to Pentecost), and on Sundays. We consider kneeling penitential, and thus do not kneel on days or seasons celebrating the Resurrection of Our Lord.

**Using proper posture during worship**

As we have said, in the Orthodox Church, worship is all about God. We gather together to give thanks, praise Him, and receive Him in the Eucharist. When we enter into the presence of our God, we should conduct ourselves respectfully, honoring Him with our dress, our behavior, and our posture.

Aside from standing, we use three other postures during worship in Orthodox churches: bows, metanias, and prostrations.

**Bows**

When we normally think of bowing, we imagine a full bow at the waist, nearly 90 degrees. The Orthodox **deep/profound bow** used in worship only goes about 45 degrees. We often use it together with making the sign of the cross.

While the Orthodox do use the *profound bow* at times, we more commonly use what we call a **reverential bow**. Rather than bowing at the waist, we simply incline the head and neck.

Orthodox Christians typically bow at the following times:

1. When we pray to Christ or ask intercession of the Theotokos;
2. As the priest blesses or censes the congregation;
3. When the priests asks for forgiveness before the Great Entrance and before Holy Communion

Many Orthodox faithful bow and cross themselves when they enter and leave the nave of the church, and when they pray before icons. Deciding when to cross oneself is an issue of personal piety, not Orthodox dogma or doctrine.

**Metanias**

Metania comes from the Greek word *metanoia*, which means “change of heart.” It goes by a few others names as well: small bow, and little reverence, among others. We make metanias when asking for forgiveness and seeking repentance.

To perform a metania, first, you make the sign of the cross. Then, bending at your waist, reach toward the floor with your right hand and touch the ground. Orthodox Christians perform metanias regularly; for example, when venerating icons, during the refrains of Akathists, and during the Anaphora during Great Lent. We also use it as a sort of substitute for the prostration, which the Church Canons only permit on certain occasions.

**Prostrations**

You may also hear some Orthodox refer to the prostration as a proskynesis, full bow, or great metania. Similar to the metania, we associate this gesture with penance and submission.

To perform a prostration, you get down on your hands and knees, then touch your forehead to the floor and remain there as long as you desire. Most people hold the position for a few seconds, long enough to say the Jesus Prayer. Some cross themselves before doing the prostration, while others cross themselves after standing back up. Those who can’t perform prostrations for physical reasons may do metanias instead.

According to Holy Tradition, there are times when it is and is not acceptable to perform prostrations during worship. We do not kneel or prostrate on Sundays or during the Paschal season (the fifty days between Pascha and Pentecost. However the guidelines do not stop there. [see: [www.orthochristian.com/97909.html](http://www.orthochristian.com/97909.html)]

**Worship is work!**

Worship is not a time of relaxation. It is not a time to lean back and just listen. Rather, it is a time to do the common work of worshiping and thanking God. The Orthodox, unlike Western Christians, worship with our entire bodies, not just our minds. This is why you see so much movement during an Orthodox service that just seems to flow without any effort at all. People bow, prostrate, cross themselves, move about to venerate icons or kiss the cross. So much is happening, it is actually quite mesmerizing to watch. The beauty of the common work is a true testament to your being in Heaven on Earth.



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*Saturday's Spiritual Vitamin:*

“God does not require from novices prayer completely free from distractions.

Do not despond when your thought is distracted, but remain calm, and

unceasingly restore your mind to itself.

+St. John of the Ladder (Climacus)

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**PRAYER CORNER**

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

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**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...** Met. Gregory, Fr. Robert, Sandra, Fr. Frank, Pañi Connie, Joanne, Michael, Jerrod, Pamela, Barbara, John, Julius, Mary Jane M., Dale, Brian, Kristina, Fr. George L., Douglas, Sean, Julia, Susan, John, 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, Georgia, Eleanora, Mark, Michaleana, Dorell, Elizabeth, 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.*

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**Patronal Feast Days (Name's Day):**  
*(contact Fr. Dave with your Patron Saint)*

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**Birthday Prayers for...** Rich Mirilovich (4/13), Melanie Paieski (4/14), *Father's Uncle Dan Urban (4/15), Father's Father Dave Urban (4/15) ...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!*

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**For our Catechumens & Inquirers...**

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

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**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.

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**For those preparing for Marriage...**

Lexi & Patrick, Lauren & Corey, Ashley & Derek ...through the prayers of Sts. Adrian & Natalia and all Holy Martyrs.

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**For Pregnant Mothers...** Marilynn *(due in April)* Pañi Katie *(June)*, Carley *(July)*, Lindsay *(July)*, Pañi Davina *(September)* ...through the prayers of St. Anna, the mother of the Virgin Mary, and St. Irene Chrysovalantou.

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**For the souls of the newly departed...**

+Joseph Dzadony (4/6), +Anthony Dranginis (3/31), +John Cochran (3/25), 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*

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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.*

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**DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS OF THE WEEK**



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**A PRAYER FOR STRENGTH**

by St Ephrem of Syria

Lord Jesus Christ, King of kings, You have power over life and death. You know even things that are uncertain and obscure, and our very thoughts and feelings are not hidden from You. Cleanse me from my secret faults, for I have done wrong and You saw it. You know how weak I am, both in soul and in body. Give me strength, O Lord, in my frailty and sustain me in my sufferings. Grant me a prudent judgment, dear Lord, and let me always be mindful of Your blessings. Let me retain until the end, Your grace that has protected me till now.  
Amen.

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**A PRAYER OF SAINT EPHRAIM**  
*(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 1 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]*