



# 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*  
 Subdeacon Ryan Ferko  
 Timothy Martin, *Reader*  
 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](http://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](mailto:OrthodoxPittsburgh1932@gmail.com)  
[www.OrthodoxPittsburgh.com](http://www.OrthodoxPittsburgh.com)  
*Instagram:* SJB\_Orthodox\_Pittsburgh  
*Twitter:* @SJB\_OrthodoxPGH

## UPCOMING SERVICES

### PLEASE WEAR A MASK FOR ALL SERVICES

#### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6

33<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
 Zacchaeus Sunday  
 St. Xenia of Petersburg, fool-for-Christ (18 c.)  
 +++

#### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12

COMMEMORATION OF THE 3 HOLY HIERARCHS  
 9:30am Festal Divine Liturgy  
 +++

#### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13 – TRIODION BEGINS

33<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
 Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee  
 Holy Wonderworkers & Unmercenarys Cyrus & John (311)  
 9:30 am Divine Liturgy  
 Epistle: 2 Timothy 3:10-15;  
 Gospel: Luke 18:10-14  
 Tone 1; Liturgical Color: **Gold**  
 Panachida for Most Reverend Metropolitan  
 Orestes P Chornock (2/17/77)  
 Add'l Capital Improvement Offering Requested  
 Souper Bowl of Caring  
 A FAST FREE WEEK  
 +++

#### TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15 (40 days after Nativity)

FEAST OF THE MEETING OF OUR LORD  
 9:30am Festal Divine Liturgy  
 Blessing of Candles

+++ +++ +++

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

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

**Future Services** are listed on our online "Parish Calendar" which is continually updated at:  
[www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar](http://www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar)  
 (Please ask Fr. Dave if you want a printed copy)

## BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

+++ +++ +++

**2021 Summary** - If you would like a copy of your 2021 SJB Donation Summary, please email Rich Mirilovich at [jmrsrcrd@gmail.com](mailto:jmrsrcrd@gmail.com).

+++ +++ +++

**2022 Envelopes** – Our new envelopes have arrived. Please take your envelopes from the table in the church hall. If you had previously not had envelopes and wish to have these stewardship reminders, please see Larry Martin. Now is a good time to catch up on past offerings.

+++ +++ +++



**Souper Bowl of Caring** – On **Sunday, February 13<sup>th</sup>** the Steelers will not be playing in the Super Bowl that evening, but we ask that you bring in unexpired cans of soup for our February Community Outreach collection for Saint Cyril of White Lake Food Pantry at St Mary's Orthodox Church on the South Side.

## "THE VOICE" Our Parish Monthly Newsletter

*John the Baptist said, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' (Jn 1:23)*

### 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.

**Blessing of Candles** – As is customary, candles will be blessed following the Feast Day Divine Liturgy on **Tuesday, February 15 as well as February 20**, the Sunday after the Feast of the Meeting of Our Lord, the 40<sup>th</sup> day after Nativity (Christmas) that remembers the presentation of the infant Jesus into the Temple. It is recorded in the Gospel of Luke (2:22-39) that on this day the elder Simeon recognized the infant Jesus as "a light for revelation to the Gentiles". Thus we highlight the use of candles, as they remind us that Christ is the true Light of the World. There will be candles available for a donation and all are encouraged to bring in candles from home to be blessed after these two Liturgies. Please place your candle(s) on the table near the iconostasis. Let's light up the world with our blessed candles!

+++ +++ +++

**A NEW DATE CHANGE: Annual Church Picnic** – "The Cabin" in North Park is booked for **Sunday, July 31<sup>st</sup>** for our summer picnic. Please update your calendars to the new date.

+++ +++ +++



**Calling all scouts!** For our youth in Scouting and to our Adult Leaders, please send Fr. Dave your Unit Number, location, current rank, and any office or position you hold in your organization by **February 15<sup>th</sup>**.

### Spiritual Vitamin:

"When you look at the candles and lamps burning in church, rise in thought from the material fire to the immaterial fire of the Holy Spirit," for our God is a consuming fire."  
 +St. John of Kronstadt, My Life in Chris

### Executive Parish Council Meeting Highlights:

\*\*\* **Candles** - Our minimum candle offering has been requested at \$3 for a long time (decades?). Starting March 1, 2022, we are going to change to the following: a minimum \$4 donation for the weekly vigil candles and a minimum \$1 donation for the smaller votive candles will be requested. Also, in the same manner that a free-will offering is asked for the Eternal Lamp each week, we will now ask for a free-will offering for the "Christ Cross Candles" and "Theotokos Cross Candles" (on the candle stands) *In Honor of (namesday, birthday, anniversary, etc.) or In Memory of someone.*

\*\*\* **Pre-Lenten Breakfast** – After discussing the current Covid conditions, we will have our breakfast on February 27

\*\*\* **Presanctified Liturgies** – Wednesday services will be at 6:00 pm at the church along with Fridays at 9:30 am.

\*\*\* **Lenten Mission** – Our deanery mission will be on the North Side on March 27

+++ +++ +++



**All-Soul Saturday (Zadušna Subota)** Liturgies with Panachidas for 2022 will be on **February 26<sup>th</sup>, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, and June 11<sup>th</sup>**. On these days, we especially pray for the departed loved ones of our families. If you are not working on a Saturday, come to church, pray with us, and light two candles for your living and departed loved ones. **Please inform Fr Dave if there are any additions to be made to your Commemoration Diptychs (Hramoty).** Offering Envelopes and cards are available in the vestibule.

+++ +++ +++  
**Holy Water Reminders**  
**2022 Holy Water Available To Take Home** - Please plan to take our Theophany Holy Water home with you! Bring in a container (or pick up a *Holy Water Bottle* from our bookstore), fill it up, and use it. Drink Holy Water every morning (or at least when you are feeling under the weather). Throw a splash into your cooking. Also, together with the sign of the Cross, you may bless one another with it prior to tests for our children in school, big days at the office, before doctor appointments, etc.

+++  
“Drink holy water as often as possible.  
It is the best and most effective medicine.  
I’m saying that not just as a priest but also from  
my experience as a doctor.”  
+St. Luke the Physician of Crimea

+++  
**Do Not Hoard Old Holy Water** - While Holy Water does not “go bad”, it is best to refresh your water each year. Holy Water from the previous Theophany should be poured outside (*preferably on the corner of your house or in a garden where people are not going to walk on it*). **The best scenario, though, is to use your Holy Water** (see above for examples).

+++ +++ +++  
**Healthy Snacks** – The variety of “grab-n-go” snacks for our coffee social are getting low. Please consider bringing in a box of something for us to share.

+++ +++ +++  
**Framed Icons** – Please consider framing your previous church calendar tops: cut them out, use a 5x7 frame, and hang them on your walls. Each year you can add an icon to another room in your home. This is also a nice project to do with our youth!

+++ +++ +++  
**Greeting Cards** – Please repurpose 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!

+++ +++ +++  
**Bulletin Sponsor** – If you wish to sponsor a bulletin In Honor of (namesday, birthday, anniversary, 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.

+++ +++ +++

OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD	
Stewardship Offerings:	\$ 429
Candles/Eternal Lamp Stewardship:	\$ 149
Community Outreach	\$ 60
<b>Total Collections:</b>	<b>\$ 638</b>
<b>Capital Improvement Fund:</b>	<b>\$ 50</b>
<b>Relocation Fund:</b>	<b>\$ 130</b>
<i>In faith that God provides:</i>	
“And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work. As it is written, ‘He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures for ever.’” – 2 Cor. 9:8-9	

**January Financial Report:**  
**General Stewardship = \$ 5597.17**  
*(includes \$ 157.08 from online stewardship)*  
**\*Expenses = \$ 7466.38**  
**Net Deficit = \$ 1869.21**  
*\*details listed on the church hall bulletin board*  
Average at Sunday Divine Liturgies: **28**


**Fiscal Year-to-Date Financial Report:**  
*(September through last month)*  
**General Stewardship = \$ 35,499**  
**\*Expenses = \$ 28,561**  
**Net Profit = \$ 6,938**  
*\*details listed on the church hall bulletin board*  
Average at Sunday Divine Liturgies: **29**

**Weekly Candle Intentions / Memorials** were offered last week by Nelson Family; Margaret Rusnak; Tim Martin; Kathy Schrmack; Lawrence Martin; Shuster Family; 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 Matthew Peifer in memory of parents, +Jack and +Viola Peifer. May Their Memory Be Eternal! Vičnaya Pamyat!

**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, and/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.

**ORTHODOXY AROUND THE  
‘BURGH AND OUR DIOCESE**

**MAN OF GOD**  
Exiled unjustly, convicted without trial, slandered without cause. MAN OF GOD depicts the trials and tribulations of Saint Nektarios of Aegina, as he bears the unjust hatred of his enemies while preaching the Word of God.  
View the trailer at: [www.imdb.com/title/tt6060964/](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt6060964/)  
**There will be a one-day showing of this movie in Pittsburgh on Monday, March 21 at 7:00 pm.** Call one of these movie theatres today to reserve your seat:  
Cinemark Robinson Township - 1-800-326-3264  
2100 Settlers Ridge Center Dr, Robinson Twp, PA 15205  
Cinemark North Hills - 412-364-1095  
851 Providence Blvd, Pittsburgh, PA 15237  
Rave Cinemas Pittsburgh North 11 - 412-931-5760  
9700 McKnight Rd, Pittsburgh PA 15237  
Cinemark Monroeville Mall - 1-800-326-3264  
600 Monroeville Mall, Monroeville, PA 15146

**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)

**SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**Epistle:** 1 Timothy 4:9-15  
“The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance. <sup>10</sup>For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe. <sup>11</sup>Command and teach these things. <sup>12</sup>Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. <sup>13</sup>Till I come, attend to the public reading of scripture, to preaching, to teaching. <sup>14</sup>Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophetic utterance when the council of elders laid their hands upon you. <sup>15</sup>Practice these duties, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress

+++ +++ +++  
**Gospel:** Luke 19:1-10  
He entered Jericho and was passing through. <sup>2</sup>And there was a man named Zacchae’us; he was a chief tax collector, and rich. <sup>3</sup>And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not, on account of the crowd, because he was small of stature. <sup>4</sup>So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was to pass that way. <sup>5</sup>And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchae’us, make haste and come down; for I must stay at your house today.” <sup>6</sup>So he made haste and came down, and received him joyfully. <sup>7</sup>And when they saw it they all murmured, “He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.” <sup>8</sup>And Zacchae’us stood and said to the Lord, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have defrauded any one of anything, I restore it fourfold.” <sup>9</sup>And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. <sup>10</sup>For the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost.”



*Spiritual Vitamin:*

“In all the Eastern Churches, candles are lit even in the daytime when one is to read the Gospels, in truth not to dispel the darkness, but as a sign of joy...in order under that factual light to feel that Light of which we read in the Psalms (119:105):

“Thy word is a lamp to my feet,  
and a light to my path.”  
Blessed Jerome (4th Century)

**MONTHLY COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

**Food Drive** – This month, through the efforts of our Sr. ACRY, we will be collecting unexpired food and donations in order to make a delivery to **St. Cyril of White Lake Food Pantry** (at Holy Assumption of St. Mary Orthodox Church, 105 S. 19<sup>th</sup> St., Pgh, PA 15203). Volunteers are needed on Thursdays from 5:15 to 6:45 to assist in the distribution of these goods. (If interested, please contact Fr Patrick first at 412-431-6428) Thank you in advance for your prayers and offerings this month! Here is a list of food items that they are looking for:

- ✓ Ready to eat canned fruit or vegetables
- ✓ Peanut Butter
- ✓ Jelly
- ✓ Canned Soups
- ✓ Canned Chili
- ✓ Macaroni & Cheese
- ✓ Spaghetti Sauce
- ✓ Pasta
- ✓ Noodle/Rice Mixes
- ✓ Small Package of Rice or Noodles
- ✓ Canned Stews
- ✓ Canned or Pouches of Tuna, Salmon or Chicken
- ✓ Boxed Meals ready to be prepared
- ✓ Baked Beans
- ✓ Canned and Boxed 100% Juice
- ✓ Crackers
- ✓ Tuna Helper Box
- ✓ Instant Cereal
- ✓ Boxed Cereal
- ✓ Canned Pastas (Chef Boyardee, Ravioli, etc.)
- ✓ Canned Meats

+++ +++ +++

**LIVING ORTHODOXY**

**Candles in Divine Services**

From the book *Fundamentals of Orthodoxy*

What does a person first do upon crossing the threshold of a church? In nine out of ten cases, he goes to the candle stand. Our practice of Christianity, our involvement in its ritual, begins with a little beeswax candle. It is impossible to imagine an Orthodox church in which candles are not lit. Blessed Simeon of Thessalonica (15th century), commentator on the Liturgy, states that pure wax symbolizes the purity and chastity of those who offer it. It is offered as a sign of our having repented of stubbornness and self-will. The softness and pliability of wax speaks of our readiness to obey God. The burning of the candle represents man's deification, his becoming a new creature through the fire of God's love.

Moreover, the candle is a witness to faith, of man's belonging to the Divine light. It expresses the flame of our love for the Lord, for the Mother of God, for the angels, or for the saints. One must not light a candle with a cold heart, merely as a formality. The external action must be supplemented by prayer, if only the simplest one, using one's own words.

A lighted candle is present at many church services. It is held by the newly baptized and by those being joined together in the Mystery of Matrimony. The funeral rite is performed amidst a multitude of burning candles. Protecting their burning candles from the wind, the faithful walk in Processions of the Cross.

There are no absolute rules as to where or how many lighted candles must be offered. Their purchase is a little sacrifice to God, voluntary and not burdensome. A large and expensive candle is no more grace-giving than is a small one.

Those who are meticulous about attending church try to light several candles during each visit: before the festal icon at the center of the church, at the icon of the Savior or of the Mother of God; **for the health of their loved ones**, and on the rectangular candlestand (*kanun*) before the Cross; **for the repose of the souls of the deceased**. If the heart so wishes, one may light candles to any saint or saints.

One should not be upset if, at the end of the Service, your candle is extinguished; the sacrifice has already been accepted by God.

There is no reason to believe that one should set a candle only with the right hand, that if it should go out, it is a sign misfortune will follow, that to singe the base of the candle to make it fit more firmly into the receptacle is a deadly sin, etc. There are many such superstitions, and they are all meaningless. The burning wax candle is pleasing to God, but He prizes the burning of the heart even more. Our spiritual life, our participation in church services, is not limited to the candle. The candle will not free us from sin, will not unite us with God, and will not give us the power to wage the unseen warfare. The candle is filled with symbolic meaning, but we are saved not by symbols, but by the full reality, Divine grace.

+++ +++ +++

**12 Reasons Orthodox Christians  
Light Candles in Church. Worshipping  
in Spirit and Truth.**

In order to truly worship in Spirit and Truth, Orthodox Christians should **know the meaning of** whatever they do in Church or in private prayer. Below are 12 symbolisms of lighting candles in Church.

St. Symeon gives these six symbolisms:

1. The candle symbolizes the purity of the soul because it is purely made from beeswax.
2. Since we can easily carve anything into a candle, the candle symbolizes how our soul can be easily imprinted (with good or bad).
3. The candle symbolizes God's Grace as wax is made from blooming flowers that give forth fragrance.
4. Just as the candle gives food to the flame, so by Theosis our nature is made into flame that burns sin and gives light.
5. The candle symbolizes the light of Christ which gives light in the darkness.
6. The candle symbolizes the light and peace that every Christian must have. When the candle burns it enlightens and comforts mankind giving light in the darkness.

Our holy father Nicodemus of Mount Athos gives us these 6 explanations:

1. We light candles for the glory of God who is the true and only light that enlightens every man.
2. We light candles to disperse the darkness of the night to comfort ourselves from the fear of darkness.
3. We light candles to show the joy that is in our hearts.
4. We light candles to honor saints and martyrs of our Faith just as early Christians lit candles at the graves of the martyrs.
5. We light candles to symbolize our good works, as the Lord says, "Thus let your light shine before men that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in the heavens".
6. We light candles for the forgiveness of sins of **both** those who light the candles and of those for whom the candles are lit. For this reason, in churches in many places, there are separate candle stands for the living and other ones for the dead.

+++ +++ +++

*Spiritual Vitamin:*

“The candles lit before icons of saints reflect their ardent love for God for Whose sake they gave up everything that man prizes in life, including their very lives, as did the holy apostles, martyrs and others. These candles also mean that these saints are lamps burning for us and providing light for us by their own saintly living, their virtues and their ardent intercession for us before God through their constant prayers by day and night. The burning candles also stand for our ardent zeal and the sincere sacrifice we make out of reverence and gratitude to them for their solicitude on our behalf before God.”  
+St. John of Kronstadt, My Life in Chris

+++ +++ +++

**STEWARDSHIP SNIPPET**

*By Dan Hromyak from St. John's Orthodox Church,  
Hermitage, PA*

"To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit." - 1 Corinthians 12:7  
St. Paul tells us that God has blessed each of us for a reason. How has God blessed you? Are you using your gifts according to God's plan? How are you

helping to build God's kingdom here on earth? Remember that if you don't do the work God planned for you, no one else can do it. Live the life God has in- tended for you. Take time to discern your charisms (gifts from the Holy Spirit). Experience the supernatural Peace and Joy God desires for each of us.

+++ +++ +++

LIVES OF THE SAINTS

ST. XENIA OF PETERSBURG, FOOL-FOR-CHRIST (18TH C.)

Commemorated on January 24, May 24

She was born about 1730, and as a young woman married an army colonel named Andrei, a handsome and dashing man fond of worldly living. When she was twenty-six years old, her husband died suddenly after drinking with his friends, leaving Xenia a childless widow. Soon afterward, she gave away all her possessions and disappeared from St Petersburg for eight years; it is believed that she spent the time in a hermitage, or even a monastery, learning the ways of the spiritual life. When she returned to St Petersburg, she appeared to have lost her reason: she dressed in her husband's army overcoat, and would only answer to his name. She lived without a home, wandering the streets of the city, mocked and abused by many. She accepted alms from charitable people, but immediately gave them away to the poor: her only food came from meals that she sometimes accepted from those she knew. At night she withdrew to a field outside the city where she knelt in prayer until morning.

Slowly, the people of the city noticed signs of a holiness that underlay her seemingly deranged life: she showed a gift of prophecy, and her very presence almost always proved to be a blessing. The Synaxarion says "The blessing of God seemed to accompany her wherever she went: when she entered a shop the day's takings would be noticeably greater; when a cabman gave her a lift he would get plenty of custom; when she embraced a sick child it would soon get better. So compassion, before long, gave way to veneration, and people generally came to regard her as the true guardian angel of the city."

Forty-five years after her husband's death, St Xenia reposed in peace at the age of seventy-one,

sometime around 1800. Her tomb immediately became a place of pilgrimage: so many people took soil from the gravesite as a blessing that new soil had to be supplied regularly; finally a stone slab was placed over the grave, but this too was gradually chipped away by the faithful. Miracles, healings and appearances of St Xenia occur to this day, to those who visit her tomb or who simply ask her intercessions. Her prayers are invoked especially for help in finding employment, a home, or a spouse (all of which she renounced in her own life). A pious custom is to offer a Panachida / Trisagion Service for the repose of her husband Andrei, for whom she prayed fervently throughout her life.

Saint Xenia was first officially glorified by the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia in 1978; then by the Moscow Patriarchate in 1988.

+++ +++ +++

FEAST DAY FEATURE

"Three Holy Hierarchs" – the Assemblage (Sobor, Synaxis) of the Holy Ecumenical Teachers of the Church and Sainted-Hierarchs: Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostomos

Commemorated on Feb. 12 / Jan. 30

"Three Saints" – the Assemblage (Sobor, Synaxis) of the Holy Ecumenical Teachers of the Church and Sainted-Hierarchs: Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and John Chrysostomos: At Constantinople for a long time there raged disputes about which one of the three sainted-hierarchs should be accorded the primacy of honour. One faction of the people preferred St Basil (Comm. Jan. 14/1), others stood forth for St Gregory the Theologian (Comm. Feb. 7 / Jan. 25), while a third revered St John Chrysostomos (Comm. Nov 26/13).

From this arose among church factions amongst Christians: some called themselves Basilians, others – Gregorians, and the third – Johannites.

In accord with the will of God, in the year 1084 the three sainted-hierarchs appeared to the Eucharistic Metropolitan John, and in declaring that they were equal before God, they gave orders that the disputes should stop and that a day in common celebration of their memory should be established.

+++ +++ +++

On the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord

Commemorated on February 15/2

On the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord, the Church commemorates an important event in the earthly life of our Lord Jesus Christ (Lk 2: 22-40). On the 40th day after birth the God-Infant was taken to the Jerusalem Temple – the centre of religious life of the God-chosen nation. By the Law of Moses (Lev 12) a woman, having given birth to a child of the male gender, was forbidden for 40 days to enter into the Temple of God. After this interval the mother came to the Temple with the child, so as to offer to the Lord thanksgiving and a purification sacrifice. The MostHoly Virgin, the Mother of God, did not have need for purification, since without defilement she had given birth to the Source of purity and sanctity, but in profound humility she submitted to the precepts of the Law.

At this time there lived at Jerusalem the righteous elder Simeon (the account about him is located under the day of his commemoration – 3 February). It had been revealed to him that he would not die until he should behold Christ the Saviour. By inspiration from above, the pious elder went to the Temple at that very moment when the MostHoly Mother of God and Righteous Joseph had brought there the Infant Jesus, so as to fulfill the ritual ceremony of the Law. The God-Bearer Simeon took the God-Infant in his arms, and having given thanks to God, he uttered a prophecy about the Saviour of the world: "Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart, O Lord, with peace according to Thy word, wherefore hath mine eyes beheld Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples, a light to the enlightening of gentiles and the glory of Thy people Israel" (Lk 2: 29-32). Righteous Simeon said to the MostHoly Virgin: "Behold, This One is set for the fall and rising up of many in Israel and for the sign spoken against, and for Thee Thyself a sword shalt pierce the soul, so that the thoughts of many hearts might be revealed" (Lk 2: 35).

At the Temple also the 84 year old widow Anna the Prophetess, daughter of Phanuel (Comm. 3 February), "who did not leave the temple, serving God both day and night in fasting and prayer. And she

also at that time, having drawn near, glorified the Lord and spake about Him (the God-Infant) to all awaiting deliverance at Jerusalem" (Lk 2: 37-38).

Before the Birth of Christ, all righteous men and women lived by faith in the Future Messiah the Saviour of the world, and they awaited His coming. The final righteous ones of the closing Old Testament – Righteous Simeon and the Prophetess Anna – were deemed worthy to meet at the Temple the Bearer of the New Testament, in the Person of Whom both Divinity and humanity do meet.

The Feast of the Meeting of the Lord is among the most ancient feasts of the Christian Church. It is known, that on the day of this solemnity were proclaimed sermons by Sainted Bishops Methodios of Patara (+ 312), Cyril of Jerusalem (+ 360), Gregory the Theologian (+ 389), Amphylokios of Iconium (+ 394), Gregory of Nyssa (+ 400), and John Chrysostom (+ 407). But in spite of its early origin, this feast was not so solemnly celebrated until the VI Century. During the reign of Justinian in the year 528, a catastrophe befell Antioch – an earthquake, in which many people perished. And upon this misfortune there followed others. In the year 544 there appeared a pestilential plague, daily carrying off several thousand people. During these days of widespread travail, it was revealed to a certain pious christian that the celebration of the Meeting of the Lord should be done more solemnly.

When at the day of the Meeting of the Lord the all-night vigil was finally made with church procession, the disasters at Byzantium ceased. In thanksgiving to God, the Church established in 544 that the Meeting of the Lord should be done more solemnly.

Church melodists adorned this feast with many a church work of song: in the VII Century – Sainted Andrew Archbishop of Crete; in the VIII Century – Sainted Cosma Bishop of Maium, Monk John Damascene, Sainted Germanos Patriarch of Constantinople; and in the IX Century – Sainted Joseph the Studite, Archbishop of Thessalonika.

With the event of the Meeting of the Lord is associated the icon of the MostHoly Mother of God named: "the Softening of Evil Hearts" or "Simeon's Prophecy", which it is necessary to distinguish from



the icon "Seven Arrows".  
The icon "Simeon's Prophecy" symbolises the fulfillment of the prophecy of the righteous elder Simeon: "for Thee Thyself a sword shalt pierce the soul" (Lk 2: 35).

+++ ++ +

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...** Patricia, Lawrence, Michelle, Paul, Kathleen, John, Joanne, Barbara, Brian, Kristina, Sean, Julia, Susan, John, Juliana, Fredrick, Kenneth, Michael, and Roberta *...through the prayers of St. Nectarios the Wonderworker; St. Luke, the Surgeon; and St. Panteleimon, the Healer.*

+++ ++ +

**For the Special Intentions of...** His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew, Metropolitan Gregory, Fr. David S., Fr. Myron, Dcn. Michael L., Laura & family, Carlene, Georgia, Eleanora, Mark, Michaleana, Dorell, Donald, Susan, Stephen, David, Anastasia, Nicholas, Cassandra, Alexander, Andrea, Jason, Tyrone, Sarah, Ameer, Joshua, John, Kathryn, Rose, Charles, Justin *our diocesan seminarians:* Nicholas, Dylan, Thomas, Samuel, Timothy, Nicholas, Aydin, Subdeacon Seamus, Nicholas, *and our Church Council, Curators, and Relocation Committee:* Lawrence, Matthew, Timothy, Theresa, Rich, Gina, Robert, Jane, Mary Jane, Katherine, Kenneth, John, Wendy, Margaret, John, Patricia, 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.*

+++ ++ +

**February Namedays:**  
Timothy Martin, Reader - Apostle Timothy of the 70 (2/4)  
Dolores Bowser - Virgin-martyr Dorothea (2/19)  
*Father's Godson*, Zachariah Kalaluhi – Prophet (2/21)  
*...May God grant them many and blessed years!*

+++ ++ +

**February Birthdays:**  
Anthony Winkler (2/1), Fr. Marc Wisnosky (2/1), Fr. Edward Pehanich (2/4), *Pañi's mother*, Alexandrina Liana Popescu (2/6), Charles Kretchek (2/8), Richard Gedid (2/9), Harmonie Torchia (2/11), Pañi Buczak (2/11), Fr. James Gleason (2/12), *Father's niece*, Samantha Ditmore (2/14), Pañi Christyn Dranginis (2/14), W. Dylan Mushinsky (2/17), James Hanchulak (2/17), John Petrovich (2/18), Carly Anton (2/21), Barbara Kirish (2/22), Theresa Sharpless (2/22), *Father's nephew*, Brian Verbanick, Jr (2/22), Fr Stephen Krivonak (2/23), Fr William Bennett (2/28), His-All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew I (2/29/40)  
*...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...** Susan, Marilynn, John *...through the prayers of St. Paul the Apostle, St. Mary Magdalene, & St. John Maximovitch.*

+++ ++ +

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

+++ ++ +

**February Anniversaries:**  
Cynthia & Jeffrey Morrison (2/5)  
*...May God fill them with His grace that they may continue to live in unity with Him!*

+++ ++ +

**For Pregnant Mothers...** Allison (*due in May*) *...through the prayers of St. Anna, the mother of the Virgin Mary, and St. Irene Chrysovalantou.*

+++ ++ +

**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 the souls of the newly departed...** Pani +Mary Panchisin (2/2), *Father's great-aunt*, +Helen Shoemaker (1/17), Gloria (1/16), +Peter Papadakos (1/14), +Michael Slovesko, the priest (1/4) *...May the Lord God grant them blessed repose where there is no pain sorrow or mourning. May they be Eternal in God's Memory.*

+++ ++ +

\* 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 PRAYERS  
OF THE MONTH

+++ ++ +

**A Prayer When Lighting A Candle**  
*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and forever. Amen.*  
Set our hearts on fire with love for You, O Christ our God, so that in its flame we may love You with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our soul, and with all our strength, and our neighbors as ourselves, so that by keeping Your commandments we may glorify You, the giver of all good gifts. Amen.

+++ ++ +

[“By the Waters of Babylon” is the entire Psalm 137, sung to a plaintive melody, during Matins (the morning service). It is only sung in church the three Sundays that precede Great Lent: Sunday of the Prodigal Son, The Last Judgment (Meatfare), and Forgiveness (Cheesefare).]

+++

**A Prayer in Exile (Psalm 137):  
Longing for Zion in a Foreign Land**  
By the waters of Babylon,  
there we sat down and wept,  
when we remembered Zion.  
<sup>2</sup> On the willows there  
we hung up our harps.  
<sup>3</sup> For there our captors  
required of us songs,  
and our tormentors, mirth, saying,  
“Sing us one of the songs of Zion!”  
<sup>4</sup> How shall we sing the LORD’s song  
in a foreign land?  
<sup>5</sup> If I forget you, O Jerusalem,  
let my right hand wither!  
<sup>6</sup> Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth,  
if I do not remember you,  
above my highest joy!  
<sup>7</sup> Remember, O LORD, against the sons of Edom  
the day of Jerusalem,  
how they said, “Raze it, raze it!  
Down to its foundations!”  
<sup>8</sup> O daughter of Babylon, you who are devastated!  
Happy shall he be who requites you  
with what you have done to us!  
<sup>9</sup> Happy shall he be who takes your little ones  
and dashes them against the rock!

+++ ++ +

**The Jesus Prayer**  
  
(*Inhale*) O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God,  
(*Exhale*) have mercy on me, a sinner!  
(*Repeat until your heart is calm...*)

+++ ++ +

### A prayer for our Neighborhoods

by Archbishop Demetrios of America

I pray to you, God, for the families of my neighborhood. Visit them. Throw their troubles out of them and bring hope. Make the daily cares that devour the heart disappear. Present solutions to life's problems. Settle the disturbed relationships among members of different families whom I know or do not know. O Lord, remind the people of our area that You exist, that You are a strong and loving Protector. Keep away, Lord, anything that causes the disappearance of peace from souls, and the escape of sleep from our eyes. Stay a little while more tonight in our neighborhood. Spread peace along with the night. Let the harshness of the day and its struggles not spread over the night. Amen.

+++ +++ +++

### A Prayer for our Diocesan Clergy

O Lord Jesus Christ, Good Shepherd of Your sheep, light the fire of ardent love in the hearts of all Your priests, that they may ever and in all things seek only Your glory. Remember especially, Lord, our Bishop (*name*), and our spiritual father (*name*), and all our diocesan clergy, who are laboring in Your vineyard for the salvation of all those whom You have entrusted to them. Make their lives as holy as the word they preach. Keep them from being discouraged. Hear their prayers for our salvation. Give them wisdom and courage to proclaim Your truth. Make them priests after Your own heart. For You are a merciful God Who loves us and to You we give glory, together with Your eternal Father and Your all-holy, good and life-giving- Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

+++ +++ +++



+++ +++ +++

### SPIRITUAL CONSIDERATIONS

*Father is available to meet Monday thru Friday from 8:30am to 3:00pm or by appointment.*

+++

**Online Community:** Please email Fr. Dave to receive the weekly bulletin via email.

**Parish 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. He will pray with you and you will receive the Mystery of Holy Anointing (Unction) to be fully prepared.

**Mystery of Confession** – Opportunities are available after every service, most Saturdays during fasting periods from 11am to 1pm, OR by appointment.

**Holy Communion/Eucharist** – The reception of the Holy Eucharist is encouraged for 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** – Two God-parents are required, at least one of whom must be Orthodox by faith (and the other a practicing Christian). In the case of infants, the newly-baptized must have one name that is Christian in origin. Parents/grandparents/guardians must also promise to

bring the child up in an Orthodox Christian way of life. Please consult Fr. Dave for more 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 only solemnized on Saturdays or Sundays. They are not performed during fasting periods and certain Feast Days. Please consult Fr. Dave ASAP for more details (*before* arrangements are made for the hall).

**Church Funerals** – are provided for practicing Orthodox Christians who are current in their spiritual responsibilities and their stewardship. Otherwise, burial is from the funeral home. The Church does not permit cremation.

+++ +++ +++

### ONLINE BONUSES

#### How to stay connected with the departed:

- ✕ Pray for them during the Divine Liturgy,
- ✕ Remember them in your daily prayers,
- ✕ Organize memorial services for their remembrance on their anniversary,
- ✕ Honor their memory by following their good deeds,
- ✕ Light a candle weekly for your departed loved ones,
- ✕ Give alms on their behalf, and
- ✕ Take care of their tombs [graves].

+++ +++ +++

#### Facing East: Why We Orthodox Christians Face East in Our Worship

We Orthodox Christians collectively worship facing east. Together with our bishops and priests, we all stand before the Lord in the direction of the east. Our priests are sort of like captains of a ship, looking towards the ocean and leading the crew on a voyage. The priest (and bishop) lead the people in prayer and worship not as the center of attention, for all are gazing in the same direction, together as the Body of Christ. Together we all gather as one body, while the priest offers the sacrifice of praise on our behalf, as the Divine Liturgy is served before the Lord of Hosts.

The celebrant (bishop or priest) stands before the holy table (altar), facing God, while facing the people only when reading the Gospel, delivering the sermon, or when blessing his people. This is similar to the Jewish pattern of worship and preaching, for like the Jews, we consider it rude to speak to someone with your back to them. So we would dare not face God when worshipping Him.

An Orthodox church is built facing true east when possible, but when building in an area where it would be impossible because of limitation or necessity, liturgically it still faces the East and looks toward God.

This ancient Tradition comes down to us for several reasons. Perhaps most importantly, we believe our Lord will return triumphantly from the East (Matthew 24:27 and Acts 1:11). We also recognize the Lord Jesus Christ as the Sun of Righteousness (Malachi 4:2) is the light who illumines all mankind. Thus, because the sun rises in the East, so too will Christ. We also recognize the paradise of Eden, is in the East (Genesis 2:8), and we remember the perfect communion Adam and Eve experienced with God there, and we look eagerly toward it every time we worship God. Even the mercy seat in the tabernacle of testimony faced East (Leviticus 16:14), and the temple of Solomon's Gate of the Lord was placed eastward

Numerous Old Testament references toward the East clearly saw this Eastern orientation as distinguishing the Israelites from all the pagan religions, who faced other directions. Many Fathers of the early Christian Church also reference facing East during prayer and worship. Saint John of Damascus is perhaps the most well-known Father to have explained this part of our Holy Tradition. Essentially, this shows that facing East has been a uniform part of Christian worship since the beginning of the Church, something it inherited from Jewish worship.

Each time we Orthodox Christians worship facing East we do so in anticipation of the Second Coming of Christ. We know our true home is in the paradise of Eden with God. Therefore, it should not be only in our churches where we face East, but even in our homes. This is why we have the Tradition of placing our personal prayer corners in our homes facing East.

We face God when we worship Him, as we eagerly await His triumphant return.  
With love in Christ,  
Abbot Tryphon

+++   ++   +++  
Why are vigil lamps lit before icons?  
By St. Nikolai Velimirovich

1. Because our faith is light. Christ said: I am the light of the world (John 8:12). The light of the vigil lamp reminds us of that light by which Christ illumines our souls.
2. In order to remind us of the radiant character of the saint before whose icon we light the vigil lamp, for saints are called sons of light (John 12:36, Luke 16:8).
3. In order to serve as a reproach to us for our dark deeds, for our evil thoughts and desires, and in order to call us to the path of evangelical light; and so that we would more zealously try to fulfill the commandments of the Saviour: “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works” (Matt. 5:16).
4. So that the vigil lamp would be our small sacrifice to God, Who gave Himself completely as a sacrifice for us, and as a small sign of our great gratitude and radiant love for Him from Whom we ask in prayer for life, and health, and salvation and everything that only boundless heavenly love can bestow.
5. So that terror would strike the evil powers who sometimes assail us even at the time of prayer and lead away our thoughts from the Creator. The evil powers love the darkness and tremble at every light, especially at that which belongs to God and to those who please Him.
6. So that this light would rouse us to selflessness. Just as the oil and wick burn in the vigil lamp, submissive to our will, so let our souls also burn with the flame of love in all our sufferings, always being submissive to God’s will.
7. In order to teach us that just as the vigil lamp cannot be lit without our hand, so too, our heart, our inward vigil lamp, cannot be lit without the holy fire of God’s grace, even if it were to be filled with all the virtues. All these virtues of ours are, after all, like combustible material, but the fire which ignites them proceeds from God.
8. In order to remind us that before anything else the

Creator of the world created light, and after that everything else in order: And God said, let there be light: and there was light (Genesis 1:3). And it must be so also at the beginning of our spiritual life, so that before anything else the light of Christ’s truth would shine within us. From this light of Christ’s truth subsequently every good is created, springs up and grows in us.  
May the Light of Christ illumine you as well!

+++   +++   +++  
WHY DO WE LIGHT CANDLES

The first thing anyone notices upon entering any Orthodox Church is the sandbox full of lit candles. We see people making an offering, taking the candle, lighting it, saying a prayer and placing the candle in the sand. So what is this all about? Christ said, “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) Jesus Christ IS that light. He is the light that shines for us in the midst this world of darkness. And anyone who follows Him needs not fear that darkness because we know that Christ will always shine for us, leading us in the Way to the Father. Each time we light a candle, we are called to remember that it is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who is the True Light and that He and only He will grant us True Life. Every candle that we light should be a time of prayer in which we reflect upon the salvation that the Lord has worked for us and also a time of recommitment, where we renew our Baptismal vow that we, as children of God, are called to “Let our light so shine before men, that they may see [our] good works and give glory to [our] Father who is in Heaven.” (Matt. 5:16)

In the Old Testament, when the first temple of God was built on earth the Tabernacle services were held in it with lamps as the Lord Himself had ordained (Ex. 40:5, 25). Following the example of the Old Testament Church, the lighting of candles and of lampadas (Icon lamps) was without fail included in the New Testament Church’s services. The Acts of the Apostles mentions the lighting of lamps during the services in the time of the Apostles. Thus, in Troas, where Christ’s followers used to gather on the first day of the week (Sunday) to break

bread, that is, to celebrate the Eucharist, there were many lights in the upper chamber (Acts 20:8). This reference to the large number of lamps signifies that they were not used simply for lighting, but for their spiritual significance. The early Christian ritual of carrying a lamp into the evening service led to the present-day order of Vespers with its entry and the singing of the ancient hymn, O Jesus Christ, the Joyful Light..., which expresses the Christian teaching of spiritual light that illumines man of Christ the Source of the grace-bestowing light. The order of the morning service of Matins is also linked to the idea of the Uncreated Light of Christ, manifested in His Incarnation and Resurrection. The Fathers of the Church also witnessed to the spiritual significance of candles. In the 2nd Century, Tertullian wrote: We never hold a service without candles, yet we use them not just to dispel night’s gloom we also hold our services in daylight but in order to represent by this Christ, the Uncreated Light, without Worn we would in broad daylight wander as if lost in darkness [ Works, 3rd ed., Kiev, 1915, p.76]. The Blessed Jerome wrote in the 4th Century that In all the Eastern Churches, candles are lit even in the daytime when one is to read the Gospels, in truth not to dispel the darkness, but as a sign of joy...in order under that factual light to feel that Light of which we read in the Psalms (119:105): Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path [Works, part IV, 2nd ed., Kiev, 1900, pp.301-302]. St. Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem, wrote in the 7th Century: Lampadas and candles represent the Eternal Light, and also the light which shines from the righteous [Writings of the Holy Fathers..., St. Petersburg, 1855, Vol. I, p.270]. The Holy Fathers of the 7th Ecumenical Council decreed that in the Orthodox Church, the holy Icons and relics, the Cross of Christ, and the Holy gospel were to be honored by censing and the lighting of candles; and the Blessed Simeon of Thessalonica (15th Century) wrote that candles are also lit before the Icons of the Saints, for the sake of their good deeds that shine in this world [Works, Moscow, 1916, p. 108]. Orthodox faithful light candles before the Icons as a sign of their faith and hope in God’s help that is

always sent to all who turn to Him and His Saints with faith and prayers. The candle is also a symbol of our burning and grateful love for God. On Pascha, from the moment of the procession around the church, in memory of the Myrrh-bearers who proceeded with burning lamps to the sepulcher of the Lord, the faithful hold lit candles in their hands until the end of the Paschal Service, expressing their great joy and spiritual triumph Since ancient times, at hierarchical services special candle-holders have been used. The faithful reverently bow their heads when blessed by the Bishop with the dikeri(two candles), representing the two natures of Christ His Divinity and His humanity, and the trikeri (three candles), representing the Holy Trinity. Candles are also lit during the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Holy Baptism is celebrated with the Priest fully vested and all the candles lit. Three candles are lit before the baptismal font as a sign that the Baptism is accomplished in the Name of the Holy Trinity; and the person to be baptized (if an adult) and the sponsors hold lit candles in their hands during the procession around the font as an expression of joy at the entry of a new member into the Church of Christ. At the betrothal ceremony, the Priest hands the bride and bridegroom lit candles before they enter the church to receive the Sacrament of Matrimony, throughout which they hold the lit candles as a symbol of their profound love for each other and of their desire to live with the blessing of the Church. At the Sacrament of Holy Unction, seven candles are lit around the vessel of Holy Oil as a sign of the grace-bestowing action of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. And when the body of a deceased person is brought in the church, four candles are placed about the coffin to form a cross to show that the deceased was a Christian. During the Funeral service, as well as Memorial services, the faithful stand with lit candles as a sign that the deceased’s soul has left this world and entered the Kingdom of Heaven the Unwaning Light of God. During the Vespers portion of the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, the Priest blesses the congregation with a lit candle and censer, proclaiming, The Light of Christ illumines all! On the Eve of the Nativity of

Christ and the Theophany, a lit candle is placed before the festal Icon in the middle of the church to remind us of the birth and appearance on earth of Christ Our Savior, the Giver of Light. At all Divine Liturgies, lit candles are carried in procession at various parts of the service.

Thus candles and lampadas (Icon lamps) are lit at all Church services, all with a wide variety of spiritual and symbolic meanings; for it is God Who said, Let light shine out of darkness, [and] Who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ (1 Cor. 4:6). So too, lit candles in the church are also an expression of the worshippers' adoration and love for God, their sacrifices to Him, and at the same time of their joy and of the spiritual triumph of the Church. The candles, by their burning, remind one of the Unwaning Light which in the Kingdom of Heaven makes glad the souls of the righteous who have pleased God.

In lighting our candles, the first thing we should do is make an offering for this candle. Everything that we have is from God and the first step is to give back to Him for all of His many blessings. The next step is to venerate the icons that guard the sandbox and lift our prayers to God on high. Next, we light the candle, remembering all of our loved ones who are sick or who have passed into the next life, or who we just want to pray for, and beseech God to have mercy on their souls.

Lastly, as we place the candle in the sand, we quietly say "Lord have mercy," repenting for our own sinfulness while at the same time "re-igniting" our own flame and recommitting our whole life to God. Thus we begin again to live as light, helping others see the Way in a world of darkness.

Of course, we should not use candles as a kind of magical substitute for our own prayers- we use candles as an expression of our own prayers, in a sacramental fashion.