

"THE WEEKLY FORERUNNER" *Our Parish Weekly Bulletin*

O Holy John, Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptizer of the Lord, pray to God for us!

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

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A WARM WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS!

Glory to Jesus Christ! (*responded with: Glory 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! Please see Fr. Dave if you have any questions in regards to our worship or Orthodoxy.

UPCOMING SERVICES

SUNDAY, MARCH 20 #THEGREATFAST

Synaxis of all Venerable Fathers of the Kiev Caves Lavra

Blessing of Prayer Ropes

4:00 pm Deanery Lenten Missions at St Michael's

(146 Third Avenue, Rankin, PA 15104)

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TUESDAY, MARCH 22 #THEGREATFAST

9:30 am Akathist Hymn to the Passion of our Lord and saviour, Jesus Christ

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23 #THEGREATFAST

6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts with community meal following

FRIDAY, MARCH 25 #THEGREATFAST

9:30am Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

SATURDAY, MARCH 26 #THEGREATFAST

9:30 am All Souls Saturday (*Zadušna Subota*)

Divine Liturgy & Panachida (3rd OF 5)

11 am – 1 pm Confessions offered

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SUNDAY, MARCH 27 #THEGREATFAST

St. Theognostus of Kiev and Moscow (1353)

9:30 am Divine Liturgy of St. Basil

Tone 7; Liturgical Color: **Purple**

Additional collection for our Community Outreach, Ukrainian Refugees in Moldova

4:00 pm Deanery Lenten Missions (here)

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During #THEGREATFAST, each week we will offer a Para-Liturgical service every Tuesday morning, Presanctified Liturgy Wednesday evening (with meal) and Friday morning. Saturday All Souls (*Zadušna Subota*) Divine Liturgy & Panachidas will be on 3/26 and 4/2 followed by Confessions (until 1pm)

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Calendar - Future Services are updated online at:

www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar

(Please see Fr. Dave if you want a printed copy)

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Live-Broadcast – If you are unable to attend church services, please pray along with our Cathedral online:

www.acrod.org/organizations/cathedral/live/

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2nd Sunday of Lent
MARCH 20th



ST GREGORY PALAMAS

Epistle:
Gospel:

Hebrews 1:10-2:3
Mark 2:1-12

Bring a prayer rope to be blessed today!
Use it and pray the Jesus Prayer each day this week.

3rd Sunday of Lent
MARCH 27th



VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

HALF WAY TO PASCHA!

Epistle:
Gospel:

Hebrews 4: 14-5:6
Mark 8: 34-9:1

Wear your cross to church and kiss the cross each morning with a bowl!

BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

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Deanery Lenten Missions - Confessions start at 3:30, Vespers at 4:00, and a Fellowship Meal following

March 20 at St Michael's (Rankin)

March 27 at St John's (Northside)

April 3 at St John's (East Pittsburgh)

April 10 at St John's (Ambridge)

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Fellowship Meals - Got Soup? A "small t" tradition in many Orthodox parishes is to have soup (or other light meal) following the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts during the Great Fast. A sign up sheet is in the hall for those interested in bringing in food for after our Wednesday evening services. Let's gather together! Let's pray together! Let's eat 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/

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*** **Ukraine** – The community outreach for the month of March will be for the support of Ukrainian Refugees. In 2014 Fr. Dave went on a mission trip to Moldova. That church is now

assisting refugees as they arrive. Our collections will go to that church.

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* **MAN OF GOD Movie** – A second showing of this internationally acclaimed film about the life of Saint Nektarios has been scheduled! MAN OF GOD depicts the trials and tribulations of Saint Nektarios, as he bears the unjust hatred of his enemies while preaching the Word of God. View the trailer at: www.imdb.com/title/tt6060964/ **Showings of this movie in Pittsburgh Cinemark Theatres will be on Monday, March 21 AND 28 at 7:00 pm.** Contact Fr. Dave for more information.

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All-Soul Saturday (*Zadušna Subota*) Liturgies with Panachidas remaining for 2022 will be on **Mar. 26th, Apr. 2nd, and Jun. 11th**. 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.

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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!*

* **REVISED Book Suggestion for the Great Fast** – "Reading the Bible is empowering. I do it everyday." Our diocese has shared a calendar for

reading the Book of Psalms throughout the Great Fast (attached to our March Newsletter). The Book of Psalms in our Orthodox Study Bible is perfect to use for this occasion. If you wish, you can search “Psalter” or “Psalms” at store.ancientfaith.com for other wonderful books to use.

** **31 Books of March Sale**^{XL} – The Ancient Faith Store is offering different books for 50% off each day of the month of March! Visit the site daily (or sign up for their emails) and keep an eye out for a book that will help you along your Spiritual Journey! (Contact Fr Dave with any questions.) Visit: store.ancientfaith.com/31-books-of-march/

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 most 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. Do not wait to plan for your confession! Confessions will only be heard through Holy Wednesday.

** **Cement Mason Needed** – As we approach spring, some cement repairs need to be made on our front steps. Is anyone handy with masonry work who could offer their time to fix them? Please let Fr. Dave or Larry know.

Pirohi – St George Ukraine Catholic Church sells Pirohi every Thursday and Friday at 3455 California Avenue. Call 412-766-8801 to find out the varieties.

OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD	
Stewardship Offerings:	\$ 155
Candle Stewardship:	\$ 69
Envelope Stewardship	\$ 435
Parish House Offering:	\$ 200
Total Collections:	\$ 859
Capital Improvement Fund:	\$ 10
Relocation Fund:	\$ 100

Weekly Candle Intentions / Memorials were offered last week by Nelson Family; Tim Martin; Lawrence Martin; Melanie Shuster; Cindy Pavilonis

* **Candle Offerings** - Starting **March 1**, these are the new requested minimum offerings for candles:
* \$4 donation for the weekly vigil candles
* \$1 donation for the smaller votive candles
* free-will offering for the Eternal Lamp
* free-will offering for the “Christ Cross Candles”
* free-will offering for the “Theotokos Cross Candles”
Special intentions *In Honor of* (nameday, birthday, anniversary, etc.), *For the Health of*, or *In Memory of*. will be taken for the Eternal Lamp and the “Candle Crosses” on the two stands.

On-Line Giving is available from our parish website to donate to the: *General Stewardship Fund, Capital Improvement Fund, and/or Relocation Fund*. The best option is to come to church and give your offering to God in His Temple (2nd best is to mail it in to Tim Martin, 2225 McAleer Rd., Sewickley, PA 15143). If you miss coming to church for a week, online giving allows you another option to “catch up” on your weekly stewardship. You can also set up a recurring donation online. For our parish to continue it’s ministries, outreach, and general bill paying, your generosity and stewardship is

needed.

** **Paschal Commemorations** – We offer you the opportunity to sponsor items to be used during Holy Week and Pascha as Special Intentions: *anonymously, for the health of OR in memory of departed loves ones*. Please sign up on the sheet in the Vestibule **by Palm Sunday (April 17)** and give an *additional free-will stewardship offering* to the Church.

Bulletin Sponsor – If you wish to sponsor a bulletin In Honor of (nameday, 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.

* **SPF50 (Scripture, Prayer, Family): A Diocese Family Ministry** - The next edition of SPF50 is available! As you are aware, praying together and reading Scripture together are pillars of a Christ-centered Orthodox Christian family. While families may desire to have these activities in their home, they may not be sure how to start. SPF50 intends to help our families bridge that gap. *If you are already participating, please contact Fr. Dave*. If not, consider joining now! Make a commitment to reading Scripture and Praying together with your family. 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.

Additional Material can be found in “The Voice” monthly newsletter on the first Sunday of each month.

VISIT OUR DIOCESE ON-LINE
Diocesan Website: www.acrod.org
Camp Nazareth: www.campnazareth.org
FB: www.facebook.com/acroddioocese
Twitter: twitter.com/acrodnews
YouTube: youtube.com/acroddioocese

SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3
¹⁰ And, “Thou, Lord, didst found the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of thy hands; ¹¹ they will perish, but you remain; they will all grow old like a garment, ¹² like a mantle thou wilt roll them up, and they will be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years will never end.” ¹³ But to what angel has he ever said, “Sit at my right hand till I make thy enemies a stool for thy feet”? ¹⁴ Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation?
Warning to Pay Attention
2 Therefore we must pay the closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. ² For if the message declared by angels was valid and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, ³ how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard him,

Gospel: Mark 2:1-12
Jesus Heals a Paralytic
2 And when he returned to Caper’na-um after some days, it was reported that he was at home. ² And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room for them, not even about the door; and he was preaching the word to them. ³ And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. ⁴ And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed

the roof above him; and when they had made an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic lay. ⁵And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “My son, your sins are forgiven.” ⁶Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, ⁷“Why does this man speak thus? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?” ⁸And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, “Why do you question thus in your hearts? ⁹Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise, take up your pallet and walk’? ¹⁰But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he said to the paralytic— ¹¹“I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home.” ¹²And he rose, and immediately took up the pallet and went out before them all; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, “We never saw anything like this!”

Spiritual Vitamin:
“Let not one think, my fellow Christian, that only priests and monks need to pray without ceasing and not laymen No, no; every Christian without exception ought to dwell always in prayer.”
+ St Gregory Palamas

LIVES OF THE SAINTS

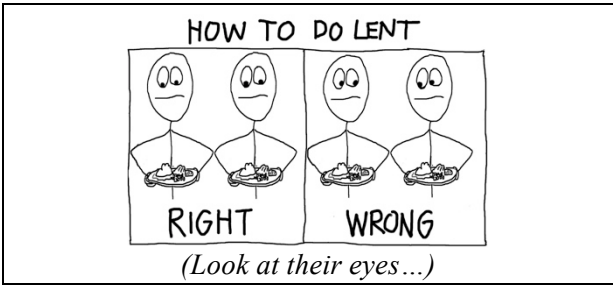
Synaxis of the Venerable Fathers of the Kiev Caves Lavra
On the second Sunday of Great Lent, we commemorate the Synaxis of all the Venerable Fathers of the Kiev Caves Monastery: those who rest in the Near Caves of Saint Anthony (see September 28), as well as those who rest in the Far Caves of Saint Theodosios (see August 28).
Tropar (Hymn in Tone 2)
When you gathered in the Caves and enclosed yourselves therein, then, O God-bearers, having

died to carnal passions, you buried yourselves with Christ. There in the Caves, you destroyed the snares of the devil. Therefore, the angels gave you heavenly crowns.

PRAYER CORNER

For the Health of... Michelle, Paul, Kathleen, John, Joanne, Barbara, Brian, Kristina, Sean, Julia, Susan, 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 souls of the newly departed... +David Himelright (3/6), +Kimberly Bining (2/23), +John Neimer (2/18) ...May the Lord God grant them blessed repose where there is no pain sorrow or mourning. May they be Eternal in God’s Memory.



Icon of Christ’s Extreme Humility

PRAYER CORNER CONTINUED

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 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, Amee, 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.

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... Justin & Erica, Francis & Alexandra, Nicole & Dustin ...through the prayers of Sts. Adrian & Natalia and all Holy Martyrs.

For Pregnant Mothers... Allison (due in May), Stacey (June), Sammy (June) , Caitlin (September), Mallory (September) ...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.

* 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 GREAT FAST**

A Prayer for Peace

Almighty God and Creator, You are the Father of all people on the earth. Guide, I pray, all the nations and their leaders in the ways of justice and peace. Protect us from the evils of injustice, prejudice, exploitation, conflict and war. Help us to put away mistrust, bitterness and hatred. Teach us to cease the storing and using of implements of war. Lead us to find peace, respect and freedom. Unite us in the making and sharing of tools of peace against ignorance, poverty, disease and oppression. Grant that we may grow in harmony and friendship as brothers and sisters created in Your image, to Your honor and praise. Amen.

**A PRAYER OF ST. SYMEON THE NEW
THEOLOGIAN BEFORE CONFESSION**

O God and Lord of all! Who has the power over every breath and soul, the only One able to heal me, hearken unto the prayer of me, the wretched one, and, having put him to death, destroy the serpent nestling within me by the decent of the All-Holy and Life-Creating Spirit.

And vouchsafe me, poor and naked of all virtue, to fall with tears at the feet of my spiritual father, and call his holy soul to mercy, to have mercy on me.

And grant, O Lord, unto my heart humility and good thoughts, becoming a sinner, who has consented to repent unto You, and do not abandon unto the end the one soul, which has united itself unto You and has confessed Thee, and instead of all the world has chosen You and has preferred Thee.

For You know, O Lord, that I want to save myself, and that my evil habit is an obstacle. But all things are possible unto Thee, O Master, which are impossible for man.

Amen.

**A PRAYER OF ST. JOHN OF DAMASCUS
BEFORE RECEIVING COMMUNION**

O Master and Lord, Jesus Christ our God, You alone have authority to forgive my sins, whether committed knowingly or in ignorance, and make me worthy to receive without condemnation Your divine, glorious, pure and life-giving Mysteries, not for my punishment, but for my purification and sanctification, now and in Your future Kingdom.

For You, Christ our God are compassionate and love mankind and to You we give glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit now and forever and ever. Amen.

**A PRAYER OF ST. BASIL THE GREAT
AFTER RECEIVING COMMUNION**

O Master Christ God, King of the ages and Creator of all things, I thank You for all the good gifts You have given me, and especially for the communion of Your pure and life-giving Mysteries. I therefore pray to You good Lord Who loves mankind: keep me under the protection and in the shadow of Your wings; grant that even to my last breath I may with a pure conscience partake worthily of Your Holy Gifts for the remission of sins and for eternal life. For You are the Bread of life, the Source of holiness, the Giver of good things, and to You we send up glory, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and to ages of ages. Amen.

A Prayer Of Repentance (Psalm 50/51)

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your great mercy; And according to the multitude of Your compassions, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my iniquity, And my sin is continually before me. Against You only have I sinned, And done this evil before You. That You might be justified in Your words, And prevail when You judge. For behold, I was conceived in iniquities, And in sins did my mother bear me.

For behold, You have loved truth; The hidden and secret things of Your wisdom You have made clear to me. You shall sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be made clean; You shall wash me and I shall be made whiter than snow. You shall make me to hear joy and gladness, The bones which have been humbled shall rejoice. Turn Your face away from my sins, And blot out all my iniquities.

Create a clean heart in me, O God, And renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Your presence, And take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And with Your governing Spirit establish me. I shall teach transgressors Your ways, And the ungodly shall turn back to You.

Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, who are the God of my salvation, My tongue shall rejoice in Your righteousness. O Lord, You shall open my lips, And my mouth shall declare Your praise.

For if You had desired sacrifice, I would have given it; With whole burnt offerings You shall not be pleased. A sacrifice to God is a broken spirit, A heart that is broken and humbled God will not despise. Do good, O Lord, in Your good pleasure to Zion; And let the walls of Jerusalem be built Then shall You be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with oblation and whole burnt offerings; Then shall they offer bullocks upon Your altar.

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.

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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.

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**THE PRAYER OF SAINT EPHRAIM
THE SYRIAN**

*(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 one
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]*

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The Jesus Prayer

(Inhale) O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God,
(Exhale) have mercy on me, a sinner!

(Repeat until your heart is calm...)

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SPIRITUAL CONSIDERATIONS

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

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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.

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MONTHLY COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Slava Ukrainii! Glory to Ukraine! - We are taking monetary donations to send to Moldova to assist in refugee aid.

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VIRTUAL BULLETIN BONUSES

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**SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR
THE GREAT FAST (GREAT LENT):**

We are called to increase our *Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving* during this time...

PRAYER:

- ✠ Attend as many of the services as possible and be strengthened in community prayer.
- ✠ Come to the Mystery of Confession (*offered after every service, on most Saturdays during the Great Fast, or by appointment*).
- ✠ Approach the Chalice to receive the Holy Eucharist as often as possible.
- ✠ Also, add additional prayers to your personal *Prayer Rule* at home. (See the attached about

reading the Book of Psalms during Great Lent.)

FASTING:

- ✠ The Great Fast begins tomorrow, March 8. This is a day of strict fasting (no meat or dairy products). Likewise, strict fast on Great & Holy Friday (4/22) and Great & Holy Saturday (4/23)
- ✠ The tradition of the Orthodox Church is a strict fast (*no meat or dairy products eaten*) by all of the faithful for the entire 40 days of the Great Fast and for all of Holy Week.
- ✠ If you cannot physically do this, adopt a fasting rule and stick to it for the duration of the Great Fast (*see Father for some guidance*). Here are a few examples:
 - a) strict fast on certain days of the week while keeping a meat fast on the others;
 - b) fast only from meat;
 - c) fast from meat for certain weeks (*Clean Week, Cross Week, and Holy Week*); or
 - d) fast from meat on Wednesdays, Fridays, and all of Holy Week (*April 18-23*).
- ✠ The more effort you put forth in your fasting, the more spiritually uplifting your Lenten Season will be!
- ✠ A minimum three (3) hour fast from all food and drink for those receiving Communion at the evening Pre-sanctified Liturgy (*the regular “midnight Fast” is called for the Liturgies of St. John Chrysostom & St. Basil the Great*)
- ✠ The sick and infirm are not bound by the fast at any time.
- ✠ Those requiring medications or certain prescribed diets are to follow their physician’s instructions.
- ✠ Lastly, the Great Fast is not a “40 day diet program” or simply a “dietary adjustment” (or “label Lent”).

ALMSGIVING:

- ✠ Find a way to give more of your time, talent, and treasures.

A general guideline for the Great Fast is this:
Try to do more than last year.
Please reach out if you have questions about this important fasting period that we are blessed with. May our journey to Pascha be a spiritually beautiful one! – *Fr. Dave*

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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].

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The Jesus Prayer
The prayer that can change your life

We all need a good dose of silent prayer each and every day. Finding that perfect place in your home that can become your cave, or prayer closet, will afford you that sacred space wherein you can go deep into the heart and connect with God. That place wherein you can close off your family, your worries, your job, your distractions, and go deep into your heart wherein you will find the peace that comes from Christ.

The Jesus Prayer is the perfect prayer, for it is a prayer of adoration and praise, and a prayer that proclaims that Jesus is Lord and, as God, can grant mercy upon you. The simple prayer which invokes the Holy Name of Jesus can transform your life, and take you into the very Heart of God. This prayer is known as the Prayer of the Heart for the very reason that it is of the heart.

"Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner." Said with the aid of a Prayer Rope (thus bringing your body into the action of the prayer), this prayer accomplishes Saint Paul's admonition that we should "pray always". It is a prayer that takes you out of yourself and into communion with Christ. It is a prayer that can change your life because through this prayer you can taste the presence of Christ beside you.

Love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon

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The Prayer Rope
Predating the Catholic Rosary, this Orthodox tool of prayer made of black wool with a small cross has over centuries passed through the hands of countless people seeking God’s Kingdom. Like a chain on a bike, the prayer rope helps us move toward God with the saying the Jesus Prayer on each knot.
THE JESUS PRAYER: Lord Jesus Christ, Have Mercy on me.
It is a mystery what depth this prayer has.. saying the name of Christ burns the demons, it makes them flee from us in times of temptations. When we are upset, feel tempted we can reach for our prayer rope and calmly call upon the Lord. Because we ask for mercy in the Jesus Prayer, we find that this helps us not be prideful. Our ego makes us think we have all we need without God, we have all the strength with out Jesus... but that is a lie. Only with God can we do anything and praying to Him with the Jesus Prayer helps us remember we are servants in need of God’s commands rather than commanding Him.
Now the Prayer Rope is not some kind of amulet with special powers... it is just string... however when tied with 7 knots the tradition tells us the devil cannot untie it like he did with the monks of Egypt in the 300’s. The Prayer Rope is simply

an aid. Keeping it in our left hand and moving from knot to knot with each prayer helps us focus and become still and quiet.
His Grace Bishop Gregory once encouraged the youth of our Diocese at Camp Nazareth that if they ever feel something is off, to go sit somewhere quiet and say the Jesus Prayer on a small rope and see how God helps us.
A Careful Reminder:
The Holy Fathers teach that when we use the prayer rope or take on any spiritual endeavor we should always refer to our spiritual father’s advice (father confessor) so as to avoid delusion.

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ORTHODOX ETIQUETTE

Postures In Worship: BOWING
During services, a **bow** is often made by the inclining of the head and neck (also called a *reverence*). It is more than a mere nod of the head, but bending at the waist.

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Orthodox Christians **bow** when the names of the Theotokos and Christ are invoked. They also **bow** to the priest at his blessing, and when he asks forgiveness before the Great Entrance and, in some parishes before Holy Communion. It is traditional for the Orthodox faithful to **bow** and cross themselves when they enter and leave the church, and when they pray before the icons.

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It is not necessary to cross oneself when the priest is giving a blessing or censuring the congregation. Instead, one should **bow** to receive the blessing. (It is not necessary to turn to “follow the priest” as he censures the church.)