

“THE WEEKLY FORERUNNER” *Our Parish Weekly Bulletin*

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

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

ST. THOMAS SUNDAY, MAY 1

9:20 am Paschal Canon
9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Epistle: Acts 5:12-20; Gospel: John 20:19-31
Breaking of the Artos Bread
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SUNDAY, MAY 8

3rd Sunday of Pascha; Sunday of the Myrrhbearing Women; Joseph of Arimathea, & Nicodemus
9:20 am Paschal Canon
9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Epistle: Acts 6:1-7
Gospel: Mark 15:43-16:8
Tone 2; Liturgical Color: **White**
Panachida for deceased Mothers
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THURSDAY, MAY 12 - Moleben is canceled

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***There is no kneeling in prayer and omit
“O Heavenly King” from your prayers for 50 days***

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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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BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

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*** **Clergy Convocation** - Fr. Dave will be at Camp Nazareth from **Tuesday through Friday, May 3-6**. In case of a pastoral emergency, since cell reception is very poor at the camp, either call the camp (724-662-4840), Fr. John Touloumes (412-366-8700), or Fr. John Charest (847-910-7120)

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*** **Bourbon Tasting** – The IOCC is hosting a Bourbon Tasting **Thursday, May 12** at 7pm at Leaf & Bean (3525 Washington Rd., McMurray, PA 15317). The \$50 ticket includes: a Leaf & Bean gift, 3 bourbon samples, and light hors d’oeuvres. Proceeds to Benefit Ukraine Relief Efforts. Register online at: www.iocc.org/Pittsburgh.

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** **Basket Raffle Returns!** – Here are the details: **Saturday, May 21st**. Doors open at 3pm with dinner starting at **4pm** and the raffle of over 25 baskets to follow. Tickets are \$20 in advance for adults (\$25 at the door), \$10 for youth (6-17), kids 5 and under are free, or there is a \$50 Family Admission. Ticket donation includes: Admission, 8 Basket Raffle Tickets, 1 Complimentary Drink, and a homemade Italian Pasta Dinner with Appetizer, Salad Bar, and Dessert. (Extra Raffle tickets may also be purchased at the event.) For reservations, please sign up on the sheet in the hall, call / text 412-748-0148, or email OrthodoxPittsburgh1932@gmail.com. *** **Baskets are needed**. Please sign up in the hall if you are able to bring a basket or to help at the event.

PASCHAL GREETING:

(use instead of ‘hello’, before ‘good morning’, etc.)

Christ is risen!

(responded with: **Indeed He is risen!**)

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

Father Dave Urban, *Pastor* +++ 2688 California Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pa 15212
www.OrthodoxPittsburgh.com +++ 412-748-0148 (Talk or Text) +++ OrthodoxPittsburgh1932@gmail.com

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** **Cemetery Grave Blessings** has been changed to **Sunday, May 22nd**. We will celebrate a Panachida after Liturgy and then head to the cemeteries after coffee social. *** *If your loved ones are not at one of the two nearby cemeteries, please schedule a time with Fr. Dave to meet (if possible) before the Feast of Ascension.*

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*** **Welcome to the Newly-Baptized! Molly Rose Blobner** was baptized and initiated into the Orthodox faith yesterday. May God give strength to her as she begins her Christian life and bless her, her parents, God-Parents, and families! Many Years!

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** **Senior Retreat at Camp Nazareth** – Did you notice that the “senior” retreat actually starts at age 55! From **May 10-12** plan to relax for a few days in among the mountains! Please see this month’s Voice Newsletter for more information or contact Fr. Dave.

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** **Calling All Graduates** – Please notify Fr. Dave of your graduation information by **May 15**. High School Students: *your High School, any academic and/or athletic awards, and where you will attend in the Fall with your intended major in college (or undecided at this time).* Trade School, College, Graduate and Post-Graduate Students: *where you went, your field of study, and degree you will earn.*

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** **2022 Garage Sale** – This year’s garage sale will be on **August 12-14**. Please begin bringing your donations in to the church hall starting on **Sunday, May 22**.

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Paschal Greeting in Church Slavonic:

Christos voskrese! (*Voistinu voskrese!*)

If greeted in a language you are unfamiliar with, translate, respond in English, then learn the response

** **100th Anniversary** - Mark your calendars for St. John the Baptist in Ambridge’s 100th Anniversary celebration on **July 10, 2022**. If you, or anyone you know, are interested in placing an ad in the 100th Anniversary program book or attending the July 10 banquet, please contact John Righetti as soon as possible (email: rusynone@gmail.com or call / text: 412-518-7149)

Paschal Greeting in Greek:

Khristós anésti! (*Alithós anésti!*)

** **Family Camp at Camp Nazareth** – Cabins are still available for this year’s Family Camp from **Friday, June 3 to Sunday, June 5** (prior to Family Day). Please see this month’s Voice Newsletter for more information or contact Fr. Dave.

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** **Family Day at Camp Nazareth** will be on **Sunday, June 5**. Divine Liturgy will be at 10am. There will be great food, music entertainment, swimming, craft activities, games, and more! The pricing for lunch is as follows: Adults: \$10; Children 5-13: \$6; Children Under 5: Free; Family Price: \$30 (Includes 2 Parents & All Children Under Age 13)

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** **2022 Young Women’s Encounter** - Registration is now open for the Annual Diocesan Young Women's Encounter which will take place from **Sunday, June 26 to Wednesday, June 29**, at Saints Peter and Paul Church in Windber, PA. We encourage our young women, ages 12-18 to attend. Registration Deadline is Monday, June 6. Register at: tinyurl.com/ACRODYWE22. *The YWE planning committee will host an Informational Call on Monday, May 23rd at 7pm EST for any new or returning parents who would like to know more about what the YWE offers and what is planned for this year.* *Informational Call sign up:* tinyurl.com/YWE22InfoCall

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**** Pittsburgh Deanery Week at Camp Nazareth is July 17-23.** Registration for all campers, ages 8-18 has begun. Information is available on the Camp’s Website: www.campnazareth.org.

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**** Annual Church Picnic** – “The Cabin” in North Park is booked for **Sunday, July 31st** for our summer picnic. Please update your calendars to the new date.

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Paschal Greeting in Romanian:
Hristos a înviat! (*Adevărat a înviat!*)

**** 90th Anniversary Update** – Planning continues for our upcoming celebration on **October 9, 2022**. The luncheon will be held at Pittsburgh's Grand Hall at the Priory on the North Side. If you have suggestions for favors, a program book, or photo slide show, etc., please see Gina Fall or Larry Martin.

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OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD

Stewardship Offerings:	\$ 1005
Candle Stewardship:	\$ 429
Envelope Stewardship:	\$ 3505
Community Outreach:	\$ 100
Total Collections:	\$ 5039
Relocation Fund:	\$ 50

Weekly Candle Intentions / Memorials were offered last week by Nelson Family; Lawrence Martin; John Radick; Tim Martin; Melanie Shuster; Mary Jane Hudak; Bobbie Kruchkevich; Mike Puhac; Brian Gogal; Patty Watson; Cindy Pavilonis

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The Eternal Lamp was offered last week by Melanie Paieski in memory of her mother, Catherine Gaydos; and by Matthew Peifer in memory of parents, +Jack and +Viola Peifer. May Their Memory Be Eternal! Vičnaya Pamyat!

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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.

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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.

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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

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Paschal Greeting in Italian:
Cristo è risorto! (*È veramente risorto!*)

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SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle Acts 5:12–20

The Apostles Heal Many

¹²Now many signs and wonders were done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon’s Portico. ¹³None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high honor. ¹⁴And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women, ¹⁵so that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and pallets, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. ¹⁶The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

The Apostles Are Persecuted

¹⁷But the high priest rose up and all who were with him, that is, the party of the Sad’ducees, and filled with jealousy ¹⁸they arrested the apostles and put

them in the common prison. ¹⁹But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out and said, ²⁰“Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life.”

Paschal Greeting in Arabic:
El Messieh kahm! (*Hakken kahm!*)

Gospel: John 20:19–31

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

¹⁹On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” ²⁰When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you.” ²²And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

Jesus and Thomas

²⁴Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in his side, I will not believe.”

²⁶Eight days later, his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. The doors were shut, but Jesus came and stood among them, and said, “Peace be with you.” ²⁷Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side; do not be faithless, but believing.” ²⁸Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” ²⁹Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.”

The Purpose of This Book

³⁰Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name.

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Paschal Greeting in Spanish:
¡Cristo ha resucitado!
(*¡En verdad ha resucitado!*)

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LIVES OF THE SAINTS

Sainted Kozma, Bishop Of Chalcedon, And His Companion The Monk Auxentios

Commemorated on May 1/April 18

Sainted Kozma, Bishop of Chalcedon, and his companion the Monk Auxentios, lived during the IX Century, at a time when the Iconoclasts oppressed the adherents of Orthodoxy. Saint Kozma while still in his youth had withdrawn to a monastery and accepted monastic tonsure. Afterwards he was ordained to the dignity of bishop of Chalcedon and he zealously defended the Orthodox faith against the Iconoclast heretics. The Monk Auxentios was an helper to the saint in this struggle. The Iconoclasts tried in manifold ways to sway the saint over to their side, but he remained faithful to Orthodoxy to the very end. Saint Kozma did not obey the decree of the emperor Leo the Armenian (813-820) about the discarding of holy icons from the churches. For this he was expelled from his cathedra-seat and exiled to prison. When the saint returned from exile, he continued with Saint Auxentios to defend the veneration of holy icons. At the mitigation of the persecution, Saint Kozma was weak in body, but remained all the more strong in spirit. Sainted Kozma (+ c. 815-820) and the Monk Auxentios to their very end steadfastly preserved the Orthodox faith.

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Paschal Greeting in Swahili:
Kristo amefufukka! (*Kweli amefufukka!*)

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PRAYER CORNER



For the Health of... Thomas, Joseph, Carol, Kelly, 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.*

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For the souls of the newly departed...

+Lino Conti (5/2), +Garry Omlar (4/30), +Donald Shelpman (4/21), +Andrew M. Halapin (4/14), +Richard Prough (4/1)

...*May the Lord God grant them blessed repose where there is no pain sorrow or mourning. May they be Eternal in God's Memory.*

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Spiritual Vitamin:

"...Now since you are celebrating the holy Pascha, you should know, brethren, what the Pascha is. Pascha means the crossing-over, and so the Festival is called by this name. For it was on this day that the Children of Israel crossed over out of Egypt, and the Son of God crossed over from this world to His Father. What gain is it to celebrate unless you imitate Him Whom you worship; that is, unless you cross over from Egypt, that is, from the darkness of evil-doing to the light of virtue, from the love of this world to the love of your heavenly home?"

St. Ambrose of Milan

"The Sunday of the Resurrection"

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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.

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"The cremation of bodies is not a Christian act. It is a custom of modern times. The body of a Christian has been sanctified with the Grace of the Holy Spirit, and as such may not be burned. God did not create our bodies for burning." - Elder Thaddeus of Vitovnica

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**CHRIST IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD, TRAMPLING
DOWN DEATH BY DEATH AND UPON THOSE IN
THE TOMBS BESTOWING LIFE!**

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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 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.*

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May Namedays:

Subdeacon Ryan Ferko – St. Thomas Sunday (5/1)

Robert Fall - St Robert, Abbot of Blois (5/8)

Mark Tongel - St. Mark the Evangelist (5/8)

Renee Mirilovich - Great-martyr Irene (5/18)

Christopher Bowser - Martyr Christopher (5/22)

Christopher Kubis - Martyr Christopher (5/22)

...*May God grant them many and blessed years!*

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May Birthdays:

Anna Karoline Dzacony (5/3), Fr Matthew Stagon

(5/4), Donald Bodnar (5/6), Apryle Horbal (5/6),

Fr Thomas Soroka (5/6), Ethan Gogal (5/7), Ella

Kovats (5/9), Dr Phillip Labas (5/10), Jillian Gaydos

(5/14), Robert Mozes (5/16), Pañi Alexandra Urban

(5/16), Patrick Wertz (5/19), Linda Gavulich (5/20),

Kenneth Parks (5/22), Elias Mainolfi (5/24), Sean

Watson (5/26), Alexander Hanchulak (5/27), Fr

Jonathan Tobias (5/27), Michael Horbal (5/29),

Melanie Shuster (5/30) ...*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... Tyler, Susan, Marilynn, John ...*through the prayers of St. Paul the Apostle, St. Mary Magdalene, & St. John*

Maximovitch.

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

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May Anniversaries:

Father’s Godparents, Dick & Andrea Babbie (5/7)
Father’s Best Man, Joe & Sarah Lavra (5/7)
Father’s sister, Melissa & Christopher Ditmore (5/17)
Fr Dave’s Ordination to the Priesthood (5/17)
Ashley & Derrick Andrekovich (5/19)
Ernest & Claudia (Herbert) Pido (5/19)
Fr Dave & Pañi Alexandra (5/25)
Jim & Katherine Schrmack (5/26)
Anthony & Donna Horbal (5/27)

...through the prayers of St. Nicholas Planas
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***For Pregnant Mothers...** Allison (*due in May*), Marilyn (June), Stacey (June), Sammy (June) , Caitlin (September), Mallory (September) ...*through the prayers of St. Anna, the mother of the Virgin Mary, and St. Irene Chrysovalantou.**

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

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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.*

DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS FOR THE WEEK

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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.

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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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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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STEWARDSHIP SNIPPET

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Stewardship of Treasure Guide												
Weekly offering to God through the Sunday Offertory - <i>Will you take a step up?</i>												
Weekly Income	Beyond a Tithe 15%	12%	10%	Tithe 9%	Upper Range Giving 8%	7%	Middle Range Giving 6%	5%	4%	Lower Range Giving 3%	2%	1%
\$200	\$30	\$24	\$20	\$18	\$16	\$14	\$12	\$10	\$8	\$6	\$4	\$2
\$300	\$45	\$36	\$30	\$27	\$24	\$21	\$18	\$15	\$12	\$9	\$6	\$3
\$400	\$60	\$48	\$40	\$36	\$32	\$28	\$24	\$20	\$16	\$12	\$8	\$4
\$500	\$75	\$60	\$50	\$45	\$40	\$35	\$30	\$25	\$20	\$15	\$10	\$5
\$600	\$90	\$72	\$60	\$54	\$48	\$42	\$36	\$30	\$24	\$18	\$12	\$6
\$700	\$105	\$84	\$70	\$63	\$56	\$49	\$42	\$35	\$28	\$21	\$14	\$7
\$800	\$120	\$96	\$80	\$72	\$64	\$56	\$48	\$40	\$32	\$24	\$16	\$8
\$900	\$135	\$108	\$90	\$81	\$72	\$63	\$54	\$45	\$36	\$27	\$18	\$9
\$1,000	\$150	\$120	\$100	\$90	\$80	\$70	\$60	\$50	\$40	\$30	\$20	\$10
\$1,100	\$165	\$132	\$110	\$99	\$88	\$77	\$66	\$55	\$44	\$33	\$22	\$11
\$2,000	\$300	\$240	\$200	\$180	\$160	\$140	\$120	\$100	\$80	\$60	\$40	\$20
\$3,000	\$450	\$360	\$300	\$270	\$240	\$210	\$180	\$150	\$120	\$90	\$60	\$30
1. Find where YOU are on the chart (your weekly income/giving). 2. Move one block to the left to determine what GROW ONE% would be.												

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THE ANGEL EXCLAIMED TO HER, “FULL OF GRACE, REJOICE O PURE VIRGIN. AGAIN I SAY REJOICE, YOUR SON IS RISEN FROM HIS THREE DAYS IN THE TOMB, AND HE HAS RAISED ALL THE DEAD. LET ALL PEOPLE REJOICE!”

O SHINE, O SHINE, O NEW JERUSALEM: FOR THE GLORY OF THE LORD IS RISEN UPON YOU. O ZION, SING WITH JOY AND REJOICE. AND YOU, PURE MOTHER OF GOD, REJOICE IN THE RESURRECTION OF YOUR SON.

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ONLINE BULLETIN BONUS

ST. THOMAS SUNDAY

By Fr. Sergei Sveshnikov

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ!

All of Bright Week we lived in the Paschal joy in the risen Savior; and our joy, just like that of the holy apostles, was mixed with confusion: not long ago we had remembered the death of Him Who is the Source of life, but now we rejoice, having been raised to life by Him Who had been in the tomb. Just like the holy disciples and apostles during the first days after the resurrection, we vividly remembered the passions of Christ during the reading of the 12 Gospels; the Lord’s death and the taking down of His Body from the Cross, which we symbolized by the bringing out of the shroud; the Savior’s burial, when we carried the shroud in a procession around the church; and the long hours awaiting the miracle on the Saturday of Great Stillness. Although from the very early morning on the day of the resurrection the good news of the resurrection was carried throughout creation, and even though angels from heaven (Mark 16:6) and holy myrrhbearers on earth (Luke 24:9) and even the guards at the Sanhedrin (Matthew 28:11) had already told of the miracle, the apostles were still in a state of fear and doubt, hiding behind doors and locks “for the fear of the Jews” (John 20:19). The disciples’ doubt is not surprising, for they were witness to the greatest miracle in the history of creation: humans killed God, and then He rose from the dead and saved the dying human race from the claws of hell. The disciples of

Christ, after their teacher’s arrest, forgot all of His prophecies concerning the things about to take place. They did not believe the miraculous story of the holy myrrhbearers (Mark 16:11, Luke 24:11), and even while talking to the Risen One face to face, they hesitated to trust their own hearts (Luke 24:25) which were burning and trembling in the presence of God (Luke 24:32).

This marvelous unbelief (Luke 24:41), human weakness, incapable of encompassing the magnitude of the miracle that took place, is reflected in the famous words of the Apostle Thomas: “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it.” (John 20:25) People often refer to Thomas as “doubting,” not really considering the depth and the height of the “doubt” of this holy apostle. But let us look more carefully at this man. Was his doubt the same as that of the Judeans who yelled about the Savior Whom they crucified, “Let Him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in Him.” (Matthew 27:42); or was it similar to that which we hear from our contemporaries: “If there is God, let Him show Himself to all, and we will believe in Him and live happily ever after”? The ancient scribes and Pharisees knew about all of Christ’s miracles and, it appears, guessed Who Jesus of Galilee really was. But every time they were faced with the Divine, they became even more rooted in blasphemy. Having found out that Christ had healed a man born blind, instead of lifting praises they spewed curses: “This man is a sinner (John 9:24), [and] you were steeped in sin at birth” (John 9:34). Having heard that Christ had resurrected a four-day-old already-smelling dead man, and, apparently, not having any more doubts about Christ’s divinity, the elders of the nation decided “to kill Lazarus as well” (John 12:10). Finally, after being faced with the fact of Christ’s miraculous resurrection, and having heard the eyewitness accounts of the guards (Matthew 28:11) who had fallen on the ground trembling in the presence of a shining angel (Matthew 28:4), the elders bribed the soldiers and deceived the people (Matthew 28:12-14), further deepening their blasphemy. Don’t modern Pharisees also only further deepen their blasphemy, having come face to face with the Risen

One and not being convinced even by the miracles? But Saint Thomas is not one of them. We know about his faithfulness and sacrificial love for his Teacher. After following the Savior for three years, Thomas understood very well the danger Christ faced from the scribes and the Pharisees. The other disciples also understood it very well; that is why when the Savior decided to go to Jerusalem, the apostles tried to talk Him out of it, warning Him of the danger (John 11:8). But it was St. Thomas who said, “Let us also go, that we may die with Him” (John 11:16). One does not often hear such words from a doubter! After the Ascension of the Savior, the Apostle Thomas, according to the Church Tradition, went to preach the Gospel in one of the furthest and most difficult to reach places of the ancient world—India, where he was tortured and killed for Christ. But on that day, a week after the Resurrection, when the Savior came to His disciples and Thomas was with them, the holy apostle needed only a push, only a step, in order for this disciple who so selflessly loved his Teacher to realize to Whom he had devoted his life. “My Lord and my God!” exclaimed Thomas, who only a minute earlier had been understandably doubting the accounts of his brethren. “My Lord and my God!” exclaimed Thomas from the bottom of his loving heart. To such a person as Thomas God comes. This is the kind of person that He allows to touch Himself! In His desire to save people, Christ suffered everything: mocking and scourging, torture and shameful death, and even others poking at His wounds with their fingers after His glorious resurrection. If He is awaited, Christ will even go through closed doors (John 20:26). But what will He hear having entered our heart? Will He hear from us the words “my Lord and my God” or will He only receive mocking and scourging? Will we worship Him, as did St. Thomas, or will we crucify Him with our lack of repentance and hurl the rocks of our sins at Him? Lord, through the prayers of the holy Apostle Thomas, give us faith and help our unbelief (Mark 9:24)!