"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!

Christ Is Risen! (responded with: Indeed. He Is Risen!) Christos Voskrese! (Voistinu Voskrese!) 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, MAY 15

4th Sunday of Pascha; Sunday of the Paralytic 9:20 am Paschal Canon: 9:30 am Divine Liturgy Urgent Parish Meeting & Vote for Duncan Avenue TUESDAY, MAY 17

7:00 pm Feast Day Vespers and prayer to the Inexhaustible Cup

WEDNESDAY, MAY 18 – MID-FEAST OF PENTECOST 9:30 am Divine Liturgy

SUNDAY, MAY 22

5th Sunday of Pascha; Sun. of the Samaritan Woman 9:20 am Paschal Canon; 9:30 am Divine Liturgy Epistle: Acts 11:19-26, 29-30; Gospel: John 4:5-42 Tone 4; Liturgical Color: White Panachida for the departed Blessing of Cemetery Graves

TUESDAY, MAY 24 – SAINTS CYRIL AND METHODIOS 9:30 am Divine Liturgy

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

Calendar - Future Services are updated online at: www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar (Please see Fr. Dave if you want a printed copy)

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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RELOCATION UPDATE

The motion for our parish to relocate to 2201 Duncan Avenue Allison Park, PA 15101 passed today, Sunday, May 15, 2022 with:

> 14 yes votes 1 no vote

1 withheld vote (from the Parish Council Pres.) We Are Heading To The North Hills!

THANK YOU for your prayers and may God's Will continue to guide us! +++ +++ +++

BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday) +++ +++ +++

Thank You to the folks who came out over the past two days to look at the property on Duncan Avenue! Your efforts and questions were greatly appreciated! +++ +++ +++

*** Basket Raffle POSTPONED - For various reasons, the ACRY Italian Dinner and Basket Raffle scheduled for Saturday, May 21, has been postponed. Updates will be shared when they are finalized. (If vou had a basket ready to donate, please hold on to it *for a future event)*

* Calling All Graduates – Please notify Fr. Dave of your graduation information by May 15.

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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 vou went, your field of study, and degree you will earn.

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

Feast Day Vespers – In the Orthodox Church. Vespers is prescribed to be done on a daily basis (which happens in a lot of monasteries). Great Vespers is appointed to be served on Saturday nights and on the eves of all Feast Days (ranked higher than Fourth Class). We will offer this service on Tuesday on the eve of the Feast of Mid-Pentecost

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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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PASCHAL GREETING: (use instead of 'hello', before 'good morning', etc.) Christ is risen!

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

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** Altar Boy Retreat - The Diocesan Altar Boy Retreat will be in Johnstown, PA from Sunday, June 26 to Wednesday, June 29, We encourage our boys

to attend. More details are coming... +++ +++ +++

** Young Women's Encounter - Registration is now open for the Diocesan Young Women's Encounter at Saints Peter and Paul Church in Windber, PA from Sunday, June 26 to Wednesday, June 29. We encourage our young women, ages 12-18 to attend. Please see this month's Voice Newsletter for more information or contact Fr. Dave.

> Paschal Greeting in Church Slavonic: Christos voskrese! (Voistinu voskrese!)

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

Stewardship Offerings: \$ 100 Candle Stewardship: \$ 228 Envelope Stewardship: \$ 300 Parish House Offering: \$ 200

OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD

Community Outreach: \$ 10 **Total Collections:** \$838 **Capital Improvement Fund:** \$ 25

Relocation Fund: \$ 50

Weekly Candle Intentions / Memorials were offered last week by Nelson Family; Tim Martin; Lawrence Martin; Melanie Shuster; Mirilovich Family; Patty Watson; John Gaydos, Jr.; Cindy **Pavilonis**

The Eternal Lamp was offered last week by Tim Martin in memory of Mother, +Anastasia; by John Gaydos, Jr. IMO Mother, +Catherine; by Cindy Pavilonis IMO +Lino Conti; and by Matthew Peifer; IMO 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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Additional Material can be found in "The Voice" monthly newsletter on the first Sunday of the month as well as the article on the cover of this bulletin.

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MAY COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Our May Community Outreach organization had not made it into the bulletin until today. This month, through the efforts of our Sr. ACRY, we ask for an additional offering this month for **Light of Life Rescue Mission** (located on the North Side) "Where Hope and Healing Meet: Changing lives together through Christ-centered care. www.lightoflife.org/Thank you in advance for your prayers and offering this month!

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

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VISIT OUR DIOCESE ON-LINE

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

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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: Acts 9:32–42

The Healing of Aeneas

³² Now as Peter went here and there among them all, he came down also to the saints that lived at Lydda. ³³ There he found a man named Aene'as, who had been bedridden for eight years and was paralyzed. ³⁴ And Peter said to him, "Aene'as, Jesus Christ heals you; rise and make your bed." And immediately he rose. ³⁵ And all the residents of Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord.

Peter in Lydda and Joppa

³⁶ Now there was at Joppa a disciple named Tabitha, which means Dorcas. She was full of good works and acts of charity. ³⁷ In those days she fell sick and died;

and when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. 38 Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to him entreating him, "Please come to us without delay." 39 So Peter rose and went with them. And when he had come, they took him to the upper room. All the widows stood beside him weeping, and showing tunics and other garments which Dorcas made while she was with them. ⁴⁰ But Peter put them all outside and knelt down and prayed; then turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, rise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. 41 And he gave her his hand and lifted her up. Then calling the saints and widows he presented her alive. 42 And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.

> +++ **Gospel:** John 5:1–15

Jesus Heals on the Sabbath

5 After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

² Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Hebrew called Beth-za'tha, which has five porticoes. ³ In these lay a multitude of invalids, blind, lame, paralyzed. ⁵ One man was there, who had been ill for thirty-eight years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him and knew that he had been lying there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be healed?" ⁷ The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is troubled, and while I am going another steps down before me." ⁸ Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your pallet, and walk." ⁹ And at once the man was healed, and he took up his pallet and walked.

Now that day was the sabbath. ¹⁰ So the Jews said to the man who was cured, "It is the sabbath, it is not lawful for you to carry your pallet." ¹¹ But he answered them, "The man who healed me said to me, 'Take up your pallet, and walk." ¹² They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Take up your pallet, and walk'?" ¹³ Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, as there was a crowd in the place. ¹⁴ Afterward, Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing

worse befall you." ¹⁵ The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him.

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

LIVES OF THE SAINTS

THE RIGHTEOUS SAINT TABITHA

Commemorated on 4th Sunday of Pascha, October 25

The Righteous Saint Tabitha (I), a virtuous and kindly woman, belonged to the Christian community in Joppa. Being grievously ill, she happened to be dying. At the time not far from Joppa, the Apostle Peter was preaching at Lydda. Messengers were sent to him with an urgent request for help. When the apostle arrived at Joppa, Tabitha was already dead. On bended knee, the First-Ranked Apostle Peter made a fervent prayer to the Lord. Then he went to the bed and called out: "Tabitha, arise!" She got up completely healed (Acts 9: 36).

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Paschal Greeting in Greek: Khristós anésti! (Alithós anésti!)

PRAYER CORNER



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

For the Health of... Alexandra, Sophia, Amy, Pani Deborah, Fr Dcn Artemius, 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...+Shirley Lorenzi (5/4), +Lino Conti (5/2), +Garry Omlar (4/30), +Donald Shelpman (4/21), +Andrew M. Halapin (4/14) ... 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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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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Paschal Notes – For 40 days from Pascha (Easter) until Ascension, we greet each other by saying, "Christ is risen!" (responding with "Indeed, He is risen!"). We can also adjust our before and after meal prayers.

The prayer to the Holy Spirit, "O Heavenly King", **is not said** at home or in church during this season until the Feast of the Decent of the Holy Spirit: Pentecost (June 12). Instead we say or sing the Paschal Tropar, "Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down..." (three times) until the Feast of Ascension (June 2).

During the 50 days from Pascha to Pentecost, we **do not kneel or make prostrations** in church in keeping with the joyful and festal character of the season. We begin to kneel and do prostrations again with the Kneeling Prayers of Pentecost that Sunday evening.

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An Orthodox Prayer for Mental Health

O Master, Lord my God, in Whose hands is my destiny: Help me according to Your mercy, and leave me not to perish in my transgressions, nor allow me to follow them who place desires of the flesh over those of the spirit. I am Your creation; disdain not the work of Your hands. Turn not away; be compassionate and humiliate me not, neither scorn me, O Lord, as I am weak. I have fled unto You as my Protector and God. Heal my soul, for I have sinned against You. Save me for Your mercy's sake, for I have cleaved unto You from my youth; let me who seeks You not be put to shame by being rejected by You for my unclean actions, unseemly thoughts, and unprofitable remembrances. Drive away from me every filthy thing and excess of evil. For You alone are holy, alone mighty, and alone immortal, in all things having unexcelled might, which, through You, is given to all that strive against the devil and the might of his armies. For unto You is due all glory, honor and worship: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

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

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Spiritual Vitamin:

"Pascha is the feast of freedom, joy and peace. We solemnly praise the Resurrection of Christ through which we experience our own coresurrection. And we faithfully worship the great mystery of Divine Economy and we share in "the feast that is common to all."

+ Bartholomew of Constantinople, *Holy Pascha 2022*

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

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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



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.

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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,

Mav 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!

May Birthdays:

Anna Karoline Dzadony (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), Paňi 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!

For our Catechumens & Inquirers... Tyler, Susan, Marilynn, John ...through the prayers of St. Paul the Apostle, St. Mary Magadalene, & 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.

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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)
Ernest & Claudia (Herbert) Pido (5/19)
Fr Dave & Paňi Alexandra (5/25)
Jim & Katherine Schrmack (5/26)
Anthony & Donna Horbal (5/27)
...through the prayers of St. Nicholas Planas

For Pregnant Mothers... Allison (due in May), Marilynn (June), Stacey (June), Sammy (June), Caitlin (September), Mallory (September), Brittany () ...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 FOR THE MONTH

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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.

+++ +++ +++ 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.

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

STEWARDSHIP SNIPPET

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| , | | | | God through the Sunday Tithe Upper Range Giving | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|--------------|---|-------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|-------|------|------|-------|--|
| Income | | | Tithe
10% | Upper
9% | Range
8% | 5iving
7% | Middle
6% | Kange
5% | 4% | 3% | 2% | SIVIN | |
| \$200 | \$30 | \$24 | \$20 | \$18 | \$16 | \$14 | \$12 | \$10 | \$8 | \$6 | \$4 | \$ | |
| \$300 | \$45 | \$36 | \$30 | \$27 | \$24 | \$21 | \$18 | \$15 | \$12 | \$9 | \$6 | 5 | |
| \$400 | \$60 | \$48 | \$40 | \$36 | \$32 | \$28 | \$24 | \$20 | \$16 | \$12 | \$8 | \$ | |
| \$500 | \$75 | \$60 | \$50 | \$45 | \$40 | \$35 | \$30 | \$25 | \$20 | \$15 | \$10 | \$ | |
| \$600 | \$90 | \$72 | \$60 | \$54 | \$48 | \$42 | \$36 | \$30 | \$24 | \$18 | \$12 | 5 | |
| \$700 | \$105 | \$84 | \$70 | \$63 | \$56 | \$49 | \$42 | \$35 | \$28 | \$21 | \$14 | \$ | |
| \$800 | \$120 | \$96 | \$80 | \$72 | \$64 | \$56 | \$48 | \$40 | \$32 | \$24 | \$16 | \$ | |
| \$900 | \$135 | \$108 | \$90 | \$81 | \$72 | \$63 | \$54 | \$45 | \$36 | \$27 | \$18 | \$ | |
| \$1,000 | \$150 | \$120 | \$100 | \$90 | \$80 | \$70 | \$60 | \$50 | \$40 | \$30 | \$20 | \$1 | |
| \$1,100 | \$165 | \$132 | \$110 | \$99 | \$88 | \$77 | \$66 | \$55 | \$44 | \$33 | \$22 | \$1 | |
| \$2,000 | \$300 | \$240 | \$200 | \$180 | \$160 | \$140 | \$120 | \$100 | \$80 | \$60 | \$40 | \$2 | |
| \$3,000 | \$450 | \$360 | \$300 | \$270 | \$240 | \$210 | \$180 | \$150 | \$120 | \$90 | \$60 | \$3 | |

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ONLINE BULLETIN BONUS

Say Yes

By Archpriest Stephen Freeman from his blog: "Glory to God for All Things"
For the Son of God. Jesus Christ, who was preached

among you ... was not Yes and No, but in Him was Yes.

For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God (2Co 1:19-20) It is very hard to say No, despite the fact that we say it all the time. The reason No is so hard is that it has no energy. Not doing something is an emptiness and carries no weight. It creates a vacuum that waits to be filled.

In observing my own life, I have become aware that I spend a lot of time saying No. There are things I don't want to see, so I have to say No to them...things I don't want to hear...things I don't want to say or do or think...all to be met with No. A Day spent in such wrestling is exhausting in the extreme. It is also frequently a path to failure. No has no energy and it places the will in a position of weakness. The will was created to will something, not nothing. St. Paul's observation that the promises of God are Yes, is a key to the daily struggle. The absence of sin isn't the same thing as righteousness. Righteousness is a fullness and a presence. Sin itself is an emptiness and has the character of non-being. The spiritual life is fulfilled in righteousness – true rightness of being – living in the image of God.

A simple way of living this reality is to say Yes. If I do not want to do one thing, then to what do I say Yes? If I do not want to hear something, to what do my ears say Yes? And so forth.

And there is another step beyond. It is possible to say Yes repeatedly throughout the day. The simple phrase, "I say Yes to God," carries a great deal of power. I have learned to make it a frequent confession in my day. I say Yes to God. I say Yes to my life. I say Yes to this problem. I say Yes to the mistakes I have made. It is a means of affirming that God is working all things together for my good – even my mistakes.

Say Yes.

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