

“THE WEEKLY FORERUNNER” Our Parish Bulletin

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

UPCOMING SERVICES

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2024 vol. X

13th Sunday after Pentecost
Within the Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos
Sunday before the Elevation of the Holy Cross
Holy Ancestors of God Joachim and Anna

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

9:30 – 11:30 am Church open for personal prayer

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

6:30 pm Feast Day Vespers
Enthronement of the Holy Cross
7:30 – 8:00 pm “Orthodoxy 101”

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27 - A day of strict-fasting

FEAST OF THE ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS
9:30 am Festal Divine Liturgy
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SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

14th Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday after the Elevation of the Holy Cross
Holy Great-Martyress Euphemia
9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Epistle: 2 Corinthians 1:21-2:4;
Gospel: Matthew 22:1-14
Epistle: Galatians 2:16-20 (Sunday after the Cross)
Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1 (Sunday after the Cross)
Tone 4; Liturgical Color: **Red**

Sr. ACRY Meeting

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

FEAST OF ST. SOPHIA
9:30 am Akathist to St. Sophia
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Live-Broadcast – If you are unable to attend church services, please pray along with our Cathedral online:

www.acrod.org/directories/cathedral/live/

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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)

BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

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*** **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 **Thursday at 6:30 pm** on the eve of the Feast of the Cross.

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*** **Strict Fast 9/27** – Why do we Strict Fast (no meat or dairy) on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross? For one, we fast as we reflect on why God allowed His only Son to die on the Cross for our sins. *Fasting is a discipline that strengthens our faith!*

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** **Sr. ACRY Meeting** – On **Sunday, September 29**, the first ACRY meeting for the Church Year will occur after coffee social.

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*** **Fall Festival at St Nicholas** (903 Ann Street, Homestead, PA 15120) will be held on Friday **October 4 from 11 to 7** and Saturday, **October 5** from 11 to about 5 with the Bingo starting at 1:00.

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* **Oktoberfest Happy Hour** to Benefit the IOCC will be on **Thursday, October 10** from 6–9 PM at the Rusty Gold Brewing Company (43 W. Pike St., Canonsburg, PA 15317). Donations welcome and 20% of food and beverage proceeds will benefit the IOCC. For more info: contact Kevin Reck at 724-344-5610 or kevinsreck@gmail.com

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** **2025 Parish Picnic** – When should we have our picnic in 2025: June? July? August? Or September? Contact Fr. Dave with your vote today!

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ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

Father Dave Urban, *Pastor* +++ 2201 Duncan Avenue, Allison Park, Pa 15101
www.OrthodoxPittsburgh.com +++ 412-748-0148 (Talk or Text) +++ OrthodoxPittsburgh1932@gmail.com

*** A Few 2024 Yearly Meeting Highlights:

- **census recap** – our census numbers sent to Johnstown are: 56 adults + 20 youth + 5 in college = 81 souls residing in 46 households of which 25 souls are over the age of 65
- **participation recap** – we averaged 35 souls on a Sunday, 80 on Nativity, and 94 on Pascha
- **building recap** – our goals of being upstairs by Nativity and having the first tier of the iconostasis up by Palm Sunday were reached. we ask that thoughts on what we should do with the ceiling in the nave of the church be shared with the building committee (Fr. Dave, Larry, Bob, or Kathy).
- **financial recap** – this past year we were “in the black” and the balance of the monies that we borrowed is currently at **\$43,711**
- **vote passed** – to use Kodiak for our french drain
- **home blessings** – reminder to schedule
- **church school** – a survey will be sent to parents to explore not having it on a Sunday
- **church school classes** – we will have three classes this year (pre-first confession class, confession class, and post-confession class).
- **teachers** are still needed! please contact Fr. Dave to be a steward of your talents!
- **Sr ACRY** – had a few meetings this past year and looks to gain momentum this year
- **Jr ACRY** – a chapter will be started this year
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2024-25 SJB PARISH COUNCIL OFFICERS

President: Lawrence Martin
Vice-President: Elizabeth Radomsky
Treasurer: Timothy Martin, Reader
Financial Secretary: Rich Mirilovich
Recording Secretary: Gina Fall
Chief Auditor: Robert Fall
Auditors: Subdeacon Ryan Ferko,
John Kirish, Kimberly Opsitos,
Matthew Opsitos, and Kathy Schrmack

THIS WEEK’S BULLETIN IS SPONSORED

in memory of +Anastasia Martin (13-years)
May she be remembered in God’s Memory
forever! Eternal Memory!


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*** **Travel Time** – Fr. Dave was asked to participate in a survey of how long it takes parishioners to get to church on a Sunday morning. With the aid of GPS, here are the findings: average of **22** minutes
5 to 10 minutes: 18% 11 to 15 minutes: 4%
16 to 20 minutes: 16% 21 to 25 minutes: 18%
26 to 30 minutes: **24%** 31 to 35 minutes: 13%
36 to 40 minutes: 2% 41 to 45 minutes: 4%

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*** **Alumni Weekend** - Calling all Diocesan Camp Nazareth Alumni (current and former campers, volunteers, clergy and staff) who are Seniors in college or older!! Camp is hosting an Alumni Weekend **October 11-13** at the Camp. There'll be time for hanging out, hiking, visiting the Gift Shop, for stories and getting to know each other, and for prayer and church services. Entertainment, a guest speaker and an alumni forum are also a part of the schedule. We have a few surprises for you as well! So don't miss out! Come gather together for a great weekend with your Camp family through the generations. Come from all those cities "far and near" to our "beautiful place in among the mountains." You can register for the Alumni Weekend online at: <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/xbsvxvk>
Diocesan Alumni and their families are welcome. Cost for the weekend is \$150. Children 7 and under are free. Remember, this is for Diocesan Alumni who are Seniors in college or older. On Friday, October 11th check-in at Camp will be between 6-7:30pm. Check-out on Sunday, October 13th will be by 3pm. After you register online, you will be sent further information about the event including a schedule, packing list, etc.

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* **Home Blessings** – Our Annual Home Blessings began on **August 14** after the Lesser Blessing of Water was called for. Fr. Dave is looking forward to visiting every home this Aug, Sept, or Oct. **Schedule with Fr. Dave today.**
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OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD	
Stewardship Offerings:	\$ 510
Candle Stewardship:	\$ 120
Envelope Stewardship:	\$ 578
Total Collections:	\$ 1208
Capital Improvement Fund:	\$ 0
Fundraising Account (from hall rental):	\$ 100
<i>Participating Souls - Sunday Liturgy: 36</i>	
<i>Friday Feast Day Vespers: 8</i>	
<i>Saturday Feast Day Liturgy: 9</i>	

Weekly Candle Intentions or Memorials were offered last week by the Nelson Family; Lawrence Martin; Tim Martin; Margie Petrucci; Kathy Schrmack; Fred and Juliana Anton; Rich and Renee Mirilovich; Cindy Pavilonis
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CHURCH BUILDING UPDATE
Here is a brief update from the past few weeks:
✠ *** At the yearly meeting, a vote passed to go with Kodiak Excavating to install a French Drain in the front of the church and for the ground on the side and back to be re-graded (*to keep water away from the building*). A contract has been signed. The cost will be over \$30,000. Donations to the Capital Improvement Fund are requested.
✠ *** A new refrigerator has been installed.
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Glory to God for All Things!
Through your generosity and dedication, all of this is coming together – one thing at a time!
Thank you! Many stewards keep coming to the church and working very hard to make improvements. May God grant you many years!
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COFFEE SOCIAL STEWARDS
Please sign up by the kitchen or by contacting Fr. Dave
September 29: Matt & Kim Opsitos
October 6: _____?
October 13: _____?

*** **Lots–O–Luck Calendars** – The National ACRY Lots-O-Luck Calendars are available. \$25 per ticket gets you a years worth of prizes totaling \$10,000! Please see Subdeacon Ryan Ferko for tickets.
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*** **Fall Retreat** - Young Adults, join us for an enriching weekend at Camp Nazareth for our upcoming Fall Retreat on **October 25-27** hosted by The American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese, the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh Y2AM, the Orthodox Church in America and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church USA. We are SO blessed to welcome Alex Balouris to talk about Caring for God's Creation: The Self. Register here: <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/2jpbq2e>
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“Code” for reading the bulletin:
*** = new news
** = 2nd time in the bulletin
* = at least the 3rd time in the bulletin
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SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 16:13-24
Final Messages and Greetings
¹³Be watchful, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. ¹⁴Let all that you do be done in love.
¹⁵Now, brethren, you know that the household of Steph’anas were the first converts in Acha’ia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints; ¹⁶I urge you to be subject to such men and to every fellow worker and laborer. ¹⁷I rejoice at the coming of Steph’anas and Fortuna’tus and Acha’icus, because they have made up for your absence; ¹⁸for they refreshed my spirit as well as yours. Give recognition to such men.
¹⁹The churches of Asia send greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send

you hearty greetings in the Lord. ²⁰All the brethren send greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss. ²¹I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. ²²If any one has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed. Our Lord, come! ²³The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. ²⁴My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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Gospel: Matthew 21:33-42
The Parable of the Wicked Tenants
³³“Hear another parable. There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it, and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to tenants, and went into another country. ³⁴When the season of fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants, to get his fruit; ³⁵and the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶Again he sent other servants, more than the first; and they did the same to them. ³⁷Afterward he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ ³⁸But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.’ ³⁹And they took him and cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. ⁴⁰When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” ⁴¹They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons.” ⁴²Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures: ‘The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes’?”

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Sunday before the Cross Epistle: Galatians 6:11-18
Final Admonitions and Benediction
¹¹See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand. ¹²It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that would compel you to be circumcised, and only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. ¹³For even those who receive circumcision do not themselves keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may glory in your flesh. ¹⁴But far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the

world. ¹⁵For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. ¹⁶Peace and mercy be upon all who walk by this rule, upon the Israel of God.
¹⁷Henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus.
¹⁸The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

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Sunday before the Cross Gospel: John 3:13-17
¹³No one has ascended into heaven but He who descended from heaven, the Son of man. ¹⁴And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in Him may have eternal life.” ¹⁶For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

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PRAYER CORNER
For the Health of... David, Elizabeth, Douglas, Thomas, Stephanie, Matthew, Angelo, Patricia, Edward, Joseph, Suzanne, Nicholas, Sherry, Charles, William, Boyd, Millicent, Michelle, Mary, Helen, Barbara, Paul, Mary, Robert, Kelly, Juliana, Fredrick, Kenneth, and Michael ...*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...
+Theodore Polas, +Sister Dorothy Dolak (9/1), +Alva Ferraz (8/30), +David French (8/14)
...*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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ONLINE BONUSES

2024 Home Blessings

How to prepare for your home blessing?

1. See Fr. Dave, email him (fr.sleepless@gmail.com), call or text him (412-748-0148) today with your preferred windows of time for him to visit.
2. Have a white cloth (*or white napkin*) placed on the dining room or kitchen table, an icon and/or a cross, and a candle to be lit. (*Fr Dave will provide the Holy Water for the blessing.*)
3. Have a list of names of those who live in the home (*including your pets*) and a list of the departed members of your family and friends you wish to have prayed for during the service.
4. Have all TVs, radios, and cell phones turned off.
5. Have on the table anything to be blessed (*such as an Icon, Cross, etc.*).
6. Participation is important! Have everyone in the family gather around the table and join in the blessing. Invite neighbors and friends over to be a part of this beautiful tradition as well!
7. If you need to discuss a personal matter, this is a good time to do so!

Home blessings will take place from August 14 through October 14

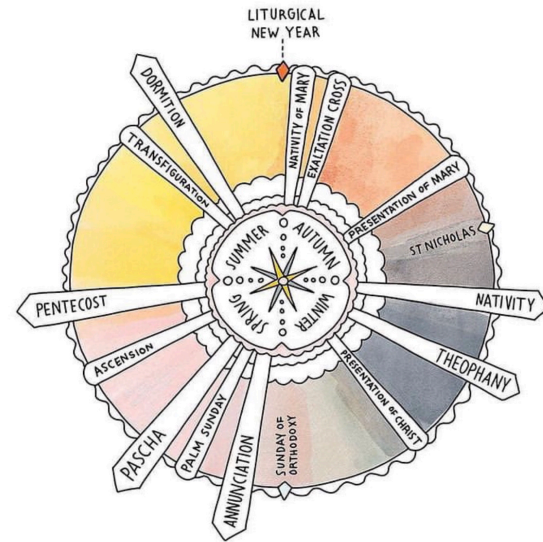
It would be ideal if Father could come on a weekday between 8:30am and 3:30pm. If this is not possible, certain evening, Saturday, and Sunday times will be available. Fr Dave looks forward to spending this time with your family!

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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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LIVING OUR FAITH

The Cross is the sign of Christ's Victory over Hades, death, darkness & despair!

"Do not do anything without signing yourself with the sign of the Cross! When you depart on a journey, when you begin your work, when you go to study, when you are alone, and when you are with other people, seal yourself with the Holy Cross on your forehead, your body, your chest, your heart, your lips, your eyes, your ears. All of you should be sealed with the sign of Christ's victory over hell. Then you will no longer be afraid of charms, evil spirits, or sorcery, because these are dissolved by the power of the Cross like wax before fire and like dust before the wind." +Elder Cleopa of Sihastria

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"O Lord save Your people and bless Your inheritance, grant victory to all Orthodox Christians over their adversaries, and protect Your people by Your Cross." – Tropar of the Cross

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LIVES OF THE SAINTS

RIGHTEOUS SAINT JOAKIM

Commemorated on September 9

Righteous Saint Joakim, son of Barpathir, was a descendant of King David, to whom God had revealed that from the descendants of his line would be born the Saviour of the world. Righteous Saint Anna was the daughter of Matthan and through her father she was of the tribe of Levi, and through her mother – of the tribe of Judah. The spouses lived at Nazareth in Galilee. They were childless into their old age and all their life they grieved over this. They had to endure derision and scorn, since at that time childlessness was considered a disgrace. But they never grumbled and only but fervently prayed to God, humbly trusting on His will. Once during the time of a great feast, the gifts which Righteous Joakim took to Jerusalem for offering to God were not accepted by the priest Ruben, who considered that a childless man was not worthy to offer sacrifice to God. This pained the old man very much, and he, regarding himself the most sinful of people, decided not to return home, but to settle in solitude in a desolate place. His righteous spouse Anna, having learned, what sort of humiliation her husband had endured, in prayer and fasting began sorrowfully to pray to God for granting her a child. In his desolate solitude and with fasting Righteous Joakim also besought God for this. And the prayer of the saintly couple was heard: to both of them an Angel announced, that there would be born of them a Daughter, Who would bless all the race of mankind. By order of this Heavenly Messenger, Righteous Joakim and Anna met at Jerusalem, where through the promise of God was born to them the Daughter, named Mary.

Saint Joakim died a few years later after the Entry into the Temple of his Blessed Daughter, at about age 80. Saint Anna died at age 70, two years after him, spending the time in the Temple alongside her Daughter.

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SEP. COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY



This month, through the efforts of our Sr. ACRY, we will be collecting donations for the **Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF)**. The OCF is the official collegiate campus ministry program under the *Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the USA*. OCF is charged with connecting Orthodox college students (and those interested in the Orthodox Christian faith) to Christ and His Church.

The vision of the OCF is to be the loving presence of Christ and the Orthodox Church on college campuses; to be an integral part of students' spiritual formation by challenging them to explore the Faith; and to inspire students to commit to living an Orthodox Christian way of life daily. This is accomplished via a growing network of on-campus OCF chapters let by talented students, clergy, and lay advisors, as well as through programs such as Reginald Retreats, College Conferences, Real Break, and the Summer Leadership Institute.

Visit www.ocf.net for more info. *Thank you in advance for your prayers and offerings this month!*

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MONTHLY SCHEDULE

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1

After-feast Of The Dormition

9:15 am Third Hour

9:30 am Divine Liturgy

Blessing of Flowers & Herbs

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4

6:00 pm Moleben to St. Nectarios with Anointing

6:30 pm Parish Council Meeting (*All are welcome to come and listen to the discussions at the meeting*)

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SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8

9:15 am Third Hour

9:30 am Divine Liturgy

God-Parent Sunday

Monthly Memorial Panachida

~11:30 am Parish Family Picnic w/ Pot-luck meal

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

6:30 pm Feast Day Vespers
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11 - *A day of strict-fasting*
FEAST OF THE BEHEADING OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
9:30 am Festal Divine Liturgy
Panachida for those who lost their lives from
terrorist attacks

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14
ECCLESIASTICAL (*LITURGICAL*) NEW YEAR
9:30 am Moleben for the New Year
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SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15
9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Youth Sunday
Parish Yearly Meeting following Liturgy

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20
6:30 pm Feast Day Vespers

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21
FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS
9:30 am Festal Divine Liturgy
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SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22
9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 am Divine Liturgy

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26
6:30 pm Feast Day Vespers

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27 - *A day of strict-fasting*
FEAST OF THE ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS
9:30 am Festal Divine Liturgy
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SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29
9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 am Divine Liturgy

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30
9:30 am Akathist to St. Sophia
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LOOKING *FURTHER* AHEAD IN 2024

➤ Oct 6 - Feast of the Conception of St. John

- Oct 14 - Feast of the Protection of the Theotokos
- Oct 23 - Founding of St John's Parish in 1932
- Oct 26 - Carpatho-Rusyn Day in North America
- Nov 8 - Feast of the Great Martyr Demetrius
- Nov 21 - Feast of the Holy Archangels
- Nov 28 - Moleben of Thanksgiving
- Nov 28 - Nativity Fast begins
- Dec 4 - Feast of the Entry of the Theotokos
- Dec 8 – St. Nicholas Charity Dinner to benefit Christ the Savior Seminary
- Dec 19 - Feast of St. Nicholas

Please, Save the Dates!

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FEAST DAY FEATURES OF THE MONTH

The Beheading Of The Prophet, Forerunner Of The Lord, John The Baptist

Commemorated on Sept 11/Aug 29

The Beheading of the Prophet, ForeRunner of the Lord, John the Baptist: The Evangelists Matthew (Mt. 14: 1-12) and Mark (Mk. 6: 14-29) provide accounts about the Martyr's end of John the Baptist in the year 32 after the Birth of Christ.

Following the Baptism of the Lord, Saint John the Baptist was locked up in prison by Herod Antipas, holding one-fourth the rule of the Holy Land as governor of Galilee. (After the death of king Herod the Great, the Romans divided the territory of Palestine into four parts, and into each part put a governor. Herod Antipas received from the emperor Augustus the rule of Galilee). The prophet of God John openly denounced Herod for having left his lawful wife – the daughter of the Arabian king Aretas, and then instead co-habiting with Herodias, – the wife of his brother Philip (Lk. 3: 19-20). On his birthday, Herod made a feast for dignitaries, the elders and a thousand chief citizens. The daughter of Herod, Salome, danced before the guests and charmed Herod. In gratitude to the girl he swore to give her anything, whatsoever she would ask, anything up to half his kingdom. The vile girl on the advice of her wicked mother Herodias asked, that she be given at once the head of John the Baptist on a plate. Herod became apprehensive, for he feared the wrath of God for the murder of a prophet, whom earlier he had heeded. He feared also the people, who loved the holy

ForeRunner. But because of the guests and his careless oath, he gave orders to cut off the head of Saint John and to give it to Salome. By tradition, the mouth of the dead head of the preacher of repentance once more opened and proclaimed: "Herod, thou ought not to have the wife of Philip thy brother". Salome took the plate with the head of Saint John and gave it to her mother. The frenzied Herodias repeatedly stabbed the tongue of the prophet with a needle and buried his holy head in a unclean place. But the pious Joanna, wife of Herod's steward Chuza, buried the head of John the Baptist in an earthen vessel on the Mount of Olives, where Herod was possessor of a parcel of land (the Uncovering of the Venerable Head is celebrated 24 February). The holy body of John the Baptist was taken that night by his disciples and buried at Sebasteia, there where the wicked deed had been done. After the murder of Saint John the Baptist, Herod continued to govern for a certain while. Pontius Pilate, governor of Judea, later sent to him the bound Jesus Christ, over Whom he made mockery (Lk. 23: 7-12).

The judgement of God came upon Herod, Herodias and Salome, even during their earthly life. Salome, crossing the River Sikoris in winter, fell through the ice. The ice gave way for her such that her body was in the water, but her head trapped beneath the ice. It was similar to how she once had danced with her feet upon the ground, but now flailing helplessly in the icy water. Thus she was trapped until that time when the sharp ice cut through her neck. The corpse was not found, but they brought the head to Herod and Herodias, as once they had brought them the head of Saint John the Baptist. The Arab king Aretas in revenge for the disrespect shown his daughter made war against Herod. Having suffered defeat, Herod suffered the wrath of the Roman emperor Caius Caligula (37-41) and was exiled with Herodias first to Gaul, and then to Spain. And there they were from view.

In memory of the Beheading of Saint John the Baptist, the feastday established by the Church is also a strict day of fast, – as an expression of the grief of Christians at the violent death of the saint. On this day the Church makes remembrance of soldiers, killed on the field of battle, as established in 1769 at the time of

a war of Russia with the Turks and the Poles.

Spiritual Vitamin:

Tropar for the Feast of the Beheading of St. John

The remembrance of the Just is worthy of praise, but the Lord's testimony is sufficient for you, O Forerunner; for it has shown that you are indeed more worthy of honor than the Prophets. You were found worthy to baptize the Lord Who you foretold. Thereafter you suffered for the truth and rejoicing, also announced the good news to those in the abyss that God had appeared as man taking away the sins of the world and granting to all of us the abundance of mercy.

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The Nativity Of The Theotokos, Our Most Holy Lady Mother Of God And Ever Virgin Mary

Commemorated on September 21/8

The Holy Virgin and Theotokos Mary was born to elderly and previously barren parents by the names of Joachim and Anna, in answer to their prayers. Orthodox Christians do not hold to the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, in which it is supposed that Mary was preserved from the ancestral sin that befalls us all as descendents of Adam and Eve, in anticipation of her giving birth to the sinless Christ. The Orthodox believe that Mary indeed received the ancestral sin, having been conceived in the normal way of humanity, and thus needed salvation like all mankind. Orthodox thought does vary on whether Mary actually ever sinned, though there is general agreement that she was cleansed from sin at the Annunciation.

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The Elevation Of The Venerable And Life-Creating Cross Of The Lord

Commemorated on September 27/14

This feast commemorates two events:

1) The finding of the Cross by the Empress Helen (the mother of St. Constantine the Great) on Golgotha in 326 AD, the place where Christ was crucified.

On the spot where the Cross was discovered, St. Helen had found a hitherto unknown flower of rare beauty and fragrance, which has been named "Vasiliko," or Basil, meaning the flower of royalty.

Note that the word "Vasiliko" means "of the King," since the word "Basileus" in Greek means "King"; so, the plant Vasiliko, Basil, is tied to the Precious Cross of the King of Glory, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Underneath the Basil, the Cross of Christ was found, but with it were the other two crosses, those used to crucify the two thieves on either side of Christ. The sign with the inscription, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews", also lay among the three crosses. In order to determine which one was the true cross, a sick woman was told to kiss each of the three crosses. The woman kissed the first cross with no result. She kissed the second cross and again nothing happened. However, when the ailing woman kissed the True Cross, she was immediately made well. It so happened that a funeral procession was passing that way, and so the body of the dead man was placed on each of the crosses, and when it was placed on the True Cross, the dead man came to life — thus the name the “Life-Giving” Cross, which gives life not only to that man, but to each person who believes in the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross and His all-glorious three day Resurrection.

When the true Cross was identified, it was lifted on high for all the people to see, who then continually sang Kyrie eleison, a practice which is still enacted at current celebrations of this feast.

2) The recovery of the Cross on which Jesus Christ was crucified from the Persians. The Persians had captured the True Cross as a prize of war when they sacked Jerusalem in 614 AD. It was recovered by the forces of the Byzantine Empire (Eastern Roman Empire) in 627 AD, when Emperor Heraclius decisively defeated the Sassanid Persians at The Battle of Nineveh, surrounding their capital Ctesiphon, recovering the True Cross, and breaking the power of the Sassanid dynasty. The Elevation took place on March 21, 630 AD, when Emperor Heraclius entered Jerusalem amidst great rejoicing, and together with Patriarch Zacharios (609-632), transferred the Cross of Christ with great solemnity into the temple of the Resurrection, joyously held up for veneration by the Christian faithful.

This is one of the two feast days which is held as a strict fast.

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ADDITIONAL BULLETIN BOARD
ANNOUNCEMENTS

“Code” for reading the bulletin:

*** = new news

** = 2nd time in the bulletin

* = at least the 3rd time in the bulletin

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*** **Bourbon Tasting** to Benefit the IOCC will be on **Thursday, November 7** at 7 pm at the Leaf & Bean (3525 Washington Rd., McMurray, PA 15317). Tickets are \$60 and include a Leaf & Bean gift, three bourbon samples, and light hors d’oeuvres. Register at iocc.org/pittsburgh, or mail checks payable to IOCC to Nick Terezis (306 Marberry Dr.,

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Joining the ACRY – If you would like to become a part of our philanthropic organization of the ACRY (American Carpatho-Russian Youth), which is open to all ages, please contact Subdeacon Ryan Ferko at 484-744-2771 or rferko85@yahoo.com.

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Why Should I Join the Local ACRY?

The ACRY is an Orthodox Christian family fellowship dedicated to the purpose of encouraging spiritual growth through charitable and apostolic missionary works, prayer and fellowship for the Glory of God and the building up of the Church and our Diocese. The local ACRY focuses on outreach to the community in various forms and fellowship within. This could be a fundraiser or family event at the church grounds to introduce people to our parish, or the volunteering of our time to help support a community event. In addition to these, the ACRY has the opportunity to branch out and meet other members of our diocesan ACRY community through deanery and nation events and partake in outreach at a broader level.

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** **Ride Share** – We were blessed to have a number of college students with us for our Student Blessing. When their schedules work out, they will need rides from Point Park, Duquesne, or Pitt. We have also

received requests from a couple other people who are interested in getting a ride to the church. Please contact Fr. Dave or Larry if you would be able to bring your “neighbor” to the church. ALSO – the idea of having an Uber Fund was brought up last week...

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Speaking With Your Priest - Please know you can call me anytime if there is something troubling you. It is not a sign of weakness to share something that may be heavy on your heart or mind. As a priest and Father to our parish, I am here for you. Please call if you need someone to listen or to pray with you. Every heart has a cross and you do not need to carry it alone. Please also call if you have an idea for the growth of our parish. I am praying for you and am grateful for your prayers. With love in Christ, Fr. Dave

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Mystery of Confession – Father is available to hear Confessions after every service *or* by appointment.

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

www.acrod.org/directories/cathedral/live/

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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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STEWARDSHIP SNIPPET

TIME, TALENT, AND TREASURES
PARISH STEWARDSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

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Garbage and Recycling – Did you ever notice that we do not have a dumpster at the church? Being non-residential without pick up in Allison Park, all of our garbage and recycling heads to stewards’ houses. If you would be willing to stick around at the end of coffee social and take a bag, please let Larry know. (please grab the coffee grounds before taking the bag)

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Additional Church Curators Needed – A synonym for *curator* is *steward*. Please see Larry Martin if you are interested in being a *steward of their time* and be “on-the-door”. Our curator list needs expanded!

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Giving at the Church – The “flow of traffic” is a little different in Allison Park, but the ways to give your stewardship treasures has not changed. One can:

- ✘ hand your offering to the curator who sits at the desk in the vestibule (to the right after you enter),
- ✘ there are multiple baskets around the church for you to drop your offering in, or
- ✘ when saying your prayers and lighting 2 candles, put your donation in the box in the candle stand.

We will continue to not “*pass the basket*” which interrupts our focus on our prayers.

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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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Stewardship of Treasure Guide												
Weekly offering to God through the Sunday Offertory - Will you take a step up?												
Weekly Income	Beyond a Tithe 15%	Tithe 12%	Upper Range Giving 10%	Tithe 9%	Upper Range Giving 8%	Upper Range Giving 7%	Middle Range Giving 6%	Middle Range Giving 5%	Middle Range Giving 4%	Lower Range Giving 3%	Lower Range Giving 2%	Lower Range Giving 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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Bulletin Sponsor - If you wish to sponsor a bulletin *In Honor of* (nameday, birthday, anniversary, etc.) or *In Memory of* someone, please sign up on the sheet in the vestibule or by contacting Fr. Dave (email, text, or call). An additional stewardship offering to the Church is requested. *Remember, sponsoring a bulletin in memory of someone does not replace having a Panachida (Memorial Service) for them.*

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A Prayer of Stewardship

Lord Jesus Christ, You are the good steward, who redeemed Adam and Eve of their failed stewardship by offering Yourself for the life of the world. You did teach us in the feeding of the multitudes that whatever we give to God is returned to us multiplied. You did praise those good and faithful servants in the parable of the talents who returned to the Master their gifts. So help us to learn the joy of stewardship, remembering that everything we have comes from You and belongs to You. We know, Lord, that we often live in fear of the future and insecurity. Help us to remember the lilies of the field and so to trust in Your providence. Grant to us a cheerful and generous spirit. Enkindle in the hearts of all Your people a zealous love for You. For You are the Good Steward, and to You we give thanks, praise and glory, together with Your Father and Your all holy good and life-giving Spirit now and ever and onto the ages of ages. Amen.

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SPIRITUAL CONSIDERATIONS

Father is available to meet Monday thru Friday from 8:30am to 2:30pm 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 prepared or not of the Orthodox Faith may receive *a blessing* from the chalice.

How to receive - Please remember the following helpful hints aimed at helping to preserve the solemnity and safety of the Holy Mystery. Anyone wearing lipstick should remove it before receiving. Be sure to offer your baptismal name to the priest before receiving. Please take great care that the red cloth held by the acolytes (servers) is fully under your chin (*you should not hold it*), then use the centuries-old practice of receiving: please fully open your mouth, tilt your head back, receive the Holy Gifts, wait until They are securely in your mouth and so that none of the holy and precious Body and Blood of Christ is accidentally spilled. Thank you for your cooperation, and may God have mercy on us all!

Lapsed Members – You are always welcome home and we want you to come back! Generally speaking, sincere and regular participation in the Sunday Divine Liturgy and in the Mysteries of Confession and Communion are all that is required to begin parish life anew! See Fr. Dave for specific details.

Parishioners in “good standing” are those Orthodox Christians who, as members of Saint John’s Orthodox Church, strive to live according to the teachings of the Orthodox Church; participate in the life of the parish

through regular attendance of services, regular reception of Holy Communion and periodic Holy Confession (*and receive these Mysteries no less than once a year*); if married, having been married in the Orthodox Church; and share their stewardship of their time, talents, and treasures which includes financially supporting the parish.

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 in the church. 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). It is critical that marriages are blessed in the church.

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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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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ONLINE PRAYER CORNER

Our Parish Prayer List for Special Intentions & 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(s) *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. Stephen B., Fr. Thomas B., Protodeacon Gregory B., Kevin, Michael L., Laura & family, Carlene, Georgia, Stephen, David, Anastasia, Nicholas, Cassandra, Alexander, Andrea, Jason, Tyrone, Sarah, Amee, Joshua, John, Kathryn, Rose, Charles, Justin, David, Donna, George, *our diocesan seminarians:* Dcn Peter S, Nicolas W., Seamus M., Samuel L., Nicholas L., Alexander H., *and our Parish Council and Curators:* Lawrence, Subdeacon Ryan, Timothy, Rich, Elizabeth, Robert, Gina, John, Mary Jane, Katherine, Kenneth 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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***** Nameday, Birthday, and Anniversary Prayer List is being reset** – Our parish prayer list of key dates and special occasions in our lives will be reset going forward (starting 3/1/24). If one of your special days is missing – please let Fr Dave know ASAP. See Fr. Dave with any questions.

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September Namedays:

Paňi’s grandmother Maria Alexa - Nativity of Mary (NC 9/9)

Cora D zadony - Martyr Coralia (9/14)

Maria Urban - Nativity of Mary (9/21)

Sophia Urban - Martyr Sophia (9/30)

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

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September Birthdays:

Samuel Mainolfi (9/1), Dexter Torchia (9/1), Timothy Martin, Reader (9/2), Ruth Herbert (9/2), Ashley Wertz Andrekovich (9/2), Fr. Bob Teklinski (9/3), Pañi Deborah Zak (9/7), Tina Scherer (9/11), Pañi Andrea Cochran (9/14), Pañi Daria Loposky (9/16), Cindy Morrison (9/17), Bonnie Carlisle (9/18), Fr. Vincent Dranginis (9/19), Fr. Kenneth Ellis (9/19), Fr. Dave Urban (9/19), Fr. Matthew Moriak (9/20), Fr. David Smoley (9/20), Ron Nelson (9/22), *Father’s brother-in-law*, Brian Verbanick, Sr (9/22), Margaret (Peggy) Rusnak (9/24), Fr. R. Michael Zak (9/24), AJ (Matolyak) Ferraz (9/26), Cora Loren Dzadony (9/28), Andrew Mirilovich (9/28), Juliana Anton (9/29), Fr Dcn Art Steinstra (9/30) ...*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... Maxwell, Barbara, Tyler ...*through the prayers of St. Paul the Apostle, St. Mary Magdalene, & St. John Maximovitch.*

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For those preparing for Marriage... Isabelle & Robert, Allison & Michael, Francis & Alexandra...*through the prayers of Sts. Adrian & Natalia and all Holy Martyrs.*

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September Anniversaries:

Marianne & Steven Kubis (9/6/14)
Father’s sister, Suzanne & Brian Verbanick (9/8/01)
Barbara & Richard Gedid (9/17/83)
Thomas & Carol Lorenzi (9/19/70)
Charles & Allison Kretchek (9/26/15)
John & Barbara Kirish (9/28/96)
...*through the prayers of St. Nicholas Planas*

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For Pregnant Mothers... Anna (*due in September*), Lexi (*October*), Mallory (*March*), Lindsay (*April*)
...*through the prayers of St. Anna, the mother of the Theotokos, and St. Irene Chrysovalantou.*

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For those serving in the Armed Forces & Civil Authorities... Thomas R. Dzadovsky
...*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.*

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Special Intentions – Did you ever wonder for what reasons would a person’s name go under “For the Special Intentions of...” on our Prayer Page? A special intention request is very diversified! It could be when one is under extreme job stress, struggling with spiritual issues, infertility, dealing with the loss of a loved one... the list goes on. As with the other lists on our page, one does not have to be Orthodox to be added.

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Prayer requests – During the Great Entrance of the Divine Liturgy, prayers are said for the sick and those celebrating special occasions listed in the bulletin. If silent prayers are requested, they will be offered quietly at the Altar at all services. All those listed in the “Prayer Corner” are prayed for during the Proskomedie (*Preparation of the Bread and Wine for Communion*). Prayer requests will remain for (about) 40 days unless requested otherwise. Please let Fr. Dave know if you wish to make additions or subtractions (*in the case of answered prayers*) to our prayer list.

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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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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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A Prayer for College Students

Heavenly Father, please be with these students as they go where they do not know. As they seek to grow in knowledge, we ask that they grow in faith. As they start to conquer the world, we hope that they conquer their fears. As they strive to find their place, we pray that they find You. Please go where we cannot, protect when we cannot, give strength that we cannot, and bring them safely home. Amen.