

“THE WEEKLY FORERUNNER” *Our Parish Bulletin*

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

UPCOMING SERVICES

SUNDAY, AUGUST 17, 2025 #DormitionFast VOL. XI

10th Sunday after Pentecost

+The Seven Youths of Ephesus

Youth Sunday

* *Liturgy Sermon Series Continues*

Blessing of Students (*with backpacks*) and Teachers

12-noon Moleben to the Theotokos

MONDAY, AUGUST 18 #DormitionFast

6:30 pm Feast Day Vespers & Blessing of Grapes

and First-Fruits (and vegetables)

TUESDAY, AUGUST 19 #DormitionFast

FEAST OF THE TRANSFIGURATION

9:30 am Festal Divine Liturgy & Blessing of Grapes

and First-Fruits (and vegetables)

THURSDAY, AUGUST 21 #DormitionFast

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

FRIDAY, AUGUST 22 #DormitionFast

Canceled 6:30 pm Paraklis to the Theotokos

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SUNDAY, AUGUST 24 #DormitionFast

Within the Feast of the Transfiguration

9:15 am Third Hour

9:30 am Divine Liturgy

* *Liturgy Sermon Series Continues*

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 9:2-12

Gospel: Matthew 18:23-35

Tone 2; Liturgical Color: **Blue**

Blessing of Grapes and First-Fruits (and vegetables)

12-noon Moleben to the Theotokos

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 27 #DormitionFast

6:30 pm Feast Day Vespers

Blessing of Flowers and Herbs

THURSDAY, AUGUST 28

FEAST OF THE DORMITION

9:30 am Festal Divine Liturgy

Blessing of Flowers and Herbs

FRIDAY, AUGUST 29

12-Noon Overdose Awareness Prayer Service at

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral (325 Oliver Ave,

Pittsburgh, PA 15222)

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A WARM WELCOME TO OUR GUESTS!

Glory be to Jesus Christ! (*responded with: Glory*

be forever!) Slava Isusu Christu! (*Slava na viki!*)

We are happy that you have joined us today! It is

our pleasure to have you in our presence this

morning. We wish God’s Blessings to all who are

with us today and pray that you come again soon!

Please see Fr. Dave if you have any questions in

regards to our worship or Orthodoxy.

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SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 4:9-16

⁹For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to men.

¹⁰We are fools for Christ’s sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. ¹¹To the present hour we

hunger and thirst, we are ill-clad and buffeted and homeless, ¹²and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure;

¹³when slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become, and are now, as the refuse of the world, the offscouring of all things.

Fatherly Admonition

¹⁴I do not write this to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. ¹⁵For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. ¹⁶I urge you, then, be imitators of me.

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Gospel: Matthew 17:14-23

Jesus Cures a Boy with a Demon

¹⁴And when they came to the crowd, a man came up to him and kneeling before him said, ¹⁵“Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is demented and he suffers terribly; for often he falls into the fire, and often into the water. ¹⁶And I brought him to your disciples, and they could

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**** #DORMITION FAST** – This is our lead-in to the great Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos. This 2-week Fast (*from August 14-27*) is one of the four fasting periods of the year when we are called to a special time of increasing our prayer, fasting, and charity. Increase your prayer by coming to confession (offered after any of the services and on).

BOOK SUGGESTION: Mary, Worthy of All Praise: Reflections on the Virgin Mary. This book shares meditations on the Paraklis Service for each day during the Dormition Fast. It can be found (at least) on Amazon (ISBN # 9781888212716) where you can get a used copy for less than \$10.

O Most Holy Theotokos, save us!

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**** Trek4Missions** - Please join us for the annual OCMC Trek4Missions held from **Aug 10 to Sep 14!** *This event is the Orthodox Christian Mission Center's largest virtual fundraiser that challenges participants to be physically active while raising awareness and financial support for our mission work to unite the world to Jesus Christ and His Church. If anyone is interested in spearheading and leading our local team (The **Pittsburgh Forerunners**), please contact Fr. Dave. The Trek4Missions is an opportunity for individuals and parish communities to unite and demonstrate our commitment to Christ's Great Commission “to make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19). Plan to walk, run, ride your bike, and more to show your support for Christ's call to each of us. Everyone who registers will receive a free Trek4Missions t-shirt! There are no fees to register.*

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**** Home Blessings** – Our Annual Home Blessings begin 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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not heal him.” ¹⁷ And Jesus answered, “O faithless and perverse generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him here to me.”

¹⁸ And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured instantly.

¹⁹ Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, “Why could we not cast it out?” ²⁰ He said to them, “Because of your little faith. For truly, I say to you, if

you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you. ²¹ But this kind never comes out except by prayer and fasting.”

Jesus Again Foretells His Death and

²² As they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of man is to be delivered into the hands of men, ²³ and they will kill him, and he will be raised on the third day.” And they were greatly distressed.

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PRAYER CORNER

For the Health of... Maryellen, Carrie, David, Carol,

Clifford, Gregory, Boyde, Lindsay, Brian, Rhonda,

Carlene, Jason, Bella, Barbara, Paul, Juliana, Fredrick,

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...

+Millie (Amelia) Skaine (8/17), +David Russel (8/2),

+Mark Zerby (7/28), +Linda Lippert (7/16)

...*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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BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

**** The Blessing of the First Fruits** – Following the Vespers or Divine Liturgy on **Monday, Aug 18, Tuesday, Aug 19, and Sunday, Aug 24**, we will bless our ‘first fruits’ from our gardens (*or from the grocery store*). **Everyone** is encouraged to bring in a bowl, basket, or bushel of fruits and/or vegetables!

2025 Home Blessings

How to prepare for your home blessing?

1. See Fr. Dave today, email him today, call him today, or text him 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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* **Calling All Church School Teachers** – Please contact Kathy Schrmack (*Youth Ministry Leader*) or Fr. Dave if you are interested in being a teacher in the upcoming year’s Church School Program. We need to have 3 different class levels made available to the children of the parish. *A meeting will be held after coffee social on a Sunday in August.*

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* **Church School Registration** – We are looking for all parents of children age 5 through 18 to register their child(ren) for this year’s Church School Program. Forms are in the vestibule. Please see Kathy Schrmack (*Youth Ministry Leader*) or Fr. Dave with any questions.

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*** **Blessing of Flowers and Herbs** – After services on **Aug. 27, 28 & 31**, we will be Blessing Flowers & Herbs in honor of the Feast of the Dormition. Everyone is encouraged to bring some in from your yard, grocery store, or florist! *Life is full of blessings!*

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*** **Greek Food Festival** – Holy Trinity will have their festival from **August 28 - 31** from 11am to 9pm at 985 Providence Blvd., Pittsburgh. Visit their website for more information: www.HolyTrinityPgh.org

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*** **SJB Family Parish Picnic** – Who will you invite to our Parish Picnic on **Sunday, September 7?** Everybody reach out to someone and invite them to our Annual Picnic at the Cabin in North Park. *Something new this year: the Divine Liturgy (weather pending) will be AT The Cabin!* Plan to bring a camping chair for Liturgy (picnic attire is appropriate for Liturgy on this occasion). For the luncheon, please sign up on the food sheet found on the coffee prep area in the hall so we know what people will be bringing.

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** **Online Course** – Starting **August 24**, the St. Athanasius College will offer an Enrichment Course Titled *Reproductive Rights: Navigating the ethics laws and realities of abortion*. Details about the course and registration are found in the online section *additional bulletin board announcements*.

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*** **Ancient Faith Singles Retreat** – An Orthodox Christian Singles Retreat (for ages 30+) is scheduled for January 15-18, 2026 at Antiochian Village in Bolivar, PA full of socializing, church services, speaker sessions, trivia, games, speed dating, and free time for relaxation and fellowship. More details are in the online bulletin section or at:

<https://www.ancientfaith.com/events/singles-retreat/>

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* **Liturgy Sermon Series** – For a number of the next Sundays, Fr. Dave will break down the Liturgy answering some questions of *why we do what we do*. Each week he will focus on a certain part of the service. The “homily” will occur prior to that part of the service. Come – learn about our Faith!

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OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD

Stewardship Offerings: \$ 115
Candle Stewardship: \$ 54
Envelope Stewardship: \$ 230

Total Collections: \$ 399

Capital Improvement Fund: \$ 1015

Participating Souls at Sunday’s Liturgy: 25

Friday’s Paraklis: 9

Weekly Candle Intentions or Memorials were offered last week by the Nelson Family; Tim Martin; Rich & Renee Mirilovich; Mary Jane Hudak; Kathy Schrmack; Cindy Pavilonis

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** **End of Fiscal Year Stewardship Reminder** – August is the last month of our fiscal calendar. Our stewardship to God is our personal giving of our Time, Talent, and Treasure. Stewardship is not financial alone, but it is part of it. If you are behind in your giving to the church, August is a good month to get caught up so our financials are accurate for next month’s yearly meeting. **Here are a couple things to ponder...** How often do you give to the church? Do you stay caught up when you are not at church each week? How much do you budget for your offering? \$10 a week? \$100 a month? Do you give 10% back to God from the blessings you have received? Let’s get caught up so our fiscal year end is not *in the red*.

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Giving at the Church – The opportunities to give your stewardship treasures at SJB are to:

- ✂ hand your offering to the curator who sits at the desk in the vestibule (to the right after you enter),
- ✂ drop your offering in one of multiple baskets around the church, or
- ✂ place your offering in the box in the candle stand after saying your prayers when lighting 2 candles.

The ministries of the church cannot happen without your dedication and support.

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* **Parish Council Meeting Highlights** – Here are a few notes from this past week’s meeting / discussion:

- The **Excavation Project** had unforeseeable issues pop up which will cost \$10,000 additional than expected. Total cost of the project is now \$45,000 [*since the meeting, the project has been completed!*]

- Having a Capital Campaign **Fundraiser** of “buying a brick” for a walkway around the church
- **Uber Fund** – As school is around the corner, donations are accepted at the curator desk to support our Uber Fund to help college kids get to our church
- **Community Cook-Out** – we will host an Open House on **Saturday, October 4** from 11 am to 2 pm as we invite our neighbors to join us at the church, meet us, and see our parish
- The **Triennial Diocesan Sobor** will be in October -Larry, Bob, Gina, and Fr. Dave will go on behalf of the parish
- Youth Ministry – **Church School** Teachers and Registration were discussed
- **Church Picnic** – this year, weather pending, we will have Liturgy outside at the Cabin in North Park prior to our annual picnic – more details coming
- **Yearly Meeting** will be **Sunday, September 14**
Remember - Anyone is welcome to come and hear the discussions about our parish!

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CHURCH BUILDING UPDATE

Here is a brief update from the past few weeks:

✂ ** **Phase 2 Complete** – Our French Drain and Excavation project is completed! The dry wells and regrading is finished. The cost for the total project was \$45,000. Additional donations to the Capital Improvement Fund are much appreciated!

✂ * **Church Proper** – Not much has changed in the nave of the church, BUT other work has been done. The building committee and Parish Council continue to discuss our plan of action going forward with work in the church proper. Please be patient with us! ***Also, remember that for a project like the one that we are undertaking, work goes top down so the ceiling and walls will be done before the floor. As mentioned, please be patient with us!***

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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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* **August: A Month of Special Blessings!** – Live the Orthodox Faith and plan ahead for the many special blessings that are offered in August:
August 1, 2, & 3: Blessing of Chariots (Vehicles)
August 10: Lesser Blessing of Water and of Honey
August 14: Home Blessings Begin
August 17: Blessing of Students & Teachers
August 18, 19 & 24: Blessing of the First-Fruits (and vegetables)
August 27, 28 & 31: Blessing of Flowers & Herbs
*Life is full of blessings! Orthodoxy is awesome!
Let's focus on the blessings in our lives!*

COFFEE SOCIAL STEWARDS

Please sign up by the kitchen or by contacting Fr. Dave

* Aug 24:	Judy Figura (in honor of her BD)
Aug 31:	_____?
Sept 7:	Parish Picnic Pot Luck

(please see the sign up sheet)

** meatless during the fast*

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY



** This month, through the efforts of our Sr. ACRY, we will be collecting donations for the **Distinguished Diocesan Donors (DDD) Program.** “The Distinguished Diocesan Donors program strives to provide the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese with the necessary resources to bring a resurgence of life and an abundance of growth to its apostolates and ministries.” **For more information,** visit www.acrod.org/ministries/dddprogram/. We ask that you make an additional offering by the end of the month for this outreach effort. *Thank you in advance for your prayers and offerings this month!*

COAT DRIVE ** Do you have a clean coat or two that you have not worn since before our last coat drive but it is still in good condition? We are now collecting clean coats and jackets to donate to the Neighborhood Resilience Project (NRP) [Formerly FOCUS Pittsburgh (who provide Food, Occupation, Clothing, Understanding, and Shelter to those who are in need)]. Please place your clean coat(s) on the coat rack in the downstairs hallway this month.

LIVING THE ORTHODOX FAITH

“Orthodoxy is not an ideology; it is a way of life, founded upon faith that has been articulated in doctrine so that it may be preserved and passed down by the faithful.” – Fr. Andrew Steven Damick

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The Rosary
The rosary was originally an Orthodox form of prayer that was later adopted by the Roman Catholics. It has since fallen out of common practice in the Church.
History
The prayer rope was formed by St. Pachomius in the fourth century. From there the rosary developed, some say as early as the eighth century. It is said that even centuries later St. Seraphim of Sarov (1754-1833) used it to pray to the Virgin Theotokos. In the thirteenth century, Roman Catholics started using in the West following its discovery by Dominic de Guzmán, a Spanish priest.
Method

The prayers said on this form of the prayer rope are the Hail Mary (also Hail Mother of God and Virgin), the Lord's Prayer, and the Jesus Prayer. The Hail Mary is said in groups of ten, and in between each group of ten are said the Lord's Prayer and the Jesus Prayer. Between each grouping of Hail Marys, a meditation is also pronounced, which is then thought of throughout the succeeding Hail Marys.
Orthodox Christian use
St. Seraphim of Sarov instructed lay people to use his prayer rule, containing 'Theotokos, Virgin, rejoice..' prayers. One of his spiritual children, Fr. Zosima, wrote out words of the Saint:
"...Say the 'Hail Mary..' one hundred and fifty times... This rule was given by the Mother of God herself in about the eighth century... We Orthodox have forgotten about it, and St. Seraphim has reminded me of this Rule. In my hands I have a hand-written book from the cell of St. Seraphim, containing a description of the many miracles which took place through praying to the Mother of God and especially through saying one hundred and fifty times the Hail Mary... Whomever he spoke to about this miracle-working Rule remained grateful to him..."

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A Prayer to the Theotokos

(Strive to pray this ten times a day during the Dormition Fast)

Hail Mary, full of grace, O Virgin Birth-giver of God, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb, for you have given birth to Christ, the Savior and deliverer of our souls.

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A Hymn to the Theotokos

You are truly deserving of glory, *
O Birth-giver of God * The ever blessed and most pure mother of our God * More honorable than the Cherubim * And beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim * Who as a virgin gave birth to God the Word *
True Birth-giver of God, * we magnify you!

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Ten Steps to a Better Prayer Life
If you want to improve your prayer life, start now. These ideas may seem of little significance, but can help you make leaps and bounds in the intensity and consistency of your prayer.
1. Designate A Prayer Space
Whether it is in the corner of your desk or a little stand in your room, it is important to have a place where you can put your Bible, Icons, etc. Dedicate the use of that space for God alone.

2. Acquire A Time
Incorporate prayer in your routine and set time aside to center your thoughts to God.

3. Acquire A Library
Start with a Bible, then get a small Orthodox Prayer Book, after that start collecting books. Here are some suggestions: ‘The Way of a Pilgrim’ (Monk of the Eastern Church), ‘Beginning to Pray’ (Metropolitan Anthony Bloom), ‘The Orthodox Way’ (Bishop Kallistos Ware), ‘Way of the Aesetic (Tito Collander).

4. Assemble An Altar
In your prayer center gather icons (Christ, Theotokos, Guardian Angel and patron saint), service books, incense, votive light, a cross, a prayer rope, etc. Incorporate your five senses in prayer.

5. Pray
Speak from your heart. Learn prayers of the Church. Try the Jesus Prayer or the Lord's Prayer. Also incorporate your own prayers and thoughts.

6. Acquire A Spiritual Guide
This is a very important step. One should build a relationship with either a member of the clergy, monk or nun, who will become your spiritual guide. He/she will help guide and pace you to a balanced prayer life. The Sacrament of Confession can be arranged through your priest.

7. Fasting and Almsgiving
Fasting adds a dimension to your prayer life. Your fasting practice should be regulated to avoid physical and spiritual harm. As for alms, give where you see a need and trust that the Lord will provide.

8. Build On What You Already Have
If you already have a routine, build on it. If, for example, you pray before you go to sleep, it will be easier to read a chapter from the Bible before your bedtime prayers, than to set up some time during the day to read.

9. Sanctify All That You Do
You may have set aside a time and space for a prayer routine, but that doesn't mean you should separate your life into sacred and secular. Privately thank God for what you have at all times, and make Him aware of your every concern. Dedicate everything you do to Him.

10. Remember the power of the Life-giving Cross
The sign of the Cross is a reminder of Christ in our lives. Blessing oneself with the cross by holding the first two fingers of the right hand and thumb together represents the Holy Trinity. The last two fingers held to the palm represent the two natures of Christ – God and man. Orthodox Christians cross themselves from the head to the breast and from shoulder to shoulder, right to left. This unique and all embracing symbol shows that the cross is the inspiration, power and indeed the very content of our lives.

Source: <https://stpeterorthodoxchurch.com/prayer/>

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THIRD HOUR

Please let Fr. Dave know if you are interested in reading or chanting the Third Hour at 9:15 am

Aug 24:	_____?
Aug 31:	_____?
Sept 7:	_____?

ONLINE BONUSES

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Random Tidbits... Father Dave 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 (Sacrament) of Holy Anointing (Unction) to be fully prepared.

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VISIT OUR DIOCESE ON-LINE
Diocesan Website: www.acrod.org
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Twitter: twitter.com/acrodnews
YouTube: youtube.com/acroddiocese

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LIVING THE ORTHODOX FAITH

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[The following article was attempted to be copied from another bulletin’s PDF. The formatting is bad. Please let Fr Dave know if you were able to read through it and get something from it...]

BLESSING OF FIRST-FRUIT

The Feast of the Transfiguration, falling in August, is the traditional time for bringing the firstfruits of our labors to the church to be blessed by God. This practice, which dates to the earliest days of the Church, and even to practices before the Church, is a visible and real offering to God by the faithful. God blesses that offering and those who offer it. This offering and blessing show themselves in different ways. First, from ancient times, the faithful were called to express their thanks for all that God has given us by offering to Him a portion of what they had. In a society where most people were farmers or herders, the offering consisted of a portion of the harvest or the herd. Before Christ, the offering was 1/10 of a person's harvest. However, it was not just any tenth, but the best tenth of the harvest. This is why it is called "first-fruits:" not first in the sense of the first grapes off the vine or the first wheat cut, but in the sense of the best they had. Since the harvest ordinarily only happens once a year, the first-fruits offering, which was the major support that people gave to the Church, was usually only once a year. The earliest followers of Jesus, in Jerusalem, gave everything they owned to the Church (and therefore to God) to carry its work. This practice did not carry out to the other Christian communities, but the practice of offering first-fruits did. The giving of the best of one's goods to the Church was extremely important to people throughout most of Church history. Even in the days of the Byzantine Empire, when the Church was supported by state funds, people still felt the need to give of themselves to God through the Church, in order to support its mission and to help those whom the Church helps. It was so popular and so important to people to receive the blessings which were associated with the first-fruit offerings that some overdid it and began customs which were abusive. For instance, in some places, the harvest, including roasted meats, were being brought into the Altar of the Church in order to be blessed at the Holy Table. The Church stopped these abuses,

while continuing to encourage and emphasize the first-fruit offerings.

When the faithful brought their first-fruit offerings to be blessed by the Church, they did not then take them home with them. People understood that the giving and the blessing were made upon the giver and the rest of their goods, but the offerings were sacrificial – that is, they were given away. They were used to support the works of the Church, done in the name of Our Lord. For instance, some was received by the clergy and others who worked in the church

as part of their compensation. The rest was distributed to the poor, the hospitals and the needy.

as part of their compensation. The rest was distributed to the poor, the hospitals and the needy.

Even in those days, some of the first-fruit offerings consisted of money rather than produce or lambs.

Some people did not farm, and some who did found it easier to transport money over long distances than to drive a herd of sheep to the church's front door. This income was used by the church for its needs also. On the

day of blessing, however, just like today, grapes were especially blessed and distributed to all the faithful.

This

was done to remind us that our offerings make us part of the First and Most Important Offering, that of Our Lord's Body and Blood. So grapes, which are the "fruit of the vine" from which we make the wine that becomes Our Lord's own most precious offering - his Holy Blood, are given away to all those who make offerings.

So, what does all of this mean to us in our present practice of bringing baskets of fruits and vegetables to the church for blessing on this day?

First, we are still encouraged to make first-fruit offerings on the Feast of the Transfiguration, the traditional time of the harvest. Even for those of us who do not grow our own food, there is value in bringing food, which keeps us alive, to the church to be blessed by God. It reinforces the understanding that Our Lord is the Source and Foundation of our life, and without Him we have no life, not even a physical one.

Second, although today we take our baskets of fruit and vegetables home after they are blessed, we need to remember the connection between this blessing and our ongoing offering of our own firstfruits to God. Our income does not come to us these days only once a year, but throughout the year. We need to remember that

the regular offerings we make to God through His Church can and should be blessed by God and bless us in

return, as long as they are offerings of our "First-fruits" – the best that we can give.

Third, it is appropriate that we make this offering and receive the blessing on the Day of the Transfiguration. When we make the sacrificial offering and receive God's blessing, we are "transfigured" in

the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ. His Divine Nature shown through his physical body on Mount Tabor; our offering and receiving allows Our Lord's divine Spirit to shine through us so that all can see our love, and God's love in our hearts.

May this year's Feast of the Transfiguration be an especially prayerful and loving one for us!

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ORTHODOX WORD OF THE WEEK

The **Cherubic Hymn** is the primary *cherubikon* (Gr: χερουβικόν), or song of the **angels**, sung during every **Divine Liturgy** of the year with the exception of the liturgies of the Presanctified Gifts and those of **Holy Thursday** and **Holy Saturday**. It occurs after the **Gospel** reading and is interrupted by the **Great Entrance**. The Cherubic Hymn was added to the **Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom** by order of the Emperor **Justinian** near the end of the sixth century.

HISTORY

In either 573 or 574, Justinian I had the Cherubic Hymn added to the standard liturgy. The previous cherubikon used was that of the **Liturgy of St. James**, which had then been borrowed into the **Liturgy of St. Basil**. This hymn, beginning with the phrase "Let all mortal flesh keep silent" is currently only used on Holy Saturday. (The cherubikon used on Holy Thursday begins, "Of thy mystical supper...").

During the period of the fourth to sixth centuries, the shape of the Eastern Divine Liturgy reached its final form under the guidance of liturgists such as St. [John Chrysostom](#). In this same period the major formative changes occurred, most of which resulted in liturgical components that corresponded to the Church's developing theological understanding. Among them were the hymn "[Only-Begotten Son](#)" and the addition of the [Nicean-Constantinopolitan Creed](#) (countering heresies), and "The Trisagion Hymn" reflecting the Trinitarian theology being currently defined. In this period and on through the ninth century, hymns were composed and added to the Divine Liturgy, such as the Cherubic Hymn, sung while the priest recites the prayer that is now called "The Prayer of the Cherubic Hymn.

TEXT

The words of the Cherubic Hymn are as follows:

"We, who mystically represent the [Cherubim](#),
And chant the [thrice-holy hymn](#) to the Life-giving [Trinity](#),
Let us set aside the cares of life
That we may receive the King of all,
Who comes invisibly escorted by the Divine Hosts."

Though the actual text is short, the hymn lasts for quite a while due to its drawn-out, ethereal style. It is our best imitation of and supplement to the singing of the Heavenly Hosts

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LIVES OF THE SAINTS

The Seven Youths Of Ephesus: Maximilian, Iamblichus, Martinian, John, Dionysius, Eksacustodianus (Constantine) And Antoninus
Commemorated on August 17/4

The Seven Youths of Ephesus: Maximilian, Iamblichus, Martinian, John, Dionysius,

Eksacustodianus (Constantine) and Antoninus, lived in the III Century. Saint Maximilian was the son of the Ephesus city administrator, and the other six youths – were sons of other illustrious Ephesus citizens. The youths were friends from childhood, and all were together in military service. When the emperor Decius (249-251) arrived in Ephesus, he commanded all the citizenry to appear for offering sacrifice to the pagan gods; torture and death by execution awaited the recalcitrant. By denunciation from those currying the emperor's favour, the seven youths of Ephesus were summoned to reply to the charges. Standing before the emperor, the seven youths confessed their faith in Christ. Their illustrious military decorations – the military sashes – were quickly taken from them. Decius however set them at liberty, hoping, that they would change their minds while he was away on military campaign. The youths fled from the city and hid in a cave on Mount Okhlonos, where they passed the time at prayer, preparing for the deed of martyrdom. The very youngest of them – Saint Iamblichus, having clothed himself in beggar's attire, went into the city and bought bread. In one of these journeys into the city he heard, that the emperor had returned and sought them, so as to bring them to trial. Saint Maximilian exhorted his companions to come out of the cave and bravely appear at trial. Having learned where the lads were hidden, the emperor gave orders to seal the entrance of the cave with stones, so that the lads would perish in it from hunger and thirst. Two of the dignitaries, coming before the walled-up entrance to the cave, were secret christians. Wanting to preserve the memory of the saints, they set in among the stones a sealed container, in which were located two tin sheaves. On them were inscribed the names of the seven youths and the details of their suffering and death.

But the Lord brought upon the youths a miraculous sleep, continuing almost two centuries. During this while the persecutions against Christians had ceased, although during the reign of the holy nobleborn emperor Theodosius the Younger (408-450) there had appeared heretics who rejected the belief in the Resurrection of the Dead at the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some of them said: "How can there be a resurrection of the dead, when there would be neither soul, nor body, since they are disintegrated?"

Others affirmed: "Only the souls alone would have a restoration, since it would be impossible for bodies to arise and live after a thousand years, when even the dust from them would not remain". The Lord therefore revealed the mystery of the awaited Resurrection of the Dead and of the Future Life also through His seven youths.

The master of that region of land, on which Mount Okhlonos was situated, discovered the stone construction, and his workers opened up the entrance to the cave. The Lord had kept alive the youths, and they as it were awoke from their habitual sleep, not suspecting, that almost 200 years had elapsed. Their bodies and clothing were completely undecayed. Preparing to accept torture, the youths entrusted to Saint Iamblichus yet once again to buy bread for them in the city to keep up their strength. Going towards the city, the youth was astonished, seeing the holy cross on the gates. And hearing the freely uttered Name of Jesus Christ, he began to doubt that he was approaching his own city. Praying for the bread, the youth gave the merchant money with the image of the emperor Decius on it, and he was detained, as one possibly concealing an horde of old money. They took Saint Iamblichus to the city administrator, who at this time happened to be the bishop of Ephesus. Hearing the bewildering answers of the youth, the bishop perceived, that God was revealing through him some sort of mystery, and set out himself with other people to the cave. At the entrance to the cave the bishop took out the sealed container and opened it. He read upon the tin sheaves the names of the seven youths and the details of the sealing-up of the cave on the orders of the emperor Decius. Going into the cave and seeing the youths alive, everyone rejoiced and perceived that the Lord, through their awakening from long sleep, was disclosing to the Church the mystery of the Resurrection of the Dead. Soon the emperor himself arrived in Ephesus and conversed with the youths in the cave. Then the holy youths in view of everyone lay down their heads upon the ground and again fell asleep, this time until the General Resurrection. The emperor wanted to place each of the youths into a jeweled coffin, but appearing to him in a dream, the holy youths said, that their bodies were to be left in the cave upon the ground. In the XII

Century the Russian pilgrim the hegumen Daniel saw in the cave these holy remains of the seven youths.

A second commemoration of the seven youths is celebrated on 22 October. (By one tradition, which entered into the Russian Prologue [of Saints Lives], the youths a second time fell asleep on this day; according to the notes of the Greek Menaion of 1870, they fell asleep first on 4 August, and woke up on 22 October. The holy youths are mentioned also in the service of the Church New Year – 1 September).

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ORTHODOXY AROUND DA ‘BURGH
AND OUR DIOCESE

*** **Congratulations and God Bless** to Father Robert Teklinski. This weekend he celebrates his 25th Anniversary of Ordination to the Holy Priesthood and he was elevated to wear the Gold Cross at Saturday’s Anniversary Liturgy! May God be merciful to his servants Fr. Bob and Pañi Peggy and bless them; may He cause His countenance to shine upon them and have mercy on them, and may He grant them peace!. Many Years! Mnohaja l’ita!

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*** **Ukrainian Food Festival** Ss Peter and Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Mansfield Ave, Carnegie) will have their Food Festival Fri., Sept 12 & Sat., Sept. 13. 11:00 AM to 7:00 PM. Pirohi, Holubki, Halushki, outdoor grill, Pastries, Vendors, Basket Raffle and much more! For more info call 412-527-5359 or visit www.orthodoxcarnegie.org/ukranianfoodfestival

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ADDITIONAL BULLETIN BOARD
ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

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“Code” for reading the bulletin:
*** = new news ** = 2nd time in the bulletin
* = at least the 3rd time in the bulletin

** **Online Course** – Starting **August 24**, the St. Athanasius College will offer an Enrichment Course Titled *Reproductive Rights: Navigating the ethics laws and realities of abortion*. Details about the course and

registration are found in the online section *additional bulletin board announcements*.

Description

Welcome to our 5-week course on **Reproductive Rights: Navigating the Ethics, Laws, and Realities of Abortion**, taught by Fr. Adam Roberts. This course will explore the complex and multifaceted topic of reproductive rights, focusing on ethical, legal, and personal dimensions, with particular attention to how these issues intersect with Orthodox Christian perspectives. Each class will cover the themes listed below through guided discussion and reflection on the episodes of “In The Name of Choice,” an award-winning documentary directed by Fr. Adam. The documentary is available to watch for free on YouTube by searching the title.

Course Modules

- Class 1: Extremism & Violence, episodes 1 & 2
- Class 2: Trapped & Shamed, episodes 3 & 4
- Class 3: Support & Decisions, episodes 5 & 6
- Class 4: Care & Commonsense, episodes 7 & 8
- Class 5: The Funnel of Choice, episode 9

Course Details

Dates/Times: August 24th, 2025, Sundays at 7pm Central Time
Length of course: 5 weeks
Class length: ~60 minutes per class
Prerequisite: Open to all people, no prerequisites
Required reading materials: none

<https://courses.bothanddesign.com/courses/reproductive-rights-navigating-the-ethics-laws-and-realities-of-abortion/>

*** **Ancient Faith Singles Retreat** – Join us at Antiochian Village in Bolivar, PA, for a long weekend for Orthodox Christian singles (age 30 and up) full of socializing, church services, speaker sessions, trivia, games, speed dating, and free time for relaxation and

fellowship. *Get out of your comfort zone and meet other singles from all over the country!*

When? January 15-18, 2026

Where? Antiochian Village Conference Center in Bolivar, PA


Who? 130+ Orthodox Christian singles

What's on the Schedule?

- * Speed Dating: Break the ice and get to know your fellow retreat attendees! Whether you are extroverted or introverted, speed dating will give you the excuse to meet every other single in attendance.
 - * Trivia Night: Start studying, because at this year's singles retreat, we will host a trivia night with questions written by Ancient Faith staff and contributors! Get ready for a fun challenge and teamwork!
 - * Interactive, Speaker-Led Sessions: Hear from Drs. Mary and David Ford and Fr. Nick Belcher and engage in fruitful discussion on being single and Orthodox today.
 - * Film Screening of American Orthodox: Watch and discuss a brand new documentary about the lives of the early American saints arriving on the West Coast and their presence with us today.
 - * Church Services (of course!): We will worship together at Vespers and Matins each day and celebrate Divine Liturgy on Sunday. We will also serve a supplication service at the relics of St. Raphael of Brooklyn.
 - * And Much More: We will enjoy the beautiful grounds of Antiochian Village, eat our meals together in the Cedars Dining Hall, and have free time to rest, pray, and fellowship with one another.
- Who is Invited? If you are...
- * a single (unmarried, divorced, widowed) man or woman,
 - * at least thirty years old,
 - * an Orthodox Christian,
 - * and living in the world (non-monastic):
- YOU are invited!
- <https://www.ancientfaith.com/events/singles-retreat/>
- * **A Note for Summer Travel** – Where we travel, whenever we go, we take our faith with us, for as it says in the Psalms, "God is with us!" Keeping that in mind, please remember when traveling over the weekends to plan ahead and check for the location of the nearest

Orthodox Christian Church. The Orthodoxy in America web site, www.OrthodoxyInAmerica.org, is a great resource which has a multi-jurisdictional listing of all Orthodox parishes. Remember, "God is with us" always. Let's not forget to invite Him!

* **New Ministry Starting this Fall: Saints Spyridon and Nicodemus Prospora Bakers Ministry** – Prospora is the bread that is used during the Divine Liturgy for the Eucharist. In some parishes, the people bake all of the bread. In other parishes, the priest bakes the bread (as part of his prayer rule). We will start a hybrid of these two practices starting this fall. Please let Fr. Dave, Larry, or Liz know if you are interested in being a part of this ministry in our parish. A hands-on workshop will be held to kick it off. *Through the prayers of Saint Spyridon, Saint Nicodemus, and our holy fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.* *** Coming to the workshop is not a commitment going forward. Anyone is welcome to come and check it out!

- *  **Food Ministry at SJB** –When someone in our community cannot get to the grocery store or make their own meals (after a major surgery, a new baby, or for any other reason is in need), this program will help allow us to help them! Here is an example: *Someone has a major surgery and will not be able to cook for themselves for 2 weeks. They notify Fr. Dave or Gina Fall of this and they sets up an account for them on this website. Someone else from the parish decides to make a big pot of soup and freeze some for the one in need. They can then either deliver the food to their house or bring it to the church on Sunday and someone else will deliver it that week.* The idea is this: that through our stewardship we will help each other out when we are able to! Please visit: www.MealTrain.com to learn more about it. Here are some basic terms from their website:
- ❖ **Meal Train:** Organized meal giving around a significant life event. One meal from one person per day.
 - ❖ **Organizer:** The person who sets up the meal train.
 - ❖ **Recipient:** Those who will receive the meals.
 - ❖ **Participant/Giver:** The person who will make and take a meal.

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* **Annual Church Picnic** – “The Cabin” in North Park is booked for **SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2025** for our end of summer picnic. **Please Save The Date!**

AND Looking FURTHER Ahead...

- Some 2025 dates of interest at St. John's:**
- Aug. 14 – Dormition Fast Begins and Home Blessings Begin
 - **Aug. 17** – Blessing of Students and Teachers
 - Aug. 19 – Feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord and Blessing of Fruit and Vegetables
 - **Aug. 24** – Blessing of Fruit and Vegetables
 - Aug. 28 – Feast of the Dormition and Blessing of Flowers and Herbs
 - **Aug. 29-Sep. 1** – ACRY Convention
 - **Aug. 31** – Blessing of Flowers and Herbs
 - **Sep. 7** – Parish Picnic at “The Cabin”
- Please, Save the Dates!**

Make plans to go to Camp Nazareth in 2025!

- ✂ October 10-12 – CN Alumni Weekend
 - ✂ Oct 31-Nov 2 - Young Adult Retreat (ages 18-35)
 - ✂ November 7-9 - Fall Encounter (ages 8-18)
- Please, Save the Dates and head to
339 Pew Road, Mercer, PA 16137*

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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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THIS MONTH'S SERVICE SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, AUGUST 1

6:30 pm Feast Day Vespers
Blessing of Chariots (Vehicles)

SATURDAY, AUGUST 2

FEAST OF THE HOLY GLORIOUS PROPHET ELIAS
9:30 am Festal Divine Liturgy
Blessing of Chariots (Vehicles)
+ + +

SUNDAY, AUGUST 3

9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Annual Blessing of Chariots (Cars, Trucks, Boats,
Bicycles, and other modes of transportation)

TUESDAY, AUGUST 5

9:30 – 11:30 am church open for personal prayer
+ + +

SUNDAY, AUGUST 10

9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Monthly Memorial Panachida for +Joseph Olas, The
Priest (58-year), +Cecilia Urban (2-yr), +John
Hriecenak, The Priest (25-yr), +Anna Louise
Pavilonis (17-yr), +Elizabeth Wertz (9-yr), +Paul
Herbert, The Priest (9-yr), +John Setar (72-yr),
+Peter E Molchany, The Priest (35-yr), +Todd
DeMarco (41-yr), +Helen Kailyar (27-yr), +Infant
John Setar (105-yr), +Mary Setar (14-yr)
Lesser Blessing of Water and of Honey

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14 #DormitionFast

FEAST OF THE PROCESSION OF THE CROSS (in 1164)
Dormition Fast begins
Home Blessings begin

FRIDAY, AUGUST 16 #DormitionFast

6:30 pm Paraklis to the Theotokos
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SUNDAY, AUGUST 17 #DormitionFast

9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Youth Sunday
Blessing of Students (with backpacks) and Teachers
12-noon Moleben to the Theotokos

MONDAY, AUGUST 18 #DormitionFast

6:30 pm Feast Day Vespers & Blessing of Grapes
and First-Fruits (and vegetables)

TUESDAY, AUGUST 19 #DormitionFast

FEAST OF THE TRANSFIGURATION
9:30 am Festal Divine Liturgy & Blessing of Grapes
and First-Fruits (and vegetables)

THURSDAY, AUGUST 21 #DormitionFast

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

FRIDAY, AUGUST 22 #DormitionFast

Possible 6:30 pm Paraklis to the Theotokos
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SUNDAY, AUGUST 24 #DormitionFast

9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Blessing of Grapes and First-Fruits (and vegetables)
12-noon Moleben to the Theotokos

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 27 #DormitionFast

6:30 pm Feast Day Vespers
Blessing of Flowers and Herbs

THURSDAY, AUGUST 28

FEAST OF THE DORMITION
9:30 am Festal Divine Liturgy
Blessing of Flowers and Herbs

FRIDAY, AUGUST 29

12-Noon Overdose Awareness Prayer Service at
Trinity Episcopal Cathedral (325 Oliver Ave,
Pittsburgh, PA 15222)

SUNDAY, AUGUST 31

9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Blessing of Flowers and Herbs
International Overdose Awareness Day
12-noon Panachida (Memorial Service) for those
who died from an overdose
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STEWARDSHIP SNIPPET



TIME, TALENT, AND TREASURES
+ + + + +

PARISH STEWARDSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:
+ + +

* **Third Hour** – If you would like to be in the rotation
for chanting (or reading) the Third Hour prior to the
Divine Liturgy (or have any questions), please see or
contact Fr. Dave. *This does not need to be done by the
Liturgy Chanter.*
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* **Coffee Social** – Did you know that we have about 30
active families at SJB. If each family committed to one
Sunday a year for the coffee social – that takes care of
more than half the year! Please consider signing up in
advance to host the coffee social (*you are more than
welcome to combine with someone else if you wish!*)
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* **Ride Share** – We have received a couple requests
from people who are interested in getting a ride to the
church. Please contact Fr. Dave or Larry if you would
be willing to bring someone to the church.
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ACRY NEWS
+ + +

* **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
anyone over age 8, please contact Subdeacon Ryan
Fenko.
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* **Restarting the Jr. ACRY** – Are you (or your child)
between the ages of 8 and 18? Let's restart our Jr.
ACRY! This year's Annual Convention will be held at
Seven Spring on Labor Day Weekend. Please see Nick
Ditmore, Reader, or Subdeacon Ryan Fenko if you (or
your child) are interested in being a part of the Jr.
ACRY. Let's have some representation at this year's
convention!
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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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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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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 Fenko,
John Kirish, Kimberly Opsitos,
Matthew Opsitos, and Kathy Schrmack
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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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| 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% | 5% 9% | 6% 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. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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.

FEAST DAY FEATURES OF THE MONTH

The Holy Prophet Elias (Ilias or Elijah)
Commemorated on August 2 / July 20



We bless vehicles in honor of the Feast of the Holy Prophet Elias who was carried to heaven in a fiery chariot (see 2 Kings chapter 2 in the Old Testament). **Annual Blessing of Chariots** – Fr Dave

will bless vehicles after the Divine Liturgy on **Sunday, August 4**

The Procession (Carrying-forth) of the Venerable Wood of the Life-Creating Cross of the Lord
Commemorated on August 14/1



"By reason of the sicknesses, often everywhere occurring in August, from of old (~1164), customarily it was done at Constantinople to carry out the Venerable Wood of the Cross along the roads and streets for the sanctifying of places and for the driving away of sicknesses. On the eve of the Feast, carrying it out from the imperial treasury, they placed it upon the Holy Table [Altar] of the Great Church (Hagia Sophia – the Wisdom of God). From this feastday up to the Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God, making litija throughout all the city, they then placed it forth for all the people to venerate." (1897 Greek Orologion) In the Russian Church this feast is combined also with a remembrance of **the Baptism of Rus'**, on August 1, 988. In the "Account about the making of services in the holy catholic and apostolic great church of the Dormition", compiled in 1627 by order of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus' Philaret, there is provided suchlike an explanation of the feast: *"And on the day of the procession of the Venerable Cross there occurs a church-procession for **the Lesser Sanctification of Water** and for the enlightenment of the people, throughout all the towns and places"*.



Together with the Blessing of Waters, there is made a **Blessing of Honey** (i.e. first-honey for the Saviour: "Saviour of the Water", "Saviour Moisture"). And from this day the newly harvested honey is blessed and tasted. *The origin is that in some climates, such as in Ukraine, the hives are ready to be "robbed" at this time of the year.* **Bring your honey to be blessed on Sunday, August 11**

The Transfiguration Of Our Lord God And Saviour Jesus Christ
Commemorated on August 19/6



“The Christian practice to bless the fruits in church can be traced back to Apostolic times. There is a Prayer of Thanksgiving for the new fruits in the work of St. Hyppolytus, *the Apostolic Tradition*, composed in about 220. St. Hippolytus mentions the following fruits usually blessed: grapes, figs, pomegranates, pears, mulberries, peaches, and almonds. The sixth Ecumenical Council, celebrated in Constantinople (680-681), prescribed that the new “wheat and grapes” were to be blessed in church on the feast of the Holy Transfiguration (canon 28).” **We will bless our grapes and ‘first fruits’ from our gardens** (or purchased from the grocery store) **after Vespers on August 18, after Liturgy on August 19, and after the Liturgy the Sunday after the Feast Day.** Everyone is encouraged to bring in a bowl, basket, or bushel of fruits and/or vegetables!

The "Falling-Asleep" ("Dormition" or "Uspenie") Of The Theotokos, Our Most-Holy Lady Mother Of God And Ever-Virgin Mary
Commemorated on August 28/15

Holy Tradition tells us that all the Apostles, with the exception of St. Thomas, were transported mystically to Jerusalem in order to be with the Mother of God – the Theotokos – as she reposed, and to be present at her burial. When the Apostle Thomas arrived the next day, the Apostles opened the tomb so that he could kiss her farewell. As the tomb was opened, the body of the Most Pure Virgin was missing, and the cave was filled with flowers and the sweet fragrance of Paradise. This was a sure sign of her great purity and holiness to the faithful. Therefore as part of our celebration of the Dormition, we will **bless flowers and fragrant herbs** after **Vespers on August 27, after Liturgy on August 28, and** after the Liturgy **the Sunday after the Feast Day.** – and the faithful traditionally keep them in their homes. The herbs, used as natural medicine, are blessed in commemoration of the numerous healings and the extraordinary grace bestowed on the pilgrims at the blessed tomb of the Mother of God. **Everyone is encouraged to bring in a bouquet or basket of flowers and/or herbs from your garden or the store to be blessed!**

SPIRITUAL CONSIDERATIONS
Father is available to meet Monday thru Friday from 8:30am to 3:30pm 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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PRAYER CORNER

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 Proskomedia (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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Our Parish Prayer List for Special Intentions #
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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 Health of...
Michael, Sophia, Andrea, Diane, Jeanette, Boyde, Mark, Michelle, Megan, Lindsay, Brian, Rhonda, Carlene, Jason, Bella, David, Barbara, Paul, Juliana, Fredrick, 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 Special Intentions of... His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew, Metropolitan Gregory, Fr. Stephen B., Fr. Thomas B., Protodeacon Gregory B., Stephanie 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, Alexander H, Joshua H, Bradley S, *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 were reset back on 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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August Namedays:
Lawrence Martin - Blessed Laurence (8/23)
Father’s sister, Suzanne Verbanick – Holy Martyress Susanna (8/24)
Pañi Alexandra Urban - Saint Alexander (8/30 NC)
...*May God grant them many and blessed years!*

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August Birthdays:
Sharon Dzadony (8/2), Bobby Paieski (8/03), Steven Anton (8/4), Joseph Mainolfi, Jr. (8/4), Nicholas Dzambo (8/5), John Gaydos Jr. (8/6), Rylie Winkler (8/7), Isabelle Opsitos (8/8), Matthew Opsitos (Jr.) (8/8), Kathleen Benedetti Anton (8/9), Michael Tongel (8/11), Lindsay Matolyak-Ferraz (8/12), Jim Schrmack (8/12), Jane Gaydos (8/13), Robert Paganico (8/13), Craig Bowser (8/16), *Fr. Paul Herbert’s son-in-law,* Ernest Pido (8/20), Maria Urban (8/21), Sophia Urban (8/21), Everly Torchia (8/22), Igumen Patrick (8/23), Renee Mirilovich (8/24), Judith Figura (8/27), Fr. Michael Kabel (8/27), Meredith Blobner (8/28), Adam Zak (8/28), Lucillia Mainolfi (8/29), Claudia (Herbert) Pido (8/29), Kyle Jozwiskowski (8/30)

...*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... Nicholas & Cassie, Allison & Michael ...*through the prayers of Sts. Adrian & Natalia and all Holy Martyrs.*
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August Anniversaries:
Robert & Gina Fall (8/6)
Ben & Tina Scherer (8/7)
Kris & Caitlin Carlisle (8/6)
Nick & Jane Sarandou (8/21)
Sharon & Ryan Dzadony (8/25)
...*through the prayers of St. Nicholas Planas*
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For Pregnant Mothers...
Caitlin (due in August), Morgan (January)
...*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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A Prayer for Peace

Almighty God and Creator, You are the Father of all people on the earth. Guide, I pray, all the nations and their leaders in the ways of justice and peace. Protect us from the evils of injustice, prejudice, exploitation, conflict and war. Help us to put away mistrust, bitterness and hatred. Teach us to cease the storing and using of implements of war. Lead us to find peace, respect and freedom.

Unite us in the making and sharing of tools of peace against ignorance, poverty, disease and oppression. Grant that we may grow in harmony and friendship as brothers and sisters created in Your image, to Your honor and praise. Amen.



A prayer for our Neighborhoods

by Archbishop Demetrios of America

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

A Prayer for our Diocesan Clergy

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

An Orthodox Prayer Before A Journey
O Lord Jesus Christ *my/our* God, be *my/our* Companion, guide and protector during *my/our* journey. Keep *me/us* from all danger, misfortune and temptation. By Your divine power grant *me/us* a peaceful and successful journey and safe arrival. In You *I/we* place *my/our* hope and trust and You *I/we* praise, honor and glorify, together with Your Father and Holy Spirit now and forever and unto ages of ages. Amen.