

“THE WEEKLY FORERUNNER” *Our Parish Bulletin*

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

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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UPCOMING SERVICES

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2025 VOL. XI

19th Sunday after Pentecost
+Holy and Glorious Apostle Thomas (1 c)
God-Parent/God-Child(ren) Sunday
Youth Sunday
Church School
12-noon Pumpkin Patch & Hayride at Shenot Farms

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22

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

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23

FOUNDING OF OUR PARISH COMMUNITY IN 1932
9:30 – 11:30 Church Open for Personal Prayer
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SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26

20th Sunday after Pentecost
COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY FATHERS OF THE
7TH ECUMENICAL COUNCIL (787)
CARPATHO-RUSYN DAY IN NORTH AMERICA
9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Reception of Hekuran Ballanca into the
Catechumenate
Epistle: Galatians 1:11-19
Gospel: Luke 8:5-15 (*4th Sunday of Luke*)
Tone 3; Liturgical Color: **Gold**
Additional donation requested for our community

outreach this month, Christ the Savior Seminary

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PRAYER CORNER

For the Health of... Liliana, Melanie, Mary, Austin, Janet, Boyde, Maryellen, Carrie, David, Clifford, Lindsay, Jason, 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...

+Carlene (10/18), +Dortha Wilt (*40-day prayers*), +James Hudak (*40-day*), +Bella Gardner (*40-day*), +Jeanette Ellis (*40-day*) ...*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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SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 11:31-12:9

³¹ The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, he who is blessed for ever, knows that I do not lie. ³² At Damascus, the governor under King Ar’etas guarded the city of Damascus in order to seize me, ³³ but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped his hands.

Paul’s Visions and Revelations

¹² I must boast; there is nothing to be gained by it, but I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. ² I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. ³ And I know that this man was caught up into Paradise—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows— ⁴ and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter. ⁵ On behalf of this man I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. ⁶ Though if I wish to boast, I shall not be a fool, for I shall be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think more of me than he sees in me or hears from me. ⁷ And to keep me from being too elated by the abundance of revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

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messenger of Satan, to harass me, to keep me from being too elated. ⁸ Three times I besought the Lord about this, that it should leave me; ⁹ but he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

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Gospel: Luke 7:11-16

Jesus Raises the Widow’s Son at Nain

¹¹ Soon afterward he went to a city called Na’in, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him. ¹² As he drew near to the gate of the city, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a large crowd from the city was with her. ¹³ And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, “Do not weep.” ¹⁴ And he came and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, “Young man, I say to you, arise.” ¹⁵ And the dead man sat up, and began to speak. And he gave him to his mother. ¹⁶ Fear seized them all; and they glorified God, saying, “A great prophet has arisen among us!” and “God has visited his people!”

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BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

* **Pumpkin Patch** – Today after the Coffee Social and Church School we are heading to Shenot’s Farm & Market (3754 Wexford Run Rd., Wexford, PA 15090) for an afternoon of fun! For \$5 you can take a hayride to a pumpkin patch and corn field mazes ☺ fun for all ages! It is only 17 minutes (8.6 miles) from our church. For more information, visit:

www.shenotsonlinemarket.com/pumpkin-patch-2025

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* **Liturgy Sermon Series** - Fr. Dave will continue to 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!

*** **Presentation about Rusyn Culture** - In the Cathedral of Learning, Room 332 at 3:00 pm **this afternoon, Sunday October 19**, Jana Tomková will speak about her doctoral research on Rusyn culture in Czechia, especially as it relates to music and identity. *The afternoon will close with a reception in the Braun Room, 12th floor of the Cathedral of Learning. While the reception will be catered, you’re welcome to bring a snack or non-alcoholic beverage to contribute.*

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* **Bourbon Tasting** – Mark your calendars for an upcoming IOCC fundraiser - **Thursday, October 23** at 7:00 pm at Leaf & Bean (3525 Washington Rd., McMurray, PA 15317). Tickets will include a Leaf & Bean gift, three bourbon samples, and light hors d’oeuvres. More details coming soon...

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*** **2025 Carpatho-Rusyn Day Events** – Everyone is invited to join the Southwestern PA Chapter of the Carpatho-Rusyn Society for these FREE activities in honor of the one day in history that Rusyns had a separate country in 1918. All events will be at the Carpatho-Rusyn Cultural Center (915 Dickson St., Munhall, PA 15210). Registration is preferred so they have enough refreshments. Register at www.C-RS.org/events

Friday, October 24, 6 PM: Rusyn Christmas

Join the Professor Cantor, musician, and cultural activist, Jerry Jumba for his presentation on traditional Carpatho-Rusyn Christmas customs, with a focus on the “Bethlehem Play.”

Sat., Oct. 25, 2 PM: Rusyn Music, Song & Dance

Join the choreographer, researcher, and radio host, Dean Poloka for his presentation on Carpatho-Rusyn music, song, and dance, followed by an all-levels dance class.

Sun., Oct. 26, 2 PM: Rusyn History

Join The C-RS founder/President Emeritus, scholar, and tour guide extraordinaire, John Righetti for Part One of his three-part presentation: "The Carpatho-Rusyns: A Complex History, a Distinctive Culture."

*** **Free ACRY Annuals** – Feel free to take a past edition of the Diocesan Yearbook, the ACRY Annual. They are on the ledge in the vestibule by the window.

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** **New Camp Nazareth Director** – Fr. Nathaniel Choma has been named the New Camp Director! You may remember that Fr. Steve Loposky, the current director, was named Chancellor of the Diocese back in January. The search for a new director has been ongoing since then. Fr. Nate, Pañi Nicole, and their two daughters will be in the process of moving to the Camp from their parish in Endicott, NY. We pray and ask God’s blessings on Fr. Nate and family as they take on this new vocation of operating our Camp Nazareth! *Many years!* We also pray that Fr. Steve, Pañi Daria, and family will find their move to Johnstown to take up that new mantle will be peaceful, easy, and in the grace of God! *Many years!*

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** **Fall Food Fair** – Our sister parish of St. Nicholas (903 Ann St., Homestead, PA 15120) will have their Fall Food Fair on **Saturday, November 1** from 11 am to 6 pm. Slavic Foods, Baked Goods, Basket Raffle, and more!

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** **St. Michael’s Parish Feast Day Dinner** - The Feast Day celebration at our sister parish in Rankin will be on **Sunday, November 16** following the Divine Liturgy. All reservations must be in by Sunday, Nov. 2. Contact Fr. Dave for more details.

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** **The St. Nicholas Charity Dinner Luncheon**, a fundraiser for our seminary, is set for **SATURDAY, December 6 at 1:00 pm** at the Bulgarian-Macedonian Hall in West Homestead. More details coming soon...

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** **Environmentally Friendly Supplies** – A little reminder that when bringing in supplies for the church, please make environmentally friendly choices. Let’s continue to avoid styrofoam, bottles of water, etc.. Our little choices will make an impact! Also, when recycling at the church, please rinse bottles before putting them in the recycle bin and do not put garbage (plates, cups, utensils, food...) in with the recyclables.

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** **Pascha 2026** – Mark your digital calendars with these important Liturgical dates so you are prepared next year:

The Great Fast Begins: Monday, February 23
Palm Sunday & Holy Week: Sunday, April 5
Pascha: Sunday, April 12

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

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** **Community Cook-Out canceled** – Our community Cook Out and Open-House scheduled for Saturday, October 25 has been canceled. A rescheduled date has not been set.

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OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD	
Stewardship Offerings:	\$ 250
Candle Stewardship:	\$ 36
Envelope Stewardship:	\$ 510
Total Collections:	\$ 796
Capital Improvement Fund:	\$ 1083
<i>Participating Souls at Sunday’s Liturgy: 33</i>	
<i>Monday Vespers: 9</i>	
<i>Tuesday Feast Day: 3</i>	

Weekly Candle Intentions or Memorials were offered last week by the Nelson Family; Tim Martin; Fred & Juliana Anton; Cindy Pavilonis

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

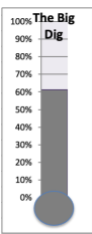
- ✂ hand your offering to the curator who sits at the desk in the vestibule (to the right after you enter),
- ✂ drop your offering in one of multiple baskets around the church, or
- ✂ place your offering in the box in the candle stand after saying your prayers when lighting 2 candles.

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

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* **The Big Dig Update** – Through the end of September, \$27,542 has been collected towards our \$45,000 bill from the recent excavation project. All of your additional generosity is greatly appreciated! May God bless you! Many Years!

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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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*** **Additional Article**, “*God-Parenting 101*” can be found in the online edition.

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Godparents in the Orthodox Church

The institution of godparents (sponsors) is one that dates back to the first century of the Christian Church. Anyone approaching baptism, be they infant or adult, was required to have a godparent. In the case of an infant, it is the godparent that speaks for the child, answering the questions posed by the priest during the baptismal service. But it doesn’t stop there! The godparent is charged by the Church with the duty to make sure the newly baptized is instructed in the teachings of the Church, remains a frequent communicant within the Church and remains active in the Church. In the case of a child, it is to the godparents that the parents entrust their child, knowing that the godparent will remain actively supporting the child within the life of the Church. Should something happen to the parents, it is traditionally the godparent who will make sure the child continues to be taken to church, and remains Orthodox.

Because of the awesome responsibility of godparents, it is all the more important that great care be taken when choosing someone who will take on this role. The Church does not allow anyone to become a godparent who is not Orthodox, for how can one who is not himself a pious, active Orthodox Christian give witness to living a life immersed in the Orthodox faith? The godparent must therefore be a person of high moral character, and able to inspire the newly baptized to fulfill their baptismal vows.

When the newly baptized approaches the holy chalice for the first three consecutive Sundays following baptism, it is the godparent who accompanies them to receive the Holy Mysteries. The godparent must, therefore, be someone who himself/herself is a frequent communicant. Additionally, the godparent must be someone who is active in the life of the Church,

supporting the Church with their tithe, keeping the fasts, and otherwise living in all piety and holiness.

The person chosen to act as a godparent must be someone willing to honor their commitment to the newly baptized for a lifetime, and willing to help nourish the spiritual life and development of the child throughout their life. Thus, it is a very bad idea to pick someone as a godparent simply because they are a good friend. Godparents are duty bound to continue giving support to their godchild, even into adulthood. They must be someone who will remember to honor their godson or goddaughter on special occasions, such as a birthday or namesday. They should be a part of the godchild’s life during the great feasts of the Church, such as Pascha or Nativity. They should commemorate the anniversary of their godchild’s baptism by giving them a Christian gift, such as a Bible, prayer book, or icon.

Everything should be done to strengthen the bond between the godparent and the godchild throughout the ensuing years. They can take each other out to a restaurant for dinner, or receive communion together when possible (if living in different cities). Time should be allotted to cultivate a unique spiritual bond, and the godparent should assist the godchild’s parents whenever possible – especially when doing so enhances the godchild’s commitment to their Orthodox faith.

Because baptism has been called Illumination, and brings us out of the darkness of sin and into the light of Christ, the role of the godparent is critical. The godparent must ensure that the Light of Christ continues to shine in the soul of the godchild. Thus, this role as godparent is an awesome responsibility, and is not to be considered a one-day event. If you’ve been asked to be a godparent, but are unwilling to see this as a lifelong vocation, please decline the honor.

www.agoc.org/our-faith/godparents-in-the-orthodox-church

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SPIRITUAL VITAMIN

"Do not be ashamed to enter again into the Church. Be ashamed when you sin. Do not be ashamed when you repent. **Sin is a wound; repentance is a medicine.** Just as there are medicines for the body wounds,

so for the soul repentance for sins."

+St. John Chrysostom (407)

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ONLINE BONUSES

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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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2025-26 SJB PARISH COUNCIL OFFICERS

President: Larry Martin
Vice-President: Liz Radomsky
Treasurer: Tim Martin, Reader
Financial Secretary: Rich Mirilovich
Recording Secretary: Gina Fall
Chief Auditor: Bob Fall
Auditors: Mary Jane Hudak, Ray Kilmer, Kim Opsitos, Matt Opsitos, and Kathy Schrmack

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GUEST SERMON

One parishioner stopped going to church. Time passed, and one day the parish priest decided to visit him. The entrance door was open and the priest went inside. The man was sitting all alone by the fireplace. He saw the priest, nodded his head in greeting and motioned to him to sit down. The priest settled comfortably into the armchair, and also began to look at the flame beautifully playing in the fireplace. Both were silent. A few minutes later, the priest got up, took the fireplace tongs, grabbed a burning brand with them and put it aside, away from the fire. Then he sat down again. The silence continued. The brand meanwhile ceased to blaze, then completely cooled down and turned black. The priest got up again, took the tongs and put the black brand back into the fire. A moment later, it was already burning like the others. The priest put aside the tongs, and without saying a word headed for the exit. When he was already at the door, he heard the words: "Thank you for the visit, and for your sermon by the fireplace. This Sunday I will definitely come to the service."

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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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God-Parenting 101

<http://orthodoxinfo.com/praxis/godparenting101.aspx>

It is a known practice in the Orthodox Church that every person, child or adult, should have a godparent (sponsor) at the time that they enter into the faith through Holy Baptism and Chrismation. To be a godparent is at the same time a great honor and a tremendous responsibility. God asks each godparent to assist in leading souls along the narrow path which leads to the Kingdom of Heaven. For this reason the role of the godparent is not to be minimized or trivialized. It is in fact a role that is holy and needs to be taken seriously.

The task of steering a child along the narrow path, and bringing them up according to the law of God is perhaps the greatest of all things in life. St. Theophan the Recluse says that there is no holier act. What better thing can we offer our children than to lead them to our Lord and teach them to imitate Him in their life.

The challenge of raising up a child in the teachings of God is perhaps far greater today than ever before. We are contending against many negative influences that carry with them great appeal. Due to the fallen state that we are in, and the unhealed passions that remain within us, the things that are most harmful are the things that are most enticing. With the many obstacles and temptations, the parents along with the godparents, must help the precious souls entrusted to them through the course of life.

While it is an honor to be asked to be a godparent, one should make sure that the potential sponsor will be committed to the responsibility. The role must be honored and not taken lightly. Every godparent will be accountable to God as to whether or not he or she has fulfilled their duties. Prospective godparents must know their faith, or at least be in the process of learning their faith and be committed to a life in Christ. One problem today is that people who are

called upon to be godparents do not know their faith and are not regular participants in the life of the Church. This is also true for some parents. Consequently a child who is baptized may never know anything about Jesus Christ and the Church.

In the early Church heavy emphasis was placed on the educating of the faithful and those who desired to come into the Christian faith. As Christianity spread in a pagan world, the need to teach individuals before their baptisms became crucial. The systematic instruction, which was a preparatory stage for baptism was and is called "catechism."

During catechism one learned the basic elements of the Christian faith and moral life. We see the importance of these teachings and the teachings themselves in the 4th Prebaptismal Catechesis of St. Cyril of Jerusalem. The candidate had to be introduced by one of the faithful, called *anadochos*, (the godparent to be) and be examined by the "doctors" (the Bishops) who were in charge of the catechumens, to ensure that clear spiritual motives led him to enter the Church. Other than in cases of urgency, baptism was not something that was rushed. Not only did the candidate need to understand the teachings of Christ and the Church, but he also had to be living by them.

The *anadochos* which means one who receives (the person out of the font), was responsible for the candidate and played a very important role during the process of his Catechesis and even after the candidate had been baptized. This obviously took place primarily with adult candidates or young people. However, as the faith spread and as entire families were coming into the Body of Christ, infant baptism became more the norm rather than the exception. With the emergence and common practice of infant baptism, the *anadochos* was called upon to be the spokesperson for the infant at their baptism.

The godparent, therefore, is the representative of the infant who is being admitted into the Church of Christ. He speaks for the infant and vows that he will do all he can to assure that the child will be a true soldier of Christ and a devoted member of His Church. He accepts the sacred responsibility of guiding the child into the understanding and practice of the teachings of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. The godparent makes a public profession of the Nicene

Creed during the Baptism. Likewise, his renunciation of the devil is made on behalf of the candidate for Baptism. The godparent implicitly pledges himself to aid his godchild in whatever necessities that may arise, but most especially in the giving of a good Orthodox Christian example to the Godchild.

How should one go about choosing a Godparent?

1. Parents must exercise the greatest care in the selection of godparents for their children. Certainly they will never select atheists or agnostics, or persons who are lukewarm toward the Church. This would obviously defeat the purpose of having a godparent in terms of their role.

2. The Godparent must bring godliness and holiness to the child. Godparents are parents representing God or parents on God's behalf.

3. Parents should not choose godparents because they feel obligated, or because they think that if they don't ask a certain person or couple that they will be offended. Many, if not most situations, where people who have chosen someone to be a godparent out of guilt or obligation, end up being disastrous.

4. The faith of the godparent and their involvement within the sacramental life of the Church is crucial. The person who confesses Jesus Christ as His Lord cannot ignore and violate in word and deed this faith. How can he promise God that he will make certain that the child will grow to be a true follower of Christ, when he himself lives a life of unbelief and disobedience?

5. It goes without saying that the godparent must be an Orthodox person. How could someone who is not Orthodox provide the proper religious education, example and inspiration to his godchild? It should also be noted that an Orthodox Christian who has not had his or her marriage blessed in the Orthodox Church is excluded from exercising the privilege of serving as a godparent, because they are not considered to be in good standing with the Church.

6. The Church also cautions us to select a person who has reached the age of reason and moral responsibility (at least 12 years of age). It is also good to look for godparents outside of the family. In this way, the family grows and special bonds are created.

(continue on the next page...)

What are some other things that are expected of the Godparent?

1. It is a gross misunderstanding to think that the only duty of the godparent is to buy a new outfit and a cross for the infant. Certainly this is a beautiful tradition, but the emphasis must not be on the material but rather the spiritual. Many times people are so concerned with the clothing, the cross, the *martyrika*, (witness pins) and the luncheon afterwards, that they forget the magnitude and the awesomeness of the great mystery and the great gift of Holy Baptism. Both the parents and the godparents should be careful not to fall into this trap, but instead to keep their minds focused on the most important aspect and that is the baptism itself.
2. The godparent should make a faithful commitment to join the struggle with the parents, guided by the Church, to bring the infant carefully and prayerfully along the difficult road to Heaven.
3. After the baptismal service is finished, the godparent delivers the child into the arms of the mother in front of the congregation. As she receives the child, now baptized, sealed and illuminated, she kisses the hand of the godparent as a token of the spiritual relationship that is established between the godparent and the family. This is a Christian expression of gratitude and respect.
4. If the godparent lives in the same city, it is customary for the godparent to bring the infant (or accompany the newly illumined adult) to Holy Communion with the lit baptismal candle for the next three Sundays. After three Sunday's the candle is no longer used, but it is good for the godparent to take the child to communion each week.
5. A faithful godparent will make the effort to maintain close contact with their godchild, building up their relationship. The main focus, however, is the progress of the child in the knowledge and practice of the Christian life. He should at all times model a Christ-like example. For this reason it is important that the godparent stay on top of their own spiritual life. The godparent should pray, fast, read from Holy Scripture, and participate in the sacramental life of the Church. As they grow and mature in the faith, they will in turn be able to offer more and more to their godchild who has been entrusted to them. To neglect

- their own spiritual life is ultimately to neglect the spiritual life of their godchild.
6. Godparents are encouraged to call to remembrance the sacred and joyous moment of Baptism, which may be done by participating in "Godparents' Sunday".
7. Appropriate gift-giving honoring the occasion of the godchild's nameday, birthday or baptism day, could include such things as icons, a Bible, and religious books that will be helpful in building up the spiritual life of the child. These are the most important, but it is not wrong to give other things as well that the child would enjoy and make use of.
8. Most of all, the greatest duty of the godparent is to pray fervently for their godchild that God will always watch over them and guide them throughout his/her life. The Akathist to the Mother of God the Nurturer of Children could be read by the godparent and they could simply replace the word "child" with "godchild". *The role and responsibility of the Godparent can be summed up in the Divine Commandment that is read from the Holy Gospel at the service of Baptism. "Teach them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age." It is truly an honor to be called upon to be a godparent. May we all live a life close to the Church, seeking help from Christ, that we may fulfill our sacred duty as godparents in a way pleasing to God.*

LIVES OF THE SAINTS

THE HOLY APOSTLE THOMAS

Commemorated on October 19/6

The Holy Apostle Thomas was born in the Galileian city of Pansada and plied the trade of fisherman. Hearing the good tidings of Jesus Christ, he left all and followed after Him. The Apostle Thomas is included in the number of the holy Twelve Apostles, the 12 closest disciples of the Saviour.

By the account of Holy Scripture, the holy Apostle Thomas did not believe the reports of the other disciples about the Resurrection of Jesus Christ: "Unless I see in His hand the wound of the nail, and place my finger into the wound of the nail, and place my hand in His side, I shalt not believe" (Jn. 20: 25). On the eighth day after the Resurrection the Lord appeared to the Apostle Thomas and shew His

wounds. "My Lord and my God" – cried out the holy apostle (Jn. 20: 28). "Thomas, being once weaker in faith than the other apostles, – says Saint John Chrysostom, – toiled through the grace of God more bravely, more zealously and tirelessly than them all, such that he went preaching almost over nearly all the earth, not fearing to announce the Word of God to savage nations". According to Church Tradition, the holy apostle Thomas founded Christian churches in Palestine, Mesopotamia, Parthia, Ethiopia and India. Preaching the Gospel earned the apostle a martyr's death. For having converted the wife and son of the governor of the Indian city of Meliapur (Melipur), the holy apostle was locked up in prison, suffered torture, and finally, having been pierced with five spears, he expired to the Lord. Part of the relics of the holy Apostle Thomas are in India, in Hungary and on Athos. With the name of the Apostle Thomas is connected the Arabian (or Arapet) Icon of the Mother of God (Comm. 6 September).

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COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

This month, through the efforts of our Sr. ACRY, we will be collecting donations for the **Seminarians** and **Christ the Saviour Seminary**. Please continue to pray for our Diocesan Seminarians! Thank you in advance for your prayers for our seminarians and offerings for the seminary!

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ADDITIONAL BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

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*** **Pop Can Tab Collection** – Join the National Jr. ACRY in supporting the Ronald McDonald House. A collection bin for *Can Tabs* has been placed in the vestibule near the bin for repurposed Greeting Cards. During the next year, please help fill the container with your pop can tabs.

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COFFEE SOCIAL STEWARDS

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

Oct 26: The Kilmers

In honor of Hekuran entering into the catechumenate

Nov 2: Matt & Kim Opsitos

Nov 9: _____?

* 2025 Fall Encounter at Camp Nazareth

November 7–9, 2025 • Mercer, PA

The National Jr. A.C.R.Y. invites all youth ages 8–18 to gather for the 2025 Fall Encounter at Camp Nazareth this Veterans Day Weekend, **November 7-9!** This year's Encounter continues the theme from this past summer at Camp Nazareth with the story of Moses, the Israelites, and the Exodus: *"The Lord is my strength and my song, and He has become my salvation"* (Exodus 15:2). Now our children will hear the story of Joshua and the people of Israel as they enter the Promised Land, drawing strength from the command of the Lord: *"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go"* (Joshua 1:9). The theme will help us discover how courage and faithfulness are essential for following Christ, the "New Joshua," who leads us into the true Promised Land of His Kingdom through the life of the Church. Through discussions, worship, and fellowship, participants will reflect on what it means to take courageous steps in their own spiritual lives and to trust Christ as He opens the way before us to His Kingdom. The Fall Encounter will include all the hallmarks of the weekend at Camp Nazareth: worship in the Camp Church, campfires, sports, great food, activities, time with friends, and the joy of being together in Christ.

Dates: November 7–9, 2025

Location: Camp Nazareth, Mercer, PA

Cost: \$120 per participant (ages 8–18)

Registration: [Register here](#)

Drop-off on Friday, 11/7 is between 6-7:30pm. Pick-up on Sunday, 11/9 is between 11am-11:30am. Thanks to the generosity of the National Sr. A.C.R.Y., financial assistance is available to families who may need help with the cost. Please contact Fr. Matthew Dutko, Jr. A.C.R.Y. Spiritual Advisor, at 404-268-6359 for more information. Come, seek Christ, find courage to carry your Cross, and be renewed in faith and hope at the 2025 Fall Encounter at Camp Nazareth!

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“Code” for reading the bulletin:
*** = new news ** = 2nd time in the bulletin
* = at least the 3rd time in the bulletin
+++ +++ +++
Live-Broadcast – If you are unable to attend church services, please pray along with our Cathedral online: www.acrod.org/directories/cathedral//live/
+++ +++ +++
Mystery of Confession – Father is available to hear Confessions after every service or by appointment.
+++ +++ +++
Calendar - Future Services are updated online at: www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar (Please see Fr. Dave if you want a printed copy)
+++ +++ +++
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.
+++ +++ +++
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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THIS MONTH’S SERVICE SCHEDULE

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5
9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Blessing of the Parish Council
Church School

MONDAY, OCTOBER 6
FEAST OF THE CONCEPTION OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
9:30 am Akathist to St. John
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SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12
9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Monthly Memorial Panachida

MONDAY, OCTOBER 13
6:30 pm Feast Day Vespers

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14
FEAST OF THE PROTECTION OF THE THEOTOKOS
9:30 am Festal Divine Liturgy
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SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19
9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Youth Sunday
God-Parent/God-Children Sunday
Church School

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22
6:30 pm Parish Council Meeting (All are welcome to come and listen to the discussions at the meeting)

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23
FOUNDING OF OUR PARISH COMMUNITY IN 1932
9:30 – 11:30 Church Open for Personal Prayer
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SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26
COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY FATHERS OF THE 7TH ECUMENICAL COUNCIL (787)
CARPATHO-RUSYN DAY IN NORTH AMERICA
9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Additional donation requested for our community outreach this month,
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AND Looking FURTHER Ahead...
Some 2025 dates of interest at St. John’s:
➤ Oct - Home Blessings Continue

➤ Nov 21 – Feast of the Holy Archangels
➤ Nov 26 – Moleben of Thanksgiving (6:30 pm)
➤ Nov 28 – Nativity Fast begins
➤ Dec 4 – Feast of the Entry of the Theotokos
➤ Dec 6 – St. Nicholas Charity Dinner Luncheon Banquet to benefit Christ the Savior Seminary
➤ Dec 19 - Feast of St. Nicholas
Please, Save the Dates!
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STEWARDSHIP SNIPPET

TIME, TALENT, AND TREASURES
+++ +++ +++
PARISH STEWARDSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:
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* **Ride Share** – We were blessed to have a number of college students with us last week 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.
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*  **meal train** **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.

CHURCH BUILDING UPDATE
Here is a brief update from the past few weeks:
❖ *** Outside Green Space: Recently, a gardening specialist and Landscape Architect came to the church and shared some of their expertise for the idea of having a Perennial Pollinator Garden. More details to come...
❖ * **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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ACRY NEWS
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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 anyone over age 8, please contact Subdeacon Ryan Ferko.
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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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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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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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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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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%	8%	7%	6%	5%	4%	3%	2%	1%		
\$200	\$30	\$24	\$20	\$18	\$16	\$14	\$12	\$10	\$8	\$6	\$4	\$2	
\$300	\$45	\$36	\$30	\$27	\$24	\$21	\$18	\$15	\$12	\$9	\$6	\$3	
\$400	\$60	\$48	\$40	\$36	\$32	\$28	\$24	\$20	\$16	\$12	\$8	\$4	
\$500	\$75	\$60	\$50	\$45	\$40	\$35	\$30	\$25	\$20	\$15	\$10	\$5	
\$600	\$90	\$72	\$60	\$54	\$48	\$42	\$36	\$30	\$24	\$18	\$12	\$6	
\$700	\$105	\$84	\$70	\$63	\$56	\$49	\$42	\$35	\$28	\$21	\$14	\$7	
\$800	\$120	\$96	\$80	\$72	\$64	\$56	\$48	\$40	\$32	\$24	\$16	\$8	
\$900	\$135	\$108	\$90	\$81	\$72	\$63	\$54	\$45	\$36	\$27	\$18	\$9	
\$1,000	\$150	\$120	\$100	\$90	\$80	\$70	\$60	\$50	\$40	\$30	\$20	\$10	
\$1,100	\$165	\$132	\$110	\$99	\$88	\$77	\$66	\$55	\$44	\$33	\$22	\$11	
\$2,000	\$300	\$240	\$200	\$180	\$160	\$140	\$120	\$100	\$80	\$60	\$40	\$20	
\$3,000	\$450	\$360	\$300	\$270	\$240	\$210	\$180	\$150	\$120	\$90	\$60	\$30	

1. Find where YOU are on the chart (your weekly income/giving).
2. Move one block to the left to determine what GROW ONE% would be.

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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.*

ORTHODOXY AROUND DA ‘BURGH AND OUR DIOCESE

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SPIRITUAL VITAMINS

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ORTHODOX WORD OF THE WEEK

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FEAST DAY FEATURE

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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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ONLINE 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
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 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., Stephanie B, Kevin, Michael L., Laura & family, Georgia, Stephen, David, Anastasia, Nicholas, Cassandra, Alexander, Andrea, Jason, Tyrone, Sarah, Ameer, Joshua, John, Kathryn, Rose, Charles, Justin, David, Donna, George, *our diocesan seminarians:* Dcn Peter S, Dcn Maximus C, Alexander H, Monk David M, Nicholas C, John B, John F, Bradley S, Clay W, and our Parish Council and Curators: Lawrence, Subdeacon Ryan, Timothy, Rich, Elizabeth, Robert, Gina, John, Kimberly, Matthew, 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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October Namedays:
John Kirish - Venerable John Kukuzelis the Singer (10/14)

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

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October Birthdays:
Nicholas Sarandou (10/3), Matthew Mirilovich (10/6), John Gaydos, III (10/7), Emma Fischer (10/9), *Father’s sister*, Melissa Ditmore (10/11), *Father’s mother*, Andrea Urban (10/11), Kevin Anton (10/12), Rhonda Gogal (10/19), Fr. Robert Buczak (10/20), Alyssa Duray (10/23), Fr. Daniel Vaskalis (10/24), Dolores Bowser (10/26/35), Kaitlyn Duray (10/26), Fr. Mark Leasure (10/26), Sarah Fucsko (10/27), Ryan Schrmack (10/30), Waylon Gavulich (10/31), Noah Winkler (10/31)

...*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...
Hekuran, 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, Nicholas & Camile
...*through the prayers of Sts. Adrian & Natalia and all Holy Martyrs.*

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October Anniversaries:
Rich & Renee Mirilovich (10/1)
Allen & Anastasia (Martin) Dzambo (10/2)
Brian & Rhonda Gogal (10/5)
Chi-Wing & Deborah (Brancho) Chow (10/08/05)
John & Jane Gaydos (10/9)
Meredith & Ryan Blobner (10/12)
Robert and Trona Paganico (10/18)
...*through the prayers of St. Nicholas Planas*

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For Pregnant Mothers...
Carley (due in November), Morgan (due in 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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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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