

## "THE WEEKLY FORERUNNER" *Our Parish Bulletin*

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

### ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

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

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### UPCOMING SERVICES

SUNDAY, JANUARY 11, 2026

VOL. XI

Sunday after Nativity  
Sunday of the Holy Ancestors (*Righteous Joseph the Betrothed, Holy Righteous David the King, and James the Brother of the Lord*)  
+Holy Innocents slain by Herod at Bethlehem  
Monthly Memorial (Panachida) for +Michael Miklos, the Priest (1-year), +Ann Timko (9-yr), +Daniel Gavulich (5-yr), +George Lavra (1-yr), Pañi +Emily Molchany (29-yr), +Dorothy Martin (31-yr), Mother Alexandra (35-yr), +John Mirilovich (23-yr), +Stephen Teplica (6-yr), +Andrew Wensel (35-yr), +Anastasia (Lipchak) Gaydos (60-yr), +Pañi Patricia Patrick (7-yr), +Patricia Deluca (3-yr), +Diana Archondis (23-yr), +Mary Archondis (2-yr)  
*take down the manger scene during the coffee social*  
Sr. ACRY Meeting after coffee social

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**FAST FREE** until the eve of Theophany (Sviatki: "Holy Days")

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 13

Leavetaking (*Apodosia*) of the Nativity of Christ  
6:30 pm Feast Day Vespers

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14

FEAST OF THE CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD  
FEAST OF SAINT BASIL THE GREAT  
9:20 am Theophany Canon  
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

FRIDAY, JANUARY 16

9:30 am Royal Hours of Theophany

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SUNDAY, JANUARY 18 **### STRICT FAST DAY**

Sunday before Theophany  
9:20 am Theophany Canon  
9:30 am Divine Liturgy  
Tone 7; Liturgical Color: **Gold**  
Epistle: 2 Timothy 4:5-8 (Sunday before)  
Gospel: Mark 1:1-8 (Sunday before)  
Youth Sunday  
**10:45 am** 2<sup>nd</sup> Holy Night Supper (*Lunch*)  
11:00 – 11:30 am Church School  
~**12-noon** Great Compline (*Velikij Povečerije*)  
Vigil Service with the Great Blessing of Water

MONDAY, JANUARY 19

FEAST OF THE THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD  
9:30 am Festal Divine Liturgy of St. Basil

TUESDAY, JANUARY 20

FEAST OF THE SYNAXIS OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST  
9:30 am Divine Liturgy

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21

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

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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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### PRAYER CORNER

#### *For the Health of...*

Anthony, Jane, Nicholas, Edward, Valerie, Thomas, Angelo, Craig, Timothy, Patrick, Melissa, Christopher, Melanie, Carrie, Jason, Barbara, Paul, Juliana, 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...*

+Robert Paganico (1/5), +Mary McNeil, +Frederick Anton (12/28), +Carol Spirnak (12/10) ...*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

#### *Galatians 1:11-19*

Paul's Vindication of His Apostleship

<sup>11</sup> For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not man's gospel. <sup>12</sup> For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. <sup>13</sup> For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it; <sup>14</sup> and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. <sup>15</sup> But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, <sup>16</sup> was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, <sup>17</sup> nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus.

<sup>18</sup> Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. <sup>19</sup> But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother.

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#### *Matthew 2:13-23*

The Escape to Egypt

<sup>13</sup> Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." <sup>14</sup> And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to

Egypt, <sup>15</sup> and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt have I called my son."

The Massacre of the Infants

<sup>16</sup> Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the wise men. <sup>17</sup> Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:

<sup>18</sup> "A voice was heard in Ramah,  
wailing and loud lamentation,  
Rachel weeping for her children;  
she refused to be consoled,  
because they were no more."

The Return from Egypt

<sup>19</sup> But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, <sup>20</sup> "Rise, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." <sup>21</sup> And he rose and took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. <sup>22</sup> But when he heard that Archelaus reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. <sup>23</sup> And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

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### BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

**\*\* Seasonal Greeting** - The greeting used amongst Orthodox Christians for the period from the Nativity until Theophany is "**Christ is born!**" with the response "**Glorify Him!**"

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**\*\* Fast-Free Period** - There is rejoicing in the celebration of the Birth of Christ! The Church reminds us of this as no fasting is called for from **January 7<sup>th</sup> until January 17<sup>th</sup>**. We fasted - now we feast (*in moderation*). This is a time of joy when the Christ-Child, our Savior, is Born! Enjoy!

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**\*\* THANK YOU** to everyone who brought something in for our Christmas Pot-Luck. It was De-Li-Cious! May God grant you many years!

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**\*\*\* CHANGE OF PLANS! Compline After Coffee and 2<sup>nd</sup> Holy Night Supper Lunch** - Rather than coming to Allison Park Sunday morning AND Sunday evening next week, **January 18...** Fr. Dave will bring items for the Second Holy Night Supper and have them as a part of the coffee social. (*Please talk to him if you would like to contribute anything to the meal.*) Following ~~dinner~~ lunch, the Virgil Service for the Theophany of our Lord will be celebrated at **about 12-noon**, concluding with the Great Blessing of Water, Church Sanctification, and distribution of the Holy Water to the faithful.

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### COFFEE SOCIAL STEWARDS

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

January 18: mushroom soup, bolbalki, \_\_?\_\_, \_\_?\_\_

January 25: Sr. ACRY

February 1: \_\_?\_\_, \_\_?\_\_, \_\_?\_\_, \_\_?\_\_

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### OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7

|                                  |                |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| Stewardship Offerings:           | \$ 225         |
| Candle Stewardship:              | \$ 74          |
| Envelope Stewardship:            | \$ 2470        |
| <b>Total Collections:</b>        | <b>\$ 2769</b> |
| <b>Capital Improvement Fund:</b> | <b>\$ 576</b>  |

Participating Souls at: *Sunday's Liturgy*: 46

*Monday PM Royal Hours*: 5

*Christmas Eve Vigil*: 31

*Nativity Divine Liturgy*: 98

*2<sup>nd</sup> Day of Christmas Liturgy*: 2

**Weekly Candle Intentions or Memorials** were offered last week by the Nelson Family; Tim Martin; ; Lawrence Martin; Melanie Paieski

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### **\*\* Caring for Others through Visitation**

**Ministry** - A ministry of caring is an important part of parish life. Join us on **Sunday, January 25** during the coffee social in the MPR (Multi-Purpose Room) for a 20-minute presentation with our guest presenter, Amy Armanious. She will lead us on ways to reach out in love to those in our church families who are homebound, coping with challenging health conditions, and/or experiencing other life difficulties. No need to sign up - just come and learn how God is opening your heart and mind to *Visitation Ministry*. We will discuss how we can make a difference through such activities as prayer, making phone calls to those who live alone, creating small gifts for the homebound, baking cookies, delivering soup, mailing cards to those who need an encouraging word, home visitation, and much more! This ministry is a way for individuals to live out the great commandment "Love one another." Come and see where God is leading you in the giving of your time & talent. We need all - young and old - for this new outreach ministry!

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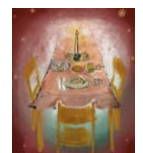
**\*\* Yum-Raising** - A different candy fundraiser has been started online for the church. Various options are out there for purchase. Valentine's orders begin shipping January 14. Help us reach our goal - order by **Friday, January 30**. Visit:

<https://www.yumraising.com/store/valentines-day-2026-st-johns-orthodox-church-allison-park-pa-8eb7/TimMar14872>  
(from the online bulletin you should be able to just click the link - if not, please contact Fr. Dave)

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**\* Second Coat Drive** - After the coats that were collected in August were donated, the need for more coats was noticed. If you have a new or gently used clean coat available for one who does not have one - please bring it to the church and hang it on the coat rack in the hallway downstairs (past Fr. Dave's office). Coats will be taken to the Neighborhood Resilience Project in the Hill District of Pittsburgh. Thank you for your generosity!

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**\* A Carpatho-Rusyn Christmas** book is a publication of the Diocesan Carpatho-Rusyn Heritage Working Group. It contains Rusyn Koljady and Western Christmas Carols in English and Rusyn PLUS the text for the Holy Night Supper (Svjatyj Večer) prayer service (Velija). Cost is \$10 per book and are available in our Gift Shop.

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**\*\* North Hills Pan-Orthodox Worship** – Our Presanctified Liturgy schedule will be a bit different this year compared to the past couple. There will be one single shared service at Holy Trinity on **March 11** at 6:30 pm with a meal following. (Next year we will all gather at either St. Alexander Nevsky or our parish.) Something else different this year is that we are going to schedule and organize a combined prayer service this fall! More details to come...

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**\*\* Framed Icons** – Please consider framing your previous church calendar tops: cut them out, use a 5x7 frame, and hang them on your walls. Each year you can add an icon to another room in your home. This is also a nice project to do with our youth!

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**\*\* Greeting Cards** – Please repurpose your [greeting cards](#) (and if you do not frame them, [calendar icons](#)) after the season concludes. The collection box is in the vestibule for the *Holy Transfiguration Monastery*. Thank you for giving back!  
*Please Note – this collection is taken year round...*

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**\* 2026 Calendars** – The newly formatted Church Calendars are in the vestibule upstairs and in the hallway downstairs.

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## ONLINE BONUSES

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VISIT OUR DIOCESE ON-LINE  
Diocesan Website: [www.acrod.org](http://www.acrod.org)  
Camp Nazareth: [www.campnazareth.org](http://www.campnazareth.org)  
FB: [www.facebook.com/acroddioocese](https://www.facebook.com/acroddioocese)  
Twitter: [twitter.com/acrodnews](https://twitter.com/acrodnews)  
YouTube: [youtube.com/acroddioocese](https://youtube.com/acroddioocese)

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**\* Online Community** - Please email Fr. Dave at [OrthodoxPittsburgh1932@gmail.com](mailto:OrthodoxPittsburgh1932@gmail.com) to receive the weekly bulletin (along with other announcements) via email each week.

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## LIVES OF THE SAINTS

### THE HOLY MARTYRED 14,000 INFANTS

*Commemorated on December 29*

The Holy Martyred 14,000 Infants were killed by king Herod in Bethlehem. When the time was come for the fulfilling of the greatest of events – the Incarnation of the Son of God and His Birth of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, Magi in the East beheld a new star in the heavens, foretelling the Nativity of the King of the Jews. They set off immediately to Jerusalem to worship the Born-Child, and the star showed them the way. Having worshipped the Divine-Infant, they did not return to Jerusalem to Herod, as he had ordered them to, but rather – receiving a revelation from on high – they went back to their country by another way. Herod finally realised that his scheme to find the Infant would not have success, and he gave orders to kill all the male children two years and younger at Bethlehem and its surroundings. He reasoned, that among the dead children would be also the Divine-Infant, Whom he considered a rival. The murdered infants became the first martyrs for Christ. The rage of Herod fell also on Simeon the God-Receiver, who declared in witness in front of everyone in the Temple that the Messiah had been born. When the

**\*\* Christmas Caroling** - The St. Nicholas Choir of Homestead has put together four virtual caroling videos of Christmas Carols (Koljady) for all to enjoy! They can be viewed from their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/stnichomestead> (One should be able to watch the videos whether they have a Facebook account or not.) Please feel free to share this with your loved ones near and far!

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**\* 2026 Offering Envelopes** are in the hallway downstairs. If you previously did not get envelopes and are interested in getting them for next year, please see Larry or Fr. Dave.

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## COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY



This month, through the efforts of our Sr. ACRY, we will be collecting donations for the [Orthodox Christian Network](#). The Orthodox Christian Network (OCN) is an official agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America. **MyOCN is YourOCN!** Visit [www.myocn.net](http://www.myocn.net) to see the variety of materials they provide online! *Thank you in advance for your prayers and offerings this month!*

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holy elder died, Herod would not give permission that he be properly buried. And on the orders of king Herod, the holy prophet and priest Zachariah also was killed: they murdered him in the Jerusalem Temple betwixt the Offertory and the Altar – because he would not tell the whereabouts of his son John, the future Baptist of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The wrath of God soon fell upon Herod himself: an horrid condition struck him down and he died – devoured by worms while still alive. Before his death the impious king accomplished full measure of his wicked deeds: he murdered chief-priests and scribes among the Jews, and also his brother by birth, and his sister and her husband, and also his own wife Mariam and three of his sons, and likewise 70 men of wisdom that were members of the Sanhedrin.

## SPIRITUAL VITAMINS

Keep this in mind when you respond  
“Lord, have mercy” during the liturgical services.

### The meaning of Kyrie Eleison

The word mercy in English is the translation of the Greek word eleos. This word has the same ultimate root as the old Greek word for oil, or more precisely, olive oil; which was poured onto wounds and gently massaged in, thus soothing, comforting, and making the injured part whole again. The Hebrew word which is also translated as eleos and mercy is ‘hesed,’ which means steadfast love.



The Greek words for ‘Lord have mercy’ are ‘Kyrie, eleison’ meaning, **‘Lord soothe me, comfort me, take away my pain, show me your steadfast love.’** Thus mercy does not refer so much to justice or acquittal but to the infinite loving-kindness of God, and His compassion for His suffering children.  
+ Fr Anthony Coniaris



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## LIVING THE ORTHODOX FAITH

### The Tradition of the Vasilopita (with Recipe)

Source: <http://www1.antiochian.org/node/18684>

From DOWAMA St. Raphael Clergy Brotherhood

The tradition of baking and cutting a special "pita" (which can mean a loaf of bread, a cake, or even a pie) each year on January 1st is observed in honor of our holy father Basil the Great, archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia-- hence its name "Vasilopita" meaning "St. Basil's Bread." This tradition is observed in both parish churches and in the homes of the faithful. What is the meaning of this tradition and how did it begin?

For centuries upon centuries, parents, grandparents and godparents have related the following to Orthodox children about St. Basil and the Vasilopita. One year, during a time of terrible famine, the emperor levied a sinfully excessive tax upon the people of Caesarea. The tax was such a heavy burden upon the already impoverished people that to avoid debtors' prison each family had to relinquish its few remaining coins and pieces of jewelry, including precious family heirlooms. Learning of this injustice upon his flock, St. Basil the Great, the archbishop of Caesarea, took up his bishop's staff and the book of the holy Gospels and came to his people's defense by fearlessly calling the emperor to repentance. By God's grace, the emperor did repent! He canceled the tax and instructed his tax collectors to turn over to St. Basil all of the chests containing the coins and jewelry which had been paid as taxes by the people of Caesarea. But now St. Basil was faced with the daunting and impossible task of returning these thousands of coins and pieces of jewelry to their rightful owners. After praying for a long time before the icons of our Master Christ and His All-Holy Mother, St. Basil had all the treasures baked into one huge pita. He then called all the townspeople to prayer at the cathedral, and, after Divine Liturgy, he blessed and cut the pita, giving a piece to each person. Miraculously, each owner received in his piece of Vasilopita his own valuables. They all joyfully returned home, giving thanks to God who had delivered them from abject poverty and to their good and holy bishop St. Basil the Great! In remembrance of that miracle wrought by God as a result of St. Basil's love and defense of his people, Orthodox Christians have observed the tradition of the Vasilopita each year on January 1st-- the date on which St. Basil reposed in the Lord in the year 379.

In some places the Vasilopita is prepared as a loaf of rich bread (like that used for Artoklasia), while in other places it takes the form of a spicy sheet cake (without frosting). But no matter what form a Vasilopita may take, they all have one thing in common-- each contains a single coin. After placing the bread dough or cake batter in the proper baking pan, the baker makes with the foil-wrapped coin the sign of the Cross over it, closes his/her eyes, and then secretly places it into the unbaked Vasilopita. After the Vasilopita is baked and cooled, it is blessed and cut following Divine Liturgy for the feast of St. Basil on January 14/1.

### A SIMPLE RECIPE FOR VASILOPITA

#### Ingredients

- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 extra-large eggs
- Grated rind of 2 large oranges

- Grated rind of 2 large lemons
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed/powdered sour cherry pits (*Arabic mahleb, Greek makhlepi*)
- 2 teaspoons crushed/powdered gum mastic (*Arabic miski, Greek mastikha*)
- 4 cups flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 egg yolk blended with 1 tablespoon milk
- sesame seeds
- blanched almonds
- a clean coin wrapped in silver or gold foil

#### Preparation

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Thickly butter a 10-inch round spring form pan.
2. In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter until it is light and fluffy. Beat in the sugar and beat until the mixture is light. Beat in the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in the orange and lemon rinds, and the crushed/powdered sour cherry pits and gum mastic.
3. In a separate bowl, sift together three cups of the flour, the baking powder and salt.
4. With the mixer on low speed, gradually beat in the dry mixture alternately with the milk. The batter will be very thick. Using a wooden spoon, gradually blend in the remaining flour, beating well until completely smooth.
5. Spread the batter into the pan, press the coin into the dough until it is completely covered (don't let anyone see where you place it!), and then smooth the top. Brush the top evenly with the egg and milk mixture and sprinkle with sesame seeds. Gently press the blanched almonds into the top to make a Cross and spell out the date of the new year.
6. Bake for 45 minutes, until golden brown (if it browns too quickly, cover the top with aluminum foil). Cool in the pan for 15 minutes before removing from spring form and thoroughly cool before slicing.

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## ADDITIONAL BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

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ACRY NEWS

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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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\* **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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### CHURCH BUILDING UPDATE

*Here is a brief update from the past few weeks:*

- ✠ \* **De-icing Wire** – A heating wire has been added to the front of our roof above the vestibule to prevent ice from causing any issues.

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### Glory to God for All Things!

Through your generosity and dedication, everything 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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- \* **A new approach to the Coffee Social:** 4 people bring 1 item each. A modified sign-up sheet is now available. *(If someone wants to host the entire event, that is still an option – just sign your name through all 4 boxes.)* Also, the Kitchen Crew, led by Liz, will be the “point person” for signing up or any questions. **Please consider hosting a coffee social in honor of someone’s Nameday, Birthday, Anniversary, or in memory of a departed loved one near their anniversary.**

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- \* **Church School Participation** – Our Youth Ministry Leader, Kathy S., will be the main contact for parents to update the teachers on whether their kids will be at class. **Parents** – please update Kathy PRIOR TO each scheduled class (1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, & 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays)

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### **“Code” for reading the bulletin:**

\*\*\* = new news    \*\* = 2<sup>nd</sup> time in the bulletin

\* = at least the 3<sup>rd</sup> time in the bulletin

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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/](http://www.acrod.org/directories/cathedral/live/)

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

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**Calendar** - Future Services are updated online at:

[www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar](http://www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar)

*(Please see Fr. Dave if you want a printed copy)*

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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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**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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### 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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### THIS MONTH'S SERVICE SCHEDULE

#### FRIDAY, JANUARY 2 #NATIVITYFAST

9:30 am Prefestive Moleben (Prayer Service) of the Nativity

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#### SUNDAY, JANUARY 4, 2026 #NATIVITYFAST

SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FOREFATHERS

SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

FOREFEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

9:15 am Nativity Canon & Carols (*Koljady*)

9:30 am Divine Liturgy

11:00 – 11:30 am Church School

#### MONDAY, JANUARY 5 #NATIVITYFAST

6:30 pm Royal Hours of Nativity

#### TUESDAY, JANUARY 6 #NATIVITYFAST

*A Day of Strict Fasting*

**7:00 pm** Great Compline (*Velikij Povečerije*)

Vigil of the Nativity of our Lord

#### WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7

FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

9:15 am Nativity Canon & Carols (*Koljady*)

9:30 am Festal Divine Liturgy

Parish Family Photo

Nativity Pot-Luck Meal

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**FAST FREE** until the eve of Theophany (*Sviatki: “Holy Days”*)

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#### THURSDAY, JANUARY 8 – 2<sup>ND</sup> DAY OF CHRISTMAS

FEAST OF THE SYNAXIS OF THE THEOTOKOS

9:30 am Divine Liturgy

#### FRIDAY, JANUARY 9 – 3<sup>RD</sup> DAY OF CHRISTMAS

FEAST OF SAINT STEPHEN

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#### SUNDAY, JANUARY 11

Sunday after Nativity

Sunday of the Holy Ancestors (*Righteous Joseph the Betrothed, Holy Righteous David the King, and James the Brother of the Lord*)



## ACRY NEWS

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9:15 am Nativity Canon & Carols (*Koljady*)  
9:30 am Divine Liturgy  
Monthly Memorial (Panachida)  
*take down the manger scene during coffee social*

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6:30 pm Feast Day Vespers

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Sunday before Theophany  
9:20 am Theophany Canon  
9:30 am Divine Liturgy  
Youth Sunday  
11:00 – 11:30 am Church School  
5:00 pm 2<sup>nd</sup> Holy Night Supper  
6:30 pm Great Compline (*Velikij Povečerije*)  
Vigil Service with the Great Blessing of Water

### MONDAY, JANUARY 19

FEAST OF THE THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD  
9:20 am Theophany Canon  
9:30 am Festal Divine Liturgy of St. Basil

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 20

FEAST OF THE SYNAXIS OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST  
9:30 am Divine Liturgy

### WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21

6:30 pm Parish Council Meeting (*All are welcome to come and listen to the discussions at the meeting*)  
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### SUNDAY, JANUARY 25

SUNDAY AFTER THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD AND GOD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST  
ZACCHAEUS SUNDAY  
9:20 Theophany Canon  
9:30 Divine Liturgy  
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## STEWARDSHIP SNIPPET



TIME, TALENT, AND TREASURES

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### PARISH STEWARDSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

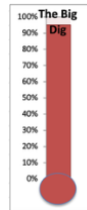
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**Bulletin Sponsor** – If you wish to sponsor a bulletin *In Honor of* (nameday, birthday, anniversary, etc.) or *In Memory of* someone, please sign up on the sheet in the vestibule or by contacting Fr. Dave (email, text, or call). An additional stewardship 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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**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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**\*\*\* The Big Dig Update – ONLY 5% LEFT!**  
Through the end of December, **\$42,800** has been collected towards our **\$45,000** expense from the excavation project (*completed in May and July*). All of your additional generosity is greatly appreciated! May God bless you! Many Years!

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| Financial Reports            | December          | Fiscal Year     | Calendar Year   |
|------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| General Stewardship          | \$10,350.05       | \$33,960        | \$79,047        |
| * Expenses                   | <b>\$6,127.11</b> | <b>\$23,552</b> | <b>\$79,498</b> |
| Yield +/-                    | \$4,222.94        | \$10,408        | <b>-\$451</b>   |
| Capital Improvement Fund     | \$2,343.00        | \$16,777        | \$31,844        |
| Sunday Participation Average | 41                | 41              | 39              |

\* detailed report is on the bulletin board in the hall

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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 (2<sup>nd</sup> 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% | 9%    | 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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## ORTHODOXY AROUND DA 'BURGH AND OUR DIOCESE

Check back later...

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## FEAST DAY FEATURE

Check back later...

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## ORTHODOX WORD OF THE WEEK

Check back later...

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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

#### 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., Carolyn U., Stephanie B, Kevin, Michael L., Laura & family, 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 Maximus C, Nicholas C, John B, John F, Bradley S, Clay R, Ignatios L., *and our Parish Council and Curators:* Lawrence, Elizabeth, Timothy, Rich, Robert, Gina, Mary Jane, Raymond, 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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#### January Namedays:

Juliana Anton – Virgin-martyr Juliana of Nicomedia (1/3)  
Stephen Brancho - Holy Protomartyr & Archdeacon Stephen (1/9)

Ashley Wertz Andrekovich; Anthony Winkler - Venerable Anthony the Great (1/30)

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

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#### January Birthdays:

Carol Lorenzi (1/2), Joshua Mainolfi (1/3), Elizabeth Fucsko (1/7), Jason Shelpman (1/9), David Turner (1/12), Pañi Kathy Fester (1/13), Fred G. Anton (1/16), Pañi Fedornock (1/16), *Father's Godson*, Alex Schreiber (1/18), *Father's Goddaughter*, Jenna Schreiber (1/18), Kevynn Christina Anton (1/19), Nicholas Ditmore (1/19), Fr Joseph Fester (1/19), Katherine Schrmack (1/22), *Father's niece*, Abiageal Verbanick (1/22), Thomas Lorenzi (1/23), Mary Ann Brady (1/26), Fr Frank Miloro (1/26), Allison Kretchek (1/29)

*...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, 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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#### For Pregnant Mothers...

Kimberly (due in March), Blaire (Evgenia) (April)

*...through the prayers of St. Anna, the mother of the Theotokos, and St. Irene Chrysovalantou.*

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#### For those serving in the Armed Forces & Civil Authorities...

Thomas R. Dzadovsky

*...through the prayers of St George, the Great-Martyr & Wonderworker.*

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**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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#### 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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