

“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**

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OUR JOURNEY TO PASCHA! 2026

Created by Fr. Jonathan Bannon (ACROD)

SUNDAYS	THEMES / GOSPEL READING	HOW TO PARTICIPATE:
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1st Sunday of Lent
MARCH 1st



GREAT LENT BEGINS WITH FORGIVENESS VESPERS
SUNDAY of ORTHODOXY
 Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2
 Gospel: John 1:43-51

Bring an icon to church
 for a procession.

2nd Sunday of Lent
MARCH 8th



ST GREGORY PALAMAS
 Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3
 Gospel: Mark 2:1-12

Bring a prayer rope to be
 blessed today!
 Use it and pray the Jesus Prayer
 each day this week.

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, MARCH 1, 2026 #TheGreatFast **VOL. XI**

TRIUMPH OF ORTHODOXY
 Procession of Icons (*Bring an icon to church*)
 Church School

4:00 pm Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers at All Saints
 (601 W. McMurray Rd., Canonsburg, PA)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4 #TheGreatFast

6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
 with fellowship meal following

FRIDAY, MARCH 6 #TheGreatFast

6:30 pm Paraklis to the Theotokos
 Followed by Orthodoxy 101 (*or movie night*)

ALL-SOUL SATURDAY, MARCH 7 #TheGreatFast

9:30 am Divine Liturgy & Panachida (*2nd of 5*)
 11 am – 1 pm Confessions Offered

* *Palm Cross making will be different this year. It will happen right after we receive the palms*

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SUNDAY, MARCH 8 #TheGreatFast

ST. GREGORY PALAMAS

9:15 am Third Hour
 9:30 pm Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
 Blessing of Prayer Ropes

(*Bring yours with you or ask Fr. Dave for one*)
 Monthly Memorial (Panachida) for +Anna Pitto (3/5),
 +Michael Matolyak Jr (2-yr), Most Reverend Met. Nicholas Smisko (15-yr), +Gary Fall (1-yr), +Katherine Crispen (3/15), +Michael Dzadovsky (48-yr), +Margaret (Gaydos) Dzadovsky (67-yr), +Olga (Gaydos) Tongel (10-yr), +Mary Carroll (10-yr), +John Ferraz (2-yr), +Lawrence H. Martin (28-yr), +Gary Bowser (15-yr), +Pauline Gaydos (8-yr)

4:00 pm Deanery Lenten Mission St John's
 (450 Glenwood Ave., Ambridge)

MONDAY, MARCH 9 #TheGreatFast

1ST & 2ND FINDINGS OF THE HEAD OF ST. JOHN

9:30 am Akathist to St. John the Baptist

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11 #TheGreatFast

6:30 pm North Hills Pan-Orthodox Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts at Holy Trinity GOA Church with community meal following (985 Providence Blvd., Pgh)

FRIDAY, MARCH 13 #TheGreatFast

3RD ANNIVERSARY IN ALLISON PARK
 6:30 pm Akathist Hymn to the Passion of our Lord followed by Orthodoxy 101 (*or movie night*) and Koliva Workshop Part 1

ALL-SOUL SATURDAY, MARCH 14 #TheGreatFast

9:00 am Koliva Workshop Part 2
 9:30 am Divine Liturgy & Panachida (*3rd of 5*)
 11 am – 1 pm Confessions Offered

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* **A complete list of services for the Great Fast is in the Online Bulletin portion of the newsletter**

** *The date for Palm Cross making will be different this year. It will happen right after we receive the palms*

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

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* **Important Upcoming Liturgical Dates:**

Palm Sunday / Holy Week: **Sunday, April 5**
 Pascha: **Sunday, April 12**

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BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

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*** **Great Lent 2026** - Our Journey To Pascha has begun! To assist the faithful in making the most of this holy season, additional resources have been added to our Diocesan Website at: www.acrod.org/orthodox-christianity/articles/lent/

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*** **Suggested Guidelines For The Great Fast (Great Lent):** We are called to increase our *Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving* during this time... A general guideline for the Great Fast is this: Try to do more than last year. Please reach out to Fr. Dave if you have questions about this important fasting period that we are blessed with. This is an opportunity, not an obligation. May our journey to Pascha be a spiritually beautiful one!

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*** **Read the Psalter this Lent** - Our diocese has shared a calendar for reading the Book of Psalms throughout the Great Fast. This is a wonderful way to increase our prayer during this time! The Book of Psalms in our Orthodox Study Bible is perfect to use for this occasion. If you wish, you can search *Psalter* or *Psalms* at <https://store.ancientfaith.com/> for other wonderful translations to use. See Fr Dave for a copy of the schedule.

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*** **Koliva Workshop** – Коливо (kolivo), Κολλίβια (kólliva), colivă, Кутя (Kutia) is an offering of boiled wheat that is blessed liturgically in connection with the Memorial (Panachida) Service. *** The Saints Spyridon and Nicodemus Bakers Ministry will host a 2-part Koliva Workshop on **Friday evening, March 13** after the Akathist and **Saturday morning, March 14** at 9:00 am (prior to All-Soul Saturday Liturgy). Please let Fr. Dave know if you are interested in participating.

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*** **Palms & Pussywillows** – Make your home ready for Palm Sunday! In the vestibule we are collecting our Palms and Pussywillows from prior years. These will not be simply thrown away but respectfully disposed of. [**For those with trees at home – are they ready to be harvested?*]

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*** **Sponsoring the Wreath for the Holy Cross** – Who would like to sponsor the decoration of the Holy Cross for the upcoming Sunday of the Cross (**March 15**). Requested donation is \$40. Please see Larry or Fr. Dave if you are interested.

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*** **31 Books of March Sale** ^{XL} – The Ancient Faith Store will be offering different books for 50% off each day of the month of March! Visit the site daily (*or sign up for their emails*) and keep an eye out for a book that will help you along your Spiritual Journey! (*Contact Fr Dave with any questions.*) Visit: store.ancientfaith.com/31-books-of-march/ Another option to consider is to borrow books from our Lending Library in the Multi-Purpose Room

If you would like to buy something for the church library or if you are looking to add a couple dollars to your order to get free shipping, please call or text Fr Dave before ordering as he has a couple small suggestions that would be helpful to our church.

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 * **All-Soul Saturday (Zadušna Subota)** services for 2026 during Lent are on **March 7, 14, and 21**. On these days, we especially pray for the departed loved ones of our families. If you are not working on a Saturday, come to church, pray with us, and light two candles for your living and departed loved ones. Please inform Fr Dave if there are any *additions* to be made to your Departed Commemoration Diptychs (*Hramoty*). Envelopes and cards are available in the vestibule. [**** This is different from the “Monthly Memorial” that we have on the 2nd Sunday of each month which is specific to each month.*]

** The **Commemoration Diptychs** are the lists of the names of the dead that we pray for during the Divine Liturgy on the 5 All-Soul Saturdays. *Historically, a diptych was two pieces of wood joined together at the center upon which were icons or other symbols or writing. Since ancient times, churches have kept lists of living and dead to pray for throughout the year, with the names of the living written on one tablet, and those of the dead on the other. In modern usage, we keep the names of the dead on a list, but we still call that list a “diptych”; another name for this list is hramota.*

*** **Rachmaninoff’s All-Night Vigil** – The Pittsburgh Concert Chorale will present Rachmaninoff All-Night Vigil

• **Saturday, March 7**; 7:30 pm concert; Westminster Presbyterian Church, 2040 Washington Rd, Pittsburgh, PA 15241
• **Sunday, March 8**; 4:00 pm concert; Ingomar United Methodist Church, 1501 W. Ingomar Rd., Pittsburgh, PA 15237

The music was composed in 1915 and is regarded as one of the greatest a cappella choral works of all time. Rachmaninoff draws heavily on traditional chants and transforms them into a complex work of lush harmonies, intricate textures, and deep resonance. In the words of scholar Vladimir Morosan, Rachmaninoff’s All-Night Vigil... stands as the crowning achievement of the “Golden Age” of Russian Orthodox sacred choral music.

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** **REVISED Deanery Lenten Mission Schedule** – We have been shifted to week two in the schedule

March 8: St John’s (450 Glenwood Ave., Ambridge)

March 15: St John’s (2201 Duncan Ave, Allison Park)

March 22: St Michael’s (146 Third Ave., Rankin)

March 29: St John’s (211 Cable Ave., East Pgh)

3:30 Confessions, 4:00 Vespers, and Fellowship Meal following
All are encouraged to attend services at our sister parishes this spring. Not only is it beautiful fellowship with other Orthodox, but each church is unique and you get to see the differences firsthand.

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* **Presanctified Liturgies** – Our schedule will be a bit different this year compared to the past couple. There will be one single *North Hills Pan-Orthodox Worship Service* at Holy Trinity GOA Church (985 Providence Blvd., Pittsburgh) on **March 11 at 6:30 pm** with a meal following. This does not change our desire to nurture a greater fellowship among our parishes and communities as we will be adding other combine activities later in the year! **If you wish to attend the other churches for Lenten services, please check their websites for service times.**

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* **North Hills Pan-Orthodox Anointing (Unction) Service** – Mark your calendars now for **Wednesday, September 16th** for our Inaugural *North Hills Pan-Orthodox Mystery of Holy Anointing (Unction) Service*. More details will be coming – but get it on your calendar now. Let’s fill the church as we do for the combined Presanctified!

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*** **LENTEN RETREATS IN THE AREA:**

Sat., March 14 - 10 am -12 pm - “The Holy Proskomide: History, Theology, and Mystery” by Fr. Stelyios Muksuris at Presentation of Christ Church (1672 Electric Ave., East Pittsburgh, PA 15112)

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Sat., March 21 - 10 am - 2 pm - “A Day of Reflection and Spiritual Growth” by Fr. Paul Abernathy at Kimisis Church (Aliquippa). Register by March 7 at www.theotokou.org

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Sat., March 28 - 10 am - 5 pm - the ACROD Central Region Lenten Retreat led by Fr. Marc Wisnosky (adults) and Fr. Dave Urban (youth) at St. Nicholas Church (903 Ann St., Homestead, PA 15120). Sign up in the church hall or contact Fr. Dave

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* **Assembling A Few Items** – There is at least ~~7-items~~ 3 items (*benches, shelves, cabinet organizer, etc*) at the church that need assembled. If this is up your alley, please let Fr Dave know. Your stewardship is needed at the church!

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SUGGESTED LENTEN READINGS

The following suggested readings for the Great Fast are available in our Bookstore for a reasonable donation (less than 50% off requested)

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**** Adults: Arise, O God: The Gospel of Christ’s Defeat of Demons, Sin, and Death** by Fr Andrew Damick (\$7)

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**** Youth: The Good Samaritan: A Children’s Catechism** by Fr. Michael Shanbour (\$12)

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For several reasons, our “Gift Shop” is not meant to be a “Bookstore”. With that in mind – there are several leftover books from previous years that can be considered for your Lenten Reading.

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In addition to the above books, another option is to use our **Lending Library** located in the Multi-Purpose Room. This is a great option **for our youth** as there are many books for them to take advantage of! If you have questions about any book – please do not hesitate to ask Fr. Dave!

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**** Candy Sale** – We are selling Anderson’s Candy and the catalogs are in the church hall. Order due date is **March 15**. * *We need to sell \$500 worth of candy to get the 30% profit from this fundraiser.* Please see Tim Martin with any questions.

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***** Yum-Raising** – A different church candy fundraiser has been started online. Various options are out there for purchase. Spring orders are due by **Friday, March 20**. Click this link from the online bulletin: <https://www.yumraising.com/store/spring-2026-st-johns-orthodox-church-allison-park-pa-321f/TimMar14872> (contact Tim or Fr. Dave if the link does not work)

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***** Lenten Spring Jr. Encounter** will be for those aged 8-18 at Camp Nazareth (339 Pew Rd., Mercer, PA 16137) from **March 13-15**. Register today

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**** Spring Maintenance Morning Afternoon** – Due to a conflict with the Diocesan Lenten Retreat (held in Homestead), our Spring Maintenance “Morning” is moved later in the day after Liturgy on Lazarus **Saturday, April 4** from 11 am to 2 pm (ish).

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*** Thank You** to everyone who helped in anyway with our Pre-Lenten Breakfast (Fašiangy)! Everything was delicious! Many years!

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PARISH STEWARDSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

**** Soups Needed** – At last week’s Parish Council meeting it was decided that we will have a variety of soups when we host the Deanery Lenten Mission on **Sunday, March 15**. If you would be interested in making a soup, please sign up in the kitchen or contact Fr. Dave.

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COFFEE SOCIAL STEWARDS

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

* March 8: ___?___, ___?___, ___?___, ___?___

* March 15: ___?___, ___?___, ___?___, ___?___ Sr ACRY

* March 22: ___?___, ___?___, ___?___, ___?___

**meatless during the fast*



Icon by: K. Tikhonovsk

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**** Lenten Coin Boxes** – Coin boxes are available in the vestibule to collect your spare change throughout the Great Fast for our upcoming Community Outreach (OCMC). More information is available at www.ocmc.org. *“Let them do good, that they may be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share” (1 Tim 6:18)*

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***** Paschal Commemorations** – We offer you the opportunity to sponsor items to be used during Holy Week and Pascha as Special Intentions: *anonymously, for the health of OR in memory of departed loves ones.* Please sign up on the sheet in the Vestibule by **Palm Sunday (April 5)** and give an *additional free-will stewardship offering* to the Church.

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OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD

Stewardship Offerings:	\$ 240
Candle Stewardship:	\$ 32
Envelope Stewardship:	\$ 710
Community Outreach:	\$ 85

Total Collections: \$ 1157

Capital Improvement Fund: \$ 20

Participating Souls at: *Sunday’s Liturgy:* 24

Monday PM Canon Service: 11

Tuesday PM Canon Service: 6

Wednesday PM Presanctified Liturgy: 22

Thursday PM Canon Service: 6

Friday AM Canon Service: 8

Weekly Candle Intentions or Memorials were offered last week by the Nelson Family; Tim Martin; Kathy Schrmack; Cindy Pavilonis

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CHURCH BUILDING UPDATE

Here is a brief update from the past few weeks:

- ✘ **** 4 new benches** were assembled for along the back wall of the Sanctuary
- ✘ **** there is a new shelf** for the library
- ✘ **** 4 LED lights** were added (or replaced lights) in the hallway and classroom downstairs

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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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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.*

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

**** LAST CALL Food Drive** – This month, through the efforts of our Sr. ACRY, we will be collecting unexpired food and donations for **St. Cyril of White Lake Food Pantry** (at Holy Assumption of St. Mary Orthodox Church, 105 S. 19th St., Pgh, PA 15203). Volunteers are needed on Thursdays from 5:15 to 6:45 to assist in the distribution of these goods to those in need. (If interested, please contact Fr Patrick first at 412-431-6428) Thank you in advance for your prayers and offerings this month! Here is a list of the items that they are looking for:

- ✓ Ready to eat canned fruit or vegetables
- ✓ Peanut Butter
- ✓ Jelly
- ✓ Canned Soups
- ✓ Canned Chili
- ✓ Macaroni & Cheese
- ✓ Spaghetti Sauce
- ✓ Pasta
- ✓ Noodle/Rice Mixes
- ✓ Small Package of Rice or Noodles
- ✓ Canned Stews
- ✓ Canned or Pouches of Tuna, Salmon or Chicken
- ✓ Boxed Meals ready to be prepared
- ✓ Canned Meats
- ✓ Baked Beans
- ✓ Canned and Boxed 100% Juice
- ✓ Crackers
- ✓ Tuna Helper Box
- ✓ Instant Cereal & Boxed Cereal
- ✓ Canned Pastas (Chef Boyardee, Ravioli, etc.)
- ✓ Canned Meats
- ✓ Can Openers

www.stmaryorthodoxchurch.net/stcyrilfoodpantry

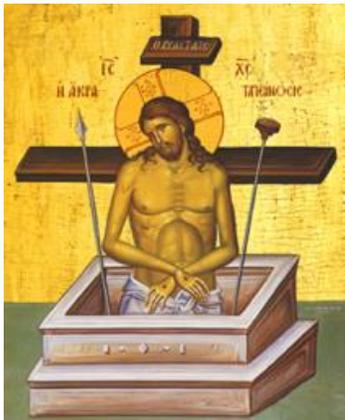
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ACRY NEWS
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*** Pop Can Tab Collection** – Join the National Jr. ACRY in supporting the Ronald McDonald House. A collection bin for *Can Tabs* has been placed in the vestibule near the bin for repurposed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

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Icon of Christ's Extreme Humility

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LIVING THE ORTHODOX FAITH

Welcome to the Sundays of Lent and the Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil

During the Sundays of Lent, the Orthodox Church changes from using the Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom to the Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil. Why do we do that and what are the differences? To most outward appearances, the Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil differs very little from the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, and those wishing to follow the service in the Divine Liturgy book may use the regular book to do so. The primary difference is in the prayers said by the priest in the later part of the service. Why the change? In general, the prayers of St. Basil are more penitential, and therefore lend themselves to the Church's liturgical preparation for important holy days; hence, their use during Great Lent and on the eves of Nativity and Theophany. During this service, as the priest offers the prayers, there may be times when the cantor completes the hymn, and the priest is still offering the prayer. During this season of increased prayer and spiritual attention, please use those times to follow along with the prayers with your own heart and immerse yourself in this beautiful worship experience. Rather than “wait for” the priest to finish the prayers, join him in the prayer of your own heart! A blessed Lent to all!

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Synodikon of the 7th Ecumenical Council:

As the Prophets beheld, as the Apostles taught, as the Church received, as the Teachers dogmatized, as the Universe agreed, as Grace illumined, as the Truth revealed, a falsehood passed away, as Wisdom presented, as Christ awarded, thus we declare, thus we assert, thus we proclaim Christ our true God and honor His saints in words, in writings, in thoughts, in sacrifices, in churches, in holy icons.

On the one hand, worshipping and reverencing Christ as God and Lord. And on the other hand, honoring and venerating His Saints as true servants of the same Lord.

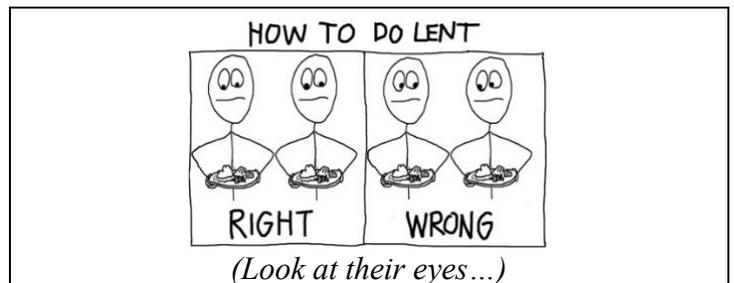
This is the Faith of the Apostles! This is the Faith of the Fathers! This is the Faith of the Orthodox! This is the Faith which has established the Universe!

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How to stay connected with the departed:

- ✘ Pray for them during the Divine Liturgy,
- ✘ Remember them in your daily prayers,
- ✘ Organize memorial services for their remembrance on the anniversary of their passing,
- ✘ Honor their memory by following their good deeds,
- ✘ Light a candle weekly for your departed loved ones,
- ✘ Give alms on their behalf, and
- ✘ Take care of their tombs [graves].

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(Look at their eyes...)

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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 11:32-12:2

²⁴ By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, ²⁵ choosing rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. ²⁶ He considered abuse suffered for the Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he looked to the reward. ³² And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— ³³ who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. ³⁵ Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. ³⁶ Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated— ³⁸ of whom the world was not worthy—wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. ³⁹ And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, ⁴⁰ since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

The Example of Jesus

12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

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Gospel: John 1:43-51

Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael

⁴³ The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. And he found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." ⁴⁴ Now Philip was from Beth-sa'ida, the city of Andrew and Peter. ⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael, and said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." ⁴⁶ Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." ⁴⁷ Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" ⁴⁸ Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." ⁴⁹ Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" ⁵⁰ Jesus answered him, "Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these." ⁵¹ And he said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

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GREAT LENT



ORTHODOX ETIQUETTE

Postures In Worship: BOWING

During services, a **bow** is often made by the inclining of the head and neck (also called a *reverence*). It is more than a mere nod of the head, but bending at the waist.

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Orthodox Christians **bow** when the names of the Theotokos and Christ are invoked. They also **bow** to the priest at his blessing, and when he asks forgiveness before the Great Entrance and, in some parishes before Holy Communion. It is traditional for the Orthodox faithful to **bow** and cross themselves when they enter and leave the church, and when they pray before the icons.

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It is not necessary to cross oneself when the priest is giving a blessing or censuring the congregation. Instead, one should **bow** to receive the blessing. (*Side note: It is not necessary to turn to "follow the priest" as he censures the church.*)

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PRAYER CORNER

For the Health of...

Bonnie, Maxwell, Trona, Mioara, Tatiana, John, Anthony, Edward, Valerie, Angelo, Craig, Timothy, Melissa, 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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March Namedays:

Fr Dave Urban – St David of Wales (3/14)
Steven (John) Zerby – St John of the Ladder (3/22)
Bonnie Carlisle – St. Mary of Egypt (3/29)
...May God grant them many and blessed years!

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March Birthdays:

Alisha Zak (3/1), Matthew Wensel (3/3), Lillian Fuesko (3/4), Christopher Kubis (3/6), Fr Daniel Mahler (3/6), Randall Paieski (3/09), *Father's nephew*, Michael Verbanick (3/9), *Father's God-mother*, Andrea Babbie (3/10), Allen Dzambo (3/11), Noella Gaydos (3/14), Fr David Cochran (3/18), Ameer Francken (3/18), Pañi Alison Archer (3/21), Charlotte Sikora (3/20), Avalise Marie Matolyak-Ferraz (3/26), Ken Dzadovsky (3/28), Marianne Kubis (3/29), Ben Anton (3/30)
...May God grant them many and blessed years!

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March Anniversaries:

Lindsay & AJ Matolyak-Ferraz (3/6/21)
...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 the souls of the newly departed...

+Milutin Lazich (2/9), +Jane Benedetti (2/7), +Jeffrey Leake (2/7), +Thomas Figura (1/28), +Mary Lou Diffindale (1/26)
...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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**A PRAYER OF REPENTANCE
(PSALM 50/51)**

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your great mercy; And according to the multitude of Your compassions, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my iniquity, And my sin is continually before me. Against You only have I sinned, And done this evil before You. That You might be justified in Your words, And prevail when You judge. For behold, I was conceived in iniquities, And in sins did my mother bear me.

For behold, You have loved truth; The hidden and secret things of Your wisdom You have made clear to me. You shall sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be made clean; You shall wash me and I shall be made whiter than snow. You shall make me to hear joy and gladness, The bones which have been humbled shall rejoice. Turn Your face away from my sins, And blot out all my iniquities.

Create a clean heart in me, O God, And renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Your presence, And take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And with Your governing Spirit establish me. I shall teach transgressors Your ways, And the ungodly shall turn back to You.

Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, who are the God of my salvation, My tongue shall rejoice in Your righteousness. O Lord, You shall open my lips, And my mouth shall declare Your praise.

For if You had desired sacrifice, I would have given it; With whole burnt offerings You shall not be pleased. A sacrifice to God is a broken spirit, A heart that is broken and humbled God will not despise. Do good, O Lord, in Your good pleasure to Zion; And let the walls of Jerusalem be built Then shall You be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with oblation and whole burnt offerings; Then shall they offer bullocks upon Your altar.

from the Lenten Triodion

Open to me the doors of repentance, O Life-Giver; for my spirit hastens early towards Your holy temple, bearing the temple of my body all defiled; but in Your compassion purify me by Your gracious mercy. Amen.

+ + + + + + + + +

These prayers can be cut out and used as a bookmark...

**PRAYER OF SAINT EPHRAIM
THE SYRIAN**

in the Ruthenian tradition as found in St. Peter Mogila's 1639 Liturgikon (Sluzhebnik)

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of laziness, despair, lust for power, and vain talking. + *[Prostration]*
But give to me, Your servant, the spirit of purity, humility, patience, and love.
+ *[Prostration]*

Yes, Lord and King, grant me to see my own sins, and not judge my brother, for blessed are You forever and ever. Amen.
+ *[Prostration]*

*The following triplet is recited 4 times
(making a total of 12 bows):*

O God, be merciful to me, a sinner. *[bow]*
O God, cleanse me of my sins and have mercy on me. *[bow]*

O Lord, forgive me, for my sins are many.
[bow]

*Then the prayer again with only one
prostration:*

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of laziness, despair, lust for power, and vain talking. But give to me, Your servant, the spirit of purity, humility, patience, and love. Yes, Lord and King, grant me to see my own sins, and not judge my brother, for blessed are You forever and ever. Amen.+
[Prostration]

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/acroddioocese
Twitter: twitter.com/acrodnews
YouTube: youtube.com/acroddioocese

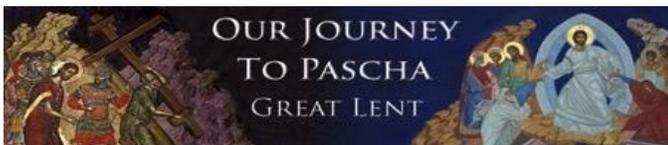
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Online Community - Please email Fr. Dave at OrthodoxPittsburgh1932@gmail.com to receive the weekly bulletin (along with other announcements) via email each week.

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LIVING THE ORTHODOX FAITH

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A Note About The Mystery Of Confession

Confessions will be heard *following every* service, on most Saturdays during Great Lent from 11am – 1pm, and at other times by appointment. It is much appreciated when you let Fr. Dave know when you plan to come. Do not wait to plan for your confession! If you have a regular Spiritual Father or wish to go to another Orthodox priest to have your confession heard, no problem! but let Fr. Dave know. Confessions before Pascha will only be heard *through Holy Wednesday*.

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SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR THE GREAT FAST (GREAT LENT):

The Church calls us to increase our *Prayer, Fasting, & Almsgiving* during this time (it's good for our souls)

PRAYER:

- ✘ Attend as many of the services as possible and be strengthened in community prayer.
- ✘ Come to the Mystery of Confession (*offered after every service, on most Saturdays during the Great Fast, or by appointment*).
- ✘ Approach the Chalice to receive the Holy Eucharist as often as possible.
- ✘ Also, add additional prayers to your personal *Prayer Rule* at home. (See the attached about reading the Book of Psalms during Great Lent.)

FASTING:

- ✘ The Great Fast begins tomorrow, **February 23**. Our diocesan practice is a day of strict fasting (no meat or dairy products). Likewise, we strict fast on Great & Holy Friday and Great & Holy Saturday
- ✘ The Orthodox Monastic Charter is a strict fast (*no meat or dairy products eaten*) for the entire 40 days of the Great Fast and for all of Holy Week.
- ✘ If you cannot physically do this, adopt a fasting rule and stick to it for the duration of the Great Fast (*see Father for some guidance*). Here are a few examples:

- a) strict fast on certain days of the week while keeping a meat fast on the others;
- b) fast only from meat;
- c) fast from meat for certain weeks (*Clean Week, Cross Week, and Holy Week*); or
- d) fast from meat on Wednesdays, Fridays, and all of Holy Week.

- ✘ The more effort you put forth in your fasting, the more spiritually uplifting your Lenten Season will be!
- ✘ A minimum three (3) hour fast from all food and drink for those receiving Communion at the evening Pre-sanctified Liturgy (*the regular "midnight Fast" is called for the Liturgies of St. John Chrysostom & St. Basil the Great*)
- ✘ The sick or infirm are not bound by the fast
- ✘ Those requiring medications or certain prescribed diets are to follow their physician's instructions.
- ✘ Lastly, the Great Fast is not a "40 day diet program" or simply a "dietary adjustment" (or "label Lent") – we should also fast from actions that are harmful for our souls.

ALMSGIVING:

- ✘ Find ways to be a better steward of your time, talent, and treasures
- ✘ *Give more of yourself to others.*

+++

A general guideline for the Great Fast is this:

- ✘ **Do more in each of the areas above than last year.**

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Please reach out if you have questions about this important fasting period that we are blessed with. This is an opportunity, not an obligation. May our journey to Pascha be a spiritually beautiful one! – Fr. Dave

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WHAT IS A PROSTRATION?

During Great Lent, the Church provides many more opportunities for Orthodox Faithful to engage the Merciful God in the worship services. Many of those services, such as St. Andrew's Canon and Presanctified Liturgy, will include and end with something known as prostrations. A prostration refers to when someone makes 1) the sign of the Cross, 2) moves down to their knees, 3) full bows with their hands and head to the floor, then 4) returns to standing position. You'll find prostrations made particularly during "St. Ephraim's Prayer" (see image above) and the singing of "Having Suffered..." ("Preterp'ivij") at the end of Lenten Services.

While these prostrations are prescribed actions for Orthodox Christians during this time of year, they can be done privately in prayer by everyone during the rest of the year, with the exception being during the Paschal Season, when no one should kneel in prayer. There is the odd example by non-Orthodox once in awhile doing prostrations, perhaps during Muslim prayer or in a Yoga position, but is otherwise considered an

unusual action. It is, in truth, an opportunity for the average Christian believer to engage in something additional in their prayer life, humble in its intention. It is the ancient practice of positioning of the self in complete humility before God and both physical, as able, and spiritual in its goal.

The hesychast Bishop Theoliptos of Philadelphia (+1322) once wrote: "Do not neglect prostration... it provides an image of man's fall into sin and expresses the confession of our sinfulness. Getting up, on the other hand, signifies repentance and the promise to lead a life of virtue. Let each prostration be accompanied by a noetic invocation of Christ, so that by falling before the Lord in soul and body you may gain the grace of the God of souls and bodies."

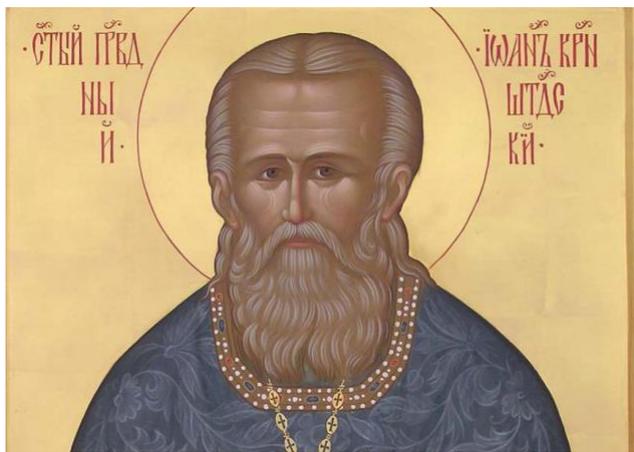
In the words of Fr. John Breck (of the OCA), "The importance of prostrations, from Theoliptos' point of view, is far more spiritual than physical. In bending our knees we assume an attitude of humility before the God to whom we offer our prayer. Kneeling, then touching our forehead to the ground, we acknowledge our sinfulness; we create a living image of our fall into sin. Our very posture represents a confession of that state, a calling to mind of our spiritual poverty, of our susceptibility to passions of greed, lust, anger and malice. As we make our descent in body and in spirit, we confess as well the Name above every name, the Name that 'upholds the universe,' as the Shepherd of Hermas expresses it..."

It is an ascetic practice. Practices like these are necessary for us to call ourselves to occasionally, if only to bring ourselves into more positions (spiritually, as it were) that will allow the Holy Spirit to work on us. Being reminders of how much we have fallen from God and, with His help, arise - the prostration serves for us as a Lenten discipline given to us by God Himself through His Holy Church.

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SPIRITUAL VITAMINS

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A true Christian behaves in this life so that it may be a preparation for the future one and not only a life here below. In his actions, he does not think what will be said of him here but of what will be said there in heaven; he represents to himself that he is always in the presence of God, of the angels and all the saints, and remembers that someday they will bear witness to his thoughts, words, and deeds.

St. John of Kronstadt

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GREAT LENT



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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE GREAT FAST

FORGIVENESS SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22

9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Rite of Forgiveness

CLEAN MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23 #TheGreatFast

THE GREAT FAST BEGINS
A DAY OF STRICT FASTING
6:30 pm Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew (1)

CLEAN TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24 #TheGreatFast

6:30 pm Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew (2)

CLEAN WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25 #TheGreatFast

6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
with fellowship meal following

CLEAN THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26 #TheGreatFast

6:30 pm Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew (3)

CLEAN FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27 #TheGreatFast

9:30 AM Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew (4)

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SUNDAY, MARCH 1 #TheGreatFast

TRIUMPH OF ORTHODOXY
9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
Procession of Icons (*Bring an icon to church*)
Church School
4:00 pm Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers at All Saints
(601 W. McMurray Rd., Canonsburg, PA)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4 #TheGreatFast

6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
with fellowship meal following

FRIDAY, MARCH 6 #TheGreatFast

6:30 pm Paraklis to the Theotokos
Followed by Orthodoxy 101 (*or movie night*)

ALL-SOUL SATURDAY, MARCH 7 #TheGreatFast

9:30 am Divine Liturgy & Panachida (2nd of 5)
11 am – 1 pm Confessions Offered
* *Palm Cross making will be different this year. It will happen right after we receive the palms*

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SUNDAY, MARCH 8 #TheGreatFast

ST. GREGORY PALAMAS
9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 pm Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
Blessing of Prayer Ropes
(*Bring yours with you or ask Fr. Dave for one*)
Panachida - *Monthly Memorial*
4:00 pm Deanery Lenten Mission St John's
(450 Glenwood Ave., Ambridge)

MONDAY, MARCH 9 #TheGreatFast

1ST & 2ND FINDINGS OF THE HEAD OF ST. JOHN

9:30 am Akathist to St. John the Baptist
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11 #TheGreatFast
6:30 pm North Hills Pan-Orthodox Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts at Holy Trinity GOA Church with community meal following (985 Providence Blvd., Pittsburgh)

FRIDAY, MARCH 13 #TheGreatFast
3RD ANNIVERSARY IN ALLISON PARK
6:30 pm Akathist Hymn to the Passion of our Lord followed by Orthodoxy 101 (or movie night) and Koliva Workshop Part 1

ALL-SOUL SATURDAY, MARCH 14 #TheGreatFast
9:00 am Koliva Workshop Part 2
9:30 am Divine Liturgy & Panachida (3rd of 5)
11 am – 1 pm Confessions Offered
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SUNDAY, MARCH 15 #TheGreatFast
SUNDAY OF THE HOLY CROSS
9:15 am Third Hour
9:25 pm Enthronement of the Holy Cross
9:30 pm Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
Youth Sunday
Church School
4:00 pm Deanery Lenten Mission St John’s in Allison Park

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18 #TheGreatFast
6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts with fellowship meal following

FRIDAY, MARCH 20 #TheGreatFast
9:30 am Moleben to the Holy Cross

ALL-SOUL SATURDAY, MARCH 21 #TheGreatFast
9:30 am Divine Liturgy & Panachida (4th of 5)
11 am – 1 pm Confessions Offered
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SUNDAY, MARCH 22 #TheGreatFast
SUNDAY OF ST. JOHN OF THE LADDER
9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 pm Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
4:00 pm Deanery Lenten Mission at St Michael’s (146 Third Ave., Rankin)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25 #TheGreatFast
6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts with fellowship meal following

FRIDAY, MARCH 27 #TheGreatFast
6:30 pm Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew with reading of the Life of St. Mary of Egypt followed by Orthodoxy 101 (or movie night)

SATURDAY, MARCH 28 #TheGreatFast
Lenten Retreat at St. Nicholas (903 Ann Street, Homestead, PA 15120)
10:00 am Akathist Hymn to the Theotokos
11 am to 5 pm Retreat (see separate flyer)
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SUNDAY, MARCH 29 #TheGreatFast
SUNDAY OF ST. MARY OF EGYPT
9:15 am Third Hour
9:30 pm Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
Church School
4:00 pm Deanery Lenten Mission St John’s (211 Cable Ave., East Pittsburgh)

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1 #TheGreatFast
6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

with fellowship meal following
FRIDAY, APRIL 3 #TheGreatFast
6:30 pm Vespers followed by Orthodoxy 101 (or movie night)
SATURDAY, APRIL 4 #LAZARUSSATURDAY
9:30 am Divine Liturgy
11 am – 2(ish) pm Spring Maintenance Morning
11 am – 1 pm Confessions heard



ADDITIONAL BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

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*** **Moving Help Wanted** – Would you be able to lend a helping hand with a parishioner who needs to move this month? Please let Fr. Dave know if you are available. No set time or date has been set yet...

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“Code” for reading the bulletin:
*** = new news ** = 2nd time in the bulletin
* = at least the 3rd time in the bulletin
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Live-Broadcast – If you are unable to attend church services, please pray along with our Cathedral online:
www.acrod.org/directories/cathedral/live/

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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

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* **Calling All Scouts!** Our Scout Sunday is **being rescheduled**. For our youth in Scouting and to our Adult Leaders, please send Fr. Dave your →Unit Number, →location, →current rank, and →any office or position you hold in your organization As Soon As You Can.

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* **Fellowship Meals** - Got Soup? A small ‘t’ tradition in many Orthodox parishes is to have soup (or other light meal) following the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts during the Great Fast. We will have this meal after our Wednesday evening services at our parish and when we travel for the North Hills Pan-Orthodox service. A sign up sheet is in the church hall for those interested in bringing in food.

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*** **Pittsburgh Marathon - Walk or Run with Team IOCC**
- Help change lives around the world! Join us on **Saturday, May 3** at the Pittsburgh Marathon Weekend. Choose a Race as a Solo Participant or Form Your Own Team! (5K, 4-Mile Fitness Challenge, Kids Marathon, Pet Walk, Toddler Trot,



Champions Mile) SIGN UP NOW AT ioccc.org/pgh. Questions? Contact Dean Stambolis at DeanStambolis@verizon.net or 412.874.9572.

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* **Outdoor Divine Liturgy and Annual Parish Picnic** – We will gather at *The Cabin* in North Park on **Sunday, August 30** for our end of summer outdoor Liturgy and picnic. Save The Date!

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*** **Online Bible Study Options** –
Check back later...

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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 (1st, 3rd, & 5th Sundays)

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** **Church School Teachers** – It’s not too late to help with our Church School program! Please contact Kathy Schrmack (*Youth Ministry Leader*) or Fr. Dave if you are interested in being a teacher in our Church School Program. Ideally, we should have three different class levels made available to the children of the parish.

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 * **TO BE RESCHEDULED Caring for Others through Visitation Ministry** – A ministry of caring is an important part of parish life. Join us on POSTPONED **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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 * **The Final Big Dig Update** – WE DID IT! The additional monies donated last week towards our Capital Improvement Fund took us over the **\$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	January	Fiscal Year
General Stewardship	\$ 9,099.64	\$ 43,060
* Expenses	\$ 10,411.50	\$ 33,964
Yield +/-	\$ 1,311.86	\$ 9,096
Capital Improvement Fund	\$ 1,765	\$ 18,542
<i>Sunday Participation Average</i>	36	40

* detailed report is on the bulletin board in the hall

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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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STEWARDSHIP SNIPPET



TIME, TALENT, AND TREASURES

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PARISH STEWARDSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

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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			Upper Range Giving			Middle Range Giving			Lower Range Giving		
	15%	12%	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

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- * **Make plans to go to Camp Nazareth events this year!**
 - ✘ **March 13-15** - Young Adult Spring Retreat
 - ✘ **March 20-22** – Lenten Spring Jr. Encounter (ages 8-18)
 - ✘ **May 5-7** - Sts. Joachim & Anna Seniors Retreat (age 55 & over)
 - ✘ **June 5-7** - Family Camp
 - ✘ **June 7** - Family Day
 - ✘ **July 26 - Aug 1** - Pgh Deanery Camping Week (ages 8-18)
 - ✘ **August 9-12** - Science & Nature Camp (ages 8-18)
 - ✘ **October 9-11** - Camp Alumni Weekend
 - ✘ **October 23-25** - Young Adult Fall Retreat
 - ✘ **November 6-8** - Fall Jr. Encounter (ages 8-18)
- Save the Dates** and head to 339 Pew Road, Mercer, PA 16137

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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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March Namedays:

Fr Dave Urban – St David of Wales (3/14)
Steven (John) Zerby – St John of the Ladder (3/22)
Bonnie Carlisle – St. Mary of Egypt (3/29)
...*May God grant them many and blessed years!*

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March Birthdays:

Alisha Zak (3/1), Matthew Wensel (3/3), Lillian Fucsko (3/4), Christopher Kubis (3/6), Fr Daniel Mahler (3/6), Randall Paieski (3/09), *Father's nephew*, Michael Verbanick (3/9), *Father's God-mother*, Andrea Babbie (3/10), Allen Dzambo (3/11), Noella Gaydos (3/14), Fr David Cochran (3/18), Amee Francken (3/18), Pañi Alison Archer (3/21), Charlotte Sikora (3/20), Avalise Marie Matolyak-Ferraz (3/26), Ken Dzdovsky (3/28), Marianne Kubis (3/29), Ben Anton (3/30)
...*May God 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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March Anniversaries:

Lindsay & AJ Matolyak-Ferraz (3/6/21)
...*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 Pregnant Mothers...

Kimberly (*due in March*)
...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. Dzdovsky
...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.



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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