

“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:

4th Sunday of Lent MARCH 22nd		ST JOHN of the LADDER Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20 Gospel: Mark 9:17-31	Every time you climb stairs this week ask St. John to help you reach Paradise with the sign of the cross!
5th Sunday of Lent MARCH 29th		ST MARY of EGYPT Epistle: Hebrews 9:11-14 Gospel: Mark 10:32-45	Ask the Theotokos to offer you and the world pure thoughts and ideas this week.

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UPCOMING SERVICES

SUNDAY, MARCH 22, 2026 #TheGreatFast **VOL. XI**
 + The Holy 40 Martyrs of Sebaste
 3:30 Confessions, 4:00 Vespers, and Fellowship Meal following
 Deanery Lenten Mission at St Michael’s (146 3rd Ave., Rankin)
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25 #TheGreatFast
6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
 with fellowship meal following AND Palm Cross making
FRIDAY, MARCH 27 #TheGreatFast
***6:00 pm** Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew with
 reading of the Life of St. Mary of Egypt ***time change**
 followed by movie night AND Palm Cross making
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
 +Martyr Sabinus of Hermopolis, Egypt (303)
 9:15 am Third Hour
 9:30 pm Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
 Resurrectional Tone 1; Liturgical Color: **Purple**
 Church School
 3:30 Confessions, 4:00 Vespers, and Fellowship Meal
 Deanery Lenten Mission at St John’s (211 Cable Ave, E. Pgh.)
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1 #TheGreatFast
6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
 with fellowship meal following
FRIDAY, APRIL 3 #TheGreatFast
***6:00 pm** Vespers ***time change**
 followed by Orthodoxy 101: 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
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*** A complete list of services for the Great Fast
 AND HOLY WEEK can be found in the Online Bulletin**
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Mystery of Confession – Father is available to hear
 Confessions after every service or by appointment.
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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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BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

*** **Great Lent 2026** – Consider the following as we look
 forward to Pascha:
Have I attended Confession? It is offered after every service or
 please schedule ASAP so as to be prepared spiritually for renewal
 of our relationship with Christ.
**Have I rearranged my schedule around the Holy Feasts or plan
 to for Holy Week?** As Orthodox Christians we celebrate the great
 feasts with joy and love! Holy Week only comes once a year.
Fasting: How are we doing? Medical needs always come first
 and we also want to do our best with prayer and renewing our
 relationship with God. Have you spoken to your Spiritual Father
 if you are looking for some encouragement? God is watching how
 we are running the race of the Fast! Remember to do your best
 and pursue God, not waiting for Him to show up, but go to Him
 (He is always present).
Make the sign of the cross and recommit to the fast today.
Remember: 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. This is an opportunity,
 not an obligation. May our journey to Pascha be a spiritually
 beautiful one together! Please reach out to Fr. Dave if you have
 questions ... 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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THIS WEEK’S BULLETIN IS SPONSORED
 in memory of +Lawrence Martin (28-years)
 May he be remembered in God’s Memory
 forever! Eternal Memory!

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*** **SERVICE TIME SURVEY** – Is it better to have evening
 Holy Week Services (Monday through Friday) at 6:00 OR 6:30?
Please let Fr. Dave know today

*** **Bright Bites** – Join the Pittsburgh IOCC for a night of fellowship and celebration of Pascha around the world with Greek, Italian, and Middle Eastern hors d'oeuvres, as well as red and white wines, for *Bright Bites: Food & Fellowship* on **Sunday, April 19** from 4:00 to 6:00 pm at Stamoolis Brothers (2020 Penn Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15222. Tickets are \$35. Register Online at ioccc.org/pittsburgh by April 14. (Walk in guests are also welcome).

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*** **Orthodoxy On Tap** – On **Sunday, April 19** at 5:00 pm, Jonathan Cader will present “The Science of Hymnology: Dissecting the Faith Through Sacred Hymns” at Monterey Pub (1227 Monterey St., Pittsburgh, PA 15212). Following the presentation, plan to stay and enjoy the fellowship and discussion with other young adults. Contact Fr Dave with any questions.

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*** **Pittsburgh Marathon - Walk or Run with Team IOCC** - Help change lives around the world! Join us on **Saturday, May 2** 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. Contact Fr. Dave with any questions.

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OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD

Stewardship Offerings:	\$ 300
Candle Stewardship:	\$ 97
Envelope Stewardship:	\$ 595
Total Collections:	\$ 992
Capital Improvement Fund:	\$ 56

Participating Souls at: *Sunday's Liturgy: 36*
Wednesday PM Presanctified: 22
Friday AM Moleben Service: 2
Saturday All-Soul's Liturgy: 8

Weekly Candle Intentions or Memorials were offered last week by the Nelson Family; Lawrence Martin; Anonymous; Tim Martin; Mary Jane Hudak; Kathy Schrmack; Cindy Pavilonis; Melanie Paieski

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** **Sts. Joachim and Anna Senior Retreat** - Our Diocese is pleased to announce its seventh annual Sts. Joachim and Anna Senior Retreat which will take place at Camp Nazareth Retreat and Conference Center in Mercer, PA from **May 5-7**. The Retreat will feature keynote addresses, church services, time for fellowship, and great evening events. His Eminence, Metropolitan Gregory, is inviting all our Diocesan Seniors, ages 55 and over, to join him for fellowship, prayer, and learning. The Theme of the Retreat is "**Living and Dying Orthodox in the 21st Century**". Retreat participants will have opportunities to get to know other Seniors, enjoy the beauty of our Diocesan Camp, and simply enjoy each other's company throughout the Retreat. Online Registration is open! Visit [2026 Senior Retreat](http://2026SeniorRetreat.org) to register for the event. Visit campnazareth.org or acrod.org for more information. You may also call (607-329-2844) or email Fr. Stephen Loposky at fr.stephen.loposky@gmail.com for more information. For those staying at Camp, the Retreat cost is \$160. For those who do not need lodging at Camp, the Retreat cost is \$110. Don't miss out on our annual Sts. Joachim and Anna Senior Retreat! Register today (Registration closes April 28)

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** **Another Call for CN Staff Applications** - If you are eligible to work at Camp Nazareth this summer season, please take the time to fill out and send in a staff application! While I know the “deadline” for applications is already past, we still need help for the upcoming summer season. If you are hesitating because you don't know what your summer plans are (things like internships, jobs, travel, etc), apply anyway! That way, if your plans work out and you can work, the paperwork is already done! I am excited to work together with you to create another amazing summer for our Diocese and all the visitors who enjoy our Camp. But I certainly can't do it alone! I look forward to seeing your applications soon! Thank you! In Christ, *Fr. Nathaniel*

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** **Registration is Open!** You can now register your child (aged 8-18) for Camp Nazareth this summer. Don't delay! If financial assistance is needed, please let Fr. Dave know. Let's get our kids to camp!

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20

The Certainty of God's Promise

¹³For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, ¹⁴saying, “Surely I will bless you and multiply you.” ¹⁵And thus Abraham, having patiently endured, obtained the promise. ¹⁶Men indeed swear by a greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. ¹⁷So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he interposed with an oath, ¹⁸so that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible that God should prove false, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to seize the hope set before us. ¹⁹We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain, ²⁰where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

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Gospel: Mark 9:17-31

¹⁷And one of the crowd answered him, “Teacher, I brought my son to you, for he has a dumb spirit; ¹⁸and wherever it seizes him, it dashes him down; and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid; and I asked your disciples to cast it out, and they were not able.” ¹⁹And he answered them, “O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him to me.” ²⁰And they brought the boy to him; and when the spirit saw him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth. ²¹And Jesus asked his father, “How long has he had this?” And he said, “From childhood. ²²And it has often cast him into the fire and into the water, to destroy him; but if you can do anything, have pity on us and help us.” ²³And Jesus said to him, “If you can! All things are possible to him who believes.” ²⁴Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, “I believe; help my unbelief!” ²⁵And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, “You dumb and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again.” ²⁶And after crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse; so that most of them said, “He is dead.” ²⁷But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. ²⁸And when he had entered the house, his disciples asked him privately, “Why could we not cast it out?” ²⁹And he said to them, “This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer.”

Jesus Again Foretells His Death and Resurrection

³⁰They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And he would not have any one know it; ³¹for he was teaching his disciples, saying

to them, "The Son of man will be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him; and when he is killed, after three days he will rise."

PRAYER CORNER

For the Health of... Maria, Sophia, Evelyn, Theresa, Janet, Matthew, Maxwell, Trona, Mioara, Tatiana, Anthony, Valerie, Angelo, Craig, Timothy, 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...

+Frank Rolley (3/13), +James Schrmack (Jim's uncle),
+Theodore Mozes, the Priest (3/9), +Karen Davis,
+Irene (Labas) Dzubak (3/6) ...*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 tip for keeping track of doing the triplet four times: With your left hand, place your thumb on your pointer finger for the 1st triplet, middle finger for the 2nd, ring finger for the 3rd, then pinky for the 4th*

PRAYER OF SAINT EPHRAIM THE SYRIAN in the Ruthenian tradition as found in St. Peter Mogila's 1639 Liturgikon (Sluzhebnyk)

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]

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.

ONLINE BONUSES

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

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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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GREAT LENT



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ORTHODOX ETIQUETTE

The Holy Orthodox Church is perhaps one of the last social institutions where dignity, protocol, respect, and reverence are maintained. This is primarily because when we come to the church and its services we are entering the Kingdom of God on earth, His habitation, and we choose to honor this sacred place by our attentiveness to what is proper and ordered. We have the opportunity to reflect the image of Christ within us by our actions. "You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation" (1 Peter 2:9). This guide is meant for personal reflection, not as a means of judging others. We come to church to pray and worship God above all else, and that should be our only focus.

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Entering the Church

The Orthodox Divine Liturgy begins when the priest intones, "Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit." We need to arrive early enough to receive this blessing. Arriving later causes a distraction for others who are praying. If an occasional problem occurs and you have to come in late, enter the church reverently and quietly. (The times in which you should stay in the back of the church, or the vestibule, before entering include: when the priest is censing the icons and congregation at the start of the Liturgy, when the Little or Great Entrance is taking place, when the Epistle or Gospel is being read, or during the homily.)

We come to the church on time, as if to a great banquet, and with reverence, because we are partaking of the very Body and Blood of Christ, our Savior. Coming to the Third Hour (at 9:15 am) before the Divine Liturgy will ensure that you will be settled in plenty of time to pray without distraction.

• Greet the Saints.

When entering the church, venerate with intention the icons of St. John the Baptist (in the vestibule), the icon for the day (on the tetrapod), Christ (in front of iconostasis on right), and the Theotokos (on the left). This small act of devotion sets the tone for the soul as we greet Christ and His saints.

The Orthodox Church teaches that it is proper to venerate, not worship, icons. The acceptable way to do this is to kiss either the hands or feet of the saint depicted in the icon, or the scroll, the Gospel book, or the hand cross a saint is holding.

*** Please do not wear lipstick when kissing the icons since the residue is hard to clean off and can ruin some of the icons. *If you come into the church late, still greet the Saints! It may feel a little uncomfortable, but come up to the front to the icons (except during the Epistle, Gospel, and homily).*

• It is good to greet one another, and to let children be children, but let us remain mindful of others who are praying. Let's save our conversations for at the coffee social. The Liturgy is our banquet and conversation with God. Just like breakfast is during coffee social, save the longer conversations for that intentional framing.

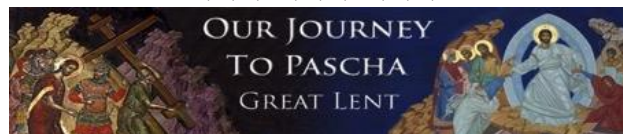
To Be Continued...

(Modified from "A Guide to Church Etiquette: How to Show Proper Respect and Reverence in Church" by The Department of Marriage and Parish Family Ministry of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America and from other church bulletins in our diocese.)

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LIVING THE ORTHODOX FAITH

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4th Sunday of Great Lent:

St. John of the Ladder (Climacus)

St. John is the author of the work, The Ladder of Divine Ascent. The abbot of St Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai (6th century) stands as a witness to the violent effort needed for entrance into God's Kingdom (Mt.10:12). The spiritual struggle of the Christian life is a real one, "not against flesh and blood, but against ... the rulers of the present darkness ... the hosts of wickedness in heavenly places ..." (Eph 6:12).

Saint John encourages the faithful in their efforts for, according to the Lord, only "he who endures to the end will be saved" (Mt.24:13).

Meditation:

Spiritual growth is gradual. The Ladder reminds us that renewal happens through daily choices — prayer, restraint, humility, patience. One faithful step at a time leads upward. Climbing step by step.

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Assembling A Traditional Easter Basket

One begins with a straw basket and filling with foods (that were fasted from), each holding symbolic significance:

1. Easter Bread (Pascha)

A sweet yeast bread rich in eggs and butter, symbolic of Christ “the Living Bread”. Usually a round loaf with a golden crust and decorated with a braid and cross. Pascha comes from the word Pasch, meaning Passover. In English we use it to refer to the Easter season. In Slavonic the word paska is used to refer to Christ “the new lamb”.

2. Cheese (Rusyn: Hrudka or Sirec)

A special cheese made from egg and milk shaped into a ball having a rather bland but sweet taste indicative of the moderation that Christians should have in all things. It is often decorated with cloves in the form of a cross.

3. Ham (Šunka)

The meat popular with the Slavs as the main dish because of its richness and symbolism of the great joy and abundance of Easter. Some may prefer lamb or veal.

4. Sausage (Kolbasi)

A spicy pork product flavored with garlic, indicative of God’s favor and generosity.

5. Butter (Maslo)

This favorite dairy product is often shaped into a lamb or small cross. Symbolic of Christ the lamb who was offered upon the altar of the Cross for the life of the world.

6. Bacon (Slanina)

Uncooked bacon cured with spices. Symbolic of the overabundance of God’s mercy to us.

7. Salt (Sol)

Symbolizes the Truth of the message of Christ. Just as salt preserves food, so the teaching of Christ preserves our eternal life.

8. Horseradish (Chrin)

Horseradish mixed with grated red beets. Symbolic of the Passion of Christ still in our minds but sweetened with some sugar because of the Resurrection. A bittersweet red colored mixture reminds us of the sufferings of Christ.

9. Decorated Eggs (Pysankô)

Hard boiled eggs brightly decorated with symbols and markings made with beeswax. Eggs were always considered as symbols of the resurrection, the emergence of new life.

*** We are not limited to only having these items in our basket (nor do we have to have all of them). We fast for 40 days and a tradition is to bring what you have fasted from to the church to bless it before having some again (i.e. chocolate, or gum, or pop, or beer, etc.)



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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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Icon of Christ’s Extreme Humility

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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 began **Feb. 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.*

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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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SPIRITUAL VITAMINS

Wisdom of St. John Climacus (“of the Ladder”)

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Confession is like a bridle that keeps the soul which reflects on it from committing sin, but anything left unconfessed we continue to do without fear as if in the dark.

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Do not be surprised if you fall every day and do not surrender. Stand your ground bravely and you may be sure that your guardian angel will respect your endurance. A fresh, warm wound is easier to heal than those that are old, neglected, and festering, and that need extensive treatment, surgery, bandaging and cauterization. Long neglect can render many of them incurable. However, all things are possible with God

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An angel fell from Heaven without any other passion except pride, and so we may ask whether it is possible to ascend to Heaven by humility alone, without any other of the virtues.

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Humility is the only thing that no devil can imitate.

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Fight to escape from your own cleverness. If you do, then you will find salvation and uprightness through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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When the soul betrays itself and loses the blessed and longed-for fervor, let it carefully investigate the reason for losing it. And let it arm itself with all its longing and zeal against whatever caused this. For the former fervor can return only through the same door through which it was lost.

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When you are depressed, bear in mind the Lord’s command to Peter to forgive a sinner seventy times seven (cf. Mt. 18:22). And you may be sure that He Who gave this command to another will Himself do very much more.

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Do not regard the feelings of a person who speaks to you about his neighbor disparagingly, but rather say to him: “Stop, brother! I fall into graver sins every day, so how can I criticize him?” In this way you will achieve two things; you will heal yourself and your neighbor with one plaster. This is one of the shortest ways to the forgiveness of sins; I mean, not to judge. “Judge not, and ye shall not be judged.”

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Hymns Honoring Saint John Of The Ladder

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O venerable and holy father John, with full voice, you have unceasingly sang the praises of God. You have meditated upon His inspired words, to make them wisely bear much fruit. Having become rich in heavenly grace, you have deserved unending happiness.

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By the streams of your tears, O glorious father John, your soul has been purified; and by your vigils throughout the night, you have found favor with God. You have ascended to His love and beauty, O blessed father; and now you rejoice in unending happiness.

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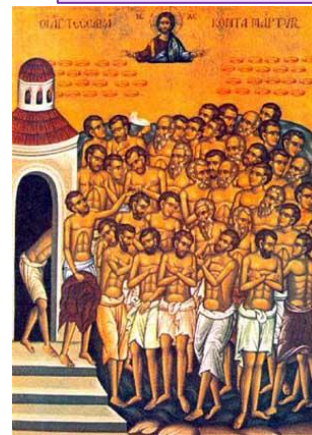
By faith, you have ascended to God, on the wings of your spirit, O venerable father John. Leaving behind the restless confusion of this world, you took up your cross and followed Christ. By your asceticism, you overcame the urges of the body, by the strength that flows from the Holy Spirit.

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Having heard the Gospel of the Lord, O venerable father John, you left this world, counting as nothing the riches and glory that it offered. Then you cried out to everyone: Love the Lord and you shall find eternal favor, for nothing is preferable to His love. And when He shall come in glory, you will find repose with all the saints. Through their prayers, O Christ, grant great mercy to our souls.

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LIVES OF THE SAINTS



**The Holy 40 Martyrs
Martyred At Sebasteia Lake
(320)**

Commemorated on March 22/9

In the year 313 Saint Constantine the Great issued an edict, from which the christians were permitted freedom of belief and made equal with pagans under the law. But his co-ruler Licinius was prevailed upon by pagans, and in his part of the empire he decided to eradicate Christianity, which had become considerably widespread there. Licinius prepared his soldiery to fight against Constantine and, fearing mutiny, he decided to rid christians from his army.

One of the military-commanders of that time in the Armenian city of Sebasteia was Agricolaus, a zealous proponent of paganism. Under his command was a company of forty Cappadocians – brave soldiers – who emerged victorious from many a battle. All of them were christians. When these soldiers refused to offer sacrifice to the pagan gods, Agricolaus locked them up in prison. The soldiers immersed themselves in diligent prayer, and at one point during the night they heard a voice: "Persevere until the end, then shalt ye be saved".

On the following morning the soldiers were again taken to Agricolaus. This time the pagan tried the method of flattery. He began to praise their valour, their youthfulness and strength; and again he urged them to renounce Christ and thereby win themselves the respect and favour of their emperor. And again hearing their refusal, Agricolaus gave orders to shackle the

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soldiers. But the eldest of them, Kyrion, said: "The emperor has not given thee the right to put shackles upon us". Agricolaus became embarrassed and gave an order to take the soldiers back to prison without shackles.

Seven days later, the reknown judge Licus arrived at Sebasteia and held trial over the soldiers. The saints steadfastly answered: "Take not only our military insignia, but also our lives, since nothing is more precious to us than Christ God". Licus thereupon ordered the holy martyrs to be beaten with stones. But the stones flew past them entirely; and the stone thrown by Licus, hit Agricolaus in the face. The torturers realised that the saints were guarded by some invisible force. In prison, the soldiers spent the night at prayer and again they heard the voice of the Lord comforting them: "Believing in Me, if anyone shalt die he shalt live. Be brave and fear not, since ye shall obtain crowns imperishable".

On the following day also the judge repeated the interrogation in front of the torturer, but the soldiers remained unyielding.

It was winter, and there was a strong frost. They lined up the holy soldiers, led them to a lake located not far from the city, and placed them under guard on the ice all night. In order to break the will of the martyrs, a warm bath-house was set up not far away on the shore. During the first hour of the night, when the cold had become unbearable, one of the soldiers could not hold out and made a dash for the bath-house, but barely had he stepped over the threshold, that he fell down dead. During the third hour of the night the Lord sent consolation to the martyrs: suddenly there was light, the ice melted away, and the water in the lake became warm. All the guards were asleep, except for one who kept watch by the name of Aglaios. Looking at the lake he saw, that over the head of each martyr there had appeared a radiant crown. Aglaios counted thirty-nine crowns and realised, that the soldier who fled had lost his crown. Aglaios thereupon woke up the other guards, discarded his uniform and said to them: "I too – am a Christian" – and he joined the martyrs. Standing in the water he prayed: "Lord God, I believe in Thee, in Whom these soldiers do believe. To them add me also, and esteem me worthy to suffer with Thy servants".

In the morning the torturers beheld with surprise that the martyrs were alive, and their guard Aglaios was glorifying Christ together with them. They then led the soldiers out of the water and broke their legs. At the time of this horrible execution the mother of the youngest of the soldiers, Meliton, pleaded with her son not to endure and suffer everything all the way to death. They put the bodies of the martyrs on a cart and committed them to fire. Young Meliton was still breathing, and they left him to lay on the ground. His mother then pulled up her son, and on her own shoulders she carried him behind the cart. When Meliton gasped out his last breath, his mother put him on the cart amidst the bodies of his fellow sufferers. The bodies of the saints were committed to fire, and they then threw the charred bones into the water, so that christians would not gather them up.

Three days later the martyrs appeared in a dream to Blessed Peter, bishop of Sebasteia, and commanded him to give their remains over to burial. The bishop together with several clergy gathered up the remains of the glorious martyrs by night and buried them with honour.

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**SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE
REMAINING OF THE GREAT FAST,
HOLY WEEK, AND BRIGHT WEEK**

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25 #TheGreatFast

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

FRIDAY, MARCH 27 #TheGreatFast

6:00 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
Liturgical Color: **Purple**
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

6:00 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

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SUNDAY, APRIL 5 #PALM(FLOWERY)SUNDAY

FEAST OF THE ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM
9:15 am Third Hour
Blessing of Branches (Palms and Willows)
9:30 pm Divine Liturgy
Liturgical Color: **Gold**
12:00 pm Bridegroom Matins

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GREAT AND HOLY PASSION WEEK

HOLY MONDAY, APRIL 6 #HolyWeek

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

HOLY TUESDAY, APRIL 7 #HolyWeek

FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION
6:00 pm Vespertal Liturgy of St. John

HOLY WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8 #HolyWeek

* *Final opportunity for Confession until after Pascha*
6:00 pm Mystery of Holy Anointing (Unction)
with community meal following

HOLY THURSDAY, APRIL 9 #HolyWeek

9:30 am Mystical (Last) Supper Vespertal Liturgy
6:00 pm Matins with the 12 Passion Gospels
*** *then setting of the Lord's Tomb*

HOLY & GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 10 #HolyWeek

A DAY OF STRICT FASTING
9:30 am Royal Hours

*** then decorating the Lord's Tomb

6:00 pm Vespers and outdoor Burial Procession with the Holy Shroud (*Plašćanitsa*)

then Reading of the Psalter until 10 pm

HOLY SATURDAY, APRIL 11 #HolyWeek

A DAY OF STRICT FASTING

8:00 am Reading of the Psalter

9:30 am Vespertal Liturgy of the Resurrection

*** then changing from dark to light colors

*** Please let Fr. Dave know if you are able to assist after the Thursday, Friday, or Saturday services

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SUNDAY, APRIL 12 #Pascha

THE FEAST OF FEASTS

9:00 am Resurrection Matins with outdoor procession

~9:40 am Paschal Divine Liturgy

Liturgical Color: **White**

Blessing of Artos Bread (*with children assisting*)

Blessing of Paschal Baskets (*upstairs in the church*)

Paschal Potluck Meal

Egg Hunt

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BRIGHT WEEK: A FAST FREE WEEK

MONDAY, APRIL 13 #BRIGHTWEEK

9:30 am Paschal Liturgy with outdoor Procession

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15 #BRIGHTWEEK

6:00 pm Akathist to the Holy Resurrection

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

FRIDAY, APRIL 17 #BRIGHTWEEK

9:30 am Paschal Divine Liturgy

11:00 am Bacon Breakfast (*See Father Dave*)

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SUNDAY, APRIL 19 #THOMASUNDAY

9:15 am Paschal Canon

9:30 pm Divine Liturgy

Breaking of the Artos

Monthly Memorial Panachida

12:00 pm Blessing of Graves

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COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

National Jr. ACRY Project

Details coming soon –

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ADDITIONAL BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wednesday)

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“Code” for reading the bulletin:

*** = new news ** = 2nd time in the bulletin

* = at least the 3rd time in the bulletin

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Live-Broadcast – If you are unable to attend church services, please pray along with our Cathedral online (which broadcasts MORE THAN JUST SUNDAY MORNINGS):

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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* **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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* **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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* **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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A Light On the Hill Spring Gala

Join us for an evening celebrating the *light at work* in the hearts of our students at **The Saint Constantine School of Pittsburgh**. This benefit event ensures that our mission of **Education in Pursuit of Virtue, Wisdom, and Joy** remains accessible to all families who desire it.

Magical entertainment, beautiful music, a moving program, buffet dinner, cash bar, and childcare are all provided at this formal gala for adults ages 18 and older at **Holy Trinity Center**. (985 Providence Blvd., Pittsburgh)

Apr 30 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM

Thank you for helping us to form young minds and souls.

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SUGGESTED LENTEN READINGS

The following suggested readings for the Great Fast are available in our *Gift Shop* for a reasonable donation

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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' suggestions that can be considered for your Lenten Reading. 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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* **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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 * **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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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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* **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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CHURCH BUILDING UPDATE

Here is a brief update from the past few weeks:

✳️ *** the **laminated floor** in the front of the nave now extends all the way to the walls (under the heat enclosures)

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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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Financial Reports	February	Fiscal Year
General Stewardship	\$ 4870.64	\$ 47,931
* Expenses	\$ 7163.91	\$ 41,128
Yield +/-	- \$ 2293.27	\$ 6,803
Capital Improvement Fund	\$ 1288.00	\$ 19,830
Sunday Participation Average	35	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 (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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Bulletin Sponsor - If you wish to sponsor a bulletin *In Honor of* (nameday, birthday, anniversary, etc.) or *In Memory of* someone, please sign up on the sheet in the vestibule or by contacting Fr. Dave (email, text, or call). An additional stewardship offering to the Church is requested. *Remember, sponsoring a bulletin in memory of someone does not replace having a Panachida (Memorial Service) for them.*

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Stewardship of Treasure Guide													
Weekly offering to God through the Sunday Offertory - Will you take a step up?													
Weekly Income	Beyond a Tithe	15%	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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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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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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ORTHODOXY AROUND DA ‘BURGH AND OUR DIOCESE

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- * **Make plans to go to Camp Nazareth events this year!**
- ✘ **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*) 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, Ameer, Joshua, John, Kathryn, Rose, Charles, Justin, David, Donna, George, *our diocesan seminarians:* Fr. Peter S, Dcn. Maximus C, Fr. Alexander H, Bradley S, Nicholas C, John B, John F, Spyridon R, Clay W, and 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), 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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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), Lauren (due in September)

...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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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.

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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

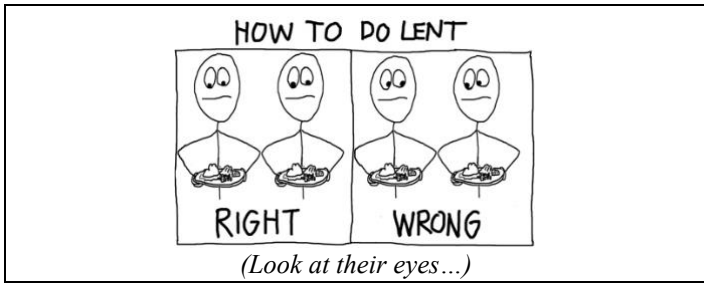
I pray to you, God, for the families of my neighborhood. Visit them. Throw their troubles out of them and bring hope. Make the daily cares that devour the heart disappear. Present solutions to life's problems. Settle the disturbed relationships among members of different families whom I know or do not 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.

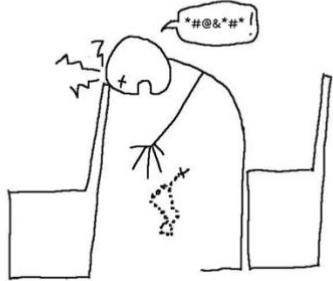
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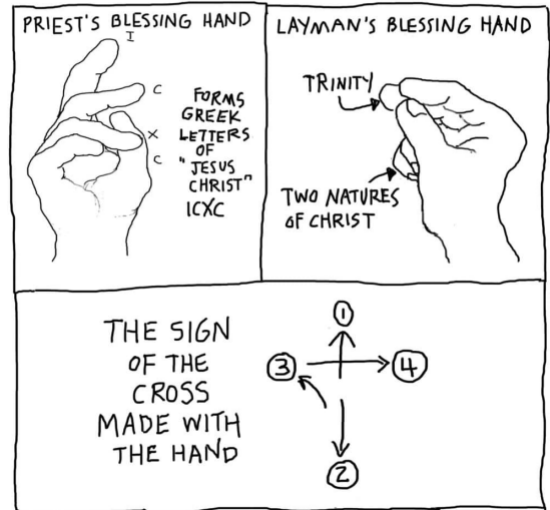
Orthodox Lenten Tutorial #2:
Prostration With Pews Warning!

WARNING!
ATTEMPTED PROSTRATION MAY RESULT IN SEVERE HEAD AND EGO INJURY



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ORTHODOX - TRINITARIAN, CHALCEDONIAN



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