

**“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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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.

FLOWERY (PALM) SUNDAY!  
**APRIL 5th**  
GREAT WEEK BEGINS



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**GREAT AND HOLY WEEK**  
**ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM**  
 Epistle: Philippians 4:4-9  
 Gospel: John 12:1-18

Place your palm branches  
and pussywillows behind  
an icon at home  
and in your car!

## UPCOMING SERVICES

**SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 2026** #TheGreatFast **VOL. XI**  
 +Martyr Sabinus of Hermopolis, Egypt (303)  
 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** #LAZARUS SATURDAY  
 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  
 Resurrectional Tone 2; Liturgical Color: **Gold**  
 Church School  
 12:00 pm Bridegroom Matins  
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**Mystery of Confession** – Father is available to hear  
 Confessions after every service or by appointment.  
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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 (*Plaščanitsa*)  
 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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### 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** – The 40-day fast ends on Friday. Let's  
 complete the Great Fast and enter the deeper fast of Holy Week  
 together with joy.

**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/](http://www.acrod.org/orthodox-christianity/articles/lent/)

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\*\*\* **Romanian Fish Dinner** – Our sister parish of St. Andrew's  
 Orthodox Church (56 Glenn Way, McKees Rocks, PA 15136)  
 will offer a delicious traditional Palm Sunday Romanian Fish  
 Dinner on **Sunday, April 5** from 1 to 3 pm. **PRE-ORDER IS  
 REQUIRED** for this eat-in or take-out meal by **TODAY March  
 29** to [events.standrewchurch@gmail.com](mailto:events.standrewchurch@gmail.com). The menu includes •

Fish roe spread • Mashed beans • Potato salad • Olives • Vegetable spread (zacusca) • Fried fish • Peas • Rice with vegetables • Apple strudel/cake • Sarailie/baklava • Biscuit salami • Bread • Juice. Cost is \$40 per portion or \$140 for four portions. Contact Fr. Dave with any questions.

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\*\*\* **Palm Crosses** – Our palms have arrived. Please see the instructions on the table in the hall if you would like to learn how to make them. This activity is for all ages. (*Once the palm gets too dry, it is nearly impossible to make them...*) Please see Fr. Dave with any questions on this different technique

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\*\*\* **Red Eggs** – The suggestion was previously made to hard boil eggs for the parish during Holy Week after one of the services. (They will naturally be dyed red.) If you are able to bring any home-grown eggs to the church, please let Fr. Dave know as soon as you can.

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\* **57<sup>th</sup> Annual Ukrainian Easter Egg Sale** – On Sunday, March 29 from 11 AM to 4 PM. Ss Peter and Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Mansfield Blvd, Carnegie, will have Eggs, Food, Arts & Crafts, and more. Don't miss it. For more info, call 412-527-5359.

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\* **LENTE RETREATS IN THE AREA:**

\* **Wed., April 1** – after the Presanctified Liturgy at Holy Trinity, Dr. Peter Gagianas will offer the presentation, “Medical Analysis of the Crucifixion” with well-researched insights into the medical aspects of this central event in Christianity and the world. The role of the Shroud of Turin will also be discussed.

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\*\* **Spring Maintenance Morning/Afternoon** – Our Spring Maintenance “Morning” is moved later in the day after Liturgy on Lazarus **Saturday, April 4** from 11 am to 2 pm (ish). Parishioners (*and family and friends*) are needed to help. Please sign up on the sheet in the hall so we have an idea of who will be sharing their stewardship...

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\* **Paschal Commemorations - Stewards Needed To Sponsor Sacred Items For Holy Week And Pascha** – In prior years, many parishioners have generously given a free-will offering for various sacred items needed for use during the Holy Week and Paschal services. Often, these items were donated to honor or remember family members and/or loved ones. Below is a list of the remaining items (*at the time of bulletin printing*) that are needed for the upcoming Holy Week and Paschal seasons.

- ✘ Censer (Kadilo) Charcoal
- ✘ Vesperal Litiya Loaves
- ✘ Vesperal Litiya Wheat
- ✘ Processional Candles at Matins
- ✘ 2 Altar Vigil Candles
- ✘ 2 Deacon Table Candles
- ✘ Altar Server Candles

Please sign up on the sheet in the Vestibule **by Palm Sunday (April 5)**. There is no set “amount” – just give an *additional free-will stewardship offering* from your heart to the Church.

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\*\* **Lenten Coin Box Reminder** – This collection to support our Community Outreach, OCMC, is to be brought in during Holy Week. More information is available at [www.ocmc.org](http://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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\*\* **Preparing for Presanctified** – If planning to receive the Eucharist (Holy Communion) at the evening Presanctified Liturgy, the teaching of the Church is to abstain from food for at least 3 hours prior, starting at 3pm. (*It would be better if one was to abstain from food from after the lunch meal until after the reception of the Holy Gifts.*) Did you ever wonder why we gather for a meal after the service? This allows us to have dinner (together) before taking the time to drive home. (Having a later dinner is also why we start the service at 6:00 instead of our usual evening start time.) Be sure to take part in this opportunity to receive the Eucharist mid-week during the Lenten Season! *If 6pm in Allison Park is not good for your schedule, check websites of nearby Orthodox Churches for their times or ask Fr. Dave.*

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\*\*\* **Fasting Before Holy Anointing** – It is not uncommon around the Orthodox world to fast prior to the Mystery of Holy Anointing (Unction). Please follow the minimum 3-hour fast as we do prior to the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts before coming to the Unction Service on Holy Wednesday. We will have a community meal afterwards.

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\*\* **Grave Watch or Guarding the Tomb** – Different churches refer to this in different ways, but all are coming to the church to pray. Faithful are asked to sign up and commit to *reading the Psalms at the Tomb of our Lord*. We will begin, as we did last year, right after the Burial Vespers on Good Friday, continue until 10 pm, then restart Holy Saturday morning at 8 am until the start of the Vespers Liturgy (at 9:30 am). Shifts will be 20-minutes long. *May these words from the Gospel of Matthew when Jesus prayed in Gethsemane inspire all of us: And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, “So, could you not keep awake with me one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” (Matthew 26:40-41)*

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**COFFEE SOCIAL STEWARDS**

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

- \* April 5: (*meatless*)    ? , ? , ? , ?
- April 12:           Pascha Pot-Luck (*sign up in the hall*)
- April 19:           ? , ? , ? , ?

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\*\* **Pot-Luck Paschal Meal** – Our next community pot-luck meal will be following the services on Pascha. All families are encouraged to bring something to share. A sign up sheet is in the hall (*as we want to have a good variety of foods*).

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\* **Faith Night** – The 2026 Pittsburgh Pirate’s Faith Night will be on **Saturday, May 2** at 4:05pm. In years past, we had a great time going to a game together. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN ORGANIZING A PARISH FAMILY EVENT AT THE BALLPARK, PLEASE CONTACT FR. DAVE TODAY.

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\*\*\* **Blessing of Graves** – Our annual grave blessings at the N.S. cemeteries have not been scheduled yet. (Thomas Sunday will not work for Fr. Dave this year.) If you have a suggested Saturday or Sunday to have this, please talk with Fr. Dave. \*\*\* *If your loved ones are not at one of the two cemeteries on the North Side, please schedule a time with Fr. Dave to meet (if possible) before the Feast of Ascension.*

**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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\*\* **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 Stamoos Brothers (2020 Penn Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15222. Tickets are \$35. Register Online at [ioccc.org/pittsburgh](http://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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\*\*\* **Icon Workshops** – Archangel Icons-Michael Kapeluck is offering five Intensive Icon Workshops in 2026 (*April 20-24; May 18-22; June 15-19; July 13-17; August 17-21*). There will only be 6 students per workshop which are open to beginners as well as more experienced students. All workshops will take place in his studio in Carnegie, PA. Each workshop will create a 12”x16” icon using JoSonja acrylic techniques. Classes will also include prayer, discussions on technique, history, and theology of the icon. Students will also have access to the studio’s 300+ book library. The workshop fee is \$600 and includes 40 hours of instruction and all materials. (Meals are not included.) If you are interested, please contact Fr. Dave for more information or visit: [www.archangelicons.com](http://www.archangelicons.com)

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\*\*\* **Spring Fundraiser Gala** – Join us on **Thursday, April 30** from 7:00 - 10:00 pm for an evening celebrating the *light at work* in the hearts of the students at *The Saint Constantine School of Pittsburgh*. This benefit event ensures that the 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+ at Holy Trinity Center (985 Providence Blvd., Pittsburgh). Cost break down is: Single ticket is \$150; Multiple tickets bought together are \$125 each. Thank you for helping us to form young minds and souls. For more information on the school, visit: <https://pittsburgh.saintconstantine.org>. Please let Fr. Dave know if you are interested in attending.

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\*\*\* **Panachida Offerings** – Reminder: Panachidas (Memorial Services for the Departed) *cannot* be served on the Major Feast Days of our Lord including Palm Sunday and Holy Pascha (as well as Lazarus Saturday).

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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 at [ioccc.org/pgh](http://ioccc.org/pgh). Contact Fr. Dave with any questions.

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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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**OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD**

Stewardship Offerings:	\$ 581
Candle Stewardship:	\$ 478
Envelope Stewardship:	\$ 1220
<b>Total Collections:</b>	<b>\$ 2279</b>
<b>Capital Improvement Fund:</b>	<b>\$ 1897</b>
Participating Souls at: <i>Sunday’s Liturgy: 54</i>	
<i>Wednesday PM Presanctified: 15</i>	
<i>Friday PM Canon of St. Andrew: 8</i>	

**Weekly Candle Intentions or Memorials** were offered last week by the Nelson Family; Carol Lorenzi; Lawrence Martin; Tim Martin; Mary Jane Hudak; Rich & Renee Mirilovich; Cindy Pavilonis; John Radick

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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 presentations, church services, time for fellowship, and great evening events. His Eminence, Met. 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) to register for the event. Visit [campnazareth.org](http://campnazareth.org) or [acrod.org](http://acrod.org) 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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**SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS**

*Epistle: Hebrews 9:11-14*

<sup>11</sup> But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) <sup>12</sup> he entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.

<sup>13</sup> For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, <sup>14</sup> how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

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**Gospel:** Mark 10:32-45

A Third Time Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection

<sup>32</sup> And they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them; and they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. And taking the twelve again, he began to tell them what was to happen to him, <sup>33</sup> saying, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and deliver him to the Gentiles; <sup>34</sup> and they will mock him, and spit upon him, and scourge him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise."

The Request of James and John

<sup>35</sup> And James and John, the sons of Zeb'edee, came forward to him, and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." <sup>36</sup> And he said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" <sup>37</sup> And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." <sup>38</sup> But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" <sup>39</sup> And they said to him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; <sup>40</sup> but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared." <sup>41</sup> And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John. <sup>42</sup> And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. <sup>43</sup> But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, <sup>44</sup> and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. <sup>45</sup> For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

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### PRAYER CORNER

**For the Health of...** Melissa, Maria, Sophia, Mary, 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!*

### FASTING SUGGESTIONS:

(source unknown)

FAST from self-concern and  
FEAST on compassion for others.

FAST from discouragement and  
FEAST on hope.

FAST from lethargy and  
FEAST on enthusiasm.

FAST from suspicion and  
FEAST on truth.

FAST from thoughts that weaken and  
FEAST on promises that inspire.

FAST from shadows of sorrow and  
FEAST on the sunlight of serenity.

FAST from idle gossip and  
FEAST on purposeful silence.

FAST from problems that overwhelm you and  
FEAST on prayer that sustains.

FAST from criticism and  
FEAST on praise.

FAST from self-pity and  
FEAST on joy.

FAST from ill-temper and  
FEAST on peace.

FAST from resentment and  
FEAST on contentment.

FAST from jealousy and  
FEAST on love.

FAST from pride and  
FEAST on humility.

FAST from selfishness and  
FEAST on service.

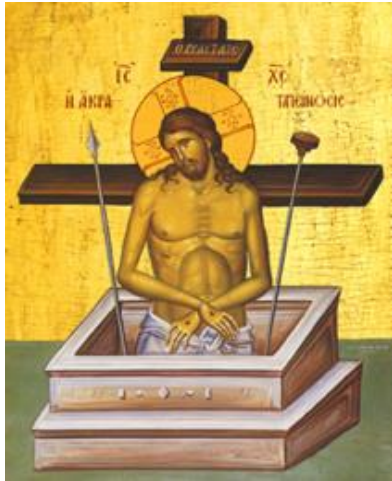
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GREAT  
LENT



Icon by: K. Tikhomirova

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Icon of Christ's Extreme Humility

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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 1<sup>st</sup> triplet, middle finger for the 2<sup>nd</sup>, ring finger for the 3<sup>rd</sup>,  
 then pinky for the 4<sup>th</sup>

**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]

**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](http://www.acrod.org)  
Camp Nazareth: [www.campnazareth.org](http://www.campnazareth.org)  
FB: [www.facebook.com/acroddiocese](https://www.facebook.com/acroddiocese)  
Twitter: [twitter.com/acrodnews](https://twitter.com/acrodnews)  
YouTube: [youtube.com/acroddiocese](https://youtube.com/acroddiocese)

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

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# GREAT LENT



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## SPIRITUAL VITAMINS

“The desires of your soul and the passions of your flesh you have cut down with the sword of abstinence; your sinful thoughts you have choked with the silence of the ascetic life.

With the streams of your tears you have watered all the wilderness, and caused the fruits of repentance to spring up for us: Therefore, O saint, we celebrate your memory.”

*An Aposticha Hymn for St. Mary of Egypt*

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"All Christians want to go to paradise, but they don't want to work for paradise. It's not enough just to want salvation. For your wish to be fulfilled you have to struggle, you need iron determination." +Saint Theophan the Recluse

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## LIVES OF THE SAINTS

### THE HOLY MARTYR SABINUS

Commemorated on March 29/16

The Holy Martyr Sabinus was governor of the Egyptian city of Hermopolis. During the time of persecution against Christians under the emperor Diocletian (284-305), Saint Sabinus hid himself away with like-minded companions in a remote village. But his dwelling-place was revealed for two gold coins given to a certain ungrateful beggar, whom the saint had constantly fed and helped with money. Together with six other Christians, Sabinus was seized, and after torture they were all drowned in the Nile (+ 287).

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## LIVING THE ORTHODOX FAITH

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### 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Great Lent:

#### St. Mary of Egypt: A Profile in Courage

*by Priest Philip LeMasters in Eastern Christian Insights*

We sometimes forget that it takes a particular kind of courage to accept the truth about ourselves, especially when that truth is painful or requires something of us that we do not want to give. No one can force us to make true spiritual changes in our lives, so all the more do we need the clarity and fortitude to recognize and respond to the truth.

Today we remember St. Mary of Egypt for having the courage to acknowledge the obscene mess she had become and then to do what it took to set things right. When an invisible force prevented her from entering the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, she asked for the help of the Theotokos, entered the church to venerate the Holy Cross, and obeyed a divine command to spend the rest of her life in repentance and strict asceticism as a hermit in the desert. When the monk Zosima stumbled upon her almost 50 years later, he was amazed at her holiness. But like all the saints, she was aware only of her sins and her ongoing need for God's mercy.

Much less attuned to the truth about themselves were the disciples James and John when they asked to have privileged places of power in the Kingdom proclaimed by Jesus Christ. The Lord had just told the disciples that He would suffer, die, and rise again, but these two continued to think in worldly terms of a political kingdom on this earth and were grasping for power. The Savior corrected them by saying that they did not know what they were asking, for the way of His Kingdom requires making a selfless offering of oneself to God, drinking the cup and undergoing the baptism of suffering and death. This is the way of Christ, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." It takes deep spiritual courage to confront the truth that we have been living in ways contrary to God's will. It was not easy for power-hungry disciples to give up their dreams of political success and learn how to follow a Lord Who brings salvation to the world through His cross and empty tomb. It was not easy for a grossly immoral person like St. Mary of Egypt to renounce her comfortable and pleasure-filled life in order to repent in the desert. And it is not easy for any of us to recognize the truth about our own failings, weaknesses, and habits of word, thought, and deed that have put roadblocks on our pathway to holiness.

It takes a particular kind of courage to do so, but we must undertake the hard work of opening the eyes of our souls to reality and taking the steps that are necessary for us to participate personally in Christ's healing and strength. Of course, we never earn or deserve the Lord's mercy, but we must cooperate with Him by recognizing what we have done to ourselves and repenting in humility as best we can. He enables us all to do that; and the more humbly we repent, the more we open ourselves to His grace and transforming power.

A Church that makes great saints out of former prostitutes, murderers, and adulterers is both realistic about the corruption of our lives and optimistic that there is hope for every one of us to set things right and live faithfully because of the mercy of Jesus Christ. But we must have the courage to recognize honestly our brokenness, sickness, and imperfection, and then have the fortitude to take the often painful steps that are necessary to reorient our lives toward the Kingdom. We may not have to spend fifty years in the desert like St. Mary of Egypt or be corrected face-to-face like James and John were by the Lord, but like them we must have the humble strength necessary to recognize the tension between our present spiritual sickness and the goal of the blessed life to which we are called. It is in that tension and struggle that we will find our salvation if we have the courage to accept the truth about ourselves and then do what we must in order to turn things around by participating more fully in the life of Christ.

As we stand near the end of Great Lent, we have all learned at least something about our spiritual state. Perhaps we have wrestled with our passions and they have gotten the better of us. Perhaps we have not even tried to pray, fast or otherwise deny ourselves, or become more generous to the needy. Maybe we have not really pursued forgiveness, reconciliation, and repentance. Regardless, it should be clear to us all by now that we need healing and strength beyond our own power, for we are all weak, sick, and so easily distracted. To recognize that is no shame, but simply the lesson learned by all the great sinners who have come to their senses and begun the journey home.

Before we begin the journey to the cross on Palm Sunday, there is still time to examine our souls with brutal honesty, confess and repent, and take the steps we can to follow in the way of Jesus Christ. He made holy people out of prostitutes and power-mongers and He will do the same with us, if we will only repent with courageous honesty and humility. Yes, there is hope even for you and me through humble repentance that opens us to the mercy of the Lord.

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### Hitting the Wall:

#### What happened with St. Mary of Egypt?

by Protopresbyter Vasile Tudora,

*Gladsome Light Dialogues – An Orthodox Blog*

The expression “Hitting the wall” refers to an athlete, usually a marathon runner or cyclists that during a race they deplete their muscles glycogen reserves and they experience sudden loss of energy and extreme fatigue. In other words they can’t go on with the race, they’re stuck.

This is what happened with St. Mary of Egypt in the church in Jerusalem when she was stopped by an unseen wall to enter the nave. It was like all her spiritual “glycogen” has ran out and there she was, unable to take one more step and enter the Church. Of course you are going to tell me it was God who stopped her because she was unclean, and living in terrible sins. That too, you are correct. But in the same time her soul had ran out of fuel. Wanting to move towards God she found herself there, paralyzed, unable to do anything. Yes, even in the multitude of her transgressions she still had that little spark of divinity that lingers, buried deep even in the greatest of sinners. She heard the call, but yet she couldn’t do move.

All the bad choices that she had made up to that point finally caught up with her “Your prolonged polluted state with all your prior defilements like a wall prevented you from beholding the August holy sites of Christ.”

She realized, like waking from a bad dream, that she was on the verge of committing spiritual suicide. Her soul was torn, exhausted, cut-off from the source of power and purposely depleted of the last drop of true life.

We are all like this in a way; we all are athletes in training for the kingdom of heaven; either we want it or not, either we prepare for it or not, we have to run the race of our lives and cross the finish line that is the meeting with our creator. And, just as St. Mary of Egypt, hit the wall at times. It does not have to be exactly like her, it doesn’t have to be a miraculous experience, but it is real and we all know when it happens.

Just as Mary of Egypt we have two choices: stay down do nothing, or act about it. Mary chose the latter, she asked the Great Intercessor, the Theotokos, to give her strength, to support her in this time of need. And she received everything, plentifully. She understood at that moment that something has to change, that her insatiable need for pleasing the body had to stop, that spiritual quests are not entertained by indulgence, but by the rigors of spiritual exercise, asceticism, as the Greeks call it. She realized that the race is far from being finished, that she is merely at the beginning and from now she needs to fortify her spiritual powers and overcome the shortcomings of her fallen nature:

*“With self-control and supplication, you practiced asceticism beyond the measure of human nature. Therefore you were exalted in Christ, through way of life and practice.”*

St. Mary’s way can be our way. We don’t have to have a “saint” gene to act like one. The difference between athletes is not necessarily the given talent. Any good coach could tell you that success is only 10% talent and 90% sweat. God has given us all the talent we need to run the race; but if we waste it on things that “do not build-up”, didn’t we spend the gift in vain? Here is the real truth: The Kingdom of God is not food and drink, but righteousness and ascetic practice and holiness; By training ourselves we’re not just going to run the race but we will be able to fly across the finish line as St. Mary walked above the waters of the Jordan.

*And you shone forth to such an extent that you were able to fly across the waters, O blessed one, and levitate above the ground when you raised your hands up to God in prayer.*

*Most Holy Mother Mary pray to God for us!*

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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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### 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 (Pysanky)

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

**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**  
Church School  
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** Vespers 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 Vespers 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 (Plaschanitsa)  
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 Vespers 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 and Candy 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** #THOMASSUNDAY

9:15 am Paschal Canon  
9:30 pm Divine Liturgy  
Breaking of the Artos  
Monthly Memorial Panachida  
Church School

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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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\* **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!

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**"Code" for reading the bulletin:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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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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\* **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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**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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\* **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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\*\*\* **Online Bible Study Options** –

*Check back later...*

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

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\* **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!

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 (2<sup>nd</sup> best is to mail it in to Tim Martin, 2225 McAleer Rd., Sewickley, PA 15143). If you miss coming to church for a week, online giving allows you another option to “catch up” on your weekly stewardship. You can also set up a recurring donation online. For our parish to continue it’s ministries, outreach, and general bill paying, your generosity and stewardship is needed.

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**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.*

**Stewardship of Treasure Guide**

**Weekly offering to God through the Sunday Offertory - Will you take a step up?**

Weekly Income	Beyond a Tithe 15%	Tithe 12%	Tithe 10%	Upper Range Giving 9%	8%	7%	Middle Range Giving 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.

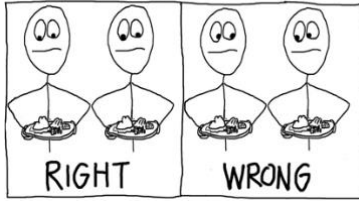
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**A Prayer for our Diocesan Clergy**

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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### HOW TO DO LENT



(Look at their eyes...)

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### Orthodox Lenten Tutorial #2: Prostration With Pews Warning!

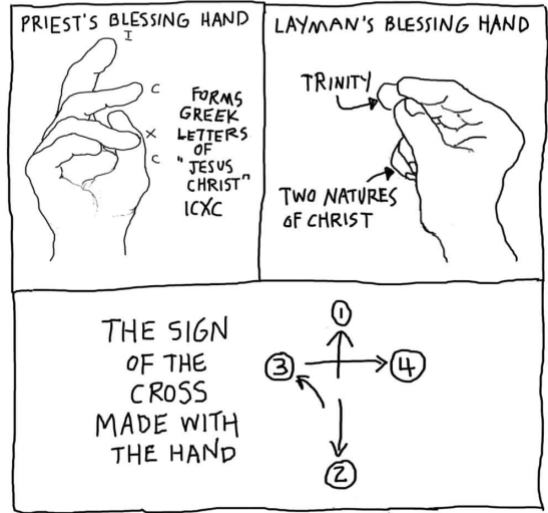
WARNING!

ATTEMPTED PROSTRATION MAY RESULT IN SEVERE HEAD AND EGO INJURY

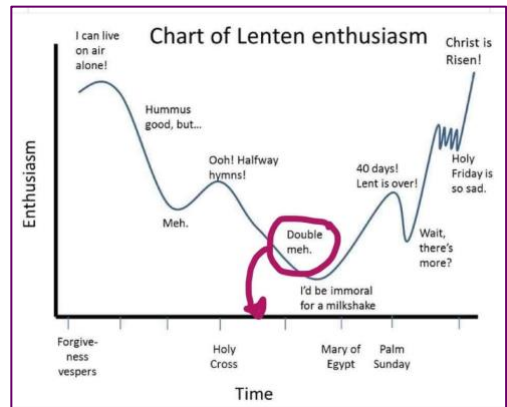


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### ORTHODOX - TRINITARIAN, CHALCEDONIAN



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