



## Welcome!

Whether you are searching for a new church home or just visiting, we are glad you're with us today. If you have a prayer request, are looking for more information about the Orthodox Faith, would like to join our parish, or would like to speak with Fr Thomas, we invite you to fill out a visitor's card and drop it in the offering basket as your offering today. We want to get to know you! God bless you!

## Schedule This Week

### Sunday, April 21

10:00 am Div. Liturgy/School/ Mem: G. Shaytar  
6:00 pm Deanery Vespers St John, New Ken

### Monday, April 22

5:00 pm Lenten Vespers

### Tuesday, April 23

9:00 am Lenten Matins (Morning Service)  
9:30 am-12:00 pm Office Hours

### Wednesday, April 24

6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts  
Lenten Fellowship Meal following Liturgy

### Thursday, April 25

9:00 am Lenten Matins (Morning Service)  
9:30 am-12:00 pm Office Hours

### Friday, April 26

7:00 pm Moleben for the Sick

### Saturday, April 27: Lazarus Saturday

9:00 am Confessions for Students  
9:30 am Divine Liturgy/Children's Breakfast  
....4:00 pm Community Food Pantry  
4:30 pm Confessions  
5:00 pm Vespers with Cathedral Vigil  
Sunday, April 28: Palm Sunday  
10:00 am Festal Divine Liturgy w/ Procession

Archpriest Thomas Soroka, Rector  
Deacon Luke Loboda, Attached  
Deacon John Skowron, Attached  
Rdr James Wargo and Danielle Bartko, Choir Dirs

### Venerable Mary of Egypt

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA  
OrthodoxPittsburgh.org April 21, 2024

## Announcements

➤ **Thank you to everyone who helped out at our clean up day on Saturday!** A tremendous amount of work was accomplished, including cleaning the chandeliers, polishing all the brass, deep cleaning the church, removing wax from the carpets, upgrading the door hardware, mounting more security cameras, clearing out the third floor of the Educational Building, repairing plumbing, painting the parking lot container, yard work, and more!

➤ **We are pleased to announce that an anonymous donor has pledged \$25,000 as a matching donation challenge to kick off the dome restoration fund.** This particular matching challenge will end on Pascha.

We prayerfully ask that you consider giving a generous donation to help meet this matching challenge by Pascha (May 5, 2024).

While we do not have the exact cost for the front three domes, our estimate is \$350,000-400,000. **Our goal is to raise at least \$150,000 this year.**

➤ **Dome Restoration Fund report:** We have are almost at our matching goal of \$25,000 by Pascha (\$22,696)! Help up us over the top! Remember, this is only one third of the **\$150,000 that we must raise by November**, but this is a great start! God bless all of our donors!

**To our Visitors: Holy Communion is reserved for Orthodox Christians who prepare themselves by prayer and fasting. Non-Orthodox visitors are welcome to come forward to venerate the cross and receive the Antidoron (blessed bread) at the conclusion of the service.**

## Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm:** *Known to be hospitalized* (none); *Home:* John Mahalchak (son). William Warnak, Nancy Shaytar, Donya Yewisiak. *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* Eleanor Kovacs, Natalie Popovich, Michael Soroka.

➤ **Vigil Lights** From **Mat. Nancy K. Mell & Gregory Mell** for the departed servant, Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of family. From **Doris Wasilko** for the departed servant, father, Charles; for the health of cousin, Cynthia; Happy Birthday & Many Years to Helen!! From **Charles A. Wasilko** for the health of Helen Billak on her birthday. From **Marsha Wasilko** for the departed servant, father, Charles (4/20/01); Happy Birthday & Many Years to Helen! From **Mr. & Mrs. R. Blaha** for the departed servants, John, Marcy, Ann, & Paul, parents, and brother; for the health of family, friends, siblings, and serving soldiers; for special intention and peace. From **John & Olga** for the health of Galina Vilcova, and for the salvation of our family. From **Edith M. Humphrey** for the departed servant, Roger Glazin. From **Lindy Hamilton** for the health of Elaine Hamilton and Nancy Shaytar. From **Donya Yewisiak** for the health of Nancy Shaytar; special attention. From **Alexandria Tirpak** for the departed servants, Memory Eternal- mother, Amelia, daughter, Amelia; for the health of Charles and my family, Richard & Andrea, and their families; special intentions.

## Thank you

➤ to our **April donors: Alexandria Tirpak** (\$50 Holy Bread) for the health of family and friends and for all departed family members. **Mertz Family** (\$25 Altar Candles) for Theodor on his birthday.

**St Nicholas Church will strive to glorify God through Orthodox Christian worship, sincere love and care for one another, and service to those in need around us.**

## This Week in Church School

**Today's lesson:** Confession and Ordination

**Questions to ask/review:**

- Why do we sin? How are we like the Prodigal Son in the parable?
- How can we prayerfully prepare for confession? What questions can we ask ourselves?
- How was confession performed in the early Church? Why did this change?
- Why can't we just confess in secret to God?
- Who does the priest represent? Who forgives your sins?
- **Ordination**
- What was the role of the original deacons? How has this changed?
- In the early Church, how were new churches begun?
- How many churches were there in a city at first?
- Who was the head of a city's church? How did the need for more than one priest in a city develop?
- Who is the head of the bishop? (Christ Himself)
- What is the primary job of the bishop? (to perpetuate the church)?
- Who can ordain and through whose authority? Why can't just anyone ordain a man if everyone can see he has a "gift"?
- What is the name of our bishop? Does one bishop have all authority over all other bishops in the world? (no)
- What gifts or talents would make one a good priest?
- Do any of you feel "called" to the priesthood?
- At what part of the service can bishops, priests, or deacons be ordained?
- What happens at an ordination? Who must perform it? Why?

**Suggested Activities at home:**

- Make a "muddy picture". Have each child color a picture of his own face on a paper plate. Cover the plate with plastic wrap. Remind them that we are all to shine with the love of Jesus so everyone can see Jesus in us, just like the shiny face. Then have the children smear the face with "mud", covering their face and making it unrecognizable. Can anyone see Jesus in us now? This is how we are when we are covered with sin. Now wipe off the mud. We are clean again! Discuss how this is like our need for confession.

**Prayer:** Father, forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Amen. OR Lord grant many years and wisdom to our bishops, priests, and deacons.

# Hymns and Readings for Sunday, April 21

## **Tone 5 Troparion** (Resurrection)

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, born for our salvation from the Virgin; for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, to endure death, and to raise the dead// by His glorious Resurrection.

## **Tone 4 Troparion** (St Nicholas)

You appeared to your flock as a rule of faith, an image of humility, and a teacher of abstinence. Because of your lowliness heaven was opened to you! Because of your poverty riches were granted to you! O holy Bishop Nicholas, pray to Christ our God to save our souls.

## **Tone 8 Troparion** (St. Mary of Egypt)

The image of God was truly preserved in thee, O Mother, for thou didst take up the Cross and follow Christ. By so doing, thou taughtest us to disregard the flesh for it passes away; but to care instead for the soul, for it is immortal// Therefore thy spirit, O holy Mother Mary, rejoices with the angels.

## **Tone 5 Kontakion** (Resurrection)

Thou didst descend into hell, O my Savior, shattering its gates as Almighty, resurrecting the dead as Creator, and destroying the sting of death. Thou hast delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of man,// and we cry to Thee: “O Lord, save us!” *Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.*

## **Tone 3 Kontakion** (St. Mary of Egypt)

Having been a sinful woman,

thou becamest through repentance a bride of Christ.

Having attained angelic life, thou didst defeat demons with the weapon of the Cross.//

Therefore, O most glorious Mary, thou art a bride of the Kingdom.

*Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

## **Tone 6 Kontakion of the Theotokos**

Steadfast protectress of Christians, constant advocate before the Creator, do not despise the cry of us sinners, but in your goodness come speedily to help us who call on you in faith.

Hasten to hear our intercessions and to intercede for us, O Theotokos

For you always protect those who honor you.

## **Tone 5 Prokeimenon** (Resurrection)

Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us / and preserve us from this generation forever.

## **Epistle of the Sunday (Hebrews 9:11-14)**

But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

## **Gospel of the Sunday (Mark 10:32-45)**

Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid. Then He took the twelve aside again and began to

tell them the things that would happen to Him: “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.”

Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying, “Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask.”

And He said to them, “What do you want Me to do for you?”

They said to Him, “Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory.”

But Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?”

They said to Him, “We are able.”

So Jesus said to them, “You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared.”

And when the ten heard it, they began to be greatly displeased with James and John. But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

## **Hymn to the Theotokos (Liturgy of St Basil)**

All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace: the assembly of angels and the race of men. O sanctified temple and spiritual paradise,

the glory of virgins, from whom God was incarnate and became a Child

–

our God before the ages.

He made your body into a throne, and your womb He made more spacious than the heavens.

All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace.

Glory to you!

## **Communion Hymn**

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! (Ps. 148:1) The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance! He shall not fear evil tidings! (Ps. 111:6) Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

**St Mary** began her life as a young woman who followed the passions of the body, running away from her parents at age twelve for Alexandria. There she lived as a harlot for seventeen years, refusing money from the men that she copulated with, instead living by begging and spinning flax.

One day, however, she met a group of young men heading toward the sea to sail to Jerusalem for the veneration of the Holy Cross. Mary went along for the ride, seducing the men as they traveled for the fun of it. But when the group reached Jerusalem and actually went towards the church, Mary was prohibited from entering by an unseen force. After three such attempts, she remained outside on the church patio, where she looked up and saw an icon of the Theotokos. She began to weep and prayed with all her might that the Theotokos might allow her to see the True Cross; afterwards, she promised, she would renounce her worldly desires and go wherever the Theotokos may lead her.

After this heart-felt conversion at the doors of the church, she fled into the desert to live as an ascetic. She survived for years on only three loaves of bread and thereafter on scarce herbs of the land. For another seventeen years, Mary was tormented by "wild beasts—mad desires and passions." After these years of temptation, however, she overcame the passions and was led by the Theotokos in all things. Following 47 years in solitude, she met the priest St. Zosima in the desert, who pleaded with her to tell him of her life. She recounted her story with great humility while also demonstrating her gift of clairvoyance.