



## Welcome!

Whether you're searching for a new church home or just visiting, we're 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. Please join us downstairs following the Divine Liturgy. We want to get to know you! God bless you!

## This Week

- Sunday, May 26**  
10:00 am Divine Liturgy
- Tuesday, May 28**  
9:00 am Daily Matins  
9:30 am to Noon Office Hours
- Wednesday, May 29**  
No Vespers or Bible Study
- Thursday, May 30**  
No Matins or Office Hours
- Saturday, June 1**  
5:00 pm Great Vespers with Cathedral Vigil
- Sunday, June 2**  
10:00 am Divine Liturgy



Christ is risen! Indeed, He is risen!  
Christos voskrese! Voistinu Voskrese! (Russian)  
Christos anesti! Alithos anesti! (Greek)

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

**Healing of the Paralytic**  
McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA  
OrthodoxPittsburgh.org May 26, 2024

## Announcements

- Congratulations to Heidi and Patrick Lewis in the baptism of their daughter, **Phoebe Elizabeth**, today. To Phoebe, her parents, sponsors, family, and friends, may God grant you many blessed years!
- His Eminence Archbishop Melchisedek will make an archpastoral visit to our parish on Sunday, June 9. Please make every effort to be in attendance on that day.
- Fr Thomas will be away at a speaking engagement **beginning on Wednesday evening and will return on Saturday afternoon before Vigil**. Text 412-206-5012 with any emergencies.
- We invite everyone to consider a donation to our **Dome Restoration Fund**. We must raise at least \$150,000 by November. Please consider helping us!
- **McKees Rocks Bridge Alert!** The Helen Street exits on the McKees Rocks Bridge **eastbound side** (the direction from McKees Rocks/Rt 51 to Pittsburgh/Ohio River Blvd) are scheduled to close beginning on Monday morning, May 20 for rebuilding through the end of July. This will affect anyone who is driving to Church from the Route 51 side of the Bridge. The alternate entrance into the Bottoms of McKees Rocks is River Road. This does not affect the Westbound side of the Bridge. For more information, see the PennDot website.

## 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: Natalie Popovich, Michael Soroka.*
- **Vigil Lights** From **Mat. Nancy K. Mell & Gregory Mell** for the newly departed servant, Eleanor Kovacs, and Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of family. From **Doris Wasilko** for the departed servants, grandfather, Andrew Wasilko, Aunt Ann Panik, and Uncle Ed Hollenbach. From **Charles A. Wasilko** for the departed servants, Uncle Ed Hollenbach, grandfather, Andrew Wasilko; for the health of Elizabeth Marie Hamilton. From **Marsha Wasilko** for the departed servants, grandfather, Andrew Wasilko (5/22/54), Uncle Ed Hollenbach, and Eleanor Kovacs. From **Lindy Hamilton** for the health of Elizabeth Marie Hamilton, the Hamilton and Scott families. From **Donya Yewisiak** for the departed servants, Fr. Vladimir & Fr. Igor-Veterans; for the health of Natalie Soroka and Hugh Conley. From **John Mahalchak family** for the health of friends & family, John, Cheryl, Gregory, Cindy, Daniel, Mary, Kayla Elizabeth, Sarah, Ivy, and Scarlet. From **John & Olga** for the health of Galina Vilcova and David Slimak; blessings for Peter Kowalcheck on his birthday. From **Mat. Joni Soroka** for the health Natalie, Hugh, and niece, Sophie on her high school graduation. From **Richard & Sonia Blaha** for the departed servants, parents, Pete & Dorothy, Betty, brother, Robert; for the health of father, Leo, family, friends, siblings, serving soldiers, and father, Leo; for birthdays, anniversaries, peace, safe journey, and special intention.

## Thank You

➤ to our **May donors Mat. Nancy Mell and Gregory Mell** for (Bulletin \$60, Communion Wine \$40, Altar Candles \$50) in memory of Philip and Ella Karavlan. From **Marsha Wasilko** (Holy Bread \$50) on the occasion of her birthday. From **Fr Thomas and Mat. Joni Soroka** (Incense \$10) for the health and salvation of daughter, Jacqueline, on her birthday.

## Bethesda – House of Mercy

The Holy Fathers see a correlation between the Pool of Bethesda and the Pool of the Church, that is, of Holy Baptism. The Sacred Chrysostom says that the Lord with this miracle makes a hint at the Mystery of Baptism. These things are not written simply and randomly, but they depict and imprint what is to take place in the future. "A Baptism was about to be given, possessing much power, and the greatest of gifts, a Baptism purging all sins, and making men alive instead of dead."

The waters of Bethesda had miraculous and not healing properties, because not everyone who entered became well, but only the first to enter after the water was stirred by the angel. And the water of Baptism receives the uncreated energy of God, through which man becomes a member of the Body of Christ. The baptismal font is the womb of the Church. Just as in the womb a man is conceived, carried and born, so in the spiritual womb of the Church man is conceived, carried and born spiritually and becomes a member of the Church. Miracles were performed in the Pool of Bethesda, but miracles happened to one man, at a given moment and with the action of an angel. But with the appearance of Christ all these conditions changed. He Himself is salvation, which is offered to everyone and at any time, as long as man wants it.

But because Holy Baptism is the introductory mystery and through it we become members of the Church, that is why the Pool of Bethesda symbolizes the Church of Christ. In the Church there is always the Grace of the Triune God and heals everyone. Bethesda means "house of mercy" and that is exactly what the Church is. (Continued on insert)

**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.**

# Hymns and Readings for Sunday, May 26

## **Tone 3 Troparion** (Resurrection)

Let the heavens rejoice!

Let the earth be glad!

For the Lord has shown strength with His arm.

He has trampled down death by death.

He has become the first born of the dead.

He has delivered us from the depths of hell,

and has granted to the world//

great mercy.

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.*

## **Tone 3 Kontakion** (Pentecostarion)

By Thy divine intercession, O Lord,

as Thou didst raise up the Paralytic of old,

so raise up my soul, paralyzed by sins and

thoughtless acts;

so that being saved I may sing to Thee://

“Glory to Thy power, O compassionate Christ!”

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

## **Tone 8 Kontakion** (Pascha)

Thou didst descend into the tomb, O Immortal,

Thou didst destroy the power of death.

In victory didst Thou arise, O Christ God,

proclaiming, “Rejoice!” to the Myrrhbearing

Women, //

granting peace to Thine Apostles, and bestowing

Resurrection on the fallen.

## **Tone 1 Prokeimenon** (Pentecostarion)

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us / as we have

set our hope on Thee! (Ps. 32:22)

## **Epistle of the Sunday** (Acts 9:32-42)

Now it came to pass, as Peter went through all parts of the country, that he also came down to the saints who dwelt in Lydda. There he found a certain man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden eight years and was paralyzed. And Peter said to him, “Aeneas, Jesus the Christ

heals you. Arise and make your bed.” Then he arose immediately. So all who dwelt at Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.

At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did. But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring him not to delay in coming to them. Then Peter arose and went with them. When he had come, they brought him to the upper room. And all the widows stood by him weeping, showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them. But Peter put them all out, and knelt down and prayed. And turning to the body he said, “Tabitha, arise.” And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. Then he gave her his hand and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive. And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed on the Lord.

## **Gospel of the Sunday** (John 5:1-15)

After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had. Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there, and

knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, “Do you want to be made well?”

The sick man answered Him, “Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me.”

Jesus said to him, “Rise, take up your bed and walk.” And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked.

And that day was the Sabbath. The Jews therefore said to him who was cured, “It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed.”

He answered them, “He who made me well said to me, ‘Take up your bed and walk.’ ”

Then they asked him, “Who is the Man who said to you, ‘Take up your bed and walk?’” But the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in that place. Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, “See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you.”

The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

## **Hymn to the Theotokos of the Feast**

The Angel cried to the Lady, full of grace:

“Rejoice, O pure Virgin! Again, I say: ‘Rejoice, your Son is risen from His three days in the tomb!

With Himself He has raised all the dead.’”

Rejoice, O ye people!

Shine, shine, O new Jerusalem! The glory of the Lord has shone on you. Exult now, and be glad, O Zion! Be radiant, O pure Theotokos, in the Resurrection of your Son!

## **Communion Hymn of the Sunday**

Receive the Body of Christ; taste the fountain of immortality! Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! (Ps. 148:1) Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

## **Bethesda – House of Mercy continued**

The Church is not a human organization, but a God-Human Organization, not a human association, but a God-Human Body. Everything in it is a mystery, which is why miracles happen all the time. And a "Lord have mercy" that one says in faith becomes a cause of receiving divine Grace. The Church is a constant Pentecost, in which the sick are healed and the dead are resurrected. We sense the Church as being a place of therapeutic healing, that is why we sinners feel comfortable, while the "pious" seek other places, other human organizations, to express their "piety" (social-charitable work, etc.).

The spiritual life is a continual progression. There is no end to the spiritual life, but a continuous perfecting. Man, from the purification of the heart, proceeds to the illumination of the nous and then enters the theoria (vision) of God, which has no end. Saint Gregory of Nyssa typically says that "virtue is a term that is without term". And elsewhere he says: "By virtue we learn a term of perfection, one that does not have a term." This progress has to do with a sense of sinfulness and the life of repentance.

Second, reading the Gospels is very important for the spiritual life, but understanding it does not depend on our cognitive state, but on our spiritual state. It is proportional to the degree of the illumination we have. Also the interpretation of the Gospel is offered authentically by the Church to its members and in fact during Divine Worship and in the spirit of Worship.

Remaining in the spiritual Bethesda, the Church (House of Mercy), having the spirit of constant and fiery repentance, will accept the visit of the God-man, who will heal and illuminate our existence.