



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. We want to get to know you! God bless you!

This Week

Wednesday, May 9

6:30 pm Daily Vespers
7:00 pm Bible Study (Acts 6)

Saturday, May 12

4:30 pm Confessions
5:00 pm Great Vespers

Sunday, May 13

9:15 am Adult Education
10:00 am Divine Liturgy
Church School after Divine Liturgy

Paschal Greeting

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

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.

Archpriest Thomas Soroka, *Rector*
Deacon Luke Loboda, *Attached*
Mat. Janet Mihalick, *Choir Director*

Fifth Sunday of Pascha: Samaritan Woman

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA
OrthodoxPittsburgh.org
May 6, 2018

Announcements

➤ The **St Nicholas Sisterhood** will meet today following coffee hour. All women of the parish are asked to attend.

➤ The men of our parish will sponsor our annual Mother's Day Brunch in honor of the women of our parish next Sunday, May 13. **Men of the parish** are reminded to give a **minimum** \$10 contribution to Bob Madalinsky to sponsor the cost of the brunch. Contributions must be in **today**. The men are asked to stay and clean up the hall after the brunch.

➤ 18th Annual Saints Cyril and Methodius Lecture will be held on Wednesday, May 16, 2018 at 7:00 pm at Saint John Byzantine Catholic Cathedral at 210 Greentree Road, Munhall PA 15210. **The speaker is Archbishop Alexander (Golitzin) of the OCA Diocese of the South and Bulgarian Diocese** on the topic "The Place of the Presence of God: Aphrahat of Persia's Portrait of the Christian Holy Man." Reservations **MUST** be made by Monday, April 30 using the online link at <http://www.bcs.edu/2018/03/14/18th-annual-ss-cyril-methodius-lecture/> or call 412-321-8383.

Thank You

to our May donors: Bulletin (\$50) from **Marsha Wasilko** on her birthday. Communion Wine (\$40) from **Alex and Olga Noskov** on Ilya's engagement. Altar Candles (\$25) from **Albena Ivanova** for Borislav. Incense (\$10) from **Fr Thomas and Mat Joni** on Jacqueline's birthday.

Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm:** *Known to be Hospitalized;* Garnette Kerchum (Passavant). *Home recovery* (none). *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* Olga Bednar, Georgiann Robes, Olga Tryszyn, Mary Zapp.

➤ **From Mat. Nancy K. Mell and Gregory Mell** for the departed servant, Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of family. **From Doris M. Wasilko** for the departed servants, (cousin) Susan Wasilko and Ann Polny; for the health of Marsha on her birthday~Many Years! **From Charles A. Wasilko** for the departed servants, Susie Wasilko and Ann Polny; for the health of (sister) Marsha on her birthday. **From Alexandria Tirpak** for the health of my family, Doris and my friend, Vaselia; special intentions. **From Marina Petrov** for the health of Raisa, Yevgeniy, Vladimir, Polina, Roman, Veronika, Elizabeth and Katia. **From John & Olga** for the health of Anatoly & Galina Vilkov and Elena Kowalcheck on her birthday. **From John & Nancy Pravlochak** for the health of our grandchildren, Marsha Wasilko on her birthday and Lois Fuller. **From Marsha Wasilko** for the departed servants, (cousin) Susan Wasilko (5/5/74) and Ann Polny (5/4/05); Happy Birthday & Many Years to Fr. Tom! **From Donya Yewisiak** for the health of Reader Leonard. **From Tatyana Sechler** for the departed servants, Polina, Lida, Slava, Bruce, Galina, Valentina; for the health of Diana, Veronika, Sergei, Tatyana and Kristofer. **For** the departed servants, Anna, Alexei, Eugenia, Nickolay and Marina; for the health of Roman, Yuri, Svetlana, Olga, Lida, Natalya, Elena, Michael and Nina. **From Mat. Joni Soroka** for the health of Fr. Tom and Jackie on their birthdays.

Congratulations to Douglas George Dean on the occasion of his baptism and reception into the Church of Christ today. God grant him many years!

Samaritan Woman

The Holy Gospel has not given us the name of the Samaritan woman. But the Holy Tradition of the Church remembers, and calls her in Greek-Photini, in Russian-Svetlana, in the Celtic languages-Fiona, in Western language-Claire. And all these names speak to us of one thing-light.

Having met the Lord Jesus Christ she has become a light shining in the world, a light that enlightens those who meet her. Every Saint is offered to us as an example; but we cannot always emulate the concrete ways in which a Saint lived, we cannot always repeat their way from earth to heaven. But we can learn from each of them two things. The one is that by the grace of God we can achieve what seems humanly impossible; that is, to become a person in the image and likeness of God, to be-in this world of darkness and tragedy which is in the power of lies-a word of truth, a sign of hope, the certainty that God can conquer if we only allow Him access to our souls. Because if the Kingdom of God is not established within us, if God is not enthroned in our minds and hearts, a fire that destroys everything unworthy of ourselves and of Him, we cannot spread God's Light around.

The Samaritan woman came to the well without any spiritual purpose; she came, as she came daily, to fetch water-and she met Christ. Each of us may meet our God at any turn in our life, when we are about our most homely tasks, if our hearts are turned in the right direction, if we are prepared to receive a message, to listen; indeed-to ask questions! Because the Samaritan woman asked a question of Christ, and what she heard transcended her question in such a way that she recognized in Him a prophet, and later-the Christ, the Savior of the world.

And this is what the Samaritan woman teaches all of us: be open at every moment of life, while we are busy with the simplest things, to receive the Divine word, to be illumined by the Divine Light, to be cleansed by His purity, to receive it in the depths of our souls, receive it with all our life, so that people seeing what we have become may believe that the Light has come into the world. *(Met Anthony of Sourozh)*

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 Today

Troparion of the Resurrection Tone 4

When the women disciples of the Lord learned from the angel the joyous message of Thy Resurrection, they cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the apostles: Death is overthrown! Christ our God is risen, granting the world great mercy.

Troparion of the Midfeast Tone 8

In the middle of the feast, O Savior, fill my thirsting soul with the waters of godliness. As Thou didst cry to all: If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink! O Christ God, Fountain of our life, glory to Thee!

Kontakion of the Sunday Tone 8

The Samaritan woman came to the well in faith; she saw Thee, the Water of Wisdom, and drank abundantly. She inherited the Kingdom on High and is ever glorified.

Kontakion of the Midfeast Tone 4

Christ God, the Creator and Master of all Cried to all in the midst of the Feast of the law: Come and draw the water of immortality! We fall before Thee and faithfully cry: Grant us Thy bounties, for Thou art the Fountain of our Life.

Prokeimenon (Psalm 46) Tone 3

Sing praises to our God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises!

Epistle (Acts 11:19-26, 29-30)

Now those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only. But some of them were men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord.

Then news of these things came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch. When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord. For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord.

Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul. And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea. This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

Gospel (John 4-5-42)

So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.

Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? Are You greater than our

father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?"

Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw."

Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here."

The woman answered and said, "I have no husband."

Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly."

The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things."

Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."

And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why are You talking with her?"

The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, "Come, see a

Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" Then they went out of the city and came to Him.

In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat."

But He said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know."

Therefore the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?" Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. For in this the saying is true: 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors."

And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I ever did." So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. And many more believed because of His own word.

Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world."

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!

(St Photini/Svetlana continued)

Three years passed, and Nero sent to the prison for one of his servants, who had been locked up. The messengers reported to him that Saints Sebastian, Photinus and Joses, who had been blinded, had completely recovered, and that people were visiting them to hear their preaching, and indeed the whole prison had been transformed into a bright and fragrant place where God was glorified.

Nero then gave orders to crucify the saints, and to beat their naked bodies with straps. On the fourth day the emperor sent servants to see whether the martyrs were still alive. But, approaching the place of the tortures, the servants fell blind. An angel of the Lord freed the martyrs from their crosses and healed them. The saints took pity on the blinded servants, and restored their sight by their prayers to the Lord. Those who were healed came to believe in Christ and were soon baptized.

In an impotent rage Nero gave orders to flay the skin from Saint Photina and to throw the martyr down a well. Sebastian, Photinus and Joses had their legs cut off, and they were thrown to dogs, and then had their skin flayed off. The sisters of Saint Photina also suffered terrible torments. Nero gave orders to cut off their breasts and then to flay their skin. An expert in cruelty, the emperor readied the fiercest execution for Saint Photis: they tied her by the feet to the tops of two bent-over trees. When the ropes were cut the trees sprang upright and tore the martyr apart. The emperor ordered the others beheaded. Saint Photina was removed from the well and locked up in prison for twenty days.

After this Nero had her brought to him and asked if she would now relent and offer sacrifice to the idols. Saint Photina spit in the face of the emperor, and laughing at him, said, "O most impious of the blind, you profligate and stupid man! Do you think me so deluded that I would consent to renounce my Lord Christ and instead offer sacrifice to idols as blind as you?"

Hearing such words, Nero gave orders to again throw the martyr down the well, where she surrendered her soul to God (+ ca. 66).

Today in Church School

Today's lesson: The Parable of the Sower

Questions to ask/review:

- What is a parable? In this parable, who is the sower? What are the seeds? What is the soil?
- What kind of people are hard, rocky ground? Would seeds grow well there?
- What kind of people are easily dried out by the hot sun? Would seeds grow well there?
- What kind of people are so shallow the birds can eat the seeds?
- What kind of things might be thorns that take over our lives?
- What kind of people are rich soil?
- How can we be like the rich soil? What can we change with God's help?

Suggested activities at home:

- Read the scripture before bed: Mark 4:1-20 and Luke 8:5-15.
- Plant seeds in your garden at home. Review and discuss the parable as you both examine the soil.
- Prayer: Lord Jesus, enrich the soil of our hearts so that your Word may grow within us. Amen.



St Photini (Svetlana)

The Holy Martyr Photina (Svetlana) the Samaritan Woman, her sons Victor (named Photinus) and Joses; and her sisters Anatola, Phota, Photis, Paraskeva, Kyriake; Nero's daughter Domnina; and the Martyr Sebastian: The holy Martyr Photina was the Samaritan Woman, with whom the Savior conversed at Jacob's Well (John. 4:5-42).

During the time of the emperor Nero (54-68), who displayed excessive cruelty against Christians, Saint Photina lived in Carthage with her younger son Joses and fearlessly preached the Gospel there. Her eldest son Victor fought bravely in the Roman army against barbarians, and was appointed military commander in the city of Attalia (Asia Minor). Later, Nero called him to Italy to arrest and punish Christians.

Sebastian, an official in Italy, said to Saint Victor, "I know that you, your mother and your brother, are followers of Christ. As a friend I advise you to submit to the will of the emperor. If you inform on any Christians, you will receive their wealth. I shall write to your mother and brother, asking them not to preach Christ in public. Let them practice their faith in secret."

Saint Victor replied, "I want to be a preacher of Christianity like my mother and brother." Sebastian said, "O Victor, we all know what woes await you, your mother and brother." Then Sebastian suddenly felt a sharp pain in his eyes. He was dumbfounded, and his face was somber.

For three days he lay there blind, without uttering a word. On the fourth day he declared, "The God of the Christians is the only true God." Saint Victor asked why Sebastian had suddenly changed his mind. Sebastian replied, "Because Christ is calling me." Soon he was baptized, and immediately regained his sight. Saint Sebastian's servants, after witnessing the miracle, were also baptized.

Reports of this reached Nero, and he commanded that the Christians be brought to him at Rome. Then the Lord Himself appeared to the confessors

and said, "Fear not, for I am with you. Nero, and all who serve him, will be vanquished." The Lord said to Saint Victor, "From this day forward, your name will be Photinus, because through you, many will be enlightened and will believe in Me." The Lord then told the Christians to strengthen and encourage Saint Sebastian to persevere until the end.

All these things, and even future events, were revealed to Saint Photina. She left Carthage in the company of several Christians and joined the confessors in Rome.

At Rome the emperor ordered the saints to be brought before him and he asked them whether they truly believed in Christ. All the confessors refused to renounce the Savior. Then the emperor gave orders to smash the martyrs' finger joints. During the torments, the confessors felt no pain, and their hands remained unharmed.



Nero ordered that Saints Sebastian, Photinus and Joses be blinded and locked up in prison, and Saint Photina and her five sisters Anatola, Phota, Photis, Paraskeva and Kyriake were sent to the imperial court under the supervision of Nero's daughter Domnina. Saint Photina converted both Domnina and all her servants to Christ. She also converted a sorcerer, who had brought her poisoned food to kill her. *(continued on back page)*