



## 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!

## This Week

### Tuesday, December 10

9:00 am Matins (Morning Service)

9:30 am-12:00 pm Office Hours/Church Open

### Wednesday, December 11

6:30 pm Vespers (Evening Service)

7:00 pm Bible Study (Romans 1-2)

### Thursday, December 12

9:00 am Matins (Morning Service)

9:30 am-12:00 pm Office Hours/Church Open

### Saturday, December 14

4:30 pm Confessions

5:00 pm Vespers with Cathedral Vigil

### Sunday, December 15

9:15 am Adult Education

10:00 am Divine Liturgy

After Services Church School

**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

### Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA

OrthodoxPittsburgh.org

December 8, 2019

## Announcements

➤ Everyone is invited downstairs for our annual St Nicholas Day Dinner immediately after the Divine Liturgy today. With thanks to the St Nicholas Sisterhood **this dinner is absolutely free for all.** We thank everyone who made this dinner possible.

➤ We're honored to have **His Eminence, Archbishop Melchisedek** leading us in the Divine Liturgy today. May God richly bless him with good health as he guides our archdiocese.

➤ Congratulations and God's blessings to **Jonathan Skowron** who is being tonsured to the lesser clerical rank of Reader at the beginning of the Divine Liturgy today. Reader Jonathan is enrolled in the Diaconal Vocations Program of the Orthodox Church in America under the mentorship of Fr Thomas. Many blessed years!

➤ Our **Annual Angel Tree Project**, benefitting those in need in the McKees Rocks area, is **now available downstairs.** When you choose an ornament from the tree, please bring the unwrapped, new gifts back to Church no later than Sunday, December 15. Please attach the ornament to the gift. Gifts are distributed by the Holy Family Institute. If you have any questions, please contact project coordinator Donya Yewisiak at 412-848-7513. Thank you for your generosity and support!

➤ Join us for our **Adult Education class** at 9:15 am every first and third Sunday of the month. We are currently discussing the "Four Pillars" document of His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon.

## Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm:** *Known to be hospitalized* (none). *Home:* Georgiann Robes. *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* Garnette Kerchum, Eleanor Kovacs, Olga Tryszyn, Mary Zapp.

➤ **From Mat. Nancy K. Mell and Gregory Mell** for the departed servant, Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of family and Michelle Bittner. **From Doris Wasilko** for the departed servants from the Wasilko & Dyczko families; for the health of the Wasilko family. **From Marsha Wasilko** for the health of Nancy Pravlochak and Georgiann Robes. **From Lindy Hamilton** for the health of Elaine Hamilton. **From Donya Yewisiak** for the health of Nancy Pravlochak. **From George & Nancy Shaytar** for the health of Michelle Bittner. **From Edith Humphrey** for the departed servant, Lawrence Hurtado. **From Michelle Bittner** for the health of Helen Billak Henry, Georgiann Robes and Eleanor Kovacs. **From Charles A. Wasilko** for the health of (sisters) Doris & Marsha, Michelle Bittner and (aunt) Johanna.

## Thank You

➤ to our December donors! Bulletin (\$60) **Jan and Chuck Widel**, in memory of departed members of the Puskar and Morris families. Holy Bread (\$50) and Communion Wine (\$40) from **Alex and Olga Noskov** for the health and salvation of newly wed couple Ilya and Kara Noskov. Candles (\$50) from **Donya Yewisiak** in memory of mother, Matushka Olga Soroka. Incense (\$10) from **Jim and Leslie Wokutch** in memory of Deacon Joseph Mell. May God richly bless all of our donors for thoughtfulness and generosity!

**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:** St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews **Verse** (younger classes): "having become so much better than the angels...(Heb 1:4)

**Questions to ask/review** (younger classes):

- What are angels? What is a messenger?
- Give examples of angels in the Bible. What types are there?
- Who has a guardian angel?
- When do you hear about the angels during Divine Liturgy?

**Verse** (older classes): "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Heb 4:12)

**Questions to ask/review** (older classes):

- Give examples of figures in the Bible who made mistakes.
- Did they try to hide their sin from God? What happened?
- Can we hide our sins from God? Should we try?
- What should we do when we sin? How will God respond?
- How is the word of God sharper than a two-edged sword?

**Suggested Activities at home:**

- Look for pictures of angels. Make angels from materials at home like paper plates and paper towel tubes.
- Encourage your child to prepare for confession during the Nativity season. What sins have they hidden from their minds and God?
- Prayer: Lord, send my guardian angel to watch over me. OR Lord, may your Word open my heart, so that I may be healed.

# Hymns and Readings for Today

## **Troparion of the Resurrection Tone 8**

Thou didst descend from on high, O Merciful One!

Thou didst accept the three day burial to free us from our sufferings!

O Lord, our Life and Resurrection: Glory to Thee.

## **Troparion of St Nicholas Tone 4**

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.

## **Troparion of Venerable Patapius Tone 8**

The image of God was truly preserved in thee, O Father,

for thou didst take up the Cross and follow Christ.

By so doing thou didst teach us to disregard the flesh for it passes away

but to care instead for the soul, since it is immortal.

Therefore thy spirit, venerable Patapius, rejoices with the Angels.

## **Kontakion of the Resurrection Tone 8**

By rising from the tomb, Thou didst raise the dead and resurrect Adam.

Eve exults in Thy Resurrection,

and the world celebrates Thy rising from the dead, O greatly Merciful One!

## **Kontakion of Venerable Patapius Tone 3**

Thy temple is found to be a source of healing, and the people flock to it eagerly, O saint.

They seek the healing of their diseases

and the forgiveness of their sins, for thou art a protector for all those in need, ven'erable Patápius.

## **Kontakion of the Theotokos Tone 8**

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.

## **Prokeimenon (Psalm 75/76) Tone 8**

Pray and make your vows before the Lord, our God!

## **Epistle of the Sunday (Eph 4:1-6)**

I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

## **Gospel of the Sunday (Luke 17:12-19)**

Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!"

So when He saw them, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed.

And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan.

So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."

## The Writings of St Herman

"A true Christian is made so by faith and love toward Christ. Our sins do not in the least hinder our Christianity, according to the words of the Savior Himself. He deigned to say: 'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to salvation' (cf. Luke 5:32); 'There is more joy in heaven over one who repents than over ninety righteous ones' (cf. Luke 15:7). Likewise concerning the sinful woman who touched his feet, He deigned to say to Simon the Pharisee: 'To one who has love, a great debt is forgiven, but from one who has no love, even a small debt will be required' (cf. Luke 7:47). From these considerations a Christian should bring himself to hope and joy, and pay not the least attention to despair that is inflicted on one. Here one needs the shield of faith.

"Sin, to one who loves God, is nothing other than an arrow from the enemy in battle. A true Christian is a warrior fighting his way through the regiments of the unseen enemy to his heavenly homeland, according to the words of the Apostle: 'Our homeland is in heaven' (cf. Phil. 3:20). About warriors he says: 'Our warfare is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers' (cf. Eph. 6:12).

"The vain desires of this world separate us from our homeland; love for them and habit clothe our soul, as it were, in a hideous garment. This is called by the Apostles the outward man. We, traveling on the journey of this life and calling upon God to help us, must divest ourselves of this hideousness and clothe ourselves in new desires, in a new love of the age to come, and thereby receive knowledge of how near or how far we are from our heavenly homeland. But it is not possible to do this quickly; rather one must follow the example of sick people who, wishing the desired health, do not leave off seeking means to cure themselves."

