



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 use the QR Code as your offering today. Please join us downstairs following the service. We want to get to know you! God bless you!



This Week

Sunday, August 25

10:00 am Divine Liturgy

Tuesday, August 27

9:00 am Daily Matins

9:30 am to 12:00 pm Office Hours

Wednesday, August 28

6:30 pm Vespers

7:00 pm Bible Study

Thursday, August 29: Beheading of the Forerunner

9:30 am Divine Liturgy

10:30 am to 12:00 pm Office Hours

Saturday, August 31

4:00 pm Community Food Pantry

4:30 pm Confessions

5:00 pm Parish Vigil

6:00 pm Social Night

Sunday, September 1

10:00 am Divine Liturgy

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*

Deacon John Skowron, *Attached*

Rdr James Wargo and Danielle Bartko, Choir Dirs

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA

OrthodoxPittsburgh.org

August 25, 2024

Announcements

➤ This coming Thursday we will commemorate the **Beheading of John the Forerunner** and Baptist of our Lord. That day is considered a "strict" fast day which generally means one meal in the evening (often done after a light breakfast). Divine Liturgy begins at 9:30 am.

➤ Last year, the parishioners extended a hand of financial support to Alex **Listvinsky for his studies at St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary** in the three-year Master of Divinity program. We ask that you once again **consider making an offering to help defray the costs of his education** and make an investment in the future of Orthodox clergy in America. Please earmark your gift as "Seminary." Thank you and may God bless you!

➤ Please remember that every **first Sunday of the month** is potluck coffee hour. The next one is next Sunday, September 1. Please bring a dish to share!

➤ **Church School will begin on Sunday, September 8.** Our excellent Church School offers meaningful education to students from PreK to Grade 12. Please submit the names and grades of your students to Matushka Joni Soroka (jonisoroka@yahoo.com) this week. Additionally, we are seeking additional teachers for our growing number of students.

➤ Our annual **Church Picnic will be held on Sunday, September 22** at Clever Park.

➤ Our **Slavic Food Fest** is scheduled for **Saturday, October 11.** We will have an informal planning meeting at with Fr Thomas near the end of Coffee Hour today.!

Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm:** *Known to be hospitalized (none); Home:* John Mahalchak (son). William Warnak, Nancy Shaytar, Natalie Toooh. *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* 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 servants from the Wasilko and Dyczko families; for the health of the Wasilko family. From **Charles A. Wasilko** for the health of sisters, Doris & Marsha, and cousin, Cynthia. From **Marsha Wasilko** for the health of the Wasilko family. From **M/M Richard Blaha** for the newly departed, Leo and Kera; for the departed, parents, Leo & Betty, Pete & Dorothy, Uncles Mike, Edward, and John; for the health of family, friends, siblings, and serving soldiers for their birthdays, anniversaries, special intention, and peace. From **John & Olga** for the health of Galina Vilcova. From **John Kowalcheck** for the health and salvation of our families. From **John Mahalchak family** for the departed servants, John (8/13), and Veronica; for the health of friends & family, John, Cheryl, Daniel, Mary, Gregory, Cindy, Kayla Elizabeth, and Margaret. From **the Pravlochaks** for the health of brother, David Herko, Marilyn Maiello, and family. From **Lindy Hamilton** for the health of the Hamilton & Scott families.

Thank You

➤ to our **August donors: Mertz Family** (\$25 Altar Candles) for the health of Christoph on his birthday. **Fr Thomas and Mat Joni Soroka** (\$10 Incense) for the health of daughter, Natalie, on her birthday. **Donya Yewisiak** (\$50 Holy Bread) in memory of (father) Fr Vladimir Soroka.

Draw Near in Awe

Let us also then touch the hem of His garment, or rather, if we be willing, we have Him entire. For indeed His body is set before us now, not His garment only, but even His body; not for us to touch it only, but also to eat, and be filled. Let us now then draw near with faith, every one that hath an infirmity. For if they that touched the hem of His garment drew from Him so much virtue, how much more they that possess Him entire? Now to draw near with faith is not only to receive the offering, but also with a pure heart to touch it; to be so minded, as approaching Christ Himself. For what, if thou hear no voice? Yet thou seest Him laid out; or rather thou dost also hear His voice, while He is speaking by the evangelists.

Believe, therefore, that even now it is that supper, at which He Himself sat down. For this is in no respect different from that. For neither doth man make this and Himself the other; but both this and that is His own work. When therefore thou seest the priest delivering it unto thee, account not that it is the priest that doeth so, but that it is Christ's hand that is stretched out. Let us hear therefore, both priests and subjects, what we have had vouchsafed to us; let us hear and tremble. Of His own holy flesh He hath granted us our fill; He hath set before us Himself sacrificed.

Let no Judas then approach this table, no Simon; nay, for both these perished through covetousness. Let us flee then from this gulf; neither let us account it enough for our salvation, if after we have stripped widows and orphans, we offer for this table a gold and jewelled cup. Nay, if thou desire to honor the sacrifice, offer thy soul, for which also it was slain; cause that to become golden; but if that remain worse than lead or potter's clay, while the vessel is of gold, what is the profit?

St John Chrysostom

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, August 25

Tone 8 Troparion (Resurrection)

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!

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 3 Troparion (Apostles)

Holy Apostles Bartholomew and Titus, entreat the merciful God,//

to grant our souls forgiveness of transgressions!

Tone 8 Kontakion (Resurrection)

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!

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

Tone 4 Kontakion (St. Bartholomew)

Thou hast appeared to the universe as a great sun,

shining with the radiance of thy teachings and awesome miracles.//

Thou dost enlighten those who honor thee, O Apostle of the Lord, Bartholomew

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 6 Kontakion (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 8 Prokeimenon (Resurrection)

Pray and make your vows / before the Lord, our God! (Ps. 75:10a)

Epistle of the Sunday (1 Corinthians 3:9-17)

For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building. According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.

Gospel of the Sunday (Matthew 14:22-34)

Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side,

while He sent the multitudes away. And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there. But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary.

Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear.

But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid."

And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water."

So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!"

And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God."

When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret.

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! (Ps. 148:1) Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!



We become too much like Peter when we relate to God based on getting what we want, which is really a way of saying that our faith is conditional. Our trust is then not actually in the Lord, but in ourselves. We may not ask to walk on the water, but we judge the importance of faithfulness to the Lord on whether He gives us the results that we want. When things do not go as we would like, the weakness of our faith becomes clear, for then we sink into doubt, despair, and a lack of commitment to find the healing for our souls. When that happens, we still have the choice of whether to drown spiritually or to come to our senses and call out "Lord, save me!" We have the choice between destroying God's temple by further weakening our faith and separating ourselves from the Body of Christ or of calling out to the Lord in humble repentance from the depths of our hearts. Remember that He had compassion on St. Peter, the thief on the cross, and the tax collector, who could only say "God, have mercy on me, a sinner." We must trust that He will do the same for us when we approach Him with the same spiritual clarity as they did.

As Orthodox Christians, we never encounter the Lord simply as isolated individuals, but as members of His Body, the Church. We have put Him on in baptism, become temples of the Holy Spirit through chrismation, and received His Body and Blood in the Eucharist. We are members of Him and of one another. He is the vine and we are the branches. If we find ourselves spiritually weak, confused, and uninterested, we should take a clear look at our relationship with Christ in His Body, the Church. It is through conscientious participation in the full sacramental and ascetical life of the Church that we will open ourselves to receive the strength to offer ourselves to God as His fellow workers, field, and building. If we take the life of the Church for granted or separate ourselves from it, we risk destroying our integrity as God's temple. We step away from our one true foundation and put ourselves in a place where can easily sink like stones.

Fr. Philip LeMasters