



# 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

Sunday, December 5

10:00 am Divine Liturgy/Church School

7:00 pm Vespers with Cathedral Vigil

Monday, December 6: St Nicholas of Myra

9:30 am Divine Liturgy

Festive Luncheon following

Tuesday, December 7

9:00 am Daily Matins

10:30 am-12:00 pm Office Hours

Wednesday, December 8

6:30 pm Daily Vespers

7:00 pm Bible Study

Thursday, December 9

9:00 am Daily Matins

10:30 am-12:00 pm Office Hours

Saturday, December 11

Vespers with Cathedral Vigil

Sunday, December 12

10:00 am Divine Liturgy/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*

Deacon John Skowron, *Attached*

## Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA

OrthodoxPittsburgh.org December 5, 2021

# Announcements

➤ We warmly welcome His Eminence Archbishop Melchisedek who is presiding at the Divine Liturgy this morning. May God continue to grant him "safety, peace, life, health, and salvation to rightly divide the word of truth."

➤ Everyone is cordially invited downstairs to continue the celebration of our patronal feast! Our annual St Nicholas Day Luncheon is free of charge. Thank you to Bob Madalinsky and the kitchen crew as well as the St Nicholas Sisterhood for helping to provide today's luncheon.

➤ This Saturday, December 11 from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm a Diocesan Advent Retreat will be held at St John the Baptist Orthodox Church, 601 Boone Ave, Canonsburg PA 15137. The Title is "Surprising Saints: Holy People's Struggles and Triumphs Can Inspire Our Lives" led by Matushka Valerie Zahirsky. There is no cost but please RSVP to frdavidvernak@verizon.net by December 6.

➤ We are now in the period of the Nativity Fast (in the west called Advent). This period of preparation for Christmas involves turning our minds, hearts, and bodies toward the celebration of the Nativity of Christ through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Please make these 40 days before Christmas a time of reflection in order to appropriately celebrate Christmas with a pure heart.

➤ Today is the deadline for the Angel Tree gifts. Thank you for your generosity! Please contact Donya Yewisiak, chair, with any questions.



# Prayers

➤ Ill and infirm: *Known to be hospitalized:* (none)  
*Home:* George Shaytar. *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* Garnette Kerchum, Eleanor Kovacs, Natalie Popovich, Olga Tryszyn  
➤Vigil Lights From Charles A. Wasilko for the health of sisters, Doris and Marsha. From Doris Wasilko for the departed servant, grandfather, Theodore Dyczko; for the health of the Wasilko family. From Marsha Wasilko for the health of the Wasilko family. From Mat. Nancy K. Mell & Gregory Mell for departed family members, Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of family. From the John Mahalchak Family for the health of friends, family, John, Cheryl, Gregory, Kayla Elizabeth and Cindy. From Alexandria Tirpak for the departed servants, John & John; for the health of my family, my grandchildren, Michael, Tatiana, Ana, Wyatt, Owen, Isabel, Rachel and for me on my birthday; special intentions. From Lindy Hamilton for the health of Elaine Hamilton; special intentions. From John & Olga for the health of Galina Vilkova and safe travels for our families. From Tatyana Sechler for the departed servants, Polina, Galina, Slava, Diana, Valentina, Andrei, Bruce, Sergei and Marina; for the health of Tatyana, Edward, Christopher, Sergei, Veronika and Adrianna. From Nancy Shaytar for the health of husband, George.

# Thank You

➤ to our December donors: Jan Widel (Bulletin \$60) in memory of departed members of the Puskar and Morris families; Donya Yewisiak (Holy Bread \$50) in memory of Mat Olga Soroka; Soroka Family (Altar Candles \$50) in memory of Barbara Naiser (5 yrs), Albenia Ivanova (Communion Wine \$40) in memory of father, Rumen Iosifov and Archpriest George Livanos; John Mahalchak Family (Incense \$10) for the health of friends and family.

# This week in Church School

Today's lesson: Sermon on the Mount

Questions to ask/review:

- What does it mean to be "poor in spirit"? (humble, reliant on God)
- In what way should we mourn? (for the sin of ourselves and all people)
- Who is meek? (someone who is gentle and kind)
- What does it mean to "hunger and thirst after righteousness"?
- What is mercy? Are we merciful? When? Do we need mercy?
- What does it mean to be "pure in heart"? (a clean and free from evil desires)
- Who is a peacemaker? What makes them a peacemaker?
- What does "persecuted" mean? Have you ever been persecuted for being a Christian?
- Has anyone ever told a lie about you? Does it hurt? Why should we still rejoice?
- Discuss the parable of the two houses.: What is the rock? What is the sand?
- Which house is easier to build? In a storm what happens to each house?

Suggested activities at home:

- With older children, work on memorizing and/or singing the Beatitudes.
- The light of the world: Look for sources of light all around. Say the evening prayers by candlelight only, explaining that Jesus is the light of the world, and we use candles in Church for light.
- The rock: Take a walk and collect pretty rocks.
- Salt of the earth: Make a meal with no salt one night!

Prayer: In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Jesus, let Your light shine in me to give light to all the world around me. Amen.

*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, December 5

## Tone 7 Troparion (*Resurrection*)

By Thy Cross Thou didst destroy death.  
To the thief Thou didst open Paradise.  
For the Myrrhbearers Thou didst change  
weeping into joy,  
and Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ  
God,  
to proclaim that Thou art risen,//  
granting the world great mercy.

## 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.

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

## Tone 7 Kontakion (*Resurrection*)

The dominion of death can no longer hold men  
captive,  
for Christ descended, shattering and destroying  
its powers.  
Hell is bound, while the Prophets rejoice and  
cry:  
“The Savior has come to those in faith;//  
enter, you faithful, into the Resurrection!”

*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 7 Prokeimenon (*Resurrection*)

The Lord shall give strength to His people. / The  
Lord shall bless His people with peace. (*Ps*  
*28/29:11*)

## Epistle of the Sunday (Ephesians 2:14-22)

For He Himself is our peace, who has made both  
one, and has broken down the middle wall of  
separation, having abolished in His flesh the  
enmity, that is, the law of commandments  
contained in ordinances, so as to create in  
Himself one new man from the two, thus  
making peace, and that He might reconcile them  
both to God in one body through the cross,  
thereby putting to death the enmity. And He  
came and preached peace to you who were afar  
off and to those who were near. For through  
Him we both have access by one Spirit to the  
Father.

Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and  
foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints  
and members of the household of God, having  
been built on the foundation of the apostles and  
prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief  
cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being  
fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the  
Lord, in whom you also are being built together  
for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

## 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.”

## Communion Hymn

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

# Defending the Faith

After his consecration as archbishop, Saint  
Nicholas remained a great ascetic, appearing to  
his flock as an image of gentleness, kindness  
and love for people. This was particularly  
precious for the Lycian Church during the  
persecution of Christians under the emperor  
Diocletian (284-305). Bishop Nicholas, locked  
up in prison together with other Christians for  
refusing to worship idols, sustained them and  
exhorted them to endure the fetters,  
punishment and torture. The Lord preserved  
him unharmed. Upon the accession of Saint  
Constantine (May 21) as emperor, Saint Nicholas  
was restored to his flock, which joyfully  
received their guide and intercessor.

Despite his great gentleness of spirit and purity  
of heart, Saint Nicholas was a zealous and  
ardent warrior of the Church of Christ. Fighting  
evil spirits, the saint made the rounds of the  
pagan temples and shrines in the city of Myra

and its surroundings, shattering the idols and  
turning the temples to dust.

In the year 325 Saint Nicholas was a participant  
in the First Ecumenical Council. This Council  
proclaimed the Nicean Symbol of Faith, and he  
stood up against the heretic Arius with the likes  
of Saints Sylvester the Bishop of Rome (January  
2), Alexander of Alexandria (May 29), Spyridon  
of Trimythontos (December 12) and other  
Fathers of the Council.

Saint Nicholas, fired with zeal for the Lord,  
assailed the heretic Arius with his words, and  
also struck him upon the face. For this reason,  
he was deprived of the emblems of his episcopal  
rank and placed under guard. But several of the  
holy Fathers had the same vision, seeing the  
Lord Himself and the Mother of God returning  
to him the Gospel and omophorion. The Fathers  
of the Council agreed that the audacity of the  
saint was pleasing to God, and restored the saint  
to the office of bishop.

Having returned to his own diocese, the saint  
brought it peace and blessings, sowing the word  
of Truth, uprooting heresy, nourishing his flock  
with sound doctrine, and also providing food for  
their bodies. The face of Saint Nicholas  
resembled that of an Angel, resplendent with  
divine grace. A brilliant ray shone from his face,  
like that which shone from the face of Moses  
(Exodus 34:29), so that those who looked at him  
were astonished. Whoever was oppressed by  
some affliction or passion of the soul had only to  
behold the Saint, and his sorrow was eased at  
once. As for those who conversed with him, they  
soon found themselves advancing on the path of  
virtue. Not only were the faithful moved to  
compassion, but unbelievers as well, and they  
directed their steps on the path of salvation  
when they heard him speak. The evil of unbelief  
which had been implanted in their hearts since  
childhood was uprooted, and in its place, the  
word of truth was sown.