



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!

Schedule This Week

Sunday, March 20

10:00 am Divine Liturgy / Church School after

Monday, March 21

5:00 pm Lenten Vespers

Tuesday, March 22

9:00 am Lenten Matins (Morning Service)

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

Wednesday, March 23

6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

Lenten Fellowship Meal following Liturgy

Thursday, March 24

9:00 am Lenten Matins (Morning Service)

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

Friday, March 25 – Great Feast of Annunciation

6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

Saturday, March 26

5:00 pm Vespers with Cathedral Vigil

Sunday, March 27

10:00 am Divine Liturgy / Church School after

4:30 pm Archdiocesan Vespers

St Alexander Nevsky, Allison Park PA

➤ Important upcoming dates:

April 9 – Cleanup Day

April 17 – Palm Sunday (Western Easter)

April 24 – Pascha: Resurrection of Christ

Archpriest Thomas Soroka, Rector

Deacon Luke Loboda, Attached

Deacon John Skowron, Attached

St Gregory Palamas Sunday

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA

OrthodoxPittsburgh.org

March 20, 2022

Announcements

➤ **During Lent we are called to increase our prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. We are called to offer to God this tithe (tenth) of the year to once again make right our relationship with God. Remember that our fast (abstinence from meat and dairy, as well as reducing the amount of food and certain periods of not eating) is a communal effort and we should seek to enjoy it to the best of our ability, but not to the point of discouragement. May God strengthen you!**

➤ During the Lenten season, we gather mid-week to be strengthened by receiving the Eucharist at the Presanctified Liturgy. Afterwards, we share a simple meal in the church hall. **We are in need of persons/families to prepare a fast-friendly meal (no meat, fish, or dairy) for several of the Wednesdays.** Please see the sign-up sheet in the church hall and consider sponsoring a meal.

This Friday we will celebrate the **Great Feast of the Annunciation** with a Vespers Divine Liturgy at 6:00 pm. There will be no communal meal after the Liturgy.

➤ **Mark your calendar!** A choir from **St Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary** will be visiting our parish on **Saturday, April 2 at 5:00 pm** to sing the Vigil service. Join us to be inspired by their beautiful and prayerful singing and help us support the theological education of our young seminarians.

Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm:** *Known to be hospitalized:* (none) *Home:* George Shaytar. *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* Eleanor Kovacs, 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 **Marsha Wasilko** for the departed servant, Uncle Michael Wasilko. From **Charles A. Wasilko** for the departed servant, Uncle Michael Wasilko; for the health of sisters, Doris and Marsha. From **Doris Wasilko** for the departed servant, Uncle Michael Wasilko; for the health of the Wasilko family. From **Mat. Joni Soroka** for the departed servant, grandmother, Elizabeth Corey; for the health of sister-in-law, Robin Naiser and Rdr. Michael Soroka; private intention. From **John Mahalchak family** for the health of friends & family, Cheryl, John, Gregory, Kayla Elizabeth, Cindy, Daniel, Mary, and Kevin. From **Daniel Glozzer** for the departed servants, Bonnie Glozzer, and all those in Ukraine; for the health Rico, Jayme, Sarah, and myself. From **John & Olga** for the health of Galina Vilкова.

Thank You

➤ to our March donors, **Jan and Chuck Widel** (Bulletin \$60) in memory of the departed from the Puskar, Widel, and Morris families; **Donya Yewisiak** (Altar Candles \$25) in memory of brother, Leonard Soroka, and (Incense \$10) in memory of Michelle Bittner.

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.

This Week in Church School

Today's lesson: Lazarus

Questions to ask/review:

- Where was Jesus when Lazarus became sick? (not nearby)
- Who were the sisters of Lazarus? (Mary and Martha)
- How was Lazarus doing by the time Jesus came? (in the tomb for 4 days)
- Why is the 4 days important; why did Lazarus "already smell"? (The 4 days show true corruption, the rottenness inside us all, defeated by Jesus in the tomb, since He alone is without corruption or sin)
- How did Jesus describe Himself to Martha? (I am the Resurrection and the Life, He who believes in Me will live forever)
- Why did Jesus cry? (he loved Lazarus, and he grieves because death was not supposed to happen to humanity)
- What happened to Lazarus after Jesus prayed? (he was resurrected and Jesus told him to walk out of the tomb)
- Was this the first person Jesus raised from the dead? (No, the son of the widow of Nain and the daughter of Jairus, but both had just died; they had not been dead for 4 days)

Suggested activities at home:

- Visit a cemetery. Pray for your departed loved ones or those buried there. Discuss the story of Lazarus and our hope in the Resurrection.
 - Play a game where your child wraps themselves in clothes and hides in the closet. Tell them to come out like Lazarus and discuss the meaning of Christ's act.
 - Read the scripture at bedtime: John 11.
- Prayer** Lord Jesus, by raising Lazarus from the dead before Your passion, you confirmed the universal resurrection, O Christ God! Amen.

Hymns and Readings for Sunday, March 20

Tone 6 Troparion (Resurrection)

The Angelic Powers were at Thy tomb;
the guards became as dead men.
Mary stood by Thy grave,
seeking Thy most pure body.
Thou didst capture hell not being tempted by it.
Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life.
O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead,//
glory to Thee.

Tone 8 Troparion (St. Gregory Palamas)

O light of Orthodoxy, teacher of the Church, its confirmation,
O ideal of monks and invincible champion of theologians,
O wonderworking Gregory, glory of
Thessalonica and preacher of grace,//
always intercede before the Lord that our souls
may be saved!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 4 Kontakion (from the Lenten Triodion)

Now is the time for action!
Judgment is at the doors!
So let us rise and fast,
offering alms with tears of compunction and crying:
“Our sins are more in number than the sands of the sea;
but forgive us, O Master of all,//
so that we may receive the incorruptible crowns!”

Tone 5 Prokeimenon

Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us / and preserve us from this generation forever.

Epistle of the Sunday (Hebrews 1:10-2:3)

“You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth,
And the heavens are the work of Your hands.
They will perish, but You remain;
And they will all grow old like a garment;
Like a cloak You will fold them up,
And they will be changed.
But You are the same,
And Your years will not fail.”

But to which of the angels has He ever said:

“Sit at My right hand,
Till I make Your enemies Your footstool?”

Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?

Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.
For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him,

Gospel of the Sunday (Mark 2:1-12)

And again He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house. Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them. Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men. And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying.

When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven you.”

And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, “Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, “Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise, take up your bed and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”—He said to the paralytic, “I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.” Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, “We never saw anything like this!”

Communion Hymn of Sunday

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

Preparing for Prayer

The basic items you need to have in a **prayer book** are the Morning and Evening prayers, the pre-communion prayers and canons, the prayers of thanksgiving following communion, and the Akathists both to our Lord and the Theotokos. Also, it is best to have one that is based on the same translation as is used in your parish.

Furthermore, in talking with Priests a common theme emerges regarding confession: people need to be encouraged to **confess regularly and only to one Priest**. Those who move from Priest to Priest (or monk to monk) are not confessing their sins at all, but rather are seeking to avoid

any true correction. Something to seriously consider.

Also, it is absolutely essential that every Orthodox Christian go beyond the use of the prayer books listed below and cultivate an interior life of the heart through the use of the **Jesus Prayer** ("Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me"). Ideally, this should be done under the guidance of a spiritual father or mother. The practice of the Jesus Prayer is central to Orthodox spirituality. For an introduction to this—set in the broader context of the Orthodox understanding of salvation as purification, illumination, and glorification—see especially (among the books listed above) the work by Metropolitan Ierotheos (Vlachos) entitled **Orthodox Spirituality**. One should also read the Russian Orthodox classic, **The Way of the Pilgrim**. Another work widely acknowledged as an outstanding "handbook" on the Jesus Prayer is **The Art of Prayer** (Faber & Faber; now back in print).

Finally, though the many-volumed **Philokalia** is the main corpus of writings on the hesychastic tradition, it is normally advised that a person who wishes to read this first immerse himself or herself in the **Lives of the Saints**. These typically comprise the "grade school" instruction—to see how others have embraced these practices and become glorified—, although as Father Seraphim Rose of Platina noted in his Introduction to Blessed Paisius Velichkovsky, many aspects of any given Saint's Life are not to be specifically emulated. (One should definitely read his very instructive introduction.) Then one can move on to "high school," reading and applying to their life—and hopefully under a wise spiritual guide—the principles contained in the major preparatory text for the Philokalia: the **Evergetinos**.

