



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, February 26

10:00 am Divine Liturgy/Church School

7:00 pm Forgiveness Vespers

Monday, February 27

7:00 pm Canon of St Andrew of Crete

Tuesday, February 28

9:00 am Lenten Matins (Morning Service)

9:30 am-12:00 pm Office Hours

7:00 pm Canon of St Andrew of Crete

Wednesday, March 1

6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

Lenten Fellowship Meal following Liturgy

Thursday, March 2

9:00 am Lenten Matins (Morning Service)

9:30 am-12:00 pm Office Hours

7:00 pm Canon of St Andrew of Crete

Friday, March 3

7:00 pm Akathist to Our Sweetest Lord Jesus

Saturday, March 4: St Theodore of Tyre

9:30 am Divine Liturgy (Day of Koliva/Kutia)

12:00 pm Pan-Orthodox Choir Rehearsal

5:00 pm Vespers with Cathedral Vigil

Sunday, March 5

10:00 am Divine Liturgy / Church School after

4:30 pm Pan-Orthodox Vespers (St Geo. Oakland)

Archpriest Thomas Soroka, Rector

Deacon Luke Loboda, Attached

Deacon John Skowron, Attached

Rdr James Wargo and Danielle Bartko, Choir Dirs

Forgiveness Sunday

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA

OrthodoxPittsburgh.org

February 26, 2023

Announcements

➤ **Today is Cheesefare Sunday, and tomorrow we enter into the season of Great Lent (Clean Monday).** 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 enliven 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 enjoin it to the best of our ability, but not to the point of discouragement. **Begin your Lenten journey with your Church Family tonight at the Great Vespers of Forgiveness at 7:00 pm.** Confession is available before every weekday service and on Saturday eve.

➤ Our parish offers **Divine Services every day during the Lenten season.** This is an amazing opportunity to enter more deeply into the rich life of the Orthodox Faith. Bring a friend!

➤ Everyone is invited downstairs for **our annual Blini Luncheon** after the Divine Liturgy sponsored by the St Nicholas Sisterhood. Thank you to all who prepared the delicious dishes!

➤ **Mark your calendar!** A choir from **St Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary** will be visiting our parish on **Saturday, March 25 for the Divine Liturgy at 9:30 am accompanied by the miraculous icon of St Anna.** Join us to be inspired by their beautiful and prayerful singing and help us support the education of our seminarians.

➤ The **Lenten schedule is enclosed** and is also available online at orthodoxpittsburgh.org.

Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm:** *Known to be hospitalized:* (none) *Home:* Irene Kulchock, John Mahalchak (son), Natalie Toooh. *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* Eleanor Kovacs, Natalie Popovich, George Shaytar, Michael Soroka.

➤ **Vigil Lights** From **Mat. Nancy K. Mell & Gregory Mell** for the departed servant, for Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of family. From **Doris A. Wasilko** for the health of the Wasilko family and George Shaytar. From **Charles A. Wasilko** for the health of sisters, Doris & Marsha. From **Marsha Wasilko** for the newly departed, Archpriest Daniel Rentel; special intention. From **Edith M. Humphrey** for the departed servant, Andrew. From **John & Olga** for the health of Galina Vilкова. From **Lindy Hamilton** for the health of Elaine Hamilton, Lizzie Hamilton, and the Scott family. From **Richard & Sonia Blaha** for the newly departed servant, Mary Ann, Donald & Janet; in memory of parents, Robert, Helen, Norma, and Fr. Stephen; for the health of family, friends, siblings & serving soldiers-for special intention, peace, anniversaries & birthdays, especially Godfather, George. From **Tatyana Sechler** for the departed servants, Polina, Slava, Marina, Maria, Luba, Valentina, Bruce, Diana, and Evan; for the health of Veronika, Tatyana, Nina, Sergei and Adick. From **the Pravlochaks** for the health of brother, David, son, Michael on his birthday, and granddaughter, Christina & son to be born. From **Donya Yewisiak** for the health of Steve Tokich.

Thank You

➤ to our **February** donors: Bob and Mary Beth Madalinsky for all categories (Bulletin \$60, Holy Bread \$50, Communion Wine \$40, Altar Candles \$25, Incense \$10).

The 2023 Lenten Schedule will be sent via

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: The Councils II/St. Nina/St. Patrick

Questions to ask/review:

- Who presides over the councils? Why are they called? What example was set by the Jerusalem council in the book of Acts?
- What is meant by "heresy"?
- What was decided at each of the Seven Ecumenical Councils?
- How did each decision clarify our understanding of God and our salvation?
- Describe the heresy of the Monophysites. According to the Forth Ecumenical Council, what is the correct teaching?
- Describe the heresy of Monothelitism. How is it similar to Monophysitism? According to the Sixth Ecumenical Council, what is the correct teaching?
- For younger students: Describe the life of St. Nina. Where and how did she serve God? Describe the life of St. Patrick. Where and how did he serve God?

Suggested Activities at Home:

- St. Nina brought Christianity to the land of Georgia by healing the queen of the land. However, the king would not believe, until one day the sun disappeared and did not return until he confessed Christ. Study the sun this week - its make-up, rising and setting. Watch the sunrise or sunset. Imagine with your child the king lost in the forest in the darkness with no sunlight in the middle of day.

Prayer: Lord, St. Nina taught us that You are the light of the world. Lord, teach us to love our enemies, as did Your servant St. Patrick.

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

Hymns and Readings for Sunday, February 26

Tone 4 Troparion (*Resurrection*)

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 God is risen,// granting the world great mercy!”

Tone 4 Troparion of 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, now and ever unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 6 Kontakion (*from the Triodion*)

O Master, Teacher of wisdom, Bestower of virtue, Who teachest the thoughtless and protectest the poor, strengthen and enlighten my heart! O Word of the Father, let me not restrain my mouth from crying to Thee: “Have mercy on me, a transgressor,// O merciful Lord!”

Tone 8 Prokeimenon (*from the Triodion*)

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

Epistle of the Sunday (Romans 13:11-14:4)

And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

Receive one who is weak in the faith, but not to disputes over doubtful things. For one believes he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats only vegetables. Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him. Who are you to judge another’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand.

Gospel of the Sunday (Matthew 6:14-21)

“For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

“Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves

break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Communion Hymn

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

On The Fall of Adam

On this day we commemorate the fall of Adam the first-created from partaking of the fruit of Paradise, which our holy and divine Fathers have appointed for the Sunday before Great Lent in order to demonstrate the great healing effect of the fast upon human nature and the great harm of intemperance and disobedience. Setting aside the countless instances of these vices in the world, the Fathers have put forth a vivid example in first-created Adam, who suffered great harm in his total failure to fast and brought this harm upon our nature. He did not keep the first commandment of a beneficial fast which God had required of mankind, but yielding to the desires of his belly and of the serpent through Eve, he not only did not become godlike, but he gave rise to death, bringing perdition upon all our race. For the sake of Adam’s intemperance the Lord fasted for forty days and was obedient. It was for this reason that the holy Apostles conceived this present forty-day fast, so that as Adam forfeited incorruption through his intemperance, we may regain it through abstinence. Also, as was stated earlier, it was the intent of the Holy Fathers through the Triodion to relate in a condensed form all of God’s acts from the beginning to the end of the world. Since Adam’s transgression and fall through the eating of the fruit of the tree is the principal cause of the state of mankind, the Fathers exhort us who are observing this commemoration to avoid Adam’s sin and to shun intemperance in all things.

Now it was on the sixth day that Adam was created by the hand of God after His own image and through His life-giving breath. Receiving God’s commandment, he lived in Paradise up until the sixth hour, when he disobeyed God’s command and was driven out. And as he stretched out his hand at the sixth hour to touch the fruit, so the new Adam, Christ, at the sixth day and hour stretched out his hands upon the Cross, annulling the sentence of perdition brought about by the former Adam. For he was created in the midst of corruption and incorruption through providence with the freedom of choice. God could have made Adam sinless, yet His providence was to provide for reparation. For this cause He gave His commandment that Adam might partake of all in the garden, save the one tree. Does this not mean that Adam was meant to understand the essence of all created by the divine power, but was not to attempt to understand the essence of the Godhead; That is to say God commanded Adam to concern himself with all other elements and qualities, reasoning with his mind to the glory of God; for this is true nourishment. But he was not to search for the divine essence: God, who He is, where He is and how He brought all things into being out of nothingness. Yet to his own harm Adam, having no care for the other things, sought to examine God and to determine His essence; and since he was not perfect but still a simple child, he failed in his undertaking, when through Eve Satan planted in him the desire of becoming Godlike.

Since we have so suffered from Adam’s failure to keep the fast, this event is commemorated today at the beginning of Great Lent, so that keeping in mind the enormous evil brought about by Adam’s intemperance, we may make joyful haste to accept and keep the fast.

In Thine ineffable compassion, O Christ our God, make us worthy of the nourishment of Paradise, and have mercy on us, as Thou alone lovest mankind. Amen.