



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, July 9

10:00 am Divine Liturgy

Monday through Thursday, July 10-13

10am to 1pm Vacation Church School

Tuesday, July 11

9:00 am Daily Matins

9:30 am to Noon Office Hours

Thursday, July 13

9:00 am Daily Matins

9:30 am to Noon Office Hours

Saturday, July 15

4:30 pm Confession

5:00 pm Great Vespers/Cathedral Vigil

Sunday, July 16

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

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA

OrthodoxPittsburgh.org

July 9, 2023

Announcements

➤ Today we will take a **special collection** to assist Alex Listvinsky tuition as he enters St Vladimir's Seminary in the Fall. **St Vladimir's is offering to match everything that we collect!** Please be generous so that we can support him in his studies this Fall! We are grateful for Alex and his love for Christ and the Church!

➤ Tomorrow we will begin our annual **Vacation Church School from July 10-13**, 10a-1p daily. Daily activities include crafts, lessons, games, and music. We are grateful to Matushka Joni Soroka and Rachel Hauenschild for leading the program, and to the teachers and helpers!

➤ **As we enter into the summer months**, a reminder that our diligence in attendance at the Sunday Divine Liturgy, the holy feast days, and the various activities of the church, is encouraged to continue. Through the summer months let us offer worship and praise to God in thanksgiving for the continued blessings

A special **official parish meeting** will be held on Sunday, July 23, 2023, after the Divine Liturgy in the parish hall to propose extensive repairs to the issue of our leaking domes and surrounding structures, as well as other projects to upgrade our facilities. Only parishioners in good standing may participate in any votes at the meeting.

➤ **Looking ahead!**

Church Picnic Sunday, Sept 3 at Clever Park
Slavic Food Fest TBD (Saturday Oct 14?)

Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm: Known to be hospitalized:**, Home: John Mahalchak (son). **Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:** Eleanor Kovacs, Natalie Popovich, Michael Soroka.

➤ **Vigil Lights** From **Mat. Nancy K. Mell & Gregory Mell** for the departed servants, Dn. Joseph Mell, and John Karavlan (brother & uncle); for the health of family. From **Mr. & Mrs. Richard Blaha** for the newly departed servants, Lorraine, Ruth Ann, Kathy, Dean, Cirio, and Flloyd; in memory of Pete, Betty, and Dorothy, Robert, Uncle Ray, Carol, and Godmother, Wilma; for the health father, Leo, family, friends, siblings, and serving soldiers for special intention, peace, anniversaries, and birthdays. From **Donya Yewisiak** for the health of Eleanor Kovacs on her 99th birthday. From **Charles A. Wasilko** for the health of sisters, Doris & Marsha. From **Marsha Wasilko** God Bless America! From **Doris Wasilko** for the health of the Wasilko family. From **John Mahalchak family** for the health of friends & family, John, Cheryl, Gregory, Cindy, Daniel, and Mary. From **Lindy Hamilton** for the health of Elaine Hamilton; special intentions.



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.

On Knowledge

Faith and hope go together with knowledge. They are built on knowledge and lead to knowledge. For what is "not seen" is believed and hoped on the basis of what is seen. And the understanding of what is seen depends on belief and hope in what is not seen. One's belief and hope in the ability to know, to trust his senses, his mind and the revelation of his God, are the foundations of all knowledge.

Man was created to know God; not only to believe in Him and to hope in Him, but to know Him and so to love Him and to serve Him. Knowledge of God is the aim and goal of man's life, the purpose of his creation by God.

Faith, given as a gift by God, results in the knowledge of God. The Lord desires that man would "know the truth," and so become free from all blindness, ignorance and sin (Jn 8.32). This is the central teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ, of the law and the prophets of the Old Testament and of the apostles and teachers of the Church.

In all of his letters, the Apostle Paul prays that the faithful would "be filled with the knowledge of Christ's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, to lead a life worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God" since "God our Savior desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (Col 1.8-9, 1 Tim 2.4).

In all of his writings, the apostle insists as well that the faithful have "all the riches of knowledge of God's mystery of Christ in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," and that the "spiritual man" has "the mind of the Lord . . . the mind of Christ" (Col 2.2-3; 1 Cor 2.6-16). (*Hopko*)

Hymns and Readings for Sunday, July 9

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.

Tone 4 Troparion (St. Pancratius)

By sharing in the ways of the Apostles, thou didst become a successor to their throne. Through the practice of virtue, thou didst find the way to divine contemplation, O inspired one of God; by teaching the word of truth without error, thou didst defend the Faith, even to the shedding of thy blood.// O Hieromartyr Pancratius, entreat Christ God to save our souls!

Tone 4 Kontakion (Resurrection)

My Savior and Redeemer as God rose from the tomb and delivered the earth-born from their chains. He has shattered the gates of hell, and as Master,// He has risen on the third day!

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

Tone 4 Kontakion (St. Pancratius)

O Pancratius, thou wast revealed as a brilliant star for the people of Taormina. Thou wast also shown to be a sufferer for Christ.// Since now thou standest before Him, O blessed one, pray for those who honor thee.

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 6 Kontakion of the 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 4 Prokeimenon (Resurrection)

O Lord, how manifold are Thy works; / in wisdom hast Thou made them all. (Ps. 103:26)

Epistle of the Sunday (Romans 10:1-10)

Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, “The man who does those things shall live by them.” But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ ” (that is, to bring Christ down from above) or, “ ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ ” (that is, to bring

Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Gospel of the Sunday (Matthew 8:28-9:1)

When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. And suddenly they cried out, saying, “What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?”

Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding. So the demons begged Him, saying, “If You cast us out, permit us to go away into the herd of swine.”

And He said to them, “Go.” So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and perished in the water.

Then those who kept them fled; and they went away into the city and told everything, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men. And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw Him, they begged Him to depart from their region.

So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city.

Communion Hymn

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

More on Knowledge

In the spiritual tradition of the Church, the knowledge of God and His truth is the main goal of life. “For what meaning would there be for creation,” asks Saint Athanasius the Great (4th c.), “if man should not know God?” (On the Incarnation, Book 1). Knowledge of God, indeed knowledge itself, according to the scriptures and the saints, is not mere “knowledge about,” the abstract knowledge of information and rational propositions, devoid of living experience. Knowledge is primarily and essentially an existential union, a cleaving together of the spiritual man and the object of his knowledge. Saint Gregory of Nyssa (4th c.) has said, “The Lord does not say that it is blessed to know something about God, but rather to possess God in oneself.” (On the Beatitudes, Sermon 6) The possession of God within the mind and heart is the true knowledge of God. It comes through faith and repentance in the life of the Church. It comes essentially through the gracious purification from all sinful passions. Saint John of the Ladder (6th c.) has written:

The growth of fear is the beginning of love, but a complete state of purity is the foundation of all divine knowledge.

The listing of knowledge among the virtues of man is critically important because in the present time there exists the widespread conviction that man is condemned to ignorance in the areas of religion and spiritual life. While most people would grant that knowledge is possible in the realm of natural sciences, they would deny genuine knowledge in the realm of the Spirit. They would say that one can know the things of this physical world but cannot know the mysteries of God, and God Himself. Thus religion becomes a matter of personal choice and subjective taste, devoid of any pretension to objective truth and genuine knowledge. As we have seen, this is precisely not the teaching of the Scriptures and the saints.