

Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm:** *Known to be hospitalized ()*; *Home:* Sonia Blaha, John Mahalchak (son). William Warnak, Nancy Shaytar, Natalie Toooh. *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* Bob Brewster (Whitehall Skilled Nursing), 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 health of the Wasilko family. From **Marsha Wasilko** for the health of the Wasilko family. From **Charles A. Wasilko** for the health of Doris, Marsha, Bob Brewster and Paul Fuller. From **Mr. & Mrs. Richard Blaha** for the departed servants, mother Dorothy, uncle John, parents and brother, family, and newly departed; for the health of family, friends, siblings, serving soldiers; for birthdays, special intention, peace. From **Lindy Hamilton** for the health of the Hamilton & Scott families. From **Mat. Joni Soroka** for the departed servant, mother, Barbara and newly-departed father, John; special intentions. From **John Mahalchak Family** for the departed servants, John, Veronica, Mary Alice, John; for the health of friends and family, John, Cheryl, Gregory, Cindy, Daniel, Mary, Margaret Joseph Kayla Elizabeth, Priya Elizabeth. From **John and Olga** for the health of Galina Vilkov, Kayla Elizabeth Kowalcheck on her birthday. From **Nancy Pravlochak** for the health of the Pravlochak family. From **Alina** for the health of Faye.

Thank You

➤ to our **December** donors: **Donya Yewisiak** (\$50 for Festal Altar Candles) in memory of arents, Fr Vladimir and Matushka Olga Soroka. **Jan and Chuck Widel** (\$60 for Bulletin) in memory of departed members of the Puskar and Morris families. **Fr Thomas and Matushka Joni Soroka** (\$10 Incense) in memory of our departed parents, Fr Vladimir and Mat Olga Soroka and John and Barbara Naiser.

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

The Church School students will be practicing for the annual Christmas program(*yolka*) on Sunday, December 22 for the next two Sundays. Church School lessons will resume on Sunday, December 29.

On Thanksgiving

“When you sit down to eat, pray. When you eat bread, do so thanking Him for being so generous to you. If you drink wine, be mindful of Him who has given it to you for your pleasure and as a relief in sickness. When you dress, thank Him for His kindness in providing you with clothes. When you look at the sky and the beauty of the stars, throw yourself at God’s feet and adore Him who in His wisdom has arranged things in this way. Similarly, when the sun goes down and when it rises, when you are asleep or awake, give thanks to God, who created and arranged all things for your benefit, to have you know, love and praise their Creator.” – *St. Basil the Great,*

Let us give thanks to God continually. For, it is outrageous that when we enjoy His benefaction to us in deed every single day, we do not acknowledge the favor with so much as a word; and this, when the acknowledgment confers great benefit on us. He does not need anything of ours, but we stand in need of all things from Him. – *St. John Chrysostom*

“We must begin with thanksgiving for everything. The beginning of joy is to be content with your situation.” – *St. Ambrose of Optina*

“Every genuine confession humbles the soul. When it takes the form of thanksgiving, it teaches the soul that it has been delivered by the grace of God.” – *St Maximos the Confessor*



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, December 8

10:00 am Divine Liturgy / Church School
6:00 pm Holy Unction (*St Alexander Cathedral*)

Tuesday, December 10

9:00 am Daily Matins
9:30 am Office Hours

Wednesday, December 11

6:30 pm Daily Vespers
7:00 pm Bible Study

Thursday, December 12

9:00 am Daily Matins
9:30 am Office Hours

Saturday, December 14

No Class or Services (see announcement)

Sunday, December 15

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*
Rdr James Wargo and Danielle Bartko, Choir Dir's

Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA

OrthodoxPittsburgh.org

December 8, 2024

Announcements

➤ We warmly welcome **His Eminence Archbishop Melchisedek** to his parish of St Nicholas on our annual St Nicholas Day weekend celebration. Our prayer for him is good health and strength to “rightly divide the word of truth.” May years to you, Vladyka!

➤ Everyone is invited downstairs for our **annual St Nicholas Day Dinner** after the Divine Liturgy today. There is no cost. Our thanks to Parish Council president Melissa Graff for organizing today’s luncheon and to all those who prepared the tables, the food, will serve, and clean up. We are grateful to God for you!

➤ We express our deepest condolences to our beloved **Matushka Joni Soroka** on the falling asleep in the Lord of **her father, John Naiser**, who passed away on Thursday, December 5, in Louisville, Kentucky at the age of 93. The burial service will be held at St Michael the Archangel Orthodox Church in Louisville on Saturday, December 14, where he was a lifelong communicant. May God grant him the kingdom of heaven and comfort to Matushka Joni and her family. Fr Thomas’s family will travel to Louisville at the end of the week for the funeral. **No services or classes will be held here at St Nicholas on Saturday, December 14.**

➤ **The Sacrament of Holy Unction** (anointing for the healing of the sick) will be held tonight at 6:00 pm at St Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Allison Park.

➤ Would you please consider a special **financial offering to help defray the costs of flowers** for the Nativity holiday? Thank you for your love of God’s House! Earmark your offering for flowers.

Hymns and Readings for Sunday, December 8

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.

Tone 8 Troparion (Ven. Patapius)

The image of God was truly preserved in thee, O
Father,
for thou didst take up the Cross and follow
Christ.
By so doing, thou taughtest us to disregard the
flesh for it passes away;
but to care instead for the soul, for it is
immortal.//
Therefore thy spirit, venerable Patapius,
rejoices with the angels.

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!”

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

Tone 3 Kontakion (Ven. Patapius)

Thy temple is found to be a source of healing,
and the people flock to it eagerly, O saint.
They seek the healing of their diseases
and the forgiveness of their sins,//
for thou art a protector for all those in need,
ven’rable Patapius.

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.
28:11)

Epistle Ephesians 2: 14-22 (Sunday)

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 Luke 17:12-19 (Sunday)

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!

The leper in the gospel is a model for all of
us who struggle to embrace Christ’s
healing, for all of us who wrestle with the
ways of the old man. The Samaritan joined with
the other lepers in calling out, “Jesus, Master,
have mercy on us!” In other words, he began
with humility, openly acknowledging that he
was sick, needed to be healed, and could not
work his own cure. We should do the same

thing in our prayers every day, confessing our
sins and asking for the Lord’s forgiveness. We
should also acknowledge our weaknesses daily
and pray for His strength to resist temptation,
to overcome our bad habits, to calm our
passions, and to help us grow in holiness. And
the more we say the Jesus Prayer, the better.

The struggle to live faithfully can certainly feel
pretty lonely at times. There is nothing like sin
to isolate us from one another and even from
ourselves. Even if it’s something that we
somehow keep secret from others, the burdens
of guilt and shame are profound and can
separate us at a deep level even from those
closest to us. They can become unhealthy
obsessions that make us feel as unclean as a
leper. That’s one of the reasons why the
sacrament of Confession is such a blessing, such
a source of strength in our journey to live the
new life in Christ. In Confession we are
reminded that we are not left alone to struggle
with our sins, for the priest is an icon of the
Lord, conveying His mercy and providing
guidance for the healing of our souls. If we want
to be healed like the Samaritan leper, we will
come to confession regularly, naming our sins,
especially those of which we are most ashamed
and which threaten to destroy our relationships
with the Lord and our neighbors. We will kneel
before Christ in humility, bare our souls, and be
assured of His forgiveness, if we are truly
honest and repentant. Confession is a therapy
for our healing, and a reminder that we are
members of a Body united together in love and
mercy. As we all know, there is great power in
hearing a human voice say that we should give
no further care to the sins we have confessed,
for they are forgiven. Christ says to each of us in
Confession through the voice of a priest, “Arise,
go your way. Your faith has made you well.”

