

Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm:** *Known to be hospitalized ()*; Home: Sonia Blaha, John Mahalchak (son). William Warnak, Nancy Shaytar, Natalie Tooch. *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* Bob Brewster (Whitehall Skilled Nursing), Natalie Popovich, Michael Soroka.

➤ **Vigil Lights** From **John and Olga (Cozza)**

Kowalcheck for the health of Galina Vilкова and salvation for our families. From **Mat Nancy and Gregory Mell** for the newly departed servant of God John Naiser and for Dn Joseph Mell; for the health of family. From **Charles A. Wasilko** for the departed servants Evelyn Herrick and John Naiser. From **Marsha Wasilko** for the departed servants of God Marie Baronyak; the newly departed John Naiser, the newly departed Evelyn Fedio Herrick. From **Dorris Wasilko** for the departed servants of God Evelyn Herrick and John Naiser. From **Kristie Mertz** for the health of Janice and William. From **Richard and Sonia Blaha** for the newly departed servants of God John Naiser; for parents, brother, grandparents, and Norma; for the health of family, friends, siblings, and serving soldiers; for the health of Paul, family and friends, special intentions, and peace. From **Bob and Mary Beth Madalinsky** for the departed servant of God John Naiser -- Memory Eternal! From **Donya Yewisiak** for the departed servants of God John and Barbara Naiser - Memory Eternal! And for Archpriest Igor Soroka - Memory Eternal! From **John Mahalchak and family** for the departed servants of God Jerome and John; for the health of family and friends: John, Cheryl, Daniel, Mary, Gregory, Cindy, Joseph, and Margaret; for safe travels for family. From **Lindy Hamilton** for the health of the Hamilton and Scott families

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.

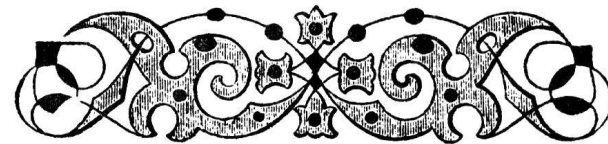
This Week in Church School

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 Forgiveness

But, O Christ our King, who can worthily extol the greatness of Your love for mankind? What was unnecessary for Him and what He did not do, namely, repentance (for He never needed to repent, being sinless), He granted to us as a mediator for when we sin even after receiving grace. Repentance means returning once again to Him and to a life according to His will out of remorse. Even if someone commits a deadly sin, if he turns away from it with all his soul, abstains from it and turns back to the Lord in deed and truth, he should take courage and be of good hope, for he shall not lose eternal life and salvation. When a child according to the flesh meets his death, he is not brought back to life by his father, but someone born of Christ, even though he fall into deadly sins, if he turns again and runs to the Father who raises the dead, is made alive once more, obtains divine adoption, and is not cast out from the company of the just.

May we all attain to this, to the glory of Christ and of His Father without beginning and of the life-giving Spirit, now and for ever, and unto unceasing ages. Amen.



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 15
10:00 am Divine Liturgy / Church School

Tuesday, December 17
9:00 am Daily Matins
9:30 am Office Hours

Thursday, December 19
9:00 am Daily Matins
9:30 am Office Hours

Saturday, December 21
3:30 pm Exploring Orthodoxy
4:30 pm Confessions
5:00 pm Parish Vigil

Sunday, December 22
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 Dirs*

Sunday of the Forefathers

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA
OrthodoxPittsburgh.org December 15, 2024

Announcements

➤ Congratulations to **Tyler, Jessica, and Charles Barron** who have been received into the Church through the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Chrismation today. They come to us from St Paul Orthodox Church in Las Vegas where they were catechumens for the past year. They have recently moved to the Pittsburgh area. May God grant them many years!

➤ 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.

Schedule of services for the Nativity of Christ

Monday, December 23
10:00 am Royal Hours

Tuesday, December 24
9:30 am Vespers Divine Liturgy
5:00 pm Communal Holy Supper
7:00 pm Festal Vigil

Wednesday, December 25
10:00 am Festal Divine Liturgy

Thursday, December 26
9:30 am Divine Liturgy

Hymns and Readings for Sunday, December 15

Tone 8 Troparion (Resurrection)

Thou didst descend from on high, O Merciful One!

Thou didst accept the three day burial to free us from our sufferings!//

O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to Thee!

Tone 2 Troparion (Forefathers)

Through faith Thou didst justify the Forefathers, betrothing through them the Church of the gentiles.

These saints exult in glory,

for from their seed came forth a glorious fruit:

she who bore Thee without seed.//

So by their prayers, O Christ God, have mercy on us!

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

Tone 6 Kontakion (Forefathers)

You did not worship the graven image,

O thrice-blessed ones,

but armed with the immaterial Essence of God, you were glorified in a trial by fire.

From the midst of unbearable flames you called on God, crying:

“Hasten, O compassionate One!

Speedily come to our aid,//

for Thou art merciful and able to do as Thou dost will!”

Tone 4 Prokeimenon (Forefathers)

Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers, / and praised and glorified is Thy Name forever! (*Song of the Three Holy Children, v. 3*)

Epistle Colossians 3:4-11 22 (Forefathers)

When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

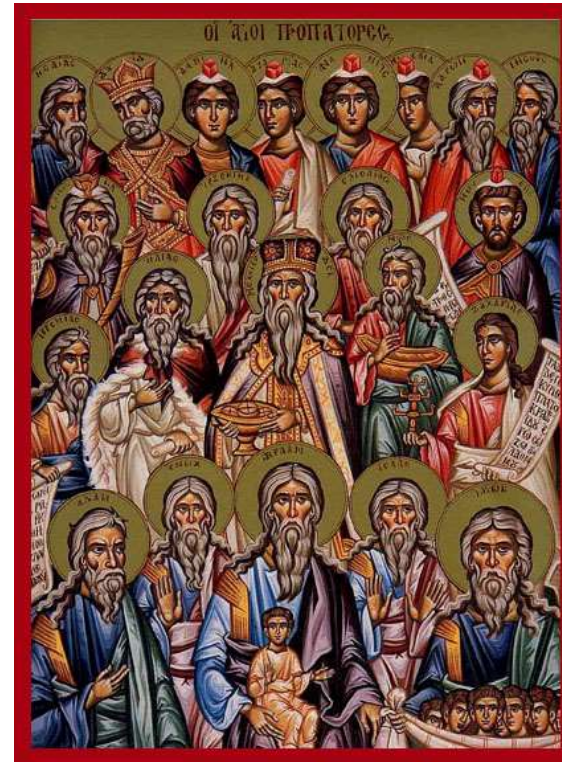
Gospel Luke 14:16-24 (Forefathers)

Then He said to him, “A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, ‘Come, for all things are now ready.’ But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.’ And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.’ Still another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’ So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.’ And the servant said, ‘Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.’ Then the master said to the servant, ‘Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say to you

that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.’ ”

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! (*Ps. 148:1*) Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous; praise befits the just! (*Ps. 32:1*) Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!



Beholding Christ the Messiah drawing near, Rejoice Abraham, for you have been shown to be the great-grandfather of Christ.

The subject of the blessed Abraham is known as much by the wise men as by common Christians. For the Book of Genesis, written by the Prophet Moses, which speaks of him, is read to be heard by all Christians in the Church, during the fasting days of the Holy and Great Lent. Wherefore we all learn from this book, that our forefather Abraham was from the land of the Chaldeans, and he was a gentile. The Chaldeans were a

nation before the Jews. And his father Terah was an idolater. The divine Abraham was also an idolater, but he was not prevented by this from coming to know the true God. Rather, we should say something strange, for the great Abraham even by this idolatry was led to understand the true God.

When the renowned one understood that nothing created is God, and should not be worshiped as God, and having contemplated the good arrangement of things that exist, and by seeing these things which were made, he came to know their invisible Maker. And having come to know Him, he worshiped Him as God, Who upholds and governs all of creation, and designated these things which have come into being to be suitable and orderly. He was therefore ordered by God to leave his homeland and relatives, and go to the land of Canaan (where also Palestine and Jerusalem are located). Immediately he obeyed, without having doubt in his heart, for he had much faith towards God. For this reason he received as a wager for his faith, a son named Isaac who was born to him in his old age, and he became the father of many nations. Isaac was born of Abraham, Jacob was born of Isaac, and from Jacob was born Judah (from whose tribe Christ was born) and his brother Patriarchs.

For this reason therefore our God-bearing Fathers and Teachers, have arranged it for today to commemorate the divine Abraham, as the forefather from whom Christ was born. And they delivered this to be reckoned by us, not for a long period of many days, but near the birth in the flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was not done simply by chance, but according to the divine inspiration of the Holy Spirit. For the most good and philanthropic Son of God, made the Patriarch Abraham and his descendants His forefathers according to His human nature. Thus the most divine Fathers rightly deemed for us to celebrate their memory as Forefathers, not long from the Lord's nativity according to the flesh.