

# Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm:** *Known to be hospitalized (none); Home:* Bob Brewster, John Mahalchak (son). Nancy Shaytar, Natalie Tooeh, William Warnak. *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* 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 departed servant, Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of Mat. Nancy Mell; Happy Birthday & Many Years to Cynthia Bottomley, Larry Polny, Greg Mell, and Donya Yewisiak. From **Marsha Wasilko** for the departed servant, Godfather, Michael Dyczko; Happy Birthday and Many Years to (cousin) Cynthia Bottomley, Larry, & Donya! From **Charles A. Wasilko** for the departed servant, Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of Godchild, Gregory Mell on his birthday. From **Mat. Joni Soroka** for the departed servants, Mat. Suzanne and John Naiser; for the health of family and Donya Yewisiak on her birthday. From **Jim & Leslie Wokutch** for the departed servant, Dn. Joseph Mell. From **Mr. & Mrs. Richard Blaha** for the departed our family, friends, and newly departed; for the health of family, friends, siblings, and serving soldiers; for special intentions, peace, anniversaries, and birthdays- especially wife, Sonia. From **Richard & Susan Porter** for the departed servant, Mat. Suzanne. From **John Mahalchak family** for the departed servant, Matushka Suzanne; for the health of John, Cheryl, Daniel, Mary, Gregory, Cindy, John, and Fr. Thomas. From **John & Olga** for the health of Galina Vilкова and for the salvation of our family.

➤ **The monthly donation sheet** for 2025 is available at the candle desk. Please note that the monthly donation for bulletins has been reduced to \$30 since we have discontinued the Vestal color covers.

***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:** Saul

**Scripture reference:** I Samuel 9-31

**Questions to ask/review:**

- How was Israel governed in its early years?
- Who were some of the leaders God used to lead His people?
- Why might people want a king? Did other countries have kings?
- How did Saul come to be King of Israel?
- What was Saul's downfall?
- What was Saul's relationship with David? Why did Saul turn against David?
- Samuel said to Saul, "to obey is better than sacrifice". What does that phrase mean? Why does God prefer obedience to sacrifice?
- After Samuel died, where did Saul turn for advice?
- In addition to "mediums", what are some other examples of counterfeit spiritual forces in our society?
- Why should Christians avoid these types of false "spirituality" or "prophecy"?

**Suggested Activities at home:**

Read stories of great Kings and failed Kings. How did they rule differently? What Godly characteristics did the good Kings have?

**Prayer:** Lord our King, help us to rule our lives in obedience to You.

**No matter what bitterness has befallen you, no matter what unpleasantness has happened to you, say, "I shall endure this for Jesus Christ!" and it will be easier for you. For the name of Jesus Christ is powerful. Through it, all unpleasantness is calmed, and demons disappear. Your disappointments will also be calmed, and your fearfulness will be quieted."**

*(St. Anthony of Optina)*



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, January 26**

**10:00 am** Divine Liturgy / Church School

**Tuesday, January 28**

**9:00 am** Daily Matins

**9:30 am to 12:00 pm** Office Hours

**Thursday, January 30**

**9:00 am** Daily Matins

**9:30 am to 12:00 pm** Office Hours

**Saturday, February 1**

**3:30 pm** Exploring Orthodoxy

**4:30 pm** Confessions

**5:00 pm** Parish Festal Vigil

**Sunday, February 2: Meeting of our Lord**

**10:00 am** Festal 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*

**Thirty-First Sunday After Pentecost**

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA

OrthodoxPittsburgh.org

January 26, 2025

## Announcements

➤ The **Annual Parish Meeting** will be held on after the Divine Liturgy today. Only members in good standing may participate.

➤ **The Saint Constantine School of Pittsburgh** is hosting a Mad Mex Robinson Fundraising Dinner on Tuesday, February 4 at 7:00pm in Robinson. Tickets are \$60 per person, which includes buffet dinner, drink, and gratuity. 100% of ticket proceeds go directly to the school. Go to <https://shorturl.at/q42z6> to purchase tickets.

➤ **IOCC fundraiser** on Thursday, February 27 • 6-9 pm at Allusion Brewing Company, McCandless, PA 15101. Join us for an evening with nice fellowship, meticulously crafted drafts, and good food. You'll learn about IOCC's work around the world and its latest emergency relief interventions. 20% of food & beverage proceeds will benefit IOCC. Go to [iocc.org/pittsburgh](http://iocc.org/pittsburgh) for more information.

**Lent and Pascha 2025**

Sunday, February 9 - Publican and Pharisee

Sunday, February 23 - Meatfare Sunday

Sunday, March 2 - Cheesefare Sunday

Monday, March 3 - First Day of Great Lent

Sunday, April 13 - Palm Sunday

Sunday, April 20 - Holy Pascha

Sunday, June 8 - Pentecost

# Hymns and Readings for Sunday, January 26

## **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 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 4 Troparion** (New Martyrs)

Today the Church of Russia forms a chorus in  
joy,  
praising her new martyrs and confessors;  
hierarchs and priests, royal passion-bearers,  
right-believing princes and princesses,  
venerable men and women, and all Orthodox  
Christians.  
Having laid down their life for faith in Christ  
during the days of godless persecution,  
they preserved the truth by the shedding of  
blood.//  
By their protection, O long-suffering Lord,  
preserve our land in Orthodoxy till the end of  
the age.

## **Tone 6 Kontakion** (Resurrection)

When Christ God, the Giver of Life,  
raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery  
with His mighty hand,  
He bestowed resurrection on the human race.//

He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, the Life,  
and the God of all.

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

## **Tone 3 Kontakion** (New Martyrs)

Today the new martyrs of Rus' stand in white  
robes before the Lamb of God,  
and with the angels they sing to God the hymn of  
victory:  
“Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and praise,  
and honor,  
and power, and strength be to our God//  
unto the ages of ages. Amen.”

*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 6 Prokeimenon** (Resurrection)

O Lord, save Thy people, / and bless Thine  
inheritance! (Ps. 27:9a)

## **Epistle** 1 Timothy 1:15-17 (Sunday)

This is a faithful saying and worthy of all  
acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the  
world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.  
However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that  
in me first Jesus Christ might show all  
longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are  
going to believe on Him for everlasting life. Now  
to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God

who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever  
and ever. Amen.

## **Gospel** Matthew 15:21-28 (Sunday)

Then Jesus went out from there and departed to  
the region of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a  
woman of Canaan came from that region and  
cried out to Him, saying, “Have mercy on me, O  
Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely  
demon-possessed.”

But He answered her not a word.

And His disciples came and urged Him, saying,  
“Send her away, for she cries out after us.”

But He answered and said, “I was not sent  
except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

Then she came and worshiped Him, saying,  
“Lord, help me!”

But He answered and said, “It is not good to  
take the children’s bread and throw it to the  
little dogs.”

And she said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs  
eat the crumbs which fall from their masters’  
table.”

Then Jesus answered and said to her, “O woman,  
great is your faith! Let it be to you as you  
desire.” And her daughter was healed from that  
very hour.

## **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!

**T**his Canaanite woman is a tremendous  
model for us as Christians, for we so  
easily give up on the Lord and on  
ourselves. We are tempted to think that we are  
who we are, that there is no point in trying to

change, and that even God can’t heal and  
transform us. Now it certainly would have been  
less stressful for this Gentile woman to have  
stayed home that day and not made a scene  
about Christ healing her daughter. She could  
have said “I’m a Gentile and this Messiah is a  
Jew. Why should I even ask Him to help?” But  
then her life and that of her daughter would  
have remained miserable and without the Lord’s  
blessing.

The same is true of us. We can assume that we  
are like the Gentiles of old, cut off from  
salvation, from God’s blessing and  
transformation in our lives because of our  
failings, our weaknesses, and whatever mistakes  
we have made in life. Yes, we have all sinned  
against God and neighbor in thought, word, and  
deed. Yes, we may find it less stressful simply to  
give into our habitual sins, our passions that  
have been with us so long that they have become  
second nature. But if we accept the lie that the  
new life in Christ isn’t really for us, that we are  
defined by our sins, that we’re better off just  
accepting who we are than growing into the full  
stature of Christ, we will end up choosing  
misery over joy, death over life, and despair  
over hope.

This woman learned that she, too, is called to be  
a temple of the living God. God’s promises  
extended even to her, and the same is true for  
us. Nothing can separate us from the love of  
God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, except for  
our own refusal to accept His love, to open our  
lives to Him as did this woman in humility,  
faith, and persistence.

She could have stayed away from the Lord on  
the grounds of her identity as a Gentile. That  
would have been an easy excuse, but she  
pressed on nonetheless. She didn’t take an easy  
out, but persevered in opening her life to Him  
beyond what anyone in that time and place  
would have expected.