

## Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm:** *Known to be hospitalized (none); Home:* Bob Brewster, John Mahalchak (son). Nancy Shaytar, Natalie Tooeh, *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, Uncle Mike Dyczko; for the health of brother, Chuck and cousin, Cynthia. From **Marsha Wasilko** for the health of the Wasilko family. From **Charles A. Wasilko** for special intention. From **John Mahalchak Family** for the health of friends and family, John, Cheryl, John, Daniel, Mary, Gregory, and Cindy. From **John & Olga** for the health of Galina Vilko and our families. From **Mr. and Mrs. Richard Blaha** for the departed servants, Baba & Deda Povich, Fr. Hubiak, parents, brother, and newly departed, Aunt Eva; for the health of family, friends, siblings, and serving soldiers; for special intention, peace, anniversaries and birthdays.

➤ (Feb 2) From **Mat. Nancy K. Mell & Gregory Mell** for the newly departed servant, Mat. Suzanne Senyo, and Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of family. From **Doris Wasilko** for the departed servants of the Wasilko family; for the health of the Wasilko family. From **Marsha Wasilko** for the health of the Wasilko family and Mat. Nancy Mell; special thanks. From **Charles A. Wasilko** for the health of Mat. Nancy Mell. From **Donya Yewisiak** for the departed servant, Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of Mat. Nancy Mell. From **John Mahalchak Family** for the health of friends and family, John, Cheryl, John, Daniel, Mary, Gregory, Cindy, Joseph, and Margaret. From **John & Olga** for the health of Galina Vilko. From **Lindy Hamilton** for the health of the Scott & Hamilton families, and Fr. Thomas; special intentions. From **Susan Porter** for the health of Ann. From **Mr. and Mrs. Richard Blaha** for the departed servants, parents, brother, Don, Ann, Raymond, and Mat. Millie; for the health of family, friends, siblings, and serving soldiers—especially Aunt Eva; for special intention, peace, anniversaries and birthdays.

➤ **Thank you to our February donors:** From **Donya Yewisiak** (Altar candles \$25) in memory of father, Fr Vladimir Soroka on his birthday. From **Kristie Mertz** (Incense \$10) for daughter Katarina on her birthday.

***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:** David #2

**Scripture reference:** Sam 16-20 and II Sam 11-12

### Questions to ask/review:

- What does the statement that Jonathon and David became “one in spirit” mean? How would David’s life have been different without Jonathon’s friendship?
- Which of these friendship characteristics do your friends exhibit? What is your own strongest friendship characteristic? Your weakest?
- Are our friends perfect? What happens when we expect them to be perfect?
- What’s the greatest risk you’ve taken for a friend? Your friend for you? How does God work through our friendships?
- What are some famous Psalms written by David? What are they about?
- What sin did David commit? Who was Bathsheba?
- What makes us want things that aren’t ours? Can you think of a time you wanted something that wasn’t yours? What happened?
- What are the consequences of various sins? Give examples.
- Even though God forgives our sins, does he always eliminate the consequences? What were the consequences for David and Bathsheba?
- When you get caught doing something wrong, what do you tend to do? Why?
- In what areas of life do people tend to hide their sin the most? Why?
- Why didn’t God condemn David and void His covenant with David?

### Suggested Activities at home:

Read or sing Psalms written by David from the book of Psalms.

**Prayer:** Lord, help us to see our sins and seek your mercy. 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 scan 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, February 9**

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

**Tuesday, February 11**

**9:00 am** Daily Matins

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

**Wednesday, January 12**

**6:30 pm** Daily Vespers

**7:00 pm** Bible Study

**Thursday, February 13**

**9:00 am** Daily Matins

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

**Saturday, February 15**

**3:30 pm** Exploring Orthodoxy

**4:30 pm** Confessions

**5:00 pm** Parish Festal Vigil

**Sunday, February 16**

**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*

**Publican and Pharisee**

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA

OrthodoxPittsburgh.org

February 9, 2025

## Announcements

➤ Congratulations to **Alan Michael Boyd** who is being received into the Orthodox Church this morning through the sacraments of Baptism and Chrismation. May God grant him many blessed years!

➤ Please see Kristie Mertz on how to utilize our new online giving platform <https://orthodoxpittsburgh.churchtrac.com/>. We encourage everyone who can to begin using online, recurring giving for your offerings.

➤ Calling all artists, actors, comedians, and musicians! **The St. Nicholas Talent Show** will take place on Saturday, February 22 after vespers. Please join your fellow parishioners for a night of fun and fellowship. If you are interested in performing, please contact Fred Zelesnik at 412-538-8052 or fred1zelesnik@yahoo.com.

➤ **Dome Fundraiser!** With many thanks to Mike Puhac, he has made 40 dozen (!) pierogi for sale as a dome fundraiser. You can purchase them today. Please see Kristie Mertz or Matushka Joni Soroka to get yours today.

### Lent and Pascha 2025

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, February 9

## **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 1 Troparion** (Feast)

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, Full of Grace!  
From thee shone the Sun of Righteousness,  
^Christ our God,  
enlightening those who sat in darkness.  
Rejoice and be glad, O righteous Elder,  
thou didst accept in thine arms the ^Redeemer  
of our souls,//  
Who grants us the Resurrection!

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

## **Tone 4 Kontakion** (from the Lenten Triodion)

Let us flee from the pride of the Pharisee!  
Let us learn humility from the Publican's tears!  
Let us cry to our Savior!  
“Have mercy on us,//  
O only merciful One!”

*Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

## **Tone 1 Kontakion** (Feast)

By Thy Nativity Thou didst sanctify the Virgin's womb  
and didst bless Simeon's hands, ^O Christ God.  
Now Thou hast come and saved us through love.  
Grant peace to all Orthodox Christians,//  
O only Lover of Man!

## **Tone 8 Prokeimenon** (Resurrection)

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

## **Tone 3 Prokeimenon** (Song of the Theotokos)

My soul doth magnify the Lord, / and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. (Lk. 1:46-47)

## **Epistle** 2 Timothy 3:10-15 (Sunday)

But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra—what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

## **Gospel** Luke 18:10-14 (Sunday)

“Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’ And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

## **Tone 3 Hymn to the Theotokos** (Feast)

O Virgin Theotokos, hope of all Christians, protect, preserve, and save those who hope in thee!

In the shadow and letter of the Law, let us the faithful discern a figure: every male [child] that opens the womb is holy to God. Therefore we

magnify the firstborn Word of the Father Who has no beginning, the Son firstborn of a Mother who had not known man.

## **Communion Hymn**

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! (Ps. 148:1) I will receive the cup of salvation and call on the Name of the Lord. (Ps. 115:4) Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

**W**ith God on this present day we begin the *Triodion*, the hymns of which were composed by many of our holy and God-bearing Fathers, inspired by the Holy Spirit according to their worthiness. The first of all was the great author Kosmas of Maiuma, who composed the three odes (symbolic of the Holy and Life-Creating Trinity) for the Great and Holy Week of the Passion of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ. After him others of the Fathers, including Theodore and Joseph of the Studite Monastery, following his zealous example, arranged the services of the other weeks of the Holy and Great Forty-day Fast, reserving them at first for the use of the Studite Monastery. Furthermore they composed and arranged hymns, seeking them and collecting them from other books of the Fathers. Since, according to the Triodion, Sunday, the celebration of the Resurrection, is the first day of the week as well as the last or eighth day, they prescribed the first canticle of the canon to be sung on the second day of the week, i.e. Monday. The second canticle was prescribed for Tuesday, the third day of the week, the third canticle for Wednesday, the fourth canticle for Thursday, the fifth canticle for Friday, and the sixth and seventh canticles for Saturday. The rest, the eighth and ninth canticles, are prescribed for every day.

It must be known, however, that although it is called the Triodion, it does have services with other than three-canticle canons. It is so named because the majority of the services have three canticle canons, especially during Holy Week. For it was our Holy Fathers' idea that through the entire Triodion would be commemorated in a concise form all God's benefits to us from the

beginning, using it as a reminder for all of us that we were created by Him, and were exiled from Paradise through the tasting of the fruit, rejecting the commandment that was given to us for our knowledge, and we were cast out through the envy of the arch villain serpent and enemy, who was made to crawl for his arrogance. That we remained cut off from the benefits of Paradise and were led by the devil. That the Son and Word of God, having suffered in His mercy, bowing the heavens, descended and made His abode in the Virgin and became man for our sake, showing us through His life the ascent into the heavens, through humility first of all then fasting and the rejection of evil and through His other deeds. That He suffered and rose from the dead and ascended once more into heaven, and He sent down the Holy Spirit upon His holy disciples and Apostles, who all proclaimed Him to be the Son of God and the most perfect God. And that once more the divine Apostles acted through the grace of the most Holy Spirit and gathered all the saints from the ends of the earth through their preaching, filling the world on high, which was the intention of the Creator from the beginning.

Now the purpose of the Triodion intended by the Holy Fathers on these three present feasts of the Publican and the Pharisee, the Prodigal Son, and the Second Coming is a kind of preparatory lesson and stimulation to prepare ourselves for the spiritual labors of the Fast, having put aside our usual corrupt habits. First of all they present to us the parable of the Publican and the Pharisee, and they call the week following precursory. For those who desire to go off to do military battle, first ascertain the time of the battle from the leaders, so that having cleaned and polished their weapons, and preparing well all their other matters, and having removed all obstacles from their path, they earnestly go forth to their labors, taking the necessary supplies. Often before battle they tell anecdotes and tales and parables to incite their hearts to zeal, driving off idleness, fear, despair and other inadequate feelings. So the divine Fathers herald the coming fast against the armies of demons as a passion which holds fast our souls to cleanse ourselves of the poison accumulated over a long period of time. Not yet possessing those benefits, let us strive to obtain them, and arming ourselves properly, so let us set off to the labors of the Fast.