

Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm:** *Known to be hospitalized (none); Home:* Bob Brewster, John Mahalchak (son). Nancy Shaytar, Natalie Toooh, *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* Natalie Popovich, Michael Soroka.

➤ **Vigil From Mat. Nancy K. Mell & Gregory Mell** for the departed servants, Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of family. From **Doris Wasilko** for the departed servants, Charles and Mary; for the health of Chuck, and Mat. Nancy. From **Marsha Wasilko** for the health of Chuck, cousin Cynthia, and Mat. Nancy. From **Charles A. Wasilko** for the health of Mat. Nancy Mell; special intention. From **Donya Yewisiak** for the health of Reader Michael Soroka on his birthday. From **John & Olga** for the health of Galina Vilko; for Elizabeth (Ella) Kowalcheck on her birthday. From **Mr. and Mrs. Richard Blaha** for the departed servants, parents, brother, Aunt Eva, Aunt Irene, and Calvin; for the health family, friends, siblings, serving soldiers, and a safe journey for wife, Sonia; for special intention, peace, anniversaries, and birthdays From **Lindy Hamilton** for the health of the Hamilton and Scott families; for special intentions. From **Nancy Shaytar** (3 weeks 2/9-2/23) for the departed servant, husband George. From **the John Mahalchak family** for the departed servants, John & Veronica; for the health of friends and family, John, Cheryl, John, Daniel, Mary, Richard, Joseph, Margaret, Gregory, and Cindy.

➤ **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: Elijah

Scripture reference: I Kings 17-22, II Kings 1-2

Questions to ask/review:

- Who was Elijah? What is a prophet?
- How did the Jewish people become separated around 900 BC?
- Did Elijah live in the North or South?
- What are the differences between a prophet of God and a prophet of Baal?
- Why did Elijah go to speak to King Ahab?
- Would you have been willing to go to the king if you had been in Elijah's place? Why or why not?
- Have you ever had to stand up for what you believe in? What happened?
- What 2 miracles occurred in Zarephath?
- What was God's curse on Israel?
- Why did Elijah destroy all the prophets of Baal after he won the challenge?
- Why did Elijah run from Jezebel? Was he cowardly? Why or why not?
- When Elijah was in the wilderness, why did he want to die? What made him willing to return and face Ahaziah, Ahab's successor?

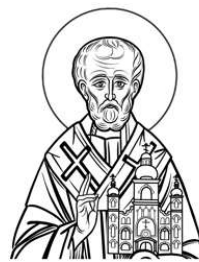
Suggested Activities at home:

- Using a study Bible, locate the events of Elijah's life on a map.

Prayer: Lord, give us the strength to stand for your Truth. Amen.

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



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 23

10:00 am Divine Liturgy / Church School

Tuesday, February 25

9:00 am Daily Matins

9:30 am to 12:00 pm Office Hours

Wednesday, February 26

6:30 pm Daily Vespers

7:00 pm Bible Study

Thursday, February 27

9:00 am Daily Matins

9:30 am to 12:00 pm Office Hours

Saturday, March 1

3:30 pm Exploring Orthodoxy Class

4:30 pm Confessions

5:00 pm Vespers (Reader's Service)

Sunday, March 2

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

Last Judgment / Meatfare

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA

OrthodoxPittsburgh.org

February 23, 2025

Announcements

➤ Thank you to **Fr Ilya Gotlinsky** who is leading us the Divine Liturgy. Fr Ilya is the Director of Orthodox Tours and is currently living in the Pittsburgh area. Please welcome him and his family after the Divine Liturgy.

➤ Everyone is invited downstairs today for our annual **Meatfare Luncheon**. Many thanks to the men!

➤ **Spring Young Adult Retreat** – March 14-16, 2025. Our Archdiocese is pleased to cosponsor the upcoming Spring Young Adult Retreat along with the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh Y2AM, the Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese, and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA. This retreat will take place at beautiful Camp Nazareth in Mercer, PA, and is **open to young adults ages 18-35**. Join Fr. Timothy Paproski for an enriching weekend exploring the theme "Living the Liturgy"—why the Divine Liturgy is central to Orthodox spiritual life and how we can live and share it beyond the church walls. Register now: <https://tinyurl.com/2z7kjpjh> Location: Camp Nazareth, 339 Pew Road, Mercer, PA 16137

➤ 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.

➤ **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.

Hymns and Readings for Sunday, February 23

Tone 2 Troparion (Resurrection)

When Thou didst descend to death, O Life immortal,
Thou didst slay hell with the splendor of Thy Godhead.
And when from the depths Thou didst raise the dead,
all the powers of heaven cried out://
“O Giver of life, Christ our God, 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.

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

Tone 3 Kontakion (St Nicholas)

Thou didst appear as a priest in Myra, O Saint Nicholas
Fulfilling the gospel of Christ, O ven'rable one;
Thou didst lay down thy life for thy people
And didst rescue the innocent from death.
Therefore, thou has been blest as a great initiate of the grace of God.

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 1 Kontakion (Lenten Triodion)

When Thou, O God, shalt come to earth with glory,
all things shall tremble,
and the river of fire shall flow before Thy judgment seat;
the books shall be opened, and the hidden things disclosed;
then deliver me from the unquenchable fire, //

and make me worthy to stand at Thy right hand,
O Righteous Judge!

Tone 3 Prokeimenon (Lenten Triodion)

Great is our Lord, and abundant in power, / His understanding is beyond measure. (Ps. 146:5)

Epistle 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2 (Sunday)

But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse.

But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak. For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols? And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

Gospel Matthew 25:31-46 (Sunday)

“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation

of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’

“Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’

“Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.’

“Then they also will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?’ Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’ And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

Communion Hymn

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

They set this fearful day here, in order to instill fear, through death and the expectation of future torments, in those who are heedless, and to bring them back to virtue, not trusting in God's loving-kindness alone, but taking into account that He is a just Judge, Who will render

unto each man according to his deeds. Moreover, since the souls of those who have died stood in our midst yesterday, it was fitting that the Judge should come today.

In a certain way, the present Feast is, as it were, the consummation of all the Feasts, just as it will be the final day for all of us. We should reflect that the Fathers will assign the beginning of the world and Adam's fall from Paradise to the following Sunday, and that the present Feast is the end of all our lives and of this world. The Fathers assigned it to the Sunday of Meatfare, so as to curb greed and gluttony through the fear aroused by this Feast, and to summon us to show compassion to our neighbors. Furthermore, since, after reaping delight, we were exiled from Eden, and came under judgment and the curse, the present Feast is placed here, and also because, on the next Sunday, on which we commemorate the fall of Adam, we are going to be figuratively cast out of Eden, until Christ comes and brings us back to Paradise.

Christ's coming is called the Second Coming, because whereas He first came to us in bodily form, quietly and without glory, He will now come from Heaven with wonders that transcend nature, with conspicuous radiance, and corporeally, so that He may be recognized by all as being He Who first came and delivered the human race, and Who is going to judge it, to see whether it has preserved what was given to it.

When His Coming will take place, no one knows; for the Lord kept this hidden even from the Apostles. But until then, at any rate, He indicated that it will be preceded by certain signs, which some of the Saints explained in greater detail. It is said that the Second Coming will occur after seven millennia have passed.

In Thine ineffable love for mankind, O Christ God, count us worthy to hear Thy desired voice, number us with those on Thy right hand, and have mercy on us. Amen.