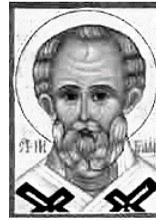


St Nicholas Orthodox Church

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA stnicholas-oca.org

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost
October 15, 2017

Archpriest Thomas Soroka, Rector
Deacon Luke Loboda, Attached
Mat. Janet Mihalick, Choir Director



Welcome!

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 fill out a visitor's card and drop it in the offering basket as your offering today. Please join us downstairs following the Divine Liturgy. We want to get to know you! God bless you!

This Week

Wednesday, October 18

6:30 pm – Daily Vespers

7:00 pm – Bible Study

Saturday, October 21

5:00 pm – Great Vespers

Sunday, October 22

9:15 am – Adult Education Class

10:00 am - Divine Liturgy

Church School after Communion

****Please note that today's coffee hour is a fundraiser to finish selling the baked goods from the Slavic Food Fest. Next week we'll return to our regular coffee hour. **This week please purchase the baked goods at the marked donation price.***

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.

Announcements

➤ **New "Virtual"**

Catechism class coming to St Nicholas parish beginning **Tuesday, November 7!** "What We Believe" presents the basic doctrines and practices of the Orthodox Christian Faith in an engaging online interactive format. This series will be divided into **six live one-hour sessions** led by Fr Thomas. Don't let your busy schedule keep you from learning the about the Orthodox Christian Faith. If you're interested, you'll need a computer (or phone) with an internet connection (Wi-Fi preferred) and Skype installed and working. A video camera is recommended but not required. *A mic is required.* See Fr Thomas for details and on how to join!



A **SPECIAL THANK YOU** to everyone who worked so hard to make our **second annual Slavic Food Fest** a success! **A complete list of names of all our dedicated parishioners who worked will be included in next week's bulletin.** A special thank you to the following leads: Donya Yewisiak, chair, Bob Madalinsky, Kitchen, Suzy Polny, Silent Auction, Sasha Gajewski, Bake Sale, and to **EVERYONE** who gave their time, energy, and love for our parish! **THANK YOU!**

➤ **A Rusyn Historical Bus Tour of Pittsburgh** will take place on Wednesday, October 18th from 8:30 am - 4:30 pm. Departs from and return to the Hyatt Regency Hotel Pittsburgh International Airport. The tour price of \$60.00 per person includes deluxe motor coach, guide fees, lunch, driver tip and admissions. For more information and to register, contact Paul Makousky at PaulMCzech@comcast.net or visit cgsievents.com.

Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm: Known to be Hospitalized:** Jack Saban (VA). *Home:* Erin Hamilton (post-partum). Sandi Tirpak, Leslie Wokutch, Georgiann Robes. *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* George Shaytar (Greentree Manor), Olga Bednar, Stephanie Kowal, John Shaytar, Olga Tryszyn, Mary Zapp.

➤ **Vigil Lights From Mat. Nancy K. Mell and Gregory Mell** for the departed servant, Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of family. **From John & Olga Kowalcheck** for the health of Anatoly & Galina Vilkov. **From Mat. Joni Soroka** for the departed servant, (mother) Barbara; for the health of (daughter) Melanie on the occasion of her birthday. **From Donya Yewisiak** for the departed servant, Matushka Olga Soroka. **From Nancy Shaytar** for the health of (husband) George. **From Sandy, Michael & Chrissy Saban** for the health of Jack Saban and George Shaytar.

Thank You

➤ **to the Robes Family** for sponsoring the bulletin for the month of October in memory of Thomas V. Robes Sr, and for many years to Teresa Robes on the occasion of her birthday.



Parable of the Sower

What is this seed which is being sown? It is the Word of God, yes, in one sense being the good news of salvation, the Gospel itself, but what is the seed in essence? Is it not love – pure, undefiled, unmingled, personal, all-powerful, life-

creating Divine love? When we love or perform acts of love, this love is often tainted, mingled together with some self-interest, with some vanity, with some vainglory, with some critical remarks or condescension. Not so with the love of God. The love of God is completely selfless and pure.

The sower is sowing these seeds, and on each of these tiny seeds, sown ever so subtly, is written the phrase: "I love you my child." And how is this seed of the love of God sown? If our eyes are open, we will see clearly that it is sown in a million different ways every day. Let's begin with nature – is not the beauty of the natural world a seed, or rather many seeds, sown through our physical senses and containing the message of God's love? The symphony of colors in the Fall, the complexity of the design of our own bodies, every cell, every molecule with its combination of elements in precise arrangements working together to give us breath and continued life, the elegance of the lines drawn across the sweeping ridges and valleys in a snow-capped mountain range, and something not often studied except in specialized courses, the awe-inspiring crystal structure and chemistry of thousands of different minerals existing on the planet where we live – these are all seeds of love, messages from God about his love for us.

Christ has been sowing these seeds of love in His creation forever and continues to do so now, every day. But how do we respond? The appropriate response to this Divine love is to give love in return, to arrange everything in our life, from our thoughts to our actions to our future plans, as a loving response to this outpouring of love from the Sower, Christ. In Proverbs God speaks to man through the Prophet and says "Son, give me your heart." And this is what he says to all of us. "Son, give me your heart." "Daughter, give me your heart." "My child, my little one, my unique creation, give me your heart." (*Hermitage of the Holy Cross*)

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.

Hymns and Readings for Today

Troparion of the Resurrection Tone 2

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!

Troparion of the Holy Fathers Tone 8

You are most glorious, O Christ our God!

You have established the Holy Fathers as lights on the earth.

Through them You have guided us to the true Faith!!

O greatly compassionate One, glory to You!

Kontakion of the Resurrection Tone 2

Hell became afraid, O almighty Savior, seeing the miracle of Thy resurrection from the tomb!

The dead arose! Creation, with Adam, beheld this and rejoiced with Thee!

And the world, O my Savior, praises Thee forever!

Kontakion of the Holy Fathers Tone 6

The Son who shone forth from the Father was ineffably born, two-fold in nature, of a woman.

Having beheld Him, we do not deny the image of His form,

but depict it piously and revere it faithfully.

Thus, keeping the True Faith!!

the Church venerates the icon of Christ Incarnate.

Prokeimenon (Psalm 118) Tone 2

The Lord is my strength and my song. He has become my salvation!

Prokiemenon (Song of the Fathers)

Blessed art Thou O Lord, God of our Fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy name forever!

Epistle of the Sunday (II Corinthians 11:31-12:9)

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. In Damascus the governor, under Aretas the king,

was guarding the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to arrest me; but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands.

It is doubtless not profitable for me to boast. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord: I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one was caught up to the third heaven. And I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such a one I will boast; yet of myself I will not boast, except in my infirmities. For though I might desire to boast, I will not be a fool; for I will speak the truth. But I refrain, lest anyone should think of me above what he sees me to be or hears from me.

And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Gospel (Luke 8:5-15)

“A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. 8 But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold.” When He had said these things He cried, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

Then His disciples asked Him, saying, “What does this parable mean?” And He said, “To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of

God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that ‘Seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.’”

“Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience.”

Communion Hymns (Ps 148:1; 32/33:1)

P raise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous! Praise befits the just! Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

The Harvest is Coming!

Be changed while ye may: turn up with the plough the hard ground, cast the stones out of the field, pluck up the thorns out of it. Be loath to retain that hard heart, from which the word of God may quickly pass away and be lost. Be loath to have that lightness of soil, where the root of charity can take no deep hold. Be loath to choke the good seed which is sown in you by my labors, with the lusts and the cares of this world. For it is the Lord who sows; and we are only His laborers. But be ye the good ground. I said yesterday, and I say again today to all, Let one bring forth a hundred, another sixty, another thirty fold. In one the fruit is more, in another less; but all will have a place in the barn. Yesterday I said all this, today I am addressing the tares; but the sheep themselves are the tares. O evil Christians, O you, who in filling only press the Church by your evil lives; amend yourselves before the harvest come. Say not, I have sinned, and what has befallen me? God has not lost His power; but He is requiring repentance from you. I say this to the evil, who yet are Christians; I say this to the tares. For they are in the field; and it may so be, that they who today are tares, may tomorrow be wheat. And so I will address the wheat also. (*Bl. Augustine*)

This Week in Church School

(As a feature of our new Church School program, review notes are being provided to the parents of our Church School students so that they can review what they learned in Church School today and reinforce the lesson at home at a level appropriate for your student..)

Today's lesson: Jesus' Life in Nazareth and Trip to Jerusalem

Questions to ask/review:

- How did Mary and Joseph care for Jesus as a boy? (cared for his needs like your parents do for you)
- What did Joseph do for a living? (carpenter)
- What happened on the family's trip to Jerusalem?
- How did Christ react when his parents found him?

Suggested activities at home:

- Before bed, read together the story of the trip to Jerusalem (Luke 2:40-52).
- If possible, ask your child to help you with some aspect of your work. Discuss how Jesus probably helped his father Joseph with carpentry work.
- Prayer: Dear Jesus, help me to grow in your wisdom and to learn to love God as you did. Amen.

