



## 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.. We want to get to know you! God bless you!

## This Week

**Saturday, January 20**

**4:30 pm** - Confessions

**5:00 pm** – Great Vespers

**Sunday, January 21**

**9:15 am** – Adult Education

**10:00 am** – Divine Liturgy

Church School following

**Anyone who wishes to have their home blessed** should contact Fr Thomas this week. Home blessings are by appointment only - weekdays after 5:00 pm. Please have an icon, candle, small bowl for holy water, and a list of family members prepared. While Fr Thomas appreciates everyone's gracious hospitality, for the sake of time, he will regretfully not be able to accept invitations for dinner.

**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*  
Mat. Janet Mihalick, *Choir Director*

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA  
OrthodoxPittsburgh.org

Jan 14, 2018

## Announcements

➤ **2018 Contribution Envelopes and Wall Calendars** are available in the Vestibule and at the Candle Desk. Please see Jonathan Skowron for your 2018 Contribution Envelopes.

➤ **Sisterhood News:** There will be a very important Sisterhood meeting today. We will nominate and elect officers. Please attend.

➤ **We will take a special collection** to assist Olga Kamaev to journey back to Russia with the remains of her deceased husband, Anton. Please be generous and help those of the household of faith.

➤ **Dates to remember for 2018:**

Jan 28 – Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee

Feb 11 – Meatfare Sunday

Feb 18 – Cheesefare Sunday

Feb 19 – Beginning of Great Lent

April 1 – Palm Sunday (and Western Easter)

April 8 – Holy Pascha

➤ **Our Yearly Parish Meeting** is scheduled to be held after the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, January 28. Only members in good standing may participate. **All parish organizations, officers, and most committees should submit a written report to the Secretary, Kristie Mertz by Sunday, January 14.**

➤ **Our January hoagie sale** will be held on Wednesday, January 31. Italian Hoagies and wraps are \$6.00 each and the Turkey hoagies and wraps are \$6.50 each. Orders can be placed by calling 412-974-9912, faxing 724-926-4052 or emailing rjmbmsam1@verizon.net. Orders are due on Sunday evening, January 28. Orders can be picked up between noon and 1 pm January 31 at the church hall.

## Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm: Known to be Hospitalized (none)**  
*Home:* Fred Zeleznik, Georgiann Robes, George Shaytar. *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* Olga Bednar, 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 Marsha Wasilko** for the departed servant, (brother) Raymond (1/10/17); Happy Birthday & Many Years to Jan Widel! **From Charles A. Wasilko** for the departed servant, (brother) Raymond. **From Doris Wasilko** for the departed servant, (brother) Raymond; for the health of the Wasilko family. **From Donya Yewisiak** for the departed servant, Stephanie Kowal; for the health of Reader Leonard Soroka, Fred Zelesnik and Chuck Widel. **From John & Nancy Pravlochak** for the departed servant, Stefanie Kowal; for the health of our grandchildren and Paul & Helen Henry. **From Jan Widel** for the health of Charles, Donya and Reader Leonard Soroka. **From Marge Speth** for the health of Barbara and Marsha.



## Thank You

➤ to all those who have donated to support our parish throughout the year 2017 **using the monthly donors sheet at the candle desk.** Everyone is encouraged to visit the candle desk to obtain a candle and to considering donating in one of the categories provided for monthly offerings. May God richly bless you for your love for God and His Church!

## Why do we burn candles?

Candles are a sacrificial offering. Though we live in an age where light comes on instantly, the candle is something that we offer up, like a prayer, to God. This sacrificial offering is "consumed" with a living flame. It requires either the effort to create them, or a financial offering to purchase them. In either case, the candle is burnt as a sacrifice to God. The light reminds us that Christ is the "light of the world" (Jn 8:12). **Everyone should light a candle when they enter the church.**

Candles and oil lamps should also be used at home in our icon corner, especially during times of prayer and family worship. The flame symbolizes the energies of God, because He is a "consuming fire" (Heb 12:29).

**Saint Nikodemos the Hagiorite** gives us six different reasons why Orthodox light candles:

1. To glorify God, who is Light, as we chant in the Matins Great Doxology: "Glory to God who has shown us the light..."
2. To dissolve the darkness of the night and to banish away the fear which is brought on by the darkness.
3. To manifest the inner joy of our soul.
4. To bestow honor to the saints of our Faith, imitating the early Christians of the first centuries who lit candles at the tombs of the martyrs.
5. To symbolize our good works, as the Lord said: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in the heavens." The priest also gave us this charge following our baptism.
6. To have our own sins forgiven and burned away, as well as the sins of those for whom we pray.

Let us often light our candles and make sure as much as possible that they be pure beeswax candles. We ourselves should abstain from all corruption and uncleanness, so that all of the above symbolism is made real in our Christian lives.

**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 7**

By Thy cross, Thou didst destroy death!  
To the thief, Thou didst open paradise!  
For the myrrh-bearers, Thou didst change weeping  
into joy!  
And Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ  
God  
to proclaim that Thou art risen,  
granting the world great mercy.

## **Troparion of the Feast Tone 1**

When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan,  
the worship of the Trinity was made manifest!  
For the voice of the Father bear witness to Thee,  
calling Thee 'His beloved Son,'  
and the Spirit, in the form of a dove,  
confirmed the truthfulness of His word.  
O Christ our God who hast revealed Thyself,  
And hast enlightened the world, glory to Thee!

## **Kontakion of the Resurrection Tone 7**

The dominion of death  
can no longer hold men captive,  
for Christ descended, shattering and destroying its  
powers!  
Hell is bound, while the prophets rejoice and cry:  
The Savior has come to those in faith,  
Enter, you faithful, into the Resurrection!

## **Kontakion of the Feast Tone 4**

Today Thou hast appeared to the universe,  
and Thy light, O Lord, hast shone on us,  
Who with understanding, praise Thee:  
Thou hast come and revealed Thyself,  
O Light Unapproachable!

## **Prokeimenon (Psalm 29) Tone 7**

The Lord shall give strength to His people! The  
Lord shall bless His people with peace!

## **Epistle of the Sunday (1 Tim 1:15-17)**

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 of the Sunday (Luke 18:35-43)**

Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho,  
that a certain blind man sat by the road begging.  
And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what  
it meant. So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth  
was passing by.

And he cried out, saying, "Jesus, Son of David,  
have mercy on me!" Then those who went before  
warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried  
out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"  
So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be  
brought to Him. And when he had come near, He  
asked him, saying, "What do you want Me to do for  
you?" He said, "Lord, that I may receive my sight."  
Then Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your  
faith has made you well." And immediately he  
received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying  
God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave  
praise to God.

## **Hymn to the Theotokos of the Feast**

Magnify, O my soul, the most pure virgin  
Theotokos, more honorable than the heavenly  
hosts!  
No tongue is capable of praising you worthily; the  
angelic mind is over-awed in exalting you, O  
Theotokos! But accept our faith, since you are  
gracious and know our divine love. You are the  
Protectress of Christians and we praise you!

## **Communion Hymn (Ps 148 and Titus 1:11)**

Praise the Lord from the heavens! Praise Him in  
the highest!  
The grace of God has appeared for the salvation of  
all men. Alleluia!

# Have Mercy on Me

The Church has taken the persistence of the blind  
beggar to heart and the term "Lord have mercy"  
appears frequently in the Orthodox Liturgy. But  
there is a depth to this usage that often goes  
unappreciated. The Greek word *eleos* meaning  
compassion or mercy is used widely in the New  
Testament as a noun, verb (to have mercy),  
adjective (merciful) and as a noun directed toward  
someone (compassionateness).

People Continuously Crying Out "Lord Have  
Mercy":

- Blind Bartimaeus and companion
- Two blind men: (Matthew 9:27-31)
- Canaanite woman for her daughter; (Matthew 15:21-28, Mark 7:24-30)
- Ten lepers: (Luke 17:11-19)
- People Begging, Imploring, Trembling, Prostrating:
- Man for epileptic son: (Matthew 17:14-21, Mark 9:14-29, Luke 9:37-42)
- Jairus for daughter: (Luke 8:40-56, Matthew 9:18-26, Mark 5:21-43)
- Woman with hemorrhage: (Luke 8:43-48, Matthew 9:20-22, Mark 5:25-34)
- One leper: (Luke 5:12-16, Matthew 8:1-4, Mark 1:40-45)

Under the Old Testament Law, animal sacrifice was  
required for forgiveness of sins. The animal  
sacrifice represented judgment on the animal in  
place of the offerer, and this foreshadowed Christ's  
sacrifice for us. However, without mercy in one's  
heart, sacrifice is pointless. For example:

- The Prophets Hosea and Micah had said it  
(Hosea 6:6, Micah 6:6-8)
- The Scribes and Pharisees didn't understand it  
(Matthew 9:13, 12:7, 23:23)
- Judgment is without mercy to the one who has  
shown no mercy (James 2:13)
- The wisdom from above is full of mercy (James 3:17)

# Today in Church School

**Today's lesson:** The Transfiguration

## **Questions to ask/review:**

- What does Transfiguration mean? (change)
- What happened before the Transfiguration?  
(Jesus told the disciples about His suffering to  
come and told them that some of them would  
die before seeing Him in His glory)
- In what way was Jesus preparing his disciples  
for his crucifixion?
- What does Christ reveal through His  
Transfiguration? (his divine and human nature)
- How is the Trinity revealed through the  
Transfiguration?
- Why are Moses and Elijah there with Christ?  
(the Law and the Prophets are fulfilled in Christ)
- How did the disciples react? How is this similar  
to how we should react when in the presence of  
God? (they were "afraid" but also said "it is  
good to be here")

## **Suggested activities at home:**

- Read the scripture together before bed: Luke 9:28-36, Matthew 17:1-13, Mark 9:1-9.
- Show the icon. Identify all the individuals.
- Make a fruit basket and deliver to a shut-in or  
person in need.
- Prayer: Lord Jesus, you who were transfigured  
on the Mount Tabor, save us who sing to you.  
Alleluia. Amen.

