



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

Monday, March 19

5:00 pm Lenten Vespers

Tuesday, March 20

5:00 pm Lenten Vespers

Wednesday, March 21

6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
Lenten Fellowship Meal

Thursday, March 22

5:00 pm Lenten Vespers

Friday, March 23

7:00 pm Akathist to the Mother of God

Saturday, March 24

9:30 am – Divine Liturgy at Holy Ghost, Ambridge
11:00 am – Talk by Andrew Weaver in Ambridge

4:30 pm Confessions

5:00 pm Great Vespers with Litiya

Sunday, March 25

10:00 am Festal Divine Liturgy / Fish 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*

Fourth Sunday of Lent – St John of “The Ladder”

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA
OrthodoxPittsburgh.org

March 18, 2018

Announcements

➤ **The Lenten season is nearing its close.** The Church prescribes that we refrain from eating meat and dairy products throughout the entirety of Lent and Holy Week. We're also called to increase our personal prayer, church attendance, and charity. May God strengthen you in your Lenten journey to enter the Lord's Pascha.

➤ **We're still in need of a few items for our Parish-wide charitable endeavor.** We provide 12 Easter Baskets for local families in need. Thank you to those who have already pledged to help. Please see the insert in today's bulletin on how you can contribute! **We need you! We are especially in need of cash donations.**

➤ **Join us for our Lenten Fish Dinner** on Sunday, March 25 (Feast of the Annunciation) after the Divine Liturgy! **This is the last day to purchase tickets.** Tickets will not be sold the day of the dinner. See the enclosed insert.



➤ **Our March hoagie sale** will be held on Wednesday, March 28. Please note that our prices have a modest increase due to increased costs. Italian Hoagies and wraps are \$6.50 each and the Turkey hoagies and wraps are \$7.00 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, March 25. Orders can be picked up between noon and 1 pm March 28 at the church hall.

Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm: Known to be Hospitalized (none).. Home recovery (none). Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:** Olga Bednar, Garnette Kerchum, Georgiann Robes, Olga Tryszyn, Mary Zapp.

➤ **From Mat. Nancy K. Mell and Gregory Mell** for the departed servants, Dn. Joseph Mell and Sandra Karavlan (1 yr anniversary of falling asleep in the Lord); for the health of family. **From Marsha Wasilko** for the departed servant, (Uncle) Mike Wasilko (3/16/86); for the health of the Wasilko family and (friend) Mary Lou. **From Charles A. Wasilko** for the departed servant, (Uncle) Mike Wasilko. **From Doris Wasilko** for the departed servant, (Uncle) Mike Wasilko; for the health of the Wasilko family. **From Amelia Kuck** for the departed servant, (father) Theodore. **From George & Nancy Shaytar** for the departed servant, John Shaytar; for the health of George Shaytar and Maryanne Lugin. **From John & Nancy Pravlochak** for the departed servants, (grandparents) Michael & Helen and Stephen & Anastasia; for the health of our family.

Thank You

➤ to the **St Nicholas Sisterhood** for donating 19 new altar server vestments (approximately \$2,000). May God bless all of our women for providing these new vestments!

➤ to **Matushka Martha Nakajima** for her tireless efforts in repairing our current altar server robes. She also decorated the Precious Cross with flowers for veneration last week. May God richly bless her!

➤ to **Chuck Wasilko** for sponsoring the bulletin for the month of March on the occasion of his birthday. May God richly bless him!

Insensibility

Insensibility is negligence that has become habit; benumbed thought; the birth of presumption; a snare for zeal; the noose of courage; ignorance of compunction; a door to despair; the mother of forgetfulness, which gives birth to loss of the fear of God. And then she becomes the daughter of her own daughter.

He who has lost sensibility is a brainless philosopher, a self-condemned commentator, a self contradictory windbag, a blind man who teaches others to see. He talks about healing a wound, and does not stop irritating it. He complains of sickness, and does not stop eating what is harmful. He prays against it, and immediately goes and does it. And when he has done it, he is angry with himself; and the wretched man is not ashamed of his own words. 'I am doing wrong,' he cries, and eagerly continues to do so. His mouth prays against his passion, and his body struggles for it. He philosophizes about death, but he behaves as if he were immortal. He groans over the separation of soul and body, but drowns along as if he were eternal. He talks of temperance and self-control, but he lives for gluttony. He reads about the judgment and begins to smile. He reads about vainglory, and is vainglorious while actually reading. He repeats what he has learnt about vigil, and drops asleep on the spot. He praises prayer, but runs from it as from the plague. He blesses obedience, but he is the first to disobey. He praises detachment, but he is not ashamed to be spiteful and to fight for a rag. When angered he gets bitter, and he is angered again at his bitterness; and he does not feel that after one defeat he is suffering another. Having overeaten he repents, and a little later again gives way to it. He blesses silence, and praises it with a spate of words. He teaches meekness, and during the actual teaching frequently gets angry. Having woken from passion he sighs, and shaking his head, he again yields to passion. He condemns laughter, and lectures on mourning with a smile on his face. Before others he blames himself for being vainglorious, and in blaming himself is only angling for glory for himself. He looks people in the face with passion, and talks about chastity. While frequenting the world, he praises the solitary life, without realizing that he shames himself. He extols almsgivers, and reviles beggars. All the time he is his own accuser, and he does not want to come to his senses—I will not say cannot. (“The Ladder” 18:2-3)

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

March 18, 2018

Troparion of the Resurrection Tone 8

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.

Troparion of St Nicholas Tone 4

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.

Troparion of St John Climacus Tone 1

O dweller of the wilderness and angel in the body,
You were a wonder-worker, O our God-bearing
Father John!
You received heavenly gifts
through fasting, vigil, and prayer:
Healing the sick and the souls of those drawn to
you by faith.
Glory to Him who gave you strength!
Glory to Him who granted you a crown!
Glory to Him who through you grants healing to all!

Kontaktion of St John Climacus Tone 4

The Lord truly set you on the heights of abstinence,
to be a guiding star, showing the way to the
universe,
O our father and teacher John.

Kontaion of the Theotokos Tone 6

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.

Prokeimenon of the Sunday (Psalm 76) Tone 8

Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God!

Epistle of the Sunday (Heb 6:13-20)

For when God made a promise to Abraham,
because He could swear by no one greater, He
swore by Himself, saying, "Surely blessing I will
bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you." And
so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the
promise. For men indeed swear by the greater, and
an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all
dispute. Thus God, determining to show more
abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability
of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two
immutable things, in which it is impossible for God
to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have
fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.

This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both
sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence
behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered
for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest
forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

Gospel of the Sunday (Mk 9:17-31)

Then one of the crowd answered and said,
"Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute
spirit. And wherever it seizes him, it throws him
down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth,
and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples,
that they should cast it out, but they could not."

He answered him and said, "O faithless generation,
how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear
with you? Bring him to Me." Then they brought him
to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the
spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and
wallowed, foaming at the mouth. So He asked his
father, "How long has this been happening to him?"

And he said, "From childhood. And often he has
thrown him both into the fire and into the water to
destroy him. But if You can do anything, have
compassion on us and help us."

Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are
possible to him who believes." Immediately the
father of the child cried out and said with tears,
"Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"

When Jesus saw that the people came running
together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it,
"Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of
him and enter him no more!" Then the spirit cried
out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him.
And he became as one dead, so that many said,
"He is dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and
lifted him up, and he arose.

And when He had come into the house, His
disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not
cast it out?" So He said to them, "This kind can
come out by nothing but prayer and fasting." Then
they departed from there and passed through
Galilee, and He did not want anyone to know it. For
He taught His disciples and said to them, "The Son
of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men,
and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will
rise the third day."

And He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that
there are some standing here who will not taste
death till they see the kingdom of God present with
power."



On Today's Gospel Reading

It is perhaps important to stress here that this
miracle account nowhere refers to the spirit by any
title such as demon, or devil. It is perhaps because
this spirit is in reference to the spirit of this world,
the enemy of Christ. It is the spirit of this generation
well rooted in society, it is passed on to our children
like a virus. Brethren remember these words well —
it is the spirit of this generation which throws our
youth about like the child with the spirit we heard
earlier today. It smashes them to the ground, it
throws them into the fire to be burnt, it throws them
into the water to be drowned — today its drugs,
alcohol, gambling, anything to distort the image and
likeness of God, within them.

Today in Church School

Today's lesson: The Last Supper

Questions to ask/review:

- What were Jesus and His disciples celebrating at the Last Supper? (the Passover)
- Jesus is often called the lamb of God. How is He like the Passover lamb? (he is sacrificed for the sins of others and saves them from death)
- Why do we celebrate the Eucharist? (Christ instructs us to do so at the Last Supper)
- How does the bread and wine become Christ's body and blood? (the Priest prays that God changes them)
- Are they truly His body and blood? (yes!)

Suggested activities at home:

- Review with your child the Eucharist, how to prepare in fasting and prayer, and how to receive.
- Wash your child's feet each evening before supper, and have him wash yours.
- Read the scripture at bedtime: Matthew 26: 17-75, Mark 14:12-72, Luke 22:1-65, John 13 and 18:1-27.
- Prayer: Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, Creator of the Universe, Who gives us the fruit of the vine. Amen.

This spirit has a very old history going way back to primordial Man, Adam and Eve. It is firmly established and cannot come out by anything — except, as our Lord instructed Moses, as our Lord instructed his disciples, as our Lord instructs us today, by beseeching God through prayer and fasting.

"Why could we not cast it out", his disciples asked their master in shame. We also must ask why can't we cast this spirit out from our lives and our children's lives? -*Kosmas Damianides*

EASTER FOOD BASKETS FOR NEEDY FAMILIES 2018



Please review the list of food items and indicate on the form the food item or monetary donation which you have selected to donate for the Easter Basket project. Please make checks payable to "St. Nicholas Orthodox Church." Acknowledgements for donations will be issued for tax purposes. Donations will be accepted through **Sunday, March 25, 2018.**

Please submit completed form to Donya Yewisiak at your earliest convenience.

- 4 ~~12~~ Hams (fully cooked- whole/semi-boneless)
- ~~12 Rings of Kielbasi~~
- 12- Five pound bags of potatoes
- ~~12 Five pound bags of flour~~
- 12- Five pound bags of sugar
- 12- Cans of vegetables (~~corn, green beans, peas, sliced beets, etc.~~)
- ~~12 Jars of applesauce (24 oz.)~~
- ~~12 Jars of pickles~~
- ~~12 Cans of black olives~~
- ~~12 Cans of fruit (pineapple slices)~~
- ~~12 Boxes of Jell O~~
- ~~12 Boxes of pudding~~
- ~~12 Boxes of cake mix~~
- ~~12 Cans of cake icing~~
- ~~12 Three pound cans of coffee~~
- ~~12 Bottles of salad dressing~~
- ~~12 Jars of horseradish~~
- ~~12 Two liter bottles of soda~~

Additionally, monetary donations will be accepted in lieu of perishable and miscellaneous items. Eggs, cheese, milk, bread, fresh fruit, vegetables, and children's Easter baskets will be purchased for the recipient families.

Distribution of the baskets will be coordinated through the Holy Family Institute of McKees Rocks, PA.

Thank you,
Donya Yewisiak
Project Coordinator
412 848 7513 cell

Easter Food Baskets for Needy Families 2018

Name _____

- I would like to donate _____
(Please indicate number and type of item.)
- I would like to make a monetary donation in the amount of \$_____.

Inner Peace in a Noisy World

A Lenten Talk

by

Andrew Weaver

former Evangelical pastor
now Orthodox Christian teacher and speaker

Saturday, March 24, 2018

at

Holy Ghost Orthodox Church

210 Maplewood Avenue
Ambridge PA 15003

9:30 am Divine Liturgy
10:30 am Continental Breakfast
11:00 am Talk by Andrew Weaver

This event is free and open to the public.

Sponsored by the Northwest Deanery of the Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and Western PA
Orthodox Church in America