



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!

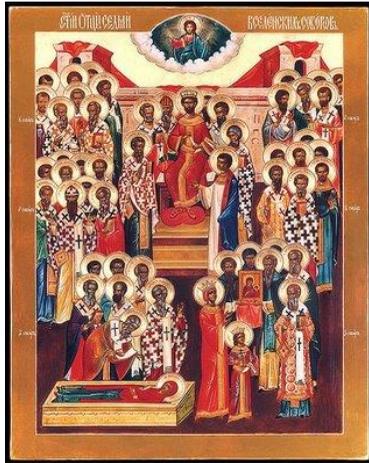
This Week

Saturday, July 21

5:00 pm Great Vespers

Sunday, July 22

10:00 am Divine Liturgy



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*

7th Sunday after Pentecost/Fathers of First Six ECs

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA
OrthodoxPittsburgh.org

July 15, 2018

Announcements

➤ **During the summer months**, let's continue to offer worship and praise to God in thanksgiving for the continued blessings He richly pours out on us. In this way, God is glorified, we sustain our faith, and we become an example to others. **Traveling this summer?** Seek out a church to visit at orthodoxyinamerica.com.

➤ **Join us outside for coffee hour today** and meet our neighbors! Thank you to Dn Luke Loboda and all those who helped organize our third annual Community Day.

➤ **The Sisterhood will have their Pelmeni Fundraiser** on July 22nd during coffee hour. Please place your order no later than today! Please see Sasha Gajewski with any questions.

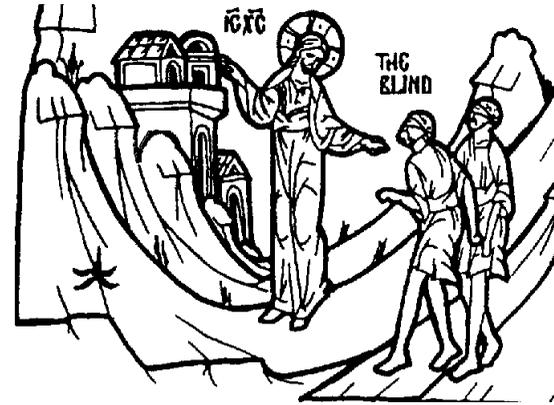
➤ **Congratulations** to Doug and Jessica Baker on the birth of their son, Theodore (Theo) Eliot, born on Wednesday, July 4 at 2:45 pm. He was 9 lbs 6 oz and 22 inches long. Mom and Baby are doing well and Penelope and Dad are entirely thrilled! May God grant the Baker family many years!

➤ Thank you to all those who helped make our **Vacation Church School last week** a great success! To Matuhska Joni for initiating, Missy Wenger for organizing and teaching, Dn Luke for taching, and to Melissa Graff for teaching our children to sing several hymns! Thank you also to the parents who supported and helped! The students learned about the life of St Herman of Alaska, the Lord's teaching of the Sermon on the Mount, made crafts, "survival kits" for our Community Day guests, prosphora, played games, and learned to sing Church hymns. The week of learning ended with a swim party!

Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm: Known to be Hospitalized; (None). Home:** Valentina Barsom, Sandi Tirpak, Georgiann Robes, George Shaytar. Doris Wasilko, Jessica Baker (40 days with new born). **Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:** Olga Bednar, Olga Tryszyn, Mary Zapp.

➤ **From Mat. Nancy K. Mell and Gregory Mell** for the departed servant, Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of family. **From Tatyana Sechler** for the departed servants, Polina, Slava, Galina, Valentina, Bruce, Marina, Victor, Gina, Andrei and Lida; for the health of Roman, Andreana, Diana, Tatyana, Sergei, Veronika, Kristofer, Ray and Yaroslav. **From Marsha Wasilko** for the health of the Wasilko family. **From Charles A. Wasilko** for the health of (sisters) Doris & Marsha. **From John & Olga** for the health of Anatoly & Galina Vilkov and Elizabeth Kowalcheck & her unborn child.



Thank you

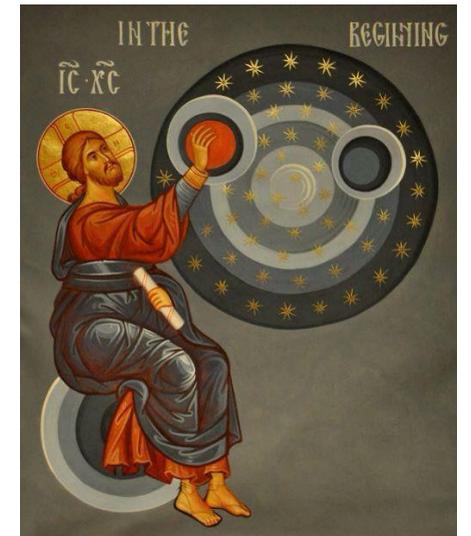
➤ to **Paul and Lois Fuller** for donating all categories [Bulletin (\$60), Holy Bread (\$50), Communion Wine (\$40), Altar Candles (\$25). Incense (\$10)] for the health of family.

Spirit Guides the Eyes

Thus then we Christians understand the earth, the sun and the stars as the symbols of spiritual reality and in no way as the reality itself. Pagans of all ages, however, have mistaken those luminous bodies of the firmament for reality. As soon as they took them for reality they began to worship them. That is how the pagans have been ensnared by a terrible error to worship the creatures instead of the Creator. The Greeks worshiped the earth under the name of goddess Gaia, and the sun under the name of Apollo. The sun was worshiped in Egypt under the name of Osiris, and the moon under the name Isis. The moon was worshiped in Babylon, Assyria, Arabia and in many other countries under the name Ishtar. The Persians, as fire worshipers, bowed before the stars as divinities.

The error of the nature worshipers, the ancient as well as the modern, was caused by the fact that their spirit did not guide their eyes but vice versa: their eyes guided their spirit. Similar to a blind person their spirit tottered after their physical eyes and worshiped everything that the eyes declared as reality, and consequently as divinity.

(St Nikolai Velimirovich)



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 6

The angelic powers were at Thy tomb;
the guards became as dead men.
Mary stood by Thy grave,
seeking Thy most pure Body.
Thou didst capture hell,
not being tempted by it.
Thou didst come to the Virgin granting life.
O Lord who didst rise from the dead, glory to Thee!

Troparion of the Holy Fathers Tone 8

Most glorious art Thou, O Christ our God!
Thou hast established the Holy Fathers as lights on
the earth!
Through them Thou hast guided us to the true faith!
O greatly Compassionate One, glory to Thee!

Kontakion of the Resurrection Tone 6

When Christ God the Giver of Life
raised all the dead from the valleys of misery with
His mighty hand,
He bestowed resurrection on the human race.
He is the Savior of All, the Resurrection, the Life,
and the God of all.

Kontakion of the Holy Fathers Tone 8

The apostle's preaching and the father's doctrines
have established one faith for the Church.
Adorned with the robe of truth, woven from
heavenly theology,
it defines and glorifies the great mystery of
Orthodoxy.

Prokeimenon (Song of the Three Children) Tone 4

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

Epistle (Romans 15:1-7)

We then who are strong ought to bear with the
scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves.
Let each of us please his neighbor for his good,
leading to edification. For even Christ did not
please Himself; but as it is written, "The reproaches
of those who reproached You fell on Me." For
whatever things were written before were written for
our learning, that we through the patience and

comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Now
may the God of patience and comfort grant you to
be like-minded toward one another, according to
Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one
mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus
Christ. Therefore receive one another, just as
Christ also received us, to the glory of God.

Gospel (Matthew 9:27-35)

When Jesus departed from there, two blind men
followed Him, crying out and saying, "Son of David,
have mercy on us!" And when He had come into
the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus
said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do
this?"

They said to Him, "Yes, Lord."

Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to
your faith let it be to you." And their eyes were
opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, saying,
"See that no one knows it." But when they had
departed, they spread the news about Him in all
that country.

As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a
man, mute and demon-possessed. And when the
demon was cast out, the mute spoke. And the
multitudes marveled, saying, "It was never seen like
this in Israel!" But the Pharisees said, "He casts out
demons by the ruler of the demons."

Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages,
teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel
of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and
every disease among the people.

Communion Hymns

Praise the Lord from the heavens! Praise Him in
the highest!

The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.
He shall not fear evil tidings.

Spiritual Blindness

by Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk

These words of our Savior point to the direct
relationship between spiritual vision and faith,
between spiritual blindness and lack of faith.
Unbelief is spiritual blindness that obturates God
and the reality of the spiritual world. A non-believer
is incapable of seeing the spiritual reality behind the
phenomena of the visible world, which is present
and co-exists with the material world. Spiritual
blindness is the inability of man to see the hand of
God in his life. A spiritually blind one ascribes all
the good things in one's life to oneself and thinks
that if one succeeded in anything it happened
thanks to one's own talents, abilities and resources
or through a coincidence. And when a temptation or
trial or sorrow or suffering comes, such a person
loses heart and falls into despair because this
experience does not fit in his idea of happiness,
success and prosperous life. Such a person does
not see the causes of either positive or negative
developments taking place in his life. It seems to
him that all this is a chance, a good or bad luck.

A spiritually blind man normally does not see his
shortcomings. It seems to him that everything is all
right in his life, that he always acts as appropriate,
and if some problems arise in his relations with
others, these others themselves are to blame
because they underestimated, misunderstood
something or did something wrong. He is certain: 'I
did everything in the right way, but all those around
me did it wrong'.

A spiritually sighted person, to whom the Lord has
opened his eyes, sees the hand of God in
everything, understanding that life is not a
coincidence and that the Lord guides him like a
mother fond of her children on the way to the
Heavenly Kingdom. Such a person understands
that if difficulties and problems arise in his relations
with others, he has to ask himself: did I do it in the
right way? Perhaps I have overlooked something or
did or said something wrong? A spiritually sighted
person is aware that the cause of many of his
troubles and sufferings lies in himself.

But if he scores a success, he first of all thanks
God because he knows: He is the One from Whom
all good things come. And even if a person himself
achieves much through his own efforts, isn't it the
Lord Who has given him talents, health and
strength to do it?

This is the difference between the spiritual blind
and spiritually sighted. Such people live next to us,
in the same world, and move in the same circle.
They can sit in the same office, live in the same flat,
but they look at things quite differently. One of them
is sighted while the other is blind; one believes,
while the other does not. One, seeing a miracle,
says, 'It is a miracle of God which has happened so
that my faith may be stronger', whereas the other,
witnessing a miracle, is sure that 'It is a
coincidence, there is no miracle'.

The Lord has opened for us, believers, our spiritual
eyes so that we may contemplate His beauty, be
guided in our actions by His divine commandments
and help those whose spiritual sight is still closed to
see His presence in their life and to feel the hand of
God in various life circumstances. We should in the
first place show by our own example that God
exists, that He is not somewhere far but here,
among us, that God is not indifferent to our life but
participates in it, helping us in every good task,
preventing many troubles and sorrows and guiding
us on the way to the Heavenly Kingdom.

May the Lord give us all to be spiritually sighted,
not to fall into spiritual blindness and remember that
if the Lord has opened our eyes we should be
especially attentive to ourselves, to each other and
to our neighbors. If there is a spiritual blind person
next to us, we should remember that we cannot
heal him as the Lord did – with a wave of His hand,
but we should help such a person to gradually heal
himself from spiritual blindness. May God give that
as many as possible people around us may see the
presence of God and turn from non-believers to
believers, that the Lord may make the Church grow
and bring more and more new people to the faith,
that people may turn from spiritually blind into
sighted. Amen".