

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 19

4:30 pm Confessions

5:00 pm Great Vespers with Cathedral Vigil

Sunday, January 20

9:00 am Adult Education

10:00 am Divine Liturgy

Church School following Divine Liturgy

Important Dates:

Zacchaeus Sunday – February 10

Meatfare Sunday – March 3

Cheesefare Sunday – March 10

Great Lent Begins (Clean Monday) – March 11

Western Easter – April 21

Holy Pascha – April 28

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*

The Sunday after Theophany

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA

OrthodoxPittsburgh.org

January 13, 2019

Announcements

St. Nicholas Community Dinner: All are Welcome- Please join us in supporting this monthly hot meal ministry to our surrounding community. The meals will be served on the **last Saturday of each month from 4-5 pm in the church basement.** Help is needed to prepare & serve the food, set-up & clean-up, and to greet our guests. Please contact Mat. Ashley (Ashley.loboda@gmail.com, #412-715-2163) or Sasha Gajewski (alexandra.mihalick@gmail.com) if you are interested in helping out with any aspect of this ministry. Our first meal will be on January 26.

➤ **Our annual parish meeting** will be held on Sunday, January 27 after the Divine Liturgy. Only members in good standing (spiritually and financially) may participate. **Reports of leaders are due next Sunday to Kristie Mertz.**

➤ **Anyone who would like to have Fr Thomas come to bless their home** should contact him directly at frthomas@orthodoxpittsburgh.org. Everyone is encouraged to have their home blessed during this season of the year.

➤ An open spot is available for one male on a **pilgrimage to Holy Cross Hermitage** leaving on Friday, Feb 15, returning on Sunday Feb/17. Please see Albenalossifova for more information.

➤ **Our January hoagie sale** is being held on Wednesday, Jan 30. 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, Jan 27. Orders can be picked up between noon and 1 pm Jan 30 at the church hall.

Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm: Known to be Hospitalized; (None).** Home: Georgiann Robes. Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home: Olga Bednar, Garnette Kerchum, 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 Charles A. Wasilko** for the departed servants, Nick Yurkowski and (brother) Raymond. **From Marsha Wasilko** for the departed servant, (brother) Raymond (1/10/17); Happy Birthday & Many Years to Sandi Tirpak! **From Doris Wasilko** for the departed servant, (brother) Raymond; for the health of the Wasilko family. **From The Yurkowski family** for the departed servants, (aunts) Florence Yurkowski (1/7/81) and Helen Marmura Hulak (1/11/14). **From Lindy Hamilton** for the health of Elaine Hamilton, Elizabeth Hamilton, Victoria & Ryan Scott. **From John & Olga** for the health & salvation of our families and Anatoly & Galina Vilkov. **From Tatyana Sechler** for the departed servants, Polina, Galina, Slava, Andrei, Valentina, Dan, Bruce, Gina, Marina and Lida; for the health of Christopher, Yaroslav, Thomas, Diana, Adrianna, Joe, Sergey, Tatyana and Edward. **From Mat. Joni Soroka** for the newly departed servant, (godfather) Larry; for the health of (father) John. **From John & Nancy Pravlochak** for the departed servants, John & Mary Pravlochak; for the health of our grandchildren. **From Alexandria Tirpak** for the health of my family and Jan Widel on her birthday; special intentions.

Thank you

➤ to George and Nancy Shaytar for donating the bulletins for the month of January in memory of John Shayar.

Focused Prayer

In order to facilitate the development of true prayer, take these steps:

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.

1) keep a prayer rule according to the blessing of your spiritual father – not more than you can read unhurriedly on a normal day;

2) before you pray, in your free time become familiar with the prayer in your rule, fully take in each word and feel it, so that you would know in advance what should be in your soul as you read. It will be even better if you learn the prayers by heart. When you do this, then all of your prayers will be easy for you to remember and feel. There is only one final difficulty: your thoughts will always stray to other subjects, therefore:

3) you must struggle to keep your attention focused on the words of your prayer, knowing in advance that your mind will wander.

When your mind does wander during prayer, bring it back. When it wanders again, bring it back again. Each and every time that you read a prayer while your thoughts are wandering (and consequently you read it without attention and feeling) then do not fail to read it again. Even if your mind wanders several times in the same place, read it again and again until you read it all the way through with understanding and feeling. In this way, you will overcome this difficulty so that the next time, perhaps, it will not come up again, or if it does return, it will be weaker. This is how one must act when the mind wanders.

On the other hand it may happen that a particular word or phrase might act so strongly on the soul, that the soul no longer wants to continue with the prayer, and even though the lips continue praying, the mind keeps wandering back to that place which first acted on it. In this case:

4) stop, do not read further, but stand with attention and feeling in that place, and use the prayer in that place and the feelings engendered by it to feed your soul. Do not hurry to get yourself out of this state. If time cannot wait, it is better to leave your rule unfinished than to disturb this prayerful state.

Maybe this feeling will stay with you all day like your guardian Angel! This sort of grace-filled action on the soul during prayer means that the spirit of prayer is becoming internalized, and consequently, maintaining this state is the most hopeful means of raising up and strengthening a spirit of prayer in your heart.

Hymns and Readings for Today

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 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 8

By rising from the tomb Thou didst raise the dead
and resurrect Adam.
Eve exults in Thy resurrection,
and the world celebrates Thy rising from the dead,
O greatly Merciful One.

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 of the Postfeast Tone 1 (Ps 33)

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set
our hope on Thee!

Epistle of the Posteast (Eph 4:7-13)

But to each one of us grace was given according to
the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore He says:
"When He ascended on high, he led captivity
captive, and gave gifts to men." (Now this, "He
ascended"—what does it mean but that He also
first descended into the lower parts of the earth?
He who descended is also the One who ascended
far above all the heavens, that He might fill all
things.)

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some
prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and
teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the
work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of
Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of
the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man,
to the measure of the stature of the fullness of
Christ...

Gospel of the Postfeast (Mt 4:12-17)

Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in
prison, He departed to Galilee. And leaving
Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which
is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and
Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken
by Isaiah the prophet, saying:

"The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by
the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of
the Gentiles: The people who sat in darkness have
seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the
region and shadow of death, light has dawned."
From that time Jesus began to preach and to say,
"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

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 (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!



The Eucharist as Journey

"The liturgy of the Eucharist is best understood as a
journey or procession. It is the journey of the
Church into the dimension of the Kingdom. We use
the word 'dimension' because it seems the best
way to indicate the manner of our sacramental
entrance into the risen life of Christ. Color
transparencies 'come alive' when viewed in three
dimensions instead of two. The presence of the
added dimension allows us to see much better the
actual reality of what has been photographed. In
very much the same way, though of course any
analogy is condemned to fail, our entrance into the
presence of Christ is an entrance into a fourth
dimension which allows us to see the ultimate
reality of life. It is not an escape from the world,
rather it is the arrival at a vantage point from which
we can see more deeply into the reality of the
world." — **Fr Alexander Schmemmann, *For the Life
of the World***

"To be in Christ means to be like Him, to make ours
the very movement of His life. And as He "ever
liveth to make intercession: for all "that come unto
God by him" (Heb 7:25), so we cannot help
accepting His intercession as our own. The Church
is not a society for escape—corporately or
individually—from this world to taste of the mystical
bliss of eternity. Communion is not a "mystical
experience": we drink of the chalice of Christ, and
He gave Himself for the life of the world. The bread
on the paten and the wine in the chalice are to
remind us of the incarnation of the Son of God, of
the cross and death. And thus it is the very joy of
the Kingdom that makes us remember the world
and pray for it. It is the very communion with the
Holy Spirit that enables us to love the world with the
love of Christ. The Eucharist is the sacrament of
unity and the moment of truth: here we see the
world in Christ, as it really is, and not from our
particular and therefore limited and partial points of
view. Intercession begins here, in the glory of the
messianic banquet, and this is the only true
beginning for the Church's mission. It is when,
"having put aside all earthly care," we seem to have
left this world, that we, in fact, recover it in all its
reality." — **Fr Alexander Schmemmann**

Today in Church School

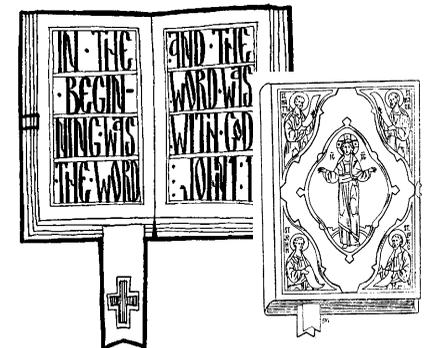
Today's lesson: Canon of Scripture

Questions to ask/review:

How did we get the Bible?
What does "canon" mean?
Name as many books of the Old Testament as you
can.
What are the main sections of the Old Testament?
What is the purpose of each?
How are books of the "Apocrypha" different?
Name as many books of the New Testament as
you can.
Identify the four Gospel writers.
Who wrote the letters of the Epistles? How were
these used in the early Church?
Who was Eusebius? How did he decide which
books should be included in the Bible?
What was the significance of the Council of
Carthage in 397 AD?

Suggested Activities at home:

Work to memorize as many names of Bible books
as appropriate for the child's age. The smallest
children should learn the names of the four gospels
and Acts. The 8-10 year olds should learn all the
books of the New Testament. Middle schoolers
and older should learn all the books of the Bible.
Do a Bible Relay Race. Write various Bible
references on cards. Place a Bible on the table a
few feet in front of each person. The first person in
each line must find the first reference, then return
and tag the next person, who finds the second
reference, etc.
Prayer: Lord, thank you for giving us your Word.
Amen



ST NICHOLAS

Symposium 2019



Orthodoxy and the Scriptures

Fr Bogdan Bucur, PhD
Dr Edith Humphrey, PhD
Andrew Weaver, MDiv

St Nicholas Orthodox Church 320 Munson Ave McKees Rocks

Saturday, February 16 • 2:00 pm

More info at orthodoxpittsburgh.org

Why are abortion numbers falling across America?

(Hint: *It's not contraception.*)

Join us next Sunday after the Divine Liturgy for a short presentation on important work being done to help women in crisis pregnancies and how you can help!

Why have they fallen faster in Pittsburgh?

We can play a part in this.

Amy Scheuring, Ex.Dir., Women's Choice Network
www.mypregnancycenter.org

Chris Humphrey, Ex. Dir., Vision for Life - Pittsburgh
www.visionforlifepgh.org