



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 25 – Annunciation to the Theotokos

6:00 pm Vespers Divine Liturgy

Tuesday, March 26

5:00 pm Lenten Vespers

Wednesday, March 27

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

Thursday, March 28

5:00 pm Lenten Vespers

Friday, March 29

7:00 pm General Panikhida for the Departed

Saturday, March 30

9:30 am -Memorial Divine Liturgy

4:30 pm Confessions

5:00 pm Great Vespers

Sunday, March 31 – Sunday of the Cross

9:00 am Adult Education

10:00 am Divine Liturgy

5:00 pm Diocesan Vespers

St Alexander Nevsky Cathedral
Allison Park



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

Second Sunday of Great Lent

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA
OrthodoxPittsburgh.org

March 24, 2019

Announcements

➤ **Today we set aside the commemoration of St Gregory Palamas** to prepare for the Great Feast of the Annunciation to the Theotokos. Nevertheless, we call to mind the important teachings of this great Saint!

➤ **The Lenten season has begun.** The Church prescribes that we refrain from eating meat and dairy products throughout the entirety of Lent and Holy Week. While it is understood that some find the prescription challenging to attain, **everyone is strongly encouraged to do something, and not to ignore the fast completely, which is both unchristian and unorthodox.** Most importantly, as the Fathers remind us, we are also to "fast from sin as we fast from food." May God strengthen you in your Lenten journey to enter the Lord's Pascha.

➤ Please consider participating in our **annual Easter Basket for Families in Need.** You will see the flyer in today's bulletin. Please see Donya Yewisiak with any questions and to participate. We are also in need of cash donations. God bless you for your generosity!

➤ **"Spiritual Self-Care: Warming Up Our Parishes"** is a Lenten retreat on **Saturday, April 13** at St Mary Orthodox Church (OCA) in the Southside led by Mother Christophora of Holy Transfiguration Monastery of Ellwood City. Divine Liturgy begins at 9:30 am followed by a Lenten brunch. The talk begins at 11:30 am and the retreat will end around 1:00 pm. The event is free and open to the public.

➤ **Our March hoagie sale** will be held on Wednesday, March 27. 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 24. Orders can be picked up between noon and 1 pm March 27 at the church hall.

Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm:** *Known to be Hospitalized; Jack Saban (VA). Home:* Nancy Pravlochak, 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 servants, Dn. Joseph Mell and newly departed, Reader Leonard Soroka and Michael Wasilko; for the health of family and Michelle Bittner. **From Charles A. Wasilko** for the departed servants, (cousin) Michael Wasilko. **From Marsha Wasilko** for the departed servants, (cousin) Michael Wasilko (newly departed) and (Aunt) Julia Falik (3/22/97). **From Doris Wasilko** for the departed servants, (uncle) Mike Wasilko (3/16/86) and (cousin) Michael Wasilko (3/12/19). **From George & Nancy Shaytar** for the departed servant, Leonard Soroka; for the health of Michelle Bittner. **From Rick & Susan Porter** for the health of Rick & Susan. **From Michelle Bittner** for the health of Jack Saban, Greg (awaiting kidney transplant); special intentions. **From John & Olga** for the health of Anatoly & Galina Vilkov and Olesya Mayorova on her birthday! **From Alexandria Tirpak** for the departed servant, Reader Leonard; for the health of (granddaughter) Sarah; special intentions. **From John & Nancy Pravlochak** for the newly departed servant, (cousin) Bill Mamay. **From Lindy Hamilton** for the health of Elaine Hamilton and Richard Hogya. **From Cathy Namisnak** for the departed servant, Leonard Soroka; for the health of Michelle Bittner and Lindy Hamilton. **From Janet & Chuck Widell** for the departed servant, Reader Leonard; for the health of Michelle Bittner and Lindy Hamilton. **From Donya Yewisiak** for the departed servant, Reader Leonard on the occasion of his birthday (3/24).

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.

Today in Church School

Today's lesson: Sts Cyril and Methodius, Baptism of Russia

Questions to ask/review:

- Who were Cyril and Methodius?
- Where did the travel to spread the Gospel?
- Who created the Cyrillic alphabet? How this alphabet help the Church grow?
- Who was Olga? Who was Vladimir?
- Where did Vladimir send a group of his men? Why?
- What happened at the Dnieper River?

Suggested Activities at home:

- Use the Cyrillic alphabet this week. Make "secret messages" to decode.
- Play missionary. Have your child make up an alphabet for an unknown language and "translate" some key Scripture verses.
- Discuss Russia traditions within our Church or within your own family.
- Prayer: Lord, bring the word of Your gospel to all the lands where You are not yet known.

Thank you

➤ to **Lindy Hamilton** for donating the bulletins for the month of March in prayerful remembrance of parents Russell and Ethel Marie Hamilton

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.

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 Forefeast Tone 4

Today is the prelude of joy for the universe.
Let us anticipate the feast and celebrate with exultation:
“Gabriel is on his way to announce the glad tidings to the Virgin;
he is ready to cry out in fear and wonder://
‘Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with thee!’”

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, my Savior, praises Thee forever.

Kontakion of the Forefeast Tone 8

Thou art the beginning of salvation for all of us on earth, Virgin Mother of God.
For the great Archangel Gabriel, God’s minister, was sent from heaven to stand before thee to bring thee joy:
Therefore, we all cry to thee: “Rejoice, O unwedded Bride!”

Prokeimenon of the Sunday Tone 5

Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us and preserve us from this generation forever.

Epistle of the Sunday (Heb 1:10-2:3)

“You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your

hands. They will perish, but You remain; and they will all grow old like a garment; Like a cloak You will fold them up, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not fail.”

But to which of the angels has He ever said: “Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool”? Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?

Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him...

Gospel of the Sunday (Mk 2:1-12)

And again He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house. Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them. Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men. And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying.

When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven you.” And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, “Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, “Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise, take up your bed and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive

sins”—He said to the paralytic, “I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.” Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, “We never saw anything like this!”

Communion Hymn (Ps 148)

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

St Gregory Palamas Quotes

“Mary properly bore the name of Virgin, and possessed to the full all the attributes of purity. She was a virgin in both body and soul, and kept all the powers of her soul and her bodily senses far above any defilement. This she did authoritatively, steadfastly, decisively and altogether inviolably at all times, as a closed gate preserves the treasure within, and a sealed book keeps hidden from sight what is written inside. The Scriptures say of her, ‘This is the sealed book’ (cf. Rev. 5:1-6:1; Dan. 12:4) and ‘this gate shall be shut, and no man shall enter by it’ (Ezek. 44:2).” ~ *St Gregory Palamas*

“If from one burning lamp someone lights another, then another from that one, and so on in succession, he has light continuously. In the same way, through the Apostles ordaining their successors, and these successors ordaining others, and so on, the grace of the Holy Spirit is handed down through all generations and enlightens all who obey their spiritual shepherds and teachers.” ~ *St Gregory Palamas*

“...the grace of the Spirit takes possession of the quiet soul, and gives it a taste of the unspeakable good things to come, which no passionate and negligent eye has seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of such a man (cf. I Cor. 2:9). This taste is the earnest of these good things, and the heart which accepts these pledges becomes spiritual and receives assurance of its salvation.” ~ *St Gregory Palamas*

“Prayer changes from entreaty to thanksgiving and

meditation on the divine truths of faith fills the heart with a sense of jubilation and unimpeachable hope. This hope is a foretaste of future blessings, of which the soul even now receives direct experience, and so it comes to know in part the surpassing richness of God’s bounty, in accordance with the Psalmist’s words, ‘Taste and know that the Lord is bountiful’ (Ps. 34:8). For He is the jubilation of the righteous, the joy of the upright, the gladness of the humble, and the solace of those who grieve because of Him.” ~ *St Gregory Palamas*

“Every day we should stand in awe of Him, as He is with us, and do what is pleasing before Him. If we are unable now to perceive Him with our physical eyes, we can, if we are watchful, see Him continuously with the eyes of our understanding and not just see Him, but reap great benefits from Him.” ~ *St Gregory Palamas*

“The Lord came to send fire upon the earth (cf. Lk. 12:49), and through participation in this fire He makes divine not just the human substance which He assumed for our sake, but every person who is found worthy of communion with Him.” ~ *St Gregory Palamas*

“Through the fall our nature was stripped of divine illumination and splendence. But the Logos of God had pity upon our disfigurement, and in His compassion He took our nature upon Himself. On Tabor He manifested it to His elect disciples clothed once again most brilliantly. He showed what we once were and what we shall become through Him in the age to come if we choose to live our present life, as far as possible, in accordance with His ways.” ~ *St Gregory Palamas*

