



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, April 15**
5:00 pm Lenten Vespers
- Tuesday, April 16**
5:00 pm Lenten Vespers
- Wednesday, April 17**
6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
Lenten Fellowship Meal (Pot Luck)
- Thursday, April 18**
5:00 pm Lenten Vespers
- Friday, April 19**
7:00 pm Moleben for the Sick/Anointing with Oil
- Saturday, April 20 Lazarus Saturday**
9:30 am Divine Liturgy
4:30 pm Confessions
5:00 pm Great Vespers with Cathedral Vigil
- Sunday, April 21 – Palm Sunday**
9:00 am Adult Education
10:00 am Divine Liturgy
7:00 pm – Bridegroom Matins

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*

Fifth Sunday of Great Lent

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA
OrthodoxPittsburgh.org

April 14, 2019

Announcements

➤ **Special collection today:** Alex and Olga Noskov will be traveling to their former home in Russia in ten days. During that time they will be visiting the **Teremok Orphanage** in the Chelyabinsk region, where Alex's sister works. They currently care for 28 children and are **in dire need of help**. It would be a wonderful opportunity for us to do good in an area where our parishioners lived in Russia. It is also significant because two orphans adopted by our parishioners came from a nearby orphanage. Please offer what you can. **You can also give directly to Alex and Olga.** God bless you for your faithfulness.

➤ **Our Lenten Effort:** In addition to increased prayer and almsgiving, 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, **everyone is encouraged to do something, and not to ignore the fast, which is both unchristian and unorthodox.** Most importantly, 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.

➤ Today is the last day to help for our **annual Easter Basket for Families in Need.** If you have not had the opportunity to help, please see Donya Yewisiak to participate. It's not too late! God bless you for your generosity! God bless Donya for her leadership.

➤ **Reminder:** Our services for Holy Pascha are:

- **Saturday April 27 9:00 pm**
Nocturn w/ procession/Matins/Divine Liturgy
Blessing of Baskets and Paschal fellowship following services
- **Sunday, April 28 12:00 pm Noon**
Paschal Vespers

For the full Holy Week and Paschal schedule, consult the online calendar.

Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm:** *Known to be Hospitalized;* Jack Saban (VA). *Home:* Georgiann Robes. *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* Olga Bednar, Garnette Kerchum, 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 and Michelle Bittner. **From Charles A. Wasilko** for the health of (sisters) Doris & Marsha, Michelle Bittner and Bill Marencell. **From Doris Wasilko** for the departed servants, (parents) Charles & Mary; for the health of Helen Billak on her birthday~Many Years! **From George & Nancy Shaytar** for the health of (sister) Barbara and Michelle Bittner. **From Marsha Wasilko** for the health Michelle Bittner and Jack Saban. **From Michelle Bittner** for the health of Jack Saban, Greg (awaiting kidney transplant) and all parishioners who have illnesses. **From Lily Spinu** for the health of Lily, Bryan, Sergie and Stella. **From Alexandria Tirpak** for the departed servant, (mother) Amelia; for the health of my children, grandchildren, great grandchildren; safe travels; special intentions. **From John & Nancy Pravlochak** for the health of our children and grandchildren. **From Tatyana Sechler** for the departed servants, Polina, Galina, Slava, Bruce, Marina and Lida; for the health of Anita, Oksana, Veronika, Andrei, Tatyana, Adick, Adrianna and Diana. **From Lindy Hamilton** for the health of Elaine Hamilton and Richard Hogya. **From Raisa Burd** for the departed servants, Alexandra, Agrippina, Stepan, Vassili, Vladimir, Viktor, Anna, Denis, Peter and Yuriy; for the health of Marina, Vladimir, Polina, Roman, Yevgeniy, Boris, Raisa, Ludmila, Valentina, Diana, Stepan, Sergei, Alla, and all our relatives and friends. **From John & Olga** for the health of Anatoly & Galina Vilkov, Rachel Heuer & her child to be born. **From Garnette Kerchum** for the departed servants, Pete Kerchum and Maurice Trent.

Thank you

To **Matushka Nancy Mell and Gregory Mell** for sponsoring the bulletin and all donation categories (\$210 total) in memory of Deacon Joseph Mell. God bless you!

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.

St Mary of Egypt

When she was only twelve years old, she slipped away from her parents and went to Alexandria, where she lived a life of prodigality for seventeen years. Then, moved by curiosity, she departed for Jerusalem with many pilgrims, in order to be present at the Exaltation of the Precious Cross. During the voyage, she gave herself over to every kind of licentiousness and immorality and enticed many into the pit of perdition.

Wishing to enter the Church, on the day when the Cross was being elevated, three times, four times, she sensed an invisible force that prevented her from entering, whereas the crowd of people with her was entering without any hindrance. Smitten in her heart by this, she resolved to change her life and to propitiate God through repentance; and thus, on returning to the Church, she entered it with ease. After venerating the Precious Cross, she departed from Jerusalem that same day, crossed the Jordan, and went into the inner recesses of the desert, where, for forty-seven years, she lived a life that was very severe and superhuman, praying alone with God.

Near the end of her life, she encountered a hermit named Zosimas and, after recounting her life from the beginning, she besought him to bring her the immaculate Mysteries so that she might receive communion. He did so the following year, on Great Thursday. When Zosimas returned a year later, he found her dead, stretched out on the ground, with a note near her, which read: "O Abba Zosimas, bury the body of humble Mary in this place. I reposed on the same day that I communed the immaculate Mysteries. Pray for me." Her death is assigned to the year 378.

The memory of this Saint is celebrated on the 1st of April; but she is also commemorated on this day, as the Holy Fast is already drawing to a close, in order to arouse the slothful and the sinners to repentance, having St. Mary as an example.

Hymns and Readings for Today

April 14, 2019

Troparion of the Resurrection *Tone 5*

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word,
Co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit,
born for our salvation from the Virgin.
For He willed to be lifted up on the cross in the
flesh
to endure death
and to raise the dead,
by His glorious resurrection.
granting the world great mercy!"

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 Mary of Egypt *Tone 8*

The image of God was truly preserved in you, O
Mother,
for you took up the Cross and followed Christ.
By so doing, you taught us to disregard the flesh,
for it passes away,
but to care instead for the soul, since it is immortal.
Therefore your spirit, O holy Mother Mary, rejoices
with the angels!

Kontakion of St Mary of Egypt *Tone 3*

Having been a sinful woman,
you became through repentance a bride of Christ.
Having attained angelic life,
you defeated demons with the weapon of the
Cross.
Therefore O most glorious Mary, you are a bride of
the Kingdom.

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 *Tone 5 (Ps 12)*

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

Epistle of the Sunday (*Heb 9:11-14*)

But Christ came as High Priest of the good things
to come, with the greater and more perfect
tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this
creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves,
but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy
Place once for all, having obtained eternal
redemption. For if the blood of bulls and goats and
the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean,
sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much
more shall the blood of Christ, who through the
eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God,
cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve
the living God?

Gospel of the Sunday (*Mk 10:32-45*)

Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem,
and Jesus was going before them; and they were
amazed. And as they followed they were afraid.
Then He took the twelve aside again and began to
tell them the things that would happen to Him:
"Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the
Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and
to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death
and deliver Him to the Gentiles; and they will mock
Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill
Him. And the third day He will rise again."

Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came
to Him, saying, "Teacher, we want You to do for us
whatever we ask." And He said to them, "What do
you want Me to do for you?"

They said to Him, "Grant us that we may sit, one on
Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your
glory." But Jesus said to them, "You do not know
what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I

drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am
baptized with?" They said to Him, "We are able."

So Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink the
cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized
with you will be baptized; but to sit on My right hand
and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those
for whom it is prepared."

And when the ten heard it, they began to be greatly
displeased with James and John. But Jesus called
them to Himself and said to them, "You know that
those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles
lord it over them, and their great ones exercise
authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among
you; but whoever desires to become great among
you shall be your servant. And whoever of you
desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the
Son of Man did not come to be served, but to
serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Today in Church School

Today's lesson: Fall of Constantinople

Questions to ask/review:

- ✓ When did the city of Constantinople fall?
- ✓ Who conquered the city? How?
- ✓ How long had the Byzantine empire lasted since the fall of Rome? (about 1000 years)
- ✓ How did this event affect the Church? (many Orthodox Christians of the East lived under Islamic rule and were persecuted)
- ✓ How would life be different for a Christian under Islamic rule?
- ✓ What is Constantinople called today? What country is it in? (Istanbul, Turkey)

Suggested Activities at home:

- ✓ Use internet sources such as Google Earth to explore modern day Istanbul. Look for images of the Hagia Sophia.
- ✓ Prayer: Lord, bring freedom to Your people still suffering in Your great City of Constantine.

- ✓ **Hoagies** on Wed. May 1 – See Bob Madalinsky
- ✓ **Mother's Day Brunch** on Sun. May 12 – All Men should donate \$10. See Bob Madalinsky

Following in Christ's Footsteps

The fact, therefore, that at the time appointed, according to the purpose of His will, Jesus Christ was crucified, dead, and buried was not the doom necessary to His own condition, but the method of redeeming us from captivity. For the Word became flesh in order that from the Virgin's womb He might take our suffering nature, and that what could not be inflicted on the Son of God might be inflicted on the Son of Man. For although at His very birth the signs of Godhead shone forth in Him, and the whole course of His bodily growth was full of wonders, yet had He truly assumed our weaknesses, and without share in sin had spared Himself no human frailty, that He might impart what was His to us and heal what was ours in Himself. For He, the Almighty Physician, had prepared a two-fold remedy for us in our misery, of which the one part consists of mystery and the other of example, that by the one Divine powers may be bestowed, by the other human weaknesses driven out. Because as God is the Author of our justification, so man is a debtor to pay Him devotion.

Therefore, dearly-beloved, by this unspeakable restoration of our health no place is left us for pride or for idleness: because we have nothing which we did not receive, and we are expressly warned not to treat the gifts of God's grace with negligence. For He that comes so timely to our aid justly urges us with precept, and He that leads us to glory mercifully incites us to obedience. Wherefore the Lord Himself is rightly made our way, because save through Christ there is no coming to Christ. But through Him and to Him does he take his way who treads the path of His endurance and humiliation, and on that road you may be sure there are not wanting the heats of toil, the clouds of sadness, the storms of fear. The snares of the wicked, the persecutions of the unbelieving, the threats of the powerful, the insults of the proud are there; and all these things the Lord of hosts and King of glory passed through in the form of our weakness and in the likeness of sinful flesh, to the end that amid the danger of this present life we might desire not so much to avoid and escape them as to endure and overcome them. (*St Leo the Great, Pope of Rome*)

From John and Deb Burgess

Greetings One and All, from Belgorod, Russia!

It's hard to believe that it is almost Pascha! The year is passing very quickly and we will soon be ending our time here.

It has been a fruitful year. John has had the opportunity to travel in the region and to learn about those in the area that were considered Holy Elders (and others) from their spiritual children and parish priests. He has had a chance to work in the city archives and explore documents related to the position of the church in the late Soviet period, he has collected a lot of books and, at this writing, is preparing presentations about his topic for conferences at the theological faculty of the university and at Belgorod Orthodox Seminary.

Deb has been, and continues to teach fans of the English language. She has two conversation groups each week. She meets with one group at a local church and the topics have ranged from liturgical texts to the history of our parish (Thank you, Kristie!) The second group is a group of journalists who are employed by the major newspaper in town. Our conversations have covered professional themes and topics of personal interest. Along with her groups she has several private students, some of whom are kids. In addition, of late she has had a number of requests from acquaintances at the university to do and to correct translations.

We live in a very nice two-room apartment in the center of the city. We go almost everywhere on foot. The city has several very nice pedestrian malls with trees, benches and flower beds, which make walking very pleasant. Belgorod is a city of 350,000 and (unlike our experience 15 years ago) there's not much that you can't get here (tortillas and good tofu being a couple of exceptions). It is a

clean and friendly city and the sun shines a great deal more than in Pittsburgh.

We spend a fair amount of time at the Orthodox seminary. The librarians, Irina and Lena, let us use the reading room as an office and ply us with tea and whatever goodies someone has brought in on any given day. We have had many an interesting conversation at the tea table. Deb has also been a guest teacher in seminary English classes and John has made a presentation or two at seminary conferences.

We also regularly attend services at the seminary church, The Church of St. Innocent, the Enlightener of Siberia and America (somehow seems appropriate). In the icon of St. Innocent on the iconostasis, he holds a Gospel with the words from Matthew 28:19 in English. The church itself is not large so everything can be seen and heard during the services. Fr. Alexei Kurenkov, the rector of the seminary and the head priest, studied at St. Tikhon's, New Canaan, PA, so we Americans are no surprise to him. He's been very welcoming and helpful to us in many ways.

We have enjoyed the slightly slower pace of life here, the very full schedule of services and abundant hospitality. In some ways, it will be difficult to say goodbye. We will be in Pittsburgh briefly in May to renew our visas so that John can take advantage of a summer research grant. We will return to Moscow in early June and will be back with you at the end of August.

It has been wonderful to follow the life of the parish on Facebook, we keep you in prayer and look forward to seeing you all in August!

Спаси Господу! (God Save!)

Deb and John

P.S. For further adventures, Deb is still blogging at oneyearinthewhitecity.wordpress.com

Traditional Paschal Basket

Many Slavic cultures have the tradition of bringing a basket of food to Church on Pascha (Easter) to be blessed after the Divine Liturgy. It normally contains many of the foods that were not eaten during the long Lenten fast.



Pascha is a rich yeast bread made with eggs and butter. It's often richly decorated with braids, crosses or the initials indicating "Christ is risen"

Eggs are hard boiled and often colorfully decorated, sometimes with intricate designs

Chocolates and other sweets are sometimes included in the basket, especially for those who have abstained from confections during the fast

Horseradish sometimes mixed with beets is a traditional accompaniment to the various meats traditionally consumed

Cheese Pascha is a rich desert made of cheese and sugar. It's often molded into a pyramid shape and decorated with candied fruits



Cheese, usually freshly made from egg curds and sweetened with sugar, is a common dish in some Slavic cultures

Meats such as ham and kolbassi, usually smoked, are a common element in Paschal baskets. Some cultures may include lamb

Butter is traditionally included since dairy products were not eaten during the Lenten period. The butter is sometimes formed in the shape of lamb

Alcoholic beverages are often included in the celebration of the Lord's Resurrection. The Lenten weekday fast prescribes abstinence from alcohol

Kulich is a sweet cake, usually baked in a cylindrical shape and covered in frosting. It's often eaten with cheese pascha