



SAINT NICHOLAS
ORTHODOX CHURCH

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

No Vespers during July Sunday, July 14
10:00 am Divine Liturgy

"It is a great art to succeed in having your soul sanctified. A person can become a saint anywhere. He can become a saint in the depraved city Square, if he wants. At your work, whatever it may be, you can become a saint through meekness, patience, and love. Make a new start every day, with new resolution, with enthusiasm and love, prayer and silence — not with anxiety so that you get a pain in the chest." (St Porphyrios)

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*

Third Sunday after Pentecost

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA
OrthodoxPittsburgh.org

July 7, 2019

Announcements

➤ During the summer months, let's continue to offer **worship and praise to God every Sunday** 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 on Sunday morning at orthodoxinamerica.org.

➤ With Amazon Prime Days just around the corner, it's a great time to help your parish benefit from your Amazon purchase. Anytime you want to use Amazon, just click on this link and you'll benefit the parish! <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/16-1170569> Thanks!

➤ This is a **friendly reminder to everyone that the parish relies on your consistent sacrificial giving** to support the ongoing work of our church. Your gifts to the church are both a response to your knowledge that the things that you have **are a gift that God has given to you**, and that you **offer a portion of them back in thanksgiving to Him**. You're asked to give that portion **first, before you give to anything else**. This is called an offering of "first fruits." In practical terms, you should decide the percentage that you give and then offer that freely and consistently. Here's an example of a monthly amount.

Monthly Income	10%	8%	5%	2%
\$1,000	\$100	\$80	\$50	\$20
\$3,000	\$300	\$240	\$150	\$60
\$5,000	\$500	\$400	\$250	\$100
\$10,000	\$1,000	\$800	\$500	\$200
\$15,000	\$1,500	\$1,200	\$750	\$300

Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm: Known to be hospitalized;** Georgiann Robes (Sewickley), Jack Saban (VA). **Home:** Katarnia Mertz (post-partum),. **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, Helen Billak and Michelle Bittner. **From George & Nancy Shaytar** for the health of Michelle Bittner and Alise Lugin. **From the Yurkowski Family** for the departed servant, Julia Yurkowski (+7/4/13). **From John & Olga** for the health of Anatoly & Galina Vilkov, Nicholas & Elizabeth Kowalcheck and family, and for Rachel Heuer & her baby to be born. **From Charles A. Wasilko** for the health of (sisters) Doris & Marsha. **From Doris Wasilko** for the health of Marsha, Helen and Michelle. **From Tatyana Sechler** for the departed servants, Bruce, Polina, Slava, Lida, Marina and Valentina; for the health of Tatyana, Maggy, Veronika, Diana, Mary and Adick.



Thank You

➤ to **Matushka Nancy Mell and Gregory Mell** for donating all of our July monthly donations in memory of departed members of the Karavlan family. Bulletin (\$60), Holy Bread (\$50), Communion Wine (\$40), Altar Candles (\$25). Incense (\$10)

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.

Moderation

For the present therefore let us lay aside our excessive sumptuousness, and let us endure moderation, and learn to acquire by honest labor all that we are to have: since even the blessed John, when he was discoursing with those that were employed upon the tribute, and with the soldiery, enjoined them to be content with their wages. Lk 3:14) Anxious though he were to lead them on to another, and a higher self-command, yet since they were still unfit for this, he speaks of the lesser things. Because, if he had mentioned what are higher than these, they would have failed to apply themselves to them, and would have fallen from the others.

For this very reason we too are practicing you in the inferior duties. Yes, because as yet, we know, the burden of voluntary poverty is too great for you, and the heaven is not more distant from the earth, than such self-denial from you. Let us then lay hold, if it be only of the lowest commandments, for even this is no small encouragement....But if we do not so much as this, of what favor shall we be worthy, who are bidden to surpass those under the old law, and yet show ourselves inferior to the philosophers among the heathens? What shall we say, who when we ought to be angels and sons of God, do not even quite maintain our being as men? For to spoil and to covet comes not of the gentleness of men, but of the fierceness of wild beasts; nay, worse than wild beasts are the assailers of their neighbor's goods. For to them this comes by nature, but we who are honored with reason, and yet are falling away unto that unnatural vileness, what indulgence shall we receive?

Let us then, considering the measures of that discipline which is set before us, press on at least to the middle station, that we may both be delivered from the punishment which is to come, and proceeding regularly, may arrive at the very summit of all good things; unto which may we all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. (*St John Chrysostom*)

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!

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, O my Savior, praises Thee forever!

Kontakion 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 (Psalm 118) Tone 2

The Lord is my strength and my song. He has become my salvation!

Epistle (Romans 5:1-10)

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good

man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Gospel (Matthew 6:22-33)

The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?

So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

On the Importance of Prayer

To accomplish our task of fidelity to God in the Church, our primary and essential duty is the practice of prayer. If we are not successful in our prayer we will not be successful in anything, for prayer is the root and ground of everything in the spiritual life. This is the teaching of our faith.

There is much talk about prayer today. Many books are written on the subject. There are discussions about places and methods and forms of prayer; much controversy about old ways and new ways of praying. In our spiritual lives we must resist the temptation first of all of merely thinking and talking about prayer, and not praying ourselves. We must resist the temptation of endless discussions about methods and techniques of prayer. These forms are not the substance of the matter. If we discuss these and fail in the practice of prayer, as taught us by the Lord and His saints and inspired in us by the Spirit of God in the life of the Church, nothing is achieved.

When we look to the Orthodox Tradition of personal prayer we find the following essential counsels. First we are taught that we must pray simply and humbly, in secret, without ostentation or pretention, without using many words and without looking for the praises of men. We are taught to pray briefly and frequently, regularly and constantly, using the words inspired by God and revealed in the Bible and the prayers of the Church. We are taught to have specific times of prayer, and to pray without ceasing by having the remembrance of God continually in our minds and the Name of Jesus constantly on our lips and in our hearts, doing all things to the glory of God for the good of others. We are taught as well to use the Lord's Prayer and the psalms and the prayers of the saints in order to learn how to pray, for what to ask and thank and glorify God. We are taught to do this in order to be liberated from the narrow and petty interests and concerns of our own limited experiences and be freed from the vain imaginations of our own minds and hearts which so often consume us, even in our prayer.

Following the rule of prayer established by the Lord in the Church, and using the traditional prayers of the scriptures and saints, we are taught as well to pray to God in our own words, and even in silence with no

words at all, opening ourselves in all things to the will of our Father in heaven, and being guided by His Spirit within us from Christ. We are strictly warned to be always aware not to make our individual prayer the result of our individual blindness and our individual desires, but to be always conscious of the fact that the sole purpose of prayer is to raise our minds and hearts to the greatness of God in order to accomplish His will in the details of our life in the ways that He desires for us.

The purpose of prayer is not to attain any particular emotional feelings or psychological states. It is not to have visions or hear voices. It is simply to accomplish the will of God in our lives. It is to be able not to sin. To love God with our entire being. To love our neighbor, and even our enemy, as ourselves. To have the Spirit of God in us. To be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ the Son of God by loving obedience to the Father even unto death.

In prayer, we are to strive for sobriety, for simplicity and silence, for quiet and calm, for the perfect integration and harmony of body and soul in joyful union with God through Christ by becoming one spirit with the Spirit of God. This is the purpose and goal of prayer: to be one with God in order to do His will. This is the meaning of prayer: union with the Blessed Trinity in adoration, thanksgiving, petition, lamentation and perpetual service.

In the spiritual life our personal prayer should be the foundation of our corporate prayer in the liturgy of the Church. People who pray only when they go to church will be very weak in their prayer and will receive very little from the common prayer of the Church in its liturgical gatherings.

The liturgical prayer of the Church is performed according to the traditional rule of worship which we have received from God through the saints. The psalmody and hymnology of liturgical prayer is the breathing of the Holy Spirit in the Church. It is the Word of God given to us for God's own glory. Every parish and every family and every person should be immersed in the liturgical prayer of the Church. The liturgical worship of the Church should be the context of our lives, the content of our spirits, the atmosphere in which we think and speak and act. (*Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church in America, 1976*)