



Welcome!

Whether you are searching for a new church home or just visiting, we are 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

Tuesday, February 18

9:00 am Matins (Morning Service)
9:30 am-12:00 pm Office Hours/Church Open

Thursday, February 20

9:00 am Matins (Morning Service)
9:30 am-12:00 pm Office Hours/Church Open

Saturday, February 22

12:00 pm Pan-Orthodox Choir Rehearsal
2:00 pm 4th Annual St Nicholas Symposium
4:00 pm Vespers with Cathedral Vigil

Sunday, February 23

9:15 am Adult Education
10:00 am Divine Liturgy / Church School after

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*

Second Pre-Lenten Sunday: The Prodigal Son

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA
OrthodoxPittsburgh.org February 16, 2020

Announcements

➤ **The Yearly Parish Meeting** will be held after coffee hour today. Only members in good standing may participate in the meeting. If you have any question about your status, please see Fr Thomas.

➤ Join us this Saturday, February 22nd for the **4th Annual St Nicholas Symposium** from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm. This year's Topic is "Orthodox Perspectives on Prayer." We will have three presenters, including, **Mother Seraphima** of the Monastery of the Transfiguration in Ellwood City will present on the Jesus Prayer, and our own **Jenifer Rune**, who will present on her embrace of Orthodox Christian Prayer and Meditation after being a teacher of Buddhist forms of meditation. **Share this event with friends and family.** You won't want to miss it!

➤ **Sisterhood Announcement:** Marina Petrov will be coordinating the Blini Luncheon and will be sending out an email for sign ups. If anyone would like to sign up for a dish or to help set up/clean up please reply to the email or contact Marina Petrov or Susan Porter.

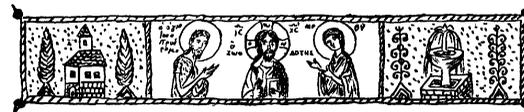
➤ Our deepest condolences to the Robes family on the **falling asleep of Georgiann Robes.** Visitation will be held today from 1-6p at Szal Funeral Home with Parastas at 2p. Funeral tomorrow at 10a. May her memory be eternal!

➤ **Our monthly hoagie sale** will be on Wednesday, February 26. Please see Bob Madalinksy to help or place an order!

Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm:** *Known to be hospitalized:* (none) *Home:* Michelle Bittner, Paul Yewisiak, Jan Widel. *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* Garnette Kerchum, Eleanor Kovacs, Olga Tryszyn, Mary Zapp.

➤ **From Mat. Nancy K. Mell and Gregory Mell** for the departed servant, Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of family, Michelle Bittner and Paul Yewisiak. **From Doris Wasilko** for the departed servant, (brother) Raymond; for the health of the Wasilko family. **From Marsha Wasilko** for the departed servant, (brother) Raymond; for the health of Michelle Bittner, Paul Yewisiak and Jan Widel. **From Charles A. Wasilko** for the departed servant, (brother) Raymond; for the health of (sisters) Doris & Marsha. **From George & Nancy Shaytar** for the health of George, Jan Widel and Michelle Bittner. **From Greg Bitsko.** **From John & Olga** for the health of Galina Vilkova and for the health and salvation of our family. **From Irene Kulchock** for the departed servants, Richard Kulchock and Emma Sipes; for the health of Vivian Moore. **From George & Nancy Shaytar** for the health of Michelle Bittner. **From Donya Yewisiak** for the health of Jan Widel.



Thank You

➤ to our February donors, **Bob and MaryBeth Madalinksy**, for donating all the categories (Bulletin \$60, Holy Bread \$50, Communion Wine \$40, Altar Candles \$25, Incense \$10) May God richly bless them!

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.

This Week in Church School

Today's lesson: Baptism (Part 1)

Questions to ask/review:

- What is the scriptural basis for the sacrament of Baptism?
- What feast remembers the baptism of Jesus?
- Why do we baptized infants? What is the role of Godparents (sponsors)?
- What is the order of the service? What is the meaning of each action?
- What is the purpose of the exorcism prayers?
- Why must we be put into the water 3 times?
- Why does the baptized wear white?
- What song do we sing after they are baptized?
- Is baptism a "free pass" to salvation? Why not?

Suggested Activities at home:

- Role play a baptism with a baby doll. Review and discuss the significance of each part of the service.
- Look at pictures from the baptisms of others in the family.
- Contact your Godparents this week and spend time together to keep your relationship strong.

Prayer: Lord, may you keep me renewed with your light, as the day of my baptism.

Important Upcoming Dates:

- Cheesefare Sunday – March 1
- Clean Monday (Great Lent Begins) – March 2
- *Western Easter* – April 12
- Holy Pascha – April 19

Hymns and Readings for Today

Tone 2 Troparion *of the Resurrection*

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!

Tone 4 Troparion *of St Nicholas*

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.

Tone 3 Kontakion *of St Nicholas*

O Saint you revealed yourself in Myra as a priest,
for you fulfilled the Gospel of Christ
by giving up your soul for your people,
and saving the innocent from death.
Therefore you are blessed as one well learned in
the grace of God.

Tone 3 Kontakion *from the Lenten Triodion*

I have recklessly forgotten Thy glory, O Father;
and among sinners I have scattered the riches
which Thou gavest me.
And now I cry to Thee as the Prodigal:
“I have sinned before Thee, O merciful Father;
receive me as a penitent, //
and make me as one of Thy hired servants!”

Tone 2 Prokeimenon *of the Sunday*

The Lord is my strength and my song. He has
become my salvation! (*Psalms 118*)

Epistle of the Sunday (1 Cor 6:12-20)

All things are lawful for me, but all things are
not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I
will not be brought under the power of any.
Foods for the stomach and the stomach for
foods, but God will destroy both it and them.
Now the body is not for sexual immorality but
for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God
both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up
by His power.

Do you not know that your bodies are members
of Christ? Shall I then take the members of
Christ and make them members of a harlot?
Certainly not! Or do you not know that he who
is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For
“the two,” He says, “shall become one flesh.”
But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit
with Him.

Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man
does is outside the body, but he who commits
sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or
do you not know that your body is the temple of
the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have
from God, and you are not your own? For you
were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in
your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.

Gospel of the Sunday (Luke 15:11-32)

Then He said: “A certain man had two sons. And
the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father,
give me the portion of goods that falls to me.’ So
he divided to them his livelihood. And not many
days after, the younger son gathered all
together, journeyed to a far country, and there
wasted his possessions with prodigal living. But
when he had spent all, there arose a severe
famine in that land, and he began to be in want.
Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of
that country, and he sent him into his fields to

feed swine. And he would gladly have filled his
stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and
no one gave him anything.

“But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How
many of my father’s hired servants have bread
enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I
will arise and go to my father, and will say to
him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and
before you, and I am no longer worthy to be
called your son. Make me like one of your hired
servants.’”

“And he arose and came to his father. But when
he was still a great way off, his father saw him
and had compassion, and ran and fell on his
neck and kissed him. And the son said to him,
‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and in
your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called
your son.’

“But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring out
the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring
on his hand and sandals on his feet. And bring
the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and
be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive
again; he was lost and is found.’

St Nicholas of Japan (*continued*)

Great hardship befell the saint and his flock at the
time of the Russo-Japanese War. For his ascetic
labor during these difficult years, he was elevated
to the rank of Archbishop.

In 1911, half a century had passed since the young
hieromonk Nicholas had first set foot on Japanese
soil. At that time there were 33,017 Christians in
266 communities of the Japanese Orthodox Church,
including 1 Archbishop, 1 bishop, 35 priests, 6
deacons, 14 singing instructors, and 116 catechists.

On February 3, 1912, Archbishop Nicholas departed
peacefully to the Lord at the age of seventy-six.
The Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church
glorified him on April 10, 1970, since the saint had
long been honored in Japan as a righteous man,
and a prayerful intercessor before the Lord.

On the Parable of the Prodigal Son

“There were two brothers. Having divided the
paternal inheritance between themselves, one
remained at home, the other squandered all that
was given to him and departed to a distant land
because he could not bear the shame of poverty.

I wanted to speak of this parable from the outset
so that you could learn that, if we are attentive,
there is remission of sins even after baptism. I do
not say this to put you in a state of inertia, but to
distance you from discouragement, because
discouragement produces worse evils among us
than inertia. Therefore, this son bears the image of
those who suffer the fall after the Laver. That he
represents those who fell after baptism is obvious
from the parable. He is called “son”; no one can be
called a son without baptism. Furthermore, he
inhabited the paternal house, and took his share
from all the paternal substance. Before baptism no
one has the right to receive paternal things, nor to
obtain an inheritance, so that through all these
events he speaks to us about the status of the
faithful. He was a brother of the reputable one; he
would not have become a brother without spiritual
regeneration. Therefore, what does the one say
who fell into the worst wickedness? “I will arise
and return to my father.” His father did not hinder
him from departing to the foreign land precisely
for this reason: so that he could learn well from
the experience how much beneficence he enjoyed
while remaining at home.

Therefore, since the prodigal son departed for the
foreign land and learned from his own experience
how much evil it is for someone to be driven out of
his paternal house, he returned, and his father did
not remember the wrongs that he had committed
against him, but accepted him with open arms.
Why? Because he was a father and not a judge.
Then, there took place dances, sumptuous feasts,
and festivals; and the entire house was beaming
with joy and exceeding gladness. What are you
saying? These are rewards of wickedness? Not of
wickedness, O man, but of the return. Not of sin,
but of repentance. Not of cunningness, but of
change toward the better.” (*St John Chrysostom*,
c 400 AD)

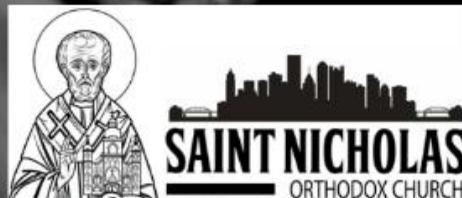
ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVES
ON

PRAYER

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2020
2:00 PM TO 4:00 PM

4TH ANNUAL
ST NICHOLAS SYMPOSIUM

ORTHODOXPITTSBURGH.ORG



Join us for an outstanding series of presentations of **Orthodox Perspectives on Prayer**, by:

- Mother Seraphima (Krenitsky)
- Jenifer Rune
- Fr Thomas Soroka

All are welcome and the event is open to the public.

St Nicholas of Japan

Saint Nicholas, Enlightener of Japan, was born Ivan Dimitrievich Kasatkin on August 1, 1836 in the village of Berezovsk, Belsk district, Smolensk diocese, where his father served as deacon. At the age of five he lost his mother. He completed the Belsk religious school, and afterwards the Smolensk Theological Seminary. In 1857 Ivan Kasatkin entered the Saint Peterburg Theological Academy. On June 24, 1860, in the academy temple of the Twelve Apostles, Bishop Nectarius tonsured him with the name Nicholas.

On June 29, the Feast of the foremost Apostles Peter and Paul, the monk Nicholas was ordained deacon. The next day, on the altar feast of the academy church, he was ordained to the holy priesthood. Later, at his request, Father Nicholas was assigned to Japan as head of the consular church in the city of Hakodate.

At first, the preaching of the Gospel in Japan seemed completely impossible. In Father Nicholas's own words: "the Japanese of the time looked upon foreigners as beasts, and on Christianity as a villainous sect, to which only villains and sorcerers could belong." He spent eight years in studying the country, the language, manners and customs of the people among whom he would preach.

In 1868, the flock of Father Nicholas numbered about twenty Japanese. At the end of 1869 Hieromonk Nicholas reported in person to the Synod in Peterburg about his work. A decision was made, on January 14, 1870, to form a special Russian Spiritual Mission for preaching the Word of God among the pagan Japanese. Father Nicholas was elevated to the rank of archimandrite and appointed as head of this Mission.

Returning to Japan after two years in Russia, he transferred some of the responsibility for the Hakodate flock to Hieromonk Anatolius, and began his missionary work in Tokyo. In 1871 there was a persecution of Christians in Hakodate. Many were arrested (among them, the first Japanese Orthodox priest Paul Sawabe). Only in 1873 did the persecution abate somewhat, and the free preaching of Christianity became possible.

In this year Archimandrite Nicholas began the construction of a stone building in Tokyo which housed a church, a school for fifty men, and later a religious school, which became a seminary in 1878.

In 1874, Bishop Paul of Kamchatka arrived in Tokyo to ordain as priests several Japanese candidates recommended by Archimandrite Nicholas. At the Tokyo Mission, there were four schools: for catechists, for women, for church servers, and a seminary. At Hakodate there were two separate schools for boys and girls.

In the second half of 1877, the Mission began regular publication of the journal "Church Herald." By the year 1878 there already 4115 Christians in Japan, and there were a number of Christian communities. Church services and classes in Japanese, the publication of religious and moral books permitted the Mission to attain such results in a short time. Archimandrite Nicholas petitioned the Holy Synod in December of 1878 to provide a bishop for Japan.

Archimandrite Nicholas was consecrated bishop on March 30, 1880 in the Trinity Cathedral of Alexander Nevsky Lavra. Returning to Japan, he resumed his apostolic work with increased fervor. He completed construction on the Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ in Tokyo, he translated the service books, and compiled a special Orthodox theological dictionary in the Japanese language. *(continued on inside)*