



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

Leavetaking of Pentecost/Sunday of All Saints

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA
OrthodoxPittsburgh.org June 13/14, 2020

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

- Saturday, June 13 – Leavetaking of Pentecost**
10:00 am Divine Liturgy
5:00 pm Great Vespers with Cathedral Vigil
- Sunday, June 14**
10:00 am Divine Liturgy
- Tuesday, June 16**
9:00 am Matins (Morning Service)
9:30 am-12:00 pm Office Hours/Church Open
- Wednesday, June 17**
7:00 Bible Study (online)
- Thursday, June 18**
9:00 am Matins (Morning Service)
9:30 am-12:00 pm Office Hours/Church Open
- Saturday, June 20**
10:00 am Divine Liturgy
5:00 pm Vespers with Cathedral Vigil
- Sunday, June 21**
10:00 am Divine Liturgy

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.

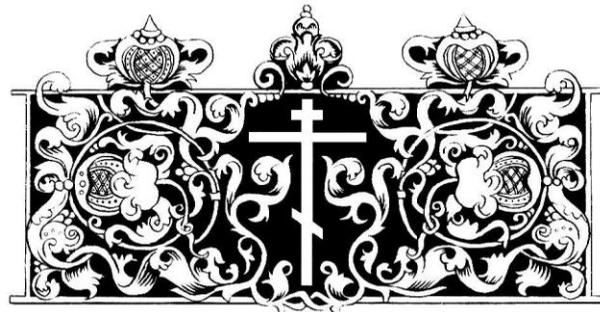
Announcements

➤ Since we continue under certain pandemic health restrictions, **we ask that you observe the following temporary practices:**

- Please maintain social distance (6 ft) from each other. Same household members do not need to observe this from one another.
- You *may* show honor to persons depicted in icons by bowing before the icon, or you may choose to venerate (kiss) the icon. If you do venerate, please use a disinfectant wipe in the area you venerated, and then a paper towel to wipe off the residue.

➤ **Eleanor Kovacs will be celebrating her 96th birthday on June 22.** We would like to shower her with birthday cards, maybe even 96 of them! Please help her to celebrate by sending a card to the following address:

Eleanor Kovacs
30 Heckel Rd
Room 117
McKees Rocks PA 15136



Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm:** *Known to be hospitalized:* (none) *Home:* Jenifer Rune (*pregnant*); Geroge Shaytar, Paul Yewisiak, *. Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* Garnette Kerchum, Eleanor Kovacs, Olga Tryszyn.

➤ **Vigil Lights from the John Mahalchak Family** for departed friends and family; for the health of friends and family; for son John. **From Marsha Wasilko** for the health of the Wasilko family; happy birthday and many years to Mat. Nancy Mell! **From Mat. Nancy Mell and Gregory Mell** for the departed servant of God Deacon Joseph C Mell; for the health of family. **From Doris Wasilko** for the departed servant of God Uncle Bill Falick; Happy Birthday and Many Years to Mat. Nancy Mell and Olga Kosnat on their birthdays! **From Alexandria Tirpak** for the health of family; for special intentions. **From Mat. Joni Soroka** for the departed servant of God Barbara; for the health of family. **From Charles A Wasilko** for the health of the Wasilko family; for D-Day Veterans, June 6 1994-2020. **From Dawna Beckett** for living and departed family members. **From John Kowalcheck and Olga Cozza** for the health and salvation of our families.!

Thank You

➤ to our May donors, **Matushka Nancy Mell and Gregory Mell**, for donating all the categories (Bulletin \$60, Holy Bread \$50, Communion Wine \$40, Altar Candles \$25, Incense \$10) in loving memory of Deacon Joseph Mell (husband, father) and departed members of the Karavlan family, and for the health of Matushka Nancy Mell.

Asking the Saints

As we have seen, the Church holds in high esteem the memory of exceptionally holy Christians, who during their earthly lives helped many of their fellow believers both physically and spiritually. Therefore, it should be no surprise that she encourages the faithful to seek the continued intercession of such individuals after their passage into the next world. An example of such an appeal is in a hymn to Saint Sergius of Radonezh, a very beloved monk and spiritual father to many in fourteenth-century Russia: "The Holy Spirit took up His abode in thee and operating there adorned thee with beauty. O thou who hast boldness to approach the Holy Trinity, remember thy flock gathered by thy wisdom and never forget it, visiting thy children, according to thy promise, O holy father Sergius". A similar appeal is made to Saint Herman, Orthodox evangelizer of Alaska in the early 1800's: "Having one desire, to bring unbelieving people to the One God, thou wert all things to all men: teaching the Holy Scripture and a life in accordance with it, instructing in handicrafts, and being an intercessor before the authorities, nursing men in everything like children, that thus thou mightest bring them to God; and do not leave us who sing to thee". Since death has been conquered by Christ, why should not such persons continue their ministry to us after they have joined Christ in heaven? A Russian Orthodox priest in the early twentieth century once chided those who do not believe in a true fellowship of prayer with the departed: "A handful of soil, a tombstone, have become [for you] unconquerable obstacles for communion with those who have departed from the world". Countless Christians of all lands and ages have given testimony about receiving help from God through the prayers and ministrations of saints. This is a strong indication that God is well pleased with their prayers for us and ours to them. Scripture attests to the sanctity of such prayers in the Book of Revelation: "The four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints" (Revelation 5:8).

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.

Hymns and Readings for Saturday, June 13

First Antiphon (Psalm 19)

v. The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims His handwork.

Refrain: Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us!

v. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge.

v. Their proclamation has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the universe.

v. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Second Antiphon (Psalm 20)

v. The Lord answer you in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob protect you!

Refrain: O Gracious Comforter, save us who sing to Thee: “Alleluia!”

v. May He send you help from the sanctuary and give you support from Zion!

v. May He remember all your offerings, and fulfill all your plans!

Glory... now and ever...Only-begotten Son...

Third Antiphon (Psalm 21)

v. In Thy strength the king rejoices, O Lord, and exults greatly in Thy salvation.

Refrain: Troparion

v. Thou has given him his heart’s desire, and has not withheld the request of his lips.

v. For Thou dost meet him with goodly blessings; Thou dost set a crown of fine gold upon his head.

Tone 8 Troparion of Pentecost

Blessed art Thou, O Christ our God Who hast revealed the fishermen as most wise by sending down upon them the Holy Spirit; through them Thou didst draw the world into Thy net

O Lover of Man, Glory to Thee!

Tone 8 Kontakion of Pentecost

When the Most High came down and confused the tongues

He divided the nations;

But when He distributed the tongues of fire, He called all to unity.

Therefore, with one voice, we glorify the All Holy Spirit!

Instead of Holy God

As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Alleluia!

Tone 8 Prokeimenon (Psalm 19)

Their proclamation has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the universe!

Epistle of the Feast (Romans 1:7-12)

To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers, making request if, by some means, now at last I may find a way in the will of God to come to you. For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established— that is, that I may be encouraged together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

Gospel of the Feast (John 7:37-52; 8:12)

Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Hymn to the Theotokos of Pentecost

Rejoice, O Queen! Glory of mothers and virgins! No mouth, however sweet or fluent is eloquent enough to praise you worthily! Every mind is overawed by your childbearing. Therefore with one voice we glorify you!

Communion Hymn of Pentecost

Let Thy good Spirit lead me on a level path.
Alleluia.

Why Would Saints Pray

Yes, Christ Jesus, both Man and God, is the only One who has reconciled fallen humanity to God the Father by His reconciling and redeeming life, death, and resurrection. But this does not mean that we never ask others to pray for us! We ask the departed saints for their prayers in the same way we ask our fellow Christians on earth to intercede for us. Since the departed remain alive in Christ, why should they cease to express their love and concern for us through prayer? Freed from the concerns of day-to-day survival on earth, unencumbered with the sinful tendencies of the flesh, and far more intimately knit together with Christ than we are, the departed are able to intercede for us much more frequently and

powerfully than our friends on earth can pray for us. Those in heaven are able to do continuously what we on earth long to do, but usually only manage to do weakly and sporadically. No wonder, then, that Christians from the earliest days have asked the departed for their prayers. This in no way means that we can only reach Christ by going through the saints, as if they are absolutely necessary intermediaries between us and God. Such an idea is completely foreign to Orthodoxy. Saint Paul clearly states, “Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God . . . let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:14-16). But just because we pray, on our own, directly to God, does not mean that we never ask other people for their prayers! Indeed, we are commanded many times in the Scriptures to pray for one another. Saint Paul says to Timothy, “Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men” (1 Timothy 2:1; see also Colossians 4:2-4, Ephesians 6:18, etc.). And we are taught by our Lord Jesus that the power of prayer is greater when more people are praying together: “Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven” (Matthew 18:19). So, just as we feel comforted and strengthened when we ask friends, family, and Church members here on earth to intercede for us in a time of need, how much more can we feel comforted and strengthened when we also ask the Church in heaven for her prayers! (And we should not neglect to ask the angels for their prayers as well, since they are expressly sent to us as “ministering spirits” [Hebrews 1:14; also Psalm 91:11 and Isaiah 63:9]). Asking the saints, both those on earth and those in heaven, for their prayers, and asking the angels, too, can all be understood simply as gathering the greatest amount of prayer support possible in a time of need!

Hymns and Readings for Sunday, June 14

Tone 8 Troparion (*Resurrection*)

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!

Tone 4 Troparion (*from the Pentecostarion*)

As with fine porphyry and royal purple,
Thy Church has been adorned with Thy martyrs'
blood shed through-
out all the world.
She cries to Thee, O Christ God:
“Send down Thy bounties on Thy people,//
grant peace to Thy habitation and great mercy
to our souls!”

Tone 8 Kontakion (*from the Pentecostarion*)

The universe offers Thee the God-bearing
Martyrs
as the first fruits of creation, O Lord and
Creator.
By their prayers keep Thy Church, Thy
habitation, in abiding peace//
through the Theotokos, O most Merciful One!

Tone 8 Prokeimenon (*Resurrection*)

Pray and make your vows / before the Lord, our
God! (*Ps 75/76:11*)

Tone 4 Prokeimenon (*Saints*)

God is wonderful in His saints, / the God of
Israel. (*Ps 67/68:35*)

Epistle of the Saturday (*Hebrews 11:33-12:2*)

...who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked
righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the
mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire,
escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness

were made strong, became valiant in battle,
turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women
received their dead raised to life again.

Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance,
that they might obtain a better resurrection.
Still others had trial of mockings and
scourgings, yes, and of chains and
imprisonment. They were stoned, they were
sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the
sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and
goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—
of whom the world was not worthy. They
wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and
caves of the earth.

And all these, having obtained a good testimony
through faith, did not receive the promise, God
having provided something better for us, that
they should not be made perfect apart from us.

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by
so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside
every weight, and the sin which so easily
ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the
race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the
author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy
that was set before Him endured the cross,
despising the shame, and has sat down at the
right hand of the throne of God.

Gospel of the Sunday (*Mt 10:32-33, 37-38, 19:27-30*)

Therefore whoever confesses Me before men,
him I will also confess before My Father who is
in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men,
him I will also deny before My Father who is in
heaven.

He who loves father or mother more than Me is
not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or
daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And

he who does not take his cross and follow after
Me is not worthy of Me.

Then Peter answered and said to Him, “See, we
have left all and followed You. Therefore what
shall we have?”

So Jesus said to them, “Assuredly I say to you,
that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man
sits on the throne of His glory, you who have
followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones,
judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone
who has left houses or brothers or sisters or
father or mother or wife or children or lands,
for My name’s sake, shall receive a hundredfold,
and inherit eternal life. But many who are first
will be last, and the last first.

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in
the highest! (Ps 148:1)
Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; praise befits
the just! (Ps 32/33:1)
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Veneration of Saints

Once someone is officially canonized, the Church in
her worship services no longer prays for the well-
being of his or her soul, but publicly asks for the
saint’s prayers. Icons are made of the saint, hymns
are written honoring and remembering good deeds
done, and at least one day of the year is designated as
a feast-day for that saint, when his or her icons are
displayed, and hymns written to the saint are sung.
An example of such a hymn is the following, honoring
Saint Nina of Georgia (called in ancient times Iberia):
“O come all and let us chant to Nina, equal of the
Apostles, the godly-wise enlightener of Iberia, for she
has banished the seduction of the idols by leading us
from darkness to light, and has taught us to praise the
Trinity, One in essence. Therefore, all the faithful
celebrate her revered memory and praise our Savior”.
The hymns, the icons, the feast-days are all important
aspects of the veneration of the saint, indicating

profound respect and love for the person, but in no
way do these things mean that the person is being
worshiped. Worship, of course, is due only to God.
And indeed, all the veneration expressed to a saint is
entirely based upon that person’s closeness to Christ.
Every saint has become holy only through the mercy
and grace of God; it is He who is glorified when we
honor His holy ones. As Christ Himself prayed in the
Garden of Gethsemane, “And all Mine are Yours, and
Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them . . . and
the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that
they may be one just as We are one” (John 17:10 and
22; my emphasis). Other scriptural indications of
God’s overflowing love for His saints, in which His
Church seeks to participate through her veneration of
them and prayers to them, are given in Psalm 97:10
(“He preserves the souls of His saints”), Psalm 116:15
(“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His
saints”), Psalm 149:5, 9 (“Let the saints be joyful in
glory . . . this honor have all His saints”), Proverbs
2:8 (“He guards the paths of justice, and preserves
the way of His saints”), and Daniel 7:22 (“ . . . until
the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made
in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time
came for the saints to possess the kingdom”). Saint
Nicholas of Zicha in Serbia, who died in Pennsylvania
in 1956, and who compiled short lives of saints for
every day of the year, describes this precious
relationship between Christ and His saints in this
way: “The saints are a burnished mirror in which are
reflected the beauty and strength and majesty of
Christ. They are the fruit on that Tree of Life which is
Christ As the sun among the stars and a king
among his nobles, so is Christ among His saints. This
works in both directions—from Christ to the saints and
from them to Christ: the saints are given meaning by
Christ, and Christ is revealed through the saints”.
While we could say that the Church is most entirely
assured of the salvation of those souls whom she
officially canonizes and venerates, this certainly does
not mean that salvation and saintliness are limited
only to them! Thus, it is perfectly acceptable to ask
others besides the canonized saints for their
intercessions. However, this is not done publicly in
the Church’s worship services, but in one’s private
prayers. Bishop Kallistos (Ware) gives an example: “It
would be perfectly normal for an Orthodox child, if
orphaned, to end his evening prayers by asking for
the intercessions not only of the Mother of God and
the saints, but of his own mother and father”.