



Archpriest Thomas Soroka, *Rector*
Deacon Luke Loboda, *Attached*

Fifth Saturday/Sunday after Pentecost

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA
OrthodoxPittsburgh.org July 11-12, 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, July 11

10:00 am Divine Liturgy
No Vigil

Sunday, July 12

10:00 am Divine Liturgy

During the Month of July

No Matins/Office Hrs, Bible Study or Sat. Vigil

Saturday, July 18

10:00 am Divine Liturgy
No Vigil

Sunday, July 19

10:00 am Divine Liturgy

**During the month of July there will be no daily Matins or office hours, Saturday Vigil, or Bible Study.*

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

➤ It is our sad task to announce that **Matushka Janet Mihalick** has relinquished her position as Choir Director of our parish due to recent health concerns. Unfortunately, she was just diagnosed with uterine cancer and will undergo surgery at the end of the month. Please remember Matushka Janet in your prayers in bearing this cross as we join together in thanking her for her five and a half years of service to our parish. We will honor her as soon as possible, when we can be together as a parish again and she is able to be present.

➤ Our **Icon Project continues in August!** Fr Theodore and John Jurewicz will be here from August 10-28. The projects completed this year will be the Ascension above the altar, and the vestibule entrance, the candle kiosk and the childcare room. See Fr Thomas if you're interested in sponsoring some of the work.

➤ Please see Susan Porter if you can sponsor an **upcoming weekend Coffee Hour fellowship**. It will generally take place outside if weather conditions permit. If it is deemed too hot or rainy, we will hold it inside in the church hall. You may either serve snacks and drinks or provide them individually wrapped and portioned. Thank you!

➤ For information about our **annual Vacation Church School** this Summer, please contact Matushka Joni Soroka for more details.

➤ **Thank you** to our July donors, **from Sandi Tirpak** (Bulletin \$60) for the health of her family; **from Rick Porter (Candles \$25)** for Susan on her birthday; **from Matushka Joni Soroka** (Communion Wine \$40 and Incense \$10) for the health of Fr Thomas on the 20th anniversary of his ordination to the Priesthood

Prayers

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

➤ **Vigil Lights From John Kowalcheck and Olga Cozza** for the departed servants of God John and Ann Kowalcheck. **From Alexandria Tirpak:** memory eternal to my friend Joyce; for the health and salvation of my family, birthday wishes for Eleanor, my uncle Mike, and granddaughter Aleah; for special intentions. **From Charles A Wasilko** for the health of George Shaytar and sisters Doris and Marsha; God bless America! **From Mat. Nancy Mell and Gregory Mell** for the departed servant of God Joseph C Mell and for the health of family. **From Doris Wasilko** for the departed servant of God Josephine Tortorella; for the health of George Shaytar and the Wasilko family; God bless America! **From Marsha Wasilko** for the health of the Wasilko family; Happy Birthday USA!

Icon of the Cross

On the Cross is our Savior, Jesus Christ. Note that He does not wear a crown of thorns, and that His feet are nailed with two nails. Behind the body of Christ, on either side, are a lance (which pierced Him) and a sponge (which was soaked with gall and offered to Christ to drink) on a pole made of reed or cane. On the body of Christ is depicted blood and water flowing forth from His side. Below the feet of Christ are four Slavonic letters meaning: "The place of the skull became Paradise". Hidden in a cave under the earth is 'the skull of Adam'. We are thus reminded that Adam our forefather lost Paradise through the tree from

which he wrongly partook; Christ is the new Adam, bringing us Salvation and Paradise through the tree of the Cross. The city of Jerusalem is depicted in the background, for He was crucified outside the city walls.

The top bar is the title-board which Pilate ordered to be hung in mockery over Christ's head on the Cross. On this board was inscribed: "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews" in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin (abbreviated to the Greek initials 'INBI' or the Latin initials 'INRI' in the Western tradition). This is replaced with the Christian inscription: "King of Glory" - below the knees of the angels. On the title-board is inscribed the initials 'IC XC', being the first and last letters of Christ's name in Greek. In addition, just above Christ's arms we see the inscription: 'NIKA', which in Greek means: "He conquers" or "He is victorious." Frequently, we see these last two inscriptions together: 'IC XC NIKA', meaning: "Jesus Christ is victorious" (over death and sin).

The middle bar is that on which the Lord's hands were nailed. On either top corner we see the depiction of the sun (left) and the moon (right), for "The sun hid its light, and the moon turned to blood." (Joel 2:31) The inscription: "Son of God" is placed on both sides of Christ's head, and below His arms we read the inscription: "Before Thy Cross we bow down, O Master, and Thy holy Resurrection, we glorify". The halo of Christ is inscribed with three Greek letters meaning "The Being" or "He Who Is", to remind us that Christ is the same God Who identified Himself with those words to Moses in the Old Law.

The slanted bottom bar is the foot-rest. There is some question of whether it was actually on the Cross of Christ, but it is acknowledged to be a necessary attribute of the Cross, worthy of veneration and prophetically alluded to in the words [Let us] worship the footstool of His feet... (Ps. 98:5).

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, July 11

Tone 2 Troparion of Saturday

Apostles, martyrs, and prophets,
Holy hierarchs, saints, and righteous ones,
Having fought the good fight and kept the faith,
Ye have boldness towards the Saviour.
Intercede for us with Him, for He is good. //
and pray that He may save our souls.

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.

Glory... now and ever...

Tone 8 Kontakion of Saturday

The universe offers thee the God-bearing
martyrs,

As the first fruits of creation, O Lord and
Creator, //

Through the Theotokos and their prayers
establish Thy Church in peace.

Tone 8 Prokeimenon of Saturday (Psalm 31/32)

Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, O ye righteous.

Epistle of the Saturday (Romans 8:14-21)

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God,
these are sons of God. For you did not receive
the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you
received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry
out, “Abba, Father.” The Spirit Himself bears
witness with our spirit that we are children of
God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God
and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer
with Him, that we may also be glorified
together.

For I consider that the sufferings of this present
time are not worthy to be compared with the
glory which shall be revealed in us. For the
earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits
for the revealing of the sons of God. For the
creation was subjected to futility, not willingly,
but because of Him who subjected it in hope;
because the creation itself also will be delivered
from the bondage of corruption into the glorious
liberty of the children of God.

Gospel of the Saturday (Mt 9:9-13)

As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man
named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He
said to him, “Follow Me.” So he arose and
followed Him.

Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the
house, that behold, many tax collectors and
sinners came and sat down with Him and His
disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they
said to His disciples, “Why does your Teacher
eat with tax collectors and sinners?”

When Jesus heard that, He said to them, “Those
who are well have no need of a physician, but
those who are sick. But go and learn what this
means: ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’ For I
did not come to call the righteous, but sinners,
to repentance.”

Communion Hymn of Saturday

Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous. Praise befits
the just. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia! (Ps 33:1)

On Patience

“A humble man is never rash, hasty or
perturbed, never has any hot and volatile
thoughts, but at all times remains calm. Even if
heaven were to fall and cleave to the earth, the

humble man would not be dismayed. Not every
quiet man is humble, but every humble man is
quiet. There is no humble man who is not self-
constrained; but you will find many who are
self-constrained without being humble. This is
also what the meek humble Lord meant when
He said, ‘Learn of Me, for I am meek and humble
of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.’
[Matt 11:29] For the humble man is always at
rest, because there is nothing which can agitate
or shake his mind. Just as no one can frighten a
mountain, so the mind of a humble man cannot
be frightened. If it be permissible and not
incongruous, I should say that the humble man
is not of this world. For he is not troubled and
altered by sorrows, nor amazed and enthused by
joys, but all his gladness and his real rejoicing
are in the things of his Master. Humility is
accompanied by modesty and self-collectedness:
that is, chastity of the senses; a moderate voice;
mean speech; self-belittlement; poor raiment; a
gait that is not pompous; a gaze directed
towards the earth; superabundant mercy; easily
flowing tears; a solitary soul; a contrite heart;
imperturbability to anger; undistributed senses;
few possessions; moderation in every need;
endurance; patience; fearlessness; manliness of
heart born of a hatred of this temporal life;
patient endurance of trials; deliberations that
are ponderous, not light, extinction of thoughts;
guarding of the mysteries of chastity; modesty,
reverence; and above all, continually to be still
and always to claim ignorance.” + **St. Isaac the
Syrian**, “Homily 72: On the Vision of the Nature
of Incorporeal Beings, in Questions and
Answers,” *Ascetical Homilies of St Isaac the
Syrian*



“The Apostles wavered in their faith in Jesus as
the Messiah, because they anticipated and
desired to see in Him an earthly king, in whose
kingdom they could sit at the right and the left
hand of the Lord.

The thief understood that the Kingdom of Jesus
of Nazareth, despised and given over to a
shameful death, was not of this world. And it
was precisely this Kingdom that the thief now
sought: the gates of earthly life were closing
after him; opening before him was eternity. He
had settled his accounts with life on earth, and
now he thought of life eternal. And here, at the
threshold of eternity, he began to understand
the vanity of earthly glory and earthly
kingdoms. He recognized that greatness consists
in righteousness, and in the righteous,
blamelessly tortured Jesus he saw the King of
Righteousness. The thief did not ask Him for
glory in an earthly kingdom but for the salvation
of his soul.

The faith of the thief, born of his esteem for
Christ’s moral greatness, proved stronger than
the faith of the Apostles, who although
captivated by the loftiness of Christ’s teaching,
based their faith to a still greater extent on the
signs and wonders He wrought.

Now there was no miraculous deliverance of
Christ from His enemies – and the Apostles’
faith was shaken.

But the patience He exhibited, His absolute
forgiveness, and the faith that His Heavenly
Father heard Him so clearly, indicated Jesus’
righteousness, His moral superiority, that one
seeking spiritual and moral rebirth could not be
shaken.

And this is precisely what the thief, aware of the
depth of his fall, craved. He did not ask to sit at
the right or the left hand of Christ in His
Kingdom, but, conscious of his unworthiness, he
asked in humility simply that he be remembered
in His Kingdom, that he be given even the
lowest place.” + **St. John Maximovitch of
Shanghai and San Francisco**, *From Man of
God: Saint John of Shanghai & San Francisco*,
“Why the Wise Thief Was Pardoned”

Hymns and Readings for Sunday, July 12

Tone 4 Troparion of the Resurrection

When the women disciples of the Lord learned from the angel the joyous message of Thy Resurrection, they cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the apostles: “Death is overthrown! Christ God is risen,// granting the world great mercy!”

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.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Tone 4 Kontakion of the Resurrection

My Savior and Redeemer as God rose from the tomb and delivered the earth-born from their chains. He has shattered the gates of hell, and as Master,// He has risen on the third day!

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 6 Kontakion of the Theotokos

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.

Tone 4 Prokeimenon of the Resurrection

O Lord, how manifold are Thy works; in wisdom hast Thou made them all. (*Ps 103/104:24*)

Epistle of the Sunday (Romans 10:1-10)

Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, “The man who does those things shall live by them.” But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ ” (that is, to bring Christ down from above) or, “‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ ” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Gospel of the Sunday (Matthew 8:28-9:1)

When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. And suddenly they cried out, saying, “What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of

God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?”

Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding. So the demons begged Him, saying, “If You cast us out, permit us to go away into the herd of swine.”

And He said to them, “Go.” So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and perished in the water.

Then those who kept them fled; and they went away into the city and told everything, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men. And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw Him, they begged Him to depart from their region.

So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city.

Communion Hymn of Sunday

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia! (*Ps 148:1*)

On the Demons

The devil approaches the God-man with temptations. Who among men is free of them?

He who goes according to the will of the evil one does not experience attacks, but is simply turned more and more toward evil. As soon as one begins to come to himself and intends to begin a new life according to God’s will, immediately the entire satanic realm enters into action: they hasten to scatter good thoughts and the intentions of the repentant one in any way they can.

If they do not manage to turn him aside, they attempt to hinder his good repentance and confession; if they do not manage to do that, they contrive to sow tares amidst the fruits of repentance and disrupt his labors of cleansing the heart.

If they do not succeed in suggesting evil they attempt to distort the truth; if they are repulsed inwardly they attack outwardly, and so on until the end of one’s life. They do not even let one die in peace; even after death they pursue the soul, until it escapes the aerial space where they hover and congregate.

You ask, “What should we do? It is hopeless and terrifying!”

For a believer there is nothing terrifying here, because near a God-fearing man demons only busy themselves, but they do not have any power over him. A sober man of prayer shoots arrows against them, and they stay far away from him, not daring to approach, and fearing the defeat which they have already experienced.

If they succeed in something, it is due to our blundering. We slacken our attention, or allow ourselves to be distracted by their phantoms, and they immediately come and disturb us more boldly.

If you do not come to your senses in time they will whirl you about; but if a soul does come to its senses they again recoil and spy from afar to see whether it is possible to approach again somehow.

So be sober, watch, and pray—and the enemies will do nothing to you.

+ **St. Theophan the Recluse**, *Thoughts for Each Day of the Year: According to the Daily Church Readings from the Word of God*