



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, August 29 – Beheading the John Baptist

- 10:00 am Divine Liturgy
- 11:30 am Outdoor Maintenance and Cleanup
- 4:00 pm Community Dinner (Fish Fry)
- 4:30 pm Confessions
- 5:00 pm Vespers with Cathedral Vigil

Sunday, August 30

- 10:00 am Divine Liturgy
- After Liturgy** – Fish Dinner (Free will offering)

Tuesday, September 1 – Church New Year

- 9:30 am Divine Liturgy
- 10:30 am-12:00 pm Office Hours (Church open)

Thursday, September 3

- 9:00 am Daily Matins
- 9:30 am-12:00 pm Office Hours (Church open)

Saturday, September 5

- 10:00 am Divine Liturgy
- 4:30 pm Confessions
- 5:00 pm Great Vespers with Cathedral Vigil

Sunday, September 6

- 10:00 am Divine Liturgy

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

Beheading of St John the Baptist/ 12th Sunday after Pentecost

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA
OrthodoxPittsburgh.org August 29/30, 2020

Announcements

➤ **Iconography Project:** The Iconography in the altar (the Ascension of Christ) has been completed. The work on the entrance to the church (narthex), candle kiosk, and children's ("cry") room **will begin in a few weeks, after Fr Theodore returns to our church.** By this coming Sunday evening, we will have a complete list of the iconography available for sponsorship. **We appreciate everyone who has shown interest in supporting this project.**

➤ **On Sunday August 30th the parish will hold a Fish Fry** (served with French fries and coleslaw) immediately following the Divine Liturgy. All parishioners are welcome, as well as members of the community. **A free will offering is requested**, which will be earmarked for future monthly community dinners.

➤ **On Sunday evening at 7:00 pm we will serve a Panikhida at our church in memory of Matushka Janet Mihalick**, our former choir director, who fell asleep in the Lord this past Wednesday. Everyone is welcomed and encouraged to attend so that we may appropriately pray for Matushka Janet's soul and honor her memory. *Due to concerns about COVID-19, the family has requested that the funeral and burial services at the Holy Transfiguration Monastery remain private.*

➤ **A sister from St Elizabeth Convent** in Belarus will be **visiting our parish next weekend**, Sept. 5 and 6. Please come to support their important work by visiting their shop.

Prayers

- **Ill and infirm:** *Known to be hospitalized:* (none)
Home: Geroge Shaytar, Paul Yewisiak, *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* Garnette Kerchum, Eleanor Kovacs, Olga Tryszyn.
- **Vigil Lights (from 8/16) From Dawna Petkash-Beckett** for the departed servant of God Matushka Catherine (Virginia) Pynch; for the health of Michael Gregory Beckett on his 23rd birthday. **From John Kowalcheck and Olga Cozza** for the health of Vladimir Mayorov. From the John Mahalchak Family for departed friends and family; for the health of friends and family, especially for son John and brother Greg. **From Mat. Nancy Mell and Gregory Mell** for the departed servant of God Deacon Joseph Mell; for the health of family. **From Fr. Thomas and Mat. Joni Soroka** for the health of Natalie on her 19th birthday. **From Alexandria Tirpak** for the departed servants Julia, Michael, Stephen, and Nicholas; for special intentions. **From Doris M. Wasilko** for the departed servants of God from the Wasilko and Dyczko Families; for the health of the Wasilko Family. **From Charles A. Wasilko**, for the health of sisters Doris and Marsha.
- **Vigil Lights (from 8/23) From the John Mahalchak family** for the health of friends and family, especially for John, Cheryl, and Gregory. **From Mat. Nancy and Gregory Mell** for the departed servant of God Dn Joseph C. Mell. **From John Kowalcheck and Olga Cozza** for the health of Vladimir Mayorov. **From Charles A. Wasilko** for the health of sisters Doris and Marsha and Aunt Johanna Dichko. **From Doris Wasilko** for the departed servants the Wasilko and Dyczko families; for the health of the Wasilko family and for (+)Mat. Janet Mihalick. **From Marsha Wasilko** for the health of the Wasilko family and for (+)Mat. Janet Mihalick. **From Tatyana Sechler** for the departed servants of God Polina, Galina, Slava, Valentina, Bruce, Andrei, Marina; for the health of Edward, Diana, Bunny, Adrianna, Thomas, Christopher, Dasha, Elena, Bernadette. **From Kristie Mertz** for the health of Fr Thomas Soroka, mother Janice, mother-in-law Caroline, and all students and teachers in the upcoming school year!

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.

Hatred is Poison

Even if we perform upon thousands of good works, my brethren: fasts, prayers, almsgiving; even if we shed our blood for our Christ and we don't have these two loves [love of God and love of brethren], but on the contrary have hatred and malice toward our brethren, all the good we have done is of the devil and we go to hell. But, you say, we go to hell despite all the good we do because of that little hatred?

Yes, my brethren, because that hatred is the devil's poison, and just as when we put a little yeast in a hundred pounds of flour it has such power that it causes all the dough to rise, so it is with hatred. It transforms all the good we have done into the devil's poison.



Thank You

➤ to our August donors, **from Sandi Tirpak** (Bulletin \$60) for the health and guidance of her family, (Holy Bread \$50) in memory of Nicholas, Nicholas, Amelia, and John, (Communion Wine \$40) for our Lord's guidance for my grandchildren, and (Incense \$10) in memory of Archpriest Paul; **from Donya Yewisiak** (Candles \$25) in memory of Fr Vladimir Soroka (father).

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.

Hymns and Readings for Saturday, Aug 29

Tone 2 Troparion (*Beheading of the Forerunner*)

The memory of the righteous is celebrated with hymns of praise, but the Lord's testimony is sufficient for you, O Forerunner.

You were shown in truth to be the most honorable of the Prophets, for you were deemed worthy to baptize in the steams of the Jordan Him Whom they foretold.

Therefore, having suffered for the truth with joy,

you proclaimed to those in hell God Who appeared in the flesh,

Who takes away the sin of the world// and grants us great mercy.

Tone 5 Kontakion (*Beheading of the Forerunner*)

The glorious beheading of the Forerunner became an act of divine dispensation, for he preached to those in hell the coming of the Savior.

Let Herodias lament, for she entreated lawless murder, loving not the Law of God, nor eternal life,// but that which is false and temporal.

Tone 7 Prokeimenon (*Forerunner*)

The righteous shall rejoice in the Lord / and shall hope in Him. (*Ps 63/64:10*)

Epistle of the Feast (*Acts 13:25-33*)

And as John was finishing his course, he said, 'Who do you think I am? I am not He. But behold, there comes One after me, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to loose.'

"Men and brethren, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to you the word of this salvation has been sent. For those who dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they did not know Him, nor even the voices of the Prophets which are read every

Sabbath, have fulfilled them in condemning Him. And though they found no cause for death in Him, they asked Pilate that He should be put to death. Now when they had fulfilled all that was written concerning Him, they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb. But God raised Him from the dead. He was seen for many days by those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses to the people. And we declare to you glad tidings—that promise which was made to the fathers. God has fulfilled this for us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm:

'You are My Son, today I have begotten You.'

Gospel of the Feast (*Mark 6:14-30*)

Now King Herod heard of Him, for His name had become well known. And he said, "John the Baptist is risen from the dead, and therefore these powers are at work in him."

Others said, "It is Elijah."

And others said, "It is the Prophet, or like one of the prophets."

But when Herod heard, he said, "This is John, whom I beheaded; he has been raised from the dead!" For Herod himself had sent and laid hold of John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her. Because John had said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife."

Therefore Herodias held it against him and wanted to kill him, but she could not; for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just and holy man, and he protected him. And when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

Then an opportune day came when Herod on his birthday gave a feast for his nobles, the high officers, and the chief men of Galilee. And when Herodias' daughter herself came in and danced, and pleased Herod and those who sat with him, the king said to the girl, "Ask me whatever you want, and I will give it to you." He also swore to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half my kingdom."

So she went out and said to her mother, "What shall I ask?"

And she said, "The head of John the Baptist!"

Immediately she came in with haste to the king and asked, saying, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter."

And the king was exceedingly sorry; yet, because of the oaths and because of those who sat with him, he did not want to refuse her. Immediately the king sent an executioner and commanded his head to be brought. And he went and beheaded him in prison, brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl; and the girl gave it to her mother. When his disciples heard of it, they came and took away his corpse and laid it in a tomb.

Then the apostles gathered to Jesus and told Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught.

Communion Hymn of the Forerunner

The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance! He shall not fear evil tidings! Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia! (*Ps 111/112:6*)

Today is a Little Holy Friday

Today is a little Great Friday, a second Great Friday. For today the greatest man among those born of women, John, the Holy Forerunner and Baptiser of the Lord, is murdered. On Great Friday,

people murdered God, crucified God. On today's holy great feast, people murdered the greatest of all men. It is not I who chose to use the expression "the greatest." What are my praises of the great and glorious Forerunner of the Lord, whom the Lord praised more than anyone among men, more than any of the apostles, the Angels, the Prophets, the Righteous Ones, the Sages? For the Lord declared of him: *Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist* (Matthew 11: 11). In all Creation, there exists no greater praise.

This is why today is a little Great Friday. Consider: senseless people murder the greatest of the righteous. Is he getting in their way? Yes, he gets between the perverse King Herod and the dissolute Herodias. God's Truth, God's immutable Truth gets in the way of the lawless, gets in the way of poor sinners, gets in the way of everyone stupefied by the various passions. Consider: do not Christ's opponents even today still shout "Crucify Him, Crucify Him!?" Even today, do not those who oppose Christ still demand the head of Jesus of Nazareth? They call for His head, not to mention calling for the head of John the Baptist.

Yes, today's Feast is a second Great Friday. Why? Because there is no greater transgression than that committed on Great Friday and that committed now, when Herod destroys the greatest among those born of women. Why did the Savior exalt the great Saint John the Baptist, as He did no one else? Why? Because, brethren, the Holy Forerunner encompassed within himself, within his person, all of the virtues of Heaven, all of the virtues in all of the Prophets, all of the Apostles, all of the Martyrs, all of the Angels of Heaven, all of the Confessors. Regard: today we glorify the destruction, the beheading of the first Apostle among the Holy Apostles, for the Forerunner of the Lord was the first sent by God to see and to herald to the world the Savior of the world.

"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." In those few words, the Holy Forerunner expressed the fullness of the Gospels. (*St. Justin Popovic*)

Hymns and Readings for Sunday, Aug 30

Tone 3 Troparion (Resurrection)

Let the heavens rejoice!

Let the earth be glad!

For the Lord has shown strength with His arm.

He has trampled down death by death.

He has become the first born of the dead.

He has delivered us from the depths of hell,

and has granted to the world//

great mercy.

Tone 4 Troparion (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 2 Troparion (Beheading of the Forerunner)

The memory of the righteous is celebrated with hymns of praise,

but the Lord's testimony is sufficient for you, O Forerunner.

You were shown in truth to be the most

honorable of the Prophets,

for you were deemed worthy to baptize in the

steams of the Jordan Him

Whom they foretold.

Therefore, having suffered for the truth with joy,

you proclaimed to those in hell God Who appeared in the flesh,

Who takes away the sin of the world//

and grants us great mercy.

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

Tone 3 Kontakion (Resurrection)

On this day Thou didst rise from the tomb, O Merciful One,

leading us from the gates of death.

On this day Adam exults as Eve rejoices;

with the Prophets and Patriarchs//

they unceasingly praise the divine majesty of Thy power.

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 5 Kontakion (Beheading of the Forerunner)

The glorious beheading of the Forerunner

became an act of divine dispensation,

for he preached to those in hell the coming of the Savior.

Let Herodias lament, for she entreated lawless murder,

loving not the Law of God, nor eternal life,//

but that which is false and temporal.

Tone 3 Prokeimenon of the Resurrection

Sing praises to our God, sing praises! / Sing

praises to our King, sing praises! (Ps

46/47:6)

Epistle of the Sunday (1 Corinthians 15:1-11)

Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel

which I preached to you, which also you

received and in which you stand, by which also

you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I

preached to you—unless you believed in vain.

For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins

according to the Scriptures, and that He was

buried, and that He rose again the third day

according to the Scriptures, and that He was

seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that

He was seen by over five hundred brethren at

once, of whom the greater part remain to the

present, but some have fallen asleep. After that

He was seen by James, then by all the apostles.

Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.

For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I

persecuted the church of God. But by the grace

of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me

was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly

than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God

which was with me. Therefore, whether it was I

or they, so we preach and so you believed.

Gospel of the Sunday (Matthew 19:16-26)

Now behold, one came and said to Him, “Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?”

So He said to him, “Why do you call Me good?

No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you

want to enter into life, keep the

commandments.”

He said to Him, “Which ones?”

Jesus said, “‘You shall not murder,’ ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ ‘You shall not steal,’ ‘You shall not bear false witness,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ ”

The young man said to Him, “All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?”

Jesus said to him, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”

But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

Then Jesus said to His disciples, “Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a

needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”

When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, “Who then can be saved?”

But Jesus looked at them and said to them, “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

Communion Hymn of Sunday

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

Riches

What then did Christ say? "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of Heaven!" blaming not riches **but them that are held in subjection by them**. But if the rich man "hardly," **much more the covetous man**. For if not to give one's own is a hindrance to entering the kingdom, even to take of other men's goods, think how much fire it heaps up.

How can it be, however, that He said to His disciples, that "hardly shall a rich man enter in," they being poor men, and having no possessions? Instructing them not to be ashamed of their poverty, and, as it were, excusing Himself to them for permitting them to have nothing. But having said it was hard; as He proceeds, He shows that it is even impossible, and not merely impossible, but even in the highest degree impossible; and this He showed by the comparison concerning the camel and the needle. Therefore, having first "beheld them, He said unto them, 'the things which are impossible with men, are possible with God.'" For with a mild and meek look, having soothed their shuddering mind, and having put an end to their distress (for this the evangelist signified by saying, "He beheld them"), then by His words also He relieves them, **bringing before them God's power, and so making them feel confidence**.