



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

Great Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA
OrthodoxPittsburgh.org November 21/22, 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, November 21

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

Sunday, November 22

- 10:00 am Divine Liturgy / Church School

*No Weekday Services, Office Hours
or Bible Study this week.*

Saturday, November 28

- 10:00 am Divine Liturgy/Church Sch.
- 5:00 pm Great Vespers/Cathedral Vigil

Sunday, November 29

- 10:00 am Divine Liturgy / Church School

**ST NICHOLAS DAY CELEBRATION
Sunday, December 6, 2020 10:00 am**

with His Eminence Archbishop Melchisedek
Ordination of Jonathan Skowron
to be a Subdeacon
Tonsuring of Charles Wasilko
to be a Reader
Dinner following

Announcements

➤ In response to the rising COVID-19 cases, His Eminence Archbishop Melchisedek has directed that **masks be worn by everyone** during all services, meetings, and activities on church property, until further notice.

➤ On November 15 we began the **Nativity Fast** to prepare ourselves for the Great Feast of the Lord's Nativity. May God strengthen you!

➤ **Iconography Project:** The remainder of the narthex, the candle kiosk, and children's ("cry") room will be completed when Fr Theodore returns beginning November 9. **We are still in need of donors. Please consider a generous donation!**

➤ **Annual Parish Christmas Card:** For those new to St. Nicholas, this project raises money for the monthly community meal. We ask each person/family to donate \$10 to have their/their family's name printed on our parish Christmas card which is then sent to all parishioners in early December. To participate, see Jan Widel on Saturdays or Susan Porter on Sundays. If you prefer, you may mail your \$10 check payable to "St. Nicholas Orthodox Church" directly to Marsha Wasilko, 1232 Stanford Court, Coraopolis, Pa. 15108. **Deadline is November 29.** Also available for purchase are boxed Orthodox Christmas cards. See Marsha Wasilko or Susan Porter. Thank you!



Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm:** *Known to be hospitalized:* (none)
Home: Geroge Shaytar, Sandi Tirpak, Paul Yewisiak, Jenifer Rune (*40 days after giving birth*).
Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home: Garnette Kerchum, Eleanor Kovacs, Olga Tryszyn.

➤ **Vigil Lights** from **Mat Joni Soroka** for the departed servants Barbara and Ruth; for the health of Melanie, Jackie, and Natalie.
From **John Kowalcheck** for the departed servant Carol Ann Kowalcheck on the 10th Anniversary of her passing. From **Mat Nancy and Gregory Mell** for the departed servant Dn Joseph; for the health of family. From **Lindy Hamilton** for the health of Elaine Hamilton; for special intentions. From **Doris Wasilko** for the departed servants Aunt Mary Hollenbach and Carol Kowalcheck; for the health of Aunt Johanna Dichko and Olga Cozza. From **Marsha Wasilko** for the departed servants Godmother Mary Hollenbach (40 years) and Carol Kowalcheck (10 years); for the health of Sandi Tirpak. From **Charles Wasilko** for the departed servants Carol Kowalcheck and Aunt Mary Hollenbach; for the health of Aunt Johanna Dichko, sisters Doris and Marsha, and Igumen Patrick. From **John Mahalchak** for the health of friends and family, especially Gregory, Cheryl, John, Daniel, Mary, Kevin, and Skylar. From **Tatyana Sechler** for the departed servants Polina, Valentina, Bruce, Galina, Slava, Marina; for the health of Diana, Andreia, Daniel, Sergei, Veronika, Tatyana, Bunny.

Thank You

➤ to our **November** 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.

This Week in Church School

Today's lesson: Joseph

Scripture reference: Genesis 37-45

Questions to ask/review:

- Who were the sons of Jacob? How many can you name? What is the significance of their names?
- Why was Joseph in Egypt when the rest of his family were in Canaan?
- Why was Joseph in prison in Egypt?
- What interpretation did Joseph give the butler and the baker?
- How did Joseph help the Egyptian Pharaoh?
- What happened when Joseph's brothers came to Egypt? How do you think Joseph felt when he saw them? How would they feel?
- Joseph had many things happen to him that were unfair. What are some examples? How did Joseph act in each situation?
- Have you ever been treated unfairly? Do you try to get revenge or do you forgive as Joseph did?
- Has God ever taken something that was intended for evil against you and made something good out of it?

Suggested Activities at home:

- Have your children tell you their dreams each morning and write them down? Do any seem to have a deeper meaning?
- Dress in your most colorful clothes and have a fashion show.
- Make one child each day the favorite; how do the others feel?

Prayer: Give us love for our brothers and sisters, O Lord. *OR* Lord, bring good out of sadness as You did for Joseph and his family.

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, Nov 21

Tone 4 Troparion *of the Feast*

Today is the prelude of the good will of God, of the preaching of the salvation of mankind. The Virgin appears in the Temple of God, in anticipation proclaiming Christ to all. Let us rejoice and sing to her: “Rejoice, O Fulfillment// of the Creator’s dispensation!”

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

Tone 4 Kontakion *of the Feast*

The most pure Temple of the Savior; the precious Chamber and Virgin; the sacred Treasure of the glory of God, is presented today to the house of the Lord. She brings with her the grace of the Spirit, therefore, the angels of God praise her:// “Truly this woman is the abode of Heaven!”

Tone 3 Prokeimenon *of the Feast*

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. *(Luke 1:46-47)*

Epistle *of the Feast* (Hebrews 9:1-7)

Then indeed, even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary. For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary; and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant; and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.

Now when these things had been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing the services. But into the second part the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people’s sins committed in ignorance;

Gospel *of the Feast* (Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28)

Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His word. But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me.”

And Jesus answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.”

And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, “Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!”

But He said, “More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!”

Tone 4 Hymn to the Theotokos *of the Feast*

The angels beheld the entrance of the Pure One and were amazed. // How has the Virgin entered into the Holy of Holies?

Since she is a living Ark of God let no profane hand touch the Theotokos. But let the lips of believers unceasingly sing to her,

praising her in joy with the angel’s song: // “Truly, you are more exalted than all, O pure Virgin!”

Communion Hymn

I will receive the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord. *(Ps. 115:4)*
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Entrance of the Theotokos

Verses: *Within the temple, Gabriel feeds you, O Daughter, and shortly he shall come and shall say to you: Rejoice. On the twenty-first Mary entered the sacred temenos (precinct).*

The Entrance of the Lady Theotokos into the Temple of the Law, is the cause of a wonderful and universal feast for Orthodox Christians. Also because this took place in a paradoxical manner, and it is an introduction to the majestic and awesome mystery of the incarnation of God the Word, Who through the Theotokos was destined to be born into the world. The starting point for this feast of the Entrance took place as follows. Anna, who is known to all, because she was barren nearly all her life and unable to have a child, after supplications to the Master of creation with her husband Joachim, was granted a child. And having been granted what they longed for, immediately they dedicated the child born to them to God. Therefore in a paradoxical way was born the one who would produce the salvation of the race of men, the cause of the refashioning of fallen Adam, and of his resurrection and theosis. We call her the Most Holy and Lady Theotokos Mary.

Wherefore when she turned three years old, her parents took her and offered her on this day to the Temple. And in fulfillment to the obligations they made, they dedicated their daughter to God Who gave her to them. So they handed her over to the priests, and the High Priest of that time

Zechariah. Having received her, he took her into the innermost section of the Temple, where only the High Priest entered once a year. This was done according to God's will, because she was soon destined to give birth, for the restoration and salvation of the world. Therefore, the Virgin remained there for twelve years, fed in a strange manner by the Archangel Gabriel with heavenly food. She was made worthy by God of these appearances, until the time came for the divine Annunciation, and that heavenly and supernatural message, which stated that it was God's good pleasure to receive flesh from her for the love of mankind, to refashion this world corrupted by sin. Then the Theotokos came out of the Holy of Holies and was given to her betrothed Joseph, that he may guard her and testify to her virginity. And also to serve her and the child born without seed, from the time of their flight into Egypt until their return to the land of Israel.

The origin of the feast is found in an account in the apocryphal Protoevangelium of Saint James. According to this document, after Saint Ann's miraculous birth-giving, the Most Holy Virgin having completed her second year, Joachim said to his wife: "Let us lead her to the Lord's Temple, as we promised Him." Ann said: "Let us yet wait until her third year, so that the child will not clamor for her father or mother, thus she will not walk straight before the Lord." When the child was three years old, Joachim said: "Let us call from among the daughters of the Hebrews those who are undefiled, and let them each take a lamp and let these lamps be lit, that the child not turn to look backward and her heart be not held captive outside the Lord's Temple." They did thusly. Zachary the priest received her and said to her: "May the Lord crown your name with glory!", and he set her down on the altar step. There, Mary was nourished by an angel until she was twelve years old. When the time came for her to marry, Joseph received her from the priests' hands, and took her from the Lord's Temple.

Hymns and Readings for Sunday, Nov 22

Tone 7 Troparion (*Resurrection*)

By Thy Cross Thou didst destroy death.
To the thief Thou didst open Paradise.
For the Myrrhbearers Thou didst change
weeping into joy,
and Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ
God,
to proclaim that Thou art risen,//
granting the world great mercy.

Tone 4 Troparion *of the Feast*

Today is the prelude of the good will of God,
of the preaching of the salvation of mankind.
The Virgin appears in the Temple of God,
in anticipation proclaiming Christ to all.
Let us rejoice and sing to her:
“Rejoice, O Fulfillment//
of the Creator’s dispensation!”

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

Tone 7 Kontakion (*Resurrection*)

The dominion of death can no longer hold men
captive,
for Christ descended, shattering and destroying
its powers.
Hell is bound, while the Prophets rejoice and
cry:
“The Savior has come to those in faith;//
enter, you faithful, into the Resurrection!”

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 4 Kontakion *of the Feast*

The most pure Temple of the Savior;
the precious Chamber and Virgin;
the sacred Treasure of the glory of God,
is presented today to the house of the Lord.
She brings with her the grace of the Spirit,
therefore, the angels of God praise her://
“Truly this woman is the abode of Heaven!”

Tone 7 Prokeimenon (*Resurrection*)

The Lord shall give strength to His people. / The
Lord shall bless His people with peace. (*Ps*
28/29:11)

Tone 3 Prokeimenon *of the Feast*

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit
rejoices in God my Savior. (*Luke 1:46-47*)

Epistle *of the Sunday* (Ephesians 2:14-22)

For He Himself is our peace, who has made both
one, and has broken down the middle wall of
separation, having abolished in His flesh the
enmity, that is, the law of commandments
contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself
one new man from the two, thus making peace,
and that He might reconcile them both to God in
one body through the cross, thereby putting to
death the enmity. And He came and preached
peace to you who were afar off and to those who
were near. For through Him we both have access
by one Spirit to the Father.

Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and
foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and
members of the household of God, having been
built on the foundation of the apostles and
prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief
cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being
fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the
Lord, in whom you also are being built together for
a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Gospel *of the Sunday* (Luke 12:16-21)

Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: “The
ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully.
And he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall
I do, since I have no room to store my crops?’ So he
said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and
build greater, and there I will store all my crops
and my goods. And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, you
have many goods laid up for many years; take your
ease; eat, drink, and be merry.’ ” But God said to

him, ‘Fool! This night your soul will be required of
you; then whose will those things be which you
have provided?’

“So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is
not rich toward God.”

Tone 4 Hymn to the Theotokos *of the Feast*

The angels beheld the entrance of the Pure One
and were amazed. //
How has the Virgin entered into the Holy of
Holies?

Since she is a living Ark of God
let no profane hand touch the Theotokos.
But let the lips of believers unceasingly sing to
her,
praising her in joy with the angel’s song: //
“Truly, you are more exalted than all, O pure
Virgin!”

Communion Hymn *of Sunday*

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in
the highest! (Ps 148:1) I will receive the cup of
salvation and call on the name of the Lord. (*Ps.*
115:4) Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Great Martyr Catherine

(c. 305 AD) The saint’s love for the Christian
martyrs and her fervent desire to ease their
sufferings compelled Catherine to speak to the
pagan priest and to the emperor Maximian.

Introducing herself, the saint confessed her faith
in the One True God and with wisdom exposed
the errors of the pagans. The beauty of the
maiden captivated the emperor. In order to
convince her and to show the superiority of
pagan wisdom, the emperor ordered fifty of the
most learned philosophers and rhetoricians of
the Empire to dispute with her, but the saint got
the better of the wise men, so that they came to
believe in Christ themselves. Saint Catherine
made the Sign of the Cross over the martyrs,

and they bravely accepted death for Christ and
were burned alive by order of the emperor.

Maximian, no longer hoping to convince the
saint, tried to entice her with the promise of
riches and fame. Receiving an angry refusal, the
emperor gave orders to subject the saint to
terrible tortures and then throw her in prison.
The Empress Augusta, who had heard much
about the saint, wanted to see her. She prevailed
upon the military commander Porphyrius to
accompany her to the prison with a detachment
of soldiers. The empress was impressed by the
strong spirit of Saint Catherine, whose face was
radiant with divine grace. The holy martyr
explained the Christian teaching to them, and
they were converted to Christ.

On the following day they again brought the
martyr to the judgment court where, under the
threat of being broken on the wheel, she was
urged to renounce the Christian Faith and offer
sacrifice to the gods. The saint steadfastly
confessed Christ and she herself approached the
wheels; but an angel smashed the instruments
of execution, which shattered into pieces with
many pagans standing nearby.

Having beheld this wonder, the Empress
Augusta and the imperial courtier Porphyrius
with 200 soldiers confessed their faith in Christ
in front of everyone, and they were beheaded.
Maximian again tried to entice the holy martyr,
proposing marriage to her, and again he was
refused. Saint Catherine firmly confessed her
fidelity to the heavenly Bridegroom Christ, and
with a prayer to Him she herself laid her head
on the block beneath the executioner’s sword.

The relics of Saint Catherine were taken by the
angels to Mount Sinai. In the sixth century, the
venerable head and left hand of the holy martyr
were found through a revelation and transferred
with honor to a newly-constructed church of the
Sinai monastery, built by the holy Emperor
Justinian (November 14).