



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's Schedule

Saturday, March 20

- 10:00 am Divine Liturgy/Church School
- 11:30 am Volunteer Workday at Church
- 5:00 pm Great Vespers with Cathedral Vigil

Sunday, March 21

- 10:00 am Divine Liturgy/Church School
- Icon Procession with Children

Monday, March 22

- 5:00 pm Lenten Vespers

Tuesday, March 23

- 9:00 am Lenten Matins
- 9:30 am-12:00 pm Office Hours

Wednesday, March 24

- 6:00 pm Presanctified Liturgy
- Fellowship meal following

Thursday, March 25 (Annunciation)

- 9:00 am Festal Matins
- 10:00 am-12:00 pm Office Hours
- 6:00 pm Vespers Divine Liturgy

Friday, March 26

- 7:00 pm General Panikhida for the Departed

Saturday, March 27

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

Sunday, March 28 (St Gregory Palamas)

- 10:00 am Divine Liturgy/Church School

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

First Saturday/Sunday of Great Lent

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA
OrthodoxPittsburgh.org March 20-21, 2021

Announcements

➤ **Donations are now being sought** for the completed iconography in the Children's ("cry") Room. Please refer to the table below to see suggested donations to support this incredible gift to our children. Fr Theodore will complete the drawings in the Candle Kiosk Room later this year. (~~Strikethrough is donated~~)

Icon	Donation
Three Youths	\$750.00
St Kevin	\$375.00
Noah's Ark	\$1,000.00
St Eustice	\$375.00
St Abigail	\$375.00
Jonah and the Whale	\$500.00
Elijah and the Fiery Chariot	\$500.00
St Cuthbert	\$375.00
St Sergius of Radonezh	\$500.00
St Seraphim of Sarov	\$500.00
St Mildred	\$375.00
St Herman of Alaska	\$500.00
St Paul of Obnoka	\$375.00
St George	\$375.00
St Michael the Archangel	\$500.00
St Blaise	\$375.00
St Modestus	\$375.00
St Stylanios	\$375.00
Unsleeping Eye of Christ w Mary and Archangel Gabriel	\$750.00
Daniel in the Lion's Den	\$375.00
St Tryphon	\$375.00
St Edith	\$375.00

Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm:** *Known to be hospitalized:* (none) *Home:* George Shaytar, Sandi Tirpak, Paul Yewisiak. *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* Garnette Kerchum, Eleanor Kovacs, Natalie Popovich, Olga Tryszyn.

➤ **Vigil Lights** From **John Kowalcheck and Olga Cozza** for the health of Galina Vilкова. From **Chuck Wasilko** for the departed servant (nephew) David Wasilko. From **Marsha Wasilko** for the departed servants (uncle) Michael Wasilko and (nephew) David Wasilko, 3/2020. From **Doris Wasilko** for the departed servants (uncle) Michael Wasilko and (nephew) David Wasilko. From **Mat. Nancy and Gregory Mell** for the departed servant of God Dn Joseph Mell; for the health of family. From **John Mahalchak** for the health of friends and family, especially Cheryl and a successful surgery for son John. From **Annaliese Mertz** for the departed servant of God Dylan Paclawski and for students and their mental health. From **Lindy Hamilton** for the health of Elaine and Lizzie Hamilton; for special intentions. From **Kristie Mertz** for the departed servant Roger Dean.

Thank You

➤ **to John and Deb Burgess** for sponsoring these categories of monthly donations for March: (Bulletin \$60, Holy Bread \$50, Communion Wine \$40, Altar Candles \$25) and to the **John Mahalchak family** (Incense \$10) for the health of friends and family.
➤ **from Lois Fuller:** Thank you to all of my Church friends for the get-well cards and prayers and sharing your light when I thought I couldn't go on any longer. Your prayers gave me strength when I needed to keep moving forward. I will always remember your kindness and support.

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: Elisha

Scripture reference: II/IV Kings 4-5

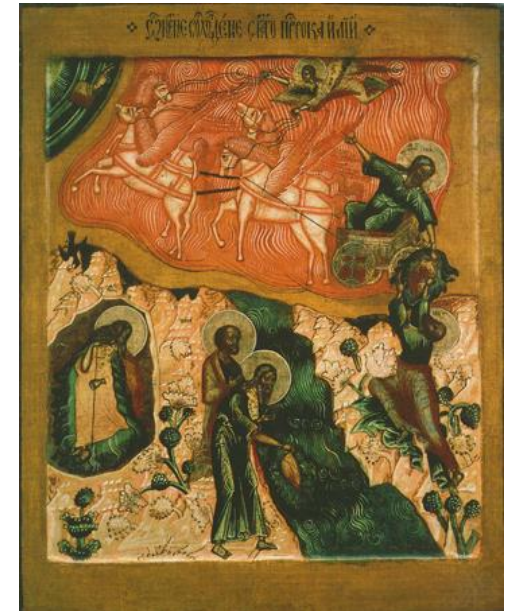
Questions to ask/review:

- How did Elijah and Elisha meet?
- Describe the relationship between Elijah and Elisha.
- What did Elisha witness when Elijah died?
- What miracles were done through Elisha?
- God spoke to Naaman through Elisha. Did Naaman want to obey God?

Suggested Activities at home:

Elisha healed the sick and raised the dead. Pray for the sick and the dead this week and write those who are sick and those who have lost a loved one a card.

Prayer: Lord, give us Your love for the sick as You did Elisha. Amen.



Hymns and Readings for Saturday, Mar 20

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 2 Troparion (*St. Theodore*)

Great are the accomplishments of faith.

The holy martyr Theodore rejoiced in the flames as though in the still waters of rest.

Consumed in the fire, he was offered up as a sacrifice to the Trinity./.

So by his prayers, O Christ God, save our souls!

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

Tone 8 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 7 Prokeimenon (*St. Theodore*)

The righteous shall rejoice in the Lord and shall hope in Him. (*Ps. 63:11a*)

Epistle of the *Saturday* (Hebrews 1:1-12)

God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;

who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

For to which of the angels did He ever say: “You are My Son, today I have begotten You”?

And again: “I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son”?

But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: “Let all the angels of God worship Him.”

And of the angels He says: “Who makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire.”

But to the Son He says: “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions.”

And: “You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain; and they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will fold them up, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not fail.”

Gospel of the *Saturday* (Mark 2:23-3:5)

Now it happened that He went through the grainfields on the Sabbath; and as they went His disciples began to pluck the heads of grain. And the Pharisees said to Him, “Look, why do they do what is not lawful on the Sabbath?”

But He said to them, “Have you never read what David did when he was in need and hungry, he and those with him: how he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the showbread, which is not lawful to eat except for the priests, and also gave some to those who were with him?”

And He said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.”

And He entered the synagogue again, and a man was there who had a withered hand. So they watched Him closely, whether He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him. And He said to the man who had the withered hand, “Step forward.” Then He said to them, “Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?” But they kept silent. And when He had looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored as whole as the other.

Communion Hymn (*St Theodore*)

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

The Miracle of the Koliva (Boiled Wheat)

When Julian the Apostate, who ruled over the Empire after Constantios, the son of Constantine the Great, had departed from Christ to idolatry, a mighty persecution was stirred up against Christians, both openly and secretly. Observing that our Christian race purifies itself and devotes itself to God more during the First Week of the Fast, he summoned the Eparch of the city and ordered him to remove the food that was usually for sale and to set out other foods in the marketplace, namely bread and beverages, having first mixed these with the blood from his [pagan] sacrificial offerings, polluting them in the process, so that, when the Christians purchased them during the Fast, they might be defiled rather than cleansed. The

Eparch carried out his order immediately and set out all over the marketplace the food and drink that had been polluted with blood from the [pagan] sacrifices.

But the all-seeing eye of God, Who catches the wise of this world in their cleverness and ever provides for us, His servants, destroyed the loathsome devices directed against us by the Apostate. He dispatched His Great Trophy-bearer, **Theodore the Recruit**, to Evdioxios, the Archbishop of the city, who had obtained this office improperly.

Standing before Evdioxios, not in a dream, but while he was awake, St. Theodore spoke words such as these: “Arise with all speed and gather together the flock of Christ, and order them under no circumstances to buy any of the items set out in the marketplace; for they have been polluted by the most impious Emperor with blood from his sacrificial offerings.” Puzzled by this, the Archbishop asked: “And how can those who do not have abundant provisions in their homes easily avoid buying food from the marketplace?” **“Provide them with Koliva,”** the Saint replied, “to relieve them in their time of need.” Puzzled again, and not knowing what Koliva was, Evdioxios asked the Saint for an explanation. The great Theodore replied: **“It is boiled wheat;** for this is what we are accustomed to calling it in Euchaita.” When the Archbishop inquired who precisely this provider for the Christian people might be, the Saint answered: “I am Theodore, the Martyr of Christ, Who has just now sent me to aid you.”

The Archbishop arose at once and announced what he had seen to the multitude. By acting thus, he preserved Christ’s flock unharmed by the machination of their enemy, the Apostate. When Julian saw that his trickery had been exposed, that he had accomplished nothing, and that he had been sufficiently put to shame, he ordered the usual foods to be put back in the marketplace.

At the end of the week, the Christian people gave thanks to their benefactor, the Martyr, and joyously celebrated his memorial on this Saturday with Koliva. Ever since then, and up until now, we faithful revive this miracle, lest the Martyr’s great deed become forgotten with the passage of time, and celebrate the memory of the Great Theodore with Koliva.

Hymns and Readings for Sunday, March 21

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 2 Troparion (Sunday of Orthodoxy)

We venerate Thy most pure image, O Good One; and ask forgiveness of our transgressions, O Christ our God.
Of Thine own will Thou wast pleased to ascend the Cross in the flesh and deliver Thy creatures from bondage to the Enemy.
Therefore with thankfulness we cry aloud to Thee:
“Thou hast filled all with joy, O our Savior,// by coming to save the world.”

Tone 8 Kontakion (Sunday of Orthodoxy)

No one could describe the Word of the Father; but when He took flesh from thee, O Theotokos, He accepted to be described, and restored the fallen image to its former state by uniting it to divine beauty.//
We confess and proclaim our salvation in words and images.

Tone 4 Prokeimenon (Song of the Fathers)

Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers, / and praised and glorified is Thy Name forever!
(*Song of the three Holy Children, v. 3*)

Epistle of the Sunday (Heb 11:24-26, 32-12:2)

By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.

And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: 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 (John 1:43-51)

The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, “Follow Me.” Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the law,

and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

And Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?”

Philip said to him, “Come and see.”

Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!”

Nathanael said to Him, “How do You know me?”

Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.”

Nathanael answered and said to Him, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”

Jesus answered and said to him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” And He said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”

Communion Hymn

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

Maintaining Peace

The formal restoration of the sacred icons took place in the Church of Hagia Sophia on the 11th day of March, in the year 843.

The Empress Theodora (Feb. 11) held a great and open banquet for the entire day, where she entertained the venerable ones and the confessors. The holy Lazarus (Nov. 17), a celebrated iconographer, suffered much under Emperor Theophilos who had ordered his men to put horseshoes into the fire, heat them till they glowed

red, and then place them in the hands of Father Lazarus. He was so badly burnt that he was near death, but he was preserved by divine grace. Therefore, when the tyrant himself learned that Lazarus was about to die, by the mediation of the pious Empress Theodora and certain other notable persons of the palace, Lazarus was released and freed from prison. Theodora was able to prevail upon her husband to permit Father Lazarus to recover at the Monastery of Saint John the Forerunner at Phoberos. Though the iconographer's hands healed miraculously, at the court banquet, he said to the empress in a marked and pointed tone, "God is not so unjust as to forget our sufferings and honor our persecutor." Theodora made no reply and took no offense. The hostess wished no wrangling or disputation on that happy day.

There was also present the saintly confessor Theophanes the Branded (Oct. 11), who sat near the end of the table. The empress observed Theophanes' face carefully and sighed in wonderment. He inquired why she sighed, and she replied, "I admire your courage and perseverance, and am appalled at the villainous and fiendish cruelty of the one who engraved letters upon your forehead, O holy one!" Without respect for the royal crown nor consideration for what had been decided about Theophilos, or perhaps, out of human weakness, Theophanes uttered the followed discordant sound: "For these letters, O devout empress, I shall be judged side by side with your husband on the day of judgement, before the fearful throne of God!" As she heard this, she was grieved and answered in tears: "Are these your promises and assurances? Is this how you have come to terms, O saint of God? So not only has my husband not been forgiven by you, but you contemplate yet chastising him further!"

On hearing this, the patriarch among the fathers, Methodios (June 14), did not hesitate, but with the rest of the saints rose and cried aloud, "Nay, my lady, never! Your husband shall not be judged any longer. For those things that have been decided on earth have been decided in the heavens as well. Let Theophanes mutter all that he will! Our promises stand; and if they weigh lightly upon some, that is of no importance."

Following this, the banquet came to a close, and the blessed Methodios took great pains to maintain peace.