



## 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

- Sunday, June 6**  
10:00 am Hierarchical Divine Liturgy
- Tuesday, June 8**  
9:00 am Daily Matins  
9:30 am - 12:00 pm Office Hours
- Wednesday, June 9**  
\*6:30 pm Vigil of the Ascension \*note time  
7:30 pm Bible Study
- Thursday, June 10 Ascension of the Lord**  
\*8:00 am Festal Divine Liturgy \*note time  
No Office Hours
- Saturday, June 12**  
4:30 pm Confessions  
5:00 pm Great Vespers with Cathedral Vigil
- Sunday, June 13**  
10:00 am Divine Liturgy

## Mark your calendar!

Vacation Church School: The week of July 12  
Parish Picnic: Sunday, September 12

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

### The Blind Man

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA  
OrthodoxPittsburgh.org June 6, 2021

## Announcements

- We welcome **His Eminence, Archbishop Melchisedek**, Archbishop of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania, as he leads us in the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy this morning. Additionally, we welcome **Fr Alexis Torrance**, a priest of the Patriarchate of Constantinople and Professor at Notre Dame University and **Deacon Peter Ilchuk** of Holy Ghost Church (OCA) in Ambridge, PA. Thank you all for being with us today on this joyous occasion!
- Congratulations to **Jonathan (John) Skowron** who is being ordained to the Holy Diaconate today! We are very proud of **Deacon John and Matushka Katrina** as they begin their ministry together. May God richly bless their family! A celebratory luncheon will follow in the parish hall immediately after the Divine Liturgy. All are warmly invited.
- Please note the time change for Wednesday evening Vigil and **Bible Study and Thursday morning Divine Liturgy** for the Ascension. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.
- In last week's bulletin there was a notice for the **"Opening Hearts to Life" event on October 14, 2021**, benefitting Vision for Life, a ministry led by Chris Humphrey and supported by Dr Ashley Loboda who serves on their board. This ministry does important work to support women in crisis pregnancies by directing them to life-saving health care and other supportive work. More information is available in the vestibule or by contacting Chris Humphrey.

## Prayers

- **Ill and infirm: Known to be hospitalized:** (none) **Home:** George Shaytar. **Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:** Garnette Kerchum, Eleanor Kovacs, Natalie Popovich, Olga Tryszyn.
- **Vigil Lights from John Mahalchak Family** for the health of family & friends; safe trip. **From John & Nancy Pravolchak** for the departed servants, our parents; for the health of our grandchildren and Jan Pravlochak. **From Alexandria Tirpak** for the departed servants, (cousin) John, Baby Ethan, (nephew) Nicholas~Memory Eternal; have mercy on the souls of our Veterans; for the health of my family; special intentions. **From Mat. Nancy K Mell & Gregory Mell** for the departed servant, Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of family. **From Charles Wasilko** for the health of (sisters) Doris & Marsha; for Veterans of Foreign Wars. **From Doris Wasilko** for the departed servants of our Armed Forces; for the health of the Wasilko family. **From Marsha Wasilko** in memory of all those who served our country

## Thank You

- to **Matushka Nancy Mell and Gregory Mell** for sponsoring the June bulletins and all donation categories (\$210 total) in memory of Deacon Joseph Mell.



**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.**

## On Prayer

But the questions remain: why, why am I doing this, why is it so important? Just for the sake of discipline? Or for something else? Why does prayer burst out of me as a kind of force only at the moment when I lose ground under my feet, when I cannot change anything and no longer hope for anything?



Which God am I praying to? Before which God do I carefully read the words of the prayer? What do I want from Him when I begin this prayer - God or God Himself? An appeal to God Himself should be, in my opinion, primary, the most important for someone who is thoughtful about prayer, wants to understand and accept it. And even if prayer is perceived as something long ago determined by the prayer book, it does not matter, since its words are aimed at establishing a direct connection with God. It is necessary to understand how and with whom I am now going to talk, to whom and why to talk. To understand how to establish the most important connection between me - "I" and God - "You", this is the understanding of prayer.

Such a prayer requires a lot of strength. But this does not mean that you need to strain yourself or pump yourself up in a special way, so that the energy boils over. We have no such faith. I don't think that in general it is possible to talk about prayer in some finite, completely definite forms and to make judgments: "this is a prayer, and that is not a prayer". So I say: "Lord, have mercy" - this is a prayer; I read the morning and evening rules - this is a prayer, something fixed. And when in my soul there is a movement towards God, not even fully verbalized, not clothed in concrete words and images, is this not a prayer? It seems to me that prayer can be defined much more broadly. (Archpriest A. Uminsky)

though he read not at home, if he attends to what is said here, one year even is sufficient to make him well versed in them; because we do not today read one kind of Scriptures, and tomorrow another, but always and continually the same. Still such is the wretched disposition of the many, that after so much reading, they do not even know the names of the Books, and are not ashamed nor tremble at entering so carelessly into a place where they may hear God's word. Yet if a harper, or dancer, or stage-player call the city, they all run eagerly, and feel obliged to him for the call, and spend the half of an entire day in attending to him alone; but when God speaks to us by Prophets and Apostles, we yawn, we scratch ourselves, we are drowsy. And in summer, the heat seems too great, and we betake ourselves to the market place; and again, in winter, the rain and mire are a hindrance, and we sit at home; yet at horse races, though there is no roof over them to keep off the wet, the greater number, while heavy rains are falling, and the wind is dashing the water into their faces, stand like madmen, caring not for cold, and wet, and mud, and length of way, and nothing either keeps them at home, or prevents their going there. But here, where there are roofs over head, and where the warmth is admirable, they hold back instead of running together; and this too, when the gain is that of their own souls. How is this tolerable, tell me? Thus it happens, that while we are more skilled than any in those matters, in things necessary we are more ignorant than children. If a man call you a charioteer, or a dancer, you say that you have been insulted, and use every means to wipe off the affront; but if he draw you to be a spectator of the action, you do not start away, and the art whose name you shun, you almost in every case pursue. But where you ought to have both the action and the name, both to be and to be called a Christian, you do not even know what kind of thing the action is. What can be worse than this folly? These things I have desired continually to say to you, but I fear lest I gain hatred in vain and unprofitably.

For I perceive that not only the young are mad, but the old also; about whom I am especially ashamed, when I see a man venerable from his white hairs, disgracing those white hairs, and drawing a child after him. What is worse than this mockery? What more shameful than this conduct? The child is taught by the father to act unseemly.

Do the words sting? This is what I desire, that you should suffer the pain caused by the words, in order to be delivered from the disgrace caused by the actions. For there are some too far colder than these, who are not even ashamed at the things spoken of, nay, who even put together a long argument in defense of the action. If you ask them who was Amos or Obadiah, or what is the number of the Prophets or Apostles, they cannot even open their mouth but for horses and charioteers, they compose excuses more cleverly than sophists or rhetoricians, and after all this, they say, What is the harm? What is the loss? This is what I groan for, that you do not so much as know that the action is a loss, nor have a sense of its evils. God has given to you an appointed space of life for serving Him, and do you while you spend it vainly, and at random, and on nothing useful, still ask, What loss is there? If you have spent a little money to no purpose, you call it a loss: when you spend whole days of yours upon the devil's pageants, do you think that you are doing nothing wrong? You ought to spend all your life in supplications and prayers, whereas you waste your life and substance heedlessly, and to your own hurt, on shouts, and uproar, and shameful words, and fighting, and unseasonable pleasure, and actions performed by trickery, and after all this you ask, What is the loss? not knowing you should be lavish of anything rather than time. Gold, if you shall have spent, you may get again; but if you lose time, you shall hardly recover that. Little is dealt out to us in this present life; if therefore we employ it not as we ought, what shall we say when we depart there?

**(St John Chrysostom)**



# Hymns and Readings for Sunday, June 6

## **Tone 5 Troparion** (*Resurrection*)

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, born for our salvation from the Virgin; for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, to endure death, and to raise the dead// by His glorious Resurrection.

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

## **Tone 4 Kontakion** (*Pentecostarion*)

I come to Thee, O Christ, blind from birth in my spiritual eyes, and call to Thee in repentance::// “Thou art the most radiant Light of those in darkness.”

*Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen*

## **Tone 8 Kontakion** (*Pascha*)

Thou didst descend into the tomb, O Immortal, Thou didst destroy the power of death. In victory didst Thou arise, O Christ God, proclaiming, “Rejoice!” to the Myrrhbearing Women// granting peace to Thine Apostles, and bestowing Resurrection on the fallen.

## **Tone 8 Prokeimenon** (*Pentecostarion*)

Pray and make your vows / before the Lord, our God! (*Ps. 75:10a*)

## **Epistle** (Acts 16:16-34)

Now it happened, as we went to prayer, that a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much profit by fortune-telling. This girl followed Paul and us, and cried out, saying, “These men are the servants of the Most High

God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation.” And this she did for many days.

But Paul, greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” And he came out that very hour. But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to the authorities.

And they brought them to the magistrates, and said, “These men, being Jews, exceedingly trouble our city; and they teach customs which are not lawful for us, being Romans, to receive or observe.” Then the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded them to be beaten with rods. And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely. Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed. And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself. But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, “Do yourself no harm, for we are all here.”

Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. And he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

So they said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.” Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized. Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.

### **Gospel** (John 9:1-38)

Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And He said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing.

Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, “Is not this he who sat and begged?”

Some said, “This is he.” Others said, “He is like him.”

He said, “I am he.”

Therefore they said to him, “How were your eyes opened?”

He answered and said, “A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, ‘Go to

the pool of Siloam and wash.’ So I went and washed, and I received sight.”

Then they said to him, “Where is He?”

He said, “I do not know.”

They brought him who formerly was blind to the Pharisees. Now it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see.”

Therefore some of the Pharisees said, “This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath.”

Others said, “How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?” And there was a division among them.

They said to the blind man again, “What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?”

He said, “He is a prophet.”

But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind and received his sight, until they called the parents of him who had received his sight. And they asked them, saying, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?”

His parents answered them and said, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but by what means he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes we do not know. He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself.” His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

So they again called the man who was blind, and said to him, “Give God the glory! We know that this Man is a sinner.”

He answered and said, “Whether He is a sinner or not I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see.”

Then they said to him again, “What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?”

He answered them, “I told you already, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become His disciples?”

Then they reviled him and said, “You are His disciple, but we are Moses’ disciples. We know that God spoke to Moses; as for this fellow, we do not know where He is from.”

The man answered and said to them, “Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes! Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him. Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing.”

They answered and said to him, “You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?” And they cast him out.

Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, “Do you believe in the Son of God?”

He answered and said, “Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?”

And Jesus said to him, “You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you.”

Then he said, “Lord, I believe!” And he worshiped Him.

### **Hymn to the Theotokos** *of the Feast*

The Angel cried to the Lady, full of grace: “Rejoice, O pure Virgin! Again, I say: ‘Rejoice, your Son is risen from His three days in the tomb! With Himself He has raised all the dead.’” Rejoice, O ye people!

Shine, shine, O new Jerusalem! The glory of the Lord has shone on you. Exult now, and be glad, O Zion! Be radiant, O pure Theotokos, in the Resurrection of your Son!

### **Communion Hymn** *of the Sunday*

Receive the Body of Christ; taste the fountain of immortality! Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! (Ps. 148:1) Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

## **On the Blind Man**

Now these things are recorded, that we too may imitate them. For if the blind man, the beggar, who had not even seen Him, straightway showed such boldness even before he was encouraged by Christ, standing opposed to a whole people, murderous, possessed, and raving, who desired by means of his voice to condemn Christ, if he neither yielded nor gave back, but most boldly stopped their mouths, and chose rather to be cast out than to betray the truth; how much more ought we, who have lived so long in the faith, who have seen ten thousand marvels wrought by faith, who have received greater benefits than he, have recovered the sight of the eyes within, have beheld the ineffable Mysteries, and have been called to such honor, how ought we, I say, to exhibit all boldness of speech towards those who attempt to accuse, and who say anything against the Christians, and to stop their mouths, and not to acquiesce without an effort. And we shall be able to do this, if we are bold, and give heed to the Scriptures, and hear them not carelessly. For if one should come in here regularly, even