



## 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!

## Schedule This Week

### Sunday, June 18

10:00 am Divine Liturgy

### Tuesday, June 20

9:00 am Daily Matins

9:30 am to Noon Office Hours

11:00 am Clergy Brotherhood Meeting

### Thursday, June 22

9:00 am Daily Matins

9:30 am to Noon Office Hours

### Saturday, June 24

4:30 pm Confession

5:00 pm Great Vespers/Cathedral Vigil

### Sunday, June 25

10:00 am Divine Liturgy



**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**

Archpriest Thomas Soroka, Rector

Deacon Luke Loboda, Attached

Deacon John Skowron, Attached

Rdr James Wargo and Danielle Bartko, Choir Dirs

### All Saints of North America

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA

OrthodoxPittsburgh.org

June 18, 2023

## Announcements

➤ **As we enter into the summer months**, a reminder that our diligence in attendance at the Sunday Divine Liturgy, the holy feast days, and the various activities of the church, is encouraged to continue. Through the summer months let us offer worship and praise to God in thanksgiving for the continued blessings He richly pours out on us. In this way, God is glorified, we sustain and grow our faith, and we become an example to others.

➤ **July's parish schedule will see an occasional reduction** in the number of services, classes, and office hours. The normal schedule will pick up in August. Please consult the online schedule ([orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parishcalendar](http://orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parishcalendar)) for the most accurate schedule.

➤ All students K-8 (from inside and outside the parish) are invited to our yearly **Vacation Church School from July 10-14**, 10a-1p daily. Daily activities include crafts, lessons, games, and music. To register, contact Matushka Joni Soroka or Rachel Hauenschild.

➤ **Looking ahead!**

**Apostle's Fast** June 12-28

**Sts Peter and Paul** Thurs, June 29 DL 9:30 am

**Vacation Church Schl** Mon July 10-Thr July 13

**Church Picnic** Sunday, Sept 3 at Clever Park

**Slavic Food Fest** TBD (Saturday Oct 7 or 14)



## Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm:** *Known to be hospitalized:*, Home: John Mahalchak (son). *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* Eleanor Kovacs, Natalie Popovich, Michael Soroka.

➤ **Vigil Lights** From **Mat. Nancy K. Mell & Gregory Mell** for the departed servant, for Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of family. From **John & Olga** for the health of Galina Vilcova, and Seraphima, Christopher, and Ruth on their birthdays. From **Mat. Joni Soroka** for the health of my father, John Naiser and daughters, Melanie, Jacqueline, and Natalie. From **Nancy Shaytar** for the departed servant, husband, George. From **George M. Shaytar** for the departed servant, my dad, George.

## “Follow Me”

There is a clear logic to the feasts and commemorations of the Church during this time of year. Celebrating the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost is followed by the Sunday of All Saints, for all who fulfill the basic human vocation to become like God in holiness do so by the transforming power of the Holy Spirit within their hearts. Pentecost and All Saints remind us that holiness is not a calling for a select few, but the vocation of all who bear the divine image as unique, irreplaceable persons loved by God.

During the Apostles Fast, we prepare for the celebration of the feast of Saints Peter and Paul, who are shining examples of what it means to find healing for our souls such that we shine with the radiance of the divine glory. Both men had sinned greatly, with Peter denying the Lord

three times and Paul having fiercely persecuted Christians. Nonetheless, the Lord called, healed, and strengthened them to the point that they became foundational pillars of the Church.

We may want to let ourselves off the hook of the calling to follow their example due to a misplaced sense of humility. We may think ourselves unworthy of hearing the Savior's call to the first disciples: "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." Of course, we would suffer from grandiose delusions and spiritual pride if we were to seek their prominence or position in the Church. The Lord does not need us to play their particular roles, of course, for they have already fulfilled them. All the apostles, including Sts. Peter and Paul, learned through their difficult journeys that responding faithfully to God's calling in their lives was not a matter of self-glorification. Instead, theirs were paths of humility in which their sins were made clear for them and others to see. They both made the ultimate witness as martyrs, becoming last in this world to the point of shedding their own blood for Christ. They pursued paths that had nothing to do with self-exaltation. As St. Paul wrote, "God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men condemned to death; for we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men... To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless. And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now." (1 Cor: 4: 9-13)

To hear and obey the Lord's calling to "Follow Me" is not to raise ourselves up by our own piety, legalism, or morality. It is not to assume that we are somehow God's favorites or to engage in any kind of religious triumphalism. As

**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 Sunday, June 18

## **Tone 1 Troparion** (Resurrection)

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, while the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst rise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world.

The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O Giver of Life:

“Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ!

Glory to Thy Kingdom!//

Glory to Thy dispensation, O Thou Who lovest mankind!”

## **Tone 8 Troparion** (All Saints of America)

As the bountiful harvest of Thy sowing of salvation, the lands of North America offer to Thee, O Lord, all the saints who have shone in them. By their prayers keep the Church and our land in abiding peace// through the Theotokos, O most Merciful One!

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

## **Tone 1 Kontakion** (Resurrection)

As God, Thou didst rise from the tomb in glory, raising the world with Thyself.

Human nature praises Thee as God, for death has vanished.

Adam exults, O Master!

Eve rejoices, for she is freed from bondage and cries to Thee://

“Thou art the Giver of Resurrection to all, O Christ!”

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

## **Tone 3 Kontakion** (All Saints of America)

Today the choir of Saints who were pleasing to God in the lands of North America now stands before us in the Church and invisibly prays to God for us.

With them the Angels glorify Him, and all the Saints of the Church of Christ keep festival with them;// and together they all pray for us to the Pre-eternal God.

## **Tone 1 Prokeimenon** (Resurrection)

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us / as we have set our hope on Thee! (Ps. 32:22)

## **Epistle of the Saturday** (Romans 2:10-16)

but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For there is no partiality with God.

For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law (for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified; for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them) in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

## **Gospel of the Sunday** (Matthew 4:18-23)

And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then He said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.” They immediately left their nets and followed Him.

Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. He called them, and

immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.

And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.

## **Communion Hymn**

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! (Ps 148:1) Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; praise befits the just! (Ps 32/33:1) Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

## “Follow Me” (continued)

St. Paul wrote in today’s epistle reading, “glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek; for there is no respect of persons with God.” He wrote of the Gentiles “that what the Law requires is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or perhaps excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.” The pressing question is not how much of God’s truth we have received, but how we have responded to what has been revealed to us. As St. Paul said, “it is not the hearers of the Law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the Law who will be justified.”

As living members of Christ’s Body, the Church, we have received the Holy Spirit personally in Chrismation and are nourished by the Savior’s Body and Blood in the Eucharist. The Savior has called and empowered us to live each day of our lives as those who participate by grace in the life of the Holy Trinity. To recognize these truths in humility means to know immediately how unworthy we are of such blessings and how far short we fall of the calling to live accordingly. When we recall the Lord’s teaching that “to whom much is given, much will be

required,” we should fall on our faces in repentance because of the great responsibility that is ours. (Lk 12:48) The Savior said, “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.” (Matt. 7:21) He also said, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.” (Jn. 14:15) As the Lord told His disciples, “Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt. 5: 20) Struggling to obey the Lord each day is the only way to grow in holiness and follow the path of the saints to the heavenly kingdom. To identify ourselves with Christ without pursuing this difficult and humbling path is sheer hypocrisy in which we judge ourselves by the contradiction between our words and our deeds. We will never become “fishers of men” by entangling ourselves in the nets of such spiritual pride and delusion. Instead of attracting others to Christ like a beacon in the darkness, we will turn them away by our bad example. There are far too many examples of people who do precisely that in the world today.

We must also remember that we will never become “fishers of men” merely by our own efforts at piety. St. Seraphim of Sarov taught, “Acquire the Spirit of peace and a thousand souls around you will be saved.” The Spirit of peace is, of course, the Holy Spirit, through whom we have become children and heirs of God through Christ. (Gal. 4:6-7) St. Seraphim also taught that “the true aim of our Christian life consists of the acquisition of the Holy Spirit of God.” Along with conveying many other deep truths, his statement entails that it is impossible for anyone to fulfill the basic human vocation to become like God in holiness apart from embracing the healing, transformative presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives. If we do not do that, we will lack the spiritual strength to bear witness to His restoration of the human person in the divine image and likeness. We will then be unable to become the kind of people who draw others into the nets of the Kingdom of Heaven. (Fr P. LeMasters)