

Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church



American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese

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Pastor – Very Rev. R. Michael Zak, Cell phone:(412)-804-8865

Deacons: Fr. Deacons Artemius Stienstra & Dr. Marc Wisnosky

Sub- Deacon: Andrew Halapin, Jr.

Cantor/Choir Director: Danielle Bartko

Assistant Cantors: Donald Bodnar, Jr. & Michele Tomko

Parish Council President: Tom Pingor

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Sunday, August 9, 2020

9TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Matins: 8:00 A.M.

Divine Liturgy: 9:00 A.M.

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 3:9-17; Resurrection Tone: 8; Gospel: Matthew 14:22-34

Tropar & Kondak: Blue Book: 102-104 / Red Book: 117-119

Altar Flowers' Sponsor: In memory of +**Dolores Pingor**, offered by the Family.

Panachida Service conducted for the repose of the soul of God's departed servant, +**Dolores Pingor** on the 13th Anniversary of her falling asleep in the Lord, offered by the Family.

Panachida Service conducted for the repose of the soul of God's departed servant, +**Mary Regdon**, offered by Nieces & Nephews.

Tuesday, (August 12)... 9:00 A.M. Divine Liturgy for the repose of the soul of God's departed servant, the priest, +**Very Rev. Protopresbyter Paul Herbert** and Special Intentions for the health of **Pani Eleanor & Ruth Ann Herbert**.

Friday, (August 14)... Dormition Fast begins on this day when no meat or meat products are eaten.

Sunday, August 16, 2020

10TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Service of the Third Hour: 8:20 A.M.

Divine Liturgy: 9:00 A.M.

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 4:9-16; Resurrection Tone: 1; Gospel: Matthew 17:14-23

Tropar & Kondak: Blue Book: 81-83 / Red Book: 95-99

Matthew 14:22-34 – Only God has dominion over nature, thus, this miracle confirms the divinity of Christ. The Lord's mastery over creation is another sign that He is the Messiah and is divine. Commands to the **sea** and **waves** can only be issued by God. God permits storms and delivers us through them, so that we can see His protection more clearly. Christ's rebuke of the storm is also an illustration of His calming the tempests in the human soul. Christ deliberately permits the **windstorm** to arise in order to perfect the disciples' faith and rebuke their weaknesses, so they would eventually be unshaken by life's temptations. Here their faith is still mixed with unbelief. They showed faith when **they came to Him**, but unbelief when they said, **"We are perishing."**

14:27 – This is the second time Christ permits His disciples to be caught in a storm. The first time He was with them; here He had left them alone. In this way, Christ strengthens their faith that He will always be with them in the middle of the storms of life. **It is I** is literally translated "I Am," which is the divine Name of God; Christ reminds the fearful disciples of His absolute and divine authority over their lives.

14:28-30 – Peter's faith allows him to walk **on the water**. Note that Peter does not ask to walk on water per se, but to come to Jesus; his desire is not to perform miracles but to be with the Lord. Peter is able to participate in the divine miracle as long as he keeps his focus on Christ. As soon as he is distracted, he begins **to sink**.

14:31 – The Greek term for **doubt** here means “wavering” or “hesitation.” The cause of Peter’s sinking was not the storm, but the doubt; thus Christ does not rebuke the wind, but Peter.

14:33 – This is the first time the disciples confess that Jesus is **the Son of God**. Knowing that only God can be worshipped, they confess Christ’s divinity by worshiping Him. **The boat** is symbolic of the Church.

RECTORY OFFICE HOURS are 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. Monday thru Friday.

EMERGENCY SICK CALLS can be made anytime. Please notify your Pastor when someone is taken to the hospital; Sacred Scriptures remind us to call the presbyter to anoint the sick.

MARRIAGES are celebrated on Saturdays and Sundays. Consult the Pastor at least 6 months in advance and before wedding reception plans have been made. Marriages cannot be celebrated during Lent or Advent, or on Fridays.

BAPTISMS are scheduled on Saturdays and Sundays at 11 A.M. Two God-parents are required; at least one of whom must be an Orthodox Christian by Faith, and the other a practicing Christian. An infant’s first or middle name must be a saint’s name.

CHURCH FUNERALS are provided for parishioners who are current in their spiritual and financial obligations to the Parish. Otherwise, burial is from the funeral home. The Church does not permit cremation.

FOLLOW OUR DIOCESE ON-LINE! Diocesan Website: <http://www.acrod.org> Camp Nazareth: <http://www.campnazareth.org> Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/acroddiocese> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/acrodnews> You Tube: <https://youtube.com/acroddiocese>

THE YEAR OF GRACE OF THE LORD **By a Monk of the Eastern Church**

Walking on the Water

The gospel reading for the ninth Sunday after Pentecost follows straight on from that of last Sunday. After feeding the multitude, Jesus sends them away. He tells His disciples to get into a boat, and He Himself retires to a mountain, alone, to pray. Meanwhile the boat in which the disciples are crossing the Sea of Galilee is shaken by waves; the winds are contrary. But suddenly the disciples see Jesus, walking on the sea; terrified, they think it is a ghost. Jesus reassures them: “Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid.” To Peter’s request, ‘Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.’ Jesus answers: “Come.” Peter gets out of the boat: ‘And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus.’ But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried out, saying: “Lord, save me.” Jesus stretches out His hand to him, and saves him. “O you of little faith, why do you doubt?” Jesus and Peter get into the boat, and the wind drops; the disciples worship their Master: “Truly You are the Son of God.”

This account contains precious information that applies to our spiritual life. The wind-tossed waters on which Peter wants to walk could be compared to our difficulties and, especially, to our temptations. Why does Peter sink? It is a sign that he was presumptuous, and should not have attempted to walk on the water? But Peter had asked Jesus for permission. He did not leave the boat without a positive invitation from the Lord. “Come!” We can learn from this that we should never undertake anything extraordinary without a call, an order from the Master. But the center of gravity of this episode lies elsewhere. As long as Peter goes towards Jesus, as long as his attention remains fixed on that goal, he is able to walk on the sea. It is when his attention is distracted from his goal, when he notices the storm surrounding him, that he starts to be afraid and, so, to drown. Thus, in our moments of temptation, we must look directly, constantly, at the person of Jesus. We must fix in our minds the image of the Saviour and pay no attention to the surrounding storm. If we look back at our spiritual defeats, we will see that it is always at the instant when we stopped looking at Christ and going straight towards Him that we have begun to be beaten. As soon as we allow our attention to be distracted by the wind and the waves, as soon as we delay in order to consider the temptation and discuss it, instead of going straight towards Jesus, we are lost – for we always find ourselves weaker than the adversary. We are saved from temptation (and all distress) only when we make up our minds to look at Jesus alone, and not at the obstacles. Briefly, instead of facing the temptation and fighting it head-on, what matters is, instead, to face the Saviour, and to substitute His Person for the temptation. Many storms surround and threaten us. “Lord,... command me to come to You on the waters.”

ST. NICHOLAS CEMETERY – CEMETERY TURNAROUND! The Cemetery Association would like to thank all the parishioners who have already donated to the Cemetery Turnaround Project. We hope you have had an opportunity to visit the cemetery and view the new turnaround and roadway repairs beyond the grotto. It is our content to continue to maintain and make improvements so that everyone can be proud of our cemetery. Your continued donations and support would be greatly appreciated. Thank You! Tom Pingor, Cemetery Association President.

EMAIL ADDRESSES NEEDED! We are looking to become more connected as a parish by sending out important announcements, updates, death and sickness notices, and other pertinent information via email. Our high school Sunday School class has volunteered to collect these email addresses. If you have not already provided your email address, we invite you to do so. Email addresses can be submitted by writing it on the sheet in the vestibule, giving it to any high school Sunday School student, or by emailing Bob Bartko at RABartko@gmail.com. Thank you for your participation!

PLEASE RETURN YOUR LENTEN SELF-DENIAL COIN BOX TO THE CHURCH IN ORDER FOR OUR PARISH TO SUBMIT A NOTABLE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN MISSION COMMISSION! Perhaps the sacrificial bank is still in your home ready to be offered to the Orthodox Christian missionaries traveling to all parts of the earth empowered to spread the “True Faith” to all humanity.

TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SUNDAY DIVINE LITURGIES OR COME TO CONFESSION... make reservations to share in “Heavenly worship” at St. Nicholas Church on every Lord’s Day during the liturgical year. Phone (412-461-3264) or e-mail (frmzak@gmail.com) Fr. Michael to indicate your and your family’s intentions to attend the Sunday Divine Liturgy. Father Zak will hear confessions following any listed divine services. Or, you can call or e-mail your pastor for an appointment at the church for the Mystery of Penance, with the safe distancing practice in place. As always, you must wear a mask before entering the church.

TAKE PART IN A MONUMENTAL BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION! On August 20,2020, Dolores Smoley celebrates her 100th birthday. Due to the pandemic, a gathering is not permitted. Therefore, we are planning a surprise drive-by on Saturday, August 22. We are gathering at the Whitaker Volunteer Fire Co. parking lot on Chalfont St. at 12:30, leaving at 1:00 to drive by her house on Elm St. (2 blocks away). A card box will be available. Please call Dave Urban 412-303-1330 if you plan to participate. Remember, it is a surprise! Thank you. The Smoley Clan

AID THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN MONASTERY IN SAXONBURG, PA! Our Pittsburgh Deanery parishes are lovingly fulfilling the needs of the Nativity of the Theotokos Orthodox Monastery in Saxonburg, PA. As these devout women monastics continuously pray for our salvation as Orthodox Christians and provide spiritually-renewing hospitality at their sacred facilities, let us graciously offer sanitary and fundamental household supplies to that “holy site.” For the next four Sundays, until the end of August, parishioners are strongly encouraged to submit their finances for the sake of this monastery. If sending a check, money order, etc., make it payable to St. Nicholas Church with the words “monastery donation” written on the financial gift, or offer cash in a sealed envelope marked “monastery donation.” Our parish will then offer one check to the Pittsburgh Deanery at the end of this appeal. May we aid these righteous souls who are presently living the angelic life, wholeheartedly!

DISTINGUISHED DIOCESAN DONORS! Anyone still wishing to make a donation to the fund this year can send your check to the church office with your regular church donations. We will collect the donations and forward them to the chancery. If you are contributing \$100 or more, please make your check payable to the Distinguished Diocesan Donors.

CONFESSION IN AUGUST: We often attend confession during the Great Fast. However, with the pandemic this was not an option for many people. Confession is a vital opportunity for every Orthodox Christian’s life in Christ. It is the Sacrament of reconciliation where we can learn about forgiving others and forgiving ourselves. Healing takes place when this mystery is approached with care. We receive forgiveness from God and Saint Paisios tells us that there is more we receive... the mind is cleansed with the soul... a weight lifted... Holy Penance is a great means of receiving grace from Almighty God and Fr. Michael wants you to have the opportunity to attend as part of our preparation for the feast of the Falling Asleep of the Mother of God on August 28th. Confessions will be heard following all the Divine Services listed in the Sunday bulletins. And, you can make an appointment with your Pastor to come to the church at a specific time and date to reveal your transgressions. The Dormition Fast starts this coming Friday. Prepare appropriately for this Great Feast that brings to a close the liturgical year.