

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, March 29, 2020

FOURTH SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST: SUNDAY OF SAINT JOHN CLIMACUS (OF THE LADDER)

Liturgy of St. Basil the Great: 9:00 A.M.

Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20; Resurrection Tone: 8 Gospel: Mark 9:17-31

Tropar & Kondak: Blue Book: 102-104, 183-184 / Red Book: 117-119, 206-207

Altar Candles' Sponsor: In memory of +**George Sukal** and **Michael Tomko**, offered by Cheryl & Michele.

Panachida Service conducted for the repose of the soul of God's departed servant, +**Anna Lippa**, offered by herself.

Panachida Service conducted for the repose of the soul of God's departed servants, +**George Sukal** and +**Michael Tomko**, offered by Cheryl & Michele.

Monday, (March 30)... 9:00 A.M. Panachida Service conducted for the repose of the soul of God's departed servant, +**Margaret Rusnak**, offered by herself.

Wednesday, (April 1)... 7:00 P.M. Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts (3-hr. fast of food or drink before partaking of Holy Communion).

Thursday, (April 2)... 7:00 P.M. Great Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete.

Friday, (April 3)... 7:00 P.M. Akathist Hymn to the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ

Sunday, April 5, 2020

FIFTH SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST: SUNDAY OF SAINT MARY OF EGYPT

Liturgy of St. Basil the Great: 9:00 A.M.

Epistle: Hebrews 9:11-14; Resurrection Tone: 1 Gospel: Mark 10:32-45

Tropar & Kondak: Blue Book: 81-83, 185-186 / Red Book: 95-99, 207-208

Panachida Service conducted for the repose of the soul of God's departed servant, mother +**Anna Janicko**, offered by daughters, Mary Janicko and Helen Revak

Mark 9:17-31 –

Matt. 17:14-21 –

17:14-16 – Sickness in Scripture is often connected to demonic activity. By **kneeling**, this father shows humility, but he lacks faith. While the **disciples** also lacked faith (v. 20), Christ rebukes the man for placing the blame on the disciples when it was his greater lack of faith that prevented the boy's healing. In effect, Jesus defends His disciples in front of the multitudes but later rebukes them privately (vv. 19-21), teaching us that we ought first to correct people in private.

18:15-20 – Church discipline is based on mutual correction in three expanding stages. Sin and correction are to remain private unless the offender refuses to repent. All correction must be

done with great care and humility, with the highest concern being the salvation of the offender. Nevertheless, correction must take place so that the sin does not spread to others as well. **17:19-21** – St. John Chrysostom notes this rebuke is directed at the nine disciples who could not cast out the demon, whereas “the pillars” of faith – Peter, James, and John (Gal. 2:9) – were not included in the rebuke, as they had been on the mountain with Christ (v. 1).

This kind (v. 21) refers to all powers of darkness, not simply those that cause a particular illness. The banishment of demons requires **faith** (v. 20), **prayer**, and **fasting** (v. 21), for there is no healing and no victory in spiritual warfare without all three. Beginning with the Didache, the Father have taught that both the person in need of healing and the person performing the healing must believe, pray, and fast.

21:21 – While it is not recorded that an apostle literally moved a **mountain**, the Fathers are clear that they had this authority if the need had arisen (certain saints did make crevices appear in mountains). Furthermore, not everything the apostles accomplished was written down. Beyond the literal meaning, this promise is also an illustration of the power of faith and prayer in all areas of life. “Whatever we ask, without hesitation and believing in God’s power, we shall receive” when we ask for spiritually profitable things. (St. Theoph.)

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/acroddioocese> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/acrodnews> You Tube: <https://youtube.com/acroddioocese>

ST. JOHN OF THE LADDER

Rev. Fr. Louis J. Noplos, St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church, Baltimore, MD

You offer the teachings of your God-given book, O wise John... it is a ladder from the earth unto Heaven that confers glory on the souls that ascend it and honor you faithfully.

- Kontakion of the Saint

The great ascetic St. John of the Ladder offers an example of both the spiritual struggle and the spiritual humility we must engage in on the way toward salvation. His best-known work, The Ladder of Divine Ascent, depicts the effort needed on that path.

St. John saw clearly, by God’s grace, that the Christian life is a journey; we take steps to mute the distractions of this world in order to cling more closely to God alone. This happens with steps, never in a sudden accomplishment. Fasting, prayer, and almsgiving are lifelong disciplines. They also help keep us from pride; like St. John, we too must pursue humility before Almighty God.

During Great Lent we are asked to course-correct, coming back to the true path: the Church reminds us to direct our attention away from the things that weigh us down, placing our focus deliberately, once again, on the goal of serving our merciful and holy God.

YOUR PASTOR IS WAITING TO RECEIVE THE SPF50 COMMITMENT CARDS! Ten of our parish families have received the Scripture, Prayer, Family materials encouraging them to pray together as a family in the home for at least 50 minutes per month. They have been asked to pledge, with God’s help to make Scripture and Prayer a part of their home. All the families involved are instructed to make a family

commitment to pray together and read the Scriptures together at least once per week. Sadly, only one family thus far, has completed the Commitment Card with the signatures of all family members and returned it to Father Zak. Your priest, like our Lord Jesus Christ concerning the no show of the nine healed lepers, asks, "Were there not ten families who received the SPF50 materials? Where are the other nine commitment cards?" Certainly in this time of uncertainty regarding the spread of the Coronavirus throughout the world and right here in Allegheny County, families and all people have been wisely advised to stay in their own homes, and drastically reduce their travel outside their residences. Especially for us Orthodox Christians during this period of the Great Fast, we are called to the altar of our in-home Icon Corners for prayer, Scriptural reading and witnessing for our precious faith. May all parishioners of St. Nicholas lay aside more frequently in their dwelling place all earthly cares as we increase our ascetical efforts for the benefit of our immortal souls. No other "distancing activity" is as important and vital as the nourishment of our image and likeness to Almighty God. And, may the other 9 families sign their first names on the SPF50 Commitment Cards and return them to Fr. Michael Zak at the rectory (Address: 903 Ann Street, Homestead, PA 15120).

ALL LITURGICAL SERVICES WILL BE CONDUCTED BY THE CLERGY & CANTORS ONLY AT ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH THROUGH APRIL 5TH AND PERHAPS LONGER, BUT OUR SACRED TEMPLE WILL BE OPEN ON SUNDAYS AND OTHER DAYS OF THE WEEK FOR LIMITED PERIODS OF TIME!

Faithful members can come to Saint Nicholas for private prayer, lighting a candle, receiving the church bulletin, offering their Sunday envelopes and monetary gifts to the parish and securing additional spiritual literature made available to all parishioners. For our beloved senior citizens 65 years of age and older, those of us who are currently experiencing any type of sickness or illness or complications of a present ailment, please, stay at home and safe within your confines. For those of you who do come please remember to apply safe social distancing. We will be reaching out to our Parish family in the following weeks by email, facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/stnichomestead/>) and our [church website](#). Please stay in touch with each other.

WE ARE APPRECIATIVE OF THE RESPONSE OF THE MEN'S CLUB TO ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH IN THE MIDST OF THE VIRUS PANDEMIC AFFECTING ALL HUMANITY ON THIS EARTH!

We express our deep gratitude and extreme thankfulness to the Saint Nicholas Men's Club for making a special donation of \$1,000.00 to the church in the name of a Coronavirus Relief Donation, helping to supplement the continued envelope donations of beloved parishioners. This monetary gift is especially needful at this time when all liturgical services have been cancelled for a period of time and social distancing is being implemented and practiced by all. The Men's Club is also making a donation to St. Michael's Church in McKeesport. A general Pascha contribution is being submitted by this distinguished group of men, as well. May all our beloved parishioners and various organizations view this generosity of the "People of God" and do likewise into their individual stewardship and communal-group financial obligations to our "House of Worship."

MEMBERS OF ST. NICHOLAS: JOIN OUR CHURCH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN DEPOSITING YOUR TREASURES IN THE COIN BOXES TO BENEFIT THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN MISSION CENTER!

The self-denial banks are available for adult parishioners in the vestibule of the church and downstairs in the auditorium. The icon on the front of the O.C.M.C. Coin Box reminds us of Christ's command to make disciples of all nations. The sacrificial money that you graciously collect will be used to help Orthodox Christians who serve as missionaries, volunteer for Mission Teams and support the mission of the Church to take the Gospel to people around the world. Please return the self-denial banks to the church office in the parish hall on Palm Sunday, April 12, 2020!

AS YOU HAVE DONATED IN THE PAST, PLEASE CONTRIBUTE IN THE PRESENT FOR THE REPLATING IN GOLD AND SILVER OF THE LITURGICAL VESSELS OF OUR CHURCH!

Three chalices and three Communion spoons used at every Sunday Divine Liturgy for the partaking of the Holy Eucharist were recently re-plated in gold and silver at the Frank Mance Plating Service on Penn Avenue in Pittsburgh, PA. When the liturgical vessels of the church needed a refinishing in the past, generous parishioners offered monetary gifts for this service. We humbly implore our faithful members to, once again, contribute their finances to maintain these sacred articles. Since the final cost for the plating service amounted to nearly \$1500.00, any sum of money is certainly appreciated by the "People of God." Pass on your donation to any of the financial leaders in the parish office downstairs.

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!

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