

Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church



American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese

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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, May 24, 2020

6TH SUNDAY OF PASCHA – SUNDAY OF THE MAN BORN BLIND AND FEAST OF SAINTS CYRIL AND METHODIOS, EQUAL-TO-THE-APOSTLES AND TEACHERS OF THE SLAVS

Divine Liturgy: 9:00 A.M.

Apostolic Reading: Acts 16:16-34 (Sunday); Resurrection Tone: 5; Gospel: John 9:1-38 (Sunday)
Epistle: Hebrews 7:28-8:2 (Saints) Gospel: Matthew 5:14-19 (Saints)

Tropar & Kondak: Blue Book: 93-95 159, 206-207 / Red Book: 108-110, 179-180, 229-231

Birthday Prayers intoned for: **Nicholas Thorn, Luca Paganico and Kira Fischer**, offered by the Family.

Panachida Service conducted for the repose of the souls of God's departed servants, **+Andrew Kindya, +Eugene Brancho, +Susan Johnston, +Raymond Brancho and +Maria Zini**, offered by Andrew & Lucy Tomko.

Monday, (May 25)... MEMORIAL DAY – 10:00 A.M. Panachida Service at St. Nicholas Cemetery in West Mifflin, PA, and abbreviated memorial services at the graves of individual parishioners upon request.

Wednesday, (May 27)... 7:00 P.M. Great Vespers on the Feast of the Ascension of our Lord, with the Blessing of Bread, Wheat, Wine and Oil.

Thursday, (May 28)... 9:30 A.M. Divine Liturgy on the Holy Day of the Ascension of our Lord.

Sunday, May 31, 2020

7TH SUNDAY OF PASCHA – SUNDAY OF THE FATHERS OF THE 1ST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

Divine Liturgy: 9:00 A.M.

Apostolic Reading: Acts 20:16-18, 28-36; Resurrection Tone: 6; Gospel: John 17:1-13

Tropar & Kondak: Blue Book: 96-98, 211-212 / Red Book: 111-114, 235-236

John 9:1-38 – This healing is the sixth sign in John's Gospel. Of all the miracle stories in the Bible, this is the only one in which the person was **blind from birth**. The blind man is symbolic of all humanity: all need illumination by Christ, the Light of the world. This sign is an illustration of baptism, which is also called "holy illumination." As Pascha (Easter) is the traditional day to receive catechumens into the Church, the lessons following Pascha reflect a baptismal theology. Thus, this passage is read on the sixth Sunday of Pascha.

9:3 – The Savior rejects the assumption (common in the ancient world) that all troubles and maladies are necessarily the consequence of personal sin or even the sins of one's **parents**. Though suffering can be the direct result of personal sin, this is certainly not always the case. In

this instance, the man's blindness provided the occasion for **the works of God to be revealed**: it was not related directly to the man's personal sins.

9:4 – The **work** that people do consists of faith (6:29), good deeds (5:29), and repentance (12:40). **The night** that comes refers both to the time after a person's death and to the age to come, when there is no longer an opportunity to express faith. On that day there will not be faith, but all will submit, whether willingly or unwillingly (St. John Chrysostom).

9:5 – The unprecedented healing of the man born blind confirms Christ's claim that He is **the light of the world**.

9:6 – St. Irenaeus sees in the mixture of **clay** and **saliva** a type of the creation of humanity from the earth (Gen. 2:7). Christ reveals His divinity by restoring part of creation using the same material with which He created humanity in the beginning.

9:7 – **The pool of Siloam** was on the outskirts of Jerusalem, a considerable distance from the temple. From this pool, water was taken for the rites connected with the Feast of Tabernacles. Siloam, **translated, Sent**, symbolizes Christ, the One sent by the Father (5:36; 20:21). Just as the healing of the blind man confirmed Christ's claim to be the light of the world (8:12), so also, His making use of the pool of Siloam confirms that He is the true purification of the temple and those who worship in it.

9:16 – Just as **the Pharisees** had ignored the healing of the paralytic and focused only on the perceived violation of **the Sabbath** (5:10-16), here many of them cannot see the glory of **God** through their own prejudices.

9:24 – With Jesus not present, the Pharisees call Him **a sinner**, but earlier when He asked them face-to-face, "Which of you convicts Me of sin?" (8:46), they evaded the question. **Give God the glory!** was an oath formula used before giving testimony. Nevertheless, the healed man will indeed give God glory (v. 38). The more he is pressed, the more frequent his faith becomes, while the Pharisees lapse into deeper darkness.

9:25 – This healed man becomes a model of Christian witness. Many people do not bear witness to Christ because they fear they will be asked questions they cannot answer. This man's answer to people much more educated than he, provides the solution: he admits what he does **not know**, but follows up with what he does know. The formula, "That I don't know, but what I do know is this," is foundational to witnessing one's faith to others.

9:26-38 – Having opened the blind man's eyes, the Lord also opens his heart and illumines his spirit. The man moves from knowing almost nothing about Christ (v. 25) through the conclusion that Jesus could not possibly be a sinner (v. 31) through confessing that Jesus must be **from God** (v. 33), to finally seeing Him as the divine **Son of God** and worshipping Him (v. 38). The Pharisees again cannot refute this man's logic nor the truth of what he reveals, and thus they resort to personal insult (v. 34).

9:32 – The unprecedented nature of opening **the eyes of one who was born blind** is a confirmation of Christ's divinity. This was one of the signs of the coming Messiah (Is. 35:5; 42:7) and a prerogative belonging solely to God (Psalm 145:8).

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.

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<http://www.campnazareth.org> Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/acroddioocese> Twitter:

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THE YEAR OF GRACE OF THE LORD
By a Monk of the Eastern Church
The Blind Man

An external event, be it even the Resurrection of our Lord, has no practical value for souls unless it translates itself, in them, into an increase of that inner Light which must direct our whole life. The light of Christ is an essential paschal theme. It is this theme which is developed on the sixth Sunday of the Paschal season, called the 'Sunday of the

Blind Man', when the healing of a blind man is commemorated and leads to the idea of our own blindness and healing.

This episode illustrates the words of the Prophet Isaiah: 'Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened'..., and what Jesus Himself said: 'The Spirit of the Lord... has sent Me...to preach... recovering of sight of the blind'... It is certain that physical blindness, while being the immediate object of Jesus' inquiry (and one knows how much suffering is caused by an eye disease in the Middle East), here symbolizes the spiritual blindness from which Jesus heals men. But the healing, in the gospel we have just read, cannot be separated from the good and sincere faith of the blind man himself. The most authoritative commentary on this episode is that given to us by the Church itself, which, in two of the antiphons for this Sunday, expresses it thus:

'Christ, our God, Sun of righteousness, beyond all understanding, O You who, in touching him, did open the eyes of the man born blind, open the eyes of our souls and make us children of light...'

'I come to You, O Christ, the eyes of my soul blind as the eyes of the man born blind, and, in repentance, I cry to You: You are the Light of supreme brightness for all those who are in darkness.'

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 replated 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 the financial leaders in the parish office.

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!

WITH THE BLESSING OF HIS EMINENCE, METROPOLITAN GREGORY, WE SHALL CONDUCT MEMORIAL DAY SERVICES AT OUR CHURCH CEMETERY IN WEST MIFFLIN ON MONDAY, MAY 25TH AT 10 A.M.!

Consenting to our bishop's orders to wear masks and maintain proper distancing from one another, we will conduct a Panachida (Memorial) Service at the Grotto on the tranquil burial grounds of our dearly-departed loved ones at 10:00 A.M., followed by abbreviated memorial services at the individual graves of our families' deceased members of this life upon request. In this outdoor setting, we can certainly implement safe distancing between one another and remember those relatives whose membership is in the Church Triumphant, and those courageous men and women of the armed forces who sacrificed their lives in order for us to enjoy the many freedoms and privileges we share in this great nation of America.

ALL-SOULS' SATURDAY, PENTECOST SUNDAY, AND HOLY SPIRIT DAY

services shall be conducted and celebrated on Saturday, June 6th at 9 A.M., Sunday, June 7th at 9 A.M. and Monday, June 8th at 9:30 A.M. God-willing, by that time, our church shall be open for the liturgical services with a maximum number (25) of faithful permitted to participate in the liturgical rites. When this 3-day observance arrives, email or phone Fr. Michael to learn if you are allowed to come and take part in the divine services, namely the Divine Liturgies that will be celebrated on three consecutive days.

ATTENTION CLASS OF 2020: To all High School and College Graduates of 2020:

Please notify Fr. Michael by Pentecost Sun. (June 7th) of your graduation info. High School Students: your High School, any academic and/or athletic awards, where you will attend in the Fall and your attended major in college (or undecided at this time). College Students, Graduate and Post-Graduate: your college/university, your field of study and degree you have earned. We will recognize our graduates on Sunday, June 28. God-willing, we will be able to do this in person. Please be in church that Sunday so that we can take a group photo.

FIRST CONFESSION CLASS SUNDAY AT 9:00 A.M. – POSTPONED UNTIL A LATER DATE!

Children of our church school-Mystery of Penance class shall confess their sins before the priest on Saturday at 11 A.M. in Saint Nicholas Church. And the following Lord's Day they will come forward and receive the Body and Blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ in Holy Communion. It is a joyous occasion for the entire congregation to welcome these youths in the full sacramental life of the Church and rejoice in their attaining the age of reason and progress in their maturity level.

FATHER'S DAY IS JUNE 21ST THIS YEAR!

Remember your beloved Father, Grand-Father, Great Grand-Father, God-Father, Step-Father in the special bulletins which will be published for the living and the +deceased fathers of the parish and of our parishioners. Submit their names to Fr. Michael by email or regular mail no later than Sunday, June 14-

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