



## Holy Ghost Orthodox Church

714 Westmoreland Avenue

PO Box 3

Slickville, PA 15684-0003

[724] 468-5581

[www.holyghostorthodoxchurch.org](http://www.holyghostorthodoxchurch.org)

Rev. Father Robert Popichak, Pastor

23 Station Street

Carnegie, PA 15106-3014

[412] 279-5640 home [412] 442-4160 office

[412] 956-6626 cell

### PHILIPKIVA—NATIVITY FAST

**ON THE MEND:** Please keep the following parishioners and others in your prayers for recovery from their illnesses and injuries: **Metropolitan Constantine**, Patriarch Pavle, Archimandrite Raphael, Father Peter Natishan, Father Gerald Olszewski, Father Jakiw Norton, Father Dragan Filipović, Father Elias Katras, Father Stevo Rocknage, **Father Paul Stoll**, Father Deacon Joseph Bulkanowa, Frank & Ollie Pendylshok, Walt & Evelyn Burlack, Joshua Agosto and his family, Harley Katarina Rahuba, Joe Karas, Mike and Hilda Holupka, Eva Malesnick, Helen Likar, Angela Wesolosky, Stella Peanoske, Joe Nezolyk, Nick Behun, Terry Reinhart, Bernie O'Masta, Grace Holupka, Virginia Bryan, Joseph Sliwinsky, Maria Balo, Linda Mechtly, Mary Mochnick, Mary Pekich, Mildred Manolovich, Evelyn Misko, Amy, Nigel Daniel, & Daniel Pocura, Jeanne Boehing, Alex Drobot, Rachelle, Jane Golofski, Doug Diller, Harry Krewsun, Sandy Gamble, Glen Lucas Burlack, Bernie Vangrin, Mary Alice Babcock, Dorie Kunkle, Andrea, & Melissa [Betty O'Masta's relatives], Mary Evelyn King, Stella Cherepko, Sam Wadrose, Khoruia Joanne Abdalah, Cameron [a boy in Matt's class], Faith—a 3-year-old girl with rheumatoid arthritis, Isabella Olivia Lindgren—a 10-month old with a brain tumor, Dillon, Cindy Rita, Ethel Thomas, Donna, Jeff, Nick Malec [Maxine's brother], Bill, Sophia Grace, Erin, Jimmy Fennel [6<sup>th</sup> Grader], Jim Markovich, Jeff Walewski [thyroid cancer], Carol [Lotinski] Rose, Michael Miller, Dave May, Peter Paul & Louise May Sprock, Grace & Owen Ostrasky, Claudia [Horvath] Gradicheck, Alberta, Margaret Mueller, Gary Zurasky, Michael Horvath, Tony Notaro, John Holupka, Patti Sinecki, David Genshi, and Daria Masur. **ARNOLD: Stefania Lucci, Kay Tomson, Ann Ostaffy, Steve Sakal, Elisabeth Arasin, Homer Paul Kline, and Harry Ostaffy.** We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.

**THANK YOU to everyone who donated toys to the Toys-for-Tots campaign. Alex and Matt helped in the Carnegie Police Department/USMC Reserves biggest haul EVER! God Bless you all for your kindness and generosity to those who are in need!**

**REMEMBER YOUR ADVENT ASSIGNMENT:  
SAY A PRAYER FOR SOMEBODY YOU DO NOT KNOW!**

Please remember ALL American servicemen and women in the Middle East in your prayers. May God watch over them and all American servicemen and women—and bring them all home safely!

PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR "BOXTOPS FOR EDUCATION" AND CAMPBELL'S SOUP LABELS TO CHURCH. There is a shoebox in the basement for Alex's Fourth Grade

and Matt's Second Grade collections. THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR HELP!  
Matt

Alex and

**REMEMBER—PRAYERS ARE ALWAYS FREE!**

Communion Fasting: nothing to eat or drink after midnight, EXCEPT in cases where your doctor tells you to eat or drink something for medical reasons: medication, diabetes, etc. If you have a question, please call Father Bob.

**AT ANY TIME—if there is an emergency, if you have questions, or if you just need to talk, please CALL FATHER BOB at [412] 279-5640.**

**Schedule of Services**

**Sunday, December 31**                      **Divine Liturgy**                      **10:30 AM**  
**29<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FOREFATHERS, MARTYR SEBASTIAN AT ROME WITH COMANION MARTYRS NICOSTRATUS, ZOE, CASTORIUS, TRANQUILLINUS, MARCELLINUS, MARK, CLAUDIUS, SYMPHORIAN, VICTORINUS, TIBURTIUS, & CASTULUS, SAINT MODESTUS-ARCHBISHOP OF JERUSALEM, SAINT FLORUS-BISHOP OF AMISUS, SAINT MICHAEL-CONFESSOR OF CONSTANTINOPLE, MARTYR EUBOTIUS AT CYZICUS**

*Tone 4*

Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40

Matthew 1:1-25

*Litany in Blessed Memory of Rudy Obradovich—Evelyn & Walt Burlack  
Parastas in Blessed Memory of Debbie Burgan—Debbie & John Paouncic*

**Saturday, January 6**                      **Nativity Eve—STRICT FAST DAY**  
**Grand Compline & Holy Supper—ARNOLD**                      **4:00 PM**  
**Grand Compline & Holy Supper—Slickville**                      **6:00 PM**

**Sunday, January 7**                      **DIVINE LITURGY—ARNOLD—Fr. Paisius**                      **8:00 AM**  
**DIVINE LITURGY—SLICKVILLE**                      **10:30 AM**  
**30<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST—DIVINE LITURGY OF SAINT BASIL THE GREAT--NATIVITY ACCORDING TO THE FLESH OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST, ADORATION OF THE MAGI—MELCHIOR, CASPAR, AND BALTHASAR**

Galatians 4:4-7

Matthew 1:1-12

**Sunday, January 14**                      **Divine Liturgy—SAINT BASIL THE GREAT--10:30 AM**  
**31<sup>st</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, SUNDAY AFTER NATIVITY, SUNDAY BEFORE THEOPHANY, THE CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, SAINT BASIL THE GREAT-ARCHBISHOP OF CAESAREA IN CAPPODOCIA**

II Timothy 4:5-8, Hebrews 7:26-8:2

Mark 1:1-8, Luke 6:17-23

*Litany in Blessed Memory of Nicholas Vitosky—Fr. Bob  
Parastas in Blessed Memory of Stephen Kuzman—Debbie & John Paouncic*

**BULLETIN INSERT FOR 31 DECEMBER 2006**

**29<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FOREFATHERS, MARTYR SEBASTIAN AT ROME WITH COMANION MARTYRS NICOSTRATUS, ZOE, CASTORIUS, TRANQUILLINUS, MARCELLINUS, MARK, CLAUDIUS,**

**SYMPHORIAN, VICTORINUS, TIBURTIUS, & CASTULUS, SAINT  
MODESTUS-ARCHBISHOP OF JERUSALEM, SAINT FLORUS-  
BISHOP OF AMISUS, SAINT MICHAEL-CONFESSOR OF  
CONSTANTINOPLE, MARTYR EUBOTIUS AT CYZICUS**

**TROPARION FOR THE HOLY FOREFATHERS—Tone 2**

Great are the achievements of faith!

In the fountain of flame, as in refreshing water, the Three Holy Children rejoiced.

And the Prophet Daniel proved a shepherd of lions as of sheep.

By their prayers, O Christ our God, save our souls.

**TROPARION—TONE 4**

When the women disciples of the Lord

Learned from the angel the joyous message of Thy Resurrection;

They cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the apostles:

Death is overthrown! Christ God is risen,

Granting the world great mercy.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and  
unto ages of ages. Amen.

**KONTAKION—TONE 4**

My Savior and Redeemer,

As God rose from the tomb

And delivered the earthborn from their chains.

He has shattered the gates of Hell,

And as Master, He has risen on the third day!

**KONTAKION FOR THE HOLY FOREFATHERS—Tone 1**

O Bethlehem, rejoice! Make ready, Ephratha!

The ewe is hastening to give birth to the Great Shepherd Whom she carries in her womb.

The Godbearing Fathers rejoice at seeing Him,

and the Shepherds praise the Virgin who suckles Him.

**PROKEIMENON—TONE 4**

**READER:** O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

**PEOPLE:** O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

**READER:** Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord my God, Thou art very great!

**PEOPLE:** O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

**READER:** O Lord, how manifold are thy works!

**PEOPLE:** In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

## **ALLELUIA VERSES—TONE 4**

**Go forth and prosper and reign, because of truth and meekness and righteousness.**

**You love righteousness and hate iniquity.**

After leaving his solitude, [St. Gregory the Wonderworker] at once hastened to the city where he felt obliged to establish a church for God. He knew that the whole region was under the grip of demons and that the temple of the true God was not yet constructed; the entire city and surrounding area was filled with pagan altars, sacred places and all the people were devoted to images. They adorned the temples and sacred places with images and the madness of idolatry with processions; their defilement gave substance to rites and ceremonies. Just as a noble commander routes the enemy in combat by the strength of his battle order, so does that great man's valor set an example against the demons. How does he accomplish this?

Upon arriving in the city at evening from the countryside, a violent rainstorm forced [Gregory] into the temple. This place was renowned because one of the demons revered there was accustomed to manifest himself to the temple's custodians, and a certain prophet was empowered to utter oracles. Once [Gregory] entered the temple with several companions, one of the demons was petrified at the invocation of Christ's name. Having purified the air with the figure of the Cross which had been defiled, he spent the entire night in prayer and singing hymns according to his usual custom. In this way [Gregory] transformed the place into a temple of prayer which had been profaned by unclean sacrifices and images [cf. Is 56.7, Mk 11.17]. After completing night prayer, he resumed at daybreak, but when the temple's custodian began to perform his rites to the demons at sunrise, he claimed that he could not approach the temple because [Gregory] blocked the way. The custodian then attempted to invite demons into the temple using sacrifices of purification and sacred rituals. However, his endeavors were ineffectual because the demons were not accustomed to respond to this enticement. Overcome with a furious rage, the custodian seized that great man and threatened him with various intimidations and to bring him to the leaders. He wanted to lay hands upon him and reveal his audacity to the king because a Christian who was hostile to the gods had the effrontery to enter the temple. His admission to temple for performing services was refused, and he could no longer visit places where oracles were made to demons. The custodian's harsh anger was enkindled at [Gregory's] splendid resolve, and he hurled all kinds of threats against the blessing offered by the true God. He alleged to have more fortitude than his opponent and had the privilege of entering those places anytime he wished as well as being able to prove this. The temple keeper was so struck with admiration at [Gregory's] ability to perform wonders that he again invoked the demons to enter the temple. Having learned about this, the great man suddenly snatched a piece of the

book and gave it to the temple keeper while angrily commanding the demons. The words of this epitaph read as follows: GREGORY TO SATAN: ENTER.

When the temple keeper received this little book to place on the altar according to custom, he offered burnt sacrifices and various types of unclean rites and again beheld what he had seen before the demons were ejected from the temple which contained the idols. Having accomplished this, he realized that Gregory was endowed with divine power which made him stronger than the demons. Before leaving the city, he promptly grasped Gregory in order to learn about his secret and about God who had vanquished the demons. When the great man gave a brief account about the mystery of piety, a certain temple guardian approached him who was in all likelihood uninitiated into divine matters. He was inclined to believe that it was too inconsequential for God to appear to men in the flesh. But when Gregory said that these miracles are possible not by reason but by faith, the temple keeper begged to see a miracle which would strengthen him in the faith. Right then and there it is said to everyone's surprise that Gregory performed a great miracle. After the temple guardian found a huge stone which in his eyes seemed unmovable by human means but only through the power of faith, Gregory ordered it transferred to another place. That great man at once charged the large stone which seemed endowed with life to move to that place designated by the temple's keeper. Once this was accomplished, the man immediately believed and forsook his entire family, household, wife, children, friends, the priesthood and possessions. In their place he requested to participate in [Gregory's] greatness, accomplishments, divine philosophy and teaching.

Thus that great man [Gregory] prevailed against the demons' strength and paraded the temple guardian as a victory trophy, a sight which filled the people with awe. With faith and courage he triumphantly entered the city not with chariots, horses, asses and boasting in the number of supporters but attended by the full array of virtues. The town's entire populace gathered to learn about this the novel wonder, and everyone desired to see that man called Gregory. They considered him a god who exercised authority and did whatever he wished against the demons in order to subject them. Having vanquished their patron to his authority and despising the honor which was formerly theirs, he changed their way of life and everything which pertained to it.

*From the Life of St. Gregory Thaumaturgos (the Wonderworker), 3<sup>d</sup> century (commemorated 17/30 November) by St. Gregory of Nyssa*

**6. And the child (Mary) grew strong day by day; and when she was six months old, her mother (Anna) set her on the ground to try whether she could stand, and she walked seven steps and came into her bosom; and she snatched her up, saying: As the Lord my God liveth, thou shall not walk on this earth until I bring thee into the temple of the Lord. And she made a sanctuary in her bed-chamber, and allowed nothing common or unclean to pass through her... And when she was a year old, Joachim made a great feast, and invited the priests, and the scribes, and the elders, and all the people of Israel. And Joachim brought the child to the priests; and they blessed her, saying: O God of our fathers, bless this child, and give her an everlasting name to be named in all generations. And all the people said: So be it, so be it, amen. And he brought her to the chief priests; and they blessed her, saying: O God most high, look upon this child, and bless her with the utmost blessing, which shall be for ever. And her mother snatched her up, and took her into the sanctuary of her bed-chamber, and gave her the breast. And Anna made a song to the Lord God, saying: I will sing a song to the Lord my God, for He hath looked upon me, and hath taken away the reproach of mine enemies; and the Lord hath given the fruit of His righteousness, singular in its kind, and richly endowed before Him. Who will tell the sons of Rubim that Anna gives suck? Hear, hear, ye twelve tribes of Israel, that Anna gives suck. And she laid her to rest in the bedchamber of her sanctuary, and went out and ministered unto them. And when the supper was ended, they went down rejoicing, and glorifying the God of Israel.**

**7. And her months were added to the child. And the child was two years old, and Joachim said: Let us take her up to the temple of the Lord, that we may pay the vow that we have vowed, lest perchance the Lord send to us, and our offering be not received. And Anna said: Let us wait for the third year, in order that the child may not seek for father or mother. And Joachim said: So let us wait. And the child was three years old, and Joachim said: Invite the daughters of the Hebrews that are undefiled, and let them take each a lamp, and let them stand with the lamps burning, that the child may not turn back, and her heart be captivated from the temple of the Lord. And they did so until they went up into the temple of the Lord. And the priest received her, and kissed her, and blessed her, saying: The Lord has magnified thy name in all generations. In thee, on the last of the days, the Lord will manifest His redemption to the sons of Israel. And he set her down upon the third step of the altar, and the Lord God sent grace upon her; and she danced with her feet, and all the house of Israel loved her.**

**8. And her parents went down marveling, and praising the Lord God, because the child had not turned back. And Mary was in the temple of the Lord as if she were a dove that dwelt there, and she received food from the hand of an angel.**

*From the Protoevangelium of James, c. 2nd century Feast of the Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple*

## Remember My Birthday?

As you well know, we are getting closer to my birthday. Every year there is a celebration in my honor and I think that this year the celebration will be repeated. During this time there are many people shopping for gifts, there are many radio announcements, TV commercials, and in every part of the world everyone is talking that my birthday is getting closer and closer.

It is really very nice to know, that at least once a year, some people think of me. As you know, the celebration of my birthday began many years ago. At first people seemed to understand and be thankful of all that I did for them, but in these times, no one seems to know the reason for the celebration. Family and friends get together and have a lot of fun, but they don't know the meaning of the celebration.

I remember that last year there was a great feast in my honor. The dinner table was full of delicious foods, pastries, fruits, assorted nuts and chocolates. The decorations were exquisite and there were many, many beautifully wrapped gifts. But, do you want to know something? I wasn't invited. I was the guest of honor and they didn't remember to send me an invitation. The party was for me, but when that great day came, I was left outside, they closed the door in my face... and I wanted to be with them and share their table. In truth, that didn't surprise me because in the last few years all close their doors to me.

Since I was not invited, I decided to enter the party without making any noise. I went in and stood in a corner. They were all drinking; there were some who were drunk and telling jokes and laughing at everything. They were having a great time. To top it all, this big fat man all dressed in red wearing a long white beard entered the room yelling Ho-Ho-Ho! He seemed drunk. He sat on the sofa and all the children ran to him, saying: "Santa Claus, Santa Claus"... as if the party were in his honor!

At 12 midnight all the people began to hug each other; I extended my arms waiting for someone to hug me and... do you know... no one hugged me. Suddenly they all began to share gifts. They opened them one by one with great expectation. When all had been opened, I looked to see if, maybe, there was one for me. What would you feel if on your birthday everybody shared gifts and you did not get one? I then understood that I was unwanted at that party and quietly left.

Every year it gets worse. People only remember to eat and drink, the gifts, the parties and nobody remembers me. I would like this Christmas that you allow me to enter into your life. I would like that you recognize the fact that almost two thousand years ago I came to this world to give my life for you, on the cross, to save you. Today, I only want that you believe this with all you heart.

I want to share something with you. As many didn't invite me to their party, I will have my own celebration, a grandiose party that no one has ever imagined, a spectacular party. I'm still making the final arrangements. Today I am sending out many invitations and there is an invitation for you. I want to know if you wish to attend and I will make a reservation for you and write your name with golden letters in my great guest book. Only those on the guest list will be invited to the party. Those who don't answer the invitation, will be left outside. Do you know how you can answer this invitation? It is by extending it to others whom you care for... I'll be waiting for all of you to attend my party this year...

See you soon... I love you!

Jesus

## **He Walked Out of Heaven**

He came from splendor to be born in poverty. He left the presence of angels, for the company of me. He laid down a scepter in heaven to be laid in a manger, and exchanged the worship of Arch-angels, for the praise of lowly shepherds.

He walked into the world with all the power of Almighty God at his bidding, but He was carried out a mutilated body lowered from a cross.

He rebuked the pious, but He comforted the sinner. He refused earthly Kingship, although He was still a King. He loved His mother yet gave her away at the Cross. He healed the broken-hearted, yet He himself, died with a broken heart.

He loved the fellowship of friends, yet was cast out by His kinsmen. He rebuked both sage and seer, and then blessed the little children. He held an executive meeting on the Mount of Transfiguration, then wept alone in the Garden of Gethsemane.

He could walk on water, but could not walk away from the tears in the eyes of the Widow from Nain. He could command the stars in their orbits, but he refused to change the circumstances of His own execution. His mission was a commitment to free all men, yet He was imprisoned on the testimony of one man.

He delivered many from pain, but He was delivered to suffer agonizing pain.



He dried the eyes of multitudes, but no one dried His eyes in Gethsemane. He carried the burdens of the world, but only one was brought forth to help Him bear His Cross to Calvary.

His execution was thought to be insignificant, but became the controversy of the ages. His life was extinguished in a brief second of time, but then ignited to lighten the world. His short span of thirty-three years on Earth should have passed unnoted were it possible, but no one life has ever had such impact on the minds of men.

His three and one-half years in the public's eye was brief indeed, but His achievements are the greatest ever recorded.

He has inspired more men, conquered more hearts, delivered more prisoners, consoled more mourners, than any figure in the history of man. He spoke of love, but was murdered with hate. He shared all that he had, and then on the Cross...He shared paradise with a thief. He gave the World light, only to be driven into the cavern of Death. He gave mankind guidance, only to be guided to Golgotha. He pointed men to the Tree of Life, and they nailed Him to a tree on a hill called the Skull. He laid down a scepter in heaven, to be laid in a borrowed tomb.

He walked out of heaven, pure, perfect, and beautiful. He returned beaten, mutilated, and nail scarred. He fulfilled all that was written of Him, and yet man did not believe Him. His coming changed the course of nations; His return will be to judge the nations. His title was simple as stated on the Cross, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews," but to those who have ever known Him, He is Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God.

source: First Impressions

## **Ten Commandments for Christmas**

1. Thou shalt prepare early. Don't wait until the last minute to get into the Christmas spirit.
2. Thou shalt keep Christ at the center of Christmas. Don't allow yourself to be overwhelmed by the commercialism of the season. Resolve to read one of the Gospels during December. Meditate upon what it means that Christ came into the world.
3. Thou shalt make Christmas a family time. Do things together: Decorate

the tree, play games, bake cookies, shop, write cards, have devotionals, go caroling, attend church together.

4. Thou shalt remember those who are less fortunate. Contribute significantly to an organization serving the needs of others throughout the year. Give a Christmas gift to your church.

5. Thou shalt give thyself with every gift. Put some thought into the gifts you purchase. Give a gift that represents you. If possible, make something instead of buying something.

6. Thou shalt learn to be a good receiver. Many of us have trouble receiving graciously and gracefully.

7. Thou shalt put music into Christmas. Buy several Christmas CD's and play them again and again. Attend church choir cantatas and special Christmas programs. Sing carols with loved ones.

8. Thou shalt slow down. Remember: Christmas is supposed to be a season of peace, not hypertension.

9. Thou shalt remember to worship. The church is the place you are most likely to be reminded of the true meaning of Christmas.

10. Thou shalt receive Christ into thy life. Don't just talk about the Christ of Christmas, receive him into your life as Lord and Savior.

source: First Impressions

"The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace." Numbers 6:24-26

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[Fr Constantin Alecse](#)  
[Biserica.org](#)