



Holy Ghost Orthodox Church

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SAINT PHILIP'S FAST—NATIVITY FAST--ADVENT

ON THE MEND: Please keep the following parishioners and others in your prayers for recovery from their illnesses and injuries: Metropolitan Constantine, Patriarch Pavle, Metropolitan Theodosius, Bishop Robert, Father Peter Natishan, Father Gerald Olszewski, Father Jakiw Norton, Father Dragan Filipović, Father Elias Katras, Father Stevo Rocknage, Father Paul Stoll, Father Igor Soroka, Father Michael Mihalick [MS], Father Joseph Kopchak, Father Charles Mezzomo, Father David Sedor, Father Anthony Dimitri, Ollie Pendlshok, Walt & Evelyn Burlack, Joshua Agosto and his family, Harley Katarina Rahuba, Mike and Hilda Holupka, Eva Malesnick, Helen Likar, Stella Peanoske, Joe Nezolyk, Nick Behun, Grace Holupka, Virginia Bryan, Joseph Sliwinsky, Maria Balo, Linda Mechtly, Mary Mochnick, Mildred Manolovich, Evelyn Misko, 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, Cameron [a boy in Matt's class], Faith—a 7-year-old girl with rheumatoid arthritis, Isabella Olivia Lindgren—a 3-year-old with a brain tumor, Dillon, Ethel Thomas, Donna, Nick Malec [Maxine's brother], Erin, Jim Markovich, Jeff Walewski [thyroid cancer], Carol [Lotinski] Rose, Michael Miller, Dave May, Grace & Owen Ostrasky, Alverta, Gary Zurasky, Michael Horvath, Patti Sinecki, David Genshi, Rita Very & family, Sue Segeleon, Mike Gallagher, Mildred Walters, Michael Miller, Jim Logue—throat cancer, Liz Stumpf, Ester Tylavsky, Ed Jamison, Theodore Nixon, Charles Johnson, Amy Forbeck, Michelle Corba Kapeluck, Gloria Prymak [Liz's niece], Robert Hippert & family, Margaret Vladimir, Luke Emmerling, John Sheliga, Sabrina, George & Mika Rocknage, Elizabeth Mitchell, Robert McKivitz, Cliff Dow, Marjorie Pershing, Amy Kemerer, Tom Marriott, Joe Farkas, Liz Obradovich, Liz, Halyna Zelinska [Bishop Daniel's mother], Mary Ann, Charlotte, Peter Natishan, Michael Spak, Andrew Mark Olynik, Deborah Finley, Claire Senita, Brandi Thomas, Eleanor Kelly, Bryan, Ben Bonifield—a classmate of Alex, and Daria Masur. ARNOLD:

Stefania Lucci, Steve Sakal, Homer Paul Kline, and Steve Ostaffy. We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.

2009 Church Calendars are available downstairs. Also, please see Debbie Paouncic if you would like to purchase the \$25 All Saints Calendar Raffle—before January 1, 2009!

Please remember David Weaver in Mosul, James John Logue, and George Senita assigned to Iraq, Matthew Machak, and 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 Sixth Grade and Matt’s Fourth Grade collections. THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR HELP! Love, ALEX AND MATT

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 28 **Divine Liturgy** **10:30 AM**
28TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FOREFATHERS, HIEROMARTYR ELEUTHERIUS-BISHOP OF ILLYRIA & HIS MOTHER ANTHIA & MARTYR CORIBUS-EPARCH, VENERABLE PAUL OF LATROS, SAINT STEPHEN THE CONFESSOR-ARCHBISHOP OF SUROZHA IN CRIMEA, MARTYR ELEUTHERIUS AT CONSTANTINOPLE, VENERABLE PARDUS-HERMIT OF PALESTINE, MARTYR BACCHUS THE NEW, MARTYR SUSANNA THE DEACONESS OF PALESTINE, VENERABLE TRYPHON-ABBOT OF PECHENGA [KOLSK] & HIS DISCIPLE JONAH

Tone 3

Colossians 3:4-11 [of the 29th Sunday]

Luke 14:16-24 [of the 29th Sunday]

Litany in Blessed Memory of Archimandrite Gregory [Woolfenden]—40 days—Fr. Bob

Sunday, January 4 **Divine Liturgy** **10:30 AM**
29TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY, SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FATHERS, GREAT-MARTYR ANASTASIA & HER TEACHER CHRYSOGONUS & WITH THEM MARTYRS THEODOTA, EVODIAS, EUTYCHIANUS, & OTHERS WHO SUFFERED UNDER DIOCLETIAN

Tone 4

Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23

Matthew 1:1-25

Litany in Blessed Memory of Steve Kuzman & Nicholas Vitosky—Fr. Bob

Tuesday, January 6

Nativity Eve
Grand Compline and Holy Supper

6:30 PM

Wednesday, January 7

Divine Liturgy
Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
Galatians 4:4-7
Matthew 2:1-12

10:30 AM

Sunday, January 11

Divine Liturgy
30TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY, COMMEMORATION OF THE RIGHTEOUS ONES: JOSEPH THE BETROTHED, DAVID THE KING, JAMES THE BROTHER OF THE LORD, 14,000 INFANTS [THE HOLY INNOCENTS] SLAIN BY HEROD AT BETHLEHEM, VENERABLE MARCELLUS-ABBOT OF THE MONASTERY OF THE UNSLEEPING ONES, VENERABLE THADDEUS-CONFESSOR OF STUDIO, VENERABLE MARK THE GRAVE-DIGGER, THEOPHILUS, & JOHN OF PERCHEVSKY LAVRA, VENERABLE BENJAMIN-MONK OF NITRIA IN EGYPT, VENERABLE ATHEADORUS-DISCIPLE OF VENERABLE PACHOMIUS THE GREAT, SAINT GEORGE-BISHOP OF NICOMEDIA

10:30 AM

Tone 5
Galatians 1:11-19
Matthew 2:13-23

Parastas in Blessed Memory of Steve Kuzman—Debbie & John Pauncic

BULLETIN INSERT FOR 28 DECEMBER 2008

28TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FOREFATHERS, HIEROMARTYR ELEUTHERIUS-BISHOP OF ILLYRIA & HIS MOTHER ANTHIA & MARTYR CORIBUS-EPARCH, VENERABLE PAUL OF LATROS, SAINT STEPHEN THE CONFESSOR-ARCHBISHOP OF SUROZHA IN CRIMEA, MARTYR ELEUTHERIUS AT CONSTANTINOPLE, VENERABLE PARDUS-HERMIT OF PALESTINE, MARTYR BACCHUS THE NEW, MARTYR SUSANNA THE DEACONESS OF PALESTINE, VENERABLE TRYPHON-ABBOT OF PECHENGA [KOLSK] & HIS DISCIPLE JONAH

TROPARION—TONE 3

Let the Heavens rejoice! Let the earth be glad!
For the Lord has shown strength with His arm!
He has trampled down death by death!
He has delivered us from the depths of hell,
And has granted 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 3

On this day Thou didst rise from the tomb, O Merciful One!
Leading us from the gates of death.
On this day Adam exults as Eve rejoices;

With the prophets and patriarchs
They unceasingly praise the divine majesty of Thy power!

PROKEIMENON—TONE 3

READER: Sing praises to our God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King,
sing praises!

PEOPLE: **Sing praises to our God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King,
sing praises!**

READER: Clap your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with loud songs of joy!

PEOPLE: **Sing praises to our God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King,
sing praises!**

READER: Sing praises to our God, sing praises!

PEOPLE: **Sing praises to our King, sing praises!**

ALLELUIA VERSES—TONE 3

In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped; let me never be put to shame!

Be Thou a God of protection for me, a house of refuge, in order to save me!

ORTHODOX?

Mitsos lived above his restaurant with only his beloved pet dog called Vagos for company.

One day Vagos the dog died and Mitsos went to his local priest and asked, "Father, my dog Vagos died. Could you do a Trisagion for the poor animal, he was like a son to me?"

Father Nikos shook his head, "I'm afraid not; we cannot have services for an animal in the church. But, there's an English church on the next block. God knows what they believe in. Maybe they'll do something for your dog"

Mitsos said, "I'll go right away Father. Do you think \$5,000 is enough to donate to them for the service?"

Father Niko exclaimed, "Kyrie Eleison! Vre Mitso, why didn't you tell me the dog was Greek Orthodox?"

A paraphrase of 1st Corinthians 13
e-mail via Rebecca Danchenko

If I decorate my house perfectly with plaid bows, strands of twinkling lights and shiny balls, but do not show love to my family, I'm just another decorator.

If I slave away in the kitchen, baking dozens of Christmas cookies, preparing gourmet meals and arranging a beautifully adorned table at mealtime, but do not show love to my family, I'm just another cook.

If I work at the soup kitchen, sing carols in the nursing home and give all that I have to charity, but do not show love to my family it profits me nothing.

If I trim the spruce with shimmering angels and crocheted snowflakes, attend a myriad of holiday parties and sing in the choir's cantata but do not focus on Christ, I have missed the point.

Love stops the cooking to hug the child.

Love sets aside the decorating to kiss the spouse.

Love is kind, though harried and tired.

Love doesn't envy another's home that has coordinated Christmas china and table linens.

Love doesn't yell at the kids to get out of the way.

Love doesn't give only to those who are able to give in return but rejoices in giving to those who can't.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things.

Love never fails! Video games will break, pearl necklaces will be lost, golf clubs will rust.

But giving the gift of Love will endure.

Indeed, that is what Christmas is all about- the gift of love.

a word from the desert

While still living in the hut, at the age of eighteen, robbers came to (St. Hilarion) by night, either supposing that he had something which they might carry off, or considering that they would be brought into contempt if a solitary boy felt no dread of their attacks. They searched up and down between the sea and the marsh from evening until daybreak without being able to find his resting place. Then, having discovered the boy by the light of day they asked him, half in jest, "What would you do if robbers came to you?" He replied, "He that has nothing does not fear robbers." Said they, "At all events, you might be killed." "I might," said he, "I might; and therefore I do not fear robbers because I am prepared to die." Then they marveled at his firmness and faith, confessed how they had wandered about in the night, and how their eyes had been blinded, and promised to lead a stricter life in the future.

Another story (of St. Hilarion's later years) relates to Italicus, a citizen of the same town (Gaza). He was a Christian and kept horses for the circus to contend against those of the Duumvir of Gaza who was a votary of the idol god Mamas. This custom at least in Roman cities was as old as the days of Romulus, and was instituted in

commemoration of the successful seizure of the Sabine women. The chariots raced seven times round the circus in honour of Consus in his character of the God of Counsel. Victory lay with the team which tired out the horses opposed to them. Now the rival of Italicus had in his pay a magician to incite his horses by certain demoniacal incantations, and keep back those of his opponent. Italicus therefore came to the blessed Hilarion and besought his aid not so much for the injury of his adversary as for protection for himself. It seemed absurd for the venerable old man to waste prayers on trifles of this sort. He therefore smiled and said, "Why do you not rather give the price of the horses to the poor for the salvation of your soul?" His visitor replied that his office was a public duty, and that he acted not so much from choice as from compulsion, that no Christian man could employ magic, but would rather seek aid from a servant of Christ, especially against the people of Gaza who were enemies of God, and who would exult over the Church of Christ more than over him. At the request therefore of the brethren who were present he ordered an earthenware cup out of which he was wont to drink to be filled with water and given to Italicus. The latter took it and sprinkled it over his stable and horses, his charioteers and his chariot, and the barriers of the course. The crowd was in a marvelous state of excitement, for the enemy in derision had published the news of what was going to be done, and the backers of Italicus were in high spirits at the victory which they promised themselves. The signal is given; the one team flies towards the goal, the other sticks fast: the wheels are glowing hot beneath the chariot of the one, while the other scarce catches a glimpse of their opponents' backs as they flit past. The shouts of the crowd swell to a roar, and the heathens themselves with one voice declare Marnas is conquered by Christ. After this the opponents in their rage demanded that Hilarion as a Christian magician should be dragged to execution. This decisive victory and several others which followed in successive games of the circus caused many to turn to the faith.

from Jerome, Life of Hilarion 12, 20—St. Hilarion, commemorated 21 October

A talk with Jesus

Many times, when I am troubled or confused, I find comfort in sitting in my back yard and having a scotch and soda along with a quiet conversation with Jesus. This happened to me again after a particularly difficult day.

I said "Jesus, why do I work so hard?"

And I heard the reply: "Men find many ways to demonstrate the love they have for their family. You work hard to have a peaceful, beautiful place for your friends and family to gather."

I said: "I thought that money was the root of all evil."

And the reply was: "No, the LOVE of money is the root of all evil. Money is a tool; it can be used for good or bad."

I was starting to feel better, but I still had that one burning question, so I asked it. "Jesus," I said, "What is the meaning of life? Why am I here?"

He replied, "That is a question many men ask. The answer is in your heart and is different for everyone. I would love to chat with you some more, **Senor**, but now I must finish your lawn."

SEEING JESUS By John William Smith

In 1962 I was preaching in Indianapolis, Indiana. I was single, and it was Christmas time.

I was headed home to Michigan to enjoy the holidays with my family. It was an extremely cold day, and it was snowing.

The wind was howling out of the North, blowing thick clouds of fine flakes across the road - it looked like a blizzard. The roads were icy in places, and there was little traffic. Somewhere near Ft. Wayne, Indiana, I saw a soldier standing under an overpass. He had a green army cap pulled as tight and low as possible over his head, his collar was pulled up around his ears, his hands were shoved down in his pockets, and he had a stuffed duffel bag standing beside him.

I was driving a Chevrolet Corvette, and I was going very fast - faster than I should have been, considering the road conditions. As I sped by, the soldier jerked one hand out of his pocket and raised his thumb. My Corvette had two seats - not a front and back seat, but two seats side by side - and I was in one of them. The trunk was big enough to hold three loaves of bread and a pound of lunch meat. Not only was my limited trunk space stuffed full with the clothes and boots I would need for my stay in Michigan, the front seat was stacked high as well, with the presents that I had purchased for my folks and my nieces and nephews.

When I saw the soldier, I was going much too fast to stop, and I was well down the highway before I gave it much thought. I told myself that I couldn't possibly get him and his duffel bag in the car - I debated about the terrible

inconvenience and delay it would cause if I did, and by the time I decided that perhaps I ought to at least offer to help, I was two miles down the road and out of sight. But my Christian Conscience really went to work on me.

It was so cold, traffic was almost nonexistent - he was a soldier - and it was Christmas. The inner battle raged for another three miles. Finally, I decided I would never get any peace unless I offered to help, so I made a U-turn and went back. I hoped with all my heart that someone else had picked him up.

That way, I could satisfy my conscience and not be inconvenienced - wouldn't that be great? But he was still there, looking more forlorn, lonely, and cold than ever. I was disgusted. I pulled up and rolled down the window. He came running, stumbling on his numb feet, dragging the duffel bag. He leaned over and stuck his head in the window. His face was bluish, his teeth were chattering, his eyebrows and eyelashes were matted with frozen snow, and he could scarcely speak intelligibly.

"Thanks so much for stopping", he said. "I had about given up hope." That was not what I wanted to hear.

"Where are you going?" I asked, hoping that it was in some direction that would alleviate me from further responsibility. "I live in Michigan, in Taylor Township," he said hopefully. That was really discouraging. It wasn't directly on my way, but it wasn't too much out of my way either.

"I'm going to Royal Oak," I said reluctantly. "Oh, " he said, "I know where that is. That's great! If I could just ride with you to Ann Arbor, it would mean a lot to me. I'm almost frozen; I can't feel my ears or feet any more," he said plaintively.

"I don't think I can possibly get both you and your things in," I said.

"If you'll let me, I'll get in-I promise you. I've been standing here for three hours."

I told him to try getting in, and we began rearranging things. The duffel bag was almost as big as he was, and there was only one place for it - the passenger seat. No matter how he put it in the car, he couldn't get in himself. I suggested that maybe he could hide it somewhere and come back for it later. He said he couldn't possibly do that; it had his kids' Christmas presents in it, and he wasn't going anywhere without it. I finally got out, walked around the car, and told him to sit down in the passenger seat. As he sat there, I wedged the duffel bag between his legs and between the floor and the roof of the car, I

sandwiched all of my presents around him - and I slammed the door. He couldn't move, he couldn't see out either the windshield or his side window - but he was in. I still don't know how we did it.

Once he began to get warm, he began to talk. I found out he was stationed at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri "Didn't I see you go by about five minutes ago?" he asked. I really felt stupid.

"Ummm, yes," I said. "You mean you turned around and came back?!" I nodded an affirmative.

"Why would you do that?" I paused a long moment.

"Well, you see, I was raised in a home where helping people who were in need was very important. In addition, I'm a minister-actually, it's more than that-I'm a Christian, and if it weren't for that, I'd probably still be going. I have as hard a time doing the right thing as most folks. I fought with this decision for five miles-it's Jesus who makes me do things like turn around and come back. When I don't do the right thing, I have this feeling He's looking at me, and He's so disappointed that I can't stand it.

"Oh!" he said. "you don't know how that convicts me. I'm going to tell you something I never thought I'd tell anybody. I'm no Christian, but my wife is the best person in the whole world, and she goes to church all the time and takes the kids. Truthfully, I've done everything I could to discourage her, but she just keeps going. She's all the time trying to get me to go, telling me that someday I'm going to wish I had.

"Do you know why I'm here hitchhiking? Let me tell you a little story. I was turned down for holiday leave because I got drunk and caused some trouble at the base. I was sick about it. I haven't seen my wife and kids for six months. A friend of mine, who's single, found out at the last minute that his folks were coming to visit some relatives who live close to the base during the holidays. He went to our commanding officer and volunteered to take my duty, if he would let me go home.

He gave me permission, but I had spent all my money buying presents, which I was going to mail home, so I decided to start hitchhiking. My family doesn't even know I'm coming. I wasn't sure I'd make it, and I didn't want to disappoint them. I've been standing there for three hours, thinking. I watched folks drive by, and it occurred to me that some of them must be Christians, and it made me feel pretty bitter - until I got to thinking about what a lousy person I am, and I knew if I was them, that I probably wouldn't stop either.

"Let me tell you something embarrassing - I got so cold, so lonely, and so desperate that I started to pray-honest to God I did-it was so humiliating. I told God that if he would help me, I'd do better. And you know what? About that time you showed up, and you told me that you came back because of Jesus-now what do you make of that?"

"Well, first I'd say that maybe there's more to Christianity than either of us thought, and second, I'd say you'd better start doing better." I found out exactly where he lived, and we agreed that I could get him pretty close before I had to go in another direction. I think I knew what I was going to do long before I actually said anything. As we approached the intersection where I was going to let him out, I told him that I had made up my mind to take him home.

About two hours later, we pulled up in his driveway. It was almost dark.

He was really excited. He asked me to blow my horn, and I did. A few minutes passed, and the inside door opened slowly. The glass in the outside door was frosted over, and whoever was looking out could only tell that there was a car in the driveway. The outside door opened, and a five-or six-year old, barefooted boy peeked around the door. When he saw my sports car, he came out on the porch and peered intently at us. His dad opened the door and stepped out.

"Hi, David, it's Daddy; I'm home for Christmas!" He started to say more, but the boy had seen the uniform and heard the voice.

The boy's face lit up, and he turned back into the house. I could hear him distinctly - "Mama, Daddy's home," he yelled shrilly. "Daddy's Home! Mama! Mama! Daddy's home for Christmas!"

The door opened again, and it didn't open slowly this time - it was thrown open. A woman dressed in a bathrobe and house slippers came running down the steps, her hair flying in the wind, oblivious to the snow and the cold, eyes and mouth opened wide with excitement, with joy etched in every line of her face. "Oh, Carl," she said, "Oh, Carl, you're home. Praise God, you're home. The kids and I have been praying every day that, somehow, God would send you home."

She was followed by a skinny, fair-haired, ten-year-old girl and finally by a towheaded, blanket-toting, two - or three-year-old girl. They kissed and hugged and laughed and cried, and they danced in the cold and the snow

until the soldier finally disentangled himself from them long enough to introduce me.

"This is John," he said. "He's a minister and he's also a Christian; and if it wasn't for him, I wouldn't be here. And I'm going to tell you something honey, right here and now. I told John that I had promised God that I was going to do better, and I am. I'm going to stop drinking, be a better husband, a better father-a better man-and we're going to start going to church together."

I have never witnessed such gratitude in my life. They all had to hug me and kiss me-even the two-year-old-and they told me what a blessing I was to them and that they owed me a debt they could never pay. I was so embarrassed, because I was so unworthy. I had grudged the whole thing until after we had started talking. I wanted to tell them that I didn't deserve any thanks.

I tried to leave, but they simply wouldn't allow it. I had to go in the house. I had to eat something and drink something; I had to accept a gift from them-yes, I had to. They would not allow me not to, and the more they did, the better and the worse I felt.

I was so embarrassed. You know why? I had just witnessed something private-a family thing-something I wasn't part of-something not meant for outsiders-and, yes, I was-I was embarrassed. And you know what else?

I envied Carl. I thought that it must be wonderful beyond description to be loved by a woman like that and missed like that and to be so unworthy - and I think Carl was just beginning to understand what he had. I have learned since then that only those who have come to know and feel the love of God can love the unworthy - and I have also learned that we are all unworthy.

Carl was home. I think that at that moment, home meant more to him, perhaps, than it would ever mean again. And when I got to my home and saw my folks and told them why I was late, they were so proud of me - and I was a little proud of myself. Home was somehow brighter, warmer, more dear to me than it had ever been before. Every human longing - bound up in the inherent yearning to be loved and to be "home" and to experience the peace and security that "home" signifies - has found its fulfillment in Jesus who said, "I go to prepare a place for you." Everything we ever dreamed of home being-what it was or was not-is in that place. Jesus has given purpose, even to the dream of death, because for those who know God-that is the way home.

"How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given.
So God imparts to human hearts, the blessings of His heaven.

No ear may hear His coming, but in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him still, the dear Christ enters in."

Jesus comes to us in many ways. He came to me in the form of a freezing soldier trying to get home for Christmas. He came to a freezing soldier in the form of a young minister trying to find his way to God. Either one of us could have missed Him.

Jesus will come to you this Christmas too, and His coming will be in an unexpected way - don't miss Him.

a word from the desert

If you are an ardent reader, seek not brilliant and erudite texts; otherwise the demon of haughtiness will strike your heart. But like a wise bee that gathers honey from flowers, so also through your reading obtain healing for your soul.

St. Ephraim the Syrian