



Holy Ghost Orthodox Church

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ADVENT/PHILIPKIVA/SAINT PHILIP'S FAST

ON THE MEND: Please keep the following parishioners and others in your prayers for recovery from their illnesses and injuries: Metropolitan Constantine, Bishop Robert, Father Gerald Olszewski, Father Jakiw Norton, Father Dragan Filipović, Father Stevo Rocknage, Father Paul Stoll, Father Igor Soroka, Father Michael Mihalick [MS], Father Joseph Kopchak, Father Anthony Dimitri, Father Cuthbert Jack, Father Elias Warnke, Archimandrite Lev, Father Nestor Kowal, Father Paul Bigelow, Father Emilian Balan, Father Silouan Rolando, Hieromonk Vasyl (Janick), Joshua Agosto and his family, Mike Holupka, Eva Malesnick, 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, Mary Alice Babcock, Dorie Kunkle, Andrea, & Melissa [Betty O'Masta's relatives], Mary Evelyn King, Stella Cherepko, Sam Wadrose, Isabella Olivia Lindgren—a 4-year-old with a brain tumor, Ethel Thomas, Donna, Erin, Michael Miller, Dave May, Grace & Owen Ostrasky, Alverta, Michael Horvath, Patti Sinecki, David Genshi, Sue Segeleon, Mike Gallagher, Michael Miller, Liz Stumpf, Theodore Nixon, Michelle Corba Kapeluck, Gloria Prymak [Liz's niece], Robert Hippert & family, Margaret Vladimir, Luke Emmerling, John Sheliga, George & Mika Rocknage, Robert McKivitz, Liz Obradovich, Liz, Halyna Zelinska [Bishop Daniel's mother], Charlotte, Peter Natishan, Andrew Mark Olynyk, Deborah Finley, Claire Senita, Brandi Thomas, Eleanor Kelly, Bryan, Doris Artman, Nancy Barylak, Khrystyna Chorniy, Anthony Cormier [4-year-old with cancer], Nathan Forbeck, Sarah Doyle, Samuel Peters, Jean Stutchell, Charles & Esther Holupka, Wanda Mefford, Lynn (Bush) Gill, David Vallor, Henry Faraly, Betty O'Masta, Julie Eiler, Glenn Miller, Vince Ferro, Michael Pawlyshyn, Dorothy Lednovich, Kristin Batch Vaughn, Bob C., Allie—young girl with leukemia, Heather Kramer, Jane Wartinbee, Matthew—21-year-old with cancer, Nicholas Orlando, Mary Ann Kuzniak, Michael Woloschak, Michael Pryhodzenko, Sonia Luciw, Nellie Patsko, Theresa Ditto, Mary Ann Musial, Mary Pelino, Yvonne Christy, Myron & Barbara Spak, Pete Niederberger, Julia

Duda, Lisa Pandle, Kris & Julie Hanczar, John Kennedy, Lloyd Sheakley [Pani Gina's uncle], Diane McDaniel, Loretta, Nancy, Carol, & Michael Sheliga, Gaelle Kelly Irma McDivitt, Robin Young, Mckayla, Rachel, Tony Butecoff, Carl & Margaret Reed, Theodore Demopoulos, Jillian Bowman [10-year old with cancer], Lydia Wilson, Robert Pointon, Walter Cecelia, John Persico, Karen & Peter Special, Adam Wilson, Jeff Miller, Mary Kernick, Glenn Miller, Jean Marie, Evan Elliott, and Daria Masur. ARNOLD: Stefania Lucci, Steve Sakal, and Homer Paul Kline. We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.

Let us not grieve when we make a slip, but when we become hardened by it. *St. Isaac the Syrian*

Just as it is impossible to be at the same moment both a plant and a seed, so it is impossible for us to be surrounded by worldly honor and at the same time to bear heavenly fruit. *Mother Syncretica*

One of the elders said to the brethren at Kellia, "Nothing is greater than God; nothing is equal to Him; nothing is only a little inferior to Him. What then is stronger or more blessed than someone who has the help of God?"

And again: "Let us gather together the cures of the soul: piety, righteousness, humility, submission. The greatest physician of souls, Christ our God, is near to us and is willing to heal us: let us not underestimate Him." *John Moschus, Leimonarion (The Spiritual Meadow) 144 7th century*

Please remember James John Logue, George Senita, John Kirkowski, Matthew Machak, Michael Repasky, and ALL American service men and women in your prayers. May God watch over them and all American service men 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 Debbie Paouncic’s class. THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR HELP!

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 11 **Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom** **10:30 AM**
TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; MARTYR STEPHEN THE NEW OF SAINT AUXENTIUS; MARTYR HIRENARCHUS & 7 WOMEN-MARTYRS AT SEBASTE; MARTYRS BASIL, STEPHEN, 2 GREGORIES, JOHN, AND MANY OTHERS [NEAR CONSTANTINOPLE]

Tone 1

Ephesians 5:9-19

Luke 13:10-17

Parastas in Blessed Memory of Caroline Holupka—Mike

Sunday, December 18 **Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom** **10:30 AM**
TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; SAINT SABBAS THE SANCTIFIED; MARTYR ANASTASIAS; SAINT KARION & HIS SON SAINT ZACHARIAH OF EGYPT

Tone 2

Ephesians 6:10-17

Luke 17:12-19

Sunday, December 25 **NO SERVICE IN SLICKVILLE**
TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FOREFATHERS; SAINT SPYRIDON THE WONDERWORKER OF TREMITHON; HIEROMARTYR ALEXANDER-BISHOP OF JERUSALEM; MARTYR SYNESIUS OF ROME

Tone 3

Colossians 3:4-11

Luke 14:16-24

BULLETIN INSERT FOR 11 DECEMBER 2011

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TROPARION—TONE 1

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews;
While the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure Body;
Thou didst rise on the third day, O Savior,
Granting life to the world.
The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O Giver of life:
Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ!
Glory to Thy Kingdom!
Glory to Thy Dispensation, O Thou who lovest mankind.

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

KONTAKION—TONE 1

As God, Thou didst rise from the tomb in glory, raising the world with Thyself.

Human nature praises Thee as God, for death has vanished!

Adam exults, O Master!

Eve rejoices, for she is freed from bondage and cries to Thee:

Thou are the Giver of Resurrection to all, O Christ!

PROKEIMENON—TONE 1

READER: Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set our hope on Thee.

PEOPLE: Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set our hope on Thee.

READER: Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! Praise befits the just!

PEOPLE: Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set our hope on Thee.

READER: Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us.

PEOPLE: As we have set our hope on Thee.

ALLELUIA VERSES

God gives vengeance to me, and subdues people under me.

He magnifies the salvation of the king, and deals mercifully with His Christ, with David and his seed forever!

UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE USA
CONSISTORY OFFICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS
PRESS RELEASE

105 Years of Ministry—a Testament to the Generosity and Hard Work!

McKees Rocks, PA – Calling historic St. Mary (Dormition of the Mother of God) Ukrainian Orthodox Church "a testament to the generosity and hard work of Pittsburgh's Ukrainian immigrant community," His Beatitude Metropolitan Constantine, Prime Hierarch of the UOC of the USA and His Grace Bishop Daniel, Ruling Hierarch of the Western Eparchy of the Church visited the parish community and led the prayerful festivities, celebrating the parish's 105th anniversary last Saturday, November 27, 2011—the feast day of St. John Chrysostom.

Both hierarchs spoke of the parish's founding years and of its more recent history, reflecting upon the century old ministry to the local community. "This is my home, my heart. These are my people and I love every single person in this church," said one of the elderly parishioners of the community. "This is the same with everyone. We are one big family. We are one. It is amazing." She said several parishioners who have moved out of town returned for the special Divine Liturgy and celebration: "McKees Rocks is still their home..."

Following the Liturgy, the parish continued the celebration with a community luncheon. Reflecting upon the words of the hierarchs, another parishioner noticed that when the congregation worships as one, there is a truer sense of its identity. "We're a part of the town, but also a viable part that has something to offer in terms of our culture," the lifelong parishioner said. The Very Rev. Timothy Tomson, pastor of the parish family, said his "hopping little parish," as he likes to call it, is full of life and welcoming to outsiders. The local clergy of the Ukrainian Orthodox parishes in Pittsburgh Metropolitan area: Very Rev. Fr. Stephen Repa, Very Rev. Fr. Roman Yatskiw, Rev. Fr. Paisius McGrath, Rev. Fr. Mark Swindel, Deacon Dennis Lapushansky and a local pastor of Carpatho-Rusyn Orthodox parish joined the hierarchs in honoring the ministry of St. Mary's parish family.

One of the younger ladies of St. Mary's, the youngest of several children in their family, recalled that the church was a fundamental part of her family's life when she was growing up. Her parents, she said, were strict and required that she and her brothers and sisters attend Divine Liturgy on Sundays. "If you didn't go to church, you couldn't go out," she said. "Singing in the church choir was a way to pray in Church as well as to get out of the house and spend time in fellowship of her fellow parishioners."

Other members of the parish family shared their life stories, as they remember going door to door to raise money for the "new" church. "Some people donated for the iconography and stained-glass windows. Some people donated for the pews," she said. "The parish is like an extended family, parishioners always ready to help in times of need...It's about family and a place to call home," she said when asked about the weekend's celebration. "It feels it has always been a part of my life."

On Sunday, November 27, 2011, Bishop Daniel officiated at the Divine Liturgy assisted by Fr. Timothy Tomson. Numerous children and adults partook of the Most Holy Eucharist. The bishop preached in spirit of the feast which the parish celebrates during these November days. He stressed

the importance of living the Gospel of the Lord, through our daily efforts of kindness and fellowship with the creation of the Lord. With special petitions chanted during the Liturgy, the bishop prayed that our Heavenly Father bless His inheritance, that is our children, youth and the generations to come.

At the end of the service, Metropolitan Constantine once again thanked the parish choir who sang during the service as well as the celebrating clergy and faithful in attendance for their dedication to the ministry of the parish as well as the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA. Fr. Timothy Tomson thanked the parishioners, guests and visitors to the parish for their presence and expressed his hope that this celebration of 105 years of ministry will give birth to a more dedicated and fruitful ministry for the years to come. He invited all to stay for the luncheon prepared by the parishioners of the parish family. Though the hall was filled with parishioners and guests, everyone was served and had a beautiful time.

M'Nohaya Lita—Many Years to the parish family, as they continue to celebrate their 105th anniversary!

Blessed Are Those Who Are Persecuted... A Page of Christian Witness

The Following is an excerpt from the address of Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap. at Assumption College. Though an address to a Roman Catholic College, it is very relevant to us American Orthodox Christians.

CATHOLICS AND THE NEXT AMERICA

Assumption College

November 10, 2011

My theme tonight focuses on Catholics and the American future. But sometimes the best way to look at the future is through the lens of the past.

One of the most sacred symbols of the Roman state was an altar to the goddess Victory. It stood in the Roman Senate for nearly 400 years. In A.D. 382, a Christian emperor removed the altar as idolatrous. Two years later, after his death, the pagan prefect of Rome – Quintus Aurelius Symmachus – wrote one of the most interesting letters of Late Antiquity.(1) Addressing the new Christian emperor, Symmachus asked that the Altar of Victory be restored. In effect, in arguing for the altar, he argued the case for an entire way of life. He described the altar's removal as unwise and

unjust. He praised past emperors for their tolerance in maintaining the old religion and funding pagan ceremonies. He said that Rome's pagan worship had protected the city and subdued the world, and therefore deserved to be treated with the reverence due to posterity. He stressed that the altar ensured a sacred guarantee for Rome's civil authority. And in a strikingly modern passage he said:

"We ask then for peace for the gods of our fathers and of our country. It is just that all worship should be considered as one. We look on the same stars; the sky is common; the same world surrounds us. What difference does it make by what pains each seeks the truth? We cannot attain so great a secret by one road . . . [so therefore] we offer now prayers, not conflict."

It is impossible to read Symmachus today without feeling a kind of compassion for his cause. But his words did no good. Christians already outnumbered pagans in Rome itself. St. Ambrose of Milan, one of the great Latin Fathers of the Church, wrote a crushing response to Symmachus that ended the discussion. The Altar of Victory never returned to the Senate. Paganism slowly died away. Symmachus argued well. But he argued from weakness – the weakness of nostalgia for old ways that were already dying; the weakness of religious rites that no longer had any power; the weakness of pleading to be heard rather than demanding and winning a place in the human heart through the zeal of religious action and the force of religious witness. Nobody listened to Symmachus because nobody cares about embers. But everyone pays attention to a fire -- especially when it burns in the hearts of other men and women. And that brings us back to the point of our discussion tonight.

Jesus said, "I came to cast fire upon the earth, and would that it were already kindled!" (Lk 12:49). For much of our nation's history, those words were known to most Americans and actually meant something in the way people organized their lives. The United States was never a Christian nation. But it didn't need to be. Its public life and civic institutions were deeply informed by biblical thought, language and morality. More importantly, most Americans were Christians; most took their faith seriously; and many tried to live it, to a degree that astonished Alexis de Tocqueville in his account of their Sunday worship.

But that was then. This is now. And it leads us to the lesson in the story of Symmachus: Christians once felt peculiarly at home in America, a land first settled by Christians and predominantly built by them over the course of three centuries. But in recent years, God, like the Altar of Victory, has been less and less welcome at the center of our common life. As a result, Christians may soon find themselves in the same place Symmachus once

did – arguing from the margins. The America emerging in the next several decades is likely to be much less friendly to Christian faith than anything in our country's past.

And that poses a challenge for all of us as Catholics. It's not a question of when or if it might happen. It's happening today. Now those are strong words. They can easily sound implausible because the roots of the American experience are so deeply Protestant. What people believe – or don't believe – about God, helps to shape what they believe about men and women.

And what they believe about men and women creates the framework for a nation's public life. Traditionally, a broad Christian faith has provided the basis for Americans' moral consensus. That moral consensus has informed American social policy and law.

It's true that God was left out of the U.S. Constitution – but not because he was unwelcome. In effect, God suffused the whole constitutional enterprise. Nearly all the Founders were religious believers, most were Christians, and some were quite devout. Their work was heavily influenced not just by the Enlightenment, but also by the legacy of Jewish and Christian Scripture. This is why the religion-friendly nature of the American founding was so obvious to the German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer. It was equally clear to the French philosopher, Jacques Maritain, who drew on the American experience when co-drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In practice, John Adams and his founding colleagues were men who, as Daniel Boorstin once suggested, had minds that were a "miscellany and a museum;" men who could blend the old and the new, Christian faith and Enlightenment ideas, without destroying either. The Founders saw religious faith as something separate from government but vital to the nation's survival. In his Farewell Address, Washington stressed that "religion and morality are indispensable supports" for political prosperity. He added that "reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle." For John Jay, James Wilson, Alexander Hamilton, Charles Carroll, John Adams, George Washington and most of the other Founders – including Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin -- religion created virtuous citizens.

And only virtuous citizens could sustain a country as carefully balanced in its institutions, moral instincts and laws as the United States. The American experiment – a nonsectarian, democratic society, sustained by a strong, implicitly Christian worldview and moral vocabulary – worked well for nearly 200 years. Despite its Protestant pedigree and the prejudice that went along with it, America had the flexibility to make room for Catholics; and Catholics could and did thrive here. In fact, next to America's broad collection of evangelical churches, baptized Catholics now make up the

biggest religious community in the United States. They serve in large numbers in Congress. They have a majority on the Supreme Court. They play commanding roles in the professions and in business leadership. All of this sounds impressive. The problem is, today it has less and less meaning. Roughly 80 percent of Americans still self-identify as Christians. By European standards, American religious practice remains high. But America's religious terrain is steadily changing. A quarter of Americans aged 18-29 now have no affiliation with any particular religion. According to Barna Group and other research studies, they also show "a greater degree of criticism toward Christianity than did previous generations when they were at the same stage of life. In fact, in just a decade . . . the Christian image [has] shifted substantially downward, fueled in part by a growing sense of disengagement and disillusionment among young people." These young persons will begin inheriting national leadership in the next decade. Yet, as Christian Smith and his colleagues have shown, many of these emerging adults are unable to engage in a discussion about real moral dilemmas; many lack any knowledge of religious principles to apply in making tough moral decisions; and most have had a deeply inadequate moral formation. Catholic losses have been masked by Latino immigration. But while 31 percent of Americans say they were raised in the Catholic faith, fewer than 24 percent of Americans now describe themselves as Catholic. This disappearance of a Christian critical mass in American life has already had results. To name the most obvious example:

Sexual minorities now routinely use the state's power and friendly mass media to break down traditional definitions of marriage and the family. And they often encounter tepid or disorganized resistance, reported by the media in lopsidedly negative ways. In the years ahead, we're going to see more and more of this trend, along with attempts by civil authority to interfere in the life of believing communities in the name of individual rights.

We'll also see less and less unchallenged space for religious institutions to carry out their work in the public square. It's already happening with state pressure on Catholic hospitals and adoption agencies, in lawsuits attacking the scope of religious liberty, federal restrictions on conscience protections, attacks on charitable tax deductions and religious tax-exempt status, and interference in the hiring practices of organizations like Catholic Charities. It's no accident that America's bishops established a special committee on religious liberty earlier this year.

Freedom of belief and religious practice used to be a concern that Americans had about other countries. Now it's a concern in ours. The question is: How did we get from the America of Tocqueville, where on Sundays "the commercial and industrial life of the nation seems suspended

[in piety, and] all noise ceases," to the America where -- borrowing the words of Pascal Bruckner -- we're the "galley slaves of pleasure;" an America of obsessive consumption and confused sexuality where "the intention was to produce freedom, but the result was advertising; [where] what was liberated was less our libido than our appetite for unlimited shopping"? By the way, Bruckner is not some overheated Bible-Belt preacher. He's a thoroughly secular French skeptic who writes what he sees. I think the truth is that America's problems grew up along with its virtues. In a sense, they come from the same seed.

Reformation theology and Enlightenment thought elevate the importance of the individual. But they can also feed a destructive individualism and a hostility to any religious authority outside the sovereignty of personal conscience. And here's the result: Without the restraints of a common moral consensus animated and defended by a living religious community, the freedom of the individual easily becomes a license for selfishness. The meaning of right and wrong becomes privatized. And ultimately, society ends up as a collection of disconnected individuals whose appetites and needs are regulated by the only project they share in common: the state. Tocqueville saw public opinion as a great vulnerability for democracy. In a democracy -- at least in theory -- every man is his own final moral authority. But the reality is different. Men and women very soon discover how isolated and uninformed they are as individuals. In the absence of a strong religious or similar community, they tend to abdicate their thinking to public opinion, which is the closest that purely secular democracies ever come to a consensus. To the degree that public opinion can be manipulated, democratic life is subverted.

This is why the Founders saw religion as so important to the health of the public square: . At its best, faith creates a stable moral framework for political discourse and morally educated citizens to conduct the nation's work. The trouble is, no religion can survive on its utility. People don't conform their lives to a message because it's useful. They do it because they believe the message is true and therefore life-giving. Or they don't do it.

My point is this: The "next America" we now see emerging -- an America ignorant or cynical toward religion in general and Christianity in particular -- shouldn't really surprise anyone. It's a new America, but it's made in America. We can blame the mass media, or the academy, or science, or special interest groups for the environment we now face. But we Christians -- including we Catholics -- helped create it with our eagerness to fit in, our distractions and overconfidence, and our own lukewarm faith. Too many people who claim to be Christian simply don't know Jesus Christ. They don't really believe in the Gospels. They feel embarrassed by their religion

and vaguely out of step with the times. They may keep their religion for comfort value. Or they may adjust it to fit their doubts. But it doesn't reshape their lives because it isn't real. And because it isn't real, it has no transforming effect on their personal behavior, no social force and few public consequences. That sort of faith is exactly the same kind of religion that Symmachus once mourned. Whatever it once was – now, it's dead. In his lifetime, the Jesuit scholar John Courtney Murray would have argued that Catholics can provide to America the moral force and intellectual depth that mainline Protestantism has lost. I believe he was right. I greatly admire his work. Murray was never blind to the flaws of our political system or the split personality of its founding. But I believe his hope in the possibilities of the American experiment was justified.

We make the future, not the other way around. Nothing in this world is inevitable except the victory of Jesus Christ; and that includes what history finally says about the character of the nation we call America...

Rejoice at every opportunity of showing kindness to your neighbor as a true Christian who strives to store up as many good works as possible, especially the treasures of love. Do not rejoice when others show you kindness and love—consider yourself unworthy of it; but rejoice when an occasion presents itself for you to show love. Show love simply, without any deviation into cunning thoughts, without any trivial, worldly, covetous calculations, remembering that love is God Himself. Remember that He sees all your ways, sees all the thoughts and movements of your heart. *St. John of Kronstadt*