



Holy Ghost Orthodox Church

714 Westmoreland Avenue

PO Box 3

Slickville, PA 15684-0003

[724] 468-5581

www.holyghostorthodoxchurch.org

Rev. Father Robert Popichak, Pastor

23 Station Street

Carnegie, PA 15106-3014

[412] 279-5640 home

[412] 956-6626 cell

ON THE MEND: Please keep the following parishioners and others in your prayers for recovery from their illnesses and injuries: Bishop Robert, Father Jakiw Norton, Father Dragan Filipović, Father Stevo Rocknage, Father Paul Stoll, Father Igor Soroka, Father Michael Mihalick [MS], Father Joseph Kopchak, Father Cuthbert Jack, Father Elias Warnke, Father Nestor Kowal, Father Paul Bigelow, Father Emilian Balan, Father John Nakonachny, Deacon Dennis Lapushanski, Protopresbyter Peter Hotrovich, Protodeacon Joseph Hotrovich, Pani-Dobrodijka Sonia Diakiw, Joshua Agosto and his family, Mike Holupka, Eva Malesnick, Stella Peanoske, Joe Nezolyk, Nick Behun, Grace Holupka, Virginia Bryan, Joseph Sliwinsky, Linda Mechtly, Mary Mochnick, Evelyn Misko, Jeanne Boehing, Alex Drobot, Rachele, 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, Ethel Thomas, Donna, Erin, Michael Miller, Dave May, Grace & Owen Ostrasky, Alverta, Patti Sinecki, David Genshi, Sue Segeleon, Mike Gallagher, Michael Miller, Liz Stumpf, Theodore Nixon, Michelle Corba Kapeluck, Robert Hippert & family, Margaret Vladimir, Luke Emmerling, John Sheliga, George & Mika Rocknage, Robert McKivitz, Liz Obradovich, Halyna Zelinska [Bishop Daniel's mother], Charlotte, Andrew Mark Olynyk, Deborah Finley, Claire Senita, Eleanor Kelly, Bryan, Doris Artman, Nancy Barylak, Patrick Keenan, Khrystyna Chorniy, Anthony Cormier, 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, Bob C., Allie— young girl with leukemia, Heather Kramer, Jane Wartinbee, Matthew—21-year-old with cancer, Nicholas Orlando, Mary Ann Kuznik, 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, Diane McDaniel, Loretta, Nancy, Carol, & Michael Sheliga, Gaelle Kelly, Irma McDivitt, Robin Young, Mckayla, Rachel, Tony Butecoff, Carl & Margaret Reed, Theodore Demopoulos, Jillian Bowman,

Lydia Wilson, Robert Pointon, Walter Cecelia, John Persico, Jeff Miller, Mary Kernick, Glenn Miller, Jean Marie, Donna & Walter McCrackin, Doug Smith [Millie Kerr's son-in-law], Bonnie & Eugene Blair [Pani Gina's parents], Mel & Charlotte Malik, Paula Pasquinelli, David Hoenshell, Barbara Macino, Shelley Hill, Mikaela Kapeluck, Linda Cawley, Gerald Cogley, Helen Bozo, June Miller, Corey Guich, Monica Salvatore, Glenda Tickerhoof, Robert Vangrin, Juliana Leis, Susan "Billie" Mason, Pauline Witkowsky, Sera White, LuAnne [Mike Horvath's daughter], Donald Griffey, Martin Kapusta, Deborah Smith, Nancy & Eric Dunik, Julian Stroz [child with cerebral palsy], Thomas Stutzman, Dr. Kirsten Ream, Patricia Corey, and Daria Masur. ARNOLD: Stefania Lucci, Steve Sakal, and Homer Paul Kline. We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.

PRAYER LIST: Please help update our prayer list. If you or someone you know no longer needs to be on the prayer list or if there is someone who needs to be on the list please let Father Bob know. Remember—Prayers are ALWAYS FREE! Thank you!

Please remember Ryan Fuller, 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, SEPTEMBER 09 Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom 10:30 AM
**FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; SAINT POEMEN THE GREAT; SAINT
HOSIUS THE CONFESSOR-BISHOP OF CORDOVA; SAINT LIBERIUS-POPE OF
ROME; SAINT POEMEN OF PALESTINE; MARTYR ANTUSA; HIEROMARTYRS
PIMEN & KUKSHA OF PERCHEVSKY LAVRA**

Tone 5

II Corinthians 1:21-2:4

Matthew 22:1-14

Litany in Blessed Memory of the victims of 09-11-2001—Fr. Bob

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 16 Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom 10:30 AM
**FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; HIEROMARTYR ANTHIMUS-BISHOP OF
NICOMEDIA & THOSE WITH HIM; SAINT THEOCTISTUS-FELLOW-FASTER WITH
SAINT EUTHYMIUS THE GREAT; SAINT PHOEBE-DEACONESS AT CENCHREAE
NEAR CORINTH; MARTYR BASILISSA OF NICOMEDIA; HIEROMARTYR
ARISTION-BISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA IN SYRIA**

Tone 6

II Corinthians 4:6-15

Matthew 22:35-46

Parastas in Blessed Memory of Milos Pekich—Millie Kerr & Family

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 23 Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom 10:30 AM
**SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; SUNDAY BEFORE THE EXALTATION;
AFTERFEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS; MARTYRS MENODORA,
METRODORA, & NYMPHODORA AT NICOMEDIA; SYNAXIS OF THE HOLY
APOSTLES APELLES, LUCIUS, & CLEMENT OF THE 70; MARTYR BARYPSABAS IN
DALMATIA; BLESSED PULCHERIA-EMPRESS OF GREECE; SAINTS PETER & PAUL-
BISHOPS OF NICAIA; SAINT PAUL THE OBEDIENT OF PERCHEVSKY LAVRA**

Tone 7

II Corinthians 6:1-10

Matthew 25:14-30

Parastas in Blessed Memory of Tillie Kuzman—Debbie & John

BULLETIN INSERT FOR 09 SEPTEMBER 2012

**FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; SAINT POEMEN THE
GREAT; SAINT HOSIUS THE CONFESSOR-BISHOP OF CORDOVA;
SAINT LIBERIUS-POPE OF ROME; SAINT POEMEN OF PALESTINE;
MARTYR ANTUSA; HIEROMARTYRS PIMEN & KUKSHA OF
PERCHEVSKY LAVRA**

TROPARION—TONE 5

Let the faithful praise and worship the Word,
Coeternal with the Father and the Spirit;
Born for our salvation from the Virgin;
For He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh,
To endure death,
And to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection!

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

KONTAKION—TONE 5

Thou didst descend into Hell, O my Savior,
Shattering its gates as almighty;
Resurrecting the dead as Creator,
And destroying the sting of death.
Thou hast delivered Adam from the curse,
O Lover of Man,
And we all cry to Thee: O Lord, save us!

PROKEIMENON—TONE 5

READER: Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us and preserve us from this generation forever.

PEOPLE: **Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us and preserve us from this generation forever.**

READER: Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any that is godly.

PEOPLE: **Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us and preserve us from this generation forever.**

READER: Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us and preserve us...

PEOPLE: **From this generation forever.**

ALLELUIA VERSES—TONE 5

I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Thy truth from generation to generation.

Thou hast said: Mercy will be established forever, and my truth will be prepared in the heavens.

How to Give Alms to the Homeless

We meet homeless people nearly every day on our life's path; people who are often contemptuously called "bums." We see them at the train station, near the subway, in town squares and parks, and of course, at the churches, asking for money. Each time we see them, our hearts deliberate painfully over the question, "Should we give them



alms, or not?" Then, other questions immediately arise, "How much? How should we give them? Is there any sense in giving at all?"

People are generally divided into two groups. The first are those who give according to their means to all, without thinking about it or asking any questions, following the Lord's words, *Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away* (Mt. 5:42). The second group is of those who do not give money to "bums," considering that we mustn't indulge the "bum mafia," for we participate in their sin of drunkenness and sponging, lying, etc. by giving money to them. These people are ready to fulfill Christ's commandment and are willing to help people, but only those who really need help. They cite the words of the holy fathers in support of this—that the greatest virtue is discernment, for fasting, prayer, alms, or any other virtue will bring a person no benefit if done beyond our strength or out of season.^[1] Truly, no one would give anyone money for a rope to hang himself, no matter how tearfully or insistently he begs it. That rope could be a bottle of liquor, which strangles the neck of the beggar each day with increasing strength, or the rope of lies that you would indulge by giving money. There are hundreds and thousands of such ropes.

So what must we do to fulfill the commandment of Christ and please the Lord in the best way? The answer is simple: **love**. Try also not to do anything without love. Then everything will settle into place, and even the question itself will seem silly. As we know, *Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing* (1 Cor. 13:3). Of course, it is hard to just up and love every homeless person, but it is usually quite possible to show compassion for every person that the Lord has brought to us. I would like to share a little practical experience in helping the homeless under various circumstances.

For example, you are walking to work, and a tipsy beggar asks you for money. What should you do? Don't be lazy—ask him why he needs money. They are often asking for food. This is the simplest case. Then you need to go with him to the nearest grocery store and buy him something he hasn't had for many long years. Give him a holiday, as if this were your old classmate. Something tasty and filling, like good sausage, chicken, cheese, yogurt—in other words, something that they could never get for themselves because it is too expensive to eat in sufficient quantities. Even if the homeless person was lying to you at first about food, he will nevertheless be thankful. Try to transfer this thankfulness to the Lord, let him thank the Lord, and not you personally. For example, tell him that it was Christ Who sent you to him today. Then it will be both bodily and spiritual alms. Try to see a deeply suffering person in him; and if you cannot see in even the last

"bum" the image of God, perhaps very soiled, clouded over, but nevertheless the great image of God, then perhaps you need to discuss this with your spiritual father and pray about it.

Ask the homeless person what his name is, where he hangs out and how often, when is his birthday, is he baptized. Be sincere and kind with him. Homeless people are very sensitive to insincerity. Do not hasten to judge him. We do not know what we ourselves would be if the Lord had deprived us of His protection and hadn't guarded us from the demon of drunkenness and other vices. Wouldn't we be much worse than that person? In a word: love him. Love him to the extent of your heart's capacity; love him sincerely, for Christ's sake. And if even a little love is born in your heart for this person, then the next time, when you are leaving your house, you will probably be prepared for another meeting with him: take some food from home, some warm clothing, a book, or something he might like. You will leave fifteen minutes early for work and find him; wait for him, call him by his name, show some concern for him, and increase love in this world, the lack of which is felt ever more sharply. Thus, from day to day you can live for the sake of Christ, taking care of one poor person. Do not just buy yourself off with money, do not limit yourself to one-time help. It is good, but it is not a perfect fruit. You can't just love for a half an hour and then forget about it.

The only warning is: do not give money for any reason, and do not cave in to their persuasion! Those on the streets in such difficult straights, spiritually sick, are in the absolute majority of cases not capable of using money properly. Buy him the thing he needs, get into his shoes, and understand his problems.

It is important to care for a person's body, but it is even more important to care for his soul. Do this without being intrusive: let your heart tell you when to talk to him about confession, prayer, or about God's infinite mercy; about how true life and healing are possible only through the Lord's healing of his soul, which cannot happen unless he wants it. Sometimes a person hungers for this and wants to hear it right away, but sometimes this happens only years later. St. John of Kronstadt writes about this: "Know that material alms should always be followed by spiritual alms: with affectionate, brotherly, and pure-hearted love for your neighbor. Do not allow him to notice that he is become beholden to you, do not appear proud. See that your material alms do not lose their value through your failure to provide the spiritual."[\[2\]](#)

Of course, not all possible instances are limited to food, and there are many others.[\[3\]](#) But it is all united by one thing: It is impossible to fulfill Christ's commandment to *Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful* (Lk. 6:36) without love. With regard to the homeless, this becomes

especially obvious. But this relates to other instances: if you help a sick person, you must not just buy medicine; you can't just send a prisoner a package; you can't just send toys to a children's home, etc. This is all very good, but without sincere love this all often loses value, gives cause for sin and vice amongst those who receive it and those who dispense it.^[4]

Medicines can make other sick people jealous, prisoners can lose your food packages in a card game; and children in children's homes can become little extortionists. We return again and again to the same question: what should we do? And the answer is always the same: **love, love for the sake of Christ.** Pray for the sick one, visit him, console him, buy him medicine, talk with other patients, give them little joys and holidays, talk about God's greatness and mercy; correspond with the prisoner, send him packages, console him and preach, give him hope and make him think about the life he has lived; visit children, bring them toys, draw with them, sing, treat them to cakes, teach them to pray, hope and trust the Lord God, etc. And live this way from day to day for the sake of Christ. Of course, many do not have enough time for all of this. In that case, at least help those who sincerely do these things, and pray for them with your whole heart, which was undoubtedly created for love.

But never take on labors beyond your strength: never take a homeless person to your own house for the night, do not go alone to places where they congregate, do not borrow money from someone else to give to the homeless. You have to be frank about the fact that the majority of people in this social stratum are spiritually very sick, often psychologically as well, and always physically. Such attempts often end tragically. They are often just the consequence of pride and neophyte zeal.

In the mind of some people lives a myth that if you give a person an apartment and work, he will get better. Practical experience shows that this is not the case. Without peace with God, without a divine miracle of healing of the soul, this is not possible. But we can be God's co-laborers, increasing love and helping a person to turn and face God.

Furthermore, it has to be said that mercy need to be shown toward all—the rich and the poor, the good and the bad; **only we must not indulge mortal sins of lying, drunkenness, promiscuity, and others, and we must approach everyone with love and discernment.** "He who gives alms, in imitation of God, does not discriminate in bodily needs between the mean and kind, the righteous and the unrighteous"^[5]

Thus, in very complicated situations I have had to say sincerely to a persistently lying homeless person that I absolutely do not believe him, but I will help him for Christ's sake, for the sake of the love that Christ has given for him. It is important that without love, even such a great virtue as discernment can turn into judgment, justification of one's own greed, and

laziness. We have to pray that God would give us the gift of discernment.

This gift is given for a life in Christ that is kind and full of mercy.[\[6\]](#)

When going to do works of mercy, we must not forget to pray to God that He would give us the strength and knowledge to fulfill His commandment as is pleasing to Him. In general, prayer is an inalienable part of works of mercy. Without prayer, it is almost impossible to do anything pleasing to God. We can calculate, make agreements, be sure of success; but if there was no prayer, then our works are like a house built upon sand. A homeless person who has not eaten meat for a long time can feel sick after eating it now; a new jacket can become the cause of his getting beaten; renewed identification documents can be stolen by his "friends" and used for criminal purposes which could have unforeseen consequences; medical help could cause complications; and the list goes on.

If we have talked with someone it would be good to pray briefly about that person, even if we do not know his name, but especially if we do know it. Some pastors bless to read the prayer, "O Heavenly King," especially if the conversation turns to spiritual matters. When you approach someone, it would be good to smile sincerely. After all, it is wonderful to be a participant, fulfiller, and conduit of God's mercy.

You must never combine your gifts with reproaches against his way of life, with moralizing and unsolicited advice. You have to help him simply, without trying to teach him. It is hard enough for him, even if it is his own fault; added reproach and moralizing would only be one more aggravating circumstance for him. Our job is not to aggravate, but to try to ease his burden if only for a second. You can only give advice after getting to know and love the person, if he trusts you, and only with prayer and inner humility.

When talking with "bums," we have to watch that presumption does not show up in our speech. And if while giving alms we allow ourselves to be high-minded toward the person or vainglorious, this will wipe out our virtue, make our behavior vile in the Lord's eyes; and He will without fail punish us for this if we do not repent of it.

This may all seem hard to fulfill, but it is worth the effort. These labors of mercy are real, active proof of our faith and love for Christ. Most important of all: the Lord helps us when we do acts of mercy. He gives us special grace, often even despite our vanity and laziness. If a person sincerely tries to please and love the Lord, the Lord covers and corrects him; even more than that—He turns our mistakes into something glorious. Grace begins to transform our souls, and the grain of the Kingdom of Heaven begins to grow. A person begins to feel this special joy of a new spiritual reality more and more each day: *Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof*

goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field (Mt. 13:44).

Abiding in this grace so transforms the soul that work which seemed impossible becomes simple and even desired.

By helping people, do not hope to change the world and all the homeless, do not expect them to thank you—do it all for the sake of Christ's love. Do not despair or be afraid if after all your efforts someone turns your alms toward evil. "Give to every one who asks you, and ask it not back; for the Father wills that to all should be given of our own blessings (free gifts). Happy is he who gives according to the commandment, for he is guiltless. Woe to him who receives; for if one receives who has need, he is guiltless; but he who receives not having need shall pay the penalty, why he received and for what.... And also concerning this, it has been said, Let your alms sweat in your hands, until you know to whom you should give."[\[7\]](#)

It goes without saying that in our time there are saintly people living, but for ordinary sinful city dwellers, worn out by the rat race of consumerism, deprived of prayer of the heart, not capable of perfect fasting, not having time for apostolic service, sunk in credit card bills and everyday affairs, "Alms given for the sake of Christ, for the sake of love for Him, cleanses us of sins more than sacrifices, opens the heavens more than virginity, and can make one equal to the apostles."[\[8\]](#)

A few words must be said also for those who never give alms at all to "bums," considering that these people are themselves at fault for all their problems. I will say this: Perhaps you are right, but isn't the Lord able to help and resurrect even the dead? Does the Creator of the universe, heaven and earth and all that exists need our pennies and millions? Is it really important to Him which pocket carries our ten-dollar bill? Or can't He feed the hungry, clothe the freezing, give shelter to the homeless? The good Lord can do all these things, but He has entrusted them to us. *Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me (Mt. 25:4–40).* And in order to serve Christ we don't have to have lived two thousand years ago; we can simply give a bowl of soup to a homeless person and say to God: "You are hungry, Lord. Here, eat."

Know that material alms should always be followed by spiritual alms: with affectionate, brotherly, and pure-hearted love for your neighbor. Do not allow him to notice that he is become beholden to you, do not appear proud. See that your material alms do not lose their value through your failure to provide the spiritual. *St. John of Kronstadt*

An important person came from abroad to Scetis bringing much gold with him, and he asked the priest to give some of it to the brothers. The priest said, "The brothers do not need it," but as the other was very insistent, he put a basket filled with gold at the door of the church. The priest said, "Let anyone who needs it, take some." But nobody came, and some did not even notice it was there. So the priest said to the visitor, "God has seen your charity: go, and give it to the poor." Greatly edified, the man went away.

One of the old men of the Thebaid used to tell the following story: I was the son of a pagan priest. When I was small, I would sit and watch my father who often went to sacrifice to the idol. Once, going in behind him in secret, I saw Satan and all his army standing beside him; and behold, one of the chief devils came to bow before him. Satan said, "Where have you come from?" He answered, "I was in a certain place and made much blood flow, and I have come to tell you about it."

Satan said, "How long did it take you to do this?" He replied, "Thirty days." Then Satan commanded him to be flogged, saying, "In so long a time have you done only that?"

And behold, another demon came to bow before him. He asked him, "And you, where have you come from?" The demon replied, "I was on the sea, and I made the waves rise, and small craft foundered, and I have killed many people, and I have come to inform you of it." He said to him, "How long did it take you to do this?" and the demon said, "Twenty days." Satan commanded that he also should be flogged, saying, "That is because in such a long time you have only done this."

Now a third demon came to bow before him. He asked, "And where have you come from?" The demon replied, "There was a marriage in a certain village, and I stirred up a riot, and I have made much blood flow, killing the bride and bridegroom, and I have come to inform you." He asked him, "How long have you taken to do this?" and he replied, "Ten days." And Satan commanded that he also should be flogged because he had taken too long.

After this another demon came to bow before him. He asked, "And where have you come from?" He said, "I was in the desert forty years fighting against a monk, and this night I made him fall into fornication." When he heard this, Satan arose, embraced him, and put the crown he was wearing upon his head and made him sit on his throne, saying, "You have been able to do a very great deed!"

The old man said, "Seeing this, I said to myself, 'Truly, it is a great contest, this contest of the monks,' and with God assisting me for my salvation, I went away and became a monk."

If recompense is bestowed according to the measure of love for God, and if the man who loves the Son is loved of Him and of His Father and becomes the dwelling place of Both, and They mystically abide and walk in him, as it is recorded in the Master's Gospel, who, then, will love Him more than His Mother? For, He was her only-begotten Son, and moreover she alone among women gave birth knowing no spouse, so that the love of Him that had partaken of her flesh might be shared with her twofold. And who will the only-begotten Son love more than His Mother, He that came forth from her ineffably without a father in this last age even as He came forth from the Father without a mother before the ages? How indeed could He that descended to fulfill the Law not multiply that honor due to His Mother over and above the ordinances of the Law?

St. Gregory Palamas, from a homily "On the Dormition of Our Supremely Pure Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary"