



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

NATIVITY FAST—SAINT PHILIP'S FAST

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 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, 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, 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, Theresa Ditto, Mary Ann Musial, Mary Pelino, Yvonne Christy, Myron & Barbara Spak, Pete Niederberger, Julia Duda, Lisa Pandle, Kris & Julie Hanczar, John Kennedy,

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, Deborah Smith, Nancy & Eric Dunik, Julian Stroz [child with cerebral palsy], Thomas Stutzman, Dr. Kirsten Ream, Patricia Corey, Michelle, Katie Swarm, Richard Dunst, Michelle, Jamie Gardner, and Daria Masur. ARNOLD: Stefania Lucci, Steve Sakal, and Homer Paul Kline. We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.

If we look to correct ourselves and look more intently towards our inner activity—rather than our external, giving precedence to Divine help—we can, in turn, be of greater and more positive help to others. We will also achieve an inner serenity that will quietly help the souls of the people we encounter, because spiritual serenity reflects the virtue of the soul and transforms souls. *Elder Paisios of Mt. Athos*

He who has realized love for God in his heart is tireless, as Jeremiah says (Jer. 17:16) in his pursuit of the Lord his God, and bears every hardship, reproach, and insult nobly, never thinking the least evil of anyone. *St. Maximos the Confessor*

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 ask 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 16 Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom 10:30 AM
TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; PROPHET ZEPHANIAH; SAINT THEODULUS-EPARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE; SAINT JOHN THE SILENT OF SAINT SABBAS MONASTERY; HIEROMARTYR THEODORE-ARCHBISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA

Tone 3

Colossians 1:12-18

Luke 18:18-27

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23 ***NO SERVICE IN SLICKVILLE*******
TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; MARTYR MENAS THE MELODIUS, HERMOGENES, & EUGRAPHUS OF ALEXANDRIA; MARTYR GEMELLUS OF PAPALAGONIA; SAINT THOMAS OF BITHYNIA; SAINT JOASAPH OF BILHOROD

Tone 4

Colossians 3:12-16

Luke 17:12-19

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30 Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom 10:30 AM
THIRTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FOREFATHERS; HOLY PROPHET DANIEL & 3 HOLY YOUTHS-ANANIAS, AZARIAS, & MISHAEL; SAINT DANIEL THE CONFESSOR [IN SCHEMA STEPHEN] OF SPAIN & EGYPT

Tone 5

Colossians 3:4-11; Hebrews 11:33-12:2

Luke 14:16-24; Luke 11:47-12:1

BULLETIN INSERT FOR 16 DECEMBER 2012
TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; PROPHET ZEPHANIAH; SAINT THEODULUS-EPARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE; SAINT JOHN THE SILENT OF SAINT

SABBAS MONASTERY; HIEROMARTYR THEODORE- ARCHBISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA

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!

It's about a dolphin trainer who noticed that when he brought his talking bird to work, only one of the dolphins would eat the feathers that dropped from its cage. Years later, that same dolphin seemed not to be aging—it looked like he might live forever. The trainer thought it must have something to do with those feathers, so embarked on a full-scale experiment. He chartered a plane to the deep jungle to collect more talking birds.

The plane landed in a clearing and team went out to collect a bag of birds. They returned at dark to find a huge pride of lions sleeping all around their plane. In the end, they decided to try tip-toeing through the big cats to reach the safety of their plane and escape. When all of a sudden, sirens blare and the jungle police come out and arrest them!! What was the charge??

Transporting Mynahs across sedate lions for immortal porpoises.

Spiritual Food for the Garden of our Heart from the EVERGETINOS

How we should withstand temptations; that we should not expose ourselves to them; those circumstances in which we should avoid or endure a temptation

"When a fire breaks out, fire-engines are brought in to extinguish it; when a temptation arises, it is the tears of the one being tempted that extinguish it. Water extinguishes a flame that has been kindled in a house; tearful prayer extinguishes evil desires." *From the Gerontikon**

"A certain Elder left his cell in order to sell his handiwork, which consisted of wicker baskets. A demon met him on the road, snatched the baskets from him, and made them vanish. The Elder immediately turned to prayer, saying: 'O my God, I thank Thee, because Thou hast freed me from the labor of carrying them to the city and selling them.' The demon could not endure the Elder's gratitude to God. For this reason, he cried out: 'Here, take back your baskets, you evil Elder!' The Elder took the handiwork and sold it." *From the Gerontikon**

()-A collection of stories/teachings by various Elders*

Ortho Thought for the Day (petitioning God in behalf of others)

When we want to ask things for other people, we should ask for them secretly, with prayer which is *in secret* and does not appear outwardly. Worry and distraction do not help prayer. Forget about telephone calls, communications and long conversations with people. If the Lord doesn't assist, what will our own efforts achieve? So what is required is prayer, prayer with love. It is preferable for us to help people from a distance with prayer. In that way we help them in the best and most perfect manner. *Elder Porphyrios, Wounded by Love, pp. 130-31.*



Very insightful and very true...Take a second to read this:

Apparently the White House referred to Christmas Trees as "Holiday Trees" for the first time this year which prompted CBS presenter, Ben Stein, to present this piece which I would like to share with you. I think it applies just as much to many countries as it does to America...

The following was written by Ben Stein and recited by him on CBS Sunday Morning Commentary.

My confession:

I am a Jew, and every single one of my ancestors was Jewish. And it does not bother me even a little bit when people call those beautiful lit up, bejeweled trees, Christmas trees. I don't feel threatened. I don't feel discriminated against. That's what they are, Christmas trees.

It doesn't bother me a bit when people say, "Merry Christmas" to me. I don't think they are slighting me or getting ready to put me in a ghetto. In fact, I kind of like it. It shows that we are all brothers and sisters celebrating this happy time of year. It doesn't bother me at all that there is a manger scene on display at a key intersection near my beach house in Malibu. If people want a crib, it's just as fine with me as is the Menorah a few hundred yards away.

I don't like getting pushed around for being a Jew, and I don't think Christians like getting pushed around for being Christians. I think people who believe in God are sick and tired of getting pushed around, period. I have no idea where the concept came from, that America is an explicitly atheist country. I can't find it in the Constitution and I don't like it being shoved down my throat.

Or maybe I can put it another way: where did the idea come from that we should worship celebrities and we aren't allowed to worship God? I guess that's a sign that I'm getting old, too. But there are a lot of us who are wondering where these celebrities came from and where the America we knew went to.

In light of the many jokes we send to one another for a laugh, this is a little different: This is not intended to be a joke; it's not funny, it's intended to get you thinking.

Billy Graham's daughter was interviewed on the Early Show and Jane Clayson asked her: "How could God let something like this happen?" (regarding Hurricane Katrina). Anne Graham gave an extremely profound and insightful response. She said: "I believe God is deeply saddened by this, just as we are, but for years we've been telling God to get out of our schools, to get out of our government and to get out of our lives. And being the gentleman He is, I believe He has calmly backed out. How can we expect God to give us His blessing and His protection if we demand He leave us alone?"

In light of recent events... terrorists attack, school shootings, etc. I think it started when Madeleine Murray O'Hare (she was murdered, her body found a few years ago) complained she didn't want prayer in our schools, and we said OK. Then someone said you better not read the Bible in school. The Bible says thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, and love your neighbour as yourself. And we said OK.

Then Dr. Benjamin Spock said we shouldn't spank our children when they misbehave, because their little personalities would be warped and we might damage their self-esteem (Dr. Spock's son committed suicide). We said an expert should know what he's talking about. And we said okay.

Now we're asking ourselves why our children have no conscience, why they don't know right from wrong, and why it doesn't bother them to kill strangers, their classmates, and themselves.

Probably, if we think about it long and hard enough, we can figure it out. I think it has a great deal to do with 'WE REAP WHAT WE SOW.'

Funny how simple it is for people to trash God and then wonder why the world's going to hell. Funny how we believe what the newspapers say, but question what the Bible says. Funny how you can send 'jokes' through e-mail and they spread like wildfire, but when you start sending messages regarding the Lord, people think twice about sharing. Funny how lewd, crude, vulgar and obscene articles pass freely through cyberspace, but public discussion of God is suppressed in the school and workplace.

Are you laughing yet?

Funny how when you forward this message, you will not send it to many on your address list because you're not sure what they believe, or what they will think of you for sending it.

Funny how we can be more worried about what other people think of us than what God thinks of us.

Pass it on if you think it has merit.

If not, then just discard it.... no one will know you did. But if you discard this thought process, don't sit back and complain about what bad shape the world is in.

My Best Regards, Honestly and respectfully,
Ben Stein

We must live like the saints themselves and imitate their works. When we become like them and live the common life, we can understand what God has revealed to them. And by being closely knit to them, we can escape the danger of sinners and fire at the Day of Judgment. We can receive what is stored up in the kingdom of heaven for the saints. Such treasure, "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have they entered into the heart of man." These things are prepared for those who live a righteous life and who love God and Christ Jesus our Lord. *St. Athanasios of Alexandria*

When someone applies himself to external activity, before having polished his spiritual inner state, he may struggle spiritually; but he will be fraught with worry, anxiety, lack of confidence in God and frequent loss of serenity. If he does not improve himself, he cannot say that his interest for the common good is pure. When he is liberated from the old self and all worldly things, then he will receive Divine Grace; and be not only at peace with himself, but also able to bring peace to everyone else. *Elder Paisios of Mt. Athos*

June 25 entry from The Prologue of Ohrid

Rejoice not when your enemy falls; and when he stumbles, let not your heart exult (Proverbs 24:17)

He is a man; do not rejoice in his fall. He is your brother; let not your heart leap for joy when he stumbles. God created him for life, and God does not rejoice in his fall. And you also, do not rejoice at that which grieves God. When a man falls, God loses; do you rejoice in the loss of your Creator, of your Parent? When the angels weep, do you rejoice?

When your enemy falls, pray to God for him that God will save him; and give thanks to God that you did not fall in the same manner. You are of the same material, both you and he; like two vessels from the hand of the potter. If one vessel breaks, should the other one smile and rejoice? Behold, the small stone that broke that vessel only waits for someone's hand to raise it to destroy this vessel also. Both vessels are of the same material, and a small stone can destroy a hundred vessels.

When one sheep is lost, should the rest of the flock rejoice? No, they should not. For behold, the shepherd leaves his flock and, being concerned,

goes to seek the lost sheep. The shepherd's loss is the flock's loss, too. Therefore, do not rejoice when your enemy falls, for your Shepherd and his Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, do not rejoice in his fall.

O Lord Jesus Christ, Thou Good Shepherd, remove malicious joy from our hearts, and in its place plant compassion and brotherly love.

To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.

God's grace always assists a struggler, but this does not mean that a struggler is always in the position of a victor; sometimes the beasts did not touch the righteous ones, but by no means did they not always touch them. What is important is not victory or the position of a victor, but rather the labor of striving towards God and devotion to Him. Though a man may be found in a weak state; that does not at all mean that he has been abandoned by God. The Lord Jesus Christ, according to the worldly view, was in trouble, but when the sinful world considered Him to be completely destroyed; in actuality He was victorious over death and Hades. The Lord did not promise us positions as victors as a reward for righteousness, but told us, "In the world we shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" (Jn. 16:33). The power of God is effective when a person asks for the help of God, acknowledging the weakness and sinfulness of his nature. This is why humility and the striving towards God are the fundamental virtues of a Christian. *St. John Maximovitch, the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Shanghai and San Francisco (1896-1966)*

Now Theophilus (patriarch of Alexandria, 385-412) had a nephew, his sister's son, named Cyril, whom he had instructed and brought up to the best of his power. And after some time the patriarch sent him to the Mount of Nitria, to the desert of St. Macarius. And Cyril dwelt there five years in the monasteries, reading the books of the Old and New Testaments; for Theophilus urged him to apply himself assiduously to his studies, saying to him, "By these studies thou wilt someday arrive in Jerusalem on high, which is the dwelling-place of the saints." For Cyril was the attendant of Theophilus in the patriarchal cell, and was ordained reader. The patriarch, when he sent Cyril to the desert, entrusted him to Serapion the Wise, and charged him to teach Cyril the doctrines of the Church, which are the true doctrines of God; so Cyril learnt all the Scriptures by heart. He used to stand before his teacher studying, who had a sword of iron in his hand; and if Cyril felt an inclination to sleep, he pricked him with the sword, and so he woke up again; and during most of his nights he would read through in a single night the Four Gospels, and the catholic Epistles, and the Acts, and the first Epistle of the Blessed Paul, namely, that addressed to the Romans;

and on the morrow after this, Cyril's teacher would know, by looking at his face, that he had studied all night. And the grace of God was with Cyril, so that when he had read a book once, he knew it by heart; and these years in the desert he learnt by heart all the canonical books.

After this, the patriarch Theophilus sent to him and brought him back to Alexandria, and there Cyril dwelt with the patriarch in his cell, and read aloud in his presence; and the priests and the learned men and philosophers were astonished at him, and rejoiced over him on account of the beauty of his form, and the sweetness of his voice which never chanced, as it is written, "I opened my mouth and drew in my breath." (Ps.128) And all the people, when they heard him read, desired that he might never cease reading, because he read so sweetly, and was so beautiful in countenance.

And his uncle Theophilus loved him greatly, and thanked God that he had granted him a spiritual son who had grown in grace and wisdom. Cyril's conduct was excellent, and his humility great; and he never ceased to study theology, nor to meditate upon the words of the doctors of the orthodox Church: Athanasius and Dionysius and Clement, patriarch of Rome, and Eusebius, and Basil, bishop of Armenia, and Basil, bishop of Cappadocia. These are the orthodox fathers whose works he studied. And he would not follow the doctrine of Origen, nor even take his books into his hand for a single day; but when he heard that one of the faithful had read Origen, he condemned and excommunicated him who had so read. When Cyril read in the Gospel the words, "Ask and ye shall receive; seek and ye shall find," he understood these words, and prayed to God for knowledge, and God gave it to him. For he was like the bee, which goes forth to feed upon every plant and tree, and collects what is profitable for itself, until it has filled its bag with pure untainted honey.

Severus Ibn Al-Muqaffa, History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria 1.11 [163-165] St. Cyril of Alexandria, commemorated 9 June

Any circumstance in which a man finds himself unwillingly is a prison for him. So be content with whatever circumstances you may now be in, lest, by being ungrateful, you punish yourself unwittingly. *St. Anthony the Great*

A short personal reflection... Fifteen years ago last Wednesday, I was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Constantine, of Blessed Memory, to serve the parish family of Holy Ghost in Slickville. I had a very faint idea that accepting ordination would change my life—but I had no idea how much.

Surrounded by clergy, family, friends, and parishioners from Slickville, Metropolitan Constantine read the prayers of ordination while placing my head on the altar of the church where I had been baptized forty-two years earlier. He gently placed his hands upon my head and charged me to dedicate my life to service to Christ and His church.

Vladyka told me that I was no longer in the parish, that I was now responsible for the parish—and all those who would be put into my path. He told me that I was to show Christ's love to everyone and to serve them as Jesus Himself commanded...and to love God with my entire mind, heart, strength, and soul—and to be ready to give my life for His Church if necessary.

Our family has grown—Alex is 15 and Matt is 13—and our parish has slowly shrunk numerically...although it seems that God continues to give us new family members when we least expect it!

What has continued to amaze me from the first day I walked into Holy Ghost as a newly-ordained Deacon in 1995 is the love that I have received from those who make up the Holy Ghost parish family. Whether cradle members, converts, or just someone who comes occasionally, you have all changed my life—and ultimately who I am. You have given my family a home—filled with warmth, kindness, and true Christian Love!

May God reward you a thousand fold for your kindness and generosity toward the “new kid from Carnegie” who ventured into the tiny spot on the map known as Slickville in Salem Township. I have never been more proud than to call myself “just a village priest.” God Bless you all! Father Bob, Pani Gina, Alexander, and Matthew

REMINDER: As you well know, many of our parishioners have indicated that they no longer drive after dark, so they will not be able to attend our Nativity Compline and Holy Supper. As discussed and agreed upon at Coffee Hour last Sunday, **we will modify our Nativity Eve celebration schedule as follows, for Sunday, January 6, 2012:**

**10:30 AM Obednitza with Holy Communion
Followed by Great Compline for the Nativity
About 1 PM we will have our Holy Supper**

Monday, January 7, 2012—10:30 AM Nativity Divine Liturgy

Please see Father Bob or John Paouncic with any questions...

NOTE: There will be no services in Slickville on Sunday, December 23, 2012, as Father Bob will be out of town—and out of cell phone contact. Please call John Paouncic if you require the services of an Orthodox priest, and plan to attend one of our sister Orthodox parishes for that day. If you will be visiting relatives or friends who celebrate Christmas on December 25, please enjoy their company and hospitality—and travel and celebrate safely! Please see Fr. Bob if you have any questions!