



Holy Ghost Orthodox Church

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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 Strozh [child with cerebral palsy], Thomas Stutzman, Dr. Kirsten Ream, Patricia Corey, Michelle, Katie Swarm, Richard Dunst, Michelle, Jamie Gardner, Patrick, Linda Morris, Howard Simpson, Ronald Graham [Evelyn's nephew], Chris, Pastor Ed Bowen, and Daria Masur ARNOLD: Stefania Lucci, Steve Sakal, and Homer Paul Kline. We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.

Elder Paisios of the Holy Mountain said: A person should experience his sinfulness and have trust and hope in the mercy of God, because that way he'll be saved. That way the mind is recollected and experiences prayer as a need. That way he begins to say: Lord Jesus Christ, come...", and the heart gains rest.

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 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, JANUARY 20
10:30 AM

Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom

**THIRTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY;
SYNAXIS OF THE HOLY AND GLORIOUS PROPHET AND FORERUNNER AND
BAPTIST JOHN; SAINT BRANNOCK OF BRAUNTON**

Tone 8

Ephesians 4:7-13

Matthew 4:12-17

SUNDAY, JANUARY 27
10:30 AM

Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom

**THIRTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; LEAVE-TAKING OF THE FEAST OF
THE THEOPHANY; SAINT SAVA-FIRST ARCHBISHOP OF SERBIA; SAINT NINA,
EQUAL-TO-THE-APOSTLES; SAINT KENTIGERN MUNGO, BISHOP; HOLY
FATHERS SLAIN AT SINAI & RAITHU; SAINT JOSEPH ANALYTINUS OF RAITHU
MONASTERY; SAINT THEODULUS-SON OF SAINT NILUS OF SINAI; SAINT
STEPHEN-ABBOT OF CHENOLAKKOS MONASTERY NEAR CHALCEDON**

Tone 1

Colossians 3:12-16

Luke 18:18-27

*******Krsna Slava in honor of Saint Sava after Divine Liturgy*******

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 03 **Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom** **10:30 AM**

**THIRTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; SAINT MAXIMUS THE CONFESSOR;
MARTYR NEOPHYTES; MARTYRS EUGENE, CANDIDUS, VALERIAN AND AQUILA;
VIRGIN MARTYRESS AGNES OF ROME; MARTYR ANASTASIAS-DISCIPLE OF
SAINT MAXIMUS THE CONFESSOR; MONK NEOPHYTES OF VATOPEDEIA; SAINT
MAXIMUS THE GREEK**

Tone 2

Colossians 3:12-16

Luke 18:35-43

***Litany in Blessed Memory of Milton G. Chicka, Daniel Pysh, Sara Chicka, Nikolai
Pivtoraiko, Anne Cherepko Mazock, & Mary Lokie—Fr. Bob***

BULLETIN INSERT FOR 20 JANUARY 2013
THIRTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; SUNDAY AFTER
THEOPHANY; SYNAXIS OF THE HOLY AND GLORIOUS
PROPHET AND FORERUNNER AND BAPTIST JOHN; SAINT
BRANNOCK OF BRAUNTON

TROPARION—TONE 8

Thou didst descent from on high, O Merciful One!
Thou didst accept the three-day burial to free us from our sufferings!
Our Lord, our Life and Resurrection, Glory to Thee

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

KONTAKION—TONE 8

By rising from the tomb,
Thou didst raise the dead and resurrect Adam.
Eve exults in Thy Resurrection,
And the world celebrates Thy Rising from the dead,
O greatly Merciful One!

PROKEIMENON—TONE 8

READER: Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God!

PEOPLE: Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God!

READER: In Judah, God is known; His name is great in Israel!

PEOPLE: Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God!

READER: Pray and make your vows.

PEOPLE: Before the Lord our God!

ALLELUIA VERSES—TONE 8

Come let us rejoice in the Lord! Let us make a joyful noise to God our Savior!

Let us come before His face with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to Him with psalms.

Father Bob's note—although this was written for December 30th, it's quite appropriate to consider for any Sunday. Why do some people choose NOT to come to church? Illness, weather, etc. are not the subject of this homily by my friend Father Rodney. Fr. Bob

Thirtieth Sunday after Pentecost

Luke 11:47-12:1(NKJV)

"Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. In fact, you bear witness that you approve the deeds of your fathers; for they indeed killed them, and you build their tombs. Therefore the wisdom of God also said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they will kill and persecute.' That the blood of all the prophets which was

shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation. Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter in yourselves, and those who were entering in you hindered." And as He said these things to them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to assail Him vehemently, and to cross-examine Him about many things, lying in wait for Him, and seeking to catch Him in something He might say, that they might accuse Him. In the meantime, when an innumerable multitude of people had gathered together, so that they trampled one another, He began to say to His disciples first of all, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

Sunday of Holy Forefathers

Luke 14:16-24

Then He said to him, "A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready. But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused. And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused. Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore cannot come.' So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind. And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is no room.' Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.'

The Feast of the Nativity of the Lord Jesus Christ is moving closer with each passing day. The Nativity Fast is the period of preparation for the Feast. The heart, the mind and the soul are to be readied for celebrating the nativity of Christ.

Christ taking on human flesh in humble surroundings is a challenge for the mind and the heart. Today's society gives greater attention to material possessions than to the soul. More people seek luxury rather than virtue.

Christ chose a simple place to be born. Christ chose simple surroundings. Christ chose a time when modes of travel were much different. Christ chose to be born when mass production and nuclear technology were not common place.

Believers have to sort through the failing relationships and excesses in society to see the greater value of the life in Christ. Believers need to deal with a society that does not hold basic family structures and human life as valuable.

The heart, the mind and the soul are central to the life in Christ. The heart, the mind and the soul govern the direction a believer's life will take.

Believers are invited with regularity to learn and experience more in God's Holy Church.

Eternal life is of primary interest to serious believers. The Kingdom of God is the chosen goal of devout followers of Christ. Serious believers of the words of Christ seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

(Mt.6:33)

Not everyone accepts invitations to attend opportunities for prayer in God's Holy Church. Not everyone attends Divine services with regularity. Partaking of the Precious Body and Blood of Christ is very limited among believers.

Limits of partaking of the Precious Body and Blood of Christ are self-imposed. Limits are self-created by believers' moderate or minimal religious beliefs. Believers have the opportunity to be continually united with Christ.

The present Gospel of St. Luke gives a glimpse of why believers decline invitations to the banquet at each Divine Liturgy. Care for property, possessions and certain personal interests often keep people from coming to church.

Being united with Christ and growing in Christ requires initiative from believers. Christ constantly extends invitations for believers to draw near. Believers determine whether to accept Christ's invitation.

Numerous decisions to decline the invitations from Christ affect the final outcome of a person's life. The outcome of a person's life is determined by the accumulated decisions made during the course of daily life.

Interest in Christ may increase when an individual faces a crisis, experiences illness or a sudden change of personal circumstances. The Nativity of Christ shows that Christ took the initiative to draw near to humanity to bring lasting change.

Believers decide whether to acknowledge the presence of Christ in the world and whether to ascribe great importance to Christ's nativity. Little time remains to prayerfully prepare for the Feast of Christ's birth.

The Church places great importance on the Nativity of Christ. The Church established the Nativity Fast as prayerful preparation. The Nativity Fast precedes the celebration of the feast which continues for several days afterwards.

Believers' lives are expected to change for the better with the preparation and celebration of this major feast. Stagnancy has no place in the Christian life. Growth in Christ is always expected.

Individuals hungry for Christ make a determined effort to accept invitations from Christ throughout life. The Mother of God readily accepted the honor for which she was chosen. Her life changed forever. The world changed forever.

The birth of Christ changed the world and ushered in a new understanding of life. Christ's virgin birth challenges the human mind. Christ

readily brings newness to lives open to His invitations. Christ joyfully renews hearts, minds and souls.

St. George Serbian Orthodox Church, Carmichaels, Pennsylvania. December 17/30, 2012. Thirtieth Sunday after Pentecost. Sunday of the Holy Forefathers, Serbian Mothers' Day. Father Rodney Torbic



FIRST HOLY E-MAIL

One day God was looking down at earth and saw all of the rascally behavior that was going on...



So He called His angels and sent one to earth for a time.



When the angel returned, he told God, 'Yes, it is bad on earth; 95% are misbehaving and only 5% are not.'

God thought for a moment and said, 'Maybe I had better send down a second angel to get another opinion.'



So God called another angel and sent her to earth for a time.



**When the angel returned she went to God and said, 'Yes, it's true. The earth is in decline; 95% are misbehaving, but 5% are being good...'
God was not pleased.**



**So He decided to e-mail the 5% who were good, because He wanted to encourage them, and give them a little something to help them keep going.
Do you know what the e-mail said?**



Okay, I was just wondering, because I didn't get one either!

Great forbearance in the midst of sorrows and temptations was the mark of Father Ieronymos of Simonopetra (on Mt. Athos), a brave soul with diamond-hard virtues who was unjustly kicked out of his monastery. He found refuge as an animal keeper at Koutloumousiou. From there he went to Kafsokalyvia and lived in a small hut which previously had been used for

storing charcoal. He was chased away from there also and went to the metochion of St. Charalambros in Thessaloniki. In spite of all these sorrows, he never stopped praying for his slanderers and accusers. *from An Athonite Gerontikon*

1.1 This is the fast of the First Born, the first of his victories. Let us rejoice in his coming; for in fasting he has overcome. Though he could have overcome by any means, He revealed for us the strength hidden in fasting, Overcomer of All. For by means of it a man can overcome that one who with fruit overcame Adam; He became greedy and gobbled it. Blessed is the First-Born who encompassed Our weakness with the wall of His great fasting.

Blessed is the King who adorned the Holy Church with Fasting, Prayer and Vigil.

1.2 This is the fast which exalts; which appeared from the First Born So as to extol the younger ones. There is occasion for delight for the discerning ones in fasting; When one sees how much he has grown. Fasting secretly purifies the soul So it can gaze on God and grow by the vision of Him. For the weight that is from the earth, bends it back to the earth. Blessed is He who gave us fasts, The sheer wings by which we fly to Him.

Blessed is the King who adorned the Holy Church with Fasting, Prayer and Vigil.

1.3 Fasting is bright and beautiful for any who bright enough To gaze on God. The Turbid One, stirred up by anything Cannot fix the eye on that Clear One. He who possesses a clear eye He can gaze upon him; as much as it is given to him to gaze. Instead of the clarifying wine, let us clarify our thought So that we will be able to see the Clear One Who overcame the Evil One by means of fasting, that Disturber of All.

Blessed is the King who adorned the Holy Church with Fasting, Prayer and Vigil.

1.4 This is the fast through which greed escapes The peoples at the top of the mountain; clothed in fasting he overcame the Greedy One. Who had clothed himself with the food of Adam's house. The Lord of Victories gave us His weapon, He ascended on high to be an observer. Who would not run to the weapon by which God overcame It is a shameful thing, my brothers, to be bested by the weapon Which overcomes and causes to overcome all creation.

Blessed is the King who adorned the Holy Church with Fasting, Prayer and Vigil.

1.5 Because the enemy is not visible, let us purge our thinking so that he sees that we see him. He is able to steal some of those whom he sees That they have not noticed him. When a soul undertakes a fast, The fast bears it

and gives it back to its counterpart. Amid the volleys of sharpened arrows, hidden from view, the hidden eye is polished to see from whence they come.

Blessed is the King who adorned the Holy Church with Fasting, Prayer and Vigil.

1.6 This is the instructive fast, it teaches the athlete the ways of the contest. Draw near to it, study, learn to struggle shrewdly. Behold he instructed us to fast with our mouths and hearts, Let us not fast from bread and think thoughts in which the hidden poison of death is hidden. Let us confess on the fast day the First Born Who gave us the word of life on which to meditate.

St. Ephraim the Syrian, 4th century, from the First Hymn on Fasting

Gregory was Roman-born, son of Gordian, and came of a noble and devout family. Felix, once bishop of the same apostolic see, a man of high distinction in the Church of Christ, was one of his ancestors, and Gregory maintained this family tradition by the nobility and devotion of his religious life. By God's grace, he employed his recognized worldly position solely to win the glory of eternal honor, for he soon retired from secular life and sought admission to a monastery. There he entered upon a life of such perfection in grace that in later years he used to recall with tears how his mind was set on high things, soaring above all that is transitory, and how he was able to devote himself entirely to the spiritual life.

Remaining in the body, he could yet transcend its limitations in contemplation, and looked forward to death, which most men regard as a punishment, as the gateway to life and reward of his labors. He used to mention this, not in order to call attention to his increase in virtue, but lamenting the loss of virtue sustained in his spiritual life through his pastoral responsibilities. One day, in conversation with his deacon Peter, Gregory described his former spiritual state, then sadly continued: 'My pastoral responsibilities now compel me to have dealings with worldly men, and when I recall my former peace, it seems that my mind is bespattered with the mire of daily affairs. For when I am wearied by attention to the worldly affairs of numberless people and wish to meditate on spiritual things, I seem to approach them with unmistakably lessened powers. So when I compare what I now endure with what I have lost, and when I weigh that loss, my burden seems greater than ever.'

Holy Gregory spoke in this way from deep humility, yet we cannot help but feel that he lost none of his monastic perfection through his pastoral cares, and gained greater merit by his labors for the conversion of souls than in his former peaceful life, especially since, even when he became Pope, he ordered his house as a monastery. When he was first summoned

from his monastery, ordained to the ministry of the altar, and sent to Constantinople as representative of the apostolic see, he never abandoned his spiritual exercises, although compelled to mix with people of the Imperial court. For some of his fellow-monks were so devoted to him that they accompanied him to the Imperial city, and he began to maintain a regular religious observance with them. In this way, as he records, their example proved an anchor-cable that held him fast to the peaceful shore of prayer while he was tossed on the restless waves of worldly affairs, and his studies in their company enabled him to refresh a mind distracted by earthly concerns. He was not only strengthened against the temptations of the world by their fellowship, but inspired to ever greater spiritual activity.

Much might be said of his imperishable genius, which was unimpaired even by the most severe physical afflictions; for while other popes devoted themselves to building churches and enriching them with costly ornaments, Gregory's sole concern was to save souls. He regularly gave whatever money he had to relieve the poor, in order that 'his righteousness might remain forever, and his horn be exalted with honor.'

The Venerable Bede, Ecclesiastical history of the English People St. Gregory I ("the Great" or "Dialogos"), pope of Rome, 590-604 commemorated 12 March, icon and troparion at: <http://comeandseeicons.com/g/pha18.htm>

Neither despair, nor cease praying, but approach even though you are sinful, so that you may glorify the Master and give him the opportunity to show His own lovingkindness when your sins are forgiven. Likewise, if you fear to approach, you have prevented His goodness and impeded His abundant kindness—which indeed belong to you.

St. Nektarios of Aegina (1846-1920)

FOCUS Pittsburgh is getting ready for a big year in 2013! Our latest fundraiser is aimed at raising awareness. We are selling FOCUS Pittsburgh bumper stickers for \$100 each. We're "driving" for visibility throughout the community and we hope our bumper sticker will give you another opportunity to tell others about FOCUS Pittsburgh. To get one, please call our bumper sticker program at (412) 447-1332 and leave a voicemail with your name, address and phone number. As always, your support is needed and greatly appreciated!