



## Holy Ghost Orthodox Church

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## NATIVITY FAST—SAINT PHILIP'S FAST—PILIPKIVA

**ON THE MEND:** Please keep the following parishioners and others in your prayers for recovery from their illnesses and injuries: Archbishop Jovan, 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 George Yatsko, Father Paul Bigelow, Father Emilian Balan, Father John Nakonachny, Father Steve Repa, Deacon Dennis Lapushanski, Protopresbyter William Diakiw, Protodeacon Joseph Hotrovich, Father Adam Yonitch, 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, Sam Wadrose, Isabella Olivia Lindgren, Ethel Thomas, Donna, Erin, Michael Miller, Grace & Owen Ostrasky, Patti Sinecki, David Genshi, Sue Segeleon, Mike Gallagher, Liz Stumpf, Theodore Nixon, Michelle Corba Kapeluck, Linda Hippert & family, Margaret Vladimir, Luke Emmerling, John Sheliga, George Rocknage, Robert McKivitz, Liz Obradovich, Halyna Zelinska [Bishop Daniel's mother], Charlotte, Andrew Mark Olynyk, Deborah Finley, Claire Senita, Eleanor Kelly, Bryan, Nancy Barylak, Patrick Keenan, Khrystyna Chorniy, Anthony Cormier, Nathan Forbeck, Sarah Doyle, Samuel Peters, Jean Stutchell, Charles & Esther Holupka, Wanda Mefford, David Vallor, Henry Faraly, Betty O'Masta, Julie Eiler, 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, 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, Bonnie & Eugene Blair [Pani Gina's parents], Mel & Charlotte Malik, David Hoenshell, Barbara Macino, Shelley Hill, Mikaela Kapeluck, Linda Cawley, Gerald Cogley, Helen Bozo, Corey Guich, Robert Vangrin, Susan "Billie" Mason, Pauline Witkowsky, Sera White, Donald Griffey, Deborah Smith, Nancy & Eric Dunik, Julian Stroz [child with cerebral palsy], 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, David Hiles, Karen Johnson, Jennifer, Jerry Quinn, Cher Mount, Frank & Janet Horrell, Jim Wandling, Susan Bertram, Rita McConnell, Gail, Pete Special, Sirena Sharp, Ron Paulovich, Fred DeNorscia, Sandi Anderson, Donald Uebing, Sabrina, Shirley, Denny Mader, Kareen Milcic, Ella Campbell, Kurt Smith, Tom Hyatt, Kenneth Miller [double-lung transplant], Joan Szymonifka, Jeaneen McCartney Thomson, Peggy Uhring [Eddie Behun's girlfriend], Bill Janiro, Jean Symanko & Wilbur Camback-Andy's sister and uncle, William Lemonakis, Barbara McDougall, and Daria Masur ARNOLD: Stefania Lucci, Steve Sakal, and Homer Paul Kline. We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.

The holy veil, more precious than the ancient Ark of the Covenant, shines more brightly than gold. It is spiritually stretched out by your pure hands, O Lady, mercifully protecting those who assemble today to celebrate your feast. Sessional Hymn, The Protection of our Most Holy Lady Theotokos

**PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS: All Christians and the others in the Middle East who are suffering during this time of great tragedy and unrest. May God watch over and keep them safe! Lord have mercy!**

Since the icon talk was so well received, Alex and Pani Gina suggested having Fr. Bob answer questions of interest to our parish family. Alex will be constructing an "Ask Your Priest" box for your questions that will be placed in the parish basement hall. If you have a question, please write it down and place it in the box. Father Bob will try to answer as many questions as he can at Coffee Hour after Liturgy...if he doesn't know the answer, he will research it and have an answer for the next Sunday! We are all learning every day, so we will continue to learn together! God Bless!  
Fr. Bob

**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, DECEMBER 22                      NO SERVICE IN SLICKVILLE**  
**TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; THE CONCEPTION BY SAINT ANNA OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS; PROPHETESS ANNA-MOTHER OF PROPHET SAMUEL; SAINT SOPHORONIOS-ARCHBISHOP OF CYPRUS; SAINT STEPHEN-THE “NEW LIGHT” OF CONSTANTINOPLE**

*Tone 1*

Galatians 4:22-31, Ephesians 5:9-19

Luke 8:16-21, Luke 17:12-19

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29                      Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom**  
**10:30 AM**  
**TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FOREFATHERS; PROPHET HAGGAI; MARTYR MARINUS OF ROME; BLESSED EMPRESS THEOPHANIA OF BYZANTIUM**

*Tone 2*

Colossians 3:4-11

Luke 14:16-24

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 5      Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom    10:30 AM**  
**TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY;**

*Tone 3*

Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40

Matthew 1:1-25

***Litany in Blessed Memory of Stephen Kuzman & Nicholas Vetosky—Fr. Bob***

## **BULLETIN INSERT FOR 22 DECEMBER 2013**

**TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; THE CONCEPTION BY  
SAINT ANNA OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS; PROPHETESS ANNA-  
MOTHER OF PROPHET SAMUEL; SAINT SOPHORONIOS-ARCHBISHOP  
OF CYPRUS; SAINT STEPHEN-THE "NEW LIGHT" OF  
CONSTANTINOPLE**

### **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!

#### ***A lesson from St. Dimitri of Rostov on Redeeming the Time***

In the life of Saint Dimitri of Rostov, as told in Blessed Bishop Nicolai Velimirovic's Prologue from Ochrid (October 28), we can read that the saint was in the salvific habit of chanting the hymn "O Theotokos and Virgin, Rejoice" every hour when the clock struck.

Of course, he was a monk and even a saint. He lived in a monastery, and led a life dedicated to prayer and the learning and keeping of God's commandments. We poor ones lead a life most often not dedicated to those things which are for the salvation of our souls, but to the cares of this world and self-gratification, even though the evangelical commandments, which St. Dimitri followed so well, apply to all Christians.

We engage in both important and frivolous pursuits, and are often surrounded by people using bad language, and with bad ideas. Everywhere, whether in the office or supermarket, among our families, friends and brethren, or even when alone, temptations, distractions and sinful images assault us. It is very easy to forget WHO WE ARE (that is, who we have as our Father), and to lose a sure knowledge of the presence of God within our hearts as we go about our tasks. Perhaps we say our morning and evening prayers faithfully (perhaps not), but we may go long periods during the day that we do not remember God, or pray even a little bit. To always have the remembrance of God within us is certainly beyond our capabilities for the moment, but we can make a good start by emulating Saint Dimitri's good habit.

Christian! Strive to remember God at least every hour. Purchase a watch which beeps every hour, or a clock with chimes. Decide upon a short prayer or prayers to say every hour when you are "called to prayer." Perhaps you may say "Meet it is," or the Jesus prayer, "Lord Jesus Christ,

Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner," or the prayer of the publican "O God be merciful to me a sinner and cleanse me." You may merely cross yourself and call God to mind. The content or variety of prayers is not so important, and is a matter of personal preference. The important idea here is to somehow shake ourselves out of our lethargy at least every hour, so that we do not forget God.

If you observe this practice faithfully, you will begin to see almost immediate results. You will find yourself praying more often, and able to listen to the prompting of your guardian angel, who previously could not be heard above the din. You may notice with unnerving frequency that you were about to be angry or were gossiping, or about to be mastered by some other passion as the clock strikes. If that is the case, then, you have an opportunity to immediately turn to God, and ask forgiveness, then say "your prayer." It is a much better thing to remember God while sinning, and to turn back to Him, than to keep on sinning and not think about Him.

In our household, everyone has this habit. Every time the wall clock chimes, we cross ourselves. Even our youngest one, Natalie, who is two years old, remembers, and is in fact the self-appointed family sentry who makes sure none of us will forget our duty.

*Notice: This Article first appeared in "Orthodox Family". It may be freely distributed, as long as my name, church and contact information, and this notice are included:  
Fr. Seraphim Holland, St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, St. Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church, PO Box 37, McKinney, TX 75070; [Phone: 972 529-2754](tel:9725292754)*

*Note from Father Bob—the following is included to remind us that saints truly do walk among us, even in modern times! Saint Porphyrios died only 22 years ago! God is marvelous in His Saints!*

**GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA**

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Date: Dec. 16, 2013

**ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE PROCLAIMED TWO NEW SAINTS**

**NEW YORK** – The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America announces to all the Orthodox faithful in America the decision of the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Nov. 27, 2013. The Holy and Sacred Synod, in which His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America participated, entered in the registry of the Saints of the Orthodox Church hieromonk Porphyrios Kafsokalyvitis (1906-1991) whose memory will be celebrated December 2, and

hieromonk Meletios of Ypseni, Rhodes, born at the end of the 18th century and his memory will be celebrated February 12. Following is the official announcement of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

*The Holy and Sacred Synod convened today, Wednesday, November 27, 2013, with His All-Holiness presiding for its regular scheduled meeting, for the purpose of examining items on its agenda.*

*During this session, the Holy and Sacred Synod approved the following:*

*1) The proposal of the Canonical Committee to enter the hieromonks Porphyrios Kafsokalyvitis and Meletios of Ypseni (Rhodes) in the registry of the Saints of the Orthodox Church.*

*2) The voluntary resignation of His Eminence Metropolitan Panteleimon of Belgium from the pastoring of his eparchy and, at the proposal of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to fill the vacancy in the Metropolis of Belgium, elected unanimously His Grace Athenagoras of Sinope as the new Metropolitan of Belgium and Exarch of the Netherlands and Luxembourg.*

*From the Chief Secretariat of the Holy and Sacred Synod*

*With special thanks to Full of Grace and Truth BlogSpot for this fine entry on the life of St. John the Merciful, Patriarch of Alexandria whose feast is celebrated on November 12/25 each year:*

*St. John the Merciful, Patriarch of Alexandria*



***St. John the Merciful, Patriarch of Alexandria - Commemorated on November 12*** (Icon courtesy of [www.eikonografos.com](http://www.eikonografos.com) used with permission)

"Saint John the Merciful, Patriarch of Alexandria, was born on Cyprus in the seventh century into the family of the illustrious dignitary Epiphanius. At the wish of his parents he entered into marriage and had children. When the wife and the children of the saint died, he became a monk. He was zealous in fasting and prayer, and had great love for those around him.

His spiritual exploits won him honor among men, and even the emperor revered him. When the Patriarchal throne of Alexandria fell vacant,

the emperor Heraclius and all the clergy begged St John to occupy the Patriarchal throne.

The saint worthily assumed his archpastoral service, concerning himself with the moral and dogmatic welfare of his flock. As patriarch he denounced every soul-destroying heresy, and drove out from Alexandria the Monophysite Phyllonos of Antioch.

He considered his chief task to be charitable and to give help all those in need. At the beginning of his patriarchal service he ordered his stewards to compile a list of all the poor and downtrodden in Alexandria, which turned out to be over seven thousand men. The saint ordered that all of these unfortunates be provided for each day out of the church's treasury.

Twice during the week, on Wednesdays and Fridays, he emerged from the doors of the patriarchal cathedral, and sitting on the church portico, he received everyone in need. He settled quarrels, helped the wronged, and distributed alms. Three times a week he visited the sick-houses, and rendered assistance to the suffering. It was during this period that the emperor Heraclius led a tremendous army against the Persian emperor Chosroes II. The Persians ravaged and burned Jerusalem, taking a multitude of captives. The holy Patriarch John gave a large portion of the church treasury for their ransom.

The saint never refused suppliants. One day, when the saint was visiting the sick, he met a beggar and commanded that he be given six silver coins. The beggar changed his clothes, ran on ahead of the Patriarch, and again asked for alms. St John gave him six more silver coins. When, however, the beggar sought charity a third time, and the servants began to chase the fellow away, the Patriarch ordered that he be given twelve pieces of silver, saying, "Perhaps he is Christ putting me to the test." Twice the saint gave money to a merchant that had suffered shipwreck, and a third time gave him a ship belonging to the Patriarchate and filled with grain, with which the merchant had a successful journey and repaid his obligations.

St John the Merciful was known for his gentle attitude towards people. Once, the saint was compelled to excommunicate two clergymen for a certain time because of some offense. One of them repented, but the other fellow became angry with the Patriarch and fell into greater sins. The saint wanted to summon him and calm him with kind words, but it slipped his



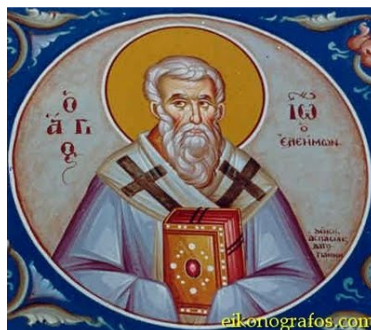
mind. When he was celebrating the Divine Liturgy, the saint was suddenly reminded by the words of the Gospel: if you bring your gift to the altar and remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift before the altar ... first, be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift (Mt. 5:23-24). The saint came out of the altar, called the offending clergyman to him, and falling down on his knees before him in front of all the people he asked forgiveness. The cleric, filled with remorse, repented of his sin, corrected himself, and afterwards was found worthy to be ordained to the priesthood.

There was a time when a certain citizen insulted George, the Patriarch's nephew. George asked the saint to avenge the wrong. The saint promised to deal with the offender so that all of Alexandria would marvel at what he had done. This calmed George, and St John began to instruct him, speaking of the necessity for meekness and humility. Then he summoned the man who insulted George. When St John learned that the man lived in a house owned by the church, he declared that he would excuse him from paying rent for an entire year. Alexandria indeed was amazed by such a "revenge," and George learned from his uncle how to forgive offenses and to bear insults for God's sake.

St John, a strict ascetic and man of prayer, was always mindful of his soul, and of death. He ordered a coffin for himself, but told the craftsmen not to finish it. Instead, he would have them come each feast day and ask if it was time to finish the work.

St John was persuaded to accompany the governor Nicetas on a visit to the emperor in Constantinople. While on his way to visit the earthly king, he dreamed of a resplendent man who said to him, "The King of Kings summons you." He sailed to his native island of Cyprus, and died at Amanthos, the saint peacefully fell asleep in the Lord (616-620)."

(taken from: <http://ocafs.oca.org/FeastSaintsViewer.asp?SID=4&ID=1&FSID=103286>)



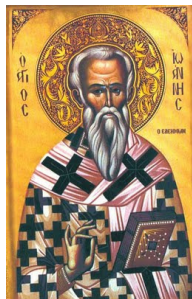
**Icon of St. John the Merciful** (Icon courtesy of [www.eikonografos.com](http://www.eikonografos.com) used with permission)

Before the Saint died, outside of what is today the town of Lemeso in Cyprus (which holds St. John as its Patron Saint) he wrote his will. It is short but very encompassing and moving (*amateur translation of the Greek text from: [http://www.pigizois.net/kiprioi\\_agioi/ioannis\\_o\\_eleimon.htm](http://www.pigizois.net/kiprioi_agioi/ioannis_o_eleimon.htm)*):

*"I thank You, my Lord and God, for you made me worthy to give back the gifts which You gave me. I thank You, for you also heard my prayer and my work now that I am dying is none other than "a third coin"\* , which I order to be given to my poor brothers. When by the grace of God I became bishop of Alexandria, I found in the treasury of my bishopric about 8,000 liters of gold. With the greatly gracious offerings of good-loving men, I established to gather [and distribute] an uncountable amount. All of which, which I knew, is a gift of Christ the king of all, which I returned with assiduity and care towards God, to whom they also belong. To Him I also now commend my soul." \*(possibly a reference to the Parable of the Widow and the Two Mites?)*

For more on St. John the Merciful, especially concerning the **"Judgements of God"** and the **"Judgements of Men"**, see:

<http://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/2009/11/st-john-merciful-on-judgements-of-god.html>. Another note for pilgrims traveling to Meteora in Greece, the Great Meteora Monastery preserves part of the Holy Skull of St. John the Merciful ([http://www.kalampaka.com/gr/meteora/monasteries\\_meteoro.asp](http://www.kalampaka.com/gr/meteora/monasteries_meteoro.asp)). **May St. John intercede for all of us and help us!**



**Icon of St. John the Merciful** (taken from:

[http://christopherklitou.com/icon\\_12\\_nov\\_john\\_the\\_merciful.htm](http://christopherklitou.com/icon_12_nov_john_the_merciful.htm))

**Apolytikion in the Plagal of the Fourth Tone**

*In patiently enduring, you obtained your reward, O venerable father. You persevered in your prayers without ceasing; and you loved the impoverished and you satisfied them. We entreat you, intercede with Christ God, O blessed John the Merciful, for the salvation of our souls.*

**Kontakion in the Second Tone**

*Thy riches and wealth didst thou disperse unto the poor; thou now hast received the Heavens' riches in return. For this cause, O all-wise John, we all honour thee with our songs of praise as we keep thy memorial, O namesake of almsgiving and of mercy.*

(taken from: [http://goarch.org/chapel/saints\\_view?contentid=288](http://goarch.org/chapel/saints_view?contentid=288))



***St. John the Merciful, Patriarch of Alexandria***

([http://www.ruicon.ru/arts-new/icons/1x1-dtl/grecheskaya/svt\\_ioann\\_milostivij/?page\\_19=840&p\\_f\\_11\\_temp\\_id=1&p\\_f\\_11\\_75=1&ref-cat=](http://www.ruicon.ru/arts-new/icons/1x1-dtl/grecheskaya/svt_ioann_milostivij/?page_19=840&p_f_11_temp_id=1&p_f_11_75=1&ref-cat=))

***Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us! Amen!***

Hypocrisy, therefore is a thing foreign to the character of the saints. That it is impossible for those things that are done and said by us to escape the eye of the Deity, He showed by saying: "There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; neither hid that shall not be known." For all our words and deeds shall be revealed at the day of judgment. *St. Cyril of Alexandria*

None of the painful things that happen to us every day will injure or distress us once we perceive and continually meditate on their purpose. It is on account of this that St. Paul says: 'I take delight in weakness, insults and hardships,' (2 Cor. 12:10), and, 'All who seek to live a holy life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution,' (2 Tim. 3:12). *St. Philotheos of Sinai*

**For those who will celebrate Christmas with friends and family next week—please pass on our parish family's wish for peaceful and prayerful celebrations! We ask God to watch over you on your travels and look forward to your safe return when we gather again**

**on December 29<sup>th</sup> to receive the Holy Eucharist together. Be safe and enjoy your friends and family! God Bless!**