

Holy Ghost Orthodox Church

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Very 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: Metropolitan Theodosius [OCA], Archbishop Jovan, Bishop Robert, Father John Harvey, Father Jakiw Norton, Father Dragan Filipović, Father Paul Stoll, Father Igor Soroka, Father Joseph Kopchak, Father Elias Warnke, Father Nestor Kowal, Father George Yatsko, Father Paul Bigelow, Father Emilian Balan, Father John Nakonachny, Father Steve Repa, Protopresbyter William Diakiw, Protodeacon Joseph Hotrovich, Father Adam Yonitch, Pani-Dobrodijka Sonia Diakiw, Father Paisius McGrath, Joshua Agosto and his family, 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, 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, Esther Holupka, Wanda Mefford, David Vallor, Henry Faraly, Betty O'Masta, Julie Eiler, 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 Luciow, Theresa Ditto, Mary Ann Musial, Mary Pelino, Yvonne Christy, Myron & Barbara Spak, Pete Niederberger, Julia Duda, Lisa Pandle, Kris & Julie Hanczar, John Kennedy, Loretta, Nancy, Carol, & Michael Sheliga, Gaelle Kelly, Irma McDivitt, Robin Young, Mckayla, Rachel, Carl & Margaret Reed, 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 Strozh [child with cerebral palsy], Dr. Kirsten Ream, Patricia Corey, Michelle, Katie Swarm, Richard Dunst, Michelle, Patrick, Linda Morris, Howard Simpson, Chris, Pastor Ed Bowen, David Hiles, Karen Johnson, Jennifer, Jerry Quinn, Cher Mount, Frank & Janet Horrell, Jim Wandling, Gail, Sirena Sharp, Ron Paulovich, Fred DeNorscia, Sandi Anderson, Donald Uebing, Sabrina, Shirley, Denny Mader, Ella Campbell, Tom Hyatt, Bill Janiro, Jean Symanko-Andy's sister, William Lemonakis, Barbara McDougall, Alma Wyke, Lindsay Romanczak & family, Virginia Catherine Pyrch, Susan Lucas, Neil Carter & family, James Paluh, Mickie Weikel, Evelyn Krempasky, Tammy Strunk, Loida Esbry, Darlene Chicka Deskins, Drew, Alice & Keith Philipa, Kateryna Kocelko, Nancy Heinbaugh, Mira Filipovic, Lynn, Jacqueline, Irma Opacic, Sharon, Zan Cheng, Jeff Jones, Kristy, Elaine Ellenberger, Donna Cacioppo [Evelyn's niece], Brandon, Anna Tranchine, Demetra, Blase Urban, Catherine Hogel & children, Jennifer & Dylan, Ron Schwartz, Lydia Wilson, Flora Tomlin, Stella Rossi, Howell Swarm, Jane Bielewicz Allred, Manny "Lazarus" Lopez, Glenn & Lucas Burlack, Katie Elizabeth, Mileva, & Michael, Deirdré Straughan, Terri Paluh, Lori & Steve Lucier, Evelyn Felouzis, Kyranna Cherpas, Pastor Bruce Nordeen, Millie Koss Good, Mary Haraczy, Heather Ried, Carla Perry, Linda Elliot, Dennis McDaniel, Mike Mangan, Luke Tinsley, Brent, Tricia, and Jackie Crimbchin. ARNOLD: Stefania Lucci, Steve Sakal, and Homer Paul Kline. We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.

March 6th—Coffee Hour compliments of Martha Persico!

Please remember in your prayers—our dear 'Little Father' Emilian, who returned to Romania to undergo surgery for back pain. This particular procedure is not offered here in the United States. He asked for our prayers and expressed his thanks for the love and fellowship he has shared with the Holy Ghost Parish Family. He said he looks forward to returning to us pain-free at some time in the future...may God watch over him and heal him...Fr. Bob

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!

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!

REMEMBER-PRAYERS ARE <u>ALWAYS</u> <u>FREE!</u>

<u>Communion Fasting:</u> 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, MARCH 06 DIVINE LITURGY OF SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM 10:30 AM MEATFARE SUNDAY—SUNDAY OF THE LAST JUDGMENT; HIEROMONK POLYCARP-BISHOP OF SMYRNA; JAINTS JOHN, ANTIOCH, ANTONINUS, MOSES, ZABINAS, POLYCHRONIUS, MOSES, & DAMIAN-AESCETICS OF THE SYRIAN DESERT; SAINT ALEXANDER-FOUNDER OF THE ORDER OF THE UNSLEEPING ONES

COFFEE HOUR COMPLIMENTS OF MARTHA PERSICO

Tone 7
1 Corinthians 8:6-9:2
Matthew 25:31-46

Litany in Blessed Memory of Mary Smith, John Metrick, Andrew Hanczar, Anna Lawrence, Michael Cicio, Chuck Shumski, Terry Reinhart, Joseph Vangrin, Frank Riznow, & Mike Holupka—Fr. Bob

SUNDAY, MARCH 13 DIVINE LITURGY OF SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM 10:30 AM CHEESEFARE SUNDAY—FORGIVENESS SUNDAY; EXPULSION OF ADAM & EVE FROM PARADISE

Tone 8
Romans 13:11-14:4
Matthew 6:14-21

MONDAY, MARCH 14

GREAT LENT BEGINS

SUNDAY, MARCH 20 HIERARCHICAL DIVINE LITURGY OF SAINT BASIL THE GREAT 10:30 AM FIRST SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT—TRIUMPH OF ORTHODOXY; THE HOLY MARTYRS OF CHERSON: BASIL, EPHRAIM, CAPITO, EUGENE, AETHERIUS, ELPIDUS, & AGATHODORUS; SAINT PAUL THE SIMPLE OF EGYPT-DISCIPLE OF SAINT ANTHONY THE GREAT; SAINT PAUL THE CONFESSOR-BISHOP OF PRUSIAS IN BITHYNIA; SAINT EMILIAN OF ROME

SPECIAL PARISH MEETING AFTER DIVINE LITURGY

Tone 1
Hebrews 11:24-26,32-12:2
John 1:43-51

VESPERS OF THE TRIUMPH OF ORTHODOXY—ST. NICHOLAS GO CATHEDRAL—5
PM

BULLETIN INSERT FOR 06 MARCH 2016

MEATFARE SUNDAY—SUNDAY OF THE LAST JUDGMENT;
HIEROMONK POLYCARP-BISHOP OF SMYRNA; JAINTS JOHN,
ANTIOCH, ANTONINUS, MOSES, ZABINAS, POLYCHRONIUS, MOSES,
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COFFEE HOUR COMPLIMENTS OF MARTHA PERSICO

TROPARION—TONE 7

By Thy Cross, Thou didst destroy death!
To the thief, Thou didst open Paradise!
For the Myrrhbearers, Thou didst change weeping into joy.
And Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God,
To proclaim that Thou art risen, granting the world great mercy!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

KONTAKION-MEATFARE SUNDAY-TONE 1

When Thou, O God, shalt come to earth with glory All things shall tremble and the river of fire shall flow before Thy Judgment Seat;

The Books shall be opened and the hidden things disclosed; Then deliver me from the unquenchable fire And make me worthy to stand at Thy right hand O Righteous Judge.

Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

<u>KONTAKION—TONE 7</u>

The dominion of death can no longer hold men captive, For Christ descended, shattering and destroying its powers! Hell is bound, while the prophets rejoice and cry: The Savior has come to those in faith! Enter, you faithful, into the Resurrection!

PROKEIMENON—TONE 7

READER: The Lord shall give strength to His people! The Lord shall bless

His people with peace!

PEOPLE: The Lord shall give strength to His people! The Lord shall

bless His people with peace!

READER: Offer to the Lord, O you sons of God! Offer young rams to the

Lord!

PEOPLE: The Lord shall give strength to His people! The Lord shall

bless His people with peace!

READER: The Lord shall give strength to His people!

PEOPLE: The Lord shall bless His people with peace!

ALLELUIA VERSES—TONE 7

It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to Thy name, O Most High!

To declare Thy mercy in the morning, and Thy truth by night!

They Who Brag About Being Humble

By St. Paisios of Mt. Athos



The proudest person is not he who brags about himself with pride, but he who brags about being very humble.

He who justifies himself when he makes mistakes, transforms his heart into a demonic refuge and will continue to err, but even more so. If he does not crush his ego, he will be crushed by his egoism to no avail. He who justifies his passions gradually falls seriously ill, his cough even betraying him then.

Whoever is not aware of his sinfulness and brags about himself, suffers from two (spiritual) illnesses, scabies and flakes. No matter how much he wants to cover his wounds and look dignified, the itching harasses him and the abrasions betray him.

Those who do not accept criticism, even from their loved ones, receive the mockery of all those with a worldly attitude, and, in the end become quarrelsome and spiritually useless. They resemble those planks that refuse to be sanded by the carpenter in order to be made into furniture. They end up being used for concrete or as scaffolding, are stepped on, covered with mud until they fall apart and end up in the fire.

He who is very proud, especially when ill tempered, derives no benefit from the very humble when they humble themselves before him; on the contrary, he oftentimes becomes even more insolent. Humility, however, causes even the devil to disappear. This is why Divine Grace deserts the proud and goes to the humble.

He who has a great idea about himself reveals that he is outside of himself (demented), for, instead of being grateful to God for all the good He has given him, he wrongs Him, appropriating for himself the gifts of God.

He who continually boasts about himself continually wrongs himself for he will never have spiritual flights but continual falls, until he collapses, since he does not have a contrite heart and a humble attitude.

All those who don't experience falls in this world and yet have all the pride in the world, reveal that their pride has exceeded its limits (has, in fact, reached a Satanic degree), and that their fall occurred from the back side of a high peak (a luciferian fall).

He who has much pride is worse than one who has a demon, for pride continues to swell until it suddenly bursts, whereas the man with an unclean spirit, besides being tormented and paid back (or collecting his savings, if he is not to blame), is necessarily humbled in the eyes of men, finally being liberated by God, with a twofold profit remaining in his soul.

Pride greatly obstructs the Grace of God. Even a mere prideful thought adulterates our virtues; not unlike when bird droppings fall on fried eggs, making both the fried eggs and the frying pan fit only for the garbage.

Those who are able to endure the very proud without, however, flattering them, are the most humble, the most faithful and just, for they will be continually wronged and looked down upon by the proud.

We owe greater gratitude to those who humble us, wrong us, and douse us with venom, than to those who nurse us with honour and sweet words, or feed us with tasty food and confections, for bile is the best medicine for our soul.

Let us not examine whether we were justly or unjustly embittered, out of love or viciousness, or whether we are at fault slightly or not at all. We

should accept with joy the spiritual benefit that every trial leaves behind, glorify God for everything and be grateful to the people who wrong us.

Blows are necessary for the salvation of our soul because they purify the soul. The more someone scours and scrubs his clothes, the cleaner they get. The same applies to the octopus and the squid; the more you beal them, the softer they become and the more the fluid is washed away.

On the contrary, the worldly caressing of praises is very harmful to souls which are spiritual damaged and the virtuous get paid back in this vain life (with praises) when their virtues are flouted. We should rather receive fewer praises than are our virtues, so that the spiritual scale may incline toward the just on the Day of Judgement, that we might see the face of God.

Woe unto us, when they advertise us; is comely watermelons when we, in fact, within we are pumpkins. (God help you, wretched Paisios!)

Woe, and three times woe, unto him who is careless and gives everyone the impression that he is a saint. In this, he eternally wrongs himself, since when he dies no one will pray for the repose of his soul, even though he will need it; instead, everyone will beatify him. (Unfortunately, I was not careful about this either and have transgressed against my soul. Pray that the Good Lord grant rest to my soul.)

Worldly relaxation and being at ease in our thoughts never bring rest to the soul, neither in the present life, since divine consolation is absent, nor in the life of the age to come. Instead, they begin torturing us in this life and have their end in the eternal and unbearable torment of hell.

He who is wounded because he abased himself in the eyes of others due to his carelessness yet is not hurt because he has wounded Christ, will be continually grieved and downcast, and will fall constantly until he changes his ways and humbles himself. Only then will he be saved from his temporal falls and the eternal descent that awaits him.

Whoever rejoices when admired by people is mocked by demons.

No one will ever find spiritual fruits in a vainglorious man, but if he does find some, they will be hollow. For the humble man, however, to be in spiritual poverty is to have spiritual riches.

Worldly people, who feed their bodies with rich Food and their souls with flattering words, remain hungry and spiritually empty. The thrones and power they pursue will be left behind in this vain world. They will be I'll

alone with their dreams, which will torture them more in the next life, having become the cause of their toil of heavenly goods. Those, however, who struggled spiritually, preferred plain food and a humblestool (instead of thrones) and sat themselves down on the seat — judging their own selves — are released from the trial of the Righteous Judge on the Day of Judgement and inherit Paradise as children of God who have philotimo.

When we seek to be justified in this life and avoid being rebuked, we reveal that the worldly way of thinking is still robust within us. This sorrow has no repentance whatsoever but rather seeks human recognition, which poisons the soul and body with the bitter gall that it exudes.

Whoever weeps with philotimo, because he has wounded Christ with his sins, immediately receives divine consolation, in proportion to the degree of his sorrow.

Until a sensitive soul who has philotimo is spiritually strengthened, it is not benefited by the detailed analysis of its faults because the evil one wars against it using its hypersensitivity, in order to induce anxiety. The evil one does not go against the grain in this case, but goes with the flow. In other words, he tries to increase the cries and distress in order to cause grief to the soul and strangle it with anxiety.

Women, naturally, are warred against more due to the over-sensitivity that the evil one fosters, inasmuch as their very tender heart and their less logical minds, in comparison to men, do not help them. (Men have more logic and toughness but a less sensitive heart.)

If it happens, however, that there is a woman who has a sharpened mind in devilishness, and who has by nature more wickedness and less love, and yet considers these traits as manliness and brags about them, then — God forbid — she can surpass both the Pope in infallibility and Mussolini in brutality.

The worst enemy, even greater than the devil, is evil-ness combined with pride, because not only does this defile the virtues and render them useless, but exhausts the body as well, and plunges the soul into hell.

Just as a small hole in a tin causes food to spoil, because air seeps in, similarly, a single prideful thought, if it crosses our mind, puffs us up and makes us boastful, rendering the virtues useless.

Most of the time, egotism causes us the greatest spiritual harm, because egotism is the most vigorous and wrongheaded child of pride. Of course, if the "I" did not exist and human beings used only the "you, he or she" humility, love, and the blessing of God would exist in the world and people would then live a heavenly life on earth. May the Good God grant this blessing to His creatures. Amen.

- Elder Paisios of Mt. Athos

The Meaning of Memorial Services

Praying for our Departed Loved Ones by Fr. Luke A. Veronis

At no matter what age of life we die, we always see death as a distortion of our existence. Death portrays a horrible tragedy because it is the fruit of evil in the world. We were not created to die. When Almighty God created the first man and woman in his own image and likeness, he meant for all humanity to live for eternity with Him. Since God has no end, He desired for His beloved creation to dwell in His infinite love forever. This is why, deep within each of us, we all sense an innate desire for life!

From this perspective, death is fearful, and something we despise. And yet, although we can see death as the greatest evil, St. Paul counsels us "not to mourn as those who do not have hope." He advises us to never despair over the dead, because "if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus." (1 Thess 4:14)

Here is the essence of our Christian faith and the Good News we proclaim week after week. "Christ is Risen from the dead, **trampling down death by His own death**, and granting life to those in the tombs!"

For all of us who have believed in Christ and walked with Him in the newness of life here and now, death becomes but a doorway into a fuller union with Him. This is why St. Paul could say, "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain." (Phil 1:21) The Apostle Paul goes on to say, "If we have been united [through baptism] in the likeness of Christ's death, we also shall be [united] in the likeness of His resurrection. (Rom 6:4-5)

Today, I want to talk about the topic of death because I want to relate it to the Memorial Services we do so often at the end of our Sunday Divine Liturgies. We all have loved ones who have passed away, and as a Church we never forget them. At each Divine Liturgy, I remember all the faithful who have died and passed on. On their anniversaries, like the 40 day memorial that we offer today for Kosta Magaritidis, or the 17 year

anniversary, which we also offer today for Kosma Hadjoclou, we remember the departed, and pray for them.

Why? What is the purpose of our memorial service and why do we pray for the dead?

To answer this question, I first want us to understand clearly how we, as Orthodox Christians, view death itself. Then, I will explain why we remember the dead continuously, and pray for them.

Although death is the culmination of evil in our world, for Christians our faith in Jesus Christ transforms death. For one who is united to our Lord here on earth, death is no longer a fearful and tragic conclusion of one's life. It is but an entranceway into a new beginning!

I remember a story my parents told me about their first travel abroad. My father and mother had only been married for half a year, and my mother was several months pregnant, when both got on a boat heading towards Greece, so that my father could study at the University of Athens. Both my parents remember vividly the scene of their farewell, as they leaned on the rail of the ship waving goodbye to tearful family and friends. Many mixed emotions passed through their minds as the ship slowly sailed away, and the figures of their loved ones got smaller and smaller in the horizon. During the long journey which followed, my parents became anxious about their separation from family, their pregnancy, and their new life in Athens.

When they arrived at the port of Piraeus many days later, however, their anxieties and concerns were washed away as other relatives and family friends **lovingly waited to receive them in their new country.**

Death itself may seem like an uncertain, even fearful journey, and yet as Christians we know who awaits us on the other side. Our Lord Jesus Christ is there, lovingly waiting, with His arms outstretched, ready to embrace us in deeper union with Himself, and welcome us into our eternal home.

As Christians, we can face death with hope, knowing that our loving, all merciful and compassionate Lord awaits us! Divine love is greater than death. St. Paul even dares to say, "Death has been swallowed up in victory!" The victory of divine love.

Well, this same love is central to understanding the role of the Memorial Service in the Orthodox Church. **We remember and pray for**

the dead because of God's divine love for us, and our sacred love for one another. As the famous French writer and Catholic reformer Leon Bloy once wrote, "To say to a person 'I love you' is tantamount to saying 'you shall never die."

We express our love to our departed ones through our prayers to reaffirm that those who have died are not dead to us, nor to God. Our love for one another continues even after death. Metropolitan Anthony Bloom so beautifully explains, "A person bereaved must learn never to speak of the love relationship that existed before in the past tense. One should never say 'We loved one another.' We should always say 'We love each other.' If we allow our love to become a thing of the past, we have to recognize that we do not believe in the continuing life of the person that died."

St. Paul teaches, "Love never ends." The Church understands well this precept, and therefore, continues to pray for the dead always. Since love never ends, our prayers never end; our communion with the departed never end; our union with them through Christ never ends.

Our prayers for the dead reveal in a most beautiful way our understanding of the Church as the Body of Christ both here on earth and in heaven. We are one Church, which includes those struggling here on earth, together with those who now live in fuller union with God in paradise. Just as we pray for one another here on earth, we also pray for those who have departed. The Body of Christ is not just the members who we see each week in Church. The Church is also the saints who we see in the icons, and the beloved faithful who have died and live in Christ. That is why before each Divine Liturgy, when I am preparing the bread which will be used for Holy Communion, I offer prayers for each one of you by name, as well offer prayers for the names of many who have died. There is no separation in our prayers for the living and the dead. Divine love unites us all together, as one Church.

So we hold Memorial Services and pray for the dead because we love! Now, I know some people will say, "OK, I understand we pray for the dead because our love for them never ends, but do our prayers actually help those who have died?"

Sincere prayer unites us to God, and when we pray for others, we believe our prayers can help others in their own union towards their Creator.

Fr. Thomas Fitzgerald, a professor at Holy Cross Theological School, writes, "Death alters but does not destroy the bond of love and faith which exists among all the members of the Church. Orthodoxy believes that through our prayers, those "who have fallen asleep in the faith and the hope of the Resurrection" continue to have opportunity to grow closer to God.

Therefore, the Church prays constantly for her members who have died in Christ. We place our trust in the love of God and the power of mutual love and forgiveness. We pray that God will forgive the sins of the faithful departed, and that He will receive them into the company of Saints in the heavenly Kingdom."

Of course, some who have died have not lived a righteous life of faith and love in Christ Jesus. Even for such as these, we still pray with hope. We know that God's unfathomable mercy and love is immeasurably greater than any sin or shortcoming of a person, no matter how evil. *Therefore, by turning to this ocean of love in prayer, we believe as Orthodox Christians that our prayers in some way, and this way may be a part of the mystery of God, our prayers bring in some way comfort and benefit to the person we pray for!*

Love compels us to pray for one another, with hope and with faith. And death can never stop this!

As a symbol of this hope we have for the dead, it is traditional for the family to bring a bowl of boiled wheat to the Church for the Memorial Service. This wheat, known as kollyva in Greek, reminds us of the words of our Lord Jesus Christ spoke, "Unless the grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much fruit." (Jn 12:24)

Death is not the end, and our Memorial Service concretely proclaims this fact!

A SPECIAL THANK YOU to everyone who took time to come and clean and polish something at our parish spring-cleaning this past Friday! May God reward you a thousand-fold for your love for our church! God Bless you all and thank you again!!!