

# **St. Mary's Orthodox Church**

217 First Street – Coaldale Pa 18218-1602

Phone.....570-645-2772

**OUR WEBSITE...[www.stmarysnativity.org](http://www.stmarysnativity.org)**

Rector: V. Rev. James Weremedic  
Retired Attached: V. Rev Paul Ropitsky  
Choir Director: Wash King

**Sunday, April 5, 2020**

**5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent**

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**Prokeimenon – Tone 1 – Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us  
as we have set our hope on Thee.**

Epistle Readings: Hebrews 9:11-14 and Galatians 3:23-29

Gospel Readings: Mark 10:32-45 and Luke 7:36-50

***Glory Be To Jesus Christ!***

***Glory Be Forever!***

**All liturgical services are cancelled until further notice!**

**This includes Divine Liturgy, Akathist, Vespers, Parastas, etc. and all meetings and events at the church are CANCELLED.**

Please read the **Epistle, Gospel and Scripture Readings** on OCA website or use your bible with the Readings listed on the Church Calendar during this period of time.

**As Metropolitan Tikhon's address on the OCA.ORG website, St. Mary's Orthodox Church will not hold services until further notice. Streaming of services will be available by going to the DOEPA.ORG website and follow the instructions or OCA.ORG website and click on Coronavirus Resources (right side of page). Scroll down to Liturgical and Spiritual Resources and Several OCA churches doing live streams.**

**Please use this time to read the Scriptures, pray in your home and please pray for those on our prayer list.**

**Prayer List: HEAVENLY FATHER ... Physician of our souls and bodies, Who has sent your only begotten Son to heal every sickness and infirmity, visit us and heal us, Your servants, from all physical and spiritual ailments through the grace of Your Son Jesus Christ; grant to us patience in this sickness, strength of body and spirit, and recovery of health. Lord, You have taught us through Your word to pray for each other that we may be healed. You are the source of healing and to You, we give glory; to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Matushka Lovey Ropitsky, Matushka Lisa Weremedic, Michael Birocik, James Blair, Terry Blair, Clark Bogosh, Theodore Bogosh, Jane Bubernak, Cecil Buchanan, Stephanie Chmel, Edward Conarty, Irene David, Ilene Devine, Gloria Ferri, Julia Forte, Olga Hebda, John King, Claire Kononchuk, Michael Kulick, John Kushnir, Helen Macenka, MaryAnn Macenka, Mary Maholick, Alexandra Miller, Courtney Miller, Mildred O'Shura, Anna Pisko, Helen Scheese, Melissa Schmitt, Althea Shellock, Helen Suda, Martha Stafiniak, Martha Teno, Nancy Vanno, Russell Wishousky, Russell Yallas, & Richard York

**Please contact Fr. James Weremedic with any emergencies or concerns at 570-645-2772.**



**Local On-line Services:**

**Christ the Saviour Orthodox Church – Harrisburg, PA**

Reader's Vespers – Sat. at 5 PM

Typica Reader's Service – Sun. at 9:30 AM (copy of service is on their website and OCA website)

See home page / Facebook of their website for replays and live stream services  
May need to click on the word "videos"

**Holy Apostles Orthodox Church Home / Facebook – Mechanicburg, PA**

Presanctified Liturgy – Wed. at 6:30 PM and Fri. at 6:30 PM

Divine Liturgy – Sunday at 9:30 AM

**St. Nicholas Orthodox Church – Mogadore, OH – You Tube**

Services every day of the week – Mon. to Fri. at 7:00 PM

Sat. Great Vespers at 5:00 PM; Sun Divine Liturgy at 10:00 AM

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**Thank you very much for all the cards, prayers, and well-wishes for my 98<sup>th</sup> birthday.**

**I really appreciated them. Hope everyone stays healthy and safe.**

**With Love, Olga Sidorik**

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7-Day Vigils/Altar ... For *These will be rescheduled when services resume.*

Altar Candles... In

Eternal Lamp... In

Vigil Crosses ... For

7-Day Vigils/Tetrapod... In

Decorated Candles/Tetrapod... In  
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**If anyone is in need of a priest please call Father James Weremedic at 570-645-2772 .....**

**Visitation of the Sick and Infirm:** If you are going into the hospital for any reason, please inform Fr. James at the Rectory. **Emergency Calls: Please call the Rectory (570-645-2772) anytime (day or night) in an emergency**

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**Financials March 23-30, 2020 Operating Acct:** -Dues 160 – Candles 0 – Weekly 400 – Non-Env 190 – Holy Days 0

- Altar Candles 10 – Initial Offering 0 – Donations 150 = Total **\$ 910.00**

Building Fund 0- ...Charity Donation 0- ...Furnace Fund 0- ...Cemetery 0...Flowers 0 ... **Thank you.**  
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**April Birthdays:** 3- Anna Pisko, 4- Elizabeth Warcholak, 10- Jackie Babinetz, 14- Marie Yurchak, 16- Mary Evetushick, 17- Julie McHugh, 22- Martha Teno, Amanda Skripnek, 23- Britney Miller, Anne Ostrosky, 24- Dennis Vavra

**April Wedding Anniversaries:** None  
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***Please keep filling your church envelopes  
or Checks can also be sent to the Church.***

***March Income –\$6,201.57; March Expenses - \$9,958.61***



## **April 5 – The Raising of Lazarus**

***“The resurrection of Lazarus has an important place in the church’s calendar with the approach of Passion Week. But this story, with its elements of love, devotion, sickness, death and final glory, touches a tender spot in the human heart. It is no wonder that in many churches this event is recalled during funerals.***

***Our vivid icon portrays what is written in the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter of John’s Gospel. The majestic Figure of Christ is shown at the cave, depicted beyond the wall of Bethany. Several groups of figures are identifiable in the scene. With Christ are the Apostles who had accompanied the Lord to the grave. At the feet of Christ are the sorrowful sisters of Lazarus, Mary and Martha, who had appealed to Jesus to come. They poured out their sorrow saying: ‘Lord, if You had been here, our brother would not have died.’ Near the cave are other people who are about to witness this miracle of restoration.***

***The figure of Lazarus, bound with burial clothes, is depicted in the icon. The burial garments are clutched by one of the figures, in obedience to the command of the Lord: ‘Loose him and let him go.’ Another figure is involved with the removal of the stone at the door of the cave.***

***Death obeys the command of the Lord of Life and releases Lazarus. The words of our Saviour ring out: ‘Lazarus, come forth!’ And so, we have a preview of the Lord’s victory over death in His own resurrection. It is also a preview of the ‘resurrection on the last day,’ when all who have believed and loved the Lord will be restored.***

***Word spread quickly of this glorious miracle. However, as it is with human nature, there still were unbelievers. As the coming week will prove, from that day on they plotted our Saviour’s death.***

*The Orthodox Weekly Bulletin .... Vestal, Cliffwood, New Jersey...USA*

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### **Some Thoughts on the Crisis and the Call of the Corona Virus:**

**A Reflection by His Grace Bishop Alexis of Bethesda**

The Bishops of the Holy Orthodox Church love their flocks and ever strive to lead them to well-watered and rich pastures. They care for them, body and soul. In so doing, they are following their Master Christ who not only “cast out unclean spirits,” but also healed “all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.” (Matthew 10:1). In the Gospels, we see that Christ sometimes treated the soul first and the body second; at other times, the body first and the soul second. In the presence of the highly contagious and potentially lethal corona virus, the Bishops’ concern is for the bodily welfare of their people lest even a single lamb be needlessly lost. This is not from a lack of faith or dearth of compassion, but from unwavering faith and an abundance of compassion. Compassion is expressed in giving each sinner the time necessary to repent, for in “hell there is no repentance” (Saint John of Damascus). Faith is expressed in the certainty that our Lord can always be in our midst, that He can always be by our side, for the Psalmist proclaims, “If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there” (Psalm 139:8). And if I am shut up in my home away from Church, “Thou art there,” even as the Lord was there for and with the Apostle Peter when he was locked up in prison, so He is there for and with us. During times of uncertainty, anxiety, and fear, we naturally turn to God for refuge, peace, and courage. This is our birthright as baptized Orthodox Christians. Indeed, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear though the earth should change” (Psalm 46:1-2). With the corona virus, the earth has changed, but we



do not fear. The faithful are isolated in their homes, physically separated from loved ones, and even unable to gather together as the Church for the celebration of the mysteries, but we do not fear, for God remains our refuge, our peace, and source of courage. Many are understandably discouraged and downcast about the decision to ban eucharistic gatherings in Church for the sake of the health of our neighbor whom we love. Yet, God remains our refuge, our peace, and our source of courage. Within this trial, this threat to so much that we hold so very dear, there is a call that is given and a promise that beckons. But to hear that call and see the fulfillment of that promise, we need to approach our Savior as His faithful children have always approached Him, not with self-righteous indignation or self-pitying despondency, but with humble, patient hope. The call is to prayer of the heart. The promise is the purifying and illumining grace of the Holy Spirit. In the emphasis on more frequent communion over the past forty years, we might be tempted to neglect the necessary ongoing moment-to-moment inner communion with Christ by prayer, that talking with Him and walking with Him that characterized most of the lives of the Apostles before and after the institution of the Mystical Supper. Many of our greatest saints were deprived of Holy Communion for periods of time that for us would be unbearable to contemplate, but that for them were periods of continued growth from glory to glory, because they were never without Holy Communion with Christ through prayer. Prayer is not easy; it requires concentration, dedication, and love, but through the gates of prayer, we can touch Christ, Christ can touch us, and we can be healed. It is imperative for us all to learn to serve Liturgy at the Altar of the heart and the time is now at hand. During this crisis of the corona virus, we are given the opportunity to become men and women of deep prayer. We are given the occasion to "enter into our closet, and when we have shut the door, pray to our Father which is in secret" (Matthew 6:6), offering Him our repentance, our gratitude, and our love. We can come to understand that "prayer is a safe fortress, a sheltered harbor, a protector of the virtues, a destroyer of passions. It brings vigor to the soul, purifies the mind, gives rest to those who suffer, consoles those who mourn. Prayer is converse with God, contemplation of the invisible, the angelic mode of life, a stimulus towards the divine, the assurance of things longed for, 'making real the things for which we hope'" (Theodore, the Great Ascetic, Century 1:61). As Saint Sophrony of Essex puts it, "prayer is infinite creation, far superior to any form of art or science. Through prayer we enter into communion with Him that was before all worlds...Prayer is delight for the Spirit." (On Prayer, 9). The Elder Aimilianos whose love for the Divine Liturgy was incomparable once said, "It is pointless to go to Church, unnecessary to attend Liturgy, and useless to commune, when I am not constantly praying" (The Church at Prayer, 14). A spiritual life of private prayer is not a monastic prerogative, but the common inheritance of all the faithful. The saintly elder further notes, "The harm that befalls us if we do not know how to pray is incalculable. Incalculable? It is the only harm from which we suffer. There is no catastrophe that can compare to it. If all the stars and all the planets were to collide with one another, and the universe to shatter into smithereens, the damage would be far less than that which befalls us if we don't know how to pray" (The Church at Prayer, 10). The threat of the virus perhaps can open our eyes to the threat of not knowing how to pray to God in our heart. The threat of the virus may turn into a blessing that can enliven our spiritual life. The temptation before us is to deafen our ears to this call to active, arduous prayer to approach God and instead to prefer more passive, easier ways for God to approach us. Now is not the time to try to devise any means to avoid this prayer in private, but it is the time to heed the call to prayer in our heart to the God of our heart. There is a rich, inner world beckoning to us, a world where God is all in God. Let's take the gift of this time to enter into that world. And if we do so, when we come together for the Divine Liturgy with a yearning magnified by distance apart, that Liturgy will be more radiant and more angelic than anything we have known before. Through a deep life of inner prayer, we will indeed learn how to set aside all earthly cares, that we may receive the King of all.



**April 5, 2020**

**FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT — Tone 1. St Mary of Egypt.** Martyrs Agathopodes the Deacon, Theodulus the Reader, and those with them, at Thessalonica (ca. 303). Ven. Publius of Egypt (4th c.). Ss. Theonas, Simeon and Phorbinus, of Egypt (4th c.). Ven. Mark the Anchorite, of Athens (400). St. Plato the Confessor, of Studion (814). Ven. Theodora of Thessalonica (892). Translation of the Relics of St. Job, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia (1652).

**Troparion — Tone 8**

The image of God was truly preserved in you, mother, / for you took up the Cross and followed Christ. / By so doing, you taught us to disregard the flesh, for it passes away, / but to care instead for the soul, since it is immortal. / Therefore your spirit, holy mother Mary, Rejoices with the angels!

**Kontakion — Tone 3**

Having been a sinful woman, / you became through repentance a Bride of Christ. / Having attained angelic life, / you defeated demons with the weapon of the Cross. / Therefore, most glorious Mary, you are a Bride of the Kingdom!

**Galatians 3:23-29 (Epistle, Saint)**

But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

**Hebrews 9:11-14 (Epistle)**

But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

**Luke 7:36-50 (Gospel, Saint)**

Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner." And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." So he said, "Teacher, say it." "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five

hundred denarii, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?" Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have rightly judged." Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little." Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

#### **Mark 10:32-45 (Gospel)**

Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid. Then He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him: "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again." Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying, "Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask." And He said to them, "What do you want Me to do for you?" They said to Him, "Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory." But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They said to Him, "We are able." So Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared." And when the ten heard it, they began to be greatly displeased with James and John. But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."