

**St. Mary's Orthodox Church**  
**217 First Street – Coaldale Pa 18218-1602**  
**Phone.....570-645-2772**  
**OUR WEBSITE...www.stmarysnativity.org**

**Rector: V. Rev. James Weremedic**  
Retired Attached: V. Rev Paul Ropitsky

**Sunday, December 11, 2022**  
Choir Director: Wash King

**26<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (12<sup>th</sup> of Luke)**

*Glory Be to Jesus Christ!*

*Glory Be Forever!*

***Services:***

Sunday, December 11- 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy and Fellowship; **Special Parish Meeting**

Saturday, December 17- 4:00 PM – Great Vespers and Confessions

Sunday, December 18- 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy, **Parastas**, and Fellowship

In memory of Benjamin Macalush offered by the Herbert Family

In memory of Sophie Herbert offered by the Herbert Family

In memory of John & Rose Bench offered by the Bench Family

Saturday, December 24- 4:00 PM – **Great Compline (Christmas Eve)** Eve of the Nativity

Sunday, December 25- 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy and Fellowship (Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ)

Saturday, December 31- 4:00 PM – Great Vespers and Confessions

Sunday, January 1- 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great and New Year's Dinner

We WELCOME all our visitors today! We want to let you know that we are so glad you came to pray with us. Please come again; join us after the Divine Liturgy in the Church Hall for Coffee Hour. If you do not have a home church, we invite you to become a part of our Church Family. Please Note: Only those Orthodox Christians who have properly prepared themselves may approach the Chalice and receive Holy Communion.

**Prayer List:**

Fr. James Weremedic, Matushka Lisa Weremedic

Andrew Balliet, Michael Birosik, Clark Andrew Bogosh, Theodore Bogosh, Danielle Bogosh, Emmalyn Naomi Buchanan, Evanna Jane Buchanan, Stephanie Chmel, Ilene Devine, Nadine Fegley, Julia Forte, Michael & Julia Harahus, Karen Harkins, Nancy King, Russell King, Michael Kulick, Olga Kushnir, Anna Marie Mantey, Mildred O'Shura, Dale Renninger, Melissa Schmitt, Althea Shellock, Olga Sidorik, Mary Simone, Martha Stafiniak, Martha Teno, Michael Teno, Elizabeth Warcholak, Russell Wishousky, Russell Yallas, George Yurchak, & Marie Yurchak.

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.

**Candles (December 11)**

7-day Vigils-Altar... In memory of **Mary & Andrew Yelsh** offered by William Yelsh

Altar Candles... For the Good Health of **Stephanie Chmel** offered by Helen & Wash King

Eternal Lamp... In memory of **Andrew & Mary Bybel Family** offered by Family Members

Vigil Crosses... In memory of **Marion Pickenheim** offered by William Yelsh

7-day Vigils-Tetrapod... In memory of **John O'Shura** offered by Millie O'Shura & Family

Decorated Candles/Tetrapod- In memory of **Andrew & Mary Bybel Family** offered by Family Members

**December Birthdays:** 9- Odess Remington, 11- Stephanie Chmel, 16- Sbdn James Weremedic, 22- Karoline Vavra, 28- Sophia James

**Financials 12/4/22: Operating Acct:** Candles 77 - Altar Candles 240 - Offerings 536

Non-Envelope 290 - Holy Days 47 - Christmas 250 - Donation 40 = Total \$1,480.00.

Poinsettias 50 Building Fund 1

Please continue to keep filling your church envelopes. Thank you!

**Fellowship Hour Hosts:**

December 11 Lena Berezniak

December 18 Michael Tatusko

December 25 Gloria Bench

There is a sign-up sheet for Fellowship Hour in the vestibule if you would like to host.

**If you have not ordered Poinsettias yet and would like to do so, please send your request "For the Health of \_\_\_\_\_" or "In memory of \_\_\_\_\_" to:**

St. Mary's Orthodox Church, Attn: Financial Secretary, 217 First Street, Coaldale, PA 18218-1602, by Saturday, December 17, 2022; so, your name can be included on the List of Donors. Price is \$10.00.

If you have any Redner receipts, please call or get them to Helen King

Please use your Boyer's card when shopping at Boyers; if you need one call Helen King

There is a sign-up sheet in the back of the church to sign up for the **New Year's Dinner** being held after Divine Liturgy on January 1, 2023. Everyone welcome!!!

**Please use Amazon Smile when ordering from Amazon.**

❖ ❖ A SHEPHERD OF A CHRISTIAN FLOCK ❖ ❖

The First Ecumenical Council of the Christian Church was summoned by the Emperor Constantine in the year 326 to deal with problems of the Early Church. Oh, how the roads to the city of Nicea must have looked! They were filled with some 318 leaders of the Faith. It was a sight to behold. Some of the Bishops rode on fine horses, while others trailed slowly on foot; some were garbed with robes while others had threadbare cloaks; some were vigorous and healthy, while others bore on their bodies the scars of persecution and suffering.

Among the most unusual and remarkable of Bishops was **ST. SPYRIDON**, the hierarch from the island of Cyprus. He had been a shepherd before becoming a Bishop, and he remained one after, including the shepherding of his Christian flock. He concerned himself with the education and Christian nurture of young and old, and the Church grew under his wise leadership. St. Spyridon also distinguished himself in the awe inspiring company of the Council, where he forcefully defended the Faith and helped reconcile differences in the group.

Called a **WONDER-WORKER**, St. Spyridon suffered during the persecutions to the Church in the fourth century. He was arrested and taken to a prison, beaten there so fiercely that he lost an eye. Then the Romans consigned him to hard labor in the mines. There he suffered for years, and at last fell asleep in the Lord, firm in his faith in Christ. His tomb is on the island of Corfu, his body preserved even after sixteen centuries, and is still carried in solemn procession on his feastday as crowds gather to honor him.

**26<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST Tone 1. Sunday of the Forefathers.** Ven. Daniel the Stylite of Constantinople (489-490). Ven. Nikon the Dry of the Kiev Caves (Near Caves—12th c.). Martyrs Mirax, Aepsius and Aithalas, of Egypt (7th c.). Ven. Luke the New Stylite of Chalcedon (ca. 970-980).

## Sunday of the Forefathers

Commemorated on December 11

The Sunday that falls between December 11-17 is known as the Sunday of the Holy Forefathers. These are the ancestors of Christ according to the flesh, who lived before the Law and under the Law, especially the Patriarch Abraham, to whom God said, "In thy seed shall all of the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:3, 22:18).

**Troparion — Tone 2** - By faith You justified the Forefathers, / when through them You betrothed Yourself beforehand to the Church of the Gentiles. / The saints boast in glory, / that from their seed there is a glorious fruit: / she who bore You without seed. / By their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls.

**Kontakion — Tone 6** – You did not worship the graven image, / O thrice-blessed youths, / but shielded by the ineffable Essence, / you were glorified in your trial by fire. / In the midst of the unbearable fire you called upon God, crying: / "Hasten, O compassionate One. / and in Your mercy, come to our aid, / for You can do so if You will."

### Colossians 3:4-11 (*Epistle*)

**When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.**

Therefore, put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth.

Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but **Christ is all and in all.**

### Luke 14:16-24 (*Gospel*)

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 I 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 in 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 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.'"

## OCA Parishes to Take Collection for the Diocese of Alaska

December 11, 2022, the Sunday before the feast day of Saint Herman of Alaska, marks the first of an annual collection for the Diocese of Alaska.

At the 20th All-American Council in Baltimore, MD, His Grace Bishop Alexei held a forum updating the Church on the challenges facing the Diocese of Alaska. In the face of such serious difficulties, the council passed the following resolution:

“Whereas Alaska is the cradle of Orthodoxy in America: Be it resolved that the 20th AAC asks the Holy Synod of Bishops to designate annually the Sunday closest to the December feast of Saint Herman, for a free-will collection from each parish in the Orthodox Church in America to support the Diocese of Alaska Clergy Endowment.”

The Diocese of Alaska is the birthplace of the Orthodox Christianity in North America and the mother diocese of the Orthodox Church in America. The entire Orthodox Church in America owes much to the Church in Alaska for its continuous faith and witness since Saint Herman and the first missionaries arrived in 1794.

In gratitude to the Alaskan faithful, and in fraternal love toward our fellow brothers and sisters in need, parishes of the OCA are asked to give generously on December 11, 2022.

For more information, see His Grace Bishop Alexei’s appeal below:

Christ is in our midst!

At the 2022 All-American Council, His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon, graciously gave me the blessing to make a presentation on behalf of the good Orthodox native peoples of Alaska. I spoke at length about their heroic and often heart-breaking struggles to be faithful to the Orthodox faith in the face of physical and emotional abuse from heterodox missionaries and a government not supportive of their culture and “foreign” religion, our common Orthodox faith. I referred to the difficulties of the faithful remaining Orthodox in communities who not only have no priest to serve the liturgy or hear their confessions, but who also face pressures from protestant pastors who prey on our native peoples and disparage their faith. I also spoke about the conditions of my clergy whose salaries are \$26,000 below the poverty line for a family of four in Alaska. And about these conditions, I seek your help.

Through the generosity of your parish and your parishioners, we can begin to change this situation by your assistance in establishing the Alaskan Native Rural Clergy Stipend Endowment. By conservative estimates, we can provide our Alaskan rural priests with an additional \$80/month from the interest of a one-million-dollar endowment. That may not seem like a very large increase, but for a priest with a \$7,200/year stipend, it is a 13% increase, raising his stipend to \$8,160/year. This is more than tithe, a tithe that your parish can offer to America’s “poor Saints in Jerusalem,” to the land through which Orthodox sanctity first reached our shores.

If every parish and community in the Orthodox Church in America would pledge \$100/month for two years, we will be able to establish the Clergy Stipend Endowment. Alternatively, it can be established if each parish could simply locate twelve donors to offer a one-hundred-dollar donation once a year for two years. His Beatitude has already personally pledged \$10,000 a year to help this fund be established. In practical terms, this supplement will enable your parish to provide a warm coat for a child, a little more heating fuel for a warm home in below freezing weather, or just some store-bought food on the table. I was told that a Yupik parent told his child who expressed the desire to be a priest, “Son, you’ll be poor, your entire life. I don’t want to see you destitute.” Establishing this fund is a response, a clear response, that our Church strives to take care of her own.

I ask that you share this information with your parish and your parish council. If you have parishioners who desire to give alms for themselves or their loved ones, please share it with them as well. Please help these your brothers and these your sisters, living lives that would be hard for many of us to imagine. Their parishioners offer what they can, but most villagers are unemployed and struggle themselves with poverty. Help and they will be sincerely grateful. Help and their children will be grateful for milk on the table. Our Lord is asking your help in the persons of these priests and our Lord will bless you accordingly for helping Him feed and clothe those in need.

May God bless you richly for your kindness and generosity to those in need.

For your convenience, this is the link to our website: [odoso.org/current-fund-raisers](https://odoso.org/current-fund-raisers). You may also donate by mail.

Gratefully Yours in Christ,

+ALEXEI

Bishop of Sitka and Alaska