

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, February 13, 2022

Choir Director: Wash King

34th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – TONE 1
Glory Be to Jesus Christ!* *Glory Be Forever!

Services:

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| Sunday, February 13 | 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy – Publican and Pharasee |
| Sunday, February 20 | 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy – Prodigal Son
Followed by Parish Council Meeting |
| Sunday, February 27 | 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy – Sunday of the Last Judgment (Meatfare)
Followed by Parastas |
| Sunday March 6 | 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy – Forgiveness Sunday
Followed by Forgiveness Vespers |

Prayer List:

Matushka Lovey Ropitsky, Matushka Lisa Weremedic,
Andrew Balliet, Michael Birosik, Clark Andrew Bogosh, Theodore Bogosh, Emmalyn Naomi Buchanan,
Evanna Jane Buchanan, Stephanie Chmel, Irene Davis, Ilene Devine, Julia Forte, Karen Harkins, John
King, Michael Kulick, John & Olga Kushnir, Nancy Lorchak, MaryAnn & Paul Macenka, Mary Maholick,
Mildred O'Shura, Melissa Schmitt, Lynn Sharpe, Althea Shellock, Olga Sidoriak, Mary Simone, Martha
Stafiniak, Martha Teno, Michael Teno, Elizabeth Warcholak, Russell Wishousky, Russell Yallas, &
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.

CONFESSION

Confessions have resumed with minor modifications. Please call the rectory at 570-645-2772 and talk to Father James for a reservation. Call between 9:30 AM and 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Individual schedule times will be spread out during the week. Husband and wife can be scheduled together. Anyone wanting to have a confession, but has concerns of COVID-19, should contact Father James to make the appropriate accommodations.

Candles (February 13)

7-Day Vigils/Altar... In memory of **Dorothy King** offered by Millie O'Shura

Altar Candles... In memory of **Aunt Olga Hebda** offered by Raymond & Mary Jo Danchak

Eternal Lamp... In memory of **Mother, Mary Lutash** offered by Raymond & Mary Jo Danchak

Vigil Crosses... For the Health of **Marie Skripnek** offered Ted Bogosh

7-Day Vigils/Tetrapod... For the Health of **Betty (Bogosh) Renninger** offered by Ted Bogosh

Decorated Candles/Tetrapod- In memory of **Helen Herbert** offered by the Herbert Family

February Birthdays: 1- Michael Kulick, 3- Michael Tatusko, 7- Ira James, 9- Wendy Kulick,
15- Claire Remington, 22- Peter Harahus, 26- Catherine Hedes, 26- George Yurchak (97)

Financials 2/6/22:

Candles 41, Altar Candles 20, Offerings 550, Non-Envelope 155, Holy Days 30 = Total \$796.00.

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

"Everybody in my church contributes freely," said a pastor to his friend. "You sure have a wonderful church," replied the friend. "Not quite," said the pastor. "Some contribute their time and money. Other contribute their criticism."

The Gospel lesson today tells of two people who criticized. The Pharisee criticized the publican. The publican criticized himself. The Pharisee who criticized others was condemned. The publican who criticized himself was saved. As someone said, "The trouble with most of us is that we would rather be ruined with praise than be saved by criticism." God gave us the ability to criticize in order that we may apply it mainly to ourselves and not to others. The only person you really know anything about in order to be able to criticize properly is yourself.

(Meet Jesus in the Sunday Gospels, by Anthony M. Coniaris, p. 255, with minor edits)

SAM'S CLUB MEMBERSHIPS

Sam's Club memberships are available for \$40.00 per year. Please see Helen King if you are interested in a membership through the church, or call 570-645-9484 by February 15, if possible.

Please use Amazon Smile when ordering from Amazon.

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.

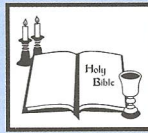


OUR LENTEN JOURNEY BEGINS!



The Feast Day of the Resurrection of Our Lord is annually preceded by a lengthy period known as Great Lent. Many Christians, however, may not be aware that the Church also prescribes a PRE-LENTEN period to further emphasize the theme of REPENTANCE for us. In essence, then, our "journey to Pascha" begins today!

During Matins on this, the first of our four pre-lenten Sundays, we hear the following words sung: "OPEN UNTO ME THE GATES OF REPENTANCE, O GIVER OF LIFE." We are reminded that a "change of spirit" is necessary for us to fully understand and appreciate the joyful message of the Resurrection of Christ. The parable of the PUBLICAN AND PHARISEE is placed before us today, pointing out to us that our Lord can dwell only in a contrite and humble heart. The proud and haughty attitude of the Pharisee



will not be tolerated by our loving Savior.

The Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee plays a significant role in the liturgical life of our Holy Church, for it is on this day that use of a special service book called the TRIODION begins. The Triodion is followed until Holy Saturday. Literally defined as "a song of three odes", the Triodion is structured in this manner to symbolize the Holy Trinity. The various hymns in these services remind us of how mankind sinned and fell out of God's grace. Ultimately we were redeemed by our Lord's death and His ensuing Resurrection.

The icon of the Mystical Supper on today's Bulletin serves to remind us that, as we progress through the pre-lenten and lenten seasons, we must fondly look forward to the day when we will partake at the Lord's table in His Heavenly Kingdom.



PRE-LENTEN SUNDAYS

PRE-LENTEN SUNDAYS

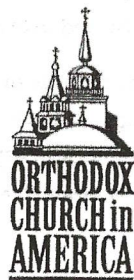
We know that we are approaching the beginning of Great Lent when we hear at the Sunday Divine Liturgy the reading from Luke 19:1-10 concerning Zacchaeus, the tax collector. The *Sunday of Zacchaeus* is the first of the pre-Lenten Sundays which takes us, step by step, to the beginning of Great Lent and, ultimately, to Pascha.

TO SEE JESUS

We begin with this particular lesson because Zacchaeus himself begins his repentance with a simple desire: he wanted to see Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ was passing by and a great crowd had gathered. Zacchaeus wanted to see Christ, but the crowd was great and Zacchaeus was short, so he climbed into a tree, thereby enabling himself to look at the Master above the heads of the crowd. Christ saw him, called him down and visited his house—much to the shock of those who knew that Zacchaeus was a great sinner. But Zacchaeus repented; he returned four times as much as he had stolen, gave the remainder of his possessions to the poor, and became a true disciple of Christ.

The message of this lesson is clear: everything begins with the simple desire to see Christ. Nothing can happen without this desire. We must desire to see Christ as well. This is our



first step toward the approaching Great Lent and Pascha.

TO SEE OURSELVES

Nothing begins without the desire to see Jesus Christ, and when we truly see Him, then and only then are we able to see ourselves. This is the second step in our approach to Great Lent and Pascha and the theme of the second pre-Lenten Sunday.

The Gospel reading for this, the *Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee*, is taken from Luke 28:10-14. Two men went to the temple to pray—a publican and a pharisee. The pharisee was a very religious man. He fasted, prayed, and gave away ten percent of his goods. Yet, he boasted about his accomplishment, and as a result, he was rejected by God. The publican, on the other hand, was truly evil—a genuine sinner. He sought to make a change in his life, however, by confessing his sinfulness and begging God for mercy. As a result, he was justified and accepted by God.

Like the Pharisee, we too are filled with pride and boastfulness; unlike the publican, we often refuse to acknowledge our sinfulness, confess it, and beg for mercy.

On this Sunday we are invited to take a deeper look inward, to search the depths of our souls,

and beg for mercy. We are called, through our vision of Jesus Christ, to acknowledge our sins and to fall down before the face of God in repentance, making the publican's prayer our own: "God be merciful to me, a sinner!"

TO SEE WHAT WE MUST DO

Having acknowledged our sins and sought the Lord's forgiveness, we now see that we are called to action. We must return to God, our Father, Who willingly and lovingly accepts us if only we make the slightest motion to return home to Him. This is the theme of the third pre-Lenten Sunday.

In the Gospel lesson for the *Sunday of the Prodigal Son*, Luke 15:11-32, we are presented with a young man, who against his father's advice, had taken all of his possessions and wasted them through foolishness. As a result, he had to resort to caring for pigs and found himself sharing the food which the pigs refused to eat. However, "he came to himself" and remembered life as it was at his father's house. He returned home, hoping only to be accepted as a servant. His father ran to meet him, kissed his son, clothed him regally, and celebrated his return with much festivity for, in the words of his father, "my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found."

TO SEE OUR REWARD

The next Sunday of the pre-Lenten season is the *Sunday of the Last Judgment*. On this day we read in the Gospel lesson, Matthew 25:31-46, the conditions upon which we will be judged by Jesus Christ. We see, therefore, the conditions of the reward for our righteousness. We see what we must do in our lives on earth and are challenged to undertake a lifestyle which will bring us to eternal life on the day of Jesus Christ's Second Coming—the day of universal and eternal resurrection.

For I was hungry and you gave Me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed Me, I was naked and you clothed Me, I was sick and you visited Me, I was in prison and you came to Me... Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these, My brethren, you did it to Me (Matthew 25:35-36, 40).

On this we are judged. By recognizing Christ in those around us and by treating them accordingly, we attain salvation. We see Christ. We see ourselves. We return to the Father who shows us His Son in the least of our brothers and sisters.

TO SEE GOD'S FORGIVENESS

On *Forgiveness Sunday*, the last of the pre-Lenten Sundays, we contemplate our separation from God—our expulsion from paradise. The services for this day continually resound with this theme as recorded in Matthew 6:14-21. We find ourselves cast out of paradise, sitting outside in the darkness and apart from the God Who is the source of Life and Light. We are weeping. We desire forgiveness. We seek mercy. And so we must ourselves forgive and be merciful.

If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses (Matthew 6:14, 15).

The whole of Great Lent, as the whole of life, is a movement toward resurrection in paradise. We may enter only if God forgives us our sins—and God will forgive us if we forgive others. With forgiveness not only in mind, but in action, we enter the season of Great Lent.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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SUNDAY OF THE PUBLICAN AND THE PHARISEE — Tone 1. Beginning of the Lenten Triodion. St. Seraphima (Sezhenovo, Russia—1877). Saints Martinian, Zoe, and Photina of Caesarea in Palestine (5th c.). Ven. Stephen (in monasticism Simeon), the Myrrhusher, Prince of Serbia (1199). St. Eulogius, Archbishop of Alexandria (607-608). Appearance of Christ to Saint Martin of Tours (316).

Kontakion — Tone 4

Let us flee from the pride of the Pharisee! / And learn humility from the Publican's tears! / Let us cry to our Savior, / have mercy on us, / only merciful One!

2 Timothy 3:10-15 (Epistle)

But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra – what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me.

Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Luke 18:10-14 (Gospel)

“Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men – extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector.

I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’

And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’

I tell you; this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee *Beginning of the Lenten Triodion*

The Sunday after the Sunday of Zacchaeus is devoted to the Publican and the Pharisee. At Vespers the night before, the *Triodion* (the liturgical book used in the services of Great Lent) begins.

Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee who scrupulously observed the requirements of religion: he prayed, fasted, and contributed money to the Temple. These are very good things, and should be imitated by anyone who loves God. We who may not fulfill these requirements as well as the Pharisee did should not feel entitled to criticize him for being faithful. His sin was in looking down on the Publican and feeling justified because of his external religious observances.

The second man was a Publican, a tax-collector who was despised by the people. He, however, displayed humility, and this humility justified him before God (Luke 18:14).

The lesson to be learned is that we possess neither the Pharisee's religious piety, nor the Publican's repentance, through which we can be saved. We are called to see ourselves as we really are in the light of Christ's teaching, asking Him to be merciful to us, deliver us from sin, and to lead us on the path of salvation.

Two weeks before the beginning of the Fast, as part of our preparation for Great Lent, Holy Week, and Pascha, the Church prescribes the reading of Saint Mark's Gospel. From Monday to Friday the focus is on the end times, and the Savior's death and burial.

Saints Martinian, Zoe, and Photina of Caesarea in Palestine

Saint Martinian went to live in the wilderness at the age of eighteen, not far from the city of Caesarea in Palestine. For twenty-five years, he devoted himself to ascetic deeds and silence, and he was granted the gift of healing illnesses and casting out demons. However, the Enemy of the human race would not stop troubling the holy ascetic with various temptations.

One day a prostitute overheard some citizens of Caesarea speaking of Saint Martinian's virtuous life, so she asked them why they were amazed by it. She said that he went to live in the desert because he could not endure the temptations of the flesh in the city. Furthermore, she made a wager with them that she could topple this pillar of virtue with her beauty and seduce him.

She came to him one night, dressed in shabby clothes, pretending that she had lost her way in the storm, and asking for shelter. Reluctantly, the saint allowed her to enter his cell, because he did not wish to be the cause of her death. He went into the inner room of his cell, telling her she would have to leave in the morning. After chanting Psalms according to his Rule, he went to sleep on the floor, but he was disturbed by carnal thoughts. Meanwhile, the wicked guest opened the bag she had been carrying and changed into her beautiful clothes and adorned herself with jewels.

When morning came, Saint Martinian came out to send the woman away. Though he was tempted by the woman's beauty, he was determined not to fall into sin. Lighting a fire, he stepped into it, saying, "You want me to burn with temptation, but I will not give in to it. Instead, I choose to burn in this fire in order to preserve my purity and to escape the unquenchable fires of Hell."

Saint Zoe

The woman was astonished at the lengths Saint Martinian was willing to go, and she realized how evil she was. She repented and asked the saint to guide her onto the way of salvation. He told her to go to Bethlehem, and enter the convent founded by Saint Paula (January 26). There she lived as a nun for twelve years in strict asceticism until her blessed repose. The woman's name was Zoe.

After his burns healed, Saint Martinian went to an uninhabited rocky island, and lived on it under the open sky for several years, nourished by the provisions brought by a certain sailor from time to time. In return the monk wove baskets for him.

One day a ship was wrecked by a powerful storm, and a woman named Photina floated to the island on pieces of the wreckage. Saint Martinian helped her to survive on the island. "Remain here," he told her, "For, I am leaving you bread and water, and in two months a boat will come and return you to the mainland."

Saint Martinian refused to stay on the island with the woman, believing that it would be better to drown than to burn with lust. He jumped into the sea and swam away, and a pair of dolphins carried him to dry land. Thereafter, Saint Martinian led the life of a wanderer. Later, he came to Athens and fell ill. Sensing the approach of death, he went into a church and lay upon the floor. God revealed to the Bishop of Athens who Saint Martinian was, and the hierarch buried his body with honor. This occurred around the year 422.

As for Saint Photina, she did not board the ship when it came to the island, electing to stay there by herself. She asked the captain of the ship to have his wife bring her men's clothing and some wool, promising to make clothes for his family. She also asked the woman to bring her bread and water in addition to the other supplies.

Saint Photina lived on the island for six years, and then she went to the Lord. Two months after her repose, the captain and his wife found her incorrupt relics and brought them to Caesarea in Palestine. He had a vision which revealed many details of Saint Photina's life, which he shared with the bishop. Then they buried her with great honor and reverence.