

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 6, 2022

Choir Director: Wash King

33rd SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – TONE 8

Glory Be to Jesus Christ!

Glory Be Forever!

Services:

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Sunday, February 6 | 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy – Zacchaeus Sunday |
| Sunday, February 13 | 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy – Publican and Pharasee |
| Sunday, February 20 | 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy – Prodigal Son |
| 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 Bogosh, Theodore Bogosh, Emmalyn Buchanan, Evanna 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 2)

7-Day Vigils/Altar... In memory of **Anna Pisko** offered by Michael Pisko
Altar Candles... For the Health of **Helen King** offered by Ted Bogosh
Eternal Lamp... For the Health of **Irene Puschak** offered by Ted Bogosh
Vigil Crosses... For the Health of **Wash King** offered Ted Bogosh
7-Day Vigils/Tetrapod... For the Health of **John & Peggy Lampman** offered by Ted Bogosh
Decorated Candles/Tetrapod- In memory of **Andrew & Mary Bybel Family** offered by Family Members

Candles (February 6)

7-Day Vigils/Altar... For the Health of **Sue O'Shura** offered by Millie O;Shura
Altar Candles... In memory of **Andrew & Mary Bybel Family** offered by Friends
Eternal Lamp... In memory of **Peter Wyshosky, Sr.** offered by Julia Forte
Vigil Crosses... In memory of **Andrew & Mary Bybel Family** offered Family Members
7-Day Vigils/Tetrapod... In memory of **Nicholas Sagan** offered by Eleanor Sidoriak
Decorated Candles/Tetrapod- In memory of **Harry Wyshosky, Jr.** offered by Julia Forte

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 1/23/22:

Operating Acct: Candles 37 - Altar Candles 60 - Offerings 1,722 - Non-Envelope 150
Holy Days 42 - Donations 170 = Total \$2,181.00.

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

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.

"I SHALL BRING UPON THE EARTH A FLOOD"

The story of NOAH and the great Flood is one of the best known of all biblical tales. We read in the Book of Genesis concerning the wickedness and corruption of mankind that existed during that period of time. An angry God issued a warning: repent and correct your ways, or suffer the consequences. After 120 years passed without any change in man's attitude and actions, the Creator of all decided to destroy the works of His hands by sending a flood upon the earth.

Among the entire human race, only Noah and his family remained faithful to God. For their obedience and loyalty, God promised to spare their lives. Noah was instructed to build an ark, which would provide safety for him, his family and two of every species of animal and bird when the rains came. The dimensions of the ark are astounding: 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high!

For 40 days and nights the rain fell, destroying everyone and everything except those in the ark. After some 150 days, the waters slowly began to recede. The ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat, which are located in present-day Turkey. Still, Noah remained in the ark. After a year had passed, he released a dove from the ark. That evening, the dove returned with a branch from an olive tree in its beak as a sign of God's reconciliation with mankind. After waiting 7 days, Noah released the dove again. When it did not return, Noah knew that it had found a home. The earth was dry again! Noah and his family left the ark and immediately offered a sacrifice to God. In return, God blessed His righteous servant, and promised never to destroy the world with a flood again, sealing His promise by sending a beautiful rainbow! We should note that nearly all ancient civilizations give some account of the world-wide flood in their writings.

33rd SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 8. Afterfeast of the Meeting. Sunday of Zacchaeus. St. Bucolus, Bishop of Smyrna (ca. 100). St. Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople (891). Ven. Barsanuphius the Great and John the Prophet (6th c.). Virgin Martyr Dorothy, two sisters—Christina and Callista, and Theophilus, at Cæsarea in Cappadocia (288-300). Martyr Julian of Emesa (312). Virgin Martyr Fausta, and with her, Evilasius and Maximus, at Cyzicus (305-311). Virgin Martyrs Martha and Mary, and their brother Lycarion, in Egypt.

1 Timothy 4:9-15 (*Epistle*)

This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.

For to this end, we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe.

These things command and teach. Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all.

Luke 19:1-10 (*Gospel*)

Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho.

Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich.

And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. So, he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house."

So, he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully.

But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner."

Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold."

And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Sunday of Zacchaeus

The paschal season of the Church is preceded by the season of Great Lent, which is also preceded by its own liturgical preparation. The first sign of the approach of Great Lent comes five Sundays before its beginning. On this Sunday the Gospel reading is about Zacchaeus the tax-collector. It tells how Christ brought salvation to the sinful man, and how his life was changed simply because he "sought to see who Jesus was" (Luke 19:3). The desire and effort to see Jesus begins the entire movement through Lent towards Pascha. It is the first movement of salvation.

Our lenten journey begins with a recognition of our own sinfulness, just as Zacchaeus recognized his. He promised to make restitution by giving half of his wealth to the poor, and by paying to those he had falsely accused four times as much as they had lost. In this, he went beyond the requirements of the Law (Ex. 22:3-12).

The example of Zacchaeus teaches us that we should turn away from our sins, and atone for them. The real proof of our sorrow and repentance is not just a verbal apology, but when we correct ourselves and try to make amends for the consequences of our evil actions.

We are also assured of God's mercy and compassion by Christ's words to Zacchaeus, "Today salvation is come to this house" (Luke 19:9). After the Great Doxology at Sunday Matins (when the Tone of the week is Tone 1, 3, 5, 7) we sing the Dismissal Hymn of the Resurrection "Today salvation has come to the world," which echoes the Lord's words to Zacchaeus.

Zacchaeus was short, so he climbed a tree in order to see the Lord. All of us have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). We are also short in our spiritual stature, therefore we must climb the ladder of the virtues. In other words, we must prepare for spiritual effort and growth.

Saint Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople

Saint Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople, “the Church’s far-gleaming beacon,” lived during the ninth century, and came from a family of zealous Christians. His father Sergius died as a martyr in defense of holy icons. Saint Photius received an excellent education and, since his family was related to the imperial house, he occupied the position of first state secretary in the Senate. His contemporaries said of him: “He so distinguished himself with knowledge in almost all the secular sciences, that it rightfully might be possible to take into account the glory of his age and compare it with the ancients.” Michael, the young successor to the throne, and Saint Cyril, the future Enlightener of the Slavs, were taught by him. His deep Christian piety protected Saint Photius from being seduced by the charms of court life. With all his soul, he yearned for monasticism.

In 857 Bardas, who ruled with Emperor Michael, deposed Patriarch Ignatius (October 23) from the See of Constantinople. The bishops, knowing the piety and extensive knowledge of Photius, informed the emperor that he was a man worthy to occupy the archpastoral throne. Saint Photius accepted the proposal with humility. He passed through all the clerical ranks in six days. On the day of the Nativity of Christ, he was consecrated bishop and elevated to the patriarchal throne. Soon, however, discord arose within the Church, stirred up by the removal of Patriarch Ignatius from office. The Synod of 861 was called to end the unrest, at which the deposition of Ignatius and the installation of Photius as patriarch were confirmed.

Pope Nicholas I, whose envoys were present at this council, hoped that by recognizing Photius as patriarch he could subordinate him to his power. When the new patriarch proved unsubmitive, Nicholas anathematized Photius at a Roman council.

Until the end of his life Saint Photius was a firm opponent of papal intrigues and designs upon the Orthodox Church of the East. In 864, Bulgaria voluntarily converted to Christianity. The Bulgarian prince Boris was baptized by Patriarch Photius himself. Later, Saint Photius sent an archbishop and priests to baptize the Bulgarian people. In 865, Saints Cyril and Methodius were sent to preach Christ in the Slavonic language. However, the partisans of the Pope incited the Bulgarians against the Orthodox missionaries.

The calamitous situation in Bulgaria developed because an invasion by the Germans forced them to seek help in the West, and the Bulgarian prince requested the Pope to send his bishops. When they arrived in Bulgaria, the papal legates began to substitute Latin teachings and customs in place of Orthodox belief and practice. Saint Photius, as a firm defender of truth and denouncer of falsehood, wrote an encyclical informing the Eastern bishops of the Pope’s actions, indicating that the departure of the Roman Church from Orthodoxy was not only in ritual, but also in its confession of faith. A council was convened, censuring the arrogance of the West.

In 867, Basil the Macedonian seized the imperial throne, after murdering the emperor Michael. Saint Photius denounced the murderer and would not permit him to partake of the Holy Mysteries of Christ. Therefore, he was removed from the patriarchal throne and locked in a monastery under guard, and Patriarch Ignatius was restored to his position.

The Synod of 869 met to investigate the conduct of Saint Photius. This council took place with the participation of papal legates, who demanded that the participants sign a document (Libellus) condemning Photius and recognizing the primacy of the Pope. The Eastern bishops would not agree to this, and argued with the legates. Summoned to the council, Saint Photius met all the accusations of the legates with a dignified silence. Only when the judges asked him whether he wished to repent did he reply, “Why do you consider yourselves judges?” After long disputes, the opponents of Photius were victorious. Although their judgment was baseless, they anathematized Patriarch Photius and the bishops defending him. The saint was sent to prison for seven years, and by his own testimony, he thanked the Lord for patiently enduring His judges.

During this time the Latin clergy were expelled from Bulgaria, and Patriarch Ignatius sent his bishops there. In 879, two years after the death of Patriarch Ignatius, another council was summoned (many consider it the Eighth Ecumenical Council), and again Saint Photius was acknowledged as the lawful archpastor of the Church of Constantinople. Pope John VIII, who knew Photius personally, declared through his envoys that the former papal decisions about Photius were annulled. The council acknowledged the unalterable character of the Nicene-Constantinople Creed, rejecting the Latin distortion (“filioque”), and acknowledging the independence and equality of both thrones and both churches (Western and Eastern). The council decided to abolish Latin usages and rituals in the Bulgarian church introduced by the Roman clergy, who ended their activities there.

Under Emperor Basil’s successor, Leo, Saint Photius again endured false denunciations, and was accused of speaking against the emperor. Again deposed from his See in 886, the saint completed the course of his life in 891. He was buried at the monastery of Eremia.

The Orthodox Church venerates Saint Photius as a “pillar and foundation of the Church,” an “inspired guide of the Orthodox,” and a wise theologian. He left behind several works, exposing the errors of the Latins, refuting soul-destroying heresies, explicating Holy Scripture, and exploring many aspects of the Faith.