

**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, January 1, 2023**  
Choir Director: Wash King

**29<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

*Glory Be to Jesus Christ!    Glory Be Forever!*

***Services:***

Sunday, January 1-	9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great and New Year's Dinner
Thursday, January 5-	4:00 PM – Great Compline (Theophany Eve)
Friday, January 6-	9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy – Theophany – Blessing of Water
Saturday, January 7-	4:00 PM – Great Vespers and Confessions
Sunday, January 8-	9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy, Oath of Office for Church Council & Auditors, followed by Fellowship Hour
Saturday, January 14-	4:00 PM – Great Vespers and Confessions
Sunday, January 15-	9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy and Fellowship Hour
Sunday, January 22--	9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy, Parastas and Fellowship Hour

***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, Ashley Buchanan, 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 Sidoriak, Mary Simone, Martha Stafiniak, Martha Teno, Michael Teno, Joseph Tosca, 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 (January 1)**

7-day Vigils-Altar...For the Good Health of **Fr. James Weremedic & Family** offered by  
Terri Bogosh & Gloria Bench

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

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

Vigil Crosses...In memory of **Mother, Mary Lutash** offered by Raymond & Mary Jo Danchak

7-day Vigils-Tetrapod...In Thanksgiving for my wife, **Anna** offered by Edward Pierson

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

### **Candles (January 6)**

7-day Vigils-Altar...For the Good Health of **Ted Bogosh & Family** offered by

Terri Bogosh & Gloria Bench

Altar Candles... In memory of **Mat. Lovey Ropitsky** offered by Fr. Paul & Michael Ropitsky

Eternal Lamp... In memory of **John & Anna Bogosh** offered by Family Members

Vigil Crosses...In memory of **John Bench, Jr.** offered by Gloria Bench & Family

7-day Vigils-Tetrapod...Good Health for the **Seminarians of our Diocese** offered by Anonymous

Decorated Candles/Tetrapod- In memory of **John & Margaret Secara** offered by Pat Palinchak

**January Birthdays:** 2- Tommy Shanosky, 3- Allysa Vavra, 7- Ted Bogosh (98), 13- Dr. Ronald Berezniak,  
21- Helen Sheers

**January Anniversaries:** 9- Wash & Helen King, 23- Russell & Geri King

**Financials 12/24-25/22: Operating Acct:** Candles 84 - Altar Candles 30 - Offerings 1,270

Non-Envelope 223 - Holy Days 69 – Christmas 1,265 – Donations 320 = Total \$3,261.00.

Building Fund 40 – Initial Envelope 20

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

### **Fellowship Hour Hosts:**

January 1 **New Year's Dinner**                      January 8 John Evetushick

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



**Home Blessing: Please use the 2023 Home Blessing Sign-up Sheet in the vestibule for those who want their homes blessed. Fr. James will call to set a day and time.**

Wall calendars for 2023 are in the back of the church

Boxes of offering envelopes for 2023 are in the back of the church.

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.

## THE IDEAL TIME FOR SPIRITUAL STRENGTH

**I**t took over three hundred years before Christianity became the official religion of the civilized world. Many lives were lost and many struggles were recorded. One guiding light during this critical point in Church history was SAINT SYLVESTER.

Sylvester was ordained Bishop of Rome at the age of 30. By his wise teachings and pious example, he led his flock to the pastures of salvation. Sylvester is remembered for the reformation of certain Christian customs. Among them, he is credited with abolishing fasting on Saturday. He decreed that only Holy Saturday and those Saturdays falling within fasting periods be observed.

Saint Sylvester's service occurred during the reign of Constantine the Great. The Emperor was not a Christian yet, but a pagan. Unlike the rulers before him, Constantine did not condone the brutal persecution of our Lord's followers. As time went on, he increased his interest in the Christian faith. Following a vision of Christ holding a banner with a cross and inscription reading, "In this sign conquer," Constantine was victorious in battle. It was Sylvester who was instrumental in the CONVERSION and BAPTISM of the Emperor and his mother, Helen.

Sylvester peacefully entered into the Heavenly Kingdom in the year 335. This was just 11 years after the founding of the Byzantine Empire. Thankfully, the triumph of our holy Faith was witnessed by this God-fearing servant.

*The Orthodox Weekly Bulletin . . . . . Vestal, Cliffwood, New Jersey . . . . . Litho in U.S.A.*

O Hierarchy, Saint Sylvester, you are an icon of meekness  
and a teacher of temperance. You have achieved the  
heights by humility and riches by poverty.

**29<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST Tone 4 The Circumcision of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.  
St. Basil the Great, Archbishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia. Sunday before Theophany.**

**2 Timothy 4:5-8 (Epistle, Sunday Before)**

But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

**Colossians 2:8-12 (Epistle, Circumcision)**

Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.

For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power. In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

**Mark 1:1-8 (Gospel, Sunday Before)**

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the Prophets: "Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You. The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; make His paths straight.'" John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.

Now John was clothed with camel's hair and with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, "There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose.

I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

**Luke 2:20-21,40-52 (Gospel, Circumcision)**

Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them. And when eight days were completed for the circumcision of the Child, His name was called JESUS, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him. His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover.

And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast. When they had finished the days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know it; but supposing Him to have been in the company, they went a day's journey, and sought Him among their relatives and acquaintances. So, when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him.

Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. So, when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously." And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them. Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

## Communal House Blessings

By Vicki Jones [Parish Ministry Resources - Communal House Blessings - Orthodox Church in America \(oca.org\)](http://ParishMinistryResources.com)

The center of worship for a family is often the home, perhaps the holiest place there is. The home is where you gather with family to eat, to raise a family, to read the word of God. Jesus said, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him" (John 14: 23). After Theophany, the home also becomes a center of celebration during the annual house blessings. This service is not only a time for a family to gather and renew the home as a holy site; it can also become an opportunity for the parish community to rejoice in the Lord together. Borne of necessity last year, the house blessings for the families of Holy Trinity Orthodox Church in Overland Park, Kansas, became real occasions of celebration in our new experience of communal house blessings.

Since the time between Theophany and the beginning of Great Lent last year was extremely brief, our pastor, Fr. Timothy Sawchak, came up with a solution to demands on his limited time. Holy Trinity is a widespread parish with mostly working families who wish to have their houses blessed in the evening; therefore, practicality forced this innovation, which allows Fr. Tim to bless up to four houses in one night and still have dinner! Precedence for this innovation was in Fr. Tim's former assignment where each year a family would invite a different family from the parish to share the house blessing and dinner. Fr. Tim suggested that four families in close geographic proximity join together. He had one central family organize the evening and the logistics, and then give him the itinerary, since it is difficult to organize this type of event one person at a time. On a designated schedule, Fr. Tim blessed the first three houses and then all four of the families gathered at the final destination. There, a large group was present for the house blessing and also for the potluck dinner immediately following.

This has proven to be a very successful opportunity for networking and meeting new families. This also provides an opportunity to sit down together at the table in homes we may never have visited before. We started relatively small last year, with about seven groupings, but because of the popularity of this program, we anticipate that this year more families will want to become part of the shared house blessings. There may be different groupings of families, or at least a different dinner host.

After the house blessing, the families feast together in an informal manner, which is a wonderful time to learn more about each other. Several new aspects of old, familiar friends in the parish family emerged. One group learned that they enjoyed similar television programs, while another discovered a shared passion for antiques. According to Carol Moore, one of the participants in this event, "To see someone's home is to see who they really are, on their own turf." Certainly, relationships were strengthened last year and new friendships forged.

There may be disadvantages to this type of program, but according to Fr. Tim, "I don't see any pitfalls." In the Midwest, one inevitable pitfall may be scheduling around bad weather. It is wise to group two to four families in one evening, and to organize by geographic areas, to alleviate Fr. Tim's driving time. It is also important to communicate that this is not mandatory, but an opportunity for fellowship. As Fr. Tim pointed out, shared house blessings "elevate the whole notion of blessing a home." This is a good way to build community, and as Jay Moore, a fellow parishioner, said, "One wants to share blessings."

Vicki Jones has coordinated Holy Trinity's All-Parish Education program, and worked with the Stewardship Committee. She is a high school English composition teacher, and a wife, mother, and grandmother.