

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 15, 2023
Choir Director: Wash King

31th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Glory Be to Jesus Christ! Glory Be Forever!

Services:

Sunday, January 15- 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy and Fellowship Hour
Saturday, January 21- 4:00 PM – Great Vespers and Confessions
Sunday, January 22- 9:30 PM – Divine Liturgy, Parastas, and Fellowship Hour

In memory of Joseph Herbert offered by the Herbert Family

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

In memory of Walter Fedora offered by Barbara Faenza & Family

In memory of Wash Fedora offered by Barbara Faenza & Family

In memory of Jean (Haspe) Huffman offered by the Family

In memory of Julia & Michael Rosahac offered by the Rosahac Family

Saturday, January 28- 4:00 PM – Great Vespers and Confessions

Sunday, January 29- 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy and Fellowship Hour: SUNDAY OF ZACCHAEUS

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 Sidorik, 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.

Living with Grief as Orthodox Christians. Adult Classes

On January 29th, our adult classes will begin with a focus on Living with Grief as Orthodox Christians. These sessions are open for those from 18 years to 100+. We will be using the book "Memory Eternal, Living with Grief as Orthodox Christians." Father James will distribute the books at the fellowship hour in the hall starting on January 15th. We are asking for a donation of \$20/book. Please use one of your donation envelopes and note it as "Living with Grief book." All donations will go to the general fund. The books were purchased and donated for this purpose. The first session will begin in the hall after the Divine Liturgy and this initial discussion will consist of the Forward, Introduction and Chapter 1.

Candles (January 15)

7-day Vigils-Altar... In memory of **Michael & Helen Bogosh & Peter, Harry, Kathleen Harahush**
offered by Terri & David Bogosh

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

Eternal Lamp... For the Good Health of **Eve Dempsher** offered by Helen & Wash King

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

7-day Vigils-Tetrapod... In memory of **Andrew & Mary Bybel Family** offered by Friends

Decorated Candles/Tetrapod- In memory of **Irene Scarloss** offered by Michael & Natalie Bolinski

January Birthdays: 2- Tommy Shanosky, 3- Allysa Vavra, 7- Ted Bogosh (98), 13- Dr. Ronald Berezniak, 21- Helen Sheers, 28- Edward Pierson

January Anniversaries: 1- Edward & Anna Pierson, 9- Wash & Helen King, 23- Russell & Geri King

Financials 1/8/23: Operating Acct: Candles 105, Altar Candles 30, Offerings 952, Holy Days 86
Non Envelope 151, Building Fund 25, Cemetery 75, Initial Envelope 20. Memorial Donation \$5,000
Please continue to keep filling your church envelopes. Each box of envelopes cost \$6.92

The contribution sheets are ready to be picked up in the back of the church.

Fellowship Hour Hosts:

January 15 Russell King

January 22 Lena Berezniak

January 29 Helen King

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

Spaghetti & Meatball Dinner is scheduled for February 12, 2023

Please use Amazon Smile when ordering from Amazon.

A few boxes of offering envelopes for 2023 are still in the back of the church

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.

ST. GREGORY: DEFENDER OF THE FAITH

When the "age of persecution" ended, the Church faced challenges to her very existence from an unlikely direction: from within! False teachings and misrepresentations of the theological truths that are now so dear to us threatened to divide and destroy the Christian Church long before its sacred mission could be fulfilled.

Fortunately, the Church was blessed with powerful and eloquent "voices of reason," who were able to brilliantly speak out and defend the Faith against all forms of heresy. ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA was one of the strongest supporters of Holy Orthodoxy.

St. Gregory was the brother of St. Basil the Great, another well-known Church Father. As a clergyman, he distinguished himself as a preacher and a scholar. Upon the death of his wife, Gregory was consecrated as Bishop of Nyssa. During this time, the Church was shaken by the heretical movement of a priest from Alexandria named Arius, who claimed that Christ was CREATED by God the Father and, therefor NOT EQUAL to the Father, as our Lord Himself proclaimed. This was seen as undermining the important doctrines of the Holy Trinity and of salvation through Jesus Christ.

When the Emperor Valens, a follower of Arius, came into power in 374 A.D., he removed Gregory from his episcopal seat and banished him from the region. Upon the death of the Emperor, Gregory returned to his position in Nyssa and, along with his famous brother, Basil the Great, brought about the defeat of Arius and his false teachings once and for all. He was a vocal participant in the 2nd Ecumenical Council, which was held in Constantinople in 381 A.D. He will always be remembered for standing up for the Faith in a firm and unwavering manner.

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

31st SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST Tone 6. Ven. Paul of Thebes (341) and John Calabytes ("the Hut-dweller"—5th c.). Ven. Pansophius of Alexandria, Martyr (ca. 249-251). Ven. Prochorus, Abbot, in the Vranski desert on the River Pshina in Bulgaria (10th c.). Ven. Gabriel, founder of Lesnovo Monastery in Bulgaria (11th c.).

1 Timothy 1:15-17 (Epistle)

This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Luke 18:18-27 (Gospel)

Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, "**Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?**"

So, Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.

You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother.'"

And he said, "All these things I have kept from my youth."

So, when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "**You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.**"

But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich.

And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

And those who heard it said, "Who then can be saved?"

But He said, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God."

Venerable Paul of Thebes

Saint Paul of Thebes was born in Egypt around 227 in the Thebaid of Egypt. Left orphaned, he suffered many things from a greedy relative over his inheritance. During the persecution against Christians under the emperor Decius (249-251), Saint Paul learned of his brother-in-law's insidious plan to deliver him into the hands of the persecutors, and so he fled the city and fled into the wilderness.

Settling into a mountain cave, Saint Paul dwelt there for ninety-one years, praying incessantly to God both day and night. He sustained himself on dates and bread, which a raven brought him, and he clothed himself with palm leaves.

Saint Anthony the Great (January 17), who also lived as an ascetic in the Thebaid desert, had a revelation from God concerning Saint Paul. Saint Anthony thought that there was no other desert dweller such as he. Then God said to him, "Anthony, there is a servant of God more excellent than you, and you should go and see him."

Saint Anthony went into the desert and came to Saint Paul's cave. Falling to the ground before the entrance to the cave, he asked to be admitted. The Elders introduced themselves, and then embraced one another. They conversed through the night, and Saint Anthony revealed how he had been led there by God. Saint Paul disclosed to Saint Anthony that for sixty years a bird had brought him half a loaf of bread each day. Now the Lord had sent a double portion in honor of Saint Anthony's visit. The next morning, Saint Paul spoke to Anthony of his approaching death, and instructed him to bury him. He also asked Saint Anthony to return to his monastery and bring back the cloak he had received from Saint Athanasius. He did not really need a garment, but wished to depart from his body while Saint Anthony was absent.

As he was returning with the cloak, Saint Anthony beheld the soul of Saint Paul surrounded by angels, prophets, and apostles, shining like the sun and ascending to God. He entered the cave and

found Abba Paul on his knees with his arms outstretched. Saint Anthony mourned for him, and wrapped him in the cloak. He wondered how he would bury the body, for he had not remembered to bring a shovel. Two lions came running from the wilderness and dug a grave with their claws.

Saint Anthony buried the holy Elder, and took his garment of palm leaves, then he returned to his own monastery. Saint Anthony kept this garb as a precious inheritance, and wore it only twice a year, on Pascha and Pentecost.

Saint Paul of Thebes died in the year 341, when he was 113 years old. He did not establish a single monastery, but soon after his end there were many imitators of his life, and they filled the desert with monasteries. Saint Paul is honored as the first desert-dweller and hermit.

In the twelfth century Saint Paul's relics were transferred to Constantinople and placed in the Peribleptos monastery of the Mother of God, on orders of the emperor Manuel (1143-1180). Later, they were taken to Venice, and finally to Hungary, at Ofa. Part of his head is in Rome.

Venerable John Calabytes "the Hut-Dweller"

Saint John the Hut-Dweller was the son of rich and illustrious parents, and was born in Constantinople in the early fifth century. He received a fine education, and he mastered rhetoric and philosophy by the age of twelve. He also loved to read spiritual books. Perceiving the vanity of worldly life, he chose the path that was narrow and extremely difficult. Filled with longing to enter a monastery, he confided his intention to a passing monk. John made him promise to come back for him when he returned from his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and take him to his monastery. He asked his parents for a Gospel so that he might study the words of Christ. John's parents hired a calligrapher to copy the text, and had the volume bound in a golden cover studded with gems. John read the Gospel constantly, delighting in the Savior's words.

The monk kept his promise to come back for John, and they went secretly to Bithynia. At the monastery of the "Unsleeping" (Akoimitoi), he received monastic tonsure. The young monk began his ascetical labors with zeal, astonishing the brethren with his unceasing prayer, humble obedience, strict abstinence, and perseverance at work. After six years, he began to undergo temptations. He remembered his parents, how much they loved him, and what sorrow he caused them. He regretted leaving them, and was filled with a burning desire to see them again.

Saint John explained his situation to the igumen Saint Marcellus (December 29) and he asked to be released from the monastery. He begged the igumen for his blessing and prayers to return home. He bid farewell to the brethren, hoping that by their prayers and with the help of God, he would both see his parents and overcome the snares of the devil. The igumen then blessed him for his journey.

Saint John returned to Constantinople, not to resume his former life of luxury, but dressed as a beggar, and unknown to anyone. He settled in a corner by the gates of his parents' home. His father noticed the "pauper," and began to send him food from his table, for the sake of Christ. John lived in a small hut for three years, oppressed and insulted by the servants, enduring cold and frost, unceasingly conversing with the Lord and the holy angels.

Before his death, the Lord appeared to the monk in a vision, revealing that the end of his sorrows was approaching, and that in three days he would be taken into the Heavenly Kingdom. Therefore, he asked the steward to give his mother a message to come to him, for he had something to say to her.

At first, she did not wish to go, but she was curious to know what this beggar had to say to her. Then he sent her another message, saying that he would die in three days. John thanked her for the charity he had received, and told her that God would reward her for it. He then made her promise to bury him beneath his hut, dressed in his rags. Only then did the saint give her his Gospel, which he always carried with him, saying, "May this console you in this life, and guide you to the next life."

She showed the Gospel to her husband, saying that it was similar to the one they had given their son. He realized that it was, in fact, the very Gospel they had commissioned for John. They went back to the gates, intending to ask the pauper where he got the Gospel, and if he knew anything about their son. Unable to restrain himself any longer, he admitted that he was their child. With tears of joy they embraced him, weeping because he had endured privation for so long at the very gates of his parental home.

The saint died in the mid-fifth century, when he was not quite twenty-five years old. On the place of his burial the parents built a church, and beside it a hostel for strangers. When they died, they were buried in the church they had built.

In the twelfth century the head of the saint was taken by Crusaders to Besançon (in France), and other relics of the saint were taken to Rome.