

St. Mary's Orthodox Church
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Phone.....570-645-2772
OUR WEBSITE...www.stmarysnativity.org

Rector: V. Rev. James Weremedic
Retired Attached: V. Rev Paul Ropitsky
Choir Director: Wash King

Sunday, March 7, 2021
39th Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday of Last Judgment

Glory Be To Jesus Christ!

Sun...March 7 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy
Sun...March 14 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy followed by Forgiveness Sunday Vespers
Tues...March 16 5:00 PM - Canon of St. Andrew
Thurs...March 18 5:00 PM – Canon of St. Andrew
Sun...March 21 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy – Archbishop Mark celebrating Orthodoxy Sunday

Glory Be Forever!

Candles (March 7):

7-Day Vigils/Altar... For the Health of **Wash & Helen King** offered by Ted Bogosh
Altar Candles... In memory of **Lillian Yelsh** offered by William Yelsh
Eternal Lamp... In memory of **Bob Tallick** offered by Russell & Geri King
Vigil Crosses ... In memory of **Mary & Andrew Yelsh** offered by William Yelsh
7-Day Vigils/Tetrapod... For the Health of **Terri & David Bogosh & Family** offered by Ted Bogosh
Decorated Candles/Tetrapod...In memory of **Parents, John & Margaret Secara** offered by
Patricia Palinchak

Prayer List: *HEAVENLY FATHER ... Physician of our souls and bodies, Who has sent your only begotten Son to heal every sickness and infirmity, visit us and heal us, Your servants, from all physical and spiritual ailments through the grace of Your Son Jesus Christ; grant to us patience in this sickness, strength of body and spirit, and recovery of health. Lord, You have taught us through Your word to pray for each other that we may be healed. You are the source of healing and to You, we give glory; to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Matushka Lovey Ropitsky, Matushka Lisa Weremedic,
Andrew Balliet, Michael Birozik, Clark Bogosh, Theodore Bogosh, Cecil Buchanan, Emmalyn Naomi Buchanan, Evanna Jane Buchanan, Stephanie Chmel, Edward Conarty, Irene Davis, Ilene Devine, Julia Forte, Olga Hebda, Peter Holoviak, John King, Claire Kononchuk, Michael Kulick, John Kushnir, Nancy Lorchak, MaryAnn Macenka, Mary Maholick, Mildred O'Shura, Anna Pisko, Melissa Schmitt, Althea Shellock, Olga Sidoriak, Martha Stafiniak, Joseph Tosca, Martha Teno, Michael Teno, Nancy Vanno, Elizabeth Warcholak, Russell Wishousky, Russell Yallas, & Richard York.

March Birthdays: 1- Logan Leatherman, 6- Marie Kalavritinos, 16- Anthony Vavra, 21-Mildred O'Shura, 24- Neil Skripnek, Tracy Skripnek, Zachary King, Olga Sidoriak (99) 29- Sandra Zuber

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.

Financials 2/22-28/21: *Operating Acct:* Candles 27 - Altar Candles 520 - Offerings 1,851 – Non-Envelope 150 - Holy Days 40 – Donations 2,000 = Total \$4,588.00 Building Fund 500 - Sam's Club 120 – Activity Fund 123. – Please continue to keep filling your church envelopes. – Thank you!

Limited copies of the "We Rejoice even in Tribulation", an Encyclical of Hope of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America at the conclusion of the Year 2020 are available in the vestibule of the church. From the Encyclical: "None of the protocols and precautions – no mask, physical distancing requirement, or call for hygiene – has stopped or can stop the Church from her vocation of making Christ manifest in the world. Even the drastic steps of temporarily suspending or curtailing liturgical services were taken out of love, not fear: love of those in particular peril from the virus, love for healthcare workers overwhelmed with patients, love for those outside of the Church for whom our cooperation was and is a witness of Christian charity."

CONFESSION

Starting on the week of March 15th, confessions will resume with modifications due to COVID-19. A schedule of dates and times are being finalized. Everyone will need to call the rectory at 570-645-2772 and talk to Father James for their reservation. Please call between 9:30 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Individual schedule times will be spread out so limited contact occurs. Husband and wife can be scheduled together. Lysol will be used between confessions.

Anyone wanting to have a confession, but have concerns of COVID-19, should contact Father James to make the appropriate accommodations. Caution in this period of time is the safe choice for many of our parishioners.

YOUR MOST IMPORTANT APPOINTMENT

Our busy lives are often filled with appointments. It may be at work, with a doctor or even an auto mechanic. But sometimes, these earthly meetings are cancelled or postponed. However, there is one appointment that every Christian must keep. It is more important than any other and will not be rescheduled. It is at the JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST.

For this, we must stand before the One Who saved us. It is an appointment for all, where no one will be excused. Just think about Who we will be meeting. Jesus is the One Who came down from heaven to save us. He endured the Cross for us. He rose for us and takes away our sins. He is always there to hear our prayers. We ought to live our lives with this important meeting in mind.

We will be standing before Someone Who knows everything about us. Nothing can be hidden from Christ; there is no way to bluff our way through this. He knows what occupies our hearts and minds. He is aware of what we read and how we manage our affairs. Are there adjustments we should make before this meeting? What changes of priorities and goals need to be done?

This important appointment is getting closer each day. A Crown of Righteousness awaits those who are willing to combine faith with action.

PREPARATION FOR CONFESSION:

questions for self-examination



offered by
The Philadelphia Deanery
of the
Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania
Orthodox Church in America

Questions for penitents
according to The Ten Commandments
by Metropolitan Anthony Khrapovitsky

Exodus 20:1—"And God spoke all these words, saying, 'I am the Lord your God...You shall have no other gods before me'."

Do you constantly have the thought of God in mind and the fear of God in your heart?

Is your faith in God shaken by skepticism and doubt?

Do you question the holy tenets of the Orthodox Faith?

Do you despair of God's mercy?

Do you pray to God every morning and evening? Is your prayer zealous?

Do you always attend Divine Services whenever possible? Do you miss them without good reason?

Do you prefer religious books and do you read them?

Have you read atheistic and heretical books out of sinful curiosity?

When the Church requests it, do you willingly make donations to the Church and to charitable causes?

Have you consulted fortune-tellers, [astrologers or numerologists, etc.]? Have you taken part in seances?

[Do you trust in luck and chance? Do you gamble?]

Have you forgotten about the most important thing in life, that is, preparation for eternity and your answer to God if you have given yourself up to vanity, sloth, pleasure and carelessness?

"You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God..."

Does God take first place with you? Perhaps God does not take first place, but something else, for example, the accumulation of money, the acquisition of property, amusement and entertainment, food and drink, clothes, self-adornment, the urge to devote attention to yourself, to play the leading part, to receive praise, to spend your time in distractions, in reading frivolous books, etc?

Are you distracted from God by a passion for television, movies, the theater, card games?

Perhaps because of worrying about yourself or your family you forget about God and fail to please Him and do not carry out what is required of you by the Church?

If so, that means you are serving an idol and that it, not God, has first place with you.

Perhaps art, sport or study take first place with you. Perhaps some passion (love of money, gluttony, carnal love) has taken possession of heart? Have you made an idol of yourself out of pride or egotism? Examine yourself. [Has pride in yourself blinded you to your own sinfulness?]

"You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain."

Do you use foul language in ordinary everyday conversation?

Have you been thoughtless and irreverent with the name of God, or what is worse, have you treated something holy as a joke? Or, God forbid, in a fit of anger or bitterness or despair have you given way to impudent grumbling at God or even reviling Him?

Have you sworn an oath and then broken it?

Have you given in to despondency?

Do you pray absent-mindedly or inattentively?

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work...for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it."

Do you violate the sanctity of Sundays and the great feast days which have been fixed by the Church by working for gain or profit?

Instead of attending Divine services on feast-days, do you spend time entertaining yourself, for example at a dance or a theater, movies, or some gathering where there is no mention of God?

Have you yourself arranged such entertainments and gatherings and thus distracted other people from attendance at Church?

Do you conscientiously attend Divine services? Do you come to Church late, at the middle or even at the end of the service? Do you leave it early? [Do you loiter in the back of the Church and not enter into the service itself? Do you leave the service to gossip, smoke, or do chores thinking that God will not notice your behavior?]

Do you attend Church on Sundays and Feast-Days?

Do you help the poor and those in need?

Do you violate the fasts?

[Are you addicted to alcohol, tobacco, drugs, pleasure or other things harmful to the body, which is the Temple of the Holy Spirit?]

"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you."

Have there been times when you were disrespectful towards your parents, or inattentive to their advice and concern? Have you taken care of them in their illness and old age?

If your parents have died, do you often pray for them in church or at home for the repose of their souls?

Have you been disrespectful towards the pastors of the Church? Have you criticized them? Have you become embittered against them when they reminded you of eternity, of preparation for it, of the salvation of your soul, of sins; or when they call on you to be obedient to the Church and her rules?

Have you insulted someone older than you?

"You shall not kill."

You have not physically killed anyone in the literal sense, but perhaps you were the cause of someone's death indirectly: you could have helped someone poor or sick but did not; you did not feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, take in a stranger, clothe the naked, visit the sick and those in jail?

Have you committed spiritual murder, that is, have you led someone astray from the proper path; have you been enticed by heresy or schism; have you tempted someone to sin?

Have you killed someone spiritually by a display of malice and hatred?

Have you killed someone spiritually or destroyed their life through gossip?

Do you forgive those who offend you? Do you bear malice and resentment in your heart for long?

Do you blame yourself in everything or only in some things?

[Do you blame others unjustly for your own faults and sins and weaknesses?]

Have you had recourse to abortions, which is also killing, a sin of both husband and wife?

“You shall not commit adultery.”

Have you lived with someone of the opposite sex in a carnal relationship without having had a church marriage?

Do you conduct yourself freely and loosely with members of the opposite sex?

Have you defiled yourself by giving in to impure and lewd thoughts and desires? Or by reading pornographic books or looking at pornographic pictures? This includes sinful songs, suggestive dances, dirty jokes, [dirty] movies, immodest dress, etc.

Have you committed impure acts by yourself or with others?

Have you had carnal relations with another person?

[Have you engaged in homosexual practices?]

Have you engaged in unnatural practices?

“You shall not steal.”

Have you taken someone else’s property in a direct or indirect way? — by fraud, by diverse cunning, conspiracy? [Have you withheld a worker’s pay or attempted to cheat him out of what is his rightful due?]

Perhaps you have not done what you were obliged to do in return for the recompense you received.

Have you excessively yearned for material goods without wishing to share them with others who need them?

Has miserliness taken possession of your soul? [Are you stingy and lacking in generosity when it comes to sharing things that God has given to you out of His goodness?]

Have you accepted stolen goods?

Have you disposed of others’ goods when they were entrusted to you?

[Have you misused your employer’s resources or services?]

“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”

Have you slandered your neighbor? Have you criticized others, spoken scandal or abused them for what you imagine are their sins and vices?

[Have you lacked good will towards others, preferring to think evil of them?]

Do you like to hear bad rumors about someone and then readily spread them, being allured by gossip and idle chatter?

Do you tell lies? Do you always try to be truthful? [Do you attempt to excuse your lies by calling them mere fibs?]

“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house...or anything that is your neighbor’s.”

Do you envy others? Envy always leads to malice and hatred and is capable of leading you to commit reckless acts, even killing.

[Brackets indicate added material.]

A BRIEF CONFESSION, COMPILED BY ARCH-BISHOP TIKHON, BASED ON A LONGER VERSION BY SAINT DMITRI OF ROSTOV

I confess to the Lord my God before thee reverend father, all my sins which I have committed up to the present day and hour, in deed, word and thought. Every day and every hour I sin through ingratitude to God for His great and numberless blessings to me and His most gracious providence and care for me, a sinner. I have sinned through:

idle talk	dozing in church
condemnation of others	saying unseemly things
scorn	laughter
insubordination	self-love
pride	love of glory
envy	love of honor
anger	gluttony
slander	love of sensual pleasure
inattention	over-eating
listlessness	drunkenness
negligence	attachment to things
carelessness	love of money
resentment	vainglory
remembering wrongs	laziness
disobedience	missing church services
acceptance of impure thoughts	neglect of prayer
lying	grumbling
self-will	concealing sins at confession
reproaching others	evil speech

I have sinned with all my senses, both spiritual and physical, wherefore I repent to the Lord and ask forgiveness. Absolve all my sins, revered father, and bless me to partake of the Mysteries of Christ.

**Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,
have mercy on me, a sinner.**

SUNDAY OF MEATFARE — Tone 6. Sunday of the Last Judgment. The Holy Hieromartyrs of Cherson: Basil, Ephraim, Capito, Eugene, Aetherius, Elpidius, and Agathodorus (4th c.). Ven. Paul the Simple, disciple of Ven. Anthony the Great (4th c.). St. Paul the Confessor, Bishop of Plousias in Bithynia (9th c.). St. Emilian of Rome. Icon of the Mother of God, "SURETY OF SINNERS" in Odrina (Orlovsk—1843) and Moscow (1848).

1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2 (*Epistle*)

But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse.

But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak. For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols?

And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord?

If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

Matthew 25:31-46 (*Gospel*)

When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.

All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats.

And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.

Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'

Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink?

When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You?

Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'

And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink;

I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.'

Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?'

Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.'

And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Sunday of Meatfare of the Last Judgment

Kontakion — Tone 1

When You, O God, shall come to earth with glory, / all things shall tremble / and the river of fire shall flow before Your judgment seat; / the books shall be opened and the hidden things disclosed! / Then deliver me from the unquenchable fire, / and make me worthy to stand at Your right hand, Most Righteous Judge!

Today's Gospel reading is Matthew 25:31-46, the parable of the Last Judgment. It reminds us that while trusting in Christ's love and mercy, we must not forget His righteous judgment when He comes again in glory. If our hearts remain hardened and unrepentant, we should not expect the Lord to overlook our transgressions simply because He is a good and loving God. Although He does not desire the death of a sinner, He also expects us to turn from our wickedness and live (Ezek. 33:11). This same idea is expressed in the prayer read by the priest after the penitent has confessed his or her sins (Slavic practice).

The time for repentance and forgiveness is now, in the present life. At the Second Coming, Christ will appear as the righteous Judge, "Who will render to every man according to his deeds" (Rom. 2:6). Then the time for entreating God's mercy and forgiveness will have passed.

As Father Alexander Schmemmann reminds us in his book GREAT LENT (Ch. 1:4), sin is the absence of love, it is separation and isolation. When Christ comes to judge the world, His criterion for judgment will be love. Christian love entails seeing Christ in other people, our family, our friends, and everyone else we may encounter in our lives. We shall be judged on whether we have loved, or not loved, our neighbor. We show Christian love when we feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, visit those who are sick or in prison. If we did such things for the least of Christ's brethren, then we also did them for Christ (Mt.25:40). If we did not do such things for the least of the brethren, neither did we do them for Christ (Mt.25:45).

Today is the last day for eating meat and meat products until Pascha, though eggs and dairy products are permitted every day during the coming week. This limited fasting prepares us gradually for the more intense fasting of Great Lent.