

**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

Reader Hours: Edward Pierson

**Sunday, March 19, 2023**

Choir Director: Wash King

Reader Epistle: Michael Ropitsky

**THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT – VENERATION OF THE PRECIOUS CROSS**

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

**Services:**

Sunday, March 19	8:45 AM – Church School
Sunday, March 19	9:30 AM – Liturgy of St. Basil – (Veneration of Precious Cross) & Fellowship Adult Class "Living with Grief as Orthodox Christians" Chapter 5 & 6 Session
Sunday, March 19	4:00 PM – Lenten Mission Service at St. Michael's in Mount Carmel
Wednesday, March 22	5:00 PM – Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts (Fast from Noon)
Friday, March 24	5:00 PM – Great Vespers with Litiya and Confessions
Saturday, March 25	9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy – The Annunciation of the Most Holy Theotokos
Saturday, March 25	4:00 PM – Great Vespers and Confessions
Sunday, March 26	8:45 AM – Church School
Sunday, March 26	9:30 AM – Liturgy of St. Basil – (St. John Climacus (the Ladder)) & Fellowship

**Sunday, March 26 4:00 PM**

**We will host our Lenten Mission Service at St. Mary's in Coaldale**

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, Elizabeth Brennan, Stephanie Chmel, Ilene Devine, Kimberly Evetushick, Nadine Fegley, Julia Forte, Michael & Julia Harahus, Karen & Rose Harkins, Nancy 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) day or night in an emergency.

Candles (March 19)

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

Altar Candles... In memory of **Mother, Mary Lutash** offered by Raymond & Mary Jo Danchak

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

Vigil Crosses...In memory of **Aunt Olga Hebda** offered by Raymond & Mary Jo Danchak

7-day Vigils-Tetrapod...In memory of **Lillian Yelsh** offered by William Yelsh

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

Candles (March 25)

7-day Vigils-Altar...For the Health of **Olga Sidoriak** offered by Gloria Bench

Altar Candles... For the Health of **Fr. James Weremedic** offered by Ted Bogosh

Eternal Lamp... In memory of **Julianna Ogozalik** offered by Julia Forte

Vigil Crosses...For the Health of **Matushka Lisa Weremedic** offered by Ted Bogosh

7-day Vigils-Tetrapod...In memory of **Lillian Yelsh** offered by William Yelsh

Decorated Candles/Tetrapod- In memory of **Olga & Robert Weiss** offered by sister, Stephanie Chmel

**March Birthdays:** 1- Logan Leatherman, 6- Marie Kalavritinos, 16- Anthony Vavra, 21- Mildred O'Shura, 24- Tracy Skripnek, 24- Zachary King, 24- Olga Sidoriak (101), 29-Sandra Zuber

**Financials 2/26/23: Operating Acct:** Offerings \$1427 Candles \$77 Altar Candles \$20  
Bookstore \$20

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Please use your Boyer's card when shopping at Boyers;  
if you need one call Helen King

## “YOU ARE OUR PROTECTION, O PRECIOUS CROSS”

**B**y the grace of God, we have arrived at the Third Sunday of Lent, which is often looked upon as the middle of the Great Fast. We have already endured three weeks of adhering to the severe disciplines our Holy Orthodox Church places upon us during this time. In all honesty, many of us may be experiencing feelings of spiritual fatigue and discouragement as we struggle to keep Lent in a proper and fruitful fashion. Indeed, *“the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”*

It is significant, then, that the Church places the precious and life-giving Cross before us today. Lest we become overcome by the burdens of Lent, the Church reveals to us on this day the Cross of Christ as a source of inspiration. We are urged to take hope, and to allow the recollection of the suffering and death of our Lord upon the Cross to strengthen us for the remainder of these 40 days of penitence. It has been written that *“The cross is planted in the midst of Lent like the tree of life in the midst of paradise, like the rod of Moses in the midst of the camp of the Israelites, in order that anyone looking upon it may find health, strength and courage to pursue his course.”*

On CROSS-VENERATION SUNDAY, Orthodox Christians are reminded that we have this all-powerful weapon in our constant battle against the forces of darkness. Today, the Cross is raised before us as a symbol of VICTORY and SALVATION. Yes, beyond the suffering that it represents, we are able to see the glory of the Resurrection and the joy of everlasting life when we gaze upon the Cross!

**THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT — Tone 7. Veneration of the Cross.** Martyrs Chrysanthus and Daria, and those with them at Rome: Claudius, Hilaria, Jason, Maurus, Diodorus the Presbyter, and Marianus the Deacon (283). Saint Innocent of Komél and Vologda disciple of Saint Nilus of Sora (Vologdá—1521). Martyr Pancharius, at Nicomedia (ca. 302). “Sweet-Kissing” Icon of the Mother of God of Smolensk (1103).

### **3rd Sunday of Great Lent: Veneration of the Cross**

**Troparion — Tone 4** - O Lord, save Your people, / and bless Your inheritance. / Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians, / over their adversaries. / And by virtue of Your Cross / preserve Your habitation!

**Kontakion — Tone 7** - Now the flaming sword no longer guards the gates of Eden; / it has mysteriously been quenched by the wood of the Cross! / The sting of death and the victory of hell have been vanquished; / for You, O my Savior, have come and cried to those in hell: / “Enter again into paradise.”

The Third Sunday of Lent is that of the Veneration of the Cross. The cross stands in the midst of the church in the middle of the Lenten season not merely to remind men of Christ’s redemption and to keep before them the goal of their efforts, but also to be venerated as that reality by which man must live to be saved. “He who does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me” (Mt.10:38). For in the Cross of Christ Crucified lies both “the power of God and the wisdom of God” for those being saved (1 Cor.1:24).

### **Hebrews 4:14-5:6 (Epistle)**

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.

He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness.

Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer sacrifices for sins.

And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was.

So also, Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: “You are My Son, today I have begotten You.”

As He also says in another place: “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek”;

### **Mark 8:34-9:1 (Gospel)**

When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, “Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.

For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it.

For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?

Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”

And He said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power.”

## **Saint Innocent of Komél and Vologda disciple of Saint Nilus of Sora**

Saint Innocent of Komél and Vologda was born in Moscow, and was descended from the Moscow princely family of Okhlyabinin. He became a monk in the Monastery of Saint Cyril of White Lake (June 9), where he was placed under the guidance of Saint Nilus of Sora (May 7).

Saints Innocent and Nilus wandered throughout the East visiting Palestine, Constantinople, and spent several years in the monasteries of Mount Athos. After returning to Rus, the Saints did not return to Saint Cyril of White Lake Monastery, but to solitary cells for monastic seclusion. Seeking a life of solitude, they withdrew into the impassable forest at the Sora River, some fifteen versts from the Monastery. There they set up a cross, dug a well, and built separate cells, after the manner of the skete monasteries. A church was built on a marshy spot, and there the hermits led strict ascetical lives.

Foreseeing his own demise, Saint Nilus sent Saint Innocent to the Nurma River and revealed to him: "God is sending you there, and yours shall be a cenobitic monastery. After my death, my wilderness monastery will remain as it was during my life, with the brothers living separately, each in his own cell."

After the repose of Saint Nilus, his holy disciple withdrew into the Vologda hinterland and in 1491 he built a cell at the Eda River, which flows into the Nurma. In a short while, disciples began to gather around him. Obeying the last command of his teacher, Saint Innocent did not seek any donations for it.

Saint Innocent labored for thirty years at building his monastery. He left behind instructions for the brethren, based on the works of the Holy Fathers, particularly the writings of Saint Nilus of Sora. Saint Innocent urged them to avoid wrangling and disputes, asking them to preserve love for Christ and spiritual peace.

The Saint forbade young and beardless monks to be accepted and tonsured at his monastery, and he forbade women to enter the monastery. A monk who left the monastery lost his right to a cell, and if he returned, he could occupy it only with the consent of the Igoumen and the brethren. Saint Innocent asked that a future church be dedicated to Saint John the Forerunner, and Baptizer of the Lord, in commemoration of the Third Finding of his Venerable Head (25 May), because Saint John is a patron for all monks and dwellers in the wilderness (later, the monastery was called Holy Transfiguration after its chief temple).

Saint Innocent went to the Lord on March 19, 1521. In accordance with his last wish, he was buried in a corner of the monastery near a marsh. A stone was placed on his grave inscribed with the year, month and day of his repose.

## **His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon Spends First Week of Lent at St. Tikhon's Monastery**

SOUTH CANAAN, PA [OCA]

From Sunday, February 27 to Friday, March 3, 2023 His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon spent the first week of Great Lent at Saint Tikhon's Monastery. During His Beatitude's stay, he spent time with the monastic brotherhood and presided at the celebration of Forgiveness Vespers on Sunday evening, Great Compline with the Great Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete the evenings of Monday through Thursday, and the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts on Friday morning.

His Beatitude gave an address at Forgiveness Vespers where he spoke about the difficulties that the Lenten season can bring as we cleanse our hearts from sin. He said "If we are willing and obedient and truly desire God to use the fast to cleanse us, we will suffer—not because fasting is suffering, but because Lent, when faithfully kept, reveals many painful truths about ourselves." At the same time, His Beatitude encouraged the faithful to stay joyful with hope since "our purification lasts for a time—throughout this Lent, throughout this life, throughout our dying and passage to eternal life... In the end, the Lord who is the End, who tramples down death by death, will defeat death, the last enemy (1 Cor. 15:26). The complete address can be read on the OCA website.