

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, March 21, 2021
Choir Director: Wash King

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT. Tone 8. Sunday of Orthodoxy. St. James (Jacob, Iago) the Confessor, Bishop of Catania. St. Cyril, Bishop of Catania. St. Thomas, Patriarch of Constantinople.

Glory Be To Jesus Christ!

Glory Be Forever!

Troparion — Tone 2

We venerate Your most pure image, O Good One, / and ask forgiveness of our transgressions, O Christ God. / Of Your own will You were pleased to ascend the Cross in the flesh / to deliver Your creatures from bondage to the enemy. / Therefore, with thanksgiving we cry aloud to You: / You have filled all with joy, O our Savior, / by coming to save the world.

Kontakion — Tone 8

No one could describe the Word of the Father; / but when He took flesh from you, O Theotokos, He accepted to be described, / and restored the fallen image to its former state by uniting it to divine beauty. / We confess and proclaim our salvation in word and images.

Sun. March 21 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy – Archbishop Mark celebrating, light Lenten lunch to follow.

Wed. March 24 5:00 PM – Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts

Sun. March 28 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy followed by Parastas

Parastas: In memory of Alexis Gancasz offered by Jeanne & John Cannon

In memory of Helen Fedora offered by Barbara Faenza & Family

In memory of Helen Suda offered by Gloria Bench

Wed. March 31 5:00 PM – Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts

CONFESSION

Confessions resumed with modifications due to COVID-19. Please call the rectory at 570-645-2772 and talk to Father James for a reservation. 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 has 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.

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 Birosik, Clark Bogosh, Theodore Bogosh, Cecil Buchanan, Emmalyn Naomi Buchanan, Evanna Jane Buchanan, Stephanie Chmel, 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, Helen Suda, 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.

Candles (March 21):

7-Day Vigils/Altar: In memory of Kathryn Yurchak offered by Gary & Mary Harahuess & Sharon Lewis

Altar Candles... For the Health of Olga Sidoriak offered by Ted Bogosh

Eternal Lamp... In memory of Kay & Paul Maliniak offered by William Yelsh

Vigil Crosses ... In memory of Marion Pickenheim offered by William Yelsh

7-Day Vigils/Tetrapod... In memory of Michael & Helen Bogosh, & Peter, Harry, & Kathleen

Harahush offered by Terri & David Bogosh

Decorated Candles/Tetrapod: For the Health of Helen Sheers offered by Drs. Andrew & Elaine Chichura

Candles (March 24-25)

7-Day Vigils/Altar... For the Health of Helen Sheers offered by Ted Bogosh

Altar Candles... For the Health of Olga Sidoriak offered by Gloria Bench

Eternal Lamp... In memory of Olga Weiss offered by Stephanie Chmel

Vigil Crosses ... For the Health of Martha Stafiniak offered by Ted Bogosh

Financials 3/8-14/21: *Operating Acct:* Candles 45 - Altar Candles 30 - Offerings 560 - Non-Envelope 160 - Holy Days 38 - Donations 2 = Total \$835.00; Building Fund 40, Cemetery Fund 50. Please continue to keep filling your church envelopes. Thank you!

* * * **THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT** * * *

A dispute raged for several centuries in the early Christian Church. It bitterly centered around the use of ICONS, resulting in the removal and return of those sacred images. The final victory for the use of them was celebrated on March 11, 843 in Constantinople. That day, Christians marched through the streets, carrying icons back to their churches. This was the first "TRIUMPH OF ORTHODOXY" service, which has since been celebrated on the first Sunday of Lent.

Icons are considered to be "WINDOWS TO HEAVEN." They help make the church a place different from other buildings, a place where God dwells among men. They are an aid to meditation, raising our thoughts to Christ and His saints. They instruct us in the teachings of the Church. They add the sense of sight to the outreach of the Gospel.

Today is a day of triumph over all heresy and all who deny the teachings of Christ. Today we boldly proclaim that we adhere to the faith of the "Mother of Christendom," the ancient Church of the East where Christianity had its birth.

Happily, it is also a day when Orthodox of various jurisdictions have been meeting together for joint services, giving public witness of their unity in Christ. Despite the differences of language, culture and tradition, we hold the one supreme thing in common: our ONE faith in Christ.

Let Christ "triumph" over our hearts. Let us rejoice in the victory of virtue over evil. Then, indeed, will there be cause for celebration this day.



March 15, 2021
Venerable Benedict of Nursia

Beloved clergy, matushki and faithful,

Christ is in our midst! As we prepare for Forgiveness Sunday and our Lenten Journey, I prostrate myself before you and ask your forgiveness for any way I have offended you in word or deed.

As we know Great Lent is a school of repentance, a time to reorient our lives and reorganize our priorities and become more fully partakers of true and authentic Life in the Kingdom of God. Great Lent prepares us to properly understand the gift we received through Baptism, the gift of Eternal Life. When we fully realize the gift we received, it becomes the point of reference for how we view life. How we live life and most importantly how we perceive death. Our Church gives us the tools we need for this journey in opportunities to pray more frequently, receive the Holy Mysteries of Confession and Communion, and encourages us to give alms. For those unfamiliar with the term, "alms," it refers to charitable gifts for the poor, the widow and the orphan in Holy Scripture.

As a child growing up outside the Orthodox Church, one often thought about what he or she would give up for Great Lent. But Lent should not be approached negatively, it is not about what we are giving up, as though we are making some great sacrifice to obtain the favor of God. Lent is about getting rid of bad habits and sinful behaviours and getting our passions under control, or redirecting them to their proper goal. If we see the Church discipline as a prescription to obtain optimal spiritual health, we approach Lent with a much different attitude.

We are not simply to eliminate certain foods from our diet, but to embrace the discipline or prescription so as to regain control of our thoughts and the various members of our bodies, i.e., our eyes, our tongue, our hands, and our feet. As we all know, one may sin without the body, but one cannot sin with the body without the thoughts preceding it.

Therefore, the Church asks us to refrain from meat, dairy, alcoholic beverages, and olive oil on certain days as well as to refrain from watching television, watching movies, frivolous conversation, social media and those things that perhaps incite the passions leading into sin. In her wisdom, the Church asks us to remove the things that contribute to sinful behaviour and an outlook on life contrary to the Holy Gospel and gives us opportunities to read and hear the Holy Scripture, pray and receive the Holy Mysteries so that we may be transformed.

Often people will try all kinds of things the world offers to get their life under control or self-medicate hoping to kill the pain of their fallen passions. Yet, we do not turn to the Church and allow her in her 2000 years of experience to lead us to spiritual health. Let us embrace the fast, the discipline of the Church, seek forgiveness and forgive one another, attend the services as frequently as possible and I can assure you that if you open your hearts to let the Spirit work, by Holy Week you will be feeling Great Lent is too short. Changes you once felt impossible, suddenly begin happen. We realize that it was not God who was distant from us, but we who had been living in exile from Him and the Life of purity and Holiness He calls us to attain.

St. John Chrysostom says that no one is too frail or sick to embrace the Fast in some form. If we cannot give up meat, we may at least abstain from luxury. Blessed Theophylact



speaks of gourmandizing, i.e., embracing the letter of the fast, but still indulging in luxurious foods. No one has ever physically died from the Lenten Fast, but they have died to the world and became alive unto Christ. Once again, the fasting from food and various forms of media are only the tools to help us to abstain from sinful behaviour and develop virtue.

Our parishes will be offering the full Lenten Cycle of services allowing everyone the opportunity to participate and be transformed. Have a Blessed Lenten Journey. What we get out of Great Lent is in direct proportion to the effort we put into it.

Yours in Christ,

+ Mark

+ MARK, Archbishop of Philadelphia and the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2 (Epistle)

By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.

And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented – of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.

And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

Therefore, we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

John 1:43-51 (Gospel)

The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me."

Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote – Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."

Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!" Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these."

And He said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."