

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
Choir Director: Wash King

Sunday, May 31, 2020
7th Sunday of Pascha
Holy Father & After feast of Ascension

Glory Be To Jesus Christ!

Glory Be Forever!

Commemoration of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council

**Prokeimenon – Tone 4 – Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our Fathers
And praised and glorified is Thy Name forever!**

Acts 20:16-18, 28-36 (Epistle)

For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the Day of Pentecost. From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. And when they had come to him, he said to them: "You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all.

John 17:1-13 (Gospel)

Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have

given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me. I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves.

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, Michael Birosik, James Blair, Terry Blair, Clark Bogosh, Theodore Bogosh, Jane Bubernak, Cecil Buchanan, Stephanie Chmel, Edward Conarty, Irene David, Ilene Devine, Gloria Ferri, Julia Forte, Olga Hebda, John King, Claire Kononchuk, Michael Kulick, John Kushnir, Helen Macenka, MaryAnn Macenka, Mary Maholick, Alexandra Miller, Courtney Miller, Mildred O'Shura, Anna Pisko, Helen Scheese, Melissa Schmitt, Althea Shellock, Helen Suda, Martha Stafiniak, Martha Teno, Nancy Vanno, Russell Wishousky, Russell Yallas, & Richard York

Local On-line Services:

Go to the Diocese of Eastern PA website at the bottom of our church website.

At the top of the page – Click on Live Streaming – Scroll down to church services

Christ the Saviour Orthodox Church – Harrisburg, PA

Vespers – Sat. at 5 PM; Divine Liturgy - Sunday at 9:30 AM

Holy Apostles Orthodox Church – Mechanicsburg, PA

Vespers – Sat. at 5 PM; Divine Liturgy - Sunday at 9:30 AM

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church – Mogadore, OH – You Tube

Services every day of the week – Mon. to Fri. at 7:00 PM

Saturday Vespers – 5:00 PM; Sunday Divine Liturgy – 9:30 AM

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 5/16-22/20 Operating Acct: -Dues 0 – Candles 0 – Weekly 125 – Non-Env 0 – Holy Days 5– Altar Candles 0 – Initial Offering 0 – Donations 0 = Total \$ 130.00

Building Fund 0- ...Charity Donation 0- ...Furnace Fund 0- ...Cemetery 0...Flowers 0 ... Thank you.

Thanks to the encouragement and perseverance of Father James Weremedic and Council President, John Evetushick, St. Mary's Orthodox Church has been approved for the Paycheck Protection Program for the amount of \$15,636.00; and it was deposited into the church checking account on May 8, 2020. This disbursement is to be used for all employees' salaries from May 8 to July 2, 2020 (eight weeks) and for approved utilities. Any portion not used by July 2, 2020 will need to be returned to Wells Fargo Bank. For the month of May (for five employees), \$6745.28 has been used. This is a great help to our church budget.

Please continue to keep filling your church envelopes

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May Birthdays: 2- Lynn Sharpe, 17- Russell King, 17- Julia Forte, 21- Lindsey Ruch, 21- Gloria Ferri, 22- Andrew Miller 31- Marie Skripnek

May Wedding Anniversaries: 9 – Richard and Julie McHugh, 16- V. Rev Paul & Matushka Lovey Ropitsky

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Attention High School and College Graduates

Please submit a picture along with your name, parents' names, graduated from, and future plans to: Gloria Bench larbench@ptd.net

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Divine Liturgy Church Attendance

We will use a rotating system for church service attendance, alternating weeks with Groups A, B, and C. Groups will be formed using the first letter of last names; taking into consideration those parishioners who obtain rides with family and non-family members.

We will follow the recommendations of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania when determining how many individuals may enter the church. Each individual or family whose last name begins with A to J will be in Group A; last names beginning with K to R will be in Group B; and last names beginning with S to Z will be in Group C and will be given a designated Sunday of when they may choose to attend Divine Liturgy in person.

Please remember to wear a mask and bring your own Divine Liturgy Book. **You must call Father James Weremedic (570-645-2772) on Thursday or Friday by 6:00 PM of the week you are assigned, to confirm that you will be attending.**

Group A may attend Divine Liturgy on June 7

Group B may attend Divine Liturgy on June 14

Group C may attend Divine Liturgy on June 21

Vespers Services

Beginning on Saturday, June 6th Great Vespers will be held at 4:00 PM outside in the Church yard in front of the wooden Cross. Everyone is welcomed, but must wear masks and keep physical distance of six feet. If it is raining or looking like it will rain, this service will be canceled. We will not be able to make an announcement of the rain cancelation.

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Attention – June 6 – Memorial Services for Pentecost

At 11:00 AM on Saturday, June 6th at Skyview (Hometown) Cemetery a Panikhida (Parastas) Service will be held outside near the Mausoleum. There will be no walking from grave to grave. Everyone is welcomed, but must wear masks and keep physical distance of six feet. If it is raining or looking like it will rain, this service will be canceled. Rain date will be on Sunday, June 7th at 1:00 pm. We will not be able to make an announcement of the rain cancelation.

At 1:00 PM on Saturday, June 6th at Summit Hill Parish Cemetery a Panikhida (Parastas) Service will be held outside near the Cross. There will be no walking from grave to grave. Everyone is welcomed, but must wear masks and keep physical distance of six feet. If it is raining or looking like it will rain, this service will be canceled. Rain date will be on Sunday, June 7th at 3:00 pm. We will not be able to make an announcement of the rain cancelation.

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Preventative Measures

1. Members of the Church should become familiar with the symptoms of the novel coronavirus, COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell), and, if these symptoms present themselves, both seek medical help immediately and self-isolate.
2. In terms of preventing the spread of this virus, the best advice is to follow CDC directives, which currently include: wash hands thoroughly and frequently, cover your coughs and sneezes, avoid sharing personal items, wear a mask, and maintain a social distance of at least six feet.
3. Churches must have hand sanitizer readily available at entrances, outside elevators, and other points of ingress. They should be sure that restrooms are properly stocked with soap, and sanitized frequently, recorded with an accompanying log sheet.
 - Hand sanitizer will be available at the table in the rear of the nave, and in the basement. Cleaning of the vestibule, nave, and bathrooms will be completed by Claire Remington following each public service.
4. Everyone except clergy and singers must wear facemasks in accord with civil directives (clergy may wear plastic face shields at the distribution of communion).

- Children under the age of 10 [per Diocesan guidelines] are not required to wear a mask. It should be noted that the CDC recommends that children over the age of 2 wear masks. Parents are asked to make sure children are able to maintain social distance and other CDC requirements (handwashing, coughing into a tissue, etc.)
- The number of clergy and singers will be minimal. Before and after services, both the clergy and singers will be expected to wear a mask.
- The Priest will wear a mask when preparing Proskomedie and during the distribution of Holy Communion

5. Churches must be cleaned routinely, especially objects that are routinely touched, like door handles, or furniture. Doors should be propped open so that door knobs or handles do not need to be used. It might, in fact, be more practical to have a designated person, an usher or greeter with gloves minding the door.

- A person will be assigned to routinely wipe any fixtures frequently touched.
- A person will be assigned to open doors

6. Icons, the blessing cross, and other sacred vessels should be venerated without physical contact.

- The faithful are instructed to simply bow for the time being until contact restrictions are lifted

7. When giving blessings, bishops and priests should not offer their hands to be kissed.

- The faithful are instructed not to kiss the hand of the clergy until contact restrictions are lifted; furthermore they are instructed not to shake hands, exchange hugs or kiss one another until contact restrictions are lifted

8. No service books should be distributed or left out for common use.

- Service books have been removed from the pews. You may bring your own prayer book from home. Please keep it on your person and take it home following the service.
- Bulletins will not be printed for in church distribution. They will continue to be posted on-line, delivered through email or sent home using snail mail.

9. Unless zapivka can be offered in a safe, individual manner, it should not be offered.

- Zapivka (the wine after communion) will not be offered until contact restrictions are lifted.

10. Unless antidoron [blessed bread] can be presented in a safe, individual manner, it should not be distributed.

- Antidoron will not be offered until contact restrictions are lifted

11. Priests should modify their censuring patterns and processions to limit exposure, or wear a mask during censings and processions in the Church building.

- Censusing patterns will be modified, maintaining social distance from those who are worshipping in the Sanctuary.

Conditions and Cautions before opening churches

Before churches are re-opened, the diocesan bishop, in collaboration with diocesan and parish leadership, should consider the following conditions and cautions:

1. Opening can only be done after a thorough cleaning of the church building.
 - Cleaning services will continue and CDC guidelines will be followed.
2. Ways should be found for everyone in the parish community to come to church for a service on a rotating basis, or at least to visit the church in order to pray and perhaps receive the reserved sacrament.
 - We will use a rotating system for church service attendance, alternating weeks with groups A, B and C. Groups will be formed using the first letter of last names; taking into consideration those parishioners who obtain rides with non-family members. Please refer to the bulletin for the alphabetical groupings as it may change over time with varying stages of operation.
3. Methods of calculating how many people can safely be in church, and then identifying where people can be at least six feet away from each other, or other family groupings, should be found. In order to do this, parishes may have to measure the square footage of the church, and calculate how many people can fit into that space, while remaining socially distanced. This will only give a rough estimate since other factors will need to be considered, such as families living together that may stand or sit more closely than those who do not.
 - Ushers will direct families and individuals to their space to worship.
 - It should be noted that this requirement cannot possibly accommodate the typical seating preferences of families or individuals. We beg your cooperation in this very dynamic and complex circumstance.
4. The best system for determining how people are to come in for services in limited numbers should be formed. Precise records of who comes on which day will have to be kept so that those who attended can be contacted if necessary..
 - We will follow the recommendations of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania when determining how many individuals may enter the church.
 - Each individual or family will be given a designated Sunday where they may choose to attend the Divine Liturgy in person (i.e. 1st week, 2nd week, 3rd week, 4th week) based upon the first letter of their last name, and **RSVP by contacting Fr. James directly at (570) 645-2772. No RSVP to others! RSVP on Thursday or Friday by 6 PM the week you are scheduled to attend.**

- After receiving all RSVPs, a seating plan will be devised.
- The clergy and parish councils are required to appoint a person to ask about coronavirus symptoms of all persons entering the church, e.g., Fever, Cough, Shortness of Breath or difficulty breathing, Diarrhea, Chills, Repeated shaking with chills, Muscle pain, Headache, Sore throat, new loss of taste or smell **before they enter the Nave.**
- As the faithful enter a volunteer will record the attendance. This is simply to Provide “contact tracing” in the event someone who attends is later found to test positive for COVID-19. It is considered “best practice” to notify others who have attended an event that they were potentially exposed.

Those attending will have to be told the following:

- **Where they can enter the church**
- **Where they can hang their coats and place any personal belongings**
 - Keep your personal belongings on your person, including prayer book
- **Where they must sanitize or wash their hand**
 - Hand sanitizer will located in the Nave
- **That their Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be inspected**
 - If a defect in a person’s mask is observed, they will be provided with a new mask from a supply maintained by the church
- **An individual may be designated to light candles for people**
 - A volunteer wearing a mask and gloves will hand candles to anyone wishing to light one
 - For those people who desire it, a person will be appointed to light candles for them
 - Please have exact change for candle purchases and place your donation in the appropriate basket
- **That an usher will lead them to a designated place**
- **That masks will be available to them**
- **The collection basket will be placed on a table in the Nave of the Church**

5. For the purposes of screening people as they come in, churches will need an usher or a doorkeeper, who can ensure that the faithful are following the directives of the Church.

- People with an assigned task will be trained.

6. In certain places, temperature checks at the door might be necessary.

- Temperature checks will occur prior to parishioners entering the Nave.

7. The number of people in [the] altar must be limited; the placement of singers and choir need to match social distancing requirements. Since those reading loudly or singing may be sources of the virus through the projection of their voices, all choirs must be moved to the optimal location to keep such possibility to a minimum (for example, moving the choirs to the front of the nave).

- The Priest and at most two (2) assistants will be permitted in the Altar at any time. Those not serving the Liturgy will be required to wear a mask.

- A limited choir (1-4 singers) will sing at the front of the church. Best practices to limit the impact of aerosolization caused by singing will be consistently monitored. When not singing, choir members will be required to wear masks.
8. Signs should be posted on the front door of the church explaining the directives and stating the assumed risk of those entering by age and preconditions.
- Appropriate postings will be placed on church and hall doors
9. Consideration of “at-risk” groups must be taken into account.
- The majority of our parishioners are considered “high risk”. We will strive to meet their needs to the full extent of this document.

DISCLAIMER:

While St. Mary’s is taking reasonable and prudent precautions to reduce the risk of the spread of COVID-19, we cannot guarantee that you will not become infected. Attending services may increase your risk of contracting COVID-19, especially if you are over 65 years old or have an underlying health condition. By entering, you voluntarily assume this increased risk of exposure or potential infection from the virus, or viruses causing COVID-19.

On the seventh Sunday of Pascha, we commemorate the holy God-bearing Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council.

The Commemoration of the First Ecumenical Council has been celebrated by the Church of Christ from ancient times. The Lord Jesus Christ left the Church a great promise, “I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Mt. 16:18). Although the Church of Christ on earth will pass through difficult struggles with the Enemy of salvation, it will emerge victorious. The holy martyrs bore witness to the truth of the Savior’s words, enduring suffering and death for confessing Christ, but the persecutor’s sword is shattered by the Cross of Christ.

Troparion — Tone 8

You are most glorious, O Christ our God! / You have established the Holy Fathers as lights on the earth! / Through them you have guided us to the true faith! / O greatly Compassionate One, glory to You!

Kontakion — Tone 8

The Apostles’ preaching and the Fathers’ doctrines have established one faith for the Church. / Adorned with the robe of truth, woven from heavenly theology, / It defines and glorifies the great mystery of Orthodoxy