

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, November 28, 2021

Choir Director: Wash King

23rd SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – TONE 6 (10th of Luke).
Monk-Martyr Stephen, Martyr Irenarchus, and Seven Women Martyrs

Glory Be to Jesus Christ!

Glory Be Forever!

Services:

Sunday, November 28 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy – followed by Parastas

In Memory of Daniel Polansky offered by Gloria Bench

In Memory of Benjamin Macalush offered by the Herbert Family

In Memory of Janet Jupin offered by her Family

In Memory of John Fedora offered by Barbara Faenza & Family

In Memory of Nicholas “Kiki” Teno offered by wife, Martha and Family

Sunday, December 5 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy

Sunday, December 12 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy – Holy Forefathers

Sunday, December 19 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy – Sunday before the Nativity

Prayer List:

Matushka Lovey Ropitsky, Matushka Lisa Weremedic,

Andrew Balliet, Michael Birosik, Clark Bogosh, Theodore Bogosh, Emmalyn Naomi Buchanan, Evanna

Jane Buchanan, Stephanie Chmel, Irene Davis, Ilene Devine, Julia Forte, Karen Harkins, John King,

Michael Kulick, John & Olga Kushnir, Nancy Lorchak, MaryAnn & Paul Macenka, Mary Maholick,

Mildred O'Shura, Anna Pisko, Melissa Schmitt, Althea Shellock, Olga Sidorik, Mary Simone, Martha

Stafiniak, Martha Teno, Michael Teno, Elizabeth Warcholak, Russell Wishousky, Russell Yallas, &

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.

Candles (November 28)

7-Day Vigils/Altar... In memory of **Nicholas Teno** offered by Ted Bogosh

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

Eternal Lamp... In memory of **Mother, Mary Lutash** offered by Raymond & Mary Jo Danchak

Vigil Crosses... In memory of **Andrew & Mary Bybel Family** offered by Friends

7-Day Vigils/Tetrapod... In memory of **Kay & Paul Maliniak** offered by William Yelsh

Decorated Candles/Tetrapod- For the Health of **Walter & Louise Rosahac** offered by Alice
(Rosahac) Styer

November Birthdays: 1- Nicholas Teno Jr., 2- Justin Babinetz, 4- Lena Marie Berezniak, 11- Nancy King, 17-Victoria Weremedic, 17- Irene Puschak, 26- Helen King, 26- Barbara Birosik, 27- Chris King, 27- Walter Rosahac, 29- Mat. Lovey Ropitsky

November Wedding Anniversary: 13-Walter & Louise Rosahac

Financials 11/21/21: *Operating Acct:* Candles 40 - Altar Candles 100 - Offerings 539 - Non-Envelope 0 - Holy Days 111 - Donations 500 = Total \$1,290.00. - Building Fund 0, Poinsettias 80. Please continue to keep filling your church envelopes. - Thank you!

CONFESSION

Confessions have resumed with minor modifications. Please call the rectory at 570-645-2772 and talk to Father James for a reservation. Call between 9:30 AM and 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Individual schedule times will be spread out during the week. Husband and wife can be scheduled together. Anyone wanting to have a confession, but has concerns of COVID-19, should contact Father James to make the appropriate accommodations.

Pocket Calendars have been distributed. If you did not get yours, please see Gloria Bench. **Boxes of envelopes for 2022 have arrived.** They are on the stand in the back of the church waiting to be taken home.

Please use Amazon Smile when ordering from Amazon.

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

CHRIST'S FIRST APOSTLE

S AINT ANDREW was first a disciple of St. John the Baptist. He was attracted to this powerful figure of the wilderness, preparing the way for the Lord. When John pointed his finger to Christ, proclaiming: "Behold the Lamb of God . . ." Andrew followed Jesus and became His first apostle. He then told his brother Simon Peter that he had found the Messiah.

Patras, Greece is said to be the scene of the martyr's death. The Roman official Ageas came to Patras and observed that multitudes had abandoned paganism and had embraced the faith of Christ. He resolved to correct the situation. It proved impossible for him to stem the tide of the Gospel. In fact, the official's wife and brother, having been cured of illness by the Apostle, accepted the Christian faith.

Soon Ageas called Andrew to account for his actions. He derided him as a propagator of that superstition whose Author was put to death on a cross. Andrew seized the opportunity to speak of the infinite love of Christ Who came into the world and died to save it. The Apostle was sent off to prison and later issued a death sentence.

Because Andrew had preached so much of the cross and sacrifice of Christ, Ageas ordered the saint to be crucified on an X-shaped cross. He saluted it, saying: "Hail, precious cross, that has been consecrated by the body of my Lord, and adorned with His limbs as with rich jewels. I come to you exulting and glad; receive me with joy into your arms. O good cross, that has received beauty from our Lord's limbs, I have ardently loved you. Long have I desired and sought you; now you have been found by me and are ready for my longing soul." After teaching the faithful from this special "pulpit" for several days, Andrew gave his life for Christ.

23rd SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 6. Monastic Martyr and Confessor Stephen the New of Mt. St. Auxentius, Martyrs Basil, Stephen, two Gregories, John, Andrew, Peter, Anna, and many others (767). Martyr Irenarchus and Seven Women Martyrs at Sebaste (303).

Troparion — Tone 4

Trained in asceticism on the mountain, / with the weapon of the Cross you destroyed the spiritual assaults of the hostile powers, all-blessed one; / Again you bravely prepared for combat / and slew Copronymus with the sword of faith; / for both struggles you have been crowned by God, monk-martyr Stephen of eternal memory.

Troparion — Tone 4

Your holy martyrs O Lord, / through their sufferings have received incorruptible crowns from You, our God. / For having Your strength, they laid low their adversaries, / and shattered the powerless boldness of demons. / Through their intercessions, save our souls!

Kontakion — Tone 8

Lovers of the feasts, from the heart with hymns let us praise in faith / godlike Stephen the lover of the Trinity, / for he honored the fair icon of the Master and of His Mother. / Now let us rejoice together and cry out to him with love: / "Rejoice, ever glorious Father."

Ephesians 2:4-10 (Epistle)

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace, you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Luke 13:10-17 (Gospel)

Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath.

And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up.

But when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him and said to her, "Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity."

And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, "There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day."

The Lord then answered him and said, "Hypocrite! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall, and lead it away to water it?"

So, ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound – think of it – for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?"

And when He said these things, all His adversaries were put to shame; and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him.

Monastic Martyr and Confessor Stephen the New

The Monk Martyr and Confessor Stephen the New was born in 715 at Constantinople into a pious Christian family. His parents, having two daughters, prayed the Lord for a son. The mother of the new-born Stephen took him to the Blachernae church of the Most Holy Theotokos and dedicated him to God.

During the reign of the emperor Leo the Isaurian (716-741) there was a persecution against the holy icons and against those venerating them. With the support of the emperor, the adherents of the Iconoclast heresy seized control of the supreme positions of authority in the Empire and in the Church. Persecuted by the powers of this world, Orthodoxy was preserved in monasteries far from the capital, in solitary cells, and in the brave and faithful hearts of its followers.

The Orthodox parents of Saint Stephen, grieved by the prevailing impiety, fled from Constantinople to Bithynia, and they gave over their sixteen-year-old son in obedience to the monk John, who labored in asceticism in a solitary place on the Mount of Saint Auxentius. Saint Stephen dwelt with the venerable monk John for more than fifteen years, devoting himself totally to this spirit-bearing Elder, and learning monastic activity from him. Here Stephen received the news that his father was dead, and his mother and sisters had been tonsured as nuns.

After a certain time, his teacher John also died. With deep sorrow Saint Stephen buried his venerable body, and continued with monastic effort in his cave by himself. Soon monks began to come to the ascetic, desiring to learn from him the virtuous and salvific life, and a monastery was established, with Saint Stephen as the igumen. At forty-two years of age Stephen left the monastery he founded, and he went to another mountain, on whose summit he dwelt in deep seclusion in a solitary cell. But here also a community of monks soon gathered, seeking the spiritual guidance of Saint Stephen.

Leo the Isaurian was succeeded by Constantine Copronymos (741-775), a fiercer persecutor of the Orthodox, and an even more zealous iconoclast. The emperor convened an Iconoclast Council, attended by 358 bishops from the Eastern provinces. However, except for Constantine, the Archbishop of Constantinople, illegitimately raised to the patriarchal throne by the power of Copronymos, not one of the other patriarchs participated in the wicked doings of this Council, thus making it less likely to style itself as "ecumenical." This council of heretics, at the instigation of the emperor and the archbishop, described icons as idols, and pronounced an anathema on all who venerated icons in the Orthodox manner, and it described icon veneration as heresy.

Meanwhile, the monastery of Mount Auxentius and its igumen became known in the capital. They told the emperor about the ascetic life of the monks, about their Orthodox piety, about the igumen Stephen's gift of wonderworking, and of how Saint Stephen's fame had spread far beyond the region of the monastery, and that the name of its head was accorded universal respect and love. The saint's open encouragement of icon veneration and the implied rebuff to the persecutors of Orthodoxy within the monastery of Mount Auxentius especially angered the emperor. Archbishop Constantine realized that in the person of Saint Stephen he had a strong and implacable opponent of his iconoclastic intentions, and he plotted how he might draw him over to his side or else destroy him.

They tried to lure Saint Stephen into the Iconoclast camp, at first with flattery and bribery, then by threats, but in vain. Then they slandered the saint, accusing him of falling into sin with the nun Anna. But his guilt was not proven, since the nun courageously denied any guilt and died under torture and beatings. Finally, the emperor gave orders to lock up the saint in prison, and to destroy his monastery. Iconoclast bishops were sent to Saint Stephen in prison, trying to persuade him of the dogmatic correctness of the Iconoclast position. But the saint easily refuted all the arguments of the heretics and he remained true to Orthodoxy.

Then the emperor ordered that the saint be exiled on one of the islands in the Sea of Marmora. Saint Stephen settled into a cave, and there also his disciples soon gathered. After a certain while the saint left the brethren and took upon himself the exploit of living atop a pillar. News of the stylite Stephen, and the miracles worked by his prayers, spread throughout all the Empire and strengthened the faith and spirit of Orthodoxy in the people.

The emperor gave orders to transfer Saint Stephen to prison on the island of Pharos, and then to bring him to trial. At the trial, the saint refuted the arguments of the heretics sitting in judgment upon him. He explained the dogmatic essence of icon veneration, and he denounced the Iconoclasts because in blaspheming icons, they blasphemed Christ and the Mother of God. As proof, the saint pointed to a golden coin inscribed with the image of the emperor. He asked the judges what would happen to a man who threw the coin to the ground, and then trampled the emperor's image under his feet. They replied that such a man would certainly be punished for dishonoring the image of the emperor. The saint said that an even greater punishment awaited anyone who would dishonor the image of the King of Heaven and His Saints, and with that he spat on the coin, threw it to the ground, and began to trample it underfoot. The emperor gave orders to take the saint to prison, where already there were languishing 342 Elders, condemned for the veneration of icons. In this prison Saint Stephen spent eleven months, consoling the imprisoned. The prison became like a monastery, where the usual prayers and hymns were chanted according to the Typikon. The people came to the prison in crowds and asked Saint Stephen to pray for them.