



Saint Michael the Archangel Orthodox Church

146 Third Avenue, Rankin, PA 15104
Pastor: Very Reverend Nicholas Ferencz, PhD
Cantor: Professor Jerry Jumba
Parish President : Carole Bushak



Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!
Slava Isusu Christu! Slava vo v'iki!

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APRIL 7, 2019

FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION TO HOLY MARY THEOTOKOS

SUN., APR. 7 FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION TO HOLY MARY THEOTOKOS. 4th Sunday of the Great Fast.

Our holy Father Tikhon Patriarch of Moscow.

8:15 – 8:45 AM Holy Mystery of Confession

9:00 AM Blessing of the Litija Gifts. Divine Liturgy

Panachida: April Perpetuals: Marie (Horgas) Stafura. Katherine Stegena.

Wed., Apr. 10 Monk Hilarion the Younger. Monk Stephen the Wonderworker.

6:30 PM Holy Mystery of Confession

7:00 PM Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

Fri., Apr. 12 Monk John Climacus. Bishop Sophronios of Irkutsk

6:30 PM Holy Mystery of Confession

7:00 PM Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

SAT., APR. 13 AKATHIST SATURDAY: Commemorating our Holy Mother Mary Theotokos.

8:15 – 8:45 AM Holy Mystery of Confession

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

10:00 AM *Church Cleaning for Easter: All are welcome to come and participate!*

Sun., Apr. 14 Commemoration of our holy mother Mary of Egypt.

8:15 – 8:45 AM Holy Mystery of Confession

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

2:30 PM *Holy Mystery of Confession*

3:00 PM *Lenten Mission at St. John's on North Side, Pittsburgh*

Holy Mystery of Confession: See Schedule.

PEOPLE STUFF

Congratulations and God Bless! To all who have birthdays in March and April: Alan Bache 3/5. Jane Barclay 3/22. Gregory Bolbat 3/17. Kimberly Fry 3/15. Eddie Gombos 4/14. Sharon Mascilak 4/12. John Varoscak 4/11. Anna Zamule 4/25. *Many, blessed and spiritually fruitful years, na mnohaja i blahaja l'ita!*

Prayer List: *Living:* Fr. Joseph Cervo. Pañi Dorothy Hutnyan. Pañi Donna Smoley. Dana Andrade. Gloria Andrade. Michael Artim. Gregory Michael Aurilio. Brooklyn Grace Banosky and her parents Chris and Katie. Jane Barclay. Donald Bodnar. Charlene Borsic. Jaime Budesca. Barbara Chappie. Steve Bournius. Rebecca, David & Bradley Noah Cozad. Mary Ann Crouse. George & Margaret Dorogy. Margaret Dufalla. Christina Duranko. Breanne Glass. Dorothy Glass. Eddie Gombos. Jennifer Hartrick. Shirley Hrubic. Kevin Ianni. Gary Ingelido. Alisha Krass. Carson Krass. Savanna Lee Krass. Joan Martell. Brian Masterovsky. Michael Mehalik. Zoe Mehalik. Helen Mihalik. Bill & Patti Novotnak. Frank Palmieri. Diane Phillips. Millie and Edward Phillips. Michael Platt. Anna Senich. Bernice Sindak. Terry Slezak. Bill and Andrea Sovick. Margaret Stemler. Milton and Thelma Supak. Diana Terezis. Bobby and Dee Triffanoff. Paul & Valerie Yednak. Jeanne Zajac. *Prosphora Bakers:* Trudy Trifanoff. Delores Cubakovic, and their intentions.

Our Gifts to God and our Church March 31, 2019

Attendance	32
Communions	24

Collections

Monthly	55.00
Sunday	930.00
All Candles	161.00
St. Cyril Food Pantry	25.60
Building Maintenance	15.00
Diocesan Membership	72.00
Patriarchal Pence	95.00

Total Offerings: **1353.60**

*Building and Repairs Donations to Date
\$3366! God bless your generosity!*

Welcome! We welcome to our church this morning all visitors, guests, relatives, and friends of Saint Michael Church. We pray your visit with us is spiritually rewarding, holy and life-giving. Visit often!

The Lord sees the hearts of men. But in their judgments of people can always be mistaken, and then these judgments become the fruit of simple idle talking. St. Nikon

F(E)ASTING

LENTE FASTING:

Traditional Guidelines:

- *On the Feast of the Annunciation (March 25/April 7),* fish is permitted as well as wine and oil, but meat and animal products are not allowed.
- On **weekdays (Monday through Friday inclusive)** in the second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth weeks, one meal a day is permitted, to be taken in the afternoon following Vespers, and at this one meal xerophagy [*Strict Fast*] is to be observed.
- On **Saturdays and Sundays in Lent**, with the exception of Holy Saturday, two main meals may be taken in the usual way [i.e., cooked], around mid-day and in the evening, with wine and olive oil; but meat, animal products and fish are not allowed.

A Pastoral Interpretation: Try to fast and pray more than last year, with more focus and concentration. Who knows, in fifty or sixty years, if we keep trying, we may become more perfect!

This Saturday we celebrate “Akathistos Saturday,” Commemorating our Holy Mother Mary Theotokos. All are welcome to come and celebrate the Divine Liturgy at 9:00 AM

PARISH STUFF

Reminder! **Easter Church Cleaning!** Saturday, April 13, starting at 9:00 AM, SPT (Standard Parish Time). Bring your mops, bring your buckets, bring your rags and soap! We will feel *so* much better when it is done!

New! **March Financial Report** is now posted on the hall bulletin board.

Reminder! All are invited! To a Birthday Party celebrating the *90th birthday* of Eddie Gombos and the 83rd birthday of John Varoscek **on Sunday, April 14** (Palm Sunday), after the Divine Liturgy. *Many years to Eddie and to John!*

Church Repairs: *We thank all of our parishioners* for your ongoing, active interest in the well-being of our parish. God bless us every one! So far, we have **\$3366** donated toward this new work. Total cost of this work was **\$3800**. *We thank you for your generosity. God bless!*

One should not pay attention to tempting thoughts, but should drive them far away from himself, and not being disturbed, continue the mental work. Though the fruit of this labor be imperceptible, though a person may not experience spiritual delights, tenderness, etc.—still prayer cannot remain inactive. It quietly completes its work. --
St. Barsanuphius

DIocese, Deanery and Additional Stuff

Update! *Please remember and come to our 3rd Deanery Mission, Sunday, April 14, at St. John's on the North Side. Confessions will be at 2:30 PM. Lenten Vespers begins at 3:00 PM, followed by a Lenten meal. Make this Lent your Best!*

For those who have difficulty with steps, here is how to park on the upper side of the church, with only a few steps in:

From Pittsburgh, take Rte 65 toward Mckees Rocks. Take the exit for California Ave., turn right at the end of the ramp to California Ave. Now you have two choices:

- 1) When you reach a Y in the road, stay to the LEFT on California. Drive *past* the Church. Turn RIGHT on Dickson St. Take the 1st RIGHT onto Holbrook Ave. (It is actually an alley). The church is at the end of the alley. Fr. Dave is going to try to make parking available on that street. ELSE
- 2) *OR*, you can bear RIGHT onto Woodland Ave. The rectory is on this street. You can park on Woodland, and then walk down past the rectory and to the side door of the church. There are a few more steps this way, but it is way way better than the front steps.

Reminder! *52nd Annual Ukrainian Pysanky Sale!* Ss Peter and Paul Orthodox Church, Carnegie, PA. Sunday, April 14, 11 am – 4 pm. See the flyer on the hall bulletin board for details!

New! Designer Purse Bash! St. Nicholas Church, Homestead. Saturday, May 18. Doors open at 4 PM. Tickets are \$30 and include meal and 4 chances. More information on the bulletin board in the hall! Don't miss this one!

A NEW LOOK AT GREAT LENT

by Very Rev. Michael Ellias, March 2005

GREAT LENT---THE 40-DAY period of prayer and fasting which precedes Holy Week—is once again upon us. Our first thoughts are probably of bowls of beans, rice and lentils in various combinations and disguises. We then either eagerly welcome or quietly dread the multiplication, elongation and repetitiveness of the Divine Services. We may even question whether such rituals have any relevance to life in such a secular, fast-paced and cynical age as the early 21st century. Perhaps, however, a new look at this ancient season of spiritual preparation can reaffirm the Church's teaching on the value of this "School of Repentance" in our lives and the lives of our parishes.

The Art of Car Repair and Spiritual Renewal

I recently took my car in for a scheduled oil change. As the technician worked his way through the checklist of inspections, he pointed out that the car's transmission fluid had transmogrified from its original red color and slick texture into something dark brown resembling pancake syrup. He could, if I wanted, simply change the fluid, but he recommended power flushing the whole system and replacing the gasket and filter in order to

prevent any old residue from contaminating the new fluid. The work was more extensive than I had anticipated, but it produced a marked improvement in the car's performance. I was now ready to return to my regular routine and to new possibilities with confidence in a well-maintained vehicle.

Great Lent is like a spiritual oil change or tune-up. We present ourselves, personally and communally, to the technician of our souls and bodies, Jesus Christ, who removes our impurities and renews our strength. The extent of our restoration and spiritual growth, however, depends on the degree to which we commit ourselves to the process. We can go in for a simple oil change, or we can undertake a serious inventory of our spiritual condition and adopt a full program of "diet and exercise." We can, in other words, take a night class for interest's sake, or we can enroll in Great Lent's "School of Repentance."

The Orthodox Church prescribes a regimen of preparation before undertaking the rigors of Great Lent and for the vocation which awaits us after Holy Pascha. While we have often emphasized the importance of individual effort, the corporate aspects of Great Lent receive too little attention. Most importantly, however, we need to keep in mind that it is Jesus Christ who produces the changes in us personally and communally.

Weeks of Preparation

Our training begins with the pre-Lenten Sundays which strike certain vital themes for our spiritual exertion. The Church first prescribes the parable of the Publican and Pharisee (Luke 18:10-14). While the Pharisee marches to the front of the temple, "prays with himself," and enumerates his virtues, the publican stands far off, beats his breast and implores God to have mercy on him. Jesus Himself explains about the publican, "This man went down to his house justified rather than the other," because of his humility. "Everyone that exalts himself shall be abased, and he that humbles himself shall be exalted."

We each need to cultivate individually what Psalm 59 describes as a "broken spirit and a contrite heart," but can we imagine what this kind of attitude would do for us communally? How different our parish council meetings would be, for example, if we were more humble rather than always trying to prove that we are the smartest one in the room! When we humble ourselves, we allow Jesus to be Lord and the Church to prosper.

In the second week of preparation we hear the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-31). This story of a young man, who leaves his father and squanders his inheritance in self-indulgence, culminates in repentance and reconciliation. After he has wasted his resources..he returns to his father's house, confessing, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." ... This example is precisely what confession looks like. The parable of the Prodigal Son ought to encourage all of us to make time for the Sacrament of Confession for a thorough power-wash and refilling...

On Meatfare Sunday the Gospel (Matthew 25:31-46) describes the Last Judgment "when the Son of man shall come in his glory".....While many will lament that today is the last taste of meat we will have until Holy Pascha, this passage emphasizes that our love for our neighbor is even more important than our dietary adjustments. The criteria for judgment...will be whether we have fed the hungry, given drink to the thirsty.....Yes, we are certainly to fast from meat, but this fast must accompany the sharing of our savings with the least of Christ's brethren through almsgiving. God does not need our fasting. We need our fasting. Our pangs of hunger, should help us identify with those who are always hungry....

Finally, on Forgiveness Sunday the Gospel (Matthew 6:14-21) opens with Jesus' teaching, "If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." It is true that the rest of this passage discusses fasting, but the structure of the reading suggests that fasting is somehow

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dependent upon forgiveness. In many of our parishes the faithful will gather for Forgiveness Sunday Vespers to inaugurate Great Lent. In the rite of forgiveness everyone in the congregation asks for forgiveness from everyone else. Our immediate reaction is to claim that we should not have to ask forgiveness of others, whom we have not directly offended. If we have learned, however, from the humility of the publican, the penitence of the prodigal,..then we have a chance to acknowledge that, in as much as we have sinned at all, we have sinned against all. In as much as we have failed to love the other, then we have sinned against all others.....

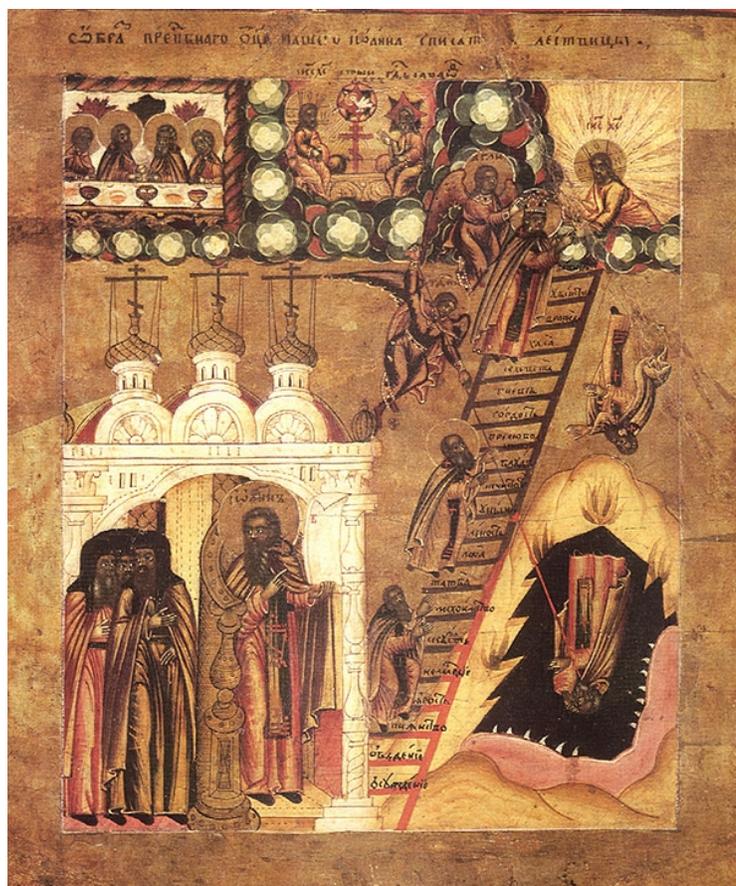
The Jesus Prayer is the most essential weapon in the work of our salvation. But he who takes hold of it must expect temptations and be prepared for an inner battle, a battle with thoughts. The demons do not like the Jesus Prayer and in every way they take vengeance on the person who strikes them with this sword. *St. Barsanuphius*

Finger Exercises versus Aunt Rhody

I recently began taking piano lessons from the parish’s choir director...Inevitably, however, I rush through the boring scales and finger exercises so that I can get to the featured piece each week...when I get to the lesson itself, my teacher easily discerns that I have not spent enough time training my fingers with the assigned scales and exercises. She reminds me, “Lift your fingers and point to the sky, then press down to the bottom of the key! Repeat the phrase over and over until you get it right! Her exhortations are precious reminders that before I can make music, I need painstakingly to develop habits of the heart, mind and body which can then find expression in the music...

As we enter Great Lent itself we encounter more Divine Services with more repetition than usual. We make the sign of the cross over ourselves more frequently as we make our prostrations....All of these devices help us regulate our hearts, minds and bodies. The repetition, spiritual exercise and slower pace recall in us a sense of what is truly important in life and to whom we truly belong...Athletes and coaches have long understood the importance of repetition and practice. Should not spiritual athletes and prayer warriors do the same? Again, most importantly, it is Jesus Christ upon whom these exercises focus and who in turn transforms our hearts, minds and bodies so that we can make His music.

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Yes, we need spiritual tune-ups personally and communally so that we can return to our old routines strengthened and renewed, but Great Lent should open us up to new possibilities as well...As we “graduate” from Great Lent’s School of Repentance” each year, we should experience a certain newness both personally and communally. We should emerge more humble and prayerful, repentant and reconciled, joyful and generous. We should be tuned-up and cleaned out so as to serve others in the power and glory of the Risen Christ. We should have developed better habits of the heart, mind, and body which will empower us to share the gospel boldly. We should recognize Jesus Christ more clearly as the author and finisher of our faith. We should perhaps, even look at a bowl of rice, beans and lentils in a new way.

HOLY WEEK AND BRIGHT WEEK SCHEDULE

Suitable for framing, or for posting on your refrigerator just in cases.

- SUN., APR. 21** **PALM (FLOWERY) SUNDAY.** Apostle Herodian. Agabus of the 70
8:45 AM Liturgical Hymns
9:00 AM Divine Liturgy – Red Pew Book, pp 210–214
- TUE., APR. 23** **HOLY & GREAT TUESDAY.** Martyrs Terence, Pompeius et al. Patriarch Gregory V of Constantinople.
6:30 PM Holy Mystery of Confession
7:00 PM Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
- WED., APR. 24** **HOLY & GREAT WEDNESDAY.** Martyred Bishop Antipas of Pergamum
6:30 PM Holy Mystery of Confession (*note: Last Scheduled Confessions*)
7:00 PM Holy Mystery of the Anointing of the Sick (*Special Note: this is only the Mystery of the Anointing of the Sick*)
- THU., APR. 25** **HOLY & GREAT THURSDAY.** Confessor Basil of Parium
9:00 AM Last Supper Liturgy - Vespers and Liturgy of Basil
7:00 PM Matins of the Passion – Great Friday Matins of the 12 Gospels
Set up the Tomb
- FRI., APR. 26** **HOLY & GREAT FRIDAY.** Martyred Priest Artemon and companions
12 Noon Royal Hours
7:00 PM Vespers and the Burial Procession with the Holy Shroud
Tomb Vigil. Please sign up for your hour!
- SAT., APR. 27** **HOLY & GREAT SATURDAY.** Confessor Martin, Bishop of Rome
10:00 AM Paschal Vigil Liturgy – Great Vespers and Liturgy of Basil
Tomb Vigil until evening. Please sign up for your hour!
- SUN., APR. 28** **PASCHA!**
8:30 AM Resurrection Matins
Divine Liturgy
Blessing of Baskets
- MON., APR. 29** **BRIGHT MONDAY!** Virgin Martyrs Agape, Irene, and Chionia
10:00 AM Divine Liturgy and Paschal Procession
- SUN., MAY 5** **THOMAS SUNDAY** Monk Theodore Sykeot
8:45 AM Liturgical Hymns
9:00 AM Divine Liturgy – Special Sheets
Thomas Sunday Paschal Brunch!

Holy Mystery of Confession: See the Schedule above. If you cannot make a scheduled time, please let me know and we can make arrangements.