



Saint Michael the Archangel Orthodox Church

146 Third Avenue, Rankin, PA 15104
Pastor: Very Reverend Nicholas Ferencz, PhD
Cantor: Professor Jerry Jumba
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Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!
Slava Isusu Christu! Slava vo v'iki!

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MARCH 8, 2020

ORTHODOXY SUNDAY

CELEBRATING THE ICONS (IMAGES) OF OUR LORD AND THE SAINTS

Sun., Mar. 8 **Sunday of Orthodoxy. *The traditional theme of the 2nd week of Lent: the Prophets of the Old Testament: Moses, Elijah et al. First and Second Findings of the head of St. John the Baptist***

Before Liturgy: Holy Mystery of Confession

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy.

Panachida: John Bonga: 40-day Memorial

4:30 PM **Vespers at *Holy Trinity Church*, North Hills (985 Providence Blvd., Pittsburgh, PA 15237)**

Wed., Mar. 11 Confessor Procopius the Decapolite.

6:30 PM Holy Mystery of Confession

7:00 PM **Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts**

Thu., Mar. 12 Confessor Basil the Decapolite. Venerable Women Marana and Kyra. New martyr Kyranna

Fri., Mar. 13 Monk John Cassian

6:30 PM Holy Mystery of Confession

7:00 PM **Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts**

Sat., Mar. 14 2nd All Souls Saturday. Martyred Nun Eudoxia. Monk David of Wales

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

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy and the reading of the Hramoty of the Deceased.

Sun., Mar. 15 **Commemoration of St. Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonika. *The traditional theme of the 3rd week of Lent: The Prodigal Son*** Martyred Bishop Theodotus of Cyrene

Before Liturgy: Holy Mystery of Confession

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy.

Panachida: March Perpetuals: William Dorogy 3/1. Rose Marie Novak 3/7. Anna Bonga 3/8. Stephen and Mary Sefchick 3/11. Irene Simonoff 3/12. Michael Lesko, Sr. 3/17. Ronald Lesko 3/29.

3:00 PM **Vespers at the Deanery Mission at *St. John's in Ambridge*. Seminarian Dan Katz preaching.**

Holy Mystery of Confession: As listed above for Lent. We can also meet other times (after Liturgy, or by appointment). Just let me know.

PEOPLE STUFF

March Birthdays! Alan Bache and Helen Mihalik 3/5. Kim Fry 3/15. Janet Baran 3/27. *Many, blessed and spiritually fruitful years!*

March Wedding Anniversaries! Tina and Jason Mazza 3/10. *Many, blessed and spiritually fruitful years!*

Prayer List: *Deceased:* John Bonga.

Living: Fr. Joseph Cervo. Pañi Eleanor Herbert. Pañi Dorothy Hutnyan. Pañi Eleanor Pribish. Fr. Jonathan Tobias. Pañi Deborah Zak. Dana Andrade. Gloria Andrade. Gregory Michael Aurilio. Walter Bolbat. Donald Bodnar. Charlene Borsic. Jaime Budesá. Barbara Chappie. Steve Bournius. Rebecca, David & Bradley Noah Cozad. Mary Ann Crouse. Martha Danchak. Nicholas Duranko. George & Margaret Dorogy. Breanne Glass. Dorothy Glass. Eddie Gombos. Jennifer Hartrick. Joseph Hlavac. Shirley Hrubic. Kevin Ianni. Gary Ingelido. Andrea Kerkentzes. Jeanne Lesko. Bobby Malackany. Joan Martell. Sharon Mascilak. Bill and Barbara McCauley. Jake McLaughlin. Helen Mihalik. Teresa Onuska. Frank Palmieri. Diane Phillips. Millie and Edward Phillips. Anna Senich. Peter Simonoff. Bernice Siudak. Terry Slezak. Milton and Thelma Supak. Diana Terezis. Bobby and Dee Triffanoff. Josh Walendziewicz. Paul & Valerie Yednak. Jim Zajac. *Prosphora Bakers:* Trudy Trifanoff. Delores Cubakovic, and their intentions.

Our Gifts to God and our Church

March 1, 2020

Attendance	35
Communions	20

Collections

Monthly	85.00
Sunday	1060.00
All Votive Candles	150.00
Building Maintenance	25.00
Diocesan Membership	24.00
Dona. in memory of John Bonga	100.00
Patriarchal Pence	20.00
Major Building Repairs	<u>150.00</u>
Total Offerings:	1639.00

Building and Repairs Donations which are available for upcoming repairs to date are \$2691! God bless your generosity!

Welcome! We welcome to our church this morning all visitors, guests, relatives, and friends of Saint Michael Church. We invite *everyone* present today to chant the Liturgy along with the cantor.

F(E)ASTING

The next Feast is the Annunciation to Holy Mary Theotokos, on Sunday, April 7.

Traditional Fasting Guidelines: *This Week:* On **weekdays** (Monday through Friday inclusive) 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.

ALL SOULS SATURDAYS: *Next All Souls Saturday* is this Saturday, March 14. All are welcome to come and pray for their deceased loved ones.

PARISH STUFF

Update! Agape Offerings: *Today: Next Sunday:*

New! The Virus Season is among us, and reception of Holy Communion! As we all know, this is the season of this new Coronavirus, and the Flu just doesn't seem to want to go away this year. With all of this going around, some folks are very concerned about getting and/or passing along any of these illnesses that are going around. So, we ask that everyone be sensitive to the needs and concerns of our fellow communicants, and refrain from licking the communion spoon, or closing your mouth while receiving. Just open wide, and I will place the *particle* in your mouth. You can wipe your lips, if necessary, on the communion cloth.

Reminder! The **Spring Lottery Ticket Raffle** will be held on Sunday, April 26. Chance tickets are being mailed out to everyone, as we usually do. You can also pick up tickets from Carole Bushak. Once again, we want to emphasize that you are welcome purchase 0, 1, 2 or 15 tickets, as you wish. There is no obligation to buy. Chance Tickets are \$5 each. The terms of the Lottery are listed on the ticket. *Prize Contributions:* As discussed at the annual meeting, some folks wanted to continue to donate toward the prize by donating Lottery Tickets. If donations do not cover the prize, the parish will cover the difference, to be repaid by ticket sales.

Update! Church Repairs: we have available at this time \$2691 in donations towards repairs in the church and rectory. 2019 – 2020 donations have totaled so far **\$6005**, some of it already used.

DIocese, Deanery and Additional Stuff

Reminder! Sunday of Orthodoxy Pan-orthodox Vespers The Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood of Greater Pittsburgh invites you to join us TODAY! at 4:30 PM, at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, 985 Providence Boulevard, Pittsburgh, PA 15237. **Celebrant and Homilist:** His Grace Bishop John (Abdallah) of the Antiochian Orthodox Diocese of Worcester and New England. **Also featuring** the Pan-Orthodox Choir under the direction of Fr. Tom Soroka. Vespers will be followed by fellowship and Lenten refreshments.

Reminder! Next Sunday, 1st Deanery Mission at St. John the Baptist Church, 450 Glenwood Dr., Ambridge, PA 15003. **Pastor:** Fr. Vincent Dranginis. **Speaker:** Seminarian Dan Katz. 2:30 PM Confessions, 3:00 PM Vespers, followed by Lenten repast.

ON THE FREQUENCY OF RECEIVING THE HOLY EUCHARIST

Excerpts of a Book Review in Religion in Russia by Boris Kolymagin, 01/14/2002. The book is *A Book Beneficial for the Soul About Ceaseless Reception of the Sacred Christian Mysteries*. Sumi: Community of the Church of the Venerable Simeon the New Theologian and St John of Kronstadt. 2001, 172 pp.

"If anyone hesitates to receive Communion, he brings serious harm upon himself." – The Venerable Nikodim of the Holy Mountain, St. Makarii of Corinth.

The practice of frequent Communion came into the life of the Russian Orthodox Church comparatively recently. In earlier Soviet times it was very difficult to receive Communion at Easter, Nativity and other major feasts. The laity who approached the Chalice more frequently than twice monthly would be subject to disapproval on the part of the majority of faithful and clergy.

Today, when the ideas of Eucharistic ecclesiology have spread widely throughout Russia, many priests give their blessing to their spiritual children to receive Communion every Sunday. At the same time there is no small number of presbyters who continue to look unfavorably upon this practice. They view this as the pernicious influence of modernists and neo-renovationists and an attack upon a tradition sanctified by centuries of practice. Thus, the appearance, in Russian, of a book on frequent Communion written by two notable saints who lived in Greece during the second half of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries, is of great significance. It is unlikely that anyone today would attempt to accuse the compilers and publishers of the well-known "Philokalia" of devotion to "pernicious Western ideas." However, there was no small number of such critics in their times. They applied an ironic epithet, "Kolyvady", to the saints, which had the same approximate implication as "Kochetovtsy" today. They received this epithet because they refused to celebrate the service for the departed over the Kolyva [see note at end] on Sundays. The dispute about the Kolyva continued for more than sixty years and it involved no small number of Athonite monks. The Kolyvady suffered cruel persecutions and many of them were expelled from Mt Athos, or deposed. Yet, in the face of all difficulties, they eventually prevailed. By common agreement, the Kolyvady laid the foundation for the beginning of the Patristic renaissance in Greece even though in their lifetime, it appeared that their opponents would prevail.

The best known of the Kolyvady, Nikodim of the Holy Mountain, played the same role in the Greek world as the Venerable Paisy Velichkovsky did in Russia. St Nikodim firmly adhered to the Patristic tradition. At the same time he was able to take the best from the spiritual experience of his Catholic neighbors. Thus for example, he translated the *Spiritual Struggle* of Lorenzo Scupoli, which is known to us as *Unseen Warfare* (it is interesting that the Russian translator from the Greek, St Theophan the Recluse, was not aware of the Western derivation of the original). The Athonite monk likewise translated the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius Loyola with additions from other Italian authors. Thus if one so desires, he could be enrolled in the department of "ecumenism and modernism."

During the saints' lifetime, the Athonites did not Commune as today, up to several times weekly, but only two or three times a year. Thus the discussion about the frequency of Communion in the context of the people's spiritual renaissance was of extreme importance. The Spiritually-inspired authors, basing themselves on Scripture and Tradition, on writings of the Fathers and on canonical norms, wrote that "whoever hesitates to receive Communion, brings serious harm upon himself." They analyze the numerous objections that were offered by the opponents of frequent Communion. It is interesting that the same objections are proffered today. One of these is that today's unworthy person, before approaching the Chalice more frequently, must intensely prepare for Communion and fast. To this the Greek saints respond that, even if the person would observe a lengthy fast, he would still be unworthy of the Mystical Supper. Because "the forty day fast does not make the persons worthy of Communion, but only sincerity and the purity of the soul makes them worthy." The second objection is mainly connected with preparation. In the opinion of those who oppose frequent Communion, a person develops a kind of an automatic habit, he comes to the Chalice too easily. To this our authors reply that, of course, it is always necessary to prepare for the Mystery of Mysteries and to approach the Chalice with discernment. However, one must approach! "Without regular Communion it is not possible to acquire love, without love there can be no obedience of the Divine commandments, and without obedience one cannot achieve perfection." There are thirteen objections in the book, and each one has its appropriate response.

The saintly authors fully realize the difficulties which the faithful will encounter if they follow their advise seriously and sincerely. The first will be the reluctance of the priests to offer the Sacred Gifts to such people. They recommend the following approach to this objection: "Should someone in spiritual authority attempts to stand in the way of such a Divinely pleasing act, we should not immediately diminish our fervent desire and not lose hope, but we should fall on our knees before him and kiss his feet, as did the fallen woman, and persistently knock on the door and beg for permission."

In another place, citing the poems of St. Meletius, they express themselves more pointedly: "There is no need to listen to the monks Nor even to the presbyters When their talk is without merit And their advise is simply bad." The saintly authors were not afraid, for the sake of Divine truth, to go against the false understanding of the unity of the Church (there immediately comes to mind the famous theological conference "Unity of the Church" at which the "Kochetkovites" were reviled). They were not afraid of the different views within the Church, for the sake of the triumph of Christ's Truth. What they accomplished in their time continues to nourish and inspire us, the Orthodox believers in the 21st century.

NOTE: Kolyva (Kut'ya) is a special preparation of wheat, honey and raisins, used for Memorial Services.

PITTSBURGH DEANERY LENTEN MISSIONS AND SERVICES! The Clergy of our Pittsburgh Deanery invite and encourage all to be a part of the special Lenten services in our area.

Confessions will be available before all Deanery Services, with a variety of priests available. *ALL* are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity to receive this Holy Mystery during Lent!

- **March 15, Remembrance of St. Gregory Palamas:** *St. John the Baptist, Ambridge, PA.*, Speaker: Seminarian Dan Katz. 2:30 PM Confessions, 3:00 PM Vespers, followed by Lenten repast.
- **March 22, Veneration of the Holy Cross:** *St. John the Baptist, East Pittsburgh, PA.* Speaker: Fr. Nik Ferencz 2:30 PM Confessions, 3:00 PM Vespers, followed by Lenten repast.
- **Saturday, March 28: Annual ACROD Lenten Retreat, St. Nicholas, Homestead, PA.** Retreat Master: Metropolitan Gregory. Starts at 9 AM.
- **March 29, Remembrance of St. John Climacus:** *St. John the Baptist, North Side, PA.*, Speaker: Fr. Joseph Fester. 2:30 PM Confessions, 3:00 PM Vespers, followed by Lenten repast.
- **April 5, Remembrance of St. Mary of Egypt:** *St. Michael, Rankin, PA.* Speaker: Fr. Vincent Draginis. 2:30 PM Confessions, 3:00 PM Vespers, followed by Lenten repast.