



Archpriest Thomas Soroka, *Rector*  
Deacon Luke Loboda, *Attached*  
Deacon John Skowron, *Attached*

## Sunday of All Saints

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA

OrthodoxPittsburgh.org

June 19, 2022

## Welcome!

Whether you are searching for a new church home or just visiting, we are glad you're with us today. If you have a prayer request, are looking for more information about the Orthodox Faith, would like to join our parish, or would like to speak with Fr Thomas, we invite you to fill out a visitor's card and drop it in the offering basket as your offering today. We want to get to know you! God bless you!

## Schedule This Week

Sunday, June 19

10:00 am Divine Liturgy

Tuesday, June 21

9:00 am Daily Matins

9:30 am-12:00 pm Office Hours

Wednesday, June 22

6:30 pm Daily Vespers

7:00 pm Bible Study

Thursday, June 23

9:00 am Daily Matins

9:30am-12:00 pm Office Hours

Saturday, June 25

4:00 pm Community Food Pantry

5:00 pm Cathedral Vigil

6:00 pm Social Night

Sunday, June 26

10:00 am Divine Liturgy

*To our Visitors: Holy Communion is reserved for Orthodox Christians who prepare themselves by prayer and fasting. Non-Orthodox visitors are welcome to come forward to venerate the cross and receive the Antidoron (blessed bread) at the conclusion of the service.*

## Announcements

➤ Everyone is invited downstairs for a Father's Day luncheon sponsored by the Sisterhood. Thank you to all those who supported it!

➤ Tomorrow begins the Apostle's Fast (from meat and dairy) which prepares us to go out and preach the gospel. Please do your best to keep the spirit of this fast which ends at the feast of Sts Peter and Paul on Monday, June 29.

➤ Students K-8 are invited to our yearly Vacation Church School from July 5-8, 10a-1p daily. This year's theme will be "Let your Light Shine." Age-appropriate activities, crafts, lessons, games, and music. To register, contact Matushka Joni Soroka at [jonisoroka@yahoo.com](mailto:jonisoroka@yahoo.com).

➤ Would you please send our parishioner Eleanor Kovacs a birthday greeting for her 98<sup>th</sup>? It's this Wednesday, June 22. Her address is 30 Heckel Road, McKees Rocks PA 15136.

➤ As we enter into the summer months, a reminder that our diligence in attendance at the Sunday Divine Liturgy, the holy feast days, and the various activities of the church, is encouraged to continue.

➤ Mark your calendars  
June 20-28 - Apostle's Fast  
June 29 Feast of Sts Peter and Paul (DL 9:30 am)  
July 5-8 - Vacation Church School  
September 11 - Church Picnic at Clever Park  
October 8 - Slavic Food Fest  
November 22 - Ceiling iconography work begins

## Prayers

➤ Ill and infirm: *Known to be hospitalized:* (none) *Home:* George Shaytar. Natalie Tooch. *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* Eleanor Kovacs, Natalie Popovich, Michael Soroka

➤ Vigil Lights From Mat. Nancy K. Mell & Gregory Mell for the departed servant, for Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of family. From Charles A. Wasilko for the departed servant, Uncle Bill Falick; for the health of sisters, Doris & Marsha. From Doris Wasilko for the departed servants, parents, Charles & Mary; for the health of the Wasilko family; Many Years to Larry & Suzy on their Anniversary!! From Marsha Wasilko for the health of Natalie Tooch; Happy Anniversary & Many Years to Larry & Suzy! From John & Olga for the health of Nicholas Kowalcheck on his birthday. From Alexandria Tirpak for the health of my family, Natalie, Tami, Eleanor, Carol; safe travels for Nicholas; special intentions. From Nancy Shaytar for the health of husband, George. From Rich & Sonia Blaha for the health of family, friends, siblings and serving soldiers on their anniversaries, birthdays, special intentions, and peace. From Lindy Hamilton for special intentions.

## Thank You

➤ to our June donors: Jim and Leslie Wokutch (Holy Bread \$50, Communion Wine \$40, Incense \$10) in memory of mother, Olga Mell and brother, Deacon Joseph Mell.

## Why honor Saints?

In the Orthodox Church, the only true "saint" or holy one (Hagios) is the Trinitarian God Himself. The glorification or veneration of Saints (not worship, which belongs only to God) is a recognition that God's holiness is manifested in the Church through these Grace-filled men and women. In Orthodoxy, sainthood is a gift (charisma) given to man by God, through the Holy Spirit. This is not a theory, but an experience: Through the Grace of God, many Saints perform miracles while alive; Saints' relics often remain undefiled, are wonder-working or myrrh-streaming - and vast numbers of believers witness this.

According to the Orthodox faith, the goal of man is to imitate God and live the life of sanctification (theosis/deification = to become "God" by Grace, not by nature). St. Maximos the Confessor writes that the Saints are men and women who have reached theosis; they have avoided sin, and tried to live according to created nature, thus achieving total unity with God through the Holy Spirit (On Theology, 7.73). They fought the "good fight for the faith" (1 Tim. 6:12 and 2 Tim. 4:7), and applied the scriptural virtues of "justice, piety, fidelity, love, fortitude, and gentleness" (1 Tim. 6:11) in their lives.

So, the Orthodox Church honors the Saints as "friends of God". In their worldly life, and through daily repentance, constant spiritual struggle against their weaknesses, genuine piety and absolute obedience to His Divine Commandments, the Saints pleased God Who sanctified them both in body and soul. After their passing into eternal life, they have been accepted in God's bosom and have been granted the special gift to pray and intercede for those remaining in this world. Thus, the Saints are the ultimate role models of an Orthodox Christian.

*St Nicholas Church will strive to glorify God through Orthodox Christian worship, sincere love and care for one another, and service to those in need around us.*

# Hymns and Readings for Sunday, June 19

## Tone 8 Troparion (*Resurrection*)

Thou didst descend from on high, O Merciful One!

Thou didst accept the three day burial

to free us from our sufferings!//

O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to Thee!

## Tone 4 Troparion (*from the Pentecostarion*)

As with fine porphyry and royal purple,

Thy Church has been adorned with Thy martyrs'

blood shed through-

out all the world.

She cries to Thee, O Christ God:

“Send down Thy bounties on Thy people,//

grant peace to Thy habitation and great mercy

to our souls!”

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

## Tone 8 Kontakion (*from the Pentecostarion*)

The universe offers Thee the God-bearing

Martyrs

as the first fruits of creation, O Lord and

Creator.

By their prayers keep Thy Church, Thy

habitation, in abiding peace//

through the Theotokos, O most Merciful One!

## Tone 8 Prokeimenon (*Resurrection*)

Pray and make your vows / before the Lord, our God! (*Ps 75/76:11*)

## Tone 4 Prokeimenon (*Saints*)

God is wonderful in His saints, / the God of

Israel. (*Ps 67/68:35*)

## Epistle of the Saturday (*Hebrews 11:33-12:2*)

...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.

## Gospel of the Sunday (*Mt 10:32-33, 37-38, 19:27-30*)

Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.

He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or

daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.

Then Peter answered and said to Him, “See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?”

So Jesus said to them, “Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name’s sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

## Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! (*Ps 148:1*) Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; praise befits the just! (*Ps 32/33:1*) Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

## The Beauty of Worship

Beauty is that which opens our eyes to the majesty of God and moves us to desire Him. Worship is not just an intellectual grasping of truths but a process of falling in love. Beauty opens us to adoration and a craving for God begins to take root. Without this, our love for Him may be polite, respectful and even theologically accurate, but it lacks the headlong abandonment that should characterize a relationship between lover and beloved.

Modern American Western church architecture seldom shows regard for beauty; in fact, contemporary “worship spaces” often look like they’ve been designed to be lecture or entertainment spaces. Other important activities, like fellowship and education, have somehow invaded the time that should be set aside for falling down in awe before God. Orthodox worship is quite elaborate, even voluptuous with beauty. Extravagant but not formal, fancy but not fussy, our worship is like a big family Christmas dinner, with the best linens and finest dishes and everyone having a hearty time.

Worship was always meant to be gloriously, delightfully beautiful. This was true even in the time of Moses. Although His people were wandering the desert in tents, God commanded them to construct a tabernacle for worship that was staggeringly elaborate. The directions given in the Book of Exodus require gold, silver, precious stones, blue and purple cloth, embroidery, incense, bells and anointing oil. The pattern continues in the visions of the prophets, where God appears in glorious settings. Isaiah sees Him “high and lifted up,” wearing a robe with a voluminous train, while soaring angels chant a hymn and the smoke of incense fills the Temple (Isaiah 6). Daniel pictures the entrance of the Son of Man into the throne room of the Ancient of Days (Daniel 7:9-14). In the last book of the Bible, St. John has a vision of heavenly worship that includes precious stones, gold, thrones, crowns, white robes, crystal and incense (Revelation 4). From the beginning to the end of Scripture, worship is accompanied by great beauty.

As a result, Orthodox worship engages all the senses: we touch and kiss those things we venerate, smell incense and beeswax candles, taste bread and wine, and hear chanting and hymns. The sense of vision has the most to savor: we see the priest moving through the congregation carrying the brocade-draped gifts, preceded by a cross and candles carried in procession, surrounded by icons, and our friends and fellow worshippers bowing and praying as the smoke of incense swirls around us. The body is good and we worship with our whole bodies.

However, beauty is not to become an end in itself; mere ceremonialism would be a circular exercise and ultimately dead. But when entered with expectant joy, nothing opens the heart to deeper worship like beauty. In his Confessions, St. Augustine – the fourth century bishop of Hippo in north Africa – wrote of the passage through beauty into passionate love for God: “Late it was that I loved You, beauty so ancient and so new, late I loved You! And look, You were within me and I was outside and there I sought for You; in my ugliness I plunged into the beauties You had made. You were with me but I was not with You. You called, You cried out, You shattered my deafness, You flashed, You shone, You scattered my blindness. You breathed perfume and I drew in my breath and I pant for You. I tasted and I am hungry and thirsty. You touched me and I burned for Your peace.” (*FMG*)