

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, January 8

10:00 am Divine Liturgy / Church School

Tuesday, January 10

9:00 am Daily Matins

9:30 am to 12:00 pm Office Hours

Wednesday, January 11

6:30 pm Daily Vespers

7:00 pm Bible Study (Ephesians)

Thursday, January 12

9:00 am Daily Matins

9:30 am to 12:00 pm Office Hours

Saturday, January 14

4:30 pm Confessions

5:00 pm Great Vespers/Cathedral Vigil

Sunday, January 15

10:00 am Divine Liturgy / Church School

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.

Archpriest Thomas Soroka, Rector
Deacon Luke Loboda, Attached
Deacon John Skowron, Attached
Rdr James Wargo and Danielle Bartko, Choir Dirs

Sunday after Theophany

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA
OrthodoxPittsburgh.org January 8, 2023

Announcements

➤ **St Nicholas Women's Group** will be getting together on Friday Jan 20th at 6:30pm at Ruby's Winehouse in Coraopolis. Please RSVP to Jessica Krchmar by Jan 18th. 412-290-3526.

➤ **The Annual Parish Meeting** will be held in the parish hall on Sunday, January 29 after the Divine Liturgy. Parish members who are considered in good standing (sacramental and financial participation in the parish) may participate in the meeting. Please see Fr Thomas with any questions.

➤ **The scaffolding in our church** has presented us with an opportunity to re-acquaint ourselves with the traditional beauty of Orthodox worship in a temple unhindered by a church full of rows of pews. While **we know the space is currently limited**, during this period, please keep in mind the following:

- The elderly, disabled, and pregnant or nursing moms should have **priority for seating**.
- Coats, etc, can be hung up in the vestibule. But please **keep valuables on your person**.
- Enjoy the **freedom** of not being pewed in. Walking around to venerate icons, praying, and lighting candles is a natural Orthodox activity, even during services. But please do so quietly and without distracting others.
- If you need to sit down for a few moments (or more), **don't be ashamed**. Feel free to do so. No one is judging you.
- Children may have an adjustment period, but the mostly universal experience of parents/caregivers is that children become much **more focused** without being pewed in.

Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm:** Known to be hospitalized; John Mahalchak (son), George Shaytar Home: Irene Kulchock, Natalie Toooh. *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 **Marsha Wasilko** Happy Birthday & Many Years to Nancy Shaytar and Jan Widel. From **Charles A. Wasilko** for the health of Jan Widel on her birthday. From **Richard & Sonia Blaha** for the departed servants, parents, Aunt Mary Ann, Robert & a special friend; for the health of family, friends, siblings, and serving soldiers; for special intention, peace, and birthdays. From **John & Nancy Pravlochak** for the departed servant, Leigh Urda; for the health of Christina. From **the Murellos** for the departed servant, Natalie Myshakina. From **Jeff & Luann Kupycinski** for the health of family in the New Year. From **Michael, Katie, & Thompson Ramey** for the departed servants, Theophanea, Nonna, and Priest James; for the health of Jean, Janet, Chip, and Deann; for our health & salvation. From **the John Mahalchak family** for the health of friends & family, John, Cheryl, Gregory, Cindy, Mary, and Daniel.

Thank You

➤ to our **January** donors: from **the John Mahalchak Family** (Altar Candles \$25) for the health of friends and family and a happy new year!



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.

On the Theophany

Today's Lesson: Constantine and the Exaltation of the Cross

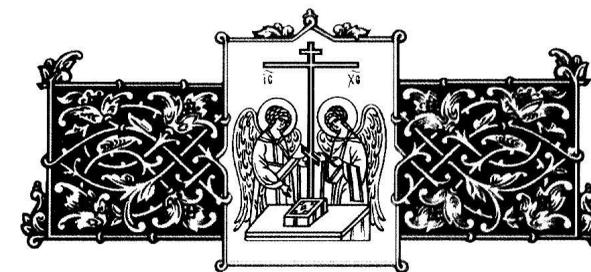
Questions to ask/review:

- Who was Constantine? How did he become Emperor of Rome?
- What sign from God did Constantine see?
- How did Constantine improve the lives of Christians? What was the Edict of Milan?
- To where did Constantine move the capital of his empire?
- Why is Constantine called "Equal to the Apostles" by the Church?
- Who was St. Helen? How is she related to Constantine?
- Describe the story of how St. Helen found the cross.
- Why is the cross so important to our faith?

Suggested Activities at Home:

- Discuss dreams and visions with your child; who else in the Bible had visions that changed the course of history? Read the stories of Noah, Joseph, Moses, Samuel, or Zachariah.
- Make shields decorated with crosses and marching to "When the saints go marching in".

Prayer: Lord, help me to conquer sin as You did for your servant Constantine.



Hymns and Readings for Sunday, January 8

Tone 5 Troparion (Resurrection)

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word,
co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit,
born for our salvation from the Virgin;
for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the
flesh,
to endure death,
and to raise the dead//
by His glorious Resurrection.

Tone 1 Troparion (Feast)

When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan,
the worship of the Trinity was made manifest.
For the voice of the Father bore witness to Thee,
and called Thee His beloved Son;
and the Spirit in the form of a dove
confirmed the truthfulness of His word.
O Christ our God, Who hast revealed Thyself//
and hast enlightened the world, glory to Thee.

Tone 4 Troparion (St Nicholas)

You appeared to your flock as a rule of faith,
an image of humility, and a teacher of
abstinence.
Because of your lowliness heaven was opened to
you!
Because of your poverty riches were granted to
you!
O holy Bishop Nicholas,
pray to Christ our God to save our souls.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Tone 5 Kontakion (Resurrection)

Thou didst descend into hell, O my Savior,
shattering its gates as Almighty,
resurrecting the dead as Creator,
and destroying the sting of death.
Thou hast delivered Adam from the curse, O
Lover of man,//
and we cry to Thee: “O Lord, save us!”

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 4 Kontakion (Feast)

Today Thou hast appeared to the universe,
And Thy light, O Lord, has shown on us,
who, with understanding, praise Thee.
Thou has come and revealed Thyself,
O Light unapproachable!

Tone 1 Prokeimenon (Sunday After)

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us / as we have
set our hope on Thee! (*Ps. 32:22*)

Epistle Sunday after Theophany (Eph 4:7-13)

But to each one of us grace was given according
to the measure of Christ’s gift. Therefore He
says:

“When He ascended on high,
He led captivity captive,
And gave gifts to men.”

(Now this, “He ascended”—what does it mean
but that He also first descended into the lower
parts of the earth? He who descended is also the
One who ascended far above all the heavens,
that He might fill all things.)

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some
prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors
and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for
the work of ministry, for the edifying of the
body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of
the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of
God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the
stature of the fullness of Christ;

Gospel Sunday after Theophany ()

Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in
prison, He departed to Galilee. And leaving
Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum,
which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun

and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which
was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:

“The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,
By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan,
Galilee of the Gentiles:
The people who sat in darkness have seen a
great light,
And upon those who sat in the region and
shadow of death
Light has dawned.”

From that time Jesus began to preach and to say,
“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Hymn to the Theotokos (Feast)

R. Magnify, O my soul, the most pure Virgin
Theotokos, more honorable than the heavenly
hosts!

(*Irmos*) No tongue is capable of praising you
worthily. The angelic mind is overawed in
exalting you, O Theotokos. But accept our faith,
since you are gracious and know our Divine
Love. You are the protectress of Christians, and
we praise you.

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in
the highest! (*Ps. 148:1*) The grace of God has
appeared for the salvation of all men. (*Titus*
2:11) Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

To people of the ancient world, water was no less than a symbol of life itself and of the world as life ... Water is truly a precondition for life. One can go without food for a long time, but without water a person will die very quickly, so we can say that human beings are by nature thirsty beings. Without water cleanliness is impossible, so water is also a symbol of cleansing and purity. Water as life and as purity, but also beauty, power and might, as we see it reflect and absorb, so to speak, the boundless blue sky. All of this describes the perception or

experience of water that placed it at the centre of religious symbolism.

The joy of Epiphany is in the recovery of a cosmic experience of the world, of recovering faith that everything and everyone can always be washed, purified, renewed, reborn and that regardless of how dirty and clouded with mud our life has become, no matter what swamp we might have rolled in, we always have access to a purifying stream of living water, because humanity’s thirst for heaven, goodness, perfection and beauty is not dead, nor can it ever die. Indeed, this thirst alone makes us human beings. “Great are You, our Lord, and marvelous are your works, and there are not words which suffice to hymn Your wonders...” Who said Christianity is depressing and grim, morbid and sad, and pulls human beings away from life? Look at the faces of worshippers that night and see the light and joy that shines as they listen to the psalm thundering its exultation, “The voice of the Lord is upon the waters” (Ps 29:3), as they watch the priest sprinkling volleys of blessed water throughout the church and those glittering drops fly as if throughout the whole world, making that world once again a possibility and a promise, the raw material for a mysterious miracle of transformation and transfiguration. God Himself entered this water in the form of a man; He united Himself not only with humanity, but also with all matter and made all of it a radiant, light-bearing stream flowing towards life and joy.

But none of this can be experienced or sensed without repentance, without a deep change of consciousness, without the conversion of mind and heart, without the ability to see everything in a new light. This was precisely the repentance John the Baptist preached and which made it possible to see Jesus approaching the river Jordan and lovingly accept Him as God Himself who from the beginning of time loved the human race and created the whole world for us as an image of His love, eternity and joy. (*A. Schmemmann*)