



Archpriest Thomas Soroka, *Rector*
 Deacon Luke Loboda, *Attached*
 Mat. Janet Mihalick, *Choir Director*

2nd Sunday after Pentecost – Saints / North America

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA
 OrthodoxPittsburgh.org

June 30, 2019

Welcome!

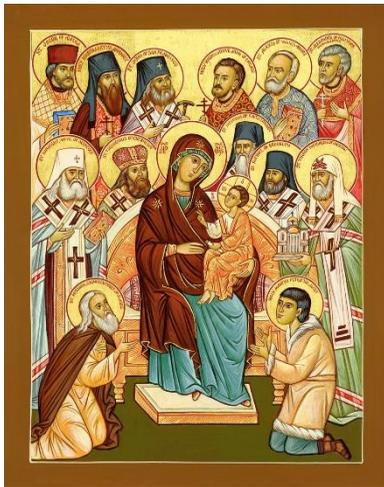
Whether you're searching for a new church home or just visiting, we're glad you're with us today. If you have a prayer request, are looking for more information about the Orthodox Faith, would like to join our parish, or would like to speak with Fr Thomas, we invite you to fill out a visitor's card and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

This Week

No Vespers during July

Sunday, July 7

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

➤ As we enter into the summer months, this is a **friendly reminder to everyone that the parish relies on your consistent sacrificial giving** to support the ongoing work of our church. Our expenses, which include salaries, insurance, electricity and gas, our diocesan assessment, water and sewage, paper and printing, etc, are a part of our monthly operating budget. Additionally, the ongoing maintenance of a 105 year old building are unavoidable expenses.

Your contribution is also an important part of your commitment as a disciple of Christ. Christian giving is no more optional than church attendance, prayer, fasting, and scripture reading, but it is done freely and is a measure of your love of God. Your gifts to the church are both a response to your understanding that the things that you have **are a gift that God has given to you**, and that you **offer a portion of them back in thanksgiving to Him**. Your offering is a measure of your thankfulness.

You are asked to give a portion of what you have received back to God, and you're asked to give that **first, before you give to anything else**. This is called an offering of "first fruits." In practical terms, you should decide the percentage that you give and then offer that freely and consistently.

Here is an example of **MONTHLY** giving:

Monthly Income	10%	8%	5%	2%
\$1,000	\$100	\$80	\$50	\$20
\$3,000	\$300	\$240	\$150	\$60
\$5,000	\$500	\$400	\$250	\$100
\$10,000	\$1,000	\$800	\$500	\$200
\$15,000	\$1,500	\$1,200	\$750	\$300

Please remember to support your parish regularly.

Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm: Known to be Hospitalized;** Georgiann Robes (Sewickley), Jack Saban (VA). **Home:** Helen Billak, Katarnia Mertz (post-partum),. **Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:** Olga Bednar, Garnette Kerchum, Olga Tryszyn, Mary Zapp.

➤ **Vigil Lights. From Mat. Nancy K. Mell and Gregory Mell** for the departed servant, Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of family, Helen Billak and Michelle Bittner. **From George & Nancy Shaytar** for the health of Michelle Bittner and Jack Saban. **From Alexandria Tirpak** for the health of my family; special intentions. **From Marsha Wasilko** for the health of Helen, Paul & Sasha Henry. **From Charles A. Wasilko** for the health of (sisters) Doris & Marsha, Michelle Bittner and Helen Billak. **From Doris Wasilko** for the health of Helen Billak, Michele Bittner and Susie Porter. **From Michelle Bittner** for the health of Susie Porter, Jack, John Storoschuck and Greg.



Thank You

➤ to **Matushka Nancy Mell and Gregory Mell** for donating all of our June monthly donations in memory of the departed servant of God, Deacon Joseph Mell. Bulletin (\$60), Holy Bread (\$50), Communion Wine (\$40), Altar Candles (\$25). Incense (\$10)

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.

St Alexis Toth

Our holy Father Alexis, the defender of the Orthodox Faith and zealous worker in the Lord's vineyard, was born in Austro-Hungary on March 18, 1854 into a poor Carpatho-Russian family. Like many others in the Austro-Hungarian empire, the Toths were Eastern Rite Catholics. Alexis' father and brother were priests and his uncle was a bishop in the Uniate church. He received an excellent education and knew several languages (Carpatho-Russian, Hungarian, Russian, German, Latin, and a reading knowledge of Greek). He married Rosalie Mihalich, a priest's daughter, and was ordained on April 18, 1878 to serve as second priest in a Uniate parish. His wife died soon afterwards, followed by their only child—losses which the saint endured with the patience of Job. In October, 1889 he was appointed to serve as pastor of a Uniate parish in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Like another Abraham, he left his country and his relatives to fulfill the will of God (Gen 12:1).

Upon his arrival in America, Father Alexis presented himself to the local Roman Catholic diocesan authority, Archbishop John Ireland, since there was no Uniate bishop in America at that time. Archbishop Ireland belonged to the party of American Catholics who favored the "Americanization" of all Roman Catholics. His vision for the future was founded on a common faith, customs, and the use of the English language for everything except liturgical celebrations. Naturally, ethnic parishes and non-Latin rite clergy did not fit into this vision. Thus, when Father Toth came to present his credentials, Archbishop Ireland greeted him with open hostility. He refused to recognize him as a legitimate Catholic priest or to grant permission for him to serve in his diocese. Archbishop Ireland sent a letter to his parishes ordering their members not to attend Father Toth's parish nor to accept any priestly ministrations from him. Expecting imminent deportation, Father Toth explained the situation to his parishioners and suggested it might be best for him to leave and return to Europe. *(continued on insert)*

Hymns and Readings for Today

Troparion of the Resurrection Tone 1

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, while the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body,

Thou didst rise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world.

The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O Giver of Life:

Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ!

Glory to Thy Kingdom!

Glory to Thy dispensation, O Thou who lovest mankind!

Troparion of All Saints of North America Tone 8

As the beautiful fruit of the sowing of Thy salvation, the land of America offer to Thee, O Lord, all the Saints that have shown in it..

By their prayers keep Thy Church and our land in deep peace

through the Theotokos, O most Merciful One.

Kontakion of the Resurrection Tone 1

As God, Thou didst rise from the tomb in glory, raising the world with Thyself.

Human nature praises Thee as God for death has vanished,

Adam exults, O Master!

Eve rejoices, for she is freed from bondage, and cries to Thee:

Thou art the giver of resurrection to all, O Christ!

Kontakion of All Saints of North America Tone 3

Today the choir of Saints who were pleasing to God in the lands of North America now stands before us in the Church and invisibly prays to God for us.

With them the Angels glorify Him, and all the Saints of the Church of Christ keep festival with them; //

and together they all pray for us to the Pre-eternal God.

Prokeimenon (Psalm 33) Tone 1

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set our hope on Thee!

Epistle (Rom 2:10-16)

...but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For there is no partiality with God.

For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law (for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified; for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them) in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

Gospel (Matthew 4:18-23)

And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." They immediately left their nets and followed Him.

Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. He called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.

And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.



St Alexis Toth (continued)

Archbishop Ireland sent a letter to his parishes ordering their members not to attend Father Toth's parish nor to accept any priestly ministrations from him. Expecting imminent deportation, Father Toth explained the situation to his parishioners and suggested it might be best for him to leave and return to Europe.

While it is true that he made some strong comments, especially in his private correspondence with the church administration, it must be remembered that this was done while defending the Orthodox Church and the American Mission from unfounded accusations by people who used much harsher language than Father Toth. His opponents may be characterized by intolerance, rude behaviour, unethical methods and threats against him and his parishioners. Yet, when Father Alexis was offended or deceived by other people he forgave them, and he would often ask his bishop to forgive his omissions and mistakes.

In the midst of great hardships, this herald of godly theology and sound doctrine poured forth an inexhaustible stream of Orthodox writings for new converts, and gave practical advice on how to live in an Orthodox manner. For example, his article "How We should Live in America" stresses the importance of education, cleanliness, sobriety, and the presence of children in church on Sundays and Holy Days.

Although the Minneapolis parish was received into the Orthodox Church in March, 1891, it was not until July, 1892 that the Holy Synod of Russia recognized and accepted the parish into the Diocese of Alaska and the Aleutians. This resolution reached America only in October, 1892. During that time there was a climate of religious and ethnic hostility against the new converts. Father Alexis was accused of selling out his own Carpatho-Russian people and his religion to the "Muscovites" for financial gain.

In reality he did not receive any financial support for a long time, for his parish was very poor. Until his priestly salary began to arrive from Russia, the righteous one was obliged to work in a bakery in order to support himself. Even though his funds were meager, he did not neglect to give alms to the poor and needy. He shared his money with other clergy worse off than himself, and contributed to the building of churches and to the education of seminarians in Minneapolis. He was not anxious about his life (Mt.6:25), what he would eat or drink or wear. Trusting in God to take care of him, Saint Alexis followed the admonition of Our Savior to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Mt.6:33). So he bore the tribulation, slander, and physical attacks with patience and spiritual joy, reminding us that "godliness is stronger than all" (Wisdom of Solomon 10:12).

Bishops Vladimir, Nicholas, Saint Tikhon, and Platon recognized the special gifts of Father Toth, so they often sent him forth to preach and teach wherever there were people of Slavic background. Even though he was aware of his shortcomings and inadequacies, yet he was obedient to the instructions of the bishops. He did not hesitate or make excuses, but went immediately to fulfill his mission. Saint Alexis visited many Uniate parishes, explaining the differences between Orthodoxy, Protestantism, Roman Catholicism and Uniatism, stressing that the true way to salvation is in Orthodoxy.

Like Josiah, "he behaved himself uprightly in the conversion of his people" (Sir 49:2). He was instrumental in the formation or return of seventeen parishes, planting a vineyard of Christ in America, and increasing its fruitful yield many times over. By 1909, the time of his blessed repose, many thousands of Carpatho-Russian and Galician Uniates had returned to Orthodoxy. This was a major event in the history of the North American Mission, which would continue to shape the future of Orthodoxy in this country for many generations to come. Any future growth or success may truly be regarded as the result of Father Toth's apostolic labors.