

St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church



100th Anniversary

THE FORERUNNER

St John the Baptist Orthodox Church

211 Cable Avenue – East Pittsburgh, PA 15112

HIS EMINENCE, METROPOLITAN GREGORY OF NYSSA

American Carpatho-Russian Diocese–Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople

The Very Reverend Protopresbyter Joseph Fester

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Email:protopresbyterjoseph@gmail.com

Website:www.sjbeastpitt.org – Facebook: @stjohneastpit

Subdeacon Gary Grysiak, Cantor; Reader Justin Rosco, Choir Director;

Robert Pervuznik, Jr., Parish Council President

ALL SERVICES STREAMED LIVE ON FB <https://www.facebook.com/joseph.fester>

10 Sunday	11 Monday	12 Tuesday	13 Wednesday	14 Thursday	15 Friday	16 Saturday
Paralytic Sunday 9:00 Divine Liturgy			Mid-Pentecost 9am Divine Liturgy			5pm Great Vespers

CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE RISEN!

WE SAY- to all who are with us today at St. John’s for the first time, ***you are welcome here!*** We pray that you will consider making St. John’s your spiritual home. Please join us after Liturgy downstairs for fellowship.

OUR GIFTS TO THE LORD- Sometimes we miss a Sunday and the opportunity to offer our financial gift to the Lord. If we do, please catch up with your gifts. Whether we are here or not, our parish bills continue. Thanks, and God bless!

<p>Sunday, May 3, 2020 – Attendance 4 – Weekly Offering, \$2042 – Building Fund, \$125 – Palm Sunday & Holy Week, \$140 – Easter Offering, \$70 – Membership Dues, \$144 – Needy Envelopes, \$90 – Patriarchal Pence, \$10 – Vigil Candles paid in advance, \$60 – Vigil Candles lit prior to 5/9 (\$45) – Cases of Vigil Candles, \$ 69 – Vigil Candles, \$228 – Vigil Candles paid in advance, (\$21)– Total \$2933</p>
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IN A CONVERSATION-I had with Metropolitan Gregory I shared with him how our parishioners have been keeping up with their weekly donations to the parish. He shared with me that our parish was one of the few in the Diocese that has not seen a significant drop in financial stewardship during the pandemic. All of you are to be commended for your prayerful effort to support St. John’s. Let’s keep doing what we are doing to the Glory of God.

THE PARISH COUNCIL-will have a virtual meeting via Skype on Tuesday at 7pm. Fr Joseph will share how to join the call today. If you are not able to join via Skype, please let Fr. Joseph know so we can make other arrangements for joining the meeting.

ARCHPRIEST PAUL LAZOR-fell asleep in the Lord early Saturday morning. Fr. Paul was my Father Confessor when I was at seminary. He was also the Dean of Students and taught Liturgical Theology. He was a good person, a solid priest and a role model for generations of clergy and laity who graduated from St. Vladimir’s Seminary. He is survived by his beautiful wife Natasha, children and grandchildren. Christ is Risen! Memory Eternal!

WE WERE NOTIFIED-this week that starting May 31st until June 28 our weekly bulletin service will be paused due to the pandemic. We will recycle old bulletin covers during that period of time.

AS YOU KNOW- Governor Wolfe has moved our area from “Red” to “Yellow” starting this coming Friday. Exactly how this will impact our ability to return to church will be discussed by the parish council on Tuesday. We can’t do anything until we receive new directives from Metropolitan Gregory but we will keep everyone posted when we hear further guidance from Johnstown. Crowd size will be limited to a maximum of 25 in church so exactly how we will determine what Sunday yinz can come to services, again, will be a discussion item at the council meeting in anticipation of diocesan guidance. Stay tuned.

THIS WEDNESDAY-at 9am we will celebrate the Divine Liturgy for the Feast of Mid-Pentecost. The Liturgy will be live-streamed.

<p><i>O Master Who loves mankind, illuminate our hearts with the pure light of Your divine knowledge and open the eyes of our mind to understand the teachings of Your Gospel. Instill in us also the fear of Your blessed commandments, that we may overcome all carnal desires, entering upon a spiritual life and understanding and acting in all things according to Your holy will. For You are the enlightenment of our souls and bodies, O Christ God, and to You we give glory together with Your eternal Father and Your all-holy, gracious and life-giving Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.</i></p>
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DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS

Monday	Acts 10:1-16	John 6:56-69	St Cyril, bishop of Turov
Tuesday	Acts 10:21-33	John 7:1-13	Apostles Jason and Sosipater of the Seventy
Wednesday	Acts 14:6-18	John 7:14-30	Mid-Pentecost
	Heb. 7:26-8:2	John 10:9-16	St Ignatius (Brianchaninov)
Thursday	Acts 10:34-43	John 8:12-20	Prophet Jeremiah
Friday	Acts 10:44-11:10	John 8:21-30	St Athanasius the Great
Saturday	Acts 12:1-11	John 8:31-42	Ven. Theodosius of the Kievan Caves
Sunday	Acts 11:19-26,29-30	John 4:5-42	Samaritan Woman

JUST A REMINDER- that Fr. Joseph has a new cell-phone number. 412-607-7039. Please update your records because if you use the old number your call or message will be lost in cyberspace **FOREVER!!!**

A VERY HAPPY- Mother's Day to all of our parish mothers and to all mothers! Many Years!

AND-let us also remember all of our Mother's who have fallen asleep in the Lord, Memory Eternal! Christ is Risen

IF ANY OF YOU-have family members or even yourselves, who because of the economic disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and shutdown, are in need of some financial assistance, please let Fr. Joseph know, privately. We have a parish Needy Fund and we can help!

WE HAVE RESUMED-the celebration of Great Vespers on Saturdays at 5pm. They will be broadcasted live on FB.

IDEAS-for upcoming CCE classes are now being accepted by Fr Joseph. We will have our next CCE classes via the Internet. Times and dates to be determined.

PLEASE-continue to observe all of the necessary health and safety guidelines that are enforce by State and Federal agencies. Masks must be worn if we venture out to the store. Some grocery stores will not allow you to enter unless you are wearing a mask. Be sure to wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. Use hand sanitizer if you are out. Practice social distancing and don't go the wrong direction in the one-way aisles at Giant Eagle. I got the "stink eye" the other day when I went the wrong way! Be safe. Be patient and be careful. It's going to be this way for a good while longer and things won't get back to normal until there is more testing, better treatment and a vaccine.

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS – All Mothers, Thomas Planiczki, Josephine Sofelkanik, Michael Sterchak, John Edward Stagon, Kathryn Rogulin, Cathy Perevuznik, Fr. Michael and Matushka Susanne Senyo, Wally Perkins, Fr Lawrence Barriger, Gina Marie Gaspard, Dannette Wargo, Pani Marie Brancho, Rose Hollis, Marti and Cathilynn Baran, Aubrey Welch, Kalina Walker and the child, Malachi, born of her, Ashley Yeagers and the child Lincoln Carl born of her. Fr. John Dixon, Fr. Jonathan Tobias, Fr Daniel Prez (Joe Monde's brother), Joshua and Natalie Walsh, Nicholas Hollis and all healthcare workers and for all sick with COVID-19 virus.

Please keep Father Joseph informed on changes to anyone's health status so he can minister to them.

May Birthdays –Alexandra Finke 5/12, Gloria Blake, 5/14, Bob Perevuznik, Jr. 5/17, Nicki Kocan 5/15. MANY YEARS!

May Anniversaries - Joshua & Brittany Vasko 5/27/12. MANY YEARS!

May Memorial – Newly departed: Archpriest Paul Lazor, Vera Geeza Hellman, Paul David Zolak
Perpetual: All departed Mothers, Protopresbyter Michael Rosco, Victor Sofelkanik, Sr, Michael Elascat, Mary Wallace, John Lisak, Mary Brancho, Paul Kobasa, Michael Wanczak, Stephen Povanda, Sr Wasil Popovich, Nicholas Kosarich, Thomas Chalca, Eva Chernega, Randolf Mallick, Michael Lisak, John Lamacz, Joseph Tucker, Mary Begey, John Kolesar, Mary Brown, Nicholas Yonkovich, Helen Dedo, William Gezzer, Sr. John Petrovay, Anna Cheremeta, Steve Evashavik, Rose Tucker, and for all victims of the COVID-19 virus.

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"The middle of the fifty days has come, beginning with the Savior's resurrection, and sealed by the Holy Pentecost. The first and the last glisten with splendor. We rejoice in the union of both feasts, as we draw near to the Lord's ascension—the sign of our coming glorification" (Vespers of the Midfeast).



THE FEAST OF MID-PENTECOST

This Wednesday we celebrate the Feast of Mid-Pentecost. It the exact midpoint of the sacred 50-day period between the Feasts of Pascha and Pentecost. So, this 25th day is called, simply, Midfeast or MidPentecost.

Pentecost (from the Greek *pentecosti*) is, of course, the name of the great Feast on the 50th day after Pascha, but the term is also used to cover the entire 50-day period linking the two feasts, thus expressing their profound inner unity. Our emphasis on the greatness of Pascha—the "Feast of Feasts"— may at times come at the expense of Pentecost, but in an essential manner Pascha is dependent upon Pentecost for its ultimate fulfillment. As Prof. Veselin Kesich wrote, "Because of Pentecost the resurrection of Christ is a present reality, not just an event that belongs to the past." Metropolitan Kallistos Ware stated that "we do not say merely, 'Christ rose,' but 'Christ is risen'—He lives now, for me and in me. This immediacy and personal directness in our relationship with Jesus is precisely the work of the Spirit. Any transformation of human life is testimony to the resurrection of Christ and the descent of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. God constantly creates

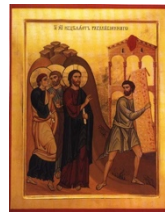
new things and glorifies Himself in His saints, in order to make it known that the Word of God became flesh, experiences death on the cross, and was raised up that we might receive the Spirit" (*The First Day of the New Creation*, p. 173).

Be that as it may, there is a wonderful hymn from the Vespers of the Midfeast that reveals this profound inner connection: "The middle of the fifty days has come, beginning with the Savior's resurrection, and sealed by the Holy Pentecost. The first and the last glisten with splendor. We rejoice in the union of both feasts, as we draw near to the Lord's ascension—the sign of our coming glorification" (Vespers of the Midfeast).

Pascha and Pentecost "glisten with splendor" – what a wonderful expression! Yet, this very expression which is indicative of the festal life of the Church may also sound embarrassingly archaic to our ears today. This is not exactly an everyday expression that comes readily to mind, even when we encounter something above the ordinary! However, that could also be saying something about ourselves and not simply serve as a reproach to the Church's less-than-contemporary vocabulary. Perhaps the drab conformity of our environment; the de-sacralized nature of the world around us, together with its prosaic concerns and uninspiring goals; and even the reduction of religion to morality and vague "values," make us more than a little skeptical/cynical about anything whatsoever "glistening with splendor!" How can Pascha and Pentecost "glisten with splendor" if Pascha is "already" (though, only 25 days ago!) a forgotten experience of the past, and if the upcoming feasts of Ascension and Pentecost fail to fill us with the least bit of expectation or anticipation?

The Lord is risen, and we await the coming of the Comforter, the "Spirit of Truth." These are two awesome claims! The Apostle Paul exhorts us, "Set your minds on the things that are above, not on things that are on earth" (Colossians 3:2). This exhortation from the Apostle is a great challenge, for experience teaches us that "the things that are on earth" can be very compelling, immediate and deeply attractive, while "the things that are above" can seem abstract and rather distant; or that they are reserved for the end of our life as we know it "on earth." The Apostle Paul is exhorting us to a radical reorientation of our approach to life—what we may call our "vision of life"—and again, this is difficult, even for believing Christians! Yet, I would like to believe that with our minds lifted up on high and our hearts turned inward where God is – deep within our hearts – not only will the feasts themselves "glisten with splendor," but so will our souls. Then, what the world believes to be unattainable, will be precisely the experience that makes us "not of the world." May the days to come somehow, by the grace of God, "glisten with splendor!" As it is written, "The abundant outpouring of divine gifts is drawing near. The chosen day of the Spirit is halfway come. The faithful promise to the disciples after the death, burial and

resurrection of Christ heralds the coming of the Comforter!" (Vespers of the Midfeast). – Fr. Steven Kostoff



THE SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC

On the third Sunday after Easter, the reading from the gospel of John recounts Christ's healing of a paralytic. "There was a feast," writes the Evangelist John, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Hebrew called Bethesda, which has five porticoes. In these lay a multitude of invalids, blind, lame, paralyzed waiting for the moving of the water; for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool, and troubled the water: whoever stepped in first after the troubling of the water was healed of whatever disease he had. One man was there, who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him and knew that he had been lying there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be healed?" The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is troubled, and while I am going another steps down before me." Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your pallet, and walk." And at once the man was healed, and he took up his pallet and walked. (Jn 5:1-9)

That is the gospel record, and having heard it, many will respond that it's just another miracle, another unbelievable event that has nothing whatsoever in common with our life, interests, needs, questions ... But we listen carefully and reflect: the gospel is so childishly simple, and its stories so short, that a person of today is easily fooled by this brevity and simplicity. It seems to him or her that the truth about themselves and about their life must be complicated and cumbersome, because they themselves are complicated. But perhaps the gospel's ageless power resides in its reduction of everything to the most essential, elementary, fundamental: good and evil, darkness and light, man and God, life and death. And indeed, any focused and deep thought that involves not merely the mind, but one's entire being, in the end always concerns what is most essential. For all of life's complexity balances on the simplicity of eternal questions: good and evil, life and death, God and man.

So, in this particular gospel story, what is eternal and enduring? At its center, very clearly, are the paralytic's words to Christ, "I have no man." This truly is the cry of someone who has come to know the terrible power of human selfishness, narcissism. Every man for himself. Looking out for number one. All of them, all that great multitude of blind, sick, paralyzed, are all "waiting for the troubling of the waters," in other words, waiting for help, concern, healing, comfort. But...each waits by himself, for himself. And when the waters are troubled, each throws himself forward and forgets about the others... From the gospel's point of view, this pool is

of course an image of the world, an image of human society, a symbol of the very organization of human consciousness.

Oh, of course, within the world one can find many examples of people who overcome egoism, examples of goodness and self-sacrifice. But even when someone has apparently overcome personal selfishness, he is still held prisoner by the category "his." He may have overcome bondage to himself as an individual, but then it is "his" family, and for "his" family, since "charity begins at home." If not family, then "his" ethnic group or country. If not this, then "his" social class, "his" political party. His, always his! And this "his" is invariably opposed to someone else's, which by definition becomes alien and hostile. We're told that this is how the world works, what can you do? But is this really true, is this really the ultimate, objective, and scientific truth about the person and human life?

Is it really true that everything in this world boils down to personal or collective self-interest, and that everyone lives by this? We are told that capitalism is wrong because it is self-serving and must, therefore, be destroyed in the name of communism. But self-serving is exactly what communism has been, constantly trumpeting its own worldview, its own class, its own party and so forth: its own against not-its-own, the other. And there is no escape whatsoever from this vicious cycle.

Unknown to us, however, we no longer feel suffocated by this world so totally drunk on all-consuming ego. We have become accustomed to blood, hatred, violence and, at best, indifference. Sometime in the 1920's, a young man, practically a boy, left a note and then committed suicide: "I do not want to live in a world where everyone is playing a con game ... " All of this was suffocating him, he could not stand it any longer. But we are gradually harassed into accepting this as normal, and the horror of self-centeredness we cease experiencing as horrible ... This is what the gospel story of the paralytic is about. All these sick, helpless, paralyzed people are sick first and foremost with incurable narcissism. This is what brings a person to cry: "I have no man!" There is no one! And this means that a person comes into being when narcissism is overcome; it means that human beings, above all, are a face turned toward the other person, eyes looking intently with concern and love into the eyes of the other person. It is love, co-suffering and care. The gospel also tells us that this new and authentic human being has been revealed to us, has come to us in Christ. In him, the One who comes to the lonely and long-suffering paralytic is no stranger, but "his own"; He comes in order to take up the sick man's sufferings as his own, his life as his own, to help and to heal.

"Do you want to be healed?" This is not the question of someone intent on forcing, convincing or subduing others. It is the question of genuine love, and

therefore, genuine concern. Religion, alas, can also become narcissism, exclusively busy with itself and its own. But it is important to understand that this kind of religion, in spite of whatever Christian cloak it might be wearing, is in reality not Christianity ... For the whole of Christianity consists of breaking through the terrible walls of self-centeredness, breaking through to that love which, in the words of St Paul, God has "poured into our hearts" (Rom 5:5). That is Christianity's new, eternal commandment, and the content of the entire gospel and all our faith ... (Fr. Alexander Schmemmann)

May 10 Candle Intentions

Health

Bires, Alice - Benjamin
Bires, Alice - Fr Will & Pani Illeana Bennett, Happy Anniversasry
Bires, Alice - Scott & Sharon
Bires, Alice - Wally
Bires, Alice - Ron Raible
Bires, Alice - Helen, David, & Joseph
Bires, Alice - Pani Hutnyan, Happy Mother's Day
Kocan, Nicki - Family
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Benjamin
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Luke & Alexis
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Irene & Basil
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Janet
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Deborah
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Burkett Family
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Josie Sofelkanik
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Bob & Miryam Knutson
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Mitzi Conroy
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Wally Perkins
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - John E. Stagon
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Anthony Macchiaroli
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Fr. John Dixon
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Kevin Henry
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Marti Baran
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Virus Victims
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Healthcare and Grocery Workers
Perevuznik, Bob, Jr. - Mom
Perevuznik, Bob, Jr. - Emily, Rebecca, Tanner, Tyler
Perevuznik, Bob, Jr. - Kelly, Lauren, Michael
Perevuznik, Bob, Jr. - Perevuznik, Skidmore, Surmis, Poach Families
Perevuznik, Bob, Jr. - John E. Stagon
Perevuznik, Bob, Jr. - Marti Baran
Perevuznik, Bob, Jr. - Fr Jonathan Tobias
Perevuznik, Bob, Jr. - Happy Birthday DeBorah Hutnyan
Perevuznik, Bob, Jr. - All St John Parishioners
Perevuznik, Bob, Jr. - Pani Brancho
Sabeh, Nancy - Happy Mother's Day, Sonya
Sabeh, Nancy - St John Mothers
Stagon, George & Barbara - Fr. Matthew, Pani Eleni, Seraphim, Luka, Harikila, Xenia
Stagon, George & Barbara - Jeffery, Nicole, Jillina Payton
Stagon, George & Barbara - Connie and Tyler
Stagon, George - Barbara Stagon
Stagon, John Jr. - John & Jessica
Stagon, John Jr. - David, Linda, Johnny

Stagon, John Jr. - David II, Christal & Weston
Stagon, John Jr- Linda Stagon, Mother's Day
Stagon, John Jr - Chrystal Stagon, Mother's Day
Stagon, John Jr - Kathy Fester, Mother's Day

Special Intentions

Alice Bires

Memory

Bires, Alice - Parents
Bires, Alice- Brother-in-law
Bires, Alice- Helen
Bires, Alice-Margie
Bires, Alice - Grandparents
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Mother, Helen
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Father, Charles
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Mother, Irene Barney
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Father, Edward Barney
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Metropolitan Nicholas
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Virus Victims
Perevuznik, Cathy - Husband Bob
Perevuznik, Bob, Jr. - Dad
Sabeh, Nancy - Mom, Ann Rosco
Sabeh, Nancy - Grandmothers Helen & Mary
Sabeh, Nancy - Godmother, Mary Demko
Stagon, George & Barbara - Mom and Dad
Stagon, George & Barbara - Grandmothers, Anna & Elizabeth
Stagon, John Jr. - Wife Anna
Stagon, John Jr - Anna Stagon Sr.
Stagon, John Jr - Anna Kuzma
Stagon, John Jr - Mary Sentipal
Stagon, John Jr - Elizabeth Stagon
Stagon, John Jr- Godmother Mary Popovic
Stagon, John Jr - Mary Alice Cole
Stagon, John Jr. - Father, Mother, Brothers
Stakel, Peggy - Parents of Nick and Betty Babich