

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

Rectory: 412-824-0246 Mobile: 908 423-9289

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

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

Robert Pervuznik, Jr., Parish Council President

22 Sunday	23 Monday	24 Tuesday	25 Wednesday	26 Thurs	27 Friday	28 Saturday
9:00 Divine Liturgy Live Stream on FB			7pm Presanctified Liturgy Live Stream on FB		9am Presanctified Liturgy Live Stream on FB	

**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.

**WEEKLY-**Presanctified Liturgies on Wednesday at 7pm and Friday at 9am and Sunday Divine Liturgy at 9am will be live streamed via Facebook (joseph fester). If you don't have a Facebook page, it is easy to get one (free). Go to <https://www.facebook.com> and set up a new account. Once the account is created then make a "friend's request" for Joseph Fester and Father will add you.

**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!

**Sunday, March 15, 2020 – Attendance 40 – Weekly Offering, \$808 – Building Fund, \$150 – Membership Dues, \$123 – Mission Vespers adv returned, \$147 – Vigil Candles – \$222 – Total \$1450**

**IT WILL BE IMPORTANT-**for us to keep our weekly donations to St. John's going while we all practice social distancing and follow the rules set forth by our Metropolitan Gregory and local government officials to limit direct participation in the Divine services to only essential persons. Please mail your offerings to the church address. You can also call the rectory with your Vigil intentions or mail the attached form to the church.

**OUR CCE-** class will suspend meeting in person until further notice due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However you can still participate ONLINE at: <http://www.agape-restoration-society.org/plugins/athanasius/Lessons-index.htm>

We are studying "The Incarnation" using the very important text of St. Athanasius of Alexandria who stood up against Arius who preached the heresy that Christ was a created being and not the Immortal Son of God.

*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 an Your all-holy, gracious and life-giving Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.*

### DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS

Monday	Isaiah 14:24-32	Gen 8:21-9:7	Prov. 11:19-12:6	Martyr Codratus
Tuesday	Isaiah 25:1-9	Gen 9:8-17	Prov. 12:8-22	St Sophronius of Jerusalem
Wednesday	Isaiah 26:21-27:9	Gen 9:18-10:1	Prov. 12:23-13:9	St Gregory, Dialogist Pope of Rome
Thursday	Isaiah 28:14-22	Gen 10:32-11:9	Prov. 13:19-14:6	Hieromartyr Publicus Bp of Athens
Friday	Isaiah 29:13-23	Gen 12:1-7	Prov. 14:15:26	Venerable Benedict of Nursia
Saturday	Hebrews 6:9-12		Mark 7:31-37	Martyr Nicander of Egypt
Sunday	Hebrews 6:13-20		Mark 9:17-31	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent St John Climacus

**PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS** – Marilyn Chuprinko, Adrienne Harms, Thomas Planiczki, Josephine Sofelkanik, Michael Sterchak, John Edward Stagon, Kathryn Rogulin, Cathy Pervuznik, 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 to be born of her, Ashley Yeagers and the child to be born of her. Fr. John Dixon, Fr. Jonathan Tobias, Fr Daniel Prez (Joe Monde's brother), Michelle Clayton. Please keep Father Joseph informed on changes to anyone's health status so he can minister to them.

**March Memorial – Newly Departed,** Paul Haruilesko, Michael Fitzurka, Milos Konjevich.

**Perpetual:** Metropolitan Nicholas, John Suvak, Rosella Lapato, Helen Marchak, Pauline and Michael Sabo, Darrel Weiss, Julia and Frank Kranik, Michael Sabo, George Wazso, Anna Bergel, Michael Seredich.

Pauline Dyakon, Helen Bloom, John Lillicotch, Andrew Kasenchak, Anna Gaydos, John Kokojko, Anna Lopovich, Michael Stripay, George Rela, Anna Suvak, Peter Danchik, Veronica Sterchak, Mary Zwisdak, Michael Orange, Helen Kosarich, Margaret Papinchak, Anna Ressatar, Paul Kobasa, Sr., Rose Plichta, Anna Rosenbayger, George Golofsky, Mary Gezzer, Joseph Papinchak, William Varhula, Mary Uram, Gregory Papinchak, Emma Evashavik, Eugene Brancho, John Begey.

**MANY YEARS !** – and Happy Birthday to Sharon Monde 3/23 David Kalaluhi 3/24 Eileen Buck 3/25 Alexandra Maskaly 3/25 William Brancho 3/28

## DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST,

First of all, I wish to express my deep love and concern for all of you. My prayers continue to be with you all for your safety and health.

It is extremely important that all of us do our part to stop the spread the COVID-19 virus. We may feel great, have no symptoms, but we still must practice social distancing, wash our hands, and do all we can to keep others safe. Because anyone can have the virus and not know it before symptoms develop, we should assume and act as if we do have the virus.

Having said that, I miss you. I was in the church hall the other day and it was so sad. It was like an abandoned place. Trays stacked up ready for nut roll making, cups ready for Sunday coffee, but no people.

I pray that our efforts to stream the services via Facebook are of some spiritual consolation to you. I feel your prayers and want you to know that we are trying to do the best we can to convey the Kingdom of God via this medium. It isn't what it should be. We should be gathered together, in one place, and partaking of the Holy Eucharist. But, for the time-being we can't, but hopefully soon we will, by God's Grace!

Maybe one of the good things that can come out of this situation is a greater appreciation for our local parish. Sometimes we may take for granted that the church will always be there for us. Of course, the Church will survive and our parish will survive, but when it is "taken away from us" even for only a short period of time, we can appreciate even more what we have, what God has given us to steward. We can appreciate more our brothers and sisters in Christ, even if they get on our nerves from time to time! And most importantly, we can more greatly appreciate how important the regular reception of the Holy Body and Blood of Christ is in our lives. We should be feeling the loss of this. May God give us a greater love for His Church as we fast from the Eucharist during this pandemic. May we desire it with a greater intensity when we will be able to be together, in person, again.

We must pray more for each other. We must use the time given to us now to discover a deeper life of prayer and meditation. As we remember one another in prayer, picture each other's face in our mind's eye. Take a moment to spiritually connect with one another, person by person. Family member by family member. Neighbor by neighbor. And, don't forget all those who have no one to pray for them. The homeless, the aged, the migrant, the sick, the suffering, and those who mourn. Pray for those who are putting their own lives at risk while they minister to others. Doctors, nurses, hospital staff. Police and firefighters and clergy.

We are still only at the very beginning of this here in the USA. It will be many weeks, if not months, before life will start to slowly return to normal. Maybe it will never quite be the same because of what we have learned from this experience. Maybe that can be a good thing. But no matter what, we can never forget that God is still in control and He asks us to do our part to protect the "least of the brethren," the most physically vulnerable to the COVID-19 virus. To love one another.

So, be smart! Wash your hands! If you have to go out, practice social distancing! Wash your hands when you get back home. Reach out to one another with phone calls and prayer. Don't hesitate to call me if you are feeling lonely or sad, anxious, or depressed. We will get through this together.

With much love (and a socially acceptable distance hug), I remain,

Yours in Christ,

Father Joseph

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## Sundays of Great Lent – The Sunday of the Cross

In the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

As we progress deeper and deeper into the weeks of Lent, we can say with an ever-growing sense of gratitude and of joy, of a serene and exulting joy the words of a Psalm, 'My soul shall live, and with gratitude I will give glory to the Lord'.

In the first week of Lent we have seen all the promises of salvation given in the Old Testament fulfilled: God became man, salvation has come, and all hopes are possible. And then, in the second week of Lent, we had the glorious proclamation of all the Saints of Christendom that not only did God come and dwell in our midst, but He has poured out upon us, into the Church, and into every human soul ready to receive Him the presence, the transforming gift of the Holy Spirit that makes us gradually commune ever deeper to the Living God until one day we become partakers of the Divine nature.

And today, if we ask ourselves, 'But how that? How can we be forgiven, how can evil be undone?' - one step brings us deeper into gratitude, deeper into joy, deeper into certainty when we consider, when we contemplate the Cross.

There is a passage of the Gospel in which we are told that when Christ spoke of salvation and of its conditions, Peter said to Him, 'Who then can be saved?' - and Christ answered, 'What is not possible to men is possible for God!'. And He Himself came; the fullness of God abided in a human person, and He has power to forgive because He is the victim of all the evil, all the cruelty, all the destructiveness of human history. Because indeed, no one but the victim can forgive those who have brought evil, suffering, misery, corruption and death into their lives. And Christ does not only forgive His own murderers, when He says, 'Father, forgive - they don't know what they are doing': He goes beyond this, because He had said, 'Whatever you have done to one of My smaller brethren and sisters, you have done it to Me' - not only in good, but indeed, the worst: because in compassion, in solidarity He identifies with every sufferer: the death, the pain, the agony of each of those who suffer is His. And so, when He prays, 'Father, forgive! They do not know what they are doing, what they have been doing', He prays for each of us not only in His own name, but in the name of all those upon whom evil has visited because of human sin.

But it is not only Christ who forgives; everyone who has suffered in soul, in body, in spirit, - everyone is called to grant freedom to those who have made him suffer.



And so, we can see why Christ says, 'Forgive so that you may be forgiven' because both the victim and the culprit are tied in one knot of solidarity and reciprocal responsibility. Only the victim can say, 'Lord - forgive him, forgive her', and only then can the Lord say, 'I do!'

But do you realise what responsibility it puts on each of us with regard to all and everyone? But also the depth, the glorious depth of hope which opens up to us when we look at the Cross and see that in solidarity with all mankind Christ taking upon Himself all the suffering of the world, accepting to die an impossible death has said in the name of all the sufferers, 'Yes, - we forgive!'

This is one more step towards freedom, this is one more step towards the moment when we will be faced with Christ's resurrection that engulfs us also because the risen Christ is risen and is offering all and each of us the fullness of eternal life.

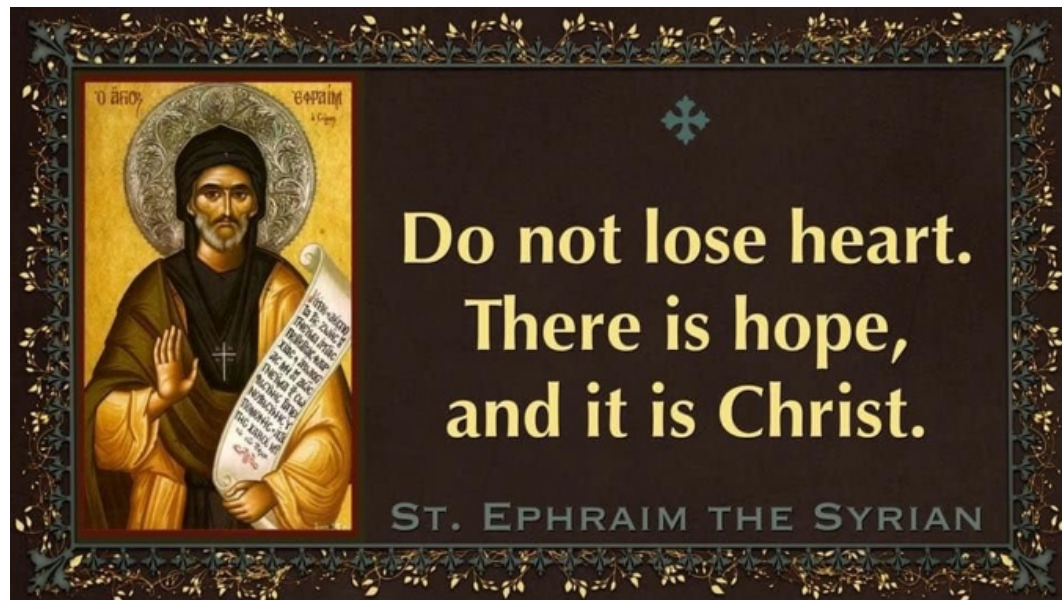
And so again, and again we can say that Lent is a spring of a new life, a new time, a time of renewal, not only in repentance, but in being taken by Christ Himself as the shepherd took the lost sheep, as the Lord took up His Cross, brought it to the place of death, and undid death, undid evil by forgiveness and giving His life. Once more we are confronted with another step of our freedom and of newness. Let us enter ever deeper into this mystery, into this wonder of salvation, and rejoice in the Lord, and rejoicing, step after step, more and more, let us also express our gratitude by newness of life.

Amen!

Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh

### Sunday of the Cross

18 March 1990



## PRAYERS OF PROTECTION FROM THE CORONAVIRUS TO BE PRAYED BY THE FAITHFUL AT HOME

*A Prayer To Be Offered in the Morning*

**L**ord our God, You who are rich in mercy, and with careful wisdom direct our lives, listen to our prayer, receive our repentance for our sins, bring an end to this new infectious disease, this new epidemic, just as you averted the punishment of your people in the time of David the King. You who are the Physician of our souls and bodies, grant restored health to those who have been seized by this illness, raising them from their bed of suffering, so that they might glorify You, O merciful Savior, and preserve in health those who have not been infected. By your grace, Lord, bless, strengthen, and preserve, all those who out of love and sacrifice care for the sick, either in their homes or in the hospitals. Remove all sickness and suffering from your people, and teach us to value life and health as gifts from You. Give us Your peace, O God, and fill our hearts with unflinching faith in Your protection, hope in Your help, and love for You and our neighbor. For Yours it is to have mercy on us and save us, O our God, and to You we ascribe glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever, to the ages of ages. Amen.

## **March 15, 2020 – Candle Intentions**

### **Health**

Babich, Sandy – Family  
Babich, Sandy – Fr. & Pani Tobias  
Babich, Sandy – Special Intentions  
Babich, Sandy – St. John's Parishioners  
Babich, Sandy – Wally & Karen Perkins  
Bires, Alice – Benjamin  
Bires, Alice – Caitlin, Dustin, & Newborn Son  
Bires, Alice - Kalina  
Bires, Alice – Pani Illeana & Unborn sons  
Bires, Alice – Scott & Sharon  
Bires, Alice – Special Intentions  
Bires, Alice – Wally  
Carlisle, Bob & Sandy – Bob & Sandy  
Carlisle, Bob & Sandy – Mihaly Family  
Chuprinko, Marylyn – Marti, Joan, & Josie  
Chuprinko, Marylyn – Neil, Barb, & Bren  
Chuprinko, Marylyn – Paul, Sonja, Pierce, & Shelby  
Chuprinko, Marylyn – Rebecca & Matthew  
Chuprinko, Marylyn – Wally, J. E. Stagon, & Ned  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary – Anthony Macchiaroli  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary – Benjamin  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary – Bob & Miryam Knutson  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary – Burkett Family  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary – Deborah  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary – Fr. John Dixon  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary – Irene & Basil  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary – Janet  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary – John E. Stagon  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary – Josie Sofelkanik  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary – Kevin Henry  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary – Luke & Alexis  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary – Marti Baran  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary – Mitzi Conroy  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary – Wally Perkins  
Kiss, Marge – Dorothy & Donna  
Kudravy, Beth – Special Intentions  
Novak, Linda – Health & Safety Alonzo  
Perkins Family – Family & Friends  
Perkins Family – Fr. Jonathan & Pani Marsha  
Perkins Family – Wally

Sabeh, Nancy – Family  
Skidmore Family – Cathy Pervuznik  
Skidmore Family – Joan Ambrose  
Skidmore Family – John E. Stagon  
Skidmore Family – Marti Baran  
Skidmore, Cathy – Tom Skidmore  
Stagon, M/M George – Connie & Tyler  
Stagon, M/M George – Fr. Matthew, Pani Eleni, Seraphim, Luke, Hariklia, & Xenia  
Stagon, M/M George – Jeff, Nicole, Jillina, & Payton  
Weiland, Ann – Family

### **Memory**

Babich, Sandy – Ron  
Babich, Sandy – Charles & Anna Babich  
Babich, Sandy – Stephen & Alma Vukson  
Bires, Alice – Helen  
Bires, Alice – Margie  
Bires, Alice – Parents  
Bires, Alice – Brother-in-law  
Chuprinko, Marylyn – Dad Joseph Tesack  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary – Father Charles Grysiak  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary – Father Edward Barney  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary – Metropolitan Nicholas  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary – Mother Helen Grysiak  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Mother Irene Barney  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary – Paul Haurilesko  
Kudravy, Beth – Mom & Aunt Barb  
Kudravy, Beth – Paul Haurilesko  
Novak, Linda – Grandfather Abe on his heavenly birthday  
Skidmore Family – Bob Pervuznik, Sr.  
Stagon, M/M George – Mom & Dad  
Stagon, M/M George – Paul Haurilesko  
Stakel, Peggy – Parents Nick & Betty Babich  
Sterchak, Michael – Paul Haurilesko  
Sterchak, Cindy & Dave – Paul Haurilesko  
Weiland, Ann – Louise & Harry  
Weiland, Ann – Loved Ones

### **Dues & Diocese**

Sabeh, Nancy