



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: 412-607-7039 Email: protopresbyterjoseph@gmail.com  
 Website: www.sjbeastpitt.org – Facebook: @stjohneastpit  
 Subdeacon Gary Grysiak, Cantor; Reader Justin Rosco, Choir Director;  
 Robert Perevuznik, Jr., Parish Council President

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

7 Sunday -Group 2	8 Monday	9 Tuesday	10 Wednesday	11 Thursday	12 Friday	13 Saturday
<b>PENTECOST</b> 8:45 Kalina Walker Churching 9:00 Divine Liturgy	<b>Holy Spirit Day</b> 9am Festal Liturgy		7pm CCE Class on the Divine Liturgy			5pm Great Vespers and Confessions

**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!

**Sunday, May 24, 2020 - Attendance 20 - Weekly Offering, \$1675 - Building Fund, \$160 - Needy Envelopes, \$50 - Vigil Candles, \$192 - Vigils paid in advance, (\$18) - Total \$1942 (collection for May 31 and June 7 will be posted next week.**

**TODAY-**we have moved to the GREEN STAGE protocols in Allegheny County which means that groups larger than 25 can gather following all other COVID-19 safety protocols. With the blessing of His Eminence, Metropolitan Gregory we are combining our 4 worship groups into 2. Previous groups A and B are now Group 1 and Groups C and D are Group 2. We will alternate Groups for the next several weeks and then assess how things are working. Next week, Group 1 will invited to church.

**TODAY-** we welcome back Kalina Walker who was churching this morning. The Baptism for Malchi will be July 11<sup>th</sup>.

**WEDDING BANS-** Irene Grysiak will be united the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony to Basil Dixon on Saturday, July 4<sup>th</sup> at 3pm at St. John's.

**THIS WEDNESDAY-** we resume our CCE will resume on Wednesday as we continue the video presentations of Sister Vassa Larin on the Divine Liturgy. We will meet in person in the church hall while spreading out to observe proper social distancing. Masks will be required for all in attendance.

*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.*

### DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS

Monday	Eph. 5:9-19	Matthew 18:10-20	Day of the Holy Spirit
Tuesday	Romans 1:1-7;13-17	Matthew 4:25-5:13	Venerable Bede of British Isles
Wednesday	Romans 1:18-27	Matthew 5:20-26	St Germanus, bishop of Paris
Thursday	Romans 1:28-2:9	Matthew 5:27-32	St Luke, bishop -surgeon of Simferopol
Friday	Romans 2:14-29	Matthew 5:33-41	St Hubert of Maastricht
Saturday	Romans 1:7-12	Matthew 5:42-48	Apostle Hermes of the Seventy
Sunday	Hebrews 11:33-12:2	Matthew 10:32-33,37-38; 19:27-30	All Saints Sunday

**PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS** –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 Cathlynn 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 Daniel Prez (Joe Monde's brother), Bob Carlisle, Frank and Diane Betz, all healthcare and frontline 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.

**June Birthdays and Anniversaries-** Kathryn Rogulin 6/3, Juliana Kitsko 6/10, Mark Popovich 6/14, Deborah Grysiak 6/16, George Paul Stagon 6/16, Adrienne Harms 6/22, Mitchell Leopold Kalaluhu 6/28, Gina Marie Gasper 6/29.  
Justin and Amanda Rosco 6/27.

**June Memorials - Newly Departed:** Fr. Michael Psenechunk, Archpriest Paul Lazor, Protopresbyter George Hutnyan, Archimandrite Elias (Bitar), Pani Patsy Joseph

**Perpetual:** Michael & Pauline Sabo, Andrew & Susan Himchak, Elizabeth Babich, John & Helen Sabol Katherine Totin, Peter Regrut, Tekla Orange, Catherine Wilson, Mary Kattalia, Anna Wukich, Nicholas Chernega, John Kasenohak, Martha Sisak, Carol Sisco, Robert Dugan, Irene Holowaty-Mancak, Edward Chuprinko, and for all victims of the COVID-19 virus.

**JUST A REMINDER-** that Fr. Joseph has a new cell-phone number. **412-607-7039**. Please update your records.

**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!

**PLEASE**-continue to observe all of the necessary health and safety guidelines that are enforce by State and Federal agencies. 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.

#### **SAFETY PROTOCOLS FOR WORSHIP AT ST. JOHN'S**

- 1. Only the Sycamore Street door will be used for entry and exit. Please park on Sycamore Street for your convenience.**
- 2. All entrants be given a touchless temperature test. The CDC maximum safe human temperature is 100.4. If your temperature is above 100.4, you will be asked to return home. Please let us know if you have taken any fever reducing medication, like Tylenol in the morning before coming to church.**
- 3. All entrants must wear a mask upon entering and during the church service. (The cantor is not required to wear a mask when singing.) There will be cloth masks available to those who do not have one. We encourage you to bring your own mask.**
- 4. All entrants before entering the church will be asked to use the provided hand sanitizer after their temperature is taken.**
- 5. Other than families that live together, please make every effort to be 6ft apart in the pews.**
- 6. There will be no coffee hour until further notice.**

Parishioners who are homebound or have informed Fr. Joseph, that due to pre-existing medical or other concerns that they are NOT ready to return to church, will not be listed in the alphabetical groups. These parishioners may change their status at any time by informing Fr. Joseph before returning to church services. Father Joseph will resume home visitations with the approval of the homebound.



## **PENTECOST- The Descent of the Holy Spirit**

In the Old Testament Pentecost was the feast which occurred fifty days after Passover. As the passover feast celebrated the exodus of the Israelites from the slavery of Egypt, so Pentecost celebrated God's gift of the ten commandments to Moses on Mount Sinai.

In the new covenant of the Messiah, the passover event takes on its new meaning as the celebration of Christ's death and resurrection, the "exodus" of men from this sinful world to the Kingdom of God. And in the New Testament as well, the pentecostal feast is fulfilled and made new by the coming of the "new law," the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples of Christ.

*When the day of Pentecost had come they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed as resting upon each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit . . . (Acts 2.1–4).*

The Holy Spirit that Christ had promised to his disciples came on the day of Pentecost (Jn 14.26, 15.26; Lk 24.49; Acts 1.5). The apostles received "the power from on high," and they began to preach and bear witness to Jesus as the risen Christ, the King and the Lord. This moment has traditionally been called the birthday of the Church. In the liturgical services of the feast of Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit is celebrated together with the full revelation of the divine Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The fullness of the Godhead is manifested with the Spirit's coming to man, and the Church hymns celebrate this manifestation as the final act of God's self-disclosure and self-donation to the world of His creation. For this reason Pentecost Sunday is also called Trinity Day in the Orthodox tradition. Often on this day the icon of the Holy Trinity—particularly that of the three angelic figures who appeared to Abraham, the forefather of the Christian faith—is placed in the center of the church. This icon is used with the traditional pentecostal icon which shows the tongues of fire hovering over Mary and the Twelve Apostles, the original prototype of the Church, who are themselves sitting in unity surrounding a symbolic image of "cosmos," the world.

On Pentecost we have the final fulfillment of the mission of Jesus Christ and the first beginning of the messianic age of the Kingdom of God mystically present in this world in the Church of the Messiah. For this reason the fiftieth day stands as the beginning of the era which is beyond the limitations of this world, fifty being that number which stands for eternal and heavenly fulfillment in Jewish and Christian mystical piety: seven times seven, plus one.

Thus, Pentecost is called an apocalyptic day, which means the day of final revelation. It is also called an eschatological day, which means the day of the final and perfect end (in Greek eschaton means the end). For when the Messiah comes and the Lord's Day is at hand, the "last days" are inaugurated in which "God declares: . . . I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh."; This is the ancient prophecy to which the Apostle Peter refers in the first sermon of the Christian Church which was preached on the first Sunday of Pentecost (Acts 2: 17; Joel 2: 28–32).

Once again it must be noted that the feast of Pentecost is not simply the celebration of an event which took place centuries ago. It is the celebration of what must happen and does happen to us in the Church today. We all have died and risen with the Messiah-King, and we all have received his Most Holy Spirit. We are the "temples of the Holy Spirit." God's Spirit dwells in us (Rom 8; 1 Cor 2–3, 12; 2 Cor 3; Gal 5; Eph 2–3). We, by our own membership in the Church, have received "the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit" in the sacrament of chrismation. Pentecost has happened to us.

The Divine Liturgy of Pentecost recalls our baptism into Christ with the verse from Galatians again replacing the Thrice-Holy Hymn. Special verses from the psalms also replace the usual antiphonal psalms of the liturgy. The epistle and gospel readings tell of the Spirit's coming to men. The kontakion sings of the reversal of Babel as God unites the nations into the unity of his Spirit. The troparion proclaims the gathering of the whole universe into God's net through the work of the inspired apostles. The hymns "O Heavenly King" and "We have seen the True Light" are sung for the first time since Easter, calling the Holy Spirit to "come and abide in us," and proclaiming that "we have received the heavenly Spirit." The church building is decorated with flowers and the green leaves of the summer to show that God's divine Breath comes to renew all creation as the "life-creating Spirit." In Hebrew the word for Spirit, breath and wind is the same word, ruah. The Great Vespers of Pentecost evening features three long prayers at which the faithful kneel for the first time since Easter.

## PENTECOST MONDAY – HOLY SPIRIT DAY



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

Today we are keeping the Feast of the Holy Spirit. What do we know about Him? We heard wonderful words of prayer about Him yesterday on Trinity Sunday, but let us think of Him, of the name He is given in the Gospel, which is translated ‘The Comforter’ in English, in other translations ‘The Advocate’. He is the One Who is the Comforter indeed, the One Who consoles us for our separation from Christ, Who consoles us who are like orphans, who long to be with Christ our God, our Saviour, and who know that as long as we are in the flesh - and these are the words of St. Paul - we are separated from Him. But for Him to be our Comforter, to be our consolation, we must first be aware of the fact that we are separated and this is the first question we

must ask ourselves: are we aware of it, or do we live in the delusion that we are in God and God in us, and that nothing more is needed? How much more is needed!

He is also the One Who, as the Comforter, gives us strength, strength to live despite the separation, strength to stand fast and to be the doers of the Will, the fulfillers of the Commandments of God, the One Who can give us vigour of soul, determination, power to act. But this, again, only if we turn to Him and say, Come! Come and abide in us! Cleanse us! Be not only our Comforter but our strength also.

Lastly, He is the One Who gives us, already now, the joy of knowing how close we are despite what seems to be an infinite distance between God and us, the One Who, in unutterable groanings, speaks to God from the depths of our being; the One Who, because we are Christ's own people, His brothers and sisters in humanity - and these are His own words - that we are the children of the Father. The joy of this, the wonder of this, the dignity of this! Indeed also, the responsibility of this...

If we think of our world which is to such a great extent alien to God, the Spirit is already the beginning of eternal life. His presence is a decisive fact. He beats against the rocks like the sea, He breaks resistances. He is the joy of eternity knocking at our door, forcing Himself into our lives, reminding us of God our Father, of Christ our Saviour and of our greatness and dignity before God, showing us that all things are possible in the power of Christ Who sustains us.

Let us therefore responsibly and gratefully keep this Feast. And may the Spirit of God Who came in tongues of fire upon the Apostles, come to us also - perhaps like a fire that sets us aglow and makes us like a Burning Bush, or touches us like the still, small voice which the Prophet heard in the wilderness in which God was, in His quiet humility, in His surrender to us, in His love for us. Amen.

*Sermon of Metropolitan Anthony Bloom June 19, 1989*

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**SATURDAY, JUNE 20-** we will have a work crew doing some cleanup and repairs around the church. We will start at 9am and hopefully be finished by 1pm. Work to do includes-

- Cutting back parking lot
- Weeding and Mulching Cross area
- Scrape Cable St fence for painting
- Stain rectory fence

## **June 7- Candle Intentions**

### **Health**

Babich, Sandy - Family  
Babich, Sandy - Chad - Birthday Blessings  
Babich, Sandy - MaKenzie, Grace - Kindergarten Graduation  
Bires, Alice - Benjamin  
Bires, Alice - Fr Will & Pani Ileana  
Bires, Alice - Scott & Sharon  
Bires, Alice -Wally  
Bires, Alice - Happy Birthday Juliana  
Bires, Alice - Bob Carlisle  
Bires, Alice - Helen, David, & Joseph  
Brancho, Bill - Grandson Elias on 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday  
Harms, Denny & Adrienne - Cp. Zackery  
Schwenning USMC (Grandson)  
Harms, Denny & Adrienne - Cameron & Noah 2020 Graduates (Grandsons)  
Harms, Denny & Adrienne - Nolan (Greatgrandson)  
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 - Wally Perkins  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - John E. Stagon  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Anthony Macchiaroli  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Fr Michael Hatrak-50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Seminary Graduation  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Marti Baran  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Virus Victims  
Grysiak, Janet & Gary - Healthcare & Grocery Workers  
Kiss, Marge - Dorothy & Donna  
Sabeh, Nancy - Happy Birthday, Juliana  
Sabeh, Nancy - Health of Family  
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, John Jr. - John & Jessica  
Stagon, John Jr. - David, Linda, Johnny  
Stagon, John Jr. - David II, Christal & Weston

### **Special Intentions**

Alice Bires

### **Memory**

Babich, Sandy - Ron Babich  
Bires, Alice - Parents  
Bires, Alice- Brother-in-law

Bires, Alice- Helen  
Bires, Alice-Margie  
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  
Sabeh, Nancy - Family Members  
Stagon, George & Barbara - Mom and Dad  
Stagon, John Jr. - Wife Anna  
Stagon, John Jr. - Father, Mother, Brothers  
Stakel, Peggy - Parents Nick & Betty Babich

## **Worship Groups During Pandemic Under GREEN Stage -starting June 7**

### **GROUP 1**

Marianne Allen and Bill Welch  
Rebecca Barclay  
Chris, Lisa and DJ Bebin  
Diane Betz  
Alice Bires  
Karen and Wally Perkins  
Bill and Eric Brancho  
Eileen Buck  
Bob and Sandy Carlisle  
Marilyn Chuprinko  
Jeffery and Nicole Durmis  
Theresa, John Finke (and Teagan)  
Gina Marie Gaspard  
Debbie Grysiak  
Janet, Irene, Basil Dixon and Benjamin Grysiak  
Shirley Hart  
Bob and Cheryl Hosken  
David, Elyse, Roman, Mitchell, Zechariah and Alexis Kalaluhi  
Kathy Bechler  
Ruthanne Barclay  
Ernie Karlar  
Connie Kimmel  
Ron, Sonya, Alexis, Julianna Kitsko  
Nancy Sabeh

### **GROUP 2**

Nicki Kocan  
Beth Kudravy  
Paula Locante  
Alexandra Maskaly  
Rosemarie Micholov  
Joe and Sharon Monde  
Sean Nelis  
Richard and Linda Novak  
Michael O'Brien  
Dina and Michael Panchura  
Cathy Pervuznik  
Bob Pervuznik, Jr.  
Dolores Popovich and Ann Weiland

Cheryl Stagon  
David Stagon  
George Stagon  
Mr. Stagon  
Jeffery Stagon, Nicole, Jillina and Payton  
Cindy Sterchak  
Charles and Barbara Vasko  
Joshua and Brittany Vasko and family  
Sean, Kalina, Mila, and Malachi Walker  
Mark Volk  
Evonne Vojnovich and Thomas Cunningham  
Ashley Yeagers and children

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**Worship Groups ONLY APPLY to Sunday Liturgy. For Saturday Vespers, Weekday Feastday Vespers and Weekday Feastal Liturgy, everyone is welcome to attend. Please remember to have a mask, use the Sycamore Street door, have your temperature taken and use the hand sanitizer**

**Worship Groups Calendar** - Updated 6.5.20

June 14 - Group 1  
June 21 - Group 2  
June 28 - Group 1  
July 5 - Group 2  
July 12 - Group 1  
July 19 - Group 2  
July 26 - Group 1

**BOB CALISLE**-was in the hospital this past week for tests. He is home now. Tests came back good. He is grateful for your prayers.

**ALSO**-please keep Frank and Diane Betz in your prayers. Frank had a heart attack this week and is awaiting a heart procedure to correct his cardiac issues.

**SOME FINAL THOUGHTS**- as we now are in the GREEN STAGE which means that crowd sizes can be more than 25 but less than 250 how this is applied in our various ACROD parishes may seem inconsistent with one parish saying everyone can come to church and others, like ours, organizing into two worship groups. Why is this?

It depends on the actual size of the church building. Our church building is the smallest in our deanery, much smaller than Homestead, Northside, Ambridge and Rankin. Having the smallest building but close to the second largest church membership in the deanery, this poses a challenge.

For example, Homestead is the largest church in physical size and population. Because it is so

large it can safely accommodate more people while Rankin and Ambridge have smaller memberships but large churches so they can let everyone come and still be 6ft or more apart. But for us, if everyone came to church there is no way that we can stay 6ft apart. So "one size" doesn't fit all when it comes to how each parish implements the safety protocols that Metropolitan Gregory has blessed. In fact in a recent phone call he shared that he has 80+ different situations that need unique answers.

Wearing a mask in church is not ideal. It makes it more difficult to sing and even maybe breath, but let me share with you something I read today. A Roman Catholic parish here in Pennsylvania has had 17 parishioners die from COVID-19! Can you imagine the sad impact that these deaths have had on the priests and laity of that community? I want all of you to be safe and I hope that you will understand that the safely protocols we have in place are for your health and safety and for the health and safety of your friends and loved ones at St. John's.

This has nothing to do with any political agenda or suppression or infringement of religious rights. This is a plague, a pandemic that is still killing 1000 people a day in the USA. This virus will not just go-away. It will only stop being a threat to our health when a vaccine is found and we can be immunized. In the meantime, we have to do our part so that we don't become infected and spread it to someone else. It is really that simple.

So, I ask you again, please try and understand why we are doing what we are doing and don't absent yourselves from church over this unless you have a medical condition that warrants your absence. The amount of time we are asked to wear a mask, for example, in church is only a couple of hours. That is a small price to ask to keep us safe, isn't it?

There is a Russian word, "Podvig" and it means "spiritual struggle." The roots of this word and its meaning can be best seen in the words of our Lord when he said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." Let us deny ourselves a bit now for the sake of the least of the brethren in our midst. Let us humble ourselves for the sake of our neighbor. That is Christ's way and ours to follow.