

SAINT JOHN'S ORTHODOX CHURCH

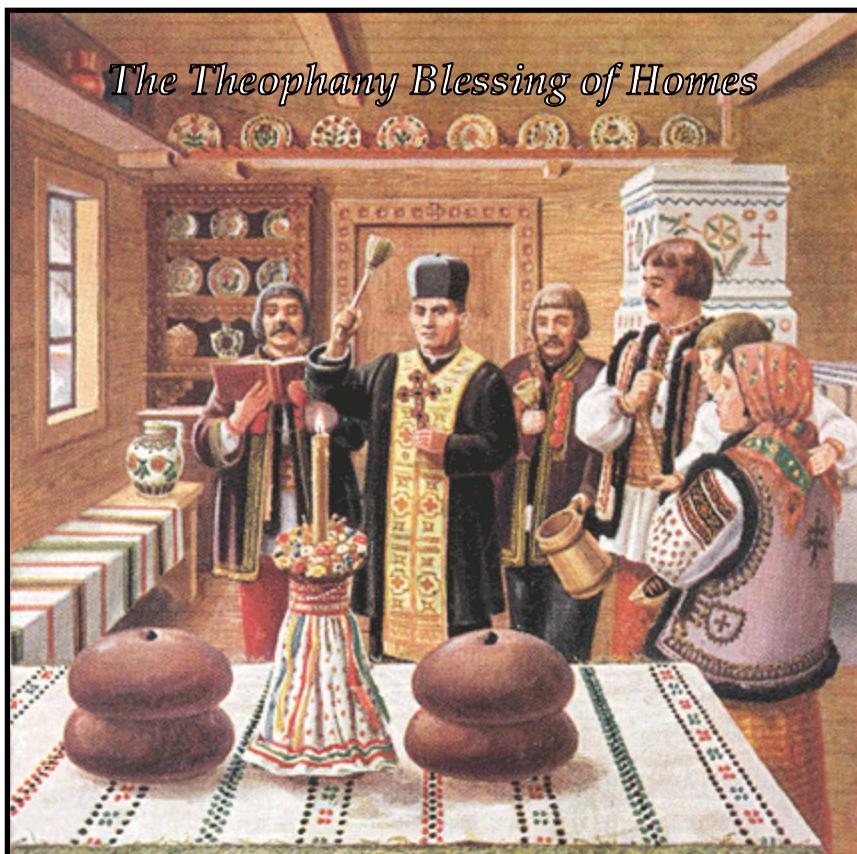
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Clergy:

Rev. Father David Mastroberte
Very Rev. Protopresbyter Michael Polanichka
Rev. Deacon John Anderson

A Parish of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese – Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople

Bulletin for January 7-20, 2018



CALENDAR OF SERVICES & EVENTS

SUN	1/7/2018	SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY; ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
	9:00 AM	Divine Liturgy <i>Panachida: ++Walko Family (Perpetual) & +John Sekerak (Perpetual)</i>
THURS	1/11/2018	
	8:30 AM	Divine Liturgy <i>+Albert Chesnut, 40th Day, by the Family</i>
SUN	1/14/2018	32ND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; LEAVETAKING OF THEOPHANY
	9:00 AM	Divine Liturgy <i>Panachida: +Peter & +Helen Gula; ++Soroka Family (Perpetual)</i>
	1:00 PM	Blessing of the Shenango River in Downtown Sharon
MON	1/15/2018	
	6:00 PM	January Board Meeting
FRI	1/19/2018	
	12:00 Noon	Prayer Service in Honor of the Sanctity of Life <i>(See Below!)</i>
SUN	1/21/2018	ZACCHAEUS SUNDAY
	9:00 AM	Divine Liturgy <i>Panachida: +Archpriest Joseph Klembara, 40th Day</i> <i>By Margie Hromyak and Family</i>

PRAYER SERVICE IN HONOR OF THE SANCTITY OF LIFE
Friday, January 19th
12:00 Noon

To spiritually unite with the hundreds of thousands who will be participating in the annual "March for Life" in Washington, we will gather in prayer on Friday, January 19th at 12 Noon. All are welcome to come and offer prayers to Our Creator as we thank Him for the gift of life, and as we affirm the value and sacredness of all human life, from conception until natural death.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Annual Blessing of the Shenango River will be on Sunday, January 14th at 1:00 PM in downtown Sharon (97 Penn Ave.; the corner of Penn Ave. and East Silver St.) Parking is available on site. Service will last approximately 15-20 minutes. Open House and Refreshments following the blessing at St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Orthodox Church, 389 Clark Street, Sharon. Be brave, bundle up, and ask God's blessing on the river and our whole region.

Stewardship 2018: We thank all who have pledged to date! Remember, it's not too late to submit your pledge for 2018. A pledge card isn't just a piece of paper—it is a sign of your ongoing full and active participation in the life of Saint John's. It is your way of saying "*Yes, Saint John's is my parish!*"

Prayerfully consider your support of Saint John's and submit your pledge card in the receptacle in the vestibule.

Installation of 2018 Church Board Officers will be on Sunday, January 28th at the Divine Liturgy.

2018 Annual Parish Meeting will be on Sunday, January 28th, 2018 after Divine Liturgy. All members in good standing, who have met their spiritual and material obligations (i.e. have— at a minimum— participated in the sacraments of Holy Confession and Holy Communion within the past year, and are financially supporting the parish) are encouraged to attend.



You are Invited to the
PARISHIONER APPRECIATION BREAKFAST
on Sunday, January 28, 2018 following Divine Liturgy

Throughout the year, we always say "thank you" to our parishioners, but we want to take the opportunity to gather for a meal as a community and show our thanks for all of your hard work and dedication over the past year.

(Catering by Mr. D's)

HOUSE BLESSING NOTES

FROM FR. DAVID

House Blessings begin on Monday, January 8th. Like last year, rather than having individual forms to fill out, there is a "master schedule" in the hall, listing the days and times I will be in different areas. Just add your name to the schedule in a given time-slot.

I always enjoy visiting for a few minutes, but one request: no food or snacks! I appreciate the show of hospitality, but food and beverages are not necessary.

Please call me (724-813-3172) if you have any questions about scheduling a house blessing.

How to prepare for a house blessing: Arrange a place for prayer at your dining room table or another location with an icon and/or cross, and a candle. Make a list of any living and departed persons that you would like prayed for in the short service. (Fr. David will bring a holy water sprinkler with holy water, so you do not need to place any holy water on the table.) When Fr. David arrives, make sure the TV and music are turned off.

Some Important Dates for 2018

Monday, February 19th:

First Day of Lent

Sunday, April 1st:

Palm Sunday (*Western Easter*)

Sunday, April 8th:

Pascha/Easter

The Blessing of Water

<http://www.holy-trinity.org/feasts/blesswater.html>

In the Book of Genesis, we read that creation began when the Spirit of God moved over the face of the waters. (Gen. 1:2) Throughout the Bible, water plays an important and a 'mystical role' in human existence and in man's relationship with God the Creator.

Water has the capacity to produce death, as recounted in the story of Noah and the ark (Gen. 6); or to produce life, as noted in the story of Moses' striking the rock in the desert to produce water for the parched wanderers (Numbers 20). While the waters of the Red Sea parted to allow the Hebrews to pass over in safety (and thus preserve life), the same waters came rushing upon the Pharaoh and his army drowning them.

In the New Testament, we see water becoming the means by which the Trinity was revealed during the Baptism of Jesus, which we celebrate on the Feast of Theophany on January 6 each year. In the Baptism of Jesus, at the hands of John the Baptist, the spiritual significance and potential of water as the source of life is again revealed and reaffirmed just as in Genesis, the first book of the Bible.

In a sermon on Theophany, St. John Chrysostom says: "On this day Christ was baptized; through His Baptism He sanctified the element of water. There let us all draw of the water and store it in homes, because on this day the water is consecrated."

In blessing water on the Feast Day, we ask and pray that the original purpose of water, as a source of life, blessing and holiness be revealed to us as we drink it. In the Garden of Eden, Adam enjoyed a unique and lordly relationship with Creation. After the Fall as he was expelled from Paradise, he heard the words, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life." (Genesis 3:17) From that point Adam would be subject to Creation, and not a master. Yet through Christ, the curse is lifted, just as the curse of death is lifted from the human race through the Resurrection. Because of Christ's coming and His work of salvation and redemption (as the hymns say, "dispensation"), Man and Creation are reconciled. Creation is able once more to meet not only the physical needs of man, but the elements of creation can be, and are, sources of grace and healing as we worship the Lord of Life.

When we bless water - or any other material object - and when we celebrate the Mysteries (Sacraments) of the Church, we reverently and gratefully proclaim that Christ Himself (in the words of the Divine Liturgy) "offers and is offered" blesses and sanctifies the world (cosmos) as the Great High Priest.

The celebration of the Great Blessing of Water is an affirmation that through Christ's own baptism, He who is our loving Lord has lifted the curse of Adam's sin, and given the creative goodness of God's creation back to mankind once again.

Winter Weather and Church Attendance

Orthodox Christians are expected—even obligated—to be at Divine Liturgy on Sundays **under ordinary circumstances**. That last part is key. There may be any number of mitigating factors excusing us from attending Divine Liturgy. Winter weather can be one such reason.

In the past, I have shared these thoughts from the pulpit. However, I wanted to include them in the bulletin as a reminder.

As a priest, it is both my great honor and my great responsibility to offer the Divine Liturgy. I avoid cancelling any scheduled liturgies on Sundays and holydays. In *most* circumstances, Sunday Liturgy will *not* be cancelled. In the rare event that weather conditions make it impossible for us to assemble for Sunday Liturgy, our board members and I will spread this information as soon as possible.

However, I want to stress the following: **when it comes to winter weather, use “common sense” and your best judgment**. This is something you have to determine for yourself. Whether it is snow, ice, or extremely low temperatures—if you feel unsafe, uncomfortable, or just unsure about driving, *don't* risk it. If you are older or sick, be cautious. God wants us to be brave, but He doesn't want us to be foolhardy.

Even if we are unable to make to church due to poor winter weather, we are still expected to keep the Lord's Day “holy”. Prayer doesn't take a snow day! How can we sanctify the Lord's Day from home?

- Silence distractions (cell phones, TV, music, computer) for a time.
- Gather for prayer before your icons, or at your dining room table.
- Offer Morning Prayers from your prayer book. If you don't have your prayer book handy, go to the “Prayer Corner” section on acrod.org.
- If there are multiple people at home, take turns reading the prayers, or read them together.
- Read the Bible Readings for the day. Look on your wall calendar for the references, or access them on acrod.org.
- As you pray, remember that you are *spiritually* united to God, the Saints, and to your fellow Orthodox Christians.

As always, if you have any questions, feel free to speak to me.

Stay warm! Be safe! God bless you!

Fr. David

THOUGHTS ON STEWARDSHIP

by *Dan Hromyak*

"...they fell down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh..." - Matthew 2:11

Notice the order of events in the Magi's visit. First, they knelt before Jesus and prayed to Him. Then they presented Him with their gifts. We, too, must take time to pray before we present our gifts to the Lord. We never know what God may be asking us to share!

"Jesus turned and saw them following him and said to them, 'What are you looking for?'" - John 1:38

What are you looking for? Are you wasting your time looking for the material comforts of the world? Or, is your heart longing for something deeper that can only be found by spending time with God! Take time, each day, in silence and ask the Lord what is it that He wants you to do.

COFFEE HOUR SPONSORS

Sunday, January 7: Jason & Shannon Baker

Sunday, January 14: Andy & Billie Lutz
(Good Health and God's Blessings!)

COFFEE HOUR VOLUNTEERS

Sunday, January 7: Jason & Shannon Baker

Sunday, January 14: Betty Jo Patterson

Sunday, January 21: Ed & Francine Fabian

BIRTHDAYS

Jan. 6 Julie Gordon
Jan. 7 Gary Yonchak
Jan. 13 Melinda Ristvey
Jan. 15 Michelle McMahon
Nicole Sayers
Jan. 19 Helen Jaeger
Jan. 20 Margaret Tatusko

MEN TO HOLD CANDLES

Sunday, January 14th

Michael Ristvey
Tom Ristvey
Peter Roman
Steve Saluga
Milan Shumkaroff

Sunday, January 21st

Ed Slovesko
Gino Tofani
Dr. Henry VanZanten
Michael Waryanka
Donald Yasnowsky

ANNIVERSARIES

January 15th

*Edward & Kathleen Chuba
Peter & Margaret Tatusko*



December 2017 Special Fund Winners

1st not sold No. 000
2nd not sold No. 736
3rd Sunday
4th Pani Eleanor Polanichka, Hermitage # 367 \$30
5th Deacon John Anderson, Sharpsville No. 464 \$30
6th not sold No. 002
7th Chuck Kretchek, Mars, PA No. 812 \$30
8th Mary Soroka, Sharpsville No. 936 \$30
9th Tom Kizak, Hermitage No. 415 \$50
10th Sunday
11th Rex Graham, Sharon No. 159 \$30
12th Kaitlin Kulusich, Warren, Oh No. 690 \$30
13th not sold No.398
14th Rhoda Faughnan, Scotch Plains, NJ # 140 \$30
15th not sold No 580
16th Deb Giroski, Hermitage No. 878 \$50
17th Sunday
18th Robert Amos, Hermitage No. 698 \$30
19th not sold No.135
20th not sold No. 182
21st not sold No.531
22nd Robert Amos, Hermitage No. 222 \$30
23rd Julie Totin, Sharpsville No. 881 \$50
24th Sunday
25th Lorie & David Scarinci, Pittstown, NJ No.867 \$300
26th Kathy Yonchak, Masury No. 554 \$30
27th Diana Lyle, Wellsville, OH No. 549 \$30
28th Tony Leon, Warren, OH No. 463 \$30
29th Karsten Baker, Hermitage, No. 375 \$30
30th Karen Bich, Brookfield, No 790 \$100
31st Sunday