

Happy Mother's Day

—May 10th, 2026—

*On Sunday, May 10th,
we pause to show our gratitude to our mothers,
both those living and those who have departed from us.*

*May the Risen Lord,
through the prayers of His most-pure Mother,
bless all mothers with many, blessed years.
May the example of the Holy Mother of God Mary,
inspire them in their maternal ministries.
God grant them many years – Christ is risen!*

*May the Risen Lord grant blessed repose and eternal rest
to all of our departed mothers.
Eternal Memory – Christ is risen!*

—SCHEDULE FOR MAY 10-23, 2026—

- *SUN 5/10/2026 FIFTH SUNDAY OF PASCHA—SAMARITAN WOMAN
MOTHER’S DAY**
9:00 AM Divine Liturgy with Prayers for All Mothers, Living and Departed
- Perpetual Commemorations for May 10-16, 2026:***
KARAS, Agnes & Andrew
KRAYNAK, Anna & John Sr.
- MON 5/11/2026**
6:00 PM May Board Meeting
- TUES 5/12/2026**
9:00 AM *Saints of the Day: St. Epiphanius of Cyprus*
Divine Liturgy (Chapel)
With Prayers for Weekly Perpetual Commemorations
- WED 5/13/2026**
6:00 PM *Saints of the Day: Virgin-Martyr Glyceria*
Moleben to the Mother of God
With Prayers for the Special Intention of the Living
- *SUN 5/17/2026 SIXTH SUNDAY OF PASCHA—BLIND MAN**
9:00 AM Divine Liturgy
- Perpetual Commemorations for May 17-23, 2026:***
KRAYNAK, Anna & John Sr.
VANSACH, John & Helen
BOGDAN, George
DOBROVOLSKI, Peter & Julia, Michael, Andrew & Peter, Rose, Pauline,
Helen, Anna, Julia, Mary
- WED 5/20/2026**
6:00 PM *Leave-Taking of Pascha*
Great Vespers for the Ascension
- THURS 5/21/2026 ASCENSION OF CHRIST (HOLYDAY)**
9:00 AM Divine Liturgy
With Mention of this Week’s Perpetual Commemorations
- *SUN 5/24/2026 SEVENTH SUNDAY OF PASCHA—HOLY FATHERS OF THE 1ST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL**
9:00 AM Divine Liturgy
Memorial Day Observance: Procession and Panachida at the Cemetery Cross

ANNOUNCEMENTS

2026 National ACRY Family and Friends Weekend will be taking place over Memorial Day Weekend (May 22 – May 25, 2026) in Cleveland. To register for all or part of the event (such as the Grand Banquet) go to acrod.org

Service with Prayers for the Living on May 13, 2026

In the week following Mother's Day, we will offer a Moleben (Service of Supplication) to the Mother of God on Wednesday, May 13 at 6:00 PM. Included in this service will be prayers for the LIVING. *Please fill out a new prayer sheet!*

Fr. David will be away over Memorial Day weekend. Fr. Nathaniel Choma will serve Divine Liturgy on Sunday, May 24. In case of any emergencies, please call Fr. Tim Papproski of St. Nicholas in Warren () or the nearest Orthodox priest.

Our Annual Memorial Day Observance will be on Sunday, May 24, 2026 following Divine Liturgy. We will offer a Panachida at the Cemetery Cross in memory of all departed veterans and all the departed clergy and faithful of our parish, as well as a general blessing of the cemetery. (In case of rain, the Panachida will be offered in the church.)

Our 2026 First Confession Celebration will be on Sunday, June 14. We have three young people (Jacob, Damon and Ryan) preparing for their First Confession this year. We look forward to honoring their accomplishment as a community!

CONGRATULATIONS! *Frederick Milette, son of Alexandria and Josiah Milette, will receive the Sacraments of Initiation on Sunday, May 17 after Liturgy (approximately 11:15 AM). We offer our prayers and best wishes to the newly-baptized, to his parents, and to the whole family! God grant many, blessed years!*

We celebrate the **ASCENSION OF CHRIST**—the 40th Day after the Resurrection—on Thursday, May 21, 2026. This is a great feast of the Lord. We have two services for this holyday: Vespers on May 20 at 6:00 PM and Liturgy on May 21 at 9:00 AM. Come to one or both as you are able, but make an effort to mark this holyday!

The Ascension of Christ and the Glorification of Man

Fr. Lawrence Farley (oca.org)

In contemporary Orthodoxy, we are accustomed to referring to Christ as one of the Holy Trinity. He is usually referred to as “Christ our true God”, and the Gospel of John, which stresses His divine status, is, I would suggest, our favourite of the four Gospels. When announcing the reading from (say) Matthew’s Gospel, the deacon says, “Bless master him who proclaims the good tidings of the holy apostle and evangelist Matthew”, but when he announces a reading from John’s Gospel, he says, “Bless master him who proclaims the good tidings of the holy apostle and evangelist John the Theologian”. The other evangelists are honoured, but only John receives the title “*the Theologian*” (an epithet shared only by St. Gregory Nazianzus and St. Simeon, sometimes called “the New Theologian”). Like I said: John is our favourite.

Looking at church history, one can see why. Starting early on and heating up dramatically in the fourth century, the Church was swamped with rival and alternative views of who Jesus of Nazareth was. Arius made headlines in the fourth century by suggesting that Jesus was a creature, like all the other creatures made by God, only perhaps a bit more exalted, like an angel on steroids (my description not his). For Arius, Jesus was only divine in an honorary sense, like a citizen being made “King for a day”. In dealing with the distortions of Arius, the Church turned with gratitude to the emphatic clarity of John’s Gospel. That Gospel opens with a ringing assertion of Christ’s divinity (“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God”), and climaxes with

a confession of the same (as Thomas falls down before Jesus, crying out, “My Lord and my God!”) From the fourth century on, the primacy of John’s Gospel was assured. Faced with the swarming multitude of heresies, the Church would continue to declare the divinity of its Saviour, and refer to Him almost reflexively as “Christ our true God”.

This is good. But it should not allow us to miss the significance of Him being “Christ the true man” as well. Orthodox theology, formed by its response to the challenges and heresies it faced, takes a *theological* approach to Jesus: we think of Him primarily as the pre-eternal and divine Word who later became a man for our sake. But the earliest disciples did not begin that way. They began with a *phenomenological* approach to Him. That is, they first knew Him as a man like them, truly and completely human, and (what’s more) authentically Jewish. For like His first disciples, Jesus referred to the God of Israel as His God (compare His cry from the cross in Mk. 15:34 and His post-resurrection reference to His God in Jn. 20:17). He prayed to God as all His fellow Jews did, and taught that the Law’s greatest commandment was to love the God of Israel (Mk. 12:29-30). They went to on discover and proclaim that this Man was also divine.

We do well to remember this, because often we tend to secretly embrace a kind of crypto-docetism. (“Docetism” is the name given to the view that Jesus was not truly human, but that He only seemed—Greek *dokeō*—to be so.) We Orthodox Christians today easily remember that Jesus is divine. We remember less easily that He is also completely human. It is as if Christ assumed our humanity at Bethlehem, and then left it behind like a used suit of clothes at His Ascension. It is not so: the humanity which He assumed for our sake at His Nativity, He keeps forever.

It is especially important to remember this at the Feast of the Ascension, for the Ascension is not only the triumph of God, but even more the triumph of Man. We do not glorify God by belittling man and denying humanity its proper glory. Humanism, with its emphasis on the splendour of the human person, at least gets *that* right. Man is glorious, and splendid, and worthy of praise. He has debased himself through sin and selfishness, but the glory remains, like gold that is covered over with a layer of dirt. This is the point of the psalmist in Psalm 8: “What is man, that You remember him, and the son of man, that You care for him? You have made him a little lower than God, and crown him with glory and majesty”. The glory of man remains, whether or not one translates the Hebrew *elohim* in this passage as “God” or “the angels”. Man retains his kingly position in earthly creation either way, and stands just slightly lower than those in heaven, because God “has put all things under his feet”.

The Church has always proclaimed that Man’s ultimate glory and destiny find fulfillment in Jesus. He is the Son of Man to whom God subjects all things, putting them under His feet. He is the One whom God crowned with glory and honour (see Heb. 2:6-9), the true and representative Man ruling over all creation. And the moment of this crowning, this final and supreme exaltation, was the Ascension.

That is the true meaning of the Ascension, and why the Ascension represents the triumph of man. In Jesus, Man assumes the throne God prepared for him, reigning finally and truly as king over the rest of creation. In the ascended Christ, sitting at God’s right hand to rule the cosmos with Him, Mankind finds its true destiny and glory and goal.

The Ascension however also reveals that this true glory comes from submitting to God’s will. Humanism rightly sees that man is a glorious being, but it errs in supposing that man can be glorious while rebelling against God. Secular humanism (there have been many varieties of humanism throughout the years) even declares that man’s glory *consists* in rebelling against God. All this is futile. Man finds his true dignity while kneeling before God; his true calling in gratefully adoring Him.

Psalm 8 reveals this, as does the example of Jesus. In Psalm 8, we see that it was *God* who “made man a little lower than *elohim*” (v. 5); it was *God* who made him rule over the works of His hands, and put all things under his feet” (v.6). Man did not attain to such heights by his own effort, by a kind of “triumph of the will” (to quote an old and horrifying documentary). Man does not glorify himself by pulling himself up by his Pelagian bootstraps (it was Pelagius who seemed to downplay our need for God). It is God who glorifies him, as His gift, as man submits in love to His will.

The life of Jesus reveals this also. Christ the Man always did the will of His Father, even though it cost Him His sweat and blood in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the Cross. In obedience “He offered up both prayers and supplications to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His piety” (Heb. 5:7). It was because of this obedience and humility before the divine will, this saving self-emptying, that “God highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the Name which is above every name” (Phil. 2:8-9). First came the Cross, and only then, the Crown; first the kneeling tears in the Garden, and only after that, the sitting at the Right Hand. Christ’s glory was the fruit of His humility, and of His obedience to the Father’s will. He proved Himself true Man when He knelt and prayed; He proved Himself true Man when He turned from His own will to the Father’s. And because of this human obedience, God exalted Him, raising Him from the dead and bringing Him to His right hand in glory.

Christ’s ascended glory therefore points the way home for us as well. The glory that Christ was given by the throne of His Father is the same glory that He will share with us (see Rev. 3:21). But we must follow in the footsteps of His humility if we would arrive finally at His glorious goal. The Ascension calls us to be authentically human, to fulfill our destiny by serving and loving God. The Man Christ Jesus has not only revealed the glory of the Father. He also revealed the true glory of humanity as well.

“The Most Important Person on earth is a mother. She cannot claim the honor of having built Notre Dame Cathedral. She need not. She has built something more magnificent than any cathedral - a dwelling for an immortal soul, the tiny perfection of her baby’s body....The angels have not been blessed with such a grace. They cannot share in God’s creative miracle to bring new saints to Heaven. Only a human mother can. Mothers are closer to God the Creator than any other creature; God joins forces with mothers in performing this act of creation....What on God’s good earth is more glorious than this; to be a mother?” (József Mindszenty)

Thoughts on Stewardship

From Dan Hromyak

“For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that be God’s will, than for doing evil.” - 1 Peter 3:17

The old line says “If you want to make God laugh, tell him your plans. Many of us are diligent in our planning and making sure things are progressing smoothly. Then disaster strikes, we don’t get the result we anticipated or an unforeseen problem arises. Many times we may respond negatively and ask, “Why me? I did everything right!”” Here’s the thing - adversity humbles us and reminds us of our dependence on God and not on our own self-reliance. Rest assured, God has a better plan in store for you.

“I am praying for them...” - John 17:9

Prayer is the foundation of our Faith and the foundation of Stewardship. Prayer is always the first best option in any situation not just our last resort. Pray for friends and family, and especially for those that don’t treat you very well. Pray to give praise, to thank, and to ask God for help. Pray to see what God wants you to do with the gifts He has given you. Teach others how to pray. It has been said that teaching someone how to pray is the best gift you can give someone.

SAINT JOHN'S ORTHODOX CHURCH

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Rev. Father David Mastroberte, Pastor

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

Sacramental and Membership Information

Sick Calls can be made at any time. Please phone the rectory (724-346-4457) when a family member is admitted to the hospital, or to request a home visit to receive Confession and Communion. Hospitals do *not* call to alert the parish when someone is admitted.

Marriages are solemnized on Saturdays or Sundays. Circumstances may require a dispensation from the diocesan bishop. Consult the pastor at least six months in advance and before any plans have been made for the wedding reception. Marriages cannot be celebrated during the fasting seasons of the church, or on Fridays.

Baptisms are usually scheduled on Saturdays or Sundays, but other days are possible as well. Consult the pastor. Two godparents (godfather and godmother) are required, at least one of whom must be a practicing Orthodox Christian in good standing at an Orthodox parish, and the other (at least) a practicing, baptized Christian.

Church Funerals are, under ordinary circumstances, provided for practicing Orthodox Christians who are current in their spiritual and material obligations to the parish; otherwise, the funeral service is conducted at the funeral home. **The Church does not permit cremation.**

Parishioners in “good standing” are those Orthodox Christians who, as members of Saint John’s Orthodox Church, strive to live according to the teachings of the Orthodox Church; participate in the life of the parish through regular church attendance, regular reception of Holy Communion and periodic Holy Confession (and receive these sacraments no less than once a year); if married, having been married in the Orthodox Church; and financially support the parish (especially through an annual “pledge”).

Prospective members and returning members are asked to fill out an application form, copies of which are available in the church office.

Our Church’s Website: stjohnacroc.org
Our YouTube Live Stream: youtube.com/user/saintjohnsharon
Our Facebook Page: facebook.com/SaintJohnHermitagePA
Our Diocesan Website: acrod.org

For Online Giving Options, please visit our website: stjohnacroc.org

■ Our Sponsors ■

May 10, 2026

Altar Flowers

For All Mothers, Living & Departed

Eternal Lamp

For All Mothers, Living & Departed

May 17, 2026

Eternal Lamp

*For All Those Suffering
With Blindness and Eye Ailments
On This Sunday of the Healing
of the Blind Man by Christ*

*Schedule of
Men to Hold
Candles During the
Gospel*

May 10

Jerry Chupak
Ed Fabian
Matt Fabian
Chad Fette
Torry Hook

May 17

Ron Hurl
Jim Hynes
Abram Johnson
Martin Johnson
Steven Lukac

May 24

Steve Lukac
John Lenhart
Ken Maceyko
Emil Maurer
Randy Martin