

# SAINT JOHN'S ORTHODOX CHURCH

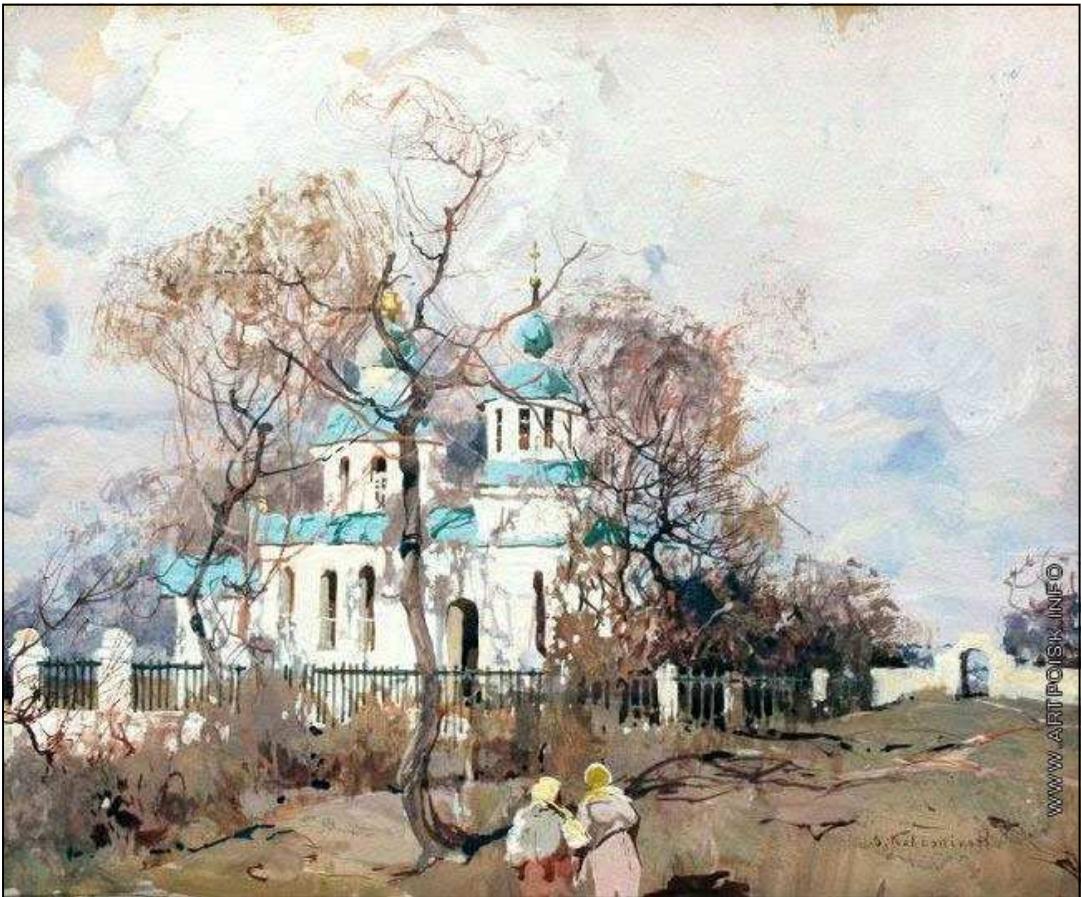
3180 Morefield Road • Hermitage, PA 16148  
Office: 724-981-0571 • Rectory: 724-346-4457  
Fax: 724-308-6615 • Website: [www.stjohnacroc.org](http://www.stjohnacroc.org)

## *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 March 3-16, 2019



WWW.ARTPOISK.INFO

By Stepan Kolesnikoff

# SCHEDULE OF SERVICES & EVENTS

<b>SUN</b>	<b>3/3/2019</b>	<b>SUNDAY OF THE LAST JUDGMENT; MEATFARE</b>
	9:00 AM	Divine Liturgy <i>Panachida: +Mike &amp; +Ruth Frejik (Per.) +Tom Chuba and ++Family (Per.) ++Repasky Family (Per.)</i>
<b>WED</b>	<b>3/6/2019</b>	
	1:00 PM	Potato Prep
<b>THURS</b>	<b>3/7/2019</b>	
	6:00 PM	Filling Prep
<b>FRI</b>	<b>3/8/2019</b>	
	8:00 AM	Pirohi Making and Sale
<b>SUN</b>	<b>3/10/2019</b>	<b>CHEESEFARE SUNDAY; SUNDAY OF FORGIVENESS</b>
	9:00 AM	Divine Liturgy <i>Panachida: +Charles Holmes +Susan &amp; +Michael Trescilla ++Palahunik Fam.</i>
	6:00 PM	Vespers for the Beginning of the Great Fast
<b>MON</b>	<b>3/11/2019</b>	<b>FIRST DAY OF THE GREAT FAST/LENT (STRICT FAST)</b>
	6:00 PM	Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew of Crete
<b>WED</b>	<b>3/13/2019</b>	
	6:00 PM	Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts <i>Panachida: +Metropolitan Nicholas, "8th Anniversary of Repose"</i>
<b>FRI</b>	<b>3/15/2019</b>	
	6:00 PM	Moleben to the Holy Cross
<b>SUN</b>	<b>3/17/2019</b>	<b>FIRST SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST – SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY</b>
	9:00 AM	Divine Liturgy Procession with Icons at the Conclusion of Liturgy <i>Panachida: +John &amp; +Mary Spondike +Andrew &amp; +Agnes Karas +Vasil &amp; +Melania Hercha</i>

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

¶ We will usher in the Great Fast with the special **Vespers Service for the Beginning of Lent** on Sunday evening, March 10th, at 6:00 PM. Please take note of the additional services scheduled during this season, as found on the monthly calendar and in the bulletin.

¶ **Lenten Self-Denial Boxes/Folders** will be available in the vestibule on March 10th. Please take one (or more!) and add your offerings to it throughout Lent. After Pascha, our donations will be shared with the Community Food Warehouse and the Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC). Related to this...

¶ **March 10th is designated as “Mission Sunday”** by the Assembly of Orthodox Bishops in the US. Focus is given to the work of the Orthodox Christian Mission Center – OCMC. Please say a prayer for Orthodox Missions and Orthodox Missionaries serving around the world, consider volunteering to serve as part of an Orthodox Mission Team, and support this eternal work of the Church with a gift to the Mission Center.

¶ **Confessions** will be heard beginning at 5:25 PM before most evening Lenten services; before Divine Liturgy on Sunday mornings, starting at 8:25 AM; and by appointment. *All Orthodox Christians are expected to approach this sacrament during Lent!*

¶ **Sunday of Orthodoxy Procession of Icons:** Following Liturgy on March 17th, a short Procession of Icons will be held inside the church, to celebrate the “Triumph of Orthodoxy” and the restoration of icons after iconoclasm in the 9th century. **All youth** are invited to participate in this procession by carrying an icon—either one brought from home, or an icon provided by the church. *Youth are to gather in the vestibule following Communion on Sunday, March 17th to be arranged for the procession.*

¶ **“Willow Watch” has begun!** Please keep an eye out for pussy willows, especially with this warmer weather. Please cut them as soon as they are ready and bring them to the church. We do have ONE request: do *not* put them in plastic

bags. Please use paper bags.

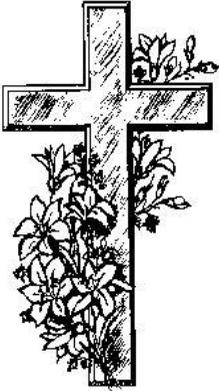
¶ **Diocesan ACRY Retreat Central Region** will be on Saturday, April 6, 2019 at St. Nicholas Church, Homestead, PA from 9:00 am - 5:00 pm. The Adult Retreat Master, Metropolitan Gregory, will speak on the topic “Focusing on the Ladder of Divine Ascent and Our Spiritual Journey One Step at a Time” and Fr. David Urban, the youth presenter, will lead an interactive discussion on the topic “Windows to Heaven – Icon of Divine Ascent & The Feasts Of The Church.” Registration is required and must be made by March 31, 2019.

¶ **Reminder About the Eucharistic Fast:** Those receiving Communion at an evening Liturgy are to fast for a minimum of 3 hours prior to the service. (*Ideally, we should not eat after lunch.*) Fasting from midnight is still observed before receiving Communion at any morning Liturgy. (*Also, remember that only services called “Liturgy” have the distribution of Holy Communion. Other services – Canon, Moleben, Parastas, Paraklis – do not have Communion.*)

¶ **“Soul Saturday” Services for the Departed:** Do not forget about the Lenten Soul Saturdays! At these services, we pray for the repose of ALL those who have fallen asleep, and read the lists of names (“*hramoty*”) which have been submitted. Even if you are not able to come to all of them, please consider attending at least one during Lent as we remember our dear departed.

¶ We are accepting donations of candy for the **Easter Egg Hunt** on Easter Sunday, April 28th. They must be *individually wrapped* and *small* enough to fit inside the plastic eggs. Donations may be brought to the church hall.





*Our deepest condolences are expressed to parents Ed and Katie Chuba and to all family and friends who are mourning the passing of Heather Chuba on February 24th. May the Lord grant her blessed repose. Eternal memory!*

## Stewardship

*By Dan Hromyak*

*"A good tree does not bear rotten fruit, nor does a rotten tree bear good fruit." - Luke 6:43*

Are you using your God-given gifts in the way God intended? Do you compare yourself to others and complain about what you don't have instead of being thankful for what you do have? God gives each of us unique gifts and a unique plan. Listen to how God is calling you to use your gifts, to bear good fruit, for the glory of His name.

*"I have now brought you the first fruits of the products of the soil which you, O Lord, have given to me." - Deuteronomy 26:10*

This line from the Old Testament offers two challenges. First, do you give to God from your "first fruits", the best that you have to offer, or do you give from what is leftover? Second, do you recognize that everything you have has been given to you by God? Ask God for a grateful and generous heart, every day, in all circumstances.



## **March 10th: Feasting Before Fasting!**

Throughout the Christian world, it is traditional to have one last “hurrah” before Lent begins. Please join us for **BREAKFAST** following Divine Liturgy on Sunday, March 10th. *All are welcome!*

This breakfast is being sponsored in loving memory of **Marlene Roach** by her family and friends.

## **“Mission Sunday” Presentation**

As March 10th is designated as “**Mission Sunday**” for *all* Orthodox churches in the USA, we will take a moment during breakfast in the fellowship hall to have a brief 10-minute presentation by Dr. Henry Van Zanten about the November 2018 Medical Mission Team Trip to Guatemala.

## **Lenten Prayer of Saint Ephrem the Syrian**

*(Said Monday-Friday during Great Lent)*

O Lord and Master of my life! Take from me  
the spirit of laziness, despair, lust for power and idle talk.

But give to me, your servant,  
the spirit of purity, humility, patience and love.

Yes, Lord and King, grant me to see my own sins and not to judge my brother,  
for blessed are You forever. Amen.

# Lent Begins on March 11th – “What about fasting?”

Fasting is **essential** to Lent. In the Orthodox Church, we call this time of year the “Great Fast” (*in Slavonic, “Velikij Post”*), as it has historically been the most rigorous fast every year. Fasting is a great spiritual tool for us to learn to say “no”: by saying “no” to one appetite, we learn to say “no” to our sins and passions.

The full, traditional fast according to the ancient discipline of the Orthodox Church includes abstaining from meat and dairy every day of Lent and Holy Week, ending after the Pascha Divine Liturgy. Over the years, our Diocese has also pastorally offered a reduced fasting regimen, to allow everyone to participate in the Lenten efforts. For example...

*“Clean Monday, the first day of Lent, is a day of strict abstinence; likewise, Great and Holy Friday, and Great and Holy Saturday. On these days, no meat or dairy products may be eaten. All Wednesdays and Fridays during this entire Season are days of abstinence from meat. Meat and meat products may not be eaten during all of Great and Holy Week. For the evening Pre-sanctified Liturgy and the Vespertal Liturgy on Holy Thursday, a minimum three-hour fast from all food and drink must be observed before the reception of Holy Communion. Normal fasting from midnight is still practiced before the Liturgies of St. John Chrysostom and St. Basil the Great.”* (Extracted from Metropolitan Nicholas’ 2006 Lenten Archpastoral Letter.)

**All** of us are called to share in the Lenten season. On one hand, we are mercifully permitted to lessen the intensity of the Lenten fast. At the same time, we are also heartily encouraged to do more, as we are able. **Prayerfully consider your personal or family observance of Lent this year.**

If you have only ever done a fast on Wednesdays and Fridays, consider some possibilities to increase your fasting this year:

- *Can I abstain from meat every Monday, Wednesday and Friday?*
- *Can I abstain from meat on all weekdays of Lent?*
- *Can I abstain from meat for the entire season, and strict fast on additional days (like Holy Week)?*

Remember: Whatever you do, do it for the glory of God, and without judgment. ***Accept the challenge! Don’t ask “What is the least I have to do?” but “What is the most I can do for Christ?”***



Our congratulations and best wishes to **Mary Barbara Hardy** who turns 90 on March 15th! May God grant her many, blessed, healthy, and happy years! *Mnohaja lita!*

## Great Lent: Going Deeper

*Fr. Lawrence Barriger*  
([acrod.org](http://acrod.org))

The season of Lent is upon us! Have we noticed it yet? Lent is something that seems completely out of place in the world today, a holdover from some earlier time. We have seen our Roman neighbors virtually drop the season of Lent from the calendar. It has sadly been reduced to abstinence from meat on Friday (if you under 65 years of age). Gone also are the Lenten devotions of the past in many parishes.

Why does the Orthodox Church continue to make such a fuss about Lent, and what about all of those pesky Lenten regulations such as fasting and weekday services? Is this necessary in the modern world?

There is a story about an Orthodox monk walking down the street in the middle of Atlanta, Georgia, dressed in his rasson, wearing his hair and beard in the monastic fashion and carrying his "chotki" or prayer rope. An onlooker, of "evangelical" bent, stopped him and inquired as to why he burdened himself with these "external things - these rocks that are only empty works. Doesn't the Bible teach that salvation is through faith and not works?" The monk answered:

*"A man carrying a bag of rocks will soon complain of their burden. But a man carrying the same weight in diamonds will hardly notice the load, contemplating the wealth of the diamonds. I do not consider these observances to be meaningless rocks, but diamonds cut by faith. So I hardly*

*notice the load!"*

If we perceive the burden of Lent to consist of "rocks," then it will be a burden, indeed, and we will excuse ourselves from all or part of it. If, on the other hand, we perceive Lent to consist of diamonds, we will be eager to seek more of its burden.

St. John Chrysostom wrote:

*"The fathers did well when they came to our aid and established for us the practice of this Lenten Fast. As soon as the season of Lent draws near, even the laziest of men rouses himself, even though no one counsels or advises him. Why? He gets counsel from the season of Lent " (Against the Jews III:6).*

In reality, Lent presents to us the essence of the "Life in Christ," a life that must be centered on repentance and the acceptance of the Cross of Christ. Unfortunately, Lent has often been reduced to a change in diet twice a week and several minutes going over an examination of conscience in preparation for our annual brief confession. Since we do not feel that this minimal effort has had any value in moving us toward God, we fail to see any purpose for it. But the failure is not with Lent, but with us in that we have been willing to accept "minimums" as "maximums." In the 1930's, a prominent liturgical scholar observed "minimums become maximums." In short the least that people are asked to observe becomes the most they will observe. This is illustrated quite well with the reception of the Eucharist. The Church requires its members to receive the Sacraments a minimum of once a year. For many people, that is the maximum they will ever receive. His Eminence, Metropolitan Nicholas, and before him Bishops John and Metropolitan Orestes, carefully specified in their Lenten messages "minimum" rules for Lenten fasting. Yes, these are minimum rules which our hierarchs in their wisdom have established because they know that many people could not or would not observe the "sterner measures which the Church has handed down to us." However, it is these "sterner measures" that they recommend each year to those who are able (The Ascetic Fathers always recommended a light and steady rule to one which was stern and soon broken).

When the time for the annual confession comes along, we often may spend several minutes in contemplation of the previous year and prepare for confession as if we were preparing our tax form. In preparing our taxes we figure out what we owe the government and what is ours to keep. In preparing for confession we figure out what we "owe" God. Amazingly, it never seems to be very much more than minimal repentance for some bad language, the occasional Friday hamburger and several other minor offenses. This we dutifully render to God, and like the IRS, He will hopefully leave us

alone for another year. When the minimums of the spiritual life become the maximums, spirituality degenerates into a lukewarm formality. Fasting, confession, repentance, prayer, Eucharist, etc., all lose their essential meaning and become "burdensome obligations."

Tragically, there is no "minimum heaven." God does not deal in minimums but in maximums - just look at the Cross. We want the maximum from God. Isn't it time we started giving the maximum to God? This Lent, resolve to go beyond the minimums. Dare yourself to fast more often, not to provide reason to boast, but to show your love for God and the gift of His Son. When you prepare for Confession, don't read those legalistic "examination of consciences," but ask yourself one question: "What is there in my life that I would be ashamed for Christ to know about?" Ask for the courage and strength to confess it now, rather than to be accused before His Judgment Seat. Resolve to go to confession more often, remembering the words of St. John: "If we say we have not sinned then we make God out to be a liar" (1 John 1:10). Finally, let us resolve to prepare and receive the Eucharist - not the minimum, but the maximum. If we wish to spend eternity with Christ in heaven, we must realize that eternity is now. Let us prepare for it by giving God our maximum, not our minimum. Lent will then become for us, not a burden, but a time for gathering diamonds in sorrow for our sins. We will rejoice in the grace of repentance that God pours into our hearts.

## **Mark Your Calendar!**

### **Our Parish Lenten Mission**

Saturday, April 13th

Vespers at 4:00 PM

Lenten Fish Dinner to Follow

Special Presentation During Dinner by **Fr. John Chakos**

*"Losing Ourselves in Christ's Mission"*

*(Fr. John is one of the main Orthodox missionary priests serving in Guatemala)*

## 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.

**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. Consult the pastor. Two godparents (godfather and godmother) are required, at least one of whom must be a practicing Orthodox Christian in good standing, and the other 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); 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.

## April 2019 Pirohi Schedule

**Wednesday, April 3**  
1:00 PM  
Potato Prep

**Thursday, April 4**  
6:00 PM  
Filling Prep

**Friday, April 5**  
8:00 AM  
Pirohi Making and Sale

## April 2019 Pirohi Order Form

*Order Deadline: March 31, 2019*

*724-981-0571*

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Potato-Cheese Pirohi @ \$8.00/dozen

\_\_\_\_\_ Butter Only

\_\_\_\_\_ Butter and Onions

**Total Amount Due:**     \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Pick-Up on Friday, April 5, 2019  
12:00 Noon—2:00 PM  
(Doors Open at Noon)

## Happy Birthday

March 3<sup>rd</sup> Donna Swetlech  
March 6<sup>th</sup> Janice Bobanick  
March 6<sup>th</sup> Blaise Mastroberte  
March 7<sup>th</sup> Chester Everett  
March 7<sup>th</sup> Steven Joseph Lukac  
March 8<sup>th</sup> Mary Jane Repasky  
March 8<sup>th</sup> Joseph Tatusko  
March 9<sup>th</sup> Robert Kapusta  
March 12<sup>th</sup> Patti Chupak  
March 13<sup>th</sup> Kathleen Chuba  
March 15<sup>th</sup> Mary Barbara Hardy  
March 15<sup>th</sup> Michael Ristvey  
March 16<sup>th</sup> Joseph Jaeger

## MEN TO HOLD CANDLES

### Sunday, March 10<sup>th</sup>

Matt Ristvey  
Tom Ristvey  
Pete Roman  
Steve Saluga  
Milan Shumkaroff

### Sunday, March 17<sup>th</sup>

Ed Slovesko  
Gino Tofani  
Henry VanZanten  
Michael Waryanka  
Donald Yasnowsky

## **Candelabrum Sponsor**

Sunday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>

In loving memory of our  
Brother & Uncle

**Thomas Chuba**

Sponsored by: Joan & Stephen  
Chuba & Family



## **Eternal Lamp Sponsor**

Sunday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>

In loving memory of Mother  
**Catherine Pavlick**

In honor of her Birthday  
Sponsored by: Debbie & Greg  
Cross

Sunday, March 10<sup>th</sup>

In loving memory of  
**William Taczak Sr.**  
Sponsored by: Diane Kupensky