

MARCH 29, 2020 – 4TH SUNDAY OF LENT – ST. JOHN CLIMACUS

Holy Martyrs Mark, Bishop of Arethusa; Cyril the Deacon; Jonas, & Barachesios



WELCOME TO ST. NICHOLAS CATHEDRAL!

VISIT www.stnickspgh.org TODAY for news and updates about our parish!

CLERGY: Rev. Fr. Christopher Bender and Rev. Dn. Robert Lykos

Father's Cell & Email: 724-630-3483; frchbender@verizon.net.

PROTOPSALTIS: Dr. Nick Giannoukakis

CHANTERS: Steve Andrews, & Michael Rodites

CHOIR DIRECTOR: Steve Andrews

ORGANIST: Haley Cobb

ALTAR BOY CAPTAINS: Dimitri Gary, Christos Mavrogeorgis,
Steven Kefalos & Chris Kefalos

Questions about our Parish? Email church@stnickspgh.org

CHURCH SERVICE SCHEDULE: Sept 15 - June, Orthros 8:30 a.m. & Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

TO OUR VISITORS & GUESTS: We welcome you to worship today. Whether you are an Orthodox Christian or this is your first visit to an Orthodox Church, we are happy to see you! Although Holy Communion and other Sacraments are offered only to baptized and chrismated (confirmed) Orthodox Christians in good standing with the church, all are invited to receive the Antidoron (blessed bread) from the priest at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy. After services, please join us in the Church hall for fellowship and refreshments. Please sign our visitor's book at the back of the church before you leave today, and leave an email address if you want to receive news & announcements from St. Nicholas.

Watch Sunday services streaming live from St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral at <https://vimeo.com/event/27846>

THIS WEEK AT ST. NICHOLAS:

- **Friday, April 3:** Akathist Hymn 6:00 pm
- From the organizing committee of parents: **We must postpone the April 5th Camp Fundraiser** (spaghetti luncheon). When we do figure out a date that is safe and convenient, we hope that everyone will support us. This Fundraiser benefits our children here at St. Nicholas, so that more of them can attend the Metropolis Summer Camp.

IMPORTANT NEWS:

The **ST. PHOTIOS BANQUET** has been **CANCELLED FOR 2020**, because of the continuing pandemic. Those who have been nominated by the parishes will be honored at next year's banquet, instead. **CONGRATULATIONS** to our honorees for 2020/2021: **BECKY BERTOS** and **LINDA HAGES**. Even if the Metropolis event has been cancelled, we can still acknowledge and thank them in a special way here at St. Nicholas, once it is safe to gather once again. Stay tuned for further information about this later in the year.

ALSO: Fr. Bender will offer a new program online and over the phone, using the **ZOOM** platform, beginning this **TUESDAY, MARCH 31 at 7:30 P.M.**, with a **BIBLE STUDY** that will focus on a variety of texts from the Old and New Testament that are appropriate to this Lenten season, as well as to our current situation. You do not have to be an existing member of our "Living Orthodoxy" program in order to join in. Nor do you need to follow the program every week – just when you are able to. Zoom can be accessed online, and the app can be downloaded to your computer or smartphone, or you can participate by calling in a specified number. More detailed information about what to do to will be made available from the Church Office as soon as it becomes available. You may watch for news about this in an upcoming email online, or call the Church Office at any time from on March 31 on to get instructions about how join by computer or telephone.

SPECIAL HYMNS OF THE DAY:

The first hymn chanted at the Small Entrance is the Resurrection Apolytikion in this week's tone (Tone 8, p. 172). After the procession with the Gospel the usual Eisodikon (Entrance Hymn) is chanted:

"Come let us worship and fall down before Christ. Save us O Son of God, who arose from the dead. We sing to you, Alleluia."

After the Entrance Hymn the Priest reenters the Sanctuary, and the Resurrection hymn is repeated. This is followed by the hymn for the saint of the Day (John Climacus):

Ταῖς τῶν δακρύων σου ροαῖς, τῆς ἐρήμου τό ἀγονον ἐγεώργησας, καί τοῖς ἐκ βάθους στεναγμοῖς, εἰς ἑκατόν τοὺς πόνοὺς ἐκαρποφόρησας, καὶ γέγονας φωστήρ, τῇ οἰκουμένῃ λάμπων τοῖς θαύμασι, Ἰωάννη Πατὴρ ἡμῶν, Ὅσιε, Πρέσβευε Χριστῷ τῷ Θεῷ, σωθῆναι τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν.

With the rivers of your tears, you have made the barren desert fertile. Through sighs of sorrow from deep within you, your labors have borne fruit a hundred-fold. By your miracles you have become a light, shining upon the world. O John, our Holy Father, pray to Christ our God, to save our souls.

Following this, we chant the Hymn for our Church's Patron Saint, St. Nicholas (Tone 4):

Κανόνα πίστεως καὶ εἰκόνα πραότητος, ἐγκρατείας Διδάσκαλον, ἀνέδειξέ σε τῇ ποιμένι σου, ἡ τῶν πραγμάτων ἀλήθεια· διὰ τοῦτο ἐκτίσω τῇ ταπεινώσει τὰ ὑψηλά, τῇ πτωχείᾳ τὰ πλούσια, Πάτερ Ἱεράρχα Νικόλαε· πρέσβευε Χριστῷ τῷ Θεῷ, σωθῆναι τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν. The truth of things have revealed you to your flock as a rule of faith, an icon of meekness, and a teacher of temperance; for this cause you have achieved the heights by humility, riches by poverty. O Father and Hierarch Nicholas, intercede with Christ God that our souls be saved.

Then, the Seasonal Kontakion in the Eighth Tone is heard:

Τῇ ὑπερμάχῳ στρατηγῷ τὰ νικητήρια, ὡς λυτρωθεῖσα τῶν δεινῶν εὐχαριστήρια, ἀναγράφω σοὶ ἡ Πόλις σου Θεοτόκε, Ἀλλ' ὡς ἔχουσα τὸ κράτος ἀπροσμάχητον, ἐκ παντοίων μὲ κινδύνων ἐλευθέρωσον, ἵνα κράζω σοί, Χαῖρε νύμφη ἀνύμφευτε. O Champion General, we your faithful inscribe to you the prize of victory as gratitude for being rescued from calamity, O Theotokos. But since you have invincible power, free us from all kinds of perils so that we may cry out to you: Rejoice, O Bride unwedded.

Epistle Reading: Hebrews 6: 13-20. BRETHREN, when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore to himself, saying, "Surely I will bless you and multiply you." And thus Abraham, having patiently endured, obtained the promise. Men indeed swear by a greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he interposed with an oath, so that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible that God should prove false, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to seize the hope set before us. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

Gospel: Mark 9: 17-31. At that time, a man came to Jesus kneeling and saying: "Teacher, I brought my son to you, for he has a dumb spirit; and wherever it seizes him it dashes him down; and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid; and I asked your disciples to cast it out, and they were not able." And he answered them, "O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him to me." And they brought the boy to him; and when the spirit saw him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth. And Jesus asked his father, "How long has he had this?" And he said, "From childhood. And it has often cast him into the fire and into the water, to destroy him; but if you can do anything, have pity on us and help us." And Jesus said to him, "If you can! All things are possible to him who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, "I believe; help my unbelief!" And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You dumb and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again." And after crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse; so that most of them said, "He is dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. And when he had entered the house, his disciples asked him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" And he said to them, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer and fasting." They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And he would not have any one know it; for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of man will be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him; and when he is killed, after three days he will rise."

2020 Stewardship Pledge Cards are in the Narthex
(Just ask a member of Parish Council)



If you have already submitted your 2020 Stewardship Commitment, THANK YOU! If not, please take the time to make your financial Stewardship Commitment today and complete the talent portion of the card to enable OUR Community to grow and carry on the mission of our faith.

HELP US REACH/ EXCEED OUR GOAL!!

***"A Time for Every
Purpose Under Heaven"***

The Stewardship of Time
Ecclesiastes 3

<u>2020</u>	<u>STEWARDSHIP</u>
Total Stewards	220 (GOAL 300)
Total Pledged	\$120,212.00 (GOAL \$185,000.00)
Avg. Pledge	\$546.42

PHILOPTOCHOS UPDATES

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Philoptochos is **CANCELLING** the following events and fundraisers:

- ❖ **Easter Bread** – If you have already placed an order, we will contact you and return your check.
- ❖ **Palm Sunday Luncheon** scheduled for Sunday, April 12
- ❖ **Anastasi Meal** scheduled for Sunday, April 19

Food Bank – The Food Bank continues to need your support! You can donate by making a check payable to the "St. Nicholas Philoptochos Food Bank" or through United Way by designating the St. Nicholas Food Bank (#3288) through your employers United Way contribution. Questions: contact Elaine Andrianos (412-731-4334) or Denise Daugherty (412-508-1326).

Neighborhood Resilience Project Food Drive – At this time, we are unable to collect food drive donations for Neighborhood Resilience Project (formerly knowns as FOCUS Pittsburgh). There is a great need for support during this difficult time for many. We encourage parishioners to take non-perishable food donations directly to Neighborhood Resilience Project located at 2038 Bedford Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15219, or to mail them a generous donation (check). They appreciate and need your support!

Celebrating MOTHER'S DAY

St. Nicholas Philoptochos believes in honoring the women in our lives. Honor your wife, mother, grandmother, godmother, sister, aunt or special friend with a gift to Philoptochos. Your donation will enable us to continue our work of charitable giving to individuals and families in need, area food banks, shelters for the homeless, social service agencies and countless research efforts in the battle against cancer and other catastrophic diseases.

Join us this Mother's Day by honoring someone you love with a gift to Philoptochos.

Make checks payable and send to: St. Nicholas Philoptochos, 419 S. Dithridge St. Pittsburgh, PA 15213, Memo: Mother's Day

DEADLINE TO SUBMIT NAMES FOR INCLUSION IN BULLETIN – SUNDAY, MAY 3, 2020

Enclosed is my gift of \$ _____

(minimum gift of \$5.00 per name please — all donations are tax deductible)

Your Name: _____

Honorees will receive a special Mother's Day acknowledgement card.

The amount of your gift will not be disclosed.

☐ Please accept this gift in **honor** of:

Name: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Address: _____

☐ Please accept this gift in **memory** of:

1. _____

4. _____

2. _____

5. _____

3. _____

6. _____

*List any additional names and addresses on the back of this flyer and indicate whether donation is in Honor or in Memory.
Please print clearly.*

Celebrating FATHER'S DAY

St. Nicholas Philoptochos believes in honoring the men in our lives. Honor your husband, father, grandfather, godfather, brother, uncle or a special friend with a gift to Philoptochos. Your donation will enable us to continue our work of charitable giving to individuals and families in need, area food banks, shelters for the homeless, social service agencies and countless research efforts in the battle against cancer and other catastrophic diseases.

Join us this Father's Day by honoring someone you love with a gift to Philoptochos.

Make checks payable and send to: St. Nicholas Philoptochos, 419 S. Dithridge St. Pittsburgh, PA 15213, Memo: Father's Day

DEADLINE TO SUBMIT NAMES FOR INCLUSION IN BULLETIN – SUNDAY, JUNE 24, 2020

Enclosed is my gift of \$ _____

(minimum gift of \$5.00 per name please — all donations are tax deductible)

Your Name: _____

Honorees will receive a special Father's Day acknowledgement card.

The amount of your gift will not be disclosed.

☐ Please accept this gift in **honor** of:

Name: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Address: _____

☐ Please accept this gift in **memory** of:

1. _____

4. _____

2. _____

5. _____

3. _____

6. _____

List any additional names and addresses on the back of this flyer and indicate whether donation is in Honor or in Memory.

Please print clearly.

In ancient Israel, shepherds were generally considered "unclean" in the community of God's people because of the work they did. They were in daily contact with dirty, smelly sheep, their manure, their blood from cuts and scrapes, and the insects that buzzed around them. All of this meant that shepherds were almost never clean enough to worship with God's people in God's presence (in the Temple).

And yet, they were still admired, because of how tenderly they would care for their flocks. Jesus had no problem comparing Himself to a keeper of sheep; in fact, he referred to shepherds favorably in His parables, and He even called Himself the "good shepherd, who lays down his life for his sheep" (John 10:11).

In this difficult time, we may feel like "sheep without a shepherd" (Mark 6:34), who have been "scattered upon the mountains" (I Kings 21:72) like "sheep for slaughter" (Psalm 44:11). Our world has seemingly turned against us; even the doors we touch or the air we breathe make us deathly ill. This is exactly when we must remember that "God is with us," as we chant in the Great Compline during Lent, where we also find that beautiful hymn: *"Lord of the powers, be with us. For in times of distress, we have no other hope but you. Lord of the powers, have mercy on us."* God is our only hope and our refuge. His love is steadfast, and His mercy is endless – even in times of distress, such as these!

My favorite passage in the Bible has always been Psalm 23. I think that it was written for times such as this. Here it is. It would be good to recite it every day, to remind ourselves of the character of the God who made us, and redeemed us.

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want;
2 he makes me lie down in green pastures.
He leads me beside still waters;
3 he restores my soul.
He leads me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.
4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I fear no evil, for thou art with me;
thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.
5 Thou preparest a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
thou anointest my head with oil,
my cup overflows.
6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life;
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Be careful, and stay well. Think of the other, to keep them safe, as well. This, too, shall pass, and "goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our lives."

Father Christopher

APRIL 2020

PLEASE NOTE: CANCELLATIONS AND LIMITATIONS ON THE NUMBER OF WORSHIPERS AT SERVICES DUE TO THE CONTINUING HEALTH CRISIS ARE DEFINITELY POSSIBLE. We will make every effort to keep you informed. The church office will always have the most up-to-date information.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3 Akathist Hymn 7:00 pm	4
5 Sunday of Saint Mary of Egypt Orthros, 8:30 am Divine Liturgy, 10 am	6	7	8	9	10	11 Lazarus Saturday Orthros 9 am Divine Liturgy 10 am
12 Palm Sunday Orthros, 8:30 am Divine Liturgy, 10 am 1 st Bridegroom Service 7 pm	13 Holy Monday 2 nd Bridegroom Service 7:00 pm	14 Holy Tuesday 3 rd Bridegroom Service 7:00 pm	15 Holy Wednesday Holy Unction & Anointing 5:00 pm	16 Holy Thursday Vespers Divine Liturgy 9:30 am [Mystical (Last) Supper] 12 Gospels Service 6:30 pm	17 Great & Holy Friday Royal Hours 9 am Apokathelosis Vespers 1:30 pm Lamentations 7:00 pm	18 GREAT & HOLY SATURDAY Vespers Divine Liturgy 9:30 am Vigil Service 10:45 pm Resurrection Service & Paschal Liturgy 11:45 pm
19 GREAT & HOLY PASCHA Vespers of Agape, 1 pm	20 Parish Council Meeting 7 pm	21	22	23 St. George the Greatmartyr Orthros 9 am Divine Liturgy 10 am	24	25
26 Thomas Sunday Orthros, 8:30 am Divine Liturgy, 10 am	27	28	29	30		