



**It is the day of
Resurrection,
Let us be radiant
for the feast,
And let us embrace
one another.
Let us say, Brethren,
Even to them
that hate us,
Let us forgive
all things
On the Resurrection,
And thus
let us cry out:**

**Christ is risen
from the dead,
trampling down
death by death,
and upon those in
the tombs
bestowing life.
(Paschal Sticheri)**

The Light of Orthodoxy

**ARCHDIOCESE OF PITTSBURGH AND
WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA
SPRING 2021**



**May Christ our true God
Who rose from the dead,
Trampled down death by
death,
And upon those in the tombs,
Bestowed life,
Grant you a most
Blessed Pascha
And may He grant you
Many blessed years!!!**

**Christ is Risen!
Truly, He is Risen!**

**This Archdiocesan Newsletter is dedicated to the
ongoing life of the Church in a time of Pandemic, and
features several articles highlighting the ongoing
ministries of the Church through this difficult time.**



Interior of the new
St. Nicholas Orthodox Church



Working on the interior of
Holy Spirit Chapel

FROM THE DESK OF THE ARCHBISHOP

THE PRIEST'S PIG

One of the stories which have come down through my family from the old country, is the story of the priest's pig. It happened on a cold spring afternoon in the middle of Great Lent. My father was with his maternal grandfather in a horse drawn wagon returning from their fields where they had inspected the newly mown hay. Since, in that part of Byelo-Russia, the ground could be marshy during that season, it was necessary to tend to the hay to make sure that it didn't rot. My great grandfather Gregory Korobka, was known as a strict man, in as much as no good deed went unrewarded, and no failure went unpunished. My father, could be called upon to recite the Trisagion prayers at a moments notice, if he did it perfectly, he was rewarded, if he made a mistake, he was punished. It was, of course, all from memory because nobody there knew how to read or write. Anyway, as the two of them returned home that Lenten evening, they were going down the main street of the village and detected the odor of roast pig in the air as they passed through the village. Then, as they passed by the priest's home, they saw, through the window, Matushka taking the pig out of the oven. My great grandfather, being the strict sort of person he was, turned to my father and told him that if the priest didn't do what he told everybody else to do, then they weren't going to do it either. They would eat



what they had when they had it. That damned pig disrupted Church life in my family for three generations. When I was ordained to the priesthood 30+ years ago, the first thing my mother said to me afterwards, was to remind me of that pig, and then said, "Whatever you tell your people to do, you had better be doing yourself." I don't think a week goes by, but what that pig and its consequences don't come to mind.

PATRISTIC COMMENTARY ON FASTING

There is both a physical and a spiritual fast. In the physical fast the body abstains from food and drink. In the spiritual fast, the faster abstains from evil intentions, words and deeds. One who truly fasts abstains from anger, rage, malice, and vengeance. One who truly fasts abstains from idle and foul talk, empty rhetoric, slander, condemnation, flattery, lying and all manner of spiteful talk. In a word, a real faster is one who withdraws from all evil.

As much as you subtract from the body, so much will you add to the strength of the soul.

Holy Hierarch Basil the Great

Do you fast? Then feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, visit the sick, do not forget the imprisoned, have pity on the tortured, comfort those who grieve and who weep, be merciful, humble, kind, calm, patient, sympathetic, forgiving, reverent, truthful and pious, so that God might accept your fasting and might plentifully grant you the fruits of repentance.

Fasting of the body is food for the soul.

Holy Hierarch John Chrysostom

Whosoever rejects the fasts, deprives himself and others of weapons against his own much-suffering flesh and against the devil, who have power over us especially as the result of our intemperance.

Holy Righteous John of Kronstadt

**ARCHDIOCESE OF PITTSBURGH
AND WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA (OCA)
OFFICIAL CHANGES**

CADMAN, PROTODEACON ALEXANDER, is released from the altar of the Holy Trinity Church, State College, PA, and attached to the altar of the St. Nicholas Church, DuBois, PA, effective January 12, 2021.

EVANSKY, ARCHPRIEST WILLIAM, is appointed Acting Administrator of the St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, Allison Park, PA, effective August 1, 2020. All other duties as Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and Western PA, and Rector of the Holy Ghost Church, Ambridge, PA, remain unchanged.

HOROSKY, ARCHPRIEST JOHN, retired, reposed in the Lord November 18, 2020. **MEMORY ETERNAL!**

HUNTER, PRIEST IGNATIUS, is accepted into the Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and W PA January 31, 2020, after release by Archbishop MARK and the Diocese of E PA (OCA). He is appointed Acting Rector of the Holy Trinity Church, State College, PA, effective February 1, 2020.

KOTALIK, PRIEST JOHN, who had been Acting Rector of the St. John the Baptist Church, Canonsburg, PA, is appointed Rector of the parish effective September 22, 2020.

PARKER, PRIEST JOHN, who had been Acting Rector of the St. Nicholas Church, Donora, PA, is appointed Rector of the parish effective July 21, 2020.

SENYO, ARCHPRIEST MICHAEL, is released from his duties as Dean of the St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, Allison Park, PA effective July 31, 2020. Effective August 1, 2020, he is appointed Rector of the Saints Cyril and Methodius Church, Jeannette, PA.

SHUGA, ARCHPRIEST STEPHEN, retired, reposed in the Lord December 16, 2019. **MEMORY ETERNAL!**

SIMERICK, ARCHPRIEST MICHAEL, is released from his duties as Acting Rector of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist Church, Philipsburg, PA, effective June 30, 2020. Effective July 1, 2020, he is attached in retirement to the altar of the St. Nicholas Church, DuBois, PA.

PARISH CHANGES

Saints Peter and Paul Church, Boswell, PA, closed April 1, 2020.

St. Nicholas Church, DuBois, PA, new address: 301 S. State St., DuBois, PA 15801

Approved for distribution:
Archpriest William J. Evansky
Chancellor
Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania
Orthodox Church in America
(8 March 2021)

Focusing on Charitable Works During the Pandemic St. Alexander Nevsky Orthodox Cathedral, Allison Park, PA

By the grace of God, parishioners at St. Alexander Nevsky made the decision to try to continue their charitable works during the pandemic. For many years they have been a church partner of Women's



Choice Network (WCN), whose mission is to empower abortion-vulnerable women to choose life for their babies (they have saved 6, 687 babies!). Between May and December 2020, parishioners at the Cathedral completed all of their WCN fundraising projects that they typically tackle, including compiling gift bags for new moms and their babies, raising money for the baby bottle campaign, and donating gift cards to be given to children in need during the Nativity season. A group of parishioners even "attended" WCN's annual fall fundraiser virtually by participating in a watch party in the church social hall. Despite the pandemic, the parish donated close to \$3000 more for WCN than in the previous year. In addition to their work with Women's Choice Network, parishioners resumed their usual pierogi-making activity, although on a smaller scale and with fewer people to maintain social distancing. The purpose of this activity is for parishioners to give of their time and talent to support monasteries, seminaries, food banks, and other groups in need,

both locally and even abroad, who have come to rely on this support. A diverse group of parishioners, from youth to those who have retired, enjoy the fellowship involved in pierogi making (even while social distancing and wearing masks!), especially because the proceeds support so many good causes of people who are in need. This project also enables the parish to connect to members of the local community who find their way to the Cathedral's doors in search of the tasty pierogies; as a result, many visitors have asked for a tour of the church and some have even attended services. In sum, St. Alexander Nevsky parishioners united around these charitable works as they faced the challenges in their church life caused by the pandemic.



New Mom/New Baby bags delivered to staff at WCN.

For everyday news on the Archdiocese, we invite you to visit the Archdiocesan Website at
ocadwpa.org

Or on Facebook follow the youth at:
Archdiocese of Pittsburgh
Orthodox Youth

THE LIGHT OF ORTHODOXY

is the Quarterly Newsletter of the Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania, Orthodox Church in America. News, and submit photos by e-mail to hieromonkpatrick@msn.com or by mail to Igumen Patrick, 105 S. 19th St., Pittsburgh, PA 15203.

Chapel of the Holy Spirit Undergoes Major Renovations

The mission center of the Chapel of the Holy Spirit in Beavertown, Synder County, Pennsylvania has undergone major building renovations during the last year.



Original interior of Chapel



Ongoing work exterior and interior



Exterior work continues



Interior work



Interior work nears complete



Completed interior work.

UPDATE ON THE ONGOING WORK OF THE ST. CYRIL OF WHITE LAKE ORTHODOX FOOD PANTRY

By the grace of God and your generous support, weekly the poor of the Greater Pittsburgh area are ministers to by the St. Cyril of White Lake Orthodox Food Pantry. Biweekly on the even Thursday afternoons from 40 to 100 families receive needed food, pet food and toiletry items all provided through the generosity of the faithful of the Orthodox Church. The Food Pantry enjoys the active support of local Orthodox churches of every jurisdiction, and tirelessly meets of the needs of all who draw near. Each person receives enough food for meals for three full days.

The Food Pantry enjoys not only the active support of you —the faithful, but also other local Churches and businesses. With Kobblestone bakery providing bread weekly, Giant Eagle providing meat, at reduced cost and various other businesses donating food and other essentials

The volunteers of the Food Pantry come from several local Orthodox churches, and from within the community.

It takes about \$650 every two weeks to supply the needed food stocks of the St. Cyril of White Lake Food Pantry. And by God's grace and your kindness the food pantry has never ran out of supplies.

How can you help?

1) Volunteer—give of your self to help your neighbor.

2) Donate, every dollar you give is used to purchase supplies to help those in need.

3) Pray daily that the Master of the Storehouse continue to bless the resources provided to meet the needs of all who draw near.

Donations can be sent to:

St. Cyril of White Lake Orthodox Food Pantry
105 S. 19th St.
Pittsburgh, PA 15203



IN BLESSED MEMORY

Metropolitan Theodosius (Lazor)
October 19, 2020

Archpriest Stephen Shuga
December 16, 2019

Archpriest John Horosky
November 18, 2020

Archpriest Rodion Pfeiffer
January 3, 2021

Mat. Eloise Lesko
November 22, 2020

**May God number them with
the saints and make their
Memory to be Eternal!!!**

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, DuBois, Finds New Home

by Archpriest Mark Meholick, Rector

IN December of 2019, after a funeral at St. Nicholas Orthodox Church on N. Third Street in DuBois, parishioners and I were again reminded of the need for accessibility in and out of the church as well as our basement hall for the elderly, for those with limited mobility, for wheel chairs, and for bringing in and taking out of coffins for funerals. The steep sand stone steps of the former Lutheran church built in 1899 were repaired shortly after 1980 when St. Nicholas Orthodox Mission purchased the building and its rectory. In 2010, the parish hired a professional architect to draw up a plan and give us an estimate to make the church building accessible to all and to expand and pave the parking lot to provide handicap spaces. The estimate was around \$330,000. Before such a sum could

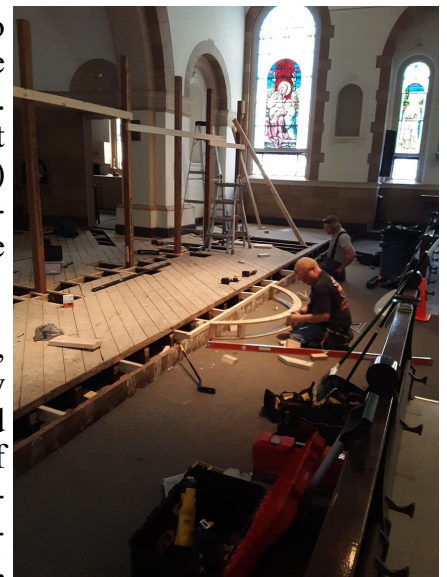
even be considered, the church needed a new roof, which was finally finished about two years ago.



After the funeral and burial on that icy December day in 2019, the Funeral Director mentioned that St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church was officially closed and might be up for sale soon and that the entryway of the church was level with the sidewalk. The same held for the basement parish hall. I was familiar with the property having had gym class in the huge hall which doubled as a gymnasium for the Catholic School system which I attended in Middle School in DuBois. I had been to

weddings, funerals, and other functions there as well. How could our little parish afford such a property? – After Christmas and into January of 2020, former St. Joseph parishioners as well as some of my own approached me to look into the property. I contacted Msgr. Richard Siefer, pastor of St. Catherine of Siena and St. Michael parishes, and former pastor of St. Joseph's. After confirming that the property was indeed for sale, we found out from the realtor that there were several interested parties (all secular) who were ready to bid on it. We also found out that a church congregation wanting to buy the property from the Catholic Diocese of Erie would take precedence over secular bids.

Once the price of \$120,000 for the property was settled on, Archbishop Melchisedek gave his blessing to bid on the property pending the approval of our Archdiocesan Council. Once utilities and building inspections were completed as well as the establishment of an emergency fund by the parish and other criteria were met, an interest free loan to purchase the property was approved by the Archdiocesan Council. After some delays due to the COVID – 19 shut downs, ownership of the property was finally transferred from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Erie to the Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania, Orthodox Church in America on April 30, 2020.



St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, DuBois, Finds New Home (continued from page 7)

Almost immediately, St. Nicholas parishioners began renovations of our new church. Most of the attention went to the altar area floor where a large Latin altar was removed by the former owners. It sat on a three tiered platform, which also had to be removed. In the next few months, we were contacted by several people who wanted to rent the parish hall for things like funeral re-



pasts, exercise groups, music lessons and flea markets. This was primarily due to the large size of the hall to allow for social distancing during the pandemic. We expect the hall to be used for even more activities when the pandemic subsides.



Once a stable sub-floor was built, we were able to move some liturgical furnishings from the old church and begin having the Divine Services at the new church in July of 2020. Because of its prominent location in the City of DuBois, we have many more visitors than at our old location. Former parishioners of St. Joseph's often stop by to pray and light candles, or just to see the progress being made. Many of these people have expressed their thankfulness that the church building they grew up attending still remains a church. We are also very thankful to God for guiding us to this new phase in the 40 year life of St. Nicholas Orthodox in DuBois.

What about our old temple that served us so well since 1980? First of all, the rectory of the former St. Joseph's Catholic Church was sold in 2007. St. Nicholas rectory and the old church sits on one city lot, which cannot be divided. The rectory remains the residence of the priest and his family and the old church houses an iconography studio and carpentry shop as well as the original sanctuary. Since the church was consecrated by His Eminence, Archbishop Kyrill (of blessed memory) in 1999, the building remains a holy place in God's service.

There is still much to be done on the new property. The iconostasis needs to be completed; the bell towers need to be rid of the pigeons and bats, cleaned and sanitized before the bells are brought over from the old church and installed, among other things.



PROCESSION OF HOLY ICONS SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY SOUTHSIDE PITTSBURGH

On Sunday, March 21 2021, St. Mary Orthodox Church and St. Vladimir Ukrainian Orthodox Church joined together to welcome Icons across America to Pittsburgh. The churches hosted 9 Icons from the Prosopon School of Iconography, and utilized the Icons in a public Icon Procession.



LIFE IN THE FACE OF PANDEMIC HOLY GHOST ORTHODOX CHURCH, AMBRIDGE PA

Despite the ongoing threat from COVID-19, the Holy Ghost Church in Ambridge has worked to continue the parish's spiritual life and parish activities - while taking prudent precautions to protect the health and well-being of the parish's members. Included in this effort has been the parish's outreach programs locally, on the diocesan level, and nationally. The parish's faithful continue to provide hot meals several times a year at the Center for Hope, a non-denominational Christian organization that provides programs, a food pantry, and meals to families and residents living within the Borough of Ambridge and the surrounding towns and townships that comprise the large Ambridge Area School District. The most recent effort took place in March, when the parish volunteers prepared 200 hot meals at the parish's Youth Center facility, boxed them in take-out containers, and distributed those meals in the parking lot of the Center for Hope located at a former Ambridge school building. The parish also provided funds last fall for the families of the neighborhood near the church on Maplewood Avenue to purchase home schooling materials for the children since the schools were meeting "virtually" only. Likewise, the parish distributed gift cards to the families of the neighborhood prior to Christmas so the parents could purchase additional gifts for their children at Christmas. The Holy Ghost Ladies Altar Society also continues to financially support the St. Cyril of White Lake Orthodox Food Pantry at our diocesan parish on Southside, Pittsburgh. The parish generously supported the St. Nicholas Project of the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America (FOCA) in December, a project that provides funding for the married seminarians of our Orthodox Church in America's seminaries to provide extra Christmas gifts for their wives and children. Finally, the parish established a special fund to anonymously support the families of the parish suffering financial hardships due to the loss of jobs related to the pandemic and maintains its own food pantry in the church hall to provide emergency food items to our membership.

LIFE IN THE FACE OF PANDEMIC GET STUFFED WITH LOVE CONTINUES

St. Mary Orthodox Church, Southside Pittsburgh hosted the 'Get Stuffed With Love' Thanksgiving Dinner project for the Pittsburgh Police. They were joined in this effort by the Pittsburgh area Rotary Clubs and Holy Virgin Orthodox Church. This year 4500+ meals were made and distributed by the Pittsburgh Police to those in need on Thanksgiving Day.



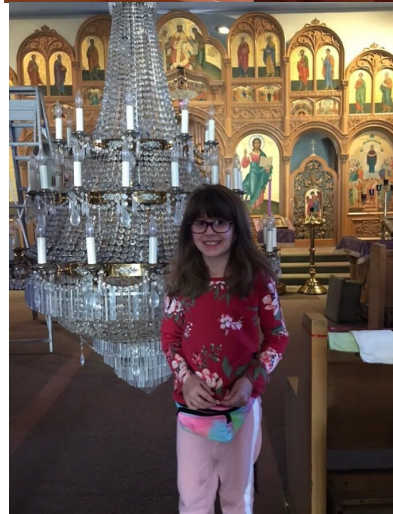
LIFE IN THE FACE OF PANDEMIC INTERCESSION OF THE VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH CARNGIE PA



The Saint Vladimir Men's Club at Holy Virgin Orthodox Church in Carnegie Pa is selling its famous homemade Kolbassa for Pascha.



Sub-deacon Nicholas York teaches a Convert Class of 7 students at the Holy Virgin Orthodox Church in Carnegie. The current topic are the Liturgies of St. Basil and John Chrysostom. All students learned about what's happening at the Carnegie church either thru their interactive website, Facebook page or from advertisements for food festivals



Arianna Smith helps clean the chandelier at Holy Virgin in Carnegie

St. Nicholas visits the children during the Covid pandemic.



LIFE IN THE FACE OF PANDEMIC

ST. JOHN ORTHODOX CHURCH, CANONSBURG PA



Church bells are sometimes referred to as "singing icons" because as the voice of the church they establish the acoustic space of Orthodox temples around the world. They summon the faithful, announce important moments during services, proclaim significant events, and express both joy and sadness.

We purchased our original bells for the newly built St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church in Canonsburg, PA in 1963 from the Royal Bellfounders Petit & Fritsen, originally located in Aarle-Rixtel, the Netherlands. They cast our bells from tintinnabulous bell metal with current ringing technology including mechanical and mercury switches. They were installed by the world-renowned Verdin Company, from Cincinnati, Ohio and were blessed by Father Dimitri Ermakov as pictured here on February 17, 1964.

However, after 56 years of dedicated use, our magnificent bells began to exhibit wear and tear and were no longer ringing properly. Parish trustee, Richard Blaha, was often called upon to haul a ladder up from the side altar to execute bell repairs on his back by removing the clapper and adjusting the twenty-six pound solenoid to clean and adjust where needed. The original finish of anodized aluminum was also wearing off and the roof was leaking around the frame of the tower. The framework was badly rusted and completely worn away in some places. We knew that professionals would need to assess our current situation as soon as possible to protect the integrity of these valued heirlooms. We contacted Verdin, our original installers, but due to obsolete parts they were unable to repair our specific bell system. Very few U.S. companies perform bell work on-site or prefer to only do a portion of the job and limit themselves to fabrication, bell repairs, or electrical work. With modern technology many companies are also now bypassing the use of real cast bells and installing digital recording technology instead. We faced many other obstacles in securing a company to address our specific issues. Several companies did not want to work in an attic – cutting and welding was a potential fire risk and the very high access also made for a difficult challenge. A crane and crane operator would also be needed to raise and lower the bells **for renovations.**



Despite these deterrents, Richard Blaha, our project manager persevered and along with research gathered from his assistant, Chris Weber, they found that Smith's Bell and Clock Service from Camby, Indiana would agree to take on this complex task. But first, they would need to remove the "honeycomb" decorative structure surrounding the bells that had been in place since 1964. Richard and Chris took on this tedious task of unscrewing the many tight-fitting bolts that held it in place. The structure was then lowered from the church on July 9, 2020 by Scott and Steve from McAdoo's Towing & Crane Service and the three

bells named individually after each of the Three Hierarchs were loaded onto a trailer for the 353 mile drive west via I-70 for refurbishment at Smith's Bell and Clock Service in Indiana



LIFE IN THE FACE OF PANDEMIC

ST. JOHN ORTHODOX CHURCH, CANONSBURG PA

(Continued from pg. 12)

The original cross, cupola and surrounding decorative honeycomb structure were made of aluminium with an anodized finish. Their sheer size made reanodizing a nearly impossible task so painting was the only option. Local and company representatives from Sherwin-Williams selected an appropriate primer and paint combination. The large cross, cupola and honeycomb were prepared and painted offsite.

When asked about the challenges of this endeavor, Richard commented, “Everything was a challenge from the weather, wind, the uniqueness of the project and of course we had Covid 19 to add to the mix. We also didn’t know the exact height and weight of the bell tower nor the dimensions of the bells which was important information needed to select the proper crane.”

At Smith’s Bell and Clock Service, our bells were cleaned, polished, and new ringing mechanisms were installed. All of the old hardware was also replaced. It was interesting to learn that according to JJ Smith, our largest bell (St. Basil the Great, Pillar of Orthodoxy) weighs 1000 pounds and rings an A3, the medium-sized bell (St. John Chrysostom, The Golden Mouthed) weighs 420 pounds and rings a D4, and our smallest bell (St. Gregory the Theologian, Divine Word of God) weighs 220 pounds and rings an F#4.

We definitely missed the sounds of our beautiful church bells this year but were blessed to still have the use of one steel church bell in our front churchyard that had been relocated from our original church built on Vine Street in 1918. Ironically, it was from the same church Metropolitan Theodosius attended as a child and was fitting to have some of our youngest parishioners, the Cario boys, to ring it solemnly by hand during our evening parastas for the ever-memorable Metropolitan Theodosius in October 2020.



The bell fabrication was completed in eight months and it was then time to coordinate the reinstalment. The bells were driven back from Indiana to Canonsburg and installed on March 2, 2021. White’s Clock and Carillon Northeast Inc. came to assist along with Smith’s Bell and Clock Service. They were able to re-install the bells into the bell structure prior to placement back onto the roof. We needed a 55 ton crane from McAdoos to raise and lower materials, a welder to secure and reattach the bell structure, cupola and the honeycombed fencing.

We are especially grateful to Richard Blaha who was available on the premises and on the phone for many hours to consult and coordinate with our various contractors. He made sure that jobs were done correctly including fabrication inspection and proper fire prevention. JJ Smith, the owner of Smith’s Clock and Bell, will finish the wiring and install the electronic controls and hand remote control the week of March 15th. Glory to God for all things! Praise Him with sounding cymbals; praise Him with loud clashing cymbals and bells!



Parish Membership – A Citizenship Model

Joseph Kormos, Parish Development Ministry, Archdiocese of Western Pennsylvania

“How many members does our parish have?” “Are you a member?”

These are common questions for parish leaders. In many ways determining parish “membership” seems simple. Most parish by-laws define a set of minimal standards for a ‘member in good standing’. Often the requirements are that one receive communion annually and offer minimal financial support. (Dues; pledge; minimum envelope donation etc.)

However, if parishes are to have a bright future it may be time for us to think of membership –as more like citizenship. Parish membership then is seen not in minimalist terms but a living, breathing relationship. Who we can count on not just who we can count.

A Continuity with the Early Church

The Biblical image of a Christian community is one where the sharing of the Gospel and the teaching of the Apostles takes place. For two thousand years, communities of believers have dedicated themselves to living in an awareness of fellowship and belonging -- strengthened by ‘remaining faithful to the teaching of the Apostles, to the community, to the breaking of bread and to prayer’ [Acts 2:24]. Our Christian identity is established by being intentionally affiliated with a community that worships together, celebrates the sacraments, actively brings others to Christ and remains faithful to this biblical image.

“One Christian is no Christian.”

Early church saying

“Salvation is achieved by being in communion with God through the community of humans in communion.

James KA Smith How NOT to be Secular

Simply put, then, “members” are those Orthodox Christians who understand what it means to build up the Body of Christ. They willingly accept, profess and practice the Orthodox Faith and make a consistent commitment to participate in the ministries of the Church, to grow spiritually, and to worship actively and regularly. If baptism is the door by which we enter the church, the parish is the place where, as members, we put our baptismal vows into practice.

Enhanced Criteria

So how should we define this citizen membership in the Body of Christ?

While somewhat obvious it may be useful to enumerate the expectations of parish membership.

- **Worship** – Members actively and regularly worship at their parish - including vespers and feast days.
- **Receive** - Members have been received into the Church via baptism and chrismation and regularly receive the sacraments of Confession and Communion at their parish.
- **Ministry** – True members make a personal contribution to the life of the community by active involvement in one or more parish ministries that fit their gifts and interests. The parish has real, important work to do in the world – to fulfill the Great Commission. What community could effectively undertake its work without clear commitment from its workers?
- **Communal Efforts** – Members’ calendars give priority to participation in communal parish programs, service projects and fellowship events.

Parish Membership – A Citizenship Model (Continued from pg. 14)

- **Study** – Members take seriously the need to actively grow in their understanding of the Orthodox faith by participating in study groups, workshops and retreats.
- **Share** – When the appropriate time arises, members share their faith with others.
- **Engage the Future** – Members work to understand and express a gospel-centric parish mission and goals. They contribute in parish meetings and in the decisions facing the parish and its future.
- **Financial Stability** - In addition to time and talent, members give back a consistent, meaningful financial contribution supporting the stability of their parish and the work of the Diocese and the Orthodox Church in America. They love their parish as they would love a spouse. They want to see it well cared for.

True members see the above elements of membership not as an obligation – or an option – but rather as a joyful opportunity to join in active, connected fellowship with other members. They realize their parish has been entrusted to them as members of the body —not to keep—but to care for, to minister from, to strengthen for future generations.

How many citizen members do you have in your parish? Are you a citizen? Can we count on you? Or just count you



His Beatitude Metropolitan Theodosius (Lazor) 1933-2020

On Monday morning, October 19, 2020, His Beatitude Metropolitan Theodosius (Lazor), former Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan of All-America and Canada, fell asleep in the Lord in Canonsburg, PA after an extended illness. He was the Primate of the Orthodox Church in America from 1977 until his retirement in 2002.

On October 27, 1933, Metropolitan Theodosius [Lazor] was born Frank Lazor to John and Mary Lazor, immigrants from Galicia (what is today the southeastern corner of Poland), in Canonsburg, PA. He was raised as a son of the Orthodox Church, a devout member of Saint John the Baptist Orthodox Church in Canonsburg, PA where he served as an altar server and then as a reader. He attended Canonsburg High School, where he was Student Council President, graduating in 1953.

He enrolled in undergraduate studies at Washington and Jefferson College in Washington, PA. During his time there, he served as the Recording Secretary of the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity, which focuses on Leadership Development. After his graduation in 1957 from Washington and Jefferson College, he enrolled in Saint Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, at that time in New York City. He was awarded a Master of Divinity degree in 1960. He spent the next year pursuing additional studies at the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, Switzerland, touring the Holy Land, and visiting Orthodox Christian centers throughout Europe and the Middle East.

His Beatitude Metropolitan Thodosius (Lazor) 1933-2020 (Continued from Pg. 15)



Father Thodosius with his parents,
Mary Kiri and John Lazor

Upon returning to the US in 1961, he took monastic vows and was tonsured as a monk on October 10 at Saint Sergius Chapel in Oyster Bay Cove, NY by Archbishop Ireney of Boston and New England and given the name Theodosius. His heavenly patron was Saint Theodosius of Chernigov. On October 14, 1961 he was ordained to the Holy Diaconate at Holy Virgin Protection Cathedral in New York City by Bishop Kiprian of Washington (DC). On October 22, 1961, the Hierodeacon Theodosius was ordained to the Holy Priesthood at Saint Gregory Orthodox Church in Homestead, PA by Archbishop Benjamin of Pittsburgh and West Virginia.

From 1961 through 1966, he served as rector of Nativity of the Virgin Mary Church in Madison, IL, and as an assistant military chaplain. While at Holy Virgin, he instituted a building program, purchasing property and building a new church next to their existing edifice. Their altar was consecrated in 1965 by Archbishop John (Garklavs) of Chicago, where Father Alexander Schmemmann was the guest speaker during the celebration. In 1966-67, he served as the personal secretary to Metropolitan Ireney.

At the Spring 1967 Session of the Great Council of Bishops, he was elected to the episcopacy to serve as Auxiliary to the Metropolitan and Bishop of Washington DC and as administrator of the Diocese of Alaska, effective June 1, 1967. He was consecrated a Bishop on May 6, 1967, Bright Saturday at Holy Virgin Protection Cathedral in NYC by Metropolitan Ireney, Archbishop of New York, Metropolitan of All America and Canada; Archbishop Nikon of Brooklyn; Archbishop Sylvester of Montreal and Canada; Bishop Kiprian of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania; Bishop Silas of Amphipolis (GOA); Bishop Mark (Lipa) of Levka, ruling bishop of the Albanian Orthodox Diocese of America under the Patriarchate of Constantinople. On November 17, 1967, the Great Council of Bishops elected him as the diocesan Bishop of Sitka and Alaska.



During his tenure in Alaska, he oversaw the rebuilding of historic Archangel Michael Cathedral in Sitka, AK, which had been destroyed by fire. He also initiated regional conferences throughout the diocese and encouraged the establishment of a variety of educational programs. He oversaw the renovation of the Bishop's House which had been originally built by Saint Innocent (Veniaminov). It is now listed as an official historic site. During his tenure as Bishop of Alaska, the Alaskan people adopted him into an indigineous clan, marking their admiration for his Christian humility and love for them.

In May 1970, as Bishop of Alaska, he headed the OCA's delegation which traveled to Moscow to receive the Tomos of Autocephaly, marking the beginning of the Orthodox Church in America. The Tomos was signed by Patriarch Aleksy I and the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church, and Bishop Theodosius received it from the hands of Metropolitan Pimen (Izvekov), the locum tenens of the Moscow Patriarchate. The Tomos guaranteed the right of self-governance for the Orthodox Church in America. Shortly thereafter, he hosted ceremonies in Alaska marking the glorification of one of the original Orthodox missionaries to Alaska, the Elder Herman. The event was significant in that it marked the first time a North American had been entered into the Orthodox calendar of saints. Bishop Theodosius initiated the effort to consider the Elder Herman for glorification.

His Beatitude Metropolitan Thodosius (Lazor)

1933-2020

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In 1972, he was reassigned by the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America to the Diocese of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania. During his five-year tenure in his home region, he instituted a highly successful program to train permanent deacons, which was eventually copied by other dioceses throughout the country; fostered educational programs for all ages; and worked diligently to strengthen the life of the diocese on all levels. One of his most significant accomplishments was to secure a new property for the archdiocesan headquarters in Cranberry Township, PA, which included a home with offices and a large wooded area.

On October 25, 1977, he was elected Archbishop of New York, Metropolitan of All America and Canada during the 5th All-American Council [AAC] in Montreal, Quebec. As Primate of the Orthodox Church in America, Metropolitan Theodosius assumed leadership of one of the world's 15 self-governing, or autocephalous, Orthodox churches. In addition, he often provided archpastoral care for dioceses temporarily without a bishop - for example as the locum tenens of Ottawa and Canada for nearly a decade.

During Metropolitan Theodosius' tenure, the OCA's ministry units were established and charged with making an impact on Church life at the grassroots level. These ministries inspired parishes to expand their outreach and impact for continued growth. The OCA also expanded their communication efforts onto the burgeoning internet. During the years of his leadership, many new parishes were established and the Church increasingly adopted the English language to become more mission-oriented, reaching out to the North American community. Among the reforms enacted by All-American Councils during his tenure was the possibility for women to be delegates at these Councils. This statute amendment was enacted by the 6th AAC in 1980.

He traveled tirelessly throughout the continent to preside at parish and diocesan celebrations. He was known for his kindness and love for the faithful. While he held the lofty title of Primate, he was widely admired for his ability to be down-to-earth and approachable. He genuinely enjoyed fellowship with clergy and laity alike, and greeted everyone with a warm smile. He would remember people personally by name, even if he had not seen them for years.

In 1981, the Holy Synod of Bishops established a new diocese of Washington, DC as the seat of the Primate of the Orthodox Church in America. As Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan Theodosius presided over this diocese, in addition to his duties as Primate.

Throughout his tenure, Metropolitan Theodosius met with numerous world religious leaders, including the primates of the various autocephalous churches. In 1990, he was the first Orthodox primate to be officially invited by the newly-enthroned Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow, and in 1992, he was also invited to participate in the 600th Anniversary of the repose of Saint Sergius of Radonezh. In 1991 and 1993, he hosted the North American visits of Patriarch Aleksy. He hosted the Primate of the Orthodox Church of Georgia, Patriarch-Catholicos Ilia in 1998 and His Beatitude, Sawa, Metropolitan of Warsaw and All Poland in 2000.



His Beatitude Metropolitan Thodosius (Lazor) 1933-2020

(Continued from Pg. 17)



As a guest of many national and foreign religious leaders, Metropolitan Theodosius traveled to Israel, Egypt, Turkey, Greece, Georgia, Ukraine, Russia, and elsewhere. He took part in official dialogues with His All-Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople, at the Patriarchal headquarters in Istanbul, Turkey.

Metropolitan Theodosius played an active role in inter-Orthodox gatherings, consultations, and bodies, including the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas [SCOBA], of which the OCA is a member. He continued to be a strong supporter of various inter-Orthodox ministries, including International Orthodox Christian Charities [IOCC] and the Orthodox Christian Missions Center [OCMC]. He was also a vocal advocate for Orthodox unity in North America. Together with the members of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America, he participated in the December 1994 SCOBA-sponsored gathering of North American hierarchs in Ligonier, PA.

Metropolitan Theodosius was a frequent guest at the White House in Washington, DC, having been called upon by Presidents Bush and Clinton for advice on religious and political affairs in various parts of the world, especially after the fall of communism in the late 1980s and early 1990s. During the crisis in Kosovo, he boldly defended the rights of all peoples in the region while calling upon President Clinton to end the NATO air campaign.

On September 28, 1994, Metropolitan Theodosius was the guest of Dr. James Billington at the Library of Congress for the opening of an historic display highlighting the contribution of the Orthodox Church and native Alaskan cultures to North America. During the ceremony, Metropolitan Theodosius was greeted by US President Clinton and Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

On May 1, 2001, Metropolitan Theodosius, requested that he be granted a four-month medical leave of absence from his archpastoral and primatial duties by the Holy Synod of Bishops, a request they granted. However, he continued to suffer the residual effects of strokes he had suffered in late 2000 and early 2001. Despite a four-month medical leave of absence from May 1 until September 1, 2001, which he took at the recommendation of his physicians, he found the ever-increasing burdens of his office too demanding. On April 2, 2002, Metropolitan Theodosius shared with members of the Holy Synod of Bishops his desire to retire from the office of Metropolitan of All America and Canada. The members of the Holy Synod of Bishops granted Metropolitan Theodosius' request effective July 22, 2002.

On July 22, 2002, His Beatitude Metropolitan Theodosius opened the 13th AAC and presented his report on the last triennium. At the conclusion, he retired as Metropolitan of All America and Canada.

During his retirement, Metropolitan Theodosius lived in Washington, PA. He actively attended the Divine Services at Saint John the Baptist Orthodox Church in Canonsburg, PA and became a beloved presence once again in his home community. As his health continued to fail, he was cared for by Protodeacon John and Matushka Myra Olyenik, along with parishioner Richard Blaha and other clergy and parishioners in the area. He entered an assisted living facility during the last years of his life and then a nursing facility as his health failed.



LIFE IN THE FACE OF PANDEMIC

ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH, McKEES ROCKS, PA

On December 6, 2020, His Eminence Archbishop Melchisedek made an official archpastoral visit to our St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, McKees Rocks, PA.. During this visit, he blessed the iconography in the narthex, blessed the new bells, tonsured Charles Wasilko to be a reader, ordained Jonathan Skowron to the Subdiaconate, and awarded Fr Thomas the Palitsa on behalf of the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church in America. His Eminence received a gift of a Paschal Engolpion on behalf of the parish and attended a festal meal after the Divine Liturgy. This Liturgy was held at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in December 2020 and most parishioners were not in attendance but participated at home via video.



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