



St. Michael's Orthodox Christian Church

1182 Ashland St., Greensburg, PA 15601
*Diocese of Charleston, Oakland and the Mid-Atlantic
Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
of North America.*

(See the back cover for detailed contact information.)

Sunday, December 17, 2017

*To all who are present with us this morning,
Welcome! Thank you for being here!*

*Please join us for "coffee and..."
in the Fellowship Hall following Divine Liturgy.*

You May Find the Text of the Divine Liturgy beginning on the bottom of page 91 of the Service Book (gold embossed cross on the reddish brown cover) or in the green-spiral-bound book; sheet music can be found in the 8.5" x 11" large, spiral-bound booklet.

At the Kiss of Peace our practice is for each of us to greet the person to our right and left with the bowing of our head, hands held in a prayerful clasp or crossed on the chest, while offering each other the seasonal Christian greeting, "Christ is in our midst!" and responding, "He is and shall be!"

Please remember that Holy Communion is reserved for those Chrismated Orthodox Christians who have appropriately prepared themselves through prayer, fasting and Confession to receive the Holy Mysteries of the Church. The bread (*anti'doron*, which means 'in place' of the gifts) which we share after Communion and at the end of the Liturgy is for all.

Being mindful we are in church, let us always remember to...

...be quiet and attentive. Let us sing, pray, stand, sit, kneel and respond where responses are indicated. Let us not talk, look around, text message, play games, etc.. Especially, let us work at this in the Communion line and when in line to venerate the Cross and depart. If we cannot hear the post-Communion prayers being chanted during our church departure, we are way too noisy.

...refrain from eating, drinking or chewing gum (most obviously and especially if you will be receiving Holy Communion).

...stay put. Except in rare cases, there are few of us who cannot stay in one location for two hours (actually less, for most of us).



Sunday of the
Forefathers

The Mission of Our Church

The mission of St Michael's Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church is to tend the flock of our Lord Jesus Christ and to spread the Good News of Christ to those outside the flock. This mission is to be accomplished by a) living a full liturgical and sacramental life, b) proclaiming the Orthodox Christian faith to all people, c) providing effective charitable and social programs, and d) establishing strong spiritual leadership and resources.

TONE 3

Arr: Basil Kazan.

Let the hea - vens re-joyce and the earth be glad;
For the Lord hath done a migh-ty act with His own arm;
He hath tram-pled down death by death, and be - came the first
born from the dead; He hath de - liv - ered us from the
depths of Ha - des, gran - ting the world the great mer - cy.

SYRIAN CHRISTIAN RELIEF

As the Syrian crisis continues, we continue to accept *donations* to do what we can to help ease the suffering there. Checks may be written to "St. Michael's" with the note "Syrian Relief." The following is a link to International Orthodox Christian Charities ((IOCC) "Response to the Crisis in Syria" page with more information on what you can do to help:

http://www.iocc.org/countries/countries_syria.aspx

Sunday, December 17, 2017

Greeting: Christ is in our midst! **Response:** He is and shall be!

Tone: 3 **Eothinon:** 6

Sunday of Forefathers (Ancestors) of Christ; Prophet Daniel and the Three Holy Youths — Ananias, Azarias and Mishael; Dionysios of Zakynthos, the wonderworker; New Martyrs Paisios the hieromonk and his disciple Habakkuk the deacon of Belgrade

THE EPISTLE READING

St. Paul to the Colossians (3:4-11)

BRETHREN, when Christ, Who is our life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. In these you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its Creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.

THE HOLY GOSPEL

According to St. Luke (14:16-24)

THE LORD SPOKE THIS PARABLE: “A man once gave a great banquet, and invited many; and at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, ‘Come; for all is now ready.’ But, one by one, they all began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it; I pray you, have me excused.’ And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them; I pray you, have me excused.’ And another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’ So the servant came and reported this to his master. Then the householder in anger said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame.’ And the servant said, ‘Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.’ And the master said to the servant, ‘Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.’ For many are called, but few are chosen.”

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NATIVITY OF CHRIST 2017

Thus all magic was dissolved and every bond of wickedness vanished; ignorance was abolished and the old kingdom was destroyed, since God was becoming manifest in human form for the newness of eternal life; what had been prepared by God had its beginning. Hence everything was shaken together, for the abolition of death was being planned. – St. Ignatius of Antioch, to the Ephesians, 19:3

At this great feast of the Nativity of Jesus Christ, these words from St. Ignatius the God-bearer of Antioch focus us powerfully on the purpose of the advent of the Savior Jesus. As we read in the Scripture, there was a proclamation to God's glory of "peace on earth, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14). But why? Why would the coming of Jesus mean peace and good will toward men? There does not seem to have been peace in the centuries that have passed since, and in our own time we certainly see no lack of ill will toward mankind from his fellow men.

Peace and good will were coming because of a war being declared at that time, with many battles fought since then. God was declaring a war on "magic" (man's desire to control others through power), on "every bond of wickedness," on "the old kingdom" of the devil that had been ruling for so long. With the coming of the Son of God "manifest in human form," God's great plan for the world was being inaugurated, to bring it to "the newness of eternal life." Even "the abolition of death" itself was being planned.

That is why there is peace now spreading on earth, not because sin is yet gone, but because death is being abolished and with it the old kingdom of our adversary the devil. The coming of God in the flesh is a sign for us and the beginning of the open war on death that our Savior will win. And so we join with Him in His conquest of death by participating in His coming and in His priesthood in this world, a priesthood of sacrifice and therefore transformation and sanctification of all things. And so we say: Christ is born! Glorify Him!

Yours in Christ,

Rt. Rev. Bishop THOMAS (Joseph) Auxiliary Bishop,
Diocese of Oakland, Charleston, and the Mid-Atlantic

"The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch" (Acts 11: 26)

Christ is in our Midst!

During this Advent period of our Orthodox Faith's calendar, we prepare ourselves in joyful anticipation for the Greatest Gift of all... our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. On behalf of the Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch Governing Council, we want to express our sincere gratitude to our membership for helping us make a difference in countless lives. We pray that during this Blessed Season and in the upcoming year, you will experience good health, prosperity and the love of your family and friends. May God bless you and keep you under His watchful care.

The members of the Order of St. Ignatius have recognized that what you have is from God and it is your responsibility to give from your abundance to those in need. In compassion, you not only give of what you have but you also strive to do it in a spirit of compassion and love. As members of the Order you give without expecting anything in return and without recognition from those who benefit. Your gift is an unconditional, personal sacrifice. It is an act of Faith that is infinite in its effect.

In Fiscal year 2017 the impact of your gift to the Order has been felt by many and in many different ways. The Order's Fiscal Year 2017 actual expenses included \$304,117 to support our retired clergy, active clergy and seminarians. You helped fund \$397,913 for the youth of the Antiochian Archdiocese (including camp scholarships). \$329,988 was provided to support programs and departments for the development and growth of the Antiochian Archdiocese. You've also helped give \$40,000 toward outreach organizations which include but are not limited to Syrian Relief, Project Mexico, FOCUS and Prison Ministries.

(Clergy - \$304,117 — Archdiocese Development & Growth - \$329,988 — Retired Clergy Housing Allowance - \$270,000 — Missions & Evangelism - \$129,996 — Married Seminarian Assistance - \$11,250 — Planning & Future Development \$75,000 — Clergy Symposium & Convention Assistance - \$22,867 — Parish Development / Mission Grants - \$24,996 — Archdiocese Youth - \$397,913 — Internet Ministry - \$99,996 — Summer Camp Scholarships - \$190,000 — Other Grants - \$40,000 — Youth Ministry - \$120,000 — Project Mexico - \$10,000 — SOYO Special Olympics - \$8,000 — Christ the Savior School - \$15,000 — SOYO Leadership & Youth Worker Training - \$25,392 — Treehouse, FOCUS, Prison Ministries - \$15,000 — Christian Ed - \$39,996 — College Conference - \$14,525.)

On behalf of the families whose children who were able to attend camp because of Order camping scholarships, and on behalf of orphaned children needing care and reassurance, and on behalf of the families suffering from persecution overseas, and on behalf of the of the new mission parishes that receive financial assistance to keep their ministry alive, and on behalf of the retired clergy and their families that deservedly receive a monthly check during their golden years ... we thank you. We thank you in sincere gratitude and humility.

So as you contemplate your support of the Order over the years, encourage your family and friends to become a part of the Order, or consider becoming a part of The Order's ministry for the first time, we leave you with what we believe should be in your heart. These words are what guide our work as a Governing Council and come from the teachings of St. Ignatius himself ...

"Let no man's place, or dignity, or riches, puff him up; and let no man's low condition or poverty abase him. For the chief points are faith towards God, hope towards Christ, the enjoyment of those good things for which we look, and love towards God and our neighbor."

In His service,
Roger J. David, North American Chairman, The Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch

The “Welcome Home” family shelter Christmas Party

has been rescheduled for this coming Thursday evening, December 21, from 6 to 8 PM. The party will be held at the Welcome Home Shelter on 218 S. Maple Street in Greensburg.



You need to bring nothing with you except your good cheer! All gifts have been purchased and the food has been taken care of as well. Just come and add yourself to the festivities.

Our gratitude is extended to Bacha Funeral Home, Inc.,

516 Stanton Street, Greensburg, for their generous donation, once again, of the 2018 Church Calendars (which you will shortly be receiving in the mail along with your Community Christmas Card and donation envelopes).



Giving Tree Pet Donations — December 3rd to January 7th



St. Michael's Orthodox Church School & Teen SOYO are accepting new pet supplies for the Animal Friends of Westmoreland.

Please drop off any donations by the Giving Tree!

The 2018 **Antiochian Women's Post-Holiday Luncheon** will be held on **Sunday, January 21** at 12:30PM at **Rodney's** in **Irwin**. The hot luncheon buffet will cost \$20. Please sign up on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall, make checks out to St. Michael's Antiochian Women, and give to Michelle Gajewski by January 14th.



CONGRATULATIONS to those who on Sunday, December 3, became members of our Parish Council — Melanie Bell, Jillian Crowe, and Julia Ritter (*nominated for 3 year terms (2018-20); affirmed for service by acclamation*); Sara Armanious (*appointed to a 3 year term 2018-20*); Jeff Curry and Christian Sam (*appointed to fulfill 2 remaining years (2018-19) on incomplete terms*); Fred Charles (*appointed to complete one remaining year of vacated position*). They join remaining members David Lebo, Veronica Fennell, Gus Flizanes, Carol Patton and Don Yoder in rounding out the 2018 Council.

The Fellowship Hour Schedule is posted on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall and we are in need of volunteers to sign up to take a turn to provide refreshments following Divine Liturgy each week. We provide the coffee and you provide whatever you feel you want to contribute to St. Michael's community.

Please sign up to host Fellowship Hour. Thank you.

REMEMBER, the **Second Week** on this schedule **May Change...**
ALWAYS USE THE MOST CURRENT BULLETIN!

Secretary Office Hours:

Monday and Tuesday
9:00 am to 3:00 PM

*There will be no church services at
St. Michael's on Christmas Day,
Monday, December 25.*

December 17 thru December 23

Sunday, Dec. 17 (*oil, wine okay*)

- 8:45 AM - MATINS
- 9:30 AM - Choir Rehearsal
- 10:00 AM - DIVINE LITURGY
 - Church School
 - Sarris Candy Sale Delivery
 - Antiochian MEN Meet 'n Greet
- 12:30 PM - Abortion Prayers

Monday, Dec. 18 (*strict fast*)

- 9:00 to 10 AM - CONFESSIONS

Tuesday, Dec. 19 (*strict fast*)

- 6:00 PM - VESP. DIV. LIT'RGY
Ignatius of Antioch, the God-bearer
- CONFESSIONS follow

Wednesday, Dec. 20 (*oil, wine okay*)

- 10 AM to 12 PM - CONFESSIONS
- 4:30 to 6:30 PM - CONFESSIONS
- 6:30 PM - Executive Board M'ting
- 7:00 PM - Parish Council Meeting

Thursday, Dec. 21 (*strict fast*)

- 5 to 6:30 PM - CONFESSIONS
- 7:00 PM - Choir Rehearsal

Friday, Dec. 22 (*strict fast*)

- 9:00 AM - ROYAL HOURS
for the Nativity of Christ
- 5 to 6:30 PM - CONFESSIONS

Saturday, Dec. 23 (*oil, wine okay*)

- 9 AM NATIVITY PARAKLESIS
- 5:15 PM - Vespers Chant Practice
- 6:00 PM - GREAT VESPERS
- CONFESSIONS follow

December 24 thru January 1

Sunday, Dec. 24 (*strict fast*)

- 8:45 AM - MATINS
- 9:30 AM - Choir Rehearsal
- 10:00 AM - DIVINE LITURGY

for the Feast of Christ's Nativity —

- 8:00 PM - FESTAL MATINS
- 9:30 PM - Traditional Carols
- 10:00 PM - FEST. DIV. LIT'GY

Christ is born!

Merry Christmas!

Glorify Him!

Wednesday, Dec. 27

- 9:00 AM - DIVINE LITURGY
Protomartyr Stephen

Thursday, Dec. 28

- 6:00 PM - VESP. DIV. LIT'RGY
The 14,000 Innocents

Saturday, Dec. 30

- 5:15 PM - Vespers Chant Practice
- 6:00 PM - GREAT VESPERS

Sunday, Dec. 31

- 8:45 AM - MATINS
- 9:30 AM - Choir Rehearsal
- 10:00 AM - DIVINE LITURGY

Monday, January 1

- 9:00 AM - DIVINE LITURGY
 - The Circumcision of Our Lord
 - St. Basil the Great
 - the New Year

FYI - Should our Christmas schedule of services at St. Michael's be creating logistical dilemmas for you, be aware that Christmas Divine Liturgy at Sts. Cyril and Methodius Church in Jeannette will begin at 10:00 AM on Monday, Christmas morning.

Happy New Year!