

# The Forerunner

[www.saintjohnnewken.org](http://www.saintjohnnewken.org)

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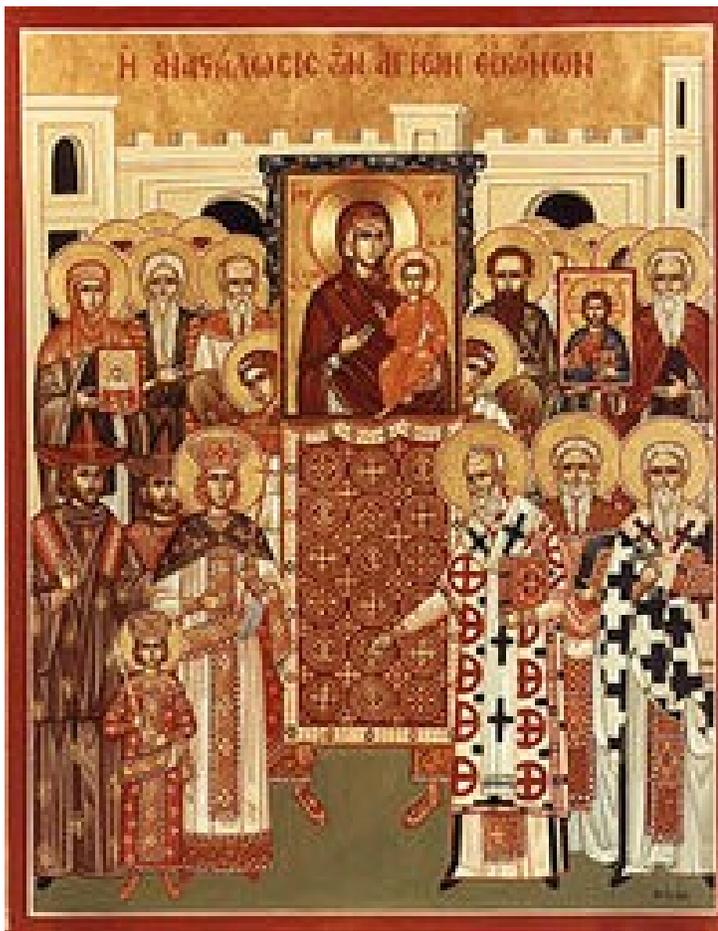
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He Must increase.....and I must decrease. (John 3:30)

## Sermon on the Triumph of Orthodoxy

by Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemmann, ed. Alexis Parshook

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Rejoicing today in the triumph of Orthodoxy on this first



Sunday of Lent, we joyfully commemorate three events: one event belonging to the past; one event to the present; and one event which still belongs to the future. Whenever we have any feast or joy in the Church, we Orthodox first of all look back — for in our present life we depend on what happened in the past. We depend first of all, of course, on the first and the ultimate triumph -- that of Christ Himself. Our faith is rooted in that strange defeat which became

the most glorious victory — the defeat of a man nailed to the cross, who rose again from the dead, who is the Lord and the Master of the world. This is the first triumph of Orthodoxy. This is the content of all our commemorations and of all our joy. This man selected and chose twelve men, gave them power to preach

about that defeat and that victory, and sent them to the whole world saying preach and baptize, build up the Church, announce the Kingdom of God... ...After almost 100 years of persecution directed against the worship of the holy icons, the Church finally proclaimed that the truth had been defined, that the truth was fully in the possession of the Church. And since then all Orthodox people, wherever they live, have gathered on this Sunday to proclaim before the world their faith in that truth, their belief that their Church is truly apostolic, truly Orthodox, truly universal. This is the event of the past that we commemorate today. But let us ask ourselves one question: Do all the triumphs of Orthodoxy, all the victories, belong to the past? Looking at the present today, we sometimes feel that our only consolation is to remember the past... ...But what about the present? My dear friends, if the triumph of Orthodoxy belongs to the past only, if there is nothing else for us to do but commemorate, to repeat to ourselves how glorious was the past, then Orthodoxy is dead. But we are here tonight to witness to the fact that Orthodoxy not only is not dead but also that it is once more and forever celebrating its own triumph — the triumph of Orthodoxy. We don't have to fight heresies among ourselves, but we have other things that once more challenge our Orthodox faith. Today, gathered here together, Orthodox of various national backgrounds, we proclaim and we glorify first of all our unity in Orthodoxy. This is the triumph of Orthodoxy in the present. This is a most wonderful event: that all of us, with all our differences, with all our limitations, with all our weaknesses, can come together and say we belong to that Orthodox faith, that we are one in Christ and in Orthodoxy. We are living very far from the traditional centers of Orthodoxy. We call ourselves Eastern Orthodox, and yet we are here in the West, so

far from those glorious cities which were centers of the Orthodox faith for centuries — Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, Moscow. How far are those cities. And yet, don't we have the feeling that something of a miracle has happened, that God has sent us here, far into the West, not just in order to settle here, to increase our income, to build up a community. He also has sent us as apostles of Orthodoxy, so that this faith, which historically was limited to the East, now is becoming a faith which is truly and completely universal. This is a thrilling moment in the history of Orthodoxy. That is why it is so important for us to be here tonight and to understand, to realize, to have that vision of what is going on. People were crossing the ocean, coming here, not thinking so much about their faith as about themselves, about their lives, about their future. They were usually poor people, they had a difficult life, and they built those little Orthodox churches everywhere in America not for other people but for themselves, just to remember their homes, to perpetuate their tradition. They didn't think of the future. And yet this is what happened: the Orthodox Church was sent here through and with those poor men. The truth itself, the fullness of the apostolic faith -- all this came here, and here we are now, filling this hall and proclaiming this apostolic faith — the faith that has strengthened the universe. And this leads us to the event which still belongs to the future. If today we can only proclaim, if we can only pray for that coming triumph of Orthodoxy in this country and in the world, our Orthodox faith forces us to believe that it is not by accident but by divine providence that the Orthodox faith today has reached all countries, all cities, all continents of the universe. After that historic weakness of our religion, after the persecutions by the Roman Empire, by the Turks, by the godless atheists, after all the

troubles that we had to go through, today a new day begins. Something new is going to happen. And it is this future of Orthodoxy that we have to rejoice about today. We can already have a vision of that future when, in the West, a strong American Orthodox Church comes into existence. We can see how this faith, which for such a long time was an alien faith here, will become truly and completely universal in the sense that we will answer the questions of all men, and also all their questions. For if we believe in that word: "Orthodoxy," "the true faith"; if for one moment we try to understand what it means: the true, the full Christianity, as it has been proclaimed by Christ and His disciples; if our Church has preserved for all ages the message of the apostles and of the fathers and of the saints in its purest form, then, my dear friends, here is the answer to the questions and to the problems and to the sufferings of our world. You know that our world today is so complex. It is changing all the time. And the more it changes, the more people fear, the more they are frightened by the future, the more they are preoccupied by what will happen to them. And this is where Orthodoxy must answer their problem; this is where Orthodoxy must accept the challenge of modern civilization and reveal to men of all nations, to all men in the whole world, that it has remained the force of God left in history for the transformation, for the deification, for the transfiguration of human life. The past, the present, the future: At the beginning, one lonely man on the cross — the complete defeat. And if at that time we had been there with all our human calculations, we probably would have said: "That's the end. Nothing else will happen." The twelve left Him. There was no one, no one to hope. The world was in darkness. Everything seemed finished. And you know what happened three days later. Three days later He

appeared. He appeared to His disciples, and their hearts were burning within them because they knew that He was the risen Lord. And since then, in every generation, there have been people with burning hearts, people who have felt that this victory of Christ had to be carried again and again into this world, to be proclaimed in order to win new human souls and to be the transforming force in history. Today this responsibility belongs to us. We feel that we are weak. We feel that we are limited, we are divided, we are still separated in so many groups, we have so many obstacles to overcome. But today, on the Sunday of Orthodoxy, we close our eyes for a second and we rejoice in that unity which is already here: priests of various national churches praying together, people of all backgrounds uniting in prayer for the triumph of Orthodoxy. We are already in a triumph, and may God help us keep that triumph in our hearts, so that we never give up hope in that future event in the history of orthodoxy when Orthodoxy will become the victory which eternally overcomes all the obstacles, because that victory is the victory of Christ Himself... ..What is the condition of the real triumph of Orthodoxy? What is the way leading to the real, the final, the ultimate victory of our faith? The answer comes from the Gospel. The answer comes from Christ Himself and from the whole tradition of Orthodoxy. It is *love*. Let us love one another, that with one mind we may confess: confess our faith, our Orthodoxy. Let us, from now on, feel responsible for each other. Let us understand that even if we are divided in small parishes, in small dioceses, we first of all belong to one another. We belong together, to Christ, to His Body, to the Church. Let us feel responsible for each other, and let us love one another. Let us put above everything else the interests of Orthodoxy in this country.

Let us understand that each one of us today has to be the apostle of Orthodoxy in a country which is not yet Orthodox, in a society which is asking us: "What do you believe?" "What is your faith?" And let us, above everything else, keep the memory, keep the experience, keep the taste of that unity which we are anticipating tonight. At the end of the first century — when the Church was still a very small group, a very small minority, in a society which was definitely anti-Christian when the persecution was beginning — St. John the Divine, the beloved disciple of Christ, wrote these words: "And this is the victory, our faith, this is the victory." There was no victory at that time, and yet he knew that in his faith he had the victory that can be applied to us today. We have the promise of Christ, that the gates of hell will *never* prevail against the Church. We have the promise of Christ that if we have faith, all things are possible. We have the promise of the Holy Spirit, that He will fill all that which is weak, that He will help us at the moment when we need help. In other words, we have all the possibilities, we have everything that we need, and therefore the victory is ours. It is not a human victory which can be defined in terms of money, of human success, of human achievements. What we are preaching tonight, what we are proclaiming tonight, what we are praying for tonight, is the victory of Christ in me, in us, in all of you in the Orthodox Church in America. And that victory of Christ in us, of the one who for us was crucified and rose again from the dead, that victory will be the victory of His Church. Today is the triumph of Orthodoxy, and a hymn sung today states solemnly and simply: "This is the Apostolic faith, this is the Orthodox faith, this is the faith of the Fathers, this is the faith that is the foundation of the world." ...Amen.

## Welcome Fr. John and Mat. Nadia Parker!

It is with great joy that we are blessed to announce that Fr. John Parker has been assigned to St. John the Baptist parish as priest-in-charge, effective May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Fr. John and his wife, Matushka Nadia, were previously assigned at St. Nicholas parish in Donora, and are looking forward to meeting all of us on Sunday, May 8<sup>th</sup>.

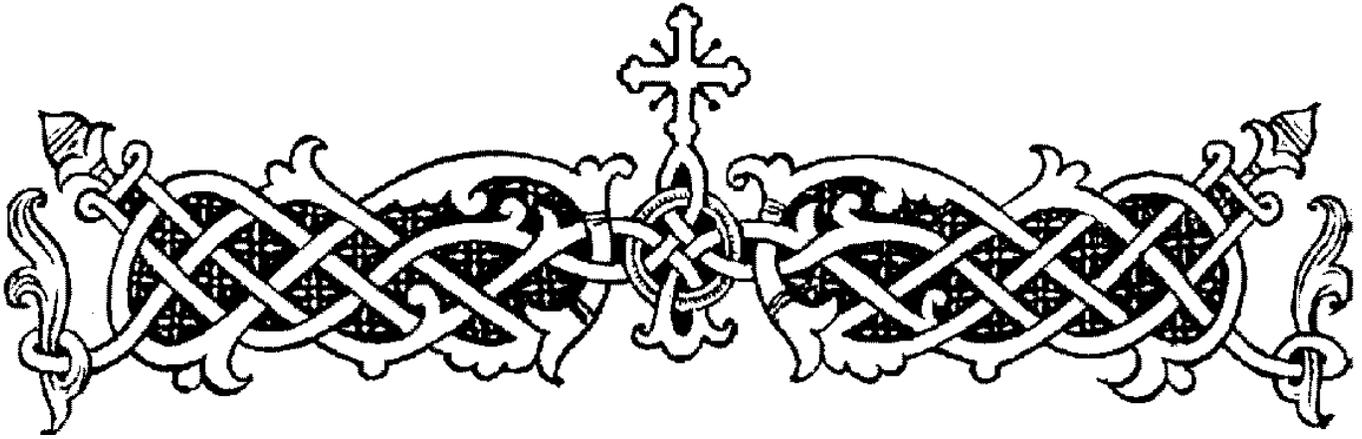


Fr. John graduated from St. Tikhon's Seminary in 2019, and was ordained shortly thereafter at St. Nicholas in Donora, where he has served till presently. Before ministry, Fr. John studied English Literature and philosophy at UCCS in Colorado, where he was born and raised. Fr. John met Matushka Nadia while at seminary, while she was earning her Bachelor's degree in biology at Marywood University, near St. Tikhon's. They married just before Fr. John's final

year at seminary. They have one son, Jonah, and a little one on the way!

May God bless Fr. John in his new pastorate, and may He continue to bless our parish as we journey forward with our new priest!

As a reminder, until May 2<sup>nd</sup>, the pastoral care of St. John's in New Kensington will continue to be undertaken by the Archdiocesan Chancellor, Fr. Bill Evansky, and the Associate Dean of the Northwest Deanery, Fr. Tom Soroka, assisted in the parish by Alexis Parshook. Emergency calls for such pastoral matters as hospitalizations, nursing homes, family crises, funerals, etc. should be addressed to **Fr. Bill's cell (412-855-1307)**, or **Fr. Tom's cell (412-716-6457)**. If the phone is not answered leave a voice-mail message. Text messages may also be sent.



## Calendar of Events

**Please note, while the parish is hopeful to have at least some Holy Week services, the schedule has not been set as of this printing. There will be no Pre-Sanctified Liturgies served at the parish during Great Lent.**

# March/April

**Sunday, March 6<sup>th</sup> – Forgiveness Sunday**

**- Resurrection Divine Liturgy – 10:00 AM**

*Visiting Priest – Archpriest Samuel Smolcic*

**- Rite of Forgiveness immediately following Liturgy**

**Great Lent begins at Sundown**

**Sunday, March 13<sup>th</sup> – Triumph of Orthodoxy**

**- Resurrection Divine Liturgy – 10:00 AM**

*Visiting Priest – Archpriest David Vernak*

**Sunday, March 20<sup>th</sup> – St. Gregory Palamas**

**- Resurrection Divine Liturgy – 10:00 AM**

*Visiting Priest – Archpriest David Vernak*

**Sunday, March 27<sup>th</sup> – Veneration of the Cross**

**- Resurrection Divine Liturgy – 10:00 AM**

*Visiting Priest – Archpriest Samuel Smolcic*

**Sunday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> – St. John Climacus**

**- Resurrection Divine Liturgy – 10:00 AM**

*Visiting Priest – Archpriest Samuel Smolcic*

**Sunday, April 10<sup>th</sup> – St. Mary of Egypt**

**- Resurrection Divine Liturgy – 10:00 AM**

*Visiting Priest – Archpriest Samuel Smolcic*

**Sunday, April 17<sup>th</sup> – Palm Sunday**

**- Resurrection Divine Liturgy – 10:00 AM**

*Visiting Priest – Archpriest David Vernak*

**All Holy Week and Paschal Services TBD.**

**Please check the calendar on the parish**

**website, [www.saintjohnnewken.org](http://www.saintjohnnewken.org), as**

**Holy Week and Pascha approach.**



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

**Χριστος Воскресе! Во истину Воскресе!  
(Christos voskrese! Vo istinu voskrese!)**

**Χριστός Ανέστη! Αληθώς Ανέστη!  
(Christos anesti! Alithos anesti!)**

# **Great Vespers/Lenten Services at our sister parishes:**

**St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral**

**8290 Thompson Run Rd. Allison Park – Saturdays –  
5:00 PM, Pre-Sanctified Liturgy Wednesdays 7:00PM**

**St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church**

**1150 Leishman Ave. New Kensington – Saturdays –  
6:00 PM, Pre-Sanctified Liturgy Wednesdays 6:00PM**

**Holy Ghost Church**

**210 Maplewood Avenue, Ambridge PA – Saturdays –  
4:30PM, Pre-Sanctified Liturgy Wednesdays 6:30PM**

**St. Nicholas Parish**

**320 Munson Avenue, Pittsburgh PA – Saturdays –  
5:00PM, Pre-Sanctified Liturgy Wednesdays 7:00PM**

**Ss. Cyril & Methodius Parish**

**520 Scott Avenue, Jeannette PA – Saturdays – 6:00PM,  
Pre-Sanctified Liturgy Wednesdays 6:00PM, Fridays  
10:00AM**



# Altar Candles



**Sunday, January 2nd** – donated by Alexis Parshook and Jack Bonifati for the health and well-being of Fr. Nikolai and Matushka Mila Breckenridge.

**Sunday, January 9<sup>th</sup>** – donated by Dorothy and Don Chlodney, wishing God's blessings to Fr. Nikolai in his new pastorate at St. Nicholas Church in Bethlehem, PA.

**Sunday, January 16<sup>th</sup>** - donated by Ellie Parshook, in memory of Leon Parshook.

**Candles at the Golgotha** – donated by Dennis and Barb Cypher in memory of Millie Kanaan.

**Sunday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>** - donated by Valerie Kennedy, for the health and well-being of Matthew Zalupski on his birthday.

**Sunday, January 30<sup>th</sup>** - donated by Tom Kachanuk, in memory of Jean Tokarchak and Dorothy Semenick.

**Sunday, February 6<sup>th</sup>** - donated by Ellie Parshook, in memory of Kita Georgevich.

**Candles at the Golgotha** – donated by Ellie Parshook in memory of all departed members of the Parshook and Scott families, and also by Miffie and Andy Rusnak in memory of George and Angie Ofiesh, and Al and Jean Rusnak.

**Sunday, February 13<sup>th</sup>** – donated by Mark and Susan Kennedy for the health and well-being of Natasha Miller on her birthday.

**Sunday, February 20<sup>th</sup>** – donated by Valerie Kennedy for the health and well-being of Natasha Miller on her 9<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**Candles before St. Panteleimon** – donated by Martin, Dawn, and Alan Miller for the health and well-being of Natash Miller on her 9<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**Sunday, February 27<sup>th</sup>** – donated by Alexis Parshook and Jack Bonifati for the health and well-being of the newborn child, Tanith, and her parents, Phil and Lydia (Watton) Rabanal.

## **Perogie Making**



The next Perogie workshops will be: 3/21  
and 4/4 at 8:00AM

The next Roll workshop will be: 3/31 at  
9:00AM

Please get your orders in for Easter pierogie and rolls by 3/28/22. Pierogie are \$10/dozen, and are available in Potato/Cheese, Sauerkraut, and Cottage Cheese with or without sugar. Rolls are \$13 each, and are available in Nut, Apricot, Poppy Seed, Cream Cheese, and Lekvar. Please call 724-226-0942 or email [saintjohnnewken@gmail.com](mailto:saintjohnnewken@gmail.com) to place an order.

# Thank You!

## Pierogie/Stuffed Cabbage Sale and Workshops:

Donald and Dorothy Chlodney, Bill and Janet Breckenridge, Bob and Pam Kraynik, Valerie Kennedy, Alan Miller, Subdeacon Harry Papaila, Becky Hixson, Bruce Parshook, Alexis Parshook Jack Bonifati, Hope Cain, Nick Bia, Joan Hughes, Barb Haught, Dennis and Barb Cypher, Miffie and Andy Rusnak, and Mark and Sue Kennedy.

## Thank-you to all who have donated towards the Cupola and Roof Projects!

Subdeacon Harry Papaila

Ellie Parshook

Andy and Miffie Rusnak

Ray and Helen Rakvic

Marlene Wray

Judith Frynko

Evelyn Herrick

Martha Hannon

Joan Hughes

Don and Dorothy Chlodney

Dawn Miller

Brad and Millicent Novic

Bruce and Linda Parshook

Bob and Pam Kraynik

Joan Mitchum

Kita Georgevich

Dennis and Barb Cypher

Linda Soulcheck

M/M Kenneth Lahner

John and Tenley Watton

David and Becky Hixson

Tom Kachanuk

Rusiewicz Funeral Home

Valerie Kennedy

Mark and Sue Kennedy

Alexis Parshook and Jack Bonifati



## Vigils – November through February

Alan Kennedy – 18  
 Christina Herrick – 4  
 Valerie Kennedy – 1  
 Nicholas and George Eror – 1  
     Hope Cain – 2  
     Faith Hughes – 2  
 Tanith Rabanal – 1  
 Philip Rabanal - 1

Barbara Haught – 2  
 Penny Schrangl – 4  
 Eric and Dominic Scarano - 1  
 Faith Hughes and Hope Cain – 1  
 Evgeni Taimonov – 1  
 Nikolas Parshook – 1  
 Jessica Parshook – 1  
     Lydia Rabanal – 1  
     Natasha Miller - 1

# Confessions

Fr. Bill Evansky (Archdiocesan Chancellor, Dean) and Fr. Tom Soroka (Associate Dean) are available to hear confessions during the Lenten season. Please visit [holyghostoca.org](http://holyghostoca.org) (Fr. Bill) or [orthodoxpittsburgh.org](http://orthodoxpittsburgh.org) (Fr. Tom) for service schedules and information. Please also either call or text Fr. Bill or Fr. Tom beforehand to confirm availability. The mysteries of confession and repentance are vital to good spiritual health, as well as proper preparation for partaking of the Holy Eucharist. Everyone should make every effort to partake of this mystery during the Great Fast.

## Memorial Commemorations

It is the tradition of the Orthodox Church that during the Proskomedia (the service of preparation) and during the Divine Liturgy we remember our loved ones, both those who are alive, and those who have departed this life. Please feel free to email your list of names to our parish email at [saintjohnnewken@gmail.com](mailto:saintjohnnewken@gmail.com).

The names for the Proskomedia should be those of Orthodox people, so please mark any non-Orthodox on your list as non-Orthodox, so we can pray for them in another manner. Remember that our prayer for the dead is just as important as our prayers for the living. It is traditional to give a donation to the Church together with your list, as a form of sacrifice on behalf of those you are praying for.

