

Saints Cyril and Methodius Orthodox Christian Church

A Parish of the Diocese of New England of the Orthodox Church in America

Fr. John Hopko, Pastor • Protodeacon Paul Nimchek

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Sunday, February 28, 2021

Sunday of the Prodigal Son

SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON – Tone 5. Ven. Basil the Confessor, Companion of Ven. Procopius at Decapolis (750). Bl. Nikolai, Fool-for-Christ at Pskov (1576). Hieromartyr Proterius, Patriarch of Alexandria (457). Hieromartyr Nestor, Bishop of Magydos in Pamphylia (250). Ven. Marina (Marana), Cyra (Kyra) and Domnica (Domnina), of Syria (ca. 450). Venerable Domnica (ca. 450). John Cassian the Roman (435). Devpeteruv Icon of the Mother of God (14th c.).

<https://www.oca.org/saints/lives/2021/02/28>

A PASTORAL LETTER ON THE OCCASION OF THE COMING OF GREAT LENT 2021

Dear Members of Saints Cyril and Methodius Orthodox Church, Terryville, CT, and of Nativity of the Holy Virgin Mary Orthodox Church, Waterbury, CT:

Glory to Jesus Christ!

**“But for me it is good to be near God; I have made the Lord God my refuge, that I may tell of all thy works.”
(Psalm 73:28)**

We are hopeful that we are beginning to experience a lessening of the COVID-19 public health crisis. This comes just as we are looking forward to beginning Great Lent and making our annual journey to Holy Pascha. (Pascha this year falls on Sunday, May 2.)

I understand that some of us are still quite concerned about being in situations that we deem risky due to the possibility of the transmission of the coronavirus that causes COVID-19.

Nevertheless, at this time, in my pastoral capacity, I am asking every parishioner, please, to make an appointment to participate in the Sacrament of Confession during Great Lent, and to prepare for and to participate in the Sacrament of Holy Communion during Great Lent.

I ask this out of a deep, fatherly concern that none of us should be without the saving and essential grace of sacraments, even as this present public health crisis persists, for almost a full year now.

If you wish to discuss this matter with me, please, contact me, at your earliest convenience, by voice or text, at my personal cellphone number, which is 860-944-3486.

With love in Christ,

Fr. John H.

Archpriest John Hopko, Pastor

PARISH PRAYER LIST

We pray for all victims of disease, disaster, difficulty, and senseless violence throughout the world, especially in this time of pestilence and civil unrest.

+ THOSE WHO HAVE DEPARTED THIS LIFE: *Memory Eternal!*

First of all, we pray for all the thousands of victims of COVID-19. Memory Eternal!

Newly Departed

Archimandrite Alexander (Cutler)—monk and priest	d. 1/26/2021
Protopresbyter Daniel Hubiak—former OCA Chancellor	d. 2/5/2021
Mitred Archpriest Daniel Ressetar	d. 1/20/2021
Archpriest John Tkachuk—Fr. John's uncle through marriage	d. 2/19/2021
Archpriest John Chupeck	d. 2/10/2021
Protodeacon John Eby—acquaintance of Fr. John H.	d. 2/3/2021
Reader Stephen Bradford—once of the Willimantic Parish	d. 2/21/2021
Byron—uncle of a friend of the Parish	d. 2/26/2021
Kate—acquaintance of the Nimcheks; a tragic passing at a young age	d. 2/18/2021
George Giba—of the Waterbury Parish; once the Waterbury "sexton"	d. 2/17/2021
Thomas Matcheson—associated with the Waterbury Parish	d. 2/8/2021
child Leo—Fr. Andrew Tregubov's grandson	d. 2/5/2021
Sharon—niece of Mat. Ann S.; recent victim of cancer	d. 1/25/2021

Anniversaries of Repose – *Memory Eternal!*

Vasili Biscoe	3/1/1951
Roland Oraschewsky	3/1/2017
Symeon Papko	3/2/1944
Mary Greziuk	3/2/1956
Lillian Hasko	3/2/2008
Anton Honcharuk	3/3/1974
Donna Marie Kriniske	3/3/2014
Emery Michael Wegh	3/3/2015
Helen Kowaleski	3/4/1997
Andrew Tczap	3/6/1946
Mary Oleshko	3/6/1984
Amelia Hriceniak	3/6/1998

THOSE IN NEED OF GOD'S MERCY AND HELP

First of all, we pray for all those suffering due to the present pestilence which is COVID-19, and those working to alleviate their suffering.

Persons captive and suffering for the Faith

Metropolitan Paul and Archbishop John—hostages in Syria

Those who are sick and suffering

Archpriest Michael—former pastor of our parish; reoccurrence of illness
Fyodor (Frank) G.—suffering from Multiple Sclerosis (MS)
Dolores T.—permanent colon malfunction following colon cancer treatment
child Drew—grandson of friends of the Nimcheks; ongoing treatment for eye cancer
Dartyne—facing health challenges; daughter of Bob and Vera Martin
Donna—Ann S.'s niece, Deb W.'s cousin; kidney disease
Dayrl—Ann S.'s niece, Deb W.'s cousin; kidney disease
JoAnn—acquaintance of Jeanne Moore; ovarian cancer
MaryEllen—Louine K.'s daughter-in-law; suffering with Huntington's Disease
Yelena "Lenna" M.—overcoming, by God's grace, serious health challenges
Katie and Aubrey—a mother and daughter for whom we have been asked to pray
Tanya B.—suffering long-term and lingering effects of brain hemorrhage
Mary Lynn—friend of Donna O.; battling breast cancer

Barbara—friend of Patty N.; unwell and in need of prayerful support
James B.—husband of a Waterbury parishioner; chronically unwell
Dorothy F.—Waterbury parishioner; still recovering from a serious surgery
Rosie D.—ongoing health issues
Michael "Mike" L.—ongoing health issues
child George—9-year-old son of a Kenyan Orthodox priest; quite unwell
Bill M.—has experienced some health issues lately, please keep in prayer
Christopher—friend of Kathy M.; struggling with cancer
Paula—friend of Jim L.; struggling with cancer
Dimitri—brother of Carolyn P.; health issues
child Hattie—injured in freak accident; request of a family in our parish
Maryna B.—dealing with some health issues
Thomas—Patty N.'s nephew; battling cancer
Wayne—Donna O.'s father
Vickie—a woman for whom we have been asked to pray
Sam—Vickie's husband, struggling with multiple health issues
Richard—a man struggling with cancer, for whom we have been asked to pray
Jody—Jacob J.'s father; recovering from significant back surgery
Sue—acquaintance of the Hopkos; unwell and requiring prayers
Helen—acquaintance of Helena G; in long-term care
Candace—acquaintance of Helena G; in need of prayers
Maria O.—dialysis three times a week; recently injured in fall, now in PA with family
Joanne—acquaintance of the Hopkos; slow recovery from recent illness
Stephen—family member of a parishioner; quite ill and in need of prayers
George K.—our fellow parishioner; unwell at this time
Lorraine—friend of Joan M.; cancerous blood disease
Joseph—friend of Jeanne M.; in need of prayers
Joan—dear and close friend of Carolyn P.; back surgery
Marcia—wife of newly departed Thomas M.
Antonio—brother-in-law of a parishioner; suffering with COVID-19
Joseph—prayed for at the request of Jeanne M.
Elaine H.—recovering from hip replacement surgery; our fellow parishioner
Dianna—Jennifer W.'s mother; suffering some health problems
Wayne—prayed for at the request of Carolyn P.; upcoming surgery
Thomas—fighting cancer; father of a friend of the Parish

Shut-ins and those resident in long-term Care Facilities

Alex—John D.'s brother; suffering permanent effects of stroke
Dolores—Bob M.'s mother; resident in long-term eldercare

Expectant Mothers

Katherine and the child to be born of her—Fr. John's nephew's wife and her child

Travelers, Those Soon to be Traveling, and Those Apart from Us

All those who are traveling, soon to be traveling, or apart from us

Those from among us serving on active duty in the Armed Forces

Fr. James Parnell, Chaplain (MAJ)—deploying with the CT ARNG
Joel O.—U.S. Navy; hospital corpsman ("medic")
Joseph B.—a Terryville neighbor; U.S. Marine Corps
Joshua P.—husband of a niece of Fr. John's; U.S. Army officer and pilot
Alexander—relative of Carolyn P.; 82nd Airborne Division soldier now home from abroad
Derek—relative of Carolyn P.; serving in Afghanistan in the U.S. Army
Ian H.—Fr. David K.'s son-in-law; overseas deployment, U.S. Army

Anniversaries of Marriage

NONE THIS WEEK

Birthdays

Jayne Grasso	3/3
Macrina Hopko	3/4

Saint John Cassian wrote: "Let us not believe that an external fast from visible food alone can possibly be sufficient for perfection of heart and purity of body unless with it there has also been united a fast of the soul. For the soul also has its foods that are harmful. Slander is its food and indeed one that is very dear to it. A burst of anger also supplies it with miserable food for an hour and destroys it as well with its deadly savor. Envy is food of the mind, corrupting it with its poisonous juices and never ceasing to make it wretched and miserable at the prosperity and success of another. Vanity is its food which gratifies the mind with a delicious meal for a time but afterward strips it clear and bare of all virtue. Then vanity dismisses it barren and void of all spiritual fruit. All lust and shift wanderings of heart are a sort of food for the soul, nourishing it on harmful meats but leaving it afterwards without a share of its heavenly bread and really solid food. If then, with all the powers we have, we abstain from these in a most holy fast our observance of the bodily fast will be both useful and profitable."

— Saint John Cassian, *Making Life a Prayer: Selected Writings*

A Book to accompany us through Great Lent

The late Fr. Steven Belonick wrote a book entitled *Pilgrimage to Pascha: A Daily Devotional for Great Lent*. This volume has now been published (in an updated posthumous edition prepared by Fr. Steven's wife, Mat. Deborah Belonick) by Ancient Faith Publishers (AFP), and is now available for purchase.

Please note that all royalties from this book will be placed in the "Father Steven Belonick Scholarship Fund" of our Diocese of New England, to help fund the education of seminarians.

For each of the 40 days of Great Lent, the book offers a Scripture reading, an excerpt from the writings of the saints with a reflection, an excerpt from a Lenten hymn, the life of a saint, and a short prayer.

Perhaps, we could purchase a copy of this book, and have it as a companion for our 2021 Lenten journey. (Great Lent begins on March 15, this year.) Here's the link to where this book can be purchased: <https://store.ancientfaith.com/pilgrimage-to-pascha-a-daily-devotional-for-great-lent/>.

News and Notes

Vacuum Cleaner Donated: Recently, we made an appeal asking for the donation of a new vacuum cleaner. Kindly, our fellow parishioner, Carolyn Palleria, has donated a new vacuum cleaner to the Church. We thank Carolyn for her generosity. Thanks, Carolyn! May God bless you and yours.

Bible Study, via "Zoom" – Tuesday evening, March 2, beginning at 7:00 PM: This week, on Tuesday evening, we will be continuing our reading and discussion of the First Letter to the Corinthians. (Most recently, we left off at Chapter 10, Verse 28.) Each week is an event unto itself, so, please, even if you haven't joined us before, feel free to join us this week, or at any time in the future.

Bible Study Companion Book: If you are interested in reading a book that will serve as a companion to the efforts we are presently making in Bible Study, this book may be a resource for you: *First and Second Corinthians: Straight From the Heart*. This book is written by Fr. Lawrence Farley, who is a priest in British Columbia, Canada, in a parish of the Orthodox Church in America's Archdiocese of Canada. It is published by Conciliar Press, Chesterton, Indiana (<https://store.ancientfaith.com/biblical-studies/>). Fr. Lawrence has written a whole series of accessible commentaries on parts of the Bible. In particular, his commentaries are written to be appreciated by and be useful to Orthodox Christian lay people.

Wednesday Morning Matins Services, via "Zoom", at 8:00 a.m.: Each Wednesday morning we serve Matins (Morning Prayers) as an online service via video teleconference. Watch your email inbox for details, including the necessary ZOOM link to join the online service.

Support from the Parish: If you require financial or pastoral support during this vexing and challenging time, contact Fr. John, personally and confidentially, and he will endeavor to help you get the assistance that you need. All such contacts will be treated with strict confidentiality and great sensitivity. **Don't be shy: If you need help, please, do contact Fr. John.**

Donations to the Parish: Please, continue to support our parish during this challenging time. Donations to the Parish may be submitted via checks made out to and mailed to Saints Cyril and Methodius Orthodox Church, 34 Fairview Avenue, Terryville, CT 06786-6329. Also, a PayPal Donation "button" (<https://www.terryvilleorthodoxchurch.org/donatenow>) is located on our parish website to make online donations possible. Our parish is registered as a charity with PayPal, so we have slightly lower fees connected to the use of that means of receiving donations. For us, PayPal's fees are 2.2%, plus \$0.30 per transaction. (So, for example, a donation of \$100.00 given via PayPal will realize us actual income of \$97.50.)

Readings from Holy Scripture

Scripture Readings for the Sunday of the Prodigal Son

The Reading from the First Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 6:12-20)

Brothers and Sisters: "All things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be enslaved by anything. "Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food"--and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that he who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, "The two shall become one flesh." But he who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Shun immorality. Every other sin which a man commits is outside the body; but the immoral man sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

The Reading from the Gospel according to Saint Luke (Lk. 15:11-32)

The Lord spoke this parable: "There was a man who had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of property that falls to me.' And he divided his living between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took his journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in loose living. And when he had spent everything, a great famine arose in that country, and he began to be in want. So he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have fed on the pods that the swine ate; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants."' And he arose and came to his father. But while he was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to make merry. "Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what this meant. And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has received him safe and sound.' But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, 'Lo, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command; yet you never gave me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your living with harlots, you killed for him the fatted calf!' And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.'"