



THE FORERUNNER
The Nativity of St. John the Baptist
 Orthodox Church O.C.A.
 420 Laura Street
 Philipsburg, PA 16866
 (814) 342-2011

Very Rev. John Horosky - Priest
 Mark Ammerman - Council President

January 2013
Glory Be to Jesus Christ!

Service Schedule

January 6 Holy Theophany
 General Confession & Hours @ 9:30 AM
 Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM
 Coffee Hour following Liturgy
 Blessing of church & rectory

January 13
 Hours @ 9:30 AM
 Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM
 Coffee Hour following Liturgy
 Council Meeting

January 20
 Hours @ 9:30 AM
 Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM
 Coffee Hour following Liturgy

January 27
 Hours @ 9:30 AM
 Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM
 Pot Luck following Liturgy

Reader's Schedule

	<i>Hours</i>	<i>Epistle</i>
1/6	Larry Ammerman	Tom Demchak
1/13	Jan Brennish	Jan Brennish
1/20	Edward Batchko	Edward Batchko
1/27	Doug Donovan	Doug Donovan

Feast Days

1/1	Feast of Circumcision
1/6	Holy Theophany
1/7	Synaxis of St. John the Baptist
1/30	Three Hierarchs



For private confession, call Father to make arrangements.

Remember in your prayers: Bishop MELCHISEDEK, Father John, Father Adam, Father Ted, Father Paul, Father Michael, Jennifer and Vincent, Larry Ammerman, Mary Ann Ammerman, Karen Blackburn, Chris Conkey, James Crites, Helen Czar, Joe Demchak, Mike Demchak, Steve Demchak, Eileen Donovan, Joe Edwards, Michael Evans, Bonnie Fetcenko, Jeffrey Fetcenko, Randy Fetcenko, Rose Marie Fetcenko, Yvonne Fetcenko, Olga Finlayson, Kenneth Finlayson, Jack Foster, Mary Foster, Harry Horosky, Evan Morgan, Richard Nakles, Anna Pennington, Harry Socie, Alexandria Stine, Karen Stine, Eleanor Sura, Holly Thompson, Andrew Tocimak, Irene Tocimak, Louise Tocimak, Walter Varagea, Delores Varagea.

“O Master, the all-sustainer, and Holy King, Who punishes, but reduces not to death, Who strengthens the failing, and raises the outcast, Who remedies the bodily sorrows of men, we pray unto Thee, O Our Lord, visit Thine infirm servants with Thy mercy; forgive them every transgression, voluntary and involuntary. Verily O Lord, send down from Heaven Thy healing power, touch the body, extinguish the fever, lessen the suffering and every infirmity of Thy servants, raise them decumbent, from sickness, and from the bed of evilness, make them whole and all-restored, return them to Thy Church well-pleasing and fulfilling Thy will. For it is of Thine own, to be merciful and to save us, O Lord, and unto Thee we send glory, to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Alexandra Stine will be going to Athens, Greece Jan 14 through May 11 studying culture, archeology and history. She will also have the opportunity to visit Turkey and Italy. God grant her a safe and prosperous journey.

Birthdays

David Mason 1/2
Mitch Tocimak 1/13
Steve Demchak 1/20

Anniversaries

Rhonda and Tom Demchak 1/19/2002
Mike and Louise Demchak 1/20/1957

Thank you. Thank you to all who made our services for the Nativity so beautiful. God grant you many years!

Thank you. Thank you to Jan Brennish (God grant you many years!) for restoring the Epistle Readings book and making a case to protect it. The book has been in the church for decades and was one we remember Jan's father, John, reading from. John would have been 100 years old on December 30th. Jan had the book restored and it will be blessed Sunday January 6th.

Assessments for 2013

The Archdiocese has increased our assessments to \$161, approved at the 11/10/12 Archdiocesan Assembly at McKees Rocks (see attached letter). St. John's Council will be discussing this at our Jan. meeting to determine if we should add anything to the \$161 for St. John's.

Year	Total	Central Church	Archdiocese	St. John's
2012	\$140	\$105	\$28	\$7
2013	\$161+?	\$95	\$66	?

From the Desk of Father John Horosky

Orthodox Prayer

The goal of the Christian's life on earth is salvation in our Lord Jesus Christ and, at the same time, communion with God. The means for this communion is prayer, and through his prayer the Christian is joined in one spirit with the Lord (1 Cor. 6:17). Prayer is the focal point and foundation of spiritual life and the source of salvation. Without prayer, as St. John Chrysostom says, there is no life in the spirit. Without prayer man is deprived of communion with God and can be compared to dry and barren tree, which **is cut down and thrown into the fire (Matt. 7:19)**.

In prayer, the Christian concentrates together all his spiritual acts. Prayer draws down to him the grace of God and is an invaluable instrument of spiritual defense in the Christian's struggles against the sinful passions and vices. By prayer our thoughts, desires and deeds are sanctified, for he who prays receives the blessing of the Lord on his deeds, for, as Holy Scripture tells us, **unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain (PS 127:1)**. Nothing so helps us to grow in virtue as our pure and pious prayers to God. Thus it was the shared opinion of the Holy Fathers that prayer is the mother of virtues. By repeated and fervent prayer, man is made more worthy of God's mercy and more capable of receiving the gifts of grace which God, by reason of His infinite goodness, is already to bestow on us our of His immeasurable bounties.

In prayer, the Christian prays not only for himself, but for all men, for we all are the children of God. We must pray for the salvation of our neighbor just as we pray for our own salvation, and the best means of correcting our neighbor is to pray for him, because prayer for our neighbor has far greater effect than denunciation of his sins. In addition, we pray not only for the living, but also for the departed, that God may forgive them their sins and grant them repose in the heavenly mansions of the righteous.

As with any spiritual endeavor, however, the Christian must learn how to pray properly. As St. Tikhon of Zadonsk cautions us: Of no value is that prayer in which the tongue prays but the mind is empty; the tongue speaks, but the mind lies silent; the tongue calls God, but the mind wanders amongst created things. We must, therefore, pray in fear and trembling and try in every way To ensure that our minds are with our words, as St. John of the Ladder tells us, "to enclose our mind In the words of our prayer. [So that] the heart may respond to the words of the prayers. "

The Hanging Vigil above the Royal Doors of the iconostasis is supported by Irene Pollock in loving memory of her sister and brother-in-law Margaret and Robert Stefanko.

The Vigils on the Tetrapod are supported by Irene Pollock in loving memory of her parents, sisters, brothers, husband, nephew and stepfather.

The votives in front of the iconostasis, on the candlestands and in front of the icons in the nave are supported by Andrew & Louise Tocimak in loving memory of George Tocimak.

**Put off your old self and put on the new self.
Change for 2013**

As we embark on our path in the New Year 2013, we might think of how we can change our lives for the better. We have quotes from Mahatma Gandhi *“Be the change that you wish to see in the world.”* from Aristotle *“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then, is not an act, but a habit.”* and from most importantly from our Lord, in “Ephesians 4:22-32 .

“You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. “In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.

Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you”

Putting off the old and putting on the new is the principle by which the possibilities that are in Christ can become evident in our experience. Notice there is a recognition of the pull of the old life on the Christian. The admonition of the apostle is to be constantly recognizing and rejecting these false, underlying assumptions that come from the old self, the old way of living. It is not merely deeds, you will notice, but outlooks and attitudes. This is what causes the problem, and this is what we must reject.

Put off means to divest yourself of something, to take it off. Paul is using the simplest of terms to illustrate what we must do in the realm of thought, of the attitudes of life. We must reject those basic assumptions that have caused our trouble—putting them off, rejecting them, divesting ourselves of them—just as you would put off your dirty clothes.

We must do this because the corruption of life comes from these wrong attitudes. Paul says the former manner of life is corrupt—decayed, dead, foul, selfish, unhappy, restless. These are the things that have made life unhappy or miserable. He points out we can recognize these attitudes by the way they operate. They are deceitful lusts. Unfortunately, this word lust is greatly misunderstood in our day. We invariably associate it with something sexual. But this word is much broader than that. It means any urge or basic drive. We will get closer to the essential meaning of this word if we use the term urge. These deceitful urges are constantly coming to us as we react to various situations in which we find ourselves.

The first step in experiencing what God intends for us is to recognize that. Put off the old. That is the first step. The other is to recognize the wonderful possibilities of the new life. In that phrase, to be made new in the attitude of your minds, you have the fundamental difference between a Christian and a non-Christian. It is true that non-Christians sometimes realize that things are wrong in their lives, and so they change them. But they merely change to another expression of the same basic egocentricity. They change the outer form, but the problem remains basically the same.

But of all human beings, Christians alone have the possibility of doing something entirely different, living by an entirely different principle, because they have been renewed in the attitude of their minds. And that happens in the regenerated life as the Spirit of God comes into the heart that believes in Jesus Christ. When we believe in Jesus Christ and receive Him as our Lord and Savior, we are renewed in the attitudes of our minds. The new self is in the likeness of God: it is the life of God; it is the image of Jesus Christ; it is His life lived in you. So put on that kind of life, because it is available to you.

Father, help me to understand and put into practice this great principle of putting off the old self and putting on the new.



Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania

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Right Rev. MELCHISEDEK
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Diocesan Treasurer
Ms. Helen Billak
Telephone: 412-953-7938

4 December 2012

Dear Reverend Father, Parish Treasurer and Parish Council Members,

Glory be to Jesus Christ!

First let me introduce myself, I am the new Treasurer of the Archdiocese. I have assumed those responsibilities this year from Fr. Dennis Hendershot who faithfully served the diocese for many years. Hopefully, we will be able to continue to do the work of the Church in our Diocese during my tenure as well.

We are transitioning to a new system for the collection of assessments. Your 2013 assessment statement is attached which includes the coupon system which was used in the past. You should have also received an email with the new assessment format. Please note that the diocesan assessment was raised this year to \$161 per member of your parish. This increase was approved at the Diocesan Assembly held on November 10th in McKees Rocks. Of this amount, \$95 is directed to the "Central Church" and \$66 will be used to support the Diocesan operations. The current budget is balanced by using a transfer from existing assets as the \$66 does not cover all the local expenses of the diocese. It is the intent of the Diocesan Council to phase in increases to fully fund the Diocesan operations by 2014. Your current assessment is based upon the census number that was provided in September of 2012. These numbers cannot be changed for 2013, as the current budget is predicated upon those numbers.

The Diocesan Council recognizes that this is a significant increase over last year; however there have been virtually no increases in our diocesan portion for many years. This increase will enable the diocese to expand their functions, improve its operating efficiency and support of parishes throughout the diocese and should prove beneficial to each of you. There will be no more separate appeals throughout the year, so please encourage parishioners that might have given directly to the diocese to redirect those donations to your parish. The appeals were not an efficient fund raising mechanism and it is hoped that the new approach will be more efficient and enable the diocese to be more strategic in its planning and operations.

During this transition year, please feel free to use either statement when you remit your monthly assessments. Next year, we will be only using the new format statements. Please remit payment at your earliest convenience but in all circumstances before the end of the month in which the assessment is due. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at helenbillak1@verizon.net or at 412-953-7938. You may also direct any correspondence to the Chancery office.

Thank you for your support of our Church. May God richly bless you for all your efforts.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Helen Billak".

HELEN BILLAK
Treasurer