



# THE FORERUNNER

The Nativity of St. John the Baptist

Orthodox Church o.c.a.

420 Laura Street

Philipsburg, PA 16866

(814) 342-2011

<http://nativityofstjohn-oca.org>

Very Rev. John Horosky - Priest

John Conkey - Council President

July 2015

Glory Be to Jesus Christ!

## Service Schedule

### July 5

General Confession @ 9:30 AM  
Hours @ 9:45 AM  
Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM  
Coffee Hour following Liturgy

### July 12

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

### July 19 Fathers of the First Six Councils

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

### July 26

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

## Reader's Schedule

### Hours

7/5 Doug Donovan  
7/12 Tom Demchak  
7/19 Doug Donovan  
7/26 John Conkey

### Epistle

Mark Ammerman  
Doug Donovan  
George Sura  
John Conkey

## Feasts & Saints

7/1 Wonderworkers Cosmas & Damian  
7/12 St. Veronica  
7/15 Isapostle St. Vladimir  
7/20 Holy Apostle Elias  
7/21 Holy Prophet Ezekiel  
7/22 Isapostle St. Mary Magdalene  
7/27 Great Martyr Panteleimon  
7/28 Apostle Prochorus  
7/31 St. Eudokimos the Martyr

Correction to last month's bulletin:

The date for Jack and Mary Foster's Anniversary is June 18, 1949. Happy 66 years of marriage!

- † Agree that God made you in His image.
- † Agree that God has a plan for your life.
- † Agree that God is for you.
- † Agree that God created you for good works.
- † Agree that ALL THINGS work together for your good.



## Birthdays

Matushka Judy Horosky	07/07
Joanne Whitehead	07/08
Chris Conkey	07/09
Shirley Donovan	07/09
Alexandra Stine	07/12
Cynthia Posmoga	07/15
Andrew Conkey	07/18
Sarah Demchak	07/18
Rose Marie Fetcenko	07/21
Jan Brennish	07/28
Andrew Tocimak	07/30

## Anniversaries

Mary Ann and John Conkey	July 3, 1987
Eleanor and George Sura	July 5, 1959
Svetlana and John Blake	July 11, 1998
Andrew and Louise Tocimak	July 21, 1956

**Remember in your prayers:** Archbishop MELCHISEDEK, Father John, Father Adam, Father Ted, Father Paul, Father Michael, Father Andrew, Father John, Matushka Judy Horosky, Matushka Ksenia Batchko, Larry Ammerman, Mary Ann Ammerman, Jen Ammerman and Victor, Karen Blackburn, Matthew Boroughf, Chris Conkey, John Conkey, James Crites, Helen Czar, Eugene Demchak, Joe Demchak, Mike Demchak, Steve Demchak, Kari Donovan, Matthew Donovan, Michael Evans, Bonnie Fetcenko, Randy Fetcenko, Rose Marie Fetcenko, Olga Finlayson, Kenneth Finlayson, Jack Foster, Mary Foster, Harry Horosky, Alexandra Mamrak, Eugene Minarich, Evan Morgan, Richard Nakles, Gloria Rice, John Saupp, Mary Sura Saupp, Harry Socie, Alexandra Stine, Karen Stine, Eleanor Sura, Andrew Tocimak, Irene Tocimak, Louise Tocimak, Walter Varagea, Delores Varagea, Patricia Wood

*“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*

## Christian Independence Day

by [Phil Ware](http://www.route50.com/religious_stories.htm) on July 05, 2004 *Berg* [http://www.route50.com/religious\\_stories.htm](http://www.route50.com/religious_stories.htm)

July 4th is the business holiday extension of the most treasured national holiday in the United States. Independence Day is a yearly reminder and celebration of our national freedoms. It is also a time to ponder the cost of that freedom. There can be no doubt that freedom often comes at a high price — with the recent Memorial Day remembrances; the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the dedication of the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C.; the 71st anniversary of D-Day and the site of all those crosses on Normandy's hillside; and the ongoing issues in Iraq that continue to claim the lives of Iraqis, Americans, and people from other nations as well; this conclusion seems inescapable. The high cost of this freedom for those who signed the original Declaration of Independence is confirmation of this truth.\*

### Each Sunday, every Lord's Day, is the Christian's Independence Day.

Christians from all over the world often carry a different perspective on world events than those from the U.S. However, on issues of faith, we share deep bonds that transcend our geographical boundaries, primary languages, skin color, and national allegiances. We all know the high cost of our freedom as children of God. Our freedom came at a huge price.

The early followers of Jesus didn't have a yearly celebration to mark this event. Instead, they celebrated their Independence Day each week. From all indications, the first followers of Jesus shared in the Lord's Supper as a gathered group at least every first day of the week. ([Acts 2:42-46](#); [Acts 20:7](#); cf. [1 Corinthians 10:16-17](#); [1 Corinthians 11:17-34](#)) This day of remembrance became known as the Lord's Day among believers by the end of the first century. ([Revelation 1:9-10](#))

During The Supper, Christians remembered the Lord's death on the day of the Lord's victory over death and they anticipated the Lord's return and liberation from a world of decay and death. ([Romans 8:18-25](#); cf. [1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](#)) As they shared in this special time, they also recognized that they were the Body of Christ in the world; His people called to live His life for the world. They were challenged to recognize that each person in Christ's Body is vital to it actually functioning as the presence of Jesus in the broken world. They were reminded that their ultimate allegiance was to a higher calling and a heavenly community that is more important than national and ethnic allegiances ([Philippians 3:20-21](#)) and they anticipated the celebration that awaits when all of earthly differences are lost in the wonder and praise of heaven itself. ([Revelation 7:9](#))

Each Sunday, every Lord's Day, is the Christian's Independence Day. Let's not forget to celebrate it. Let's not forget to remember the high cost of our freedom and to anticipate the day of our ultimate and glorious experience of that freedom

when we see the Lord face to face. ([1 John 3:1-3](#)) Let's not forget that our church family crosses all of earth's boundaries and awaits the Savior of all peoples, languages, tribes, and nations. Let's be reminded that each believer, each brother and sister in God's Kingdom, is precious and vital to the work of the Kingdom in the world. Let's learn to more completely, more universally, more joyfully celebrate our Christian Independence Day and more fully demonstrate the character and compassion of our Lord and King who made this freedom possible.

### ***"Keep Your Fork"***

Ivin Edlund, Jr. from Colorado, [aedlund@chaffee.net](mailto:aedlund@chaffee.net), sent this story that he had received from Jodi Miller.

There was a woman who had been diagnosed with a terminal illness and had been given three months to live. So as she was getting her things "in order," she contacted her pastor and had him come to her house to discuss certain aspects of her final wishes. She told him which songs she wanted sung at the service, what scriptures she would like read, and what outfit she wanted to be buried in. The woman also requested to be buried with her favorite Bible. Everything was in order and the pastor was preparing to leave when the woman suddenly remembered something very important to her.

"There's one more thing," she said excitedly. "What's that?" came the pastor's reply. "This is very important," the woman continued. "I want to be buried with a fork in my right hand."

The pastor stood looking at the woman, not knowing quite what to say. "That surprises you, doesn't it?" the woman asked. "Well, to be honest, I'm puzzled by the request," said the pastor. The woman explained. "In all my years of attending church socials and potluck dinners, I always remember that when the dishes of the main course were being cleared, someone would inevitably lean over and say, 'Keep your fork.' It was my favorite part because I knew that something better was coming like velvety chocolate cake or deep-dish apple pie. Something wonderful, and with substance! So, I just want people to see me there in that casket with a fork in my hand and I want them to wonder 'What's with the fork?'. Then I want you to tell them: **"Keep your fork - the best is yet to come"**.

The pastor's eyes welled up with tears of joy as he hugged the woman good-bye. He knew this would be one of the last times he would see her before her death. But he also knew that the woman had a better grasp of heaven than he did. She KNEW that something better was coming. At the funeral people were walking by the woman's casket and they saw the pretty dress she was wearing and her favorite Bible and the fork placed in her right hand. Over and over, the pastor heard the question "What's with the fork?" And over and over he smiled. During his message, the pastor told the people of the conversation he had with the woman shortly before she died. He also told them about the fork and about what it symbolized to her. The pastor told the people how he could not stop thinking about the fork and told them that they probably would not be able to stop thinking about it either. He was right. So the next time you reach down for your fork, let it remind you, oh so gently, that the best is yet to come.

### ***Does Prayer Make a Difference?***

<http://www.focusonthefamily.com/faith/faith-in-life/prayer/prayer>

"Hear my prayer, O LORD, listen to my cry for help." –Psalm 39:12 (NIV)[\[i\]](#)

"Lord, teach us to pray." –Luke 11:1

"After Jesus said this, He looked toward heaven and prayed." –John 17:1

"They all joined together constantly in prayer." –Acts 1:14

"And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests." –Ephesians 6:18

"Pray continually." -1 Thessalonians 5:17

Throughout the Bible, believers are called to pray. But what is prayer? What does it mean to "pray without ceasing?" And does prayer really make a difference? Before delving too deeply into the topic of prayer, it will be beneficial to first define the term, as well as the focus of our prayers—God.

### **Prayer and God's Nature**

Let's start with the second part. In order to develop a clear idea of prayer, we must first have a clear idea of God. Biblically speaking, God is a personal being. This is critical to prayer because it means that God is a person we can interact with, that He has a will and that we are able to relate to Him on a meaningful level. If He were

impersonal, then prayer would not be meaningful. If He were personal, but uncaring and distant, prayer wouldn't serve a purpose.

Not only is God personal, He is also loving (1 John 4:8, 16; John 3:16). This is also important in relation to prayer. If God were personal, but uncaring or unkind, then prayer might do us more harm than good! But God is not only loving, He is all loving (omnibenevolent). In relation to prayer, this means that God always desires the best for us because He loves us.

God is also all-powerful (omnipotent), meaning that no prayer is beyond His ability to answer, "For nothing is impossible with God" (Luke 1:37). If God were less than all powerful, then we would have no assurance that He could answer or even hear our prayers.

The fact that God is all-knowing (omniscient) is also significant to the concept of prayer. If God were limited, then He would not know all that is happening in His creation. If this were the case, He might overlook our prayers because they might be beyond His knowledge. Fortunately, the Bible is clear that God knows everything (see, for instance, Psalm 139:2-4; 147: 4-5; Isaiah 46:10). In relation to God's omniscience, Jesus said, "Your Father knows what you need before you ask him" (Matthew 6:8).

God is also wise and holy. He knows what is best for us, as well as what will lead us to holiness rather than sin. He is also immanent, meaning that God is active in His creation in a personal way, not only directing greater matters of history, but also involved in the life of everyone. This means that no prayer is too great for Him, but also that no prayer is too small for Him.

While we cannot explore all of God's attributes here, one final one to note, of utmost importance to prayer is God's sovereignty. God is supremely in charge of everything that happens in His universe. Nothing takes Him by surprise and nothing happens in our lives without the knowledge of God, even though we may not always understand His actions: "'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,' declares the LORD. 'As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts'" (Isaiah 55:8-9).

In hearing and responding to our prayers, then, we are assured that God will do so on the basis of His many attributes. His personal nature, love, power, knowledge, wisdom, holiness, immanence and sovereignty all play a role in how we relate to God in prayer and how He relates to us.

**We have only to look at the answered prayers at the Nativity of St. John's in Philipsburg to know the power of prayer.**



*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 candle stands and in front of the icons in the nave are supported by Andrew & Louise Tocimak in loving memory of the Tocimak family.*