



# 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

September 2015

Glory Be to Jesus Christ!

## Service Schedule

### September 6

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

### September 13

Hours @ 9:30 AM  
Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM  
Semi-Annual Meeting

### September 20

Hours @ 9:30 AM  
Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM  
Dinner following Liturgy  
Archbishop Visit/Father's Retirement

### September 27

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

## Reader's Schedule

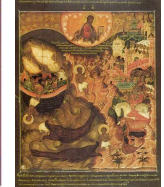
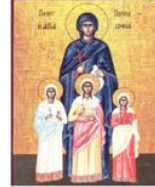
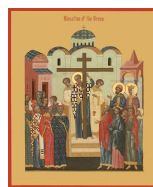
| Hours | Epistle       |
|-------|---------------|
| 9/6   | Doug Donovan  |
| 9/13  | Tom Demchak   |
| 9/20  | John Conkey   |
| 9/27  | Mike Conkey   |
|       | Mark Ammerman |

## Feasts & Saints

|      |  |
|------|--|
| 9/1  | Church New Year                                  |
| 9/5  | Prophet Zachariah, father of St John the Baptist |
| 9/8  | Birth of the Holy Theotokos                      |
| 9/14 | Elevation of the Holy Cross                      |
| 9/15 | Great-Martyr Nikitas the Goth                    |
| 9/17 | St. Sophia                                       |
| 9/22 | Holy Prophet Jonah                               |

## Reminders:

- 9/13/15 (Sun.): Semi-Annual Meeting - following Liturgy
- 9/20/15 (Sun.): His Eminence, Archbishop MELCHISEDEK will visit St. John's
- 11/7/15 (Sat.): Archdiocesan Assembly at St. John's



## Birthdays

|                |      |
|----------------|------|
| Hunter Batchko | 9/19 |
| Mark Ammerman  | 9/23 |
| Elena Batchko  | 9/27 |

## Anniversaries

|                           |           |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| Douglas & Shirley Donovan | 9/1/1973  |
| Linda & Tom Nolder        | 9/10/1983 |

**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.

**Special thank you to: Mary Ann Conkey** for the donation of a new above-range microwave for the parish house. The old microwave, which is considerably smaller, will be moved to the parish hall. **God Grant You Many Blessed Years!**

**Congratulations to: Garret McGraw and Lilia Houser** who were join in the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony on July 26 at St. John the Baptist Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Church in Hawk Run, PA. **God Grant You Many Blessed Years!**

Lilia's mother was able to view the wedding via Skype.



**Yard Sale: Thank You** to all who donated, worked the day of, prepared the food and organized the items for sale, cleaned out and sorted items from the basements, attics and crawl space - we made approximately \$1000 (money still coming in) and got the basements, attics and crawl space cleaned out for the first time in years. Items not sold were donated to the Salvation Army.

**Special Thank you to: Mark Ammerman** for serving the *Obednitsa* during the Sundays Father John was not able to be at St. John's. Mark was prepared with the order of service, the readings and an Orthodox sermon (he found online) that supported the readings. Thank you Mark! **God Grant You Many Blessed Years!**

**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, Alexis Blackburn, 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*

**God has a purpose for your pain,  
A reason for your struggles,  
And a reward for your faithfulness.  
Don't give up!**

## *Father's Corner*

### **Random Writings of the Desert Father & Mothers**

Work is not separated from prayer.

Humility looks to shift the focus of oneself as the center of the world and to place oneself in the service of others.

The humble person is always satisfied, always shares, always gives, always gives thanks. In fact, one learns to give thanks even for misfortunes.

Gratitude (eucharistia) is the vessel that contains grace (charis) is the human expression of a divine expression of a divine experience defined as learning to share.

Someone said to the blessed Arsenius: "How is it that we, with all our education and wide knowledge get nowhere, while these Egyptian peasants acquire so many virtues by hard work?" Abba Arsenius replied, We, indeed, get nothing from our secular education, but these Egyptian peasants acquire the virtues by hard work."

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My dear brothers and sister in Christ,

I have served the Holy Orthodox Church for over 30 years and have never found people like the parishioners of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist. You were a joy to serve the Lord with and your faith has grown. There were many unseen miracles during the years and God is glorified in them. Keep up the good work of glory to God and the Church.

In Christ,

Father John



**Farewell to Father John:** For health reasons, Father John retired on August 31<sup>st</sup> and plans to spend his retirement with his beloved wife, Matushka Judy. Traveling from Punxsutawney, Father John faithfully served our parish for each service, delivering the sacraments, helping with church events, hearing confessions and providing counseling as needed. Father John and Matushka Judy quickly became a part of St. John's family and both will be greatly missed. We were blessed to have Father John serve our parish for many years and we wish him a healthy, happy retirement.

***God Grant You Many Blessed Years and Keep You in His Divine Care!***

## **Church New Year Commemorated on September 1**

The first day of the Church New Year is also called the beginning of the Indiction. The term Indiction comes from a Latin word meaning, "to impose." It was originally applied to the imposition of taxes in Egypt. The first worldwide Indiction was in 312 when the Emperor Constantine (May 21) saw a miraculous vision of the Cross in the sky. Before the introduction of the Julian calendar, Rome began the New Year on September 1. According to Holy Tradition, Christ entered the synagogue on September 1 to announce His mission to mankind (Luke 4:16-22). Quoting Isaiah 61:1-2), the Savior proclaimed, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me; because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent me to proclaim release to captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord..." This scene is depicted in a Vatican manuscript (Vatican, Biblioteca. Cod. Gr. 1613, p.1). Tradition says that the Hebrews entered the Promised Land in September.

## **Love Thy Neighbor - What's the Origin of this Phrase?**

"Love thy neighbor" is a term that's become almost clichéd over the years. But where did it originate, and what does it really mean? In a time when neighbors, at least in America, are people we rarely see (thanks to garage door openers and busy lives), or are thought of as nuisances with barking dogs and noisy children, how can we possibly love our neighbors?

## **Love thy Neighbor - Christ's Answer to Religion**

Love thy neighbor was, in part, Jesus' answer when the Pharisees, the chief religious sect of that day, asked Him about the greatest commandment in the Law (See [Matthew 22:36-40](#)). These religious leaders had made almost an art form of classifying all the various laws and giving them relative degrees of importance, so in asking Jesus this question, their aim was to test Him. His answer stunned them: *Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.*

Jesus was summing up all the law in these two statements. If we love the Lord God with all our heart, soul and mind, loving our neighbor is the natural result. The question then is, who is our neighbor, and how do we love him or her?

Let's look at who Jesus says our neighbor is: *You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you ([Matthew 5:43](#)).*

Is our neighbor more than the guy next door? Could he or she be someone in our community or almost anyone we meet? Could our enemies also be our neighbors? Jesus says that it's so. But how can we love someone who acts hatefully toward us?

When we love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, we grow to recognize that everyone is part of His creation. Will everyone be in heaven? No, but that's not because God doesn't desire that to be the case. His Word tells us that God desires that all would be saved ([1 Timothy 2:4](#)). So it's clear that God sees all of us as potential children. Because He lives outside of time and has seen the end from the beginning, He also knows who will choose salvation and who will not. For us, that is where faith comes in. It is not for us to know who will choose Him and who will not, but we are called to be His witnesses. In order to fulfill that calling, we must love others enough to desire their salvation just as He does.

Here's the good news for those who find this teaching difficult: Nowhere does it say we have to like our neighbor! As for the how part of this formula, we turn to these words from the Apostle Paul. In [Romans 13:8-10](#), Paul says: *Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.*

## **Love Thy Neighbor - Get to Know Jesus**

"Love thy neighbor" is not as hard as it looks on the surface. It simply means respecting others and regarding their needs and desires as highly as we regard our own. Keeping this commandment, however, is likely to require the supernatural assistance only God, through Christ, can provide.

How can we learn to love the guy next door with the barking dog, especially when we don't even like him? Perhaps the secret is to recognize that our neighbor, whether it's the guy next door, the checker at the local grocery store, or the Sunday school teacher at church, is someone as worthy of God's love as you or I. In The Message paraphrase of the Bible, [John 1:14](#) is expressed as follows:

*The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood. We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son, Generous inside and out, true from start to finish.*

Could it be that the way we love our neighbor is through getting to know Christ, the living Word of God? It's human nature to emulate those we admire most, so in getting to know Christ, we'll discover a God worthy of our whole-hearted love, and our neighbor will see that love in us. <http://www.allaboutgod.com/love-thy-neighbor.htm>