

THE FORERUNNER
The Nativity of St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church
 420 Laura Street
 Philipsburg, PA 16866
 (814) 342-2011
 V. Rev. Fr. C. Michael Simerick, Acting Rector
<http://nativityofstjohn-oca.org>



John Conkey-Council President; Tom Demchak-Vice-President; Judy Everly-Secretary; Garret McGraw-Treasurer
Members: Mark Ammerman, John Blake, Sonya Brennish, Mike Conkey, George Sura, Ivan Switala

OCTOBER 2018

Service & Activity Schedule

Wed. Oct. 3 – Council Adult Ed. Class 6:00 p.m.
 Sat. October 6
 Vespers @ 5:00 pm followed by Gen. Confession
 Sun. October 7
 Hours @ 9:35 a.m.
 Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 a.m.
 Fellowship Hour – Simerick & Donovan
 Wed. Oct. 10 – Council Adult Ed. Class 6:00 p.m.
 Sat., October 13
 Panikhida for Sura, Demchak & Donovan families @ 4:30 p.m.
 Vespers @ 5:00 p.m.
 Sun. October 14
 Hours @ 9:35 a.m.
 Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 a.m.
 Fellowship Hour – Foster & Conkey
 Parish Council meeting
 Wed. Oct. 17 – Parish Adult Ed. Class 6:00 p.m.
 Sat. October 20
 Vespers @ 5:00 p.m.
 Sun. October 21
 Hours @ 9:35 a.m.
 Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 a.m.
 Fellowship Hour – Fetcenko & Stine
 Wed. Oct. 24 – Parish Adult Ed. Class 6:00 p.m.
 Sat. October 27
 Vespers @ 5:00 p.m.
 Sun. October 28
 Hours @ 9:35 a.m.
 Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 a.m.
 Fellowship Hour Blake & McGraw
 Wed. Oct. 31 – Parish Adult Ed. Class 6:00 p.m.

Readers:

Mark Ammerman, John Conkey,
 Mike Conkey, Tom Demchak,
 Doug Donovan, George Sura,
 Andrew Tocimak

Altar Servers:

John Blake
 Ivan Switala

Reader's Schedule

	<i>Hours</i>	<i>Epistle</i>
10/7	John Conkey	John Conkey
10/14	Doug Donovan	Doug Donovan
10/21	Mark Ammerman	Mark Ammerman
10/28	Tom Demchak	Tom Demchak

Notable Feasts in October

10/1	Protection of the Most-Holy Theotokos
10/6	St. Innocent, Apostle to the Americas
10/9	St. Tikhon, Patriarch of Russia, Enlightener of North America
10/18	Holy Apostle & Evangelist Luke
10/26	Great Martyr Demetrius the Myrrhgusher

Birthdays

Victor Ammerman	October 8
Rhonda Demchak	October 10
Mary Foster	October 15
Joe Bartko	October 20
Linda Nolder	October 30
Helen Czar	October 31

Anniversaries

Mark & Jennifer Ammerman	October 6, 2007
Mark & Julie Blazosky	October 15, 2005
Larry & MaryAnn Ammerman	October 17, 1965

Please contact Shirley Donovan (814-360-3615) or Mary Ann Conkey (814-867-2926) if there are changes with the Fellowship Hour. Cash donations go towards the purchase of coffee, cream, sugar, and donuts.

THE FEAST OF THE PROTECTION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

On Monday, October 1, our Holy Church commemorates the Feast of the Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos. This feast is particularly revered in the Russian Orthodox Church. The following is taken from the book “The Meaning of Icons” written by Leonid Ouspensky and Vladimir Lossky.

“The festival of the Veil (in Russian ‘Pokrov’, which means both veil and protection), celebrated on October 1, was instituted to commemorate the appearance of the Mother of God at Constantinople in the tenth century. This festival is almost unknown in the East. On the other hand, the Russian Church has always celebrated the Protection of the Mother of God with particular solemnity. Several churches in Russia are dedicated to the ‘Pokrov’.

The account of the appearance is to be found in the Life of St. Andrew ‘the Fool in Christ’ (died 956). It is at the church of Blachernes, where the robe, the veil and part of the girdle of the Holy Virgin are preserved, that the appearance occurred. During the office of the vigil, about four o’clock in the morning, St. Andrew and his disciple Epiphanius saw a majestic woman advancing towards the ambo, supported by St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist, and accompanied by several saints. On reaching the center of the church, the Mother of God knelt down and remained long in prayer, her face bathed in tears. When she had prayed yet again before the altar, she took off the shining veil which enveloped her and, holding it above her head, extended it over all the people present in the church. Andrew and Epiphanius alone were able to see the appearance of the Mother of God and her veil which shone like the glory of God, but all who were present felt the grace of her protection.

This invisible protection of the Mother of God, interceding with her Son for the whole universe, protection that St. Andrew could contemplate in the form of a veil covering the faithful, constitutes the central idea of this feast: ‘The Virgin is today present in the church: with the choirs of the saints she prays to God invisibly for us. Angels and bishops prostrate themselves, apostles and prophets rejoice: for the Mother of God intercedes for us before the eternal God.’

In a popular icon of the Protection (the Novgorod School, sixteenth century) the Mother of God is seen standing on a small cloud, hovering in the air above the crowd of the faithful. Clothed in her traditional maphorion, she has both arms outstretched in the gesture of prayer, which here expresses her prayer of intercession. Two angels hold by either end a great veil which billows in the form of a vault over the Mother of God.”

KNOWLEDGE: A DIVINE GIFT FOR A DIVINE PURPOSE



Science would have us believe that the first man was primitive, a cave man limited in his intellectual capacity and capability. The Book of Genesis reveals to us that Adam communed with God and was commissioned by Him to name the animals (no trivial responsibility since to name something in the scriptural sense was to know the thing in its essence). Adam and Eve were additionally given dominion over all the earth and all the creatures in it. The first man of the Bible is not the cave man of modern science.

The Holy Word of God, however, also reveals to us that Adam and Eve sinned and through sinning, diminished their ability to commune with God and to readily know and come to know the divine essence in all things, the real basis for the gift of knowledge in the first place.

Again, however, the scriptures explain that God did not abandon humanity in this predicament. He sent righteous men and women in every generation inspiring them by the Holy Spirit to enlighten the rest of us. Through some of them He made available to us His eternal word, both in the Old and the New Testaments.

When the fullness of time had come, He sent us His Son, who restored our communion with God, our Creator, and taught us by His words, deeds, and life the knowledge of the mysteries necessary for us to persevere in this life in preparation for the life to come. In addition, our Savior Jesus Christ left us His holy Church, a divine saving institution in the midst of this temporal fallen world. Our holy Church has been compared by theologians and non-theologians alike to many things in order to clarify its purpose and function. In one such comparison, the Church is called a divine school, a divine place of instruction where once again mankind is given the opportunity to come to know God and the mysteries of His salvation plan for us. Through this divine knowledge, our immortal soul is healed, making possible for us to lead a communal Godly life in this world and ultimately for eternity with God in the world to come.

One would surmise that with all that has been revealed to us by God, mankind would pursue this divine knowledge as his first priority. Yet we find that the majority of the human race now and throughout history was and is totally engrossed in the pursuance of understanding in almost every field of study except the study of our relationship with God and our eternal destiny.

In 2 Timothy, 3:1-7, St. Paul explains some of the happenings that will occur as signs at the end time. In verse 7, he says mankind will be “always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” True knowledge about God and all things can only come from God Himself, and He has left us His holy Church that through Her we can come to know all things He has revealed.

I have spoken in the past regarding the importance of religious education. Our Holy Church teaches that upon baptism and Chrismation, we set in motion our restored ability by God’s grace to come to the knowledge of the truth which will continue through all eternity.

Brothers and sisters, in order to facilitate our pursuit of divine knowledge which primarily comes to us through our participation in the liturgical/sacramental services of the Church, adult education classes began on Wed., September 19, for our Parish Council members and will conclude on Wed., October 10. Adult Education classes will begin on Wed., October 17, for **all** adult members of our parish for a four-week period ending on Wed., November 7. This course of study is designed to facilitate our understanding of our Orthodox faith and to help prepare our parish members with the fundamental teachings of our Church that we might embrace a full program of evangelization for the next several years.

As your pastor, I would hope that these adult education classes will serve to enlighten you with regard to the Orthodox faith and prepare you for a ministry of bringing others to Christ and His Holy Church. Let us make every effort to diligently participate in one of the most important aspects of our parish life which is the pursuit of divine knowledge for our own salvation and the salvation of others.

Panikhida Service for the following: Eleanor Sura, Michael Demchak, Helen Minarich, and Arthur Jackson is scheduled for Saturday, October 13, at 4:30 p.m. prior to the Vespers service. May God grant their Memories be Eternal!

Prayers For The Infirm

Larry Ammerman, Elaine Chutko, Louise Demchak, Joseph Demchak, Jack Foster, Rosemarie Fetcenko, Sub-Deacon Christopher Meholick, Alexa and Baby Asa Thompson, Mitchell Tocimak

Prayers for the Deceased

Michael Demchak, Betty Royer, and Louise Tocimak

In Memoriam:

Prospora Bread Bowl/Post Communion Wine Cups and Saucers (Zion Set).

The brass prospora bread bowl in memory of Matushka Judy Horosky has been received and blessed for use in our liturgical services. Yet to be received are the zion post communion wine cups and saucers.

Donations are still being taken for the items listed above in memory of Matushka Judy. For those wishing to contribute, please submit your donations at the candle stand at the back of the church.

Two Post Communion Wine Carafe Dispensers were blessed and used for the first time on Sunday, September 23. They were donated by Shirley and Doug Donovan in memory of Shirley’s godparents, Helen Minarich and Arthur Jackson. May God grant their memories be eternal!

Special Thanks To: Svetlana Blake for her meticulous care of the shrubbery surrounding the rectory and especially for her creativity in shaping one of the bushes to resemble the cupola on top of our church. May God bless her and her family for her diligence and care.

To: all of the families who participate in providing the fellowship hour luncheons after the Divine Liturgy on Sundays. They are continuing the tradition of the early Church in the practice of Agape, a love meal that was shared by all of the members of a community after Sunday services.

To: our Parish Council officers/members, choir director/members, readers, and servers who diligently perform their duties that the liturgical/sacramental and administrative work of our parish might function smoothly for the glory of God and well-being of His Holy Church.

Prayers for the Infirm – The individuals being prayed for in the petitions during the divine services are suffering at the time being commemorated from spiritual, physical, or psychological duress. They are individuals in need of prayer and intervention to God for their healing.

Every person is in need of intercessory prayers before God so that they might receive grace and spiritual healing and fortification that they might live their daily lives in full communion with God and with others. Therefore, a list is provided below of parish members so that each and every one of us has an opportunity to intercede for them before the throne of God during the time of the day and evening that we set aside for prayer. May God hear and respond to our prayers of intercession.

Ammerman	MaryAnn	Brennish	Sonya	Donovan	Doug	Nakles	Richard
	Larry	Cardinal	Elaine		Shirley	Nolder	Linda
	Mark	Chutko	Elaine	Everly	Thomas	Posmoga	Cynthia
	Lilian	Conkey	John		Judy	Simerick	Fr. Michael
	Vincent		MaryAnn	Fetcenko	Mildred		Mat. Linda
	Victor		Andrew	Fetcenko	RoseMarie	Stine	Karen
Blackburn	Karen		Michael		Bonnie	Sura	George
Blake	John		Christopher	Foster	Jack	Switala	Ivan
	Svetlana	Czar	Helen		Mary	Thompson	Holly
	Anastasia	Demchak	Joseph	McGraw	Garret	Tocimak	Andrew
	Elizabeth	Demchak	Thomas		Lilia	Tocimak	Mitch
Blazosky	Julie		Rhonda		Isabella	Whitehead	Joanne

COMMUNAL THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Contact members of our parish whom you have not seen attending church for a while. Inquire about them and volunteer to assist them in coming to church in the month of October. May God help us to assist our brothers and sisters in any way possible to be more actively involved in the life of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist parish.