

Visitors, please read

We warmly welcome all visitors and seekers in our midst today.

Holy Communion is the greatest gift on earth. It is given by God to baptized and chrismated Orthodox Christians, who have prepared themselves with regular prayer, fasting (from midnight, unless there is a medical condition), and confession, and who have the blessing of their spiritual father or confessor to receive it.

We welcome anyone visiting for the first time, and we trust that your experience here will be an uplifting and enriching one. The Orthodox Christian Church is actually a community of local Churches, whose roots are the ancient and native Christian communities of the biblical world, with centers in Jerusalem, Syria, Egypt, and Asia Minor, and by extension in Greece, Cyprus, Russia, North America, and throughout the world.

As a continuation of the ancient Church, we engage the whole person, heart, mind, and all senses in divine worship. This experience has been so powerful to seekers in the past that it was often said "We knew not whether we were in heaven or on earth. We knew only that there God dwelt among men" (Russian Primary Chronicle). That experience of heaven on earth and God in our midst forms the heart of all Orthodox worship.

Our worship culminates in the sharing of Holy Communion, which not only unites us with the Divine, but also expresses the deep unity in faith and life among all Orthodox believers. Since Holy Communion expresses that deep unity in belief and practice alike, it is reserved for practicing Orthodox Christians, who have properly prepared themselves with prayer, fasting, and recent confession. This is because the Orthodox choose not to make an external display of unity with other Christian groups when actual unity of faith and practice does not exist.

While working to restore the full communion that did exist among Christians in antiquity, today we offer the blessed bread (*antidoron*) at the conclusion of the Liturgy, as a gift of hospitality and of growing unity that is offered to all present. If you would like to learn more about the Orthodox way of life, or have any questions about worship or Holy Communion, please approach Fr. Michael or one of the other clergy following the Liturgy.

Thank you for joining us, and again, we welcome you all.

We hope you enjoy your visit with us here at Holy Cross, and we thank you for joining us today.

We formally invite you and/or your guests to join us for coffee hour in the community center next door. If you can stay, we would love to have you!

Sunday, March 15, 2020 ~ St. Gregory Palamas

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 1:10-14; 2:1-3

"In the beginning, Thou, Lord, didst found the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of thy hands; they will perish, but thou remainest; they will all grow old like a garment, like a mantle thou wilt roll them up, and they will be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years will never end." But to what angel has he ever said, "Sit at my right hand, till I make thy enemies a stool for thy feet?" Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation?

Therefore we must pay closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. For if the message declared by angels was valid and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard him.

The Gospel According Mark 2:1-12

At that time, Jesus entered Capernaum and it was reported that he was at home. And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room for them, not even about the door; and he was preaching the word to them. And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and when they had made an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic lay. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "My son, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, "Why does this man speak thus? It is a blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question thus in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your pallet and walk? But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins'-he said to the paralytic-"I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home." And he rose, and immediately took up the pallet and went out before them all; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

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Fr. Michael Kallaur
Fr. Daniel Korba
Dn. Frank Dickos

March 13, 2020

There will be no coffee hour today.

THIS WEEK:

Monday – March 16 **6:30pm Great Compline**

Tuesday – March 17

Wednesday – March 18 **6pm Presanctified Liturgy**

Thursday – March 19

Friday – March 20 **9am Presanctified Liturgy**
6:30pm Salutations

Saturday – March 21 **5pm Vespers /Confessions**

Looking ahead to next Sunday: His Eminence Metropolitan Savas of Pittsburgh will preside at the Divine Liturgy for the Sunday of the Veneration of the Cross.

2020 Food Fair update: Our annual food fair will take place on **June 16, 17, 18 and 19.** All are welcome and encouraged to once again help make this year's festival a successful event. This is a large undertaking for our community, so everyone's participation is encouraged as we showcase our beautiful church and heritage. Please call or email me with any suggestions or questions you may have. I look forward to working with everyone. **Takis Kontoulis 412-780-3363 or etakis@yahoo.com**

Beloved Members and Friends of Holy Cross,

**Christ is in our midst!
He is and shall always be!**

Today, on the second Friday of the Great Fast, we are engaged in both physical and spiritual warfare. There is a virus that wants to attack us physically and for the majority of us, thankfully by God's mercy, we will experience little or no lasting impact. However, for those who are elderly and in situations with other health issues, this might not be the case. Therefore we are taking steps to slow the spreading of the virus as best as we can. We do not want to have a situation where our hospitals and doctors are overwhelmed and unable to provide the necessary medical assistance and medicines for those who need it.

Today, and everyday, we pray for God's mercy, love, compassion, and protection. Whatever we encounter and experience, that it may somehow be for our spiritual benefit and to help us along the path of salvation. We must think of our brothers and sisters in Christ and do what is best for them.

In discussions with our Parish Council President and in following the directives from our Metropolitan SAVAS and the Synod of Bishops of the Archdiocese, we will be limiting all non-liturgical activities for the remainder of March. Our Parish Council President, Stephanie Kladakis Myers, will be sending out a letter with the details of these cancellations and certain modifications. We are blessed to have our services streamed live through our website (holycrosspgh.org), so that if you are unable to be present in person, you will be with us through prayer.

Also this developing situation provides us with a challenge to minister. As events develop in our communities, we will be looking for ways to serve those who have been effected by the Coronavirus. If you have suggestions or ideas of how the Church might help, please share them with me or the Parish Council.

Also with the cancellation of many activities we have the possibility to attend the Church services (if healthy) and to spend more time as a family- doing those things that are often neglected. Praying together, reading the Scriptures, eating, and enjoying being together.

Let us not act out of fear and paranoia, but rather out of love and confidence that our Great God and Savior Jesus Christ will deliver us and protect us. We call upon the intercessions of the Holy Theotokos and of all the saints who have been pleasing to God to assist us. May He bless our efforts!

Wishing you courage and strength in the face of our physical and spiritual battles!

With love and prayers,
Fr. Michael

Dear Holy Cross Parishioners,

With growing concern over Covid-19 (Coronavirus), Father Michael and I wanted to share the steps we're taking here at Holy Cross to keep our community healthy.

In an effort to minimize the risk of illness, all Holy Cross social events will be cancelled or postponed from today until March 29th.

All services will continue as scheduled and the Eucharist will be distributed as per usual. For older adults, people who have severe underlying chronic medical conditions like heart or lung disease or diabetes, or people that are in close contact with these groups, please consider viewing the services with our live streaming church video.

If you feel sick (fever, coughing, sneezing or muscle aches), please stay home and rest.

The list below provides examples of events that are postponed/cancelled. If you require further clarification, please contact Father Michael or me.

- Coffee Hour (3/15, 3/22, 3/29)
- Sunday School (3/15, 3/22, 3/29)
- Greek School (3/18, 3/25)
- Community Night (3/19)
- First Steps (3/17)
- Golden Club (3/17)
- Sts. Mary & Martha (3/17)
- Greek School Luncheon and Program (3/22)
- GOYA Volleyball (3/17)

For services, the following steps will be implemented in order to minimize risk of illness.

- No basket will be passed for stewardship collections. Please mail donations to the church or place in stewardship donation box in the Narthex.
- Hand sanitizer is provided in the Narthex to disinfect our hands as we enter the Church.
- Parishioners should feel free to refrain from reverencing Fr. Michael's hand.
- Honor may be shown to Icons and the blessing cross by only bowing.

We will continue to provide regular updates as new information is available and/or additional decisions are made. Thank you for your understanding and continued support.

Sincerely,
Stephanie Kladakis Myers
412-221-1848
skladakis@gmail.com

The applications for the **Popi Hagelios Memorial Philanthropy Award of Holy Cross Philoptochos Society** MUST be received by 4pm THIS Friday, March 20 in the church office or NEXT Sunday, March 22 to Elaine Sofis at church or her home, 121 Woodhaven Dr, Mt. Lebanon. *NO exceptions.*

Circle of Angels Cancellation We appeal to our dear Baking Angels to please freeze your Pascha cookies that you usually offer for our shut-ins. The Circle of Angels has decided that it would not be safe for the Visiting Angels to enter nursing homes at this time: neither for the visitors nor the people who are visited. The visitors could be carriers of illness from one home to another. We will let you know when to bring your cookies to the church for distribution, after the danger is over. Lord, have mercy on all of us. ~Carol and Christine

Save the Date (*pending current conditions*) for **Pascha bread making on Monday, March 30** at 10am for rolling and twisting. Bread egg washing begins about 11:30am and wrapping and selling from 2:00-4:30pm. \$10 a loaf. Thank you for your time. Additional bread sales on April 5 & 12.

<p>TO RENEW OR JOIN PHILOPTOCHOS for 2020, please complete and return to church or to <i>Connie Carabalis, 224 Mt. Lebanon Blvd, Pittsburgh 15234</i></p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>Telephone _____</p> <p>Email _____</p> <p>*From your Philoptochos Stewardship donation, \$15 is sent to National Philoptochos in NYC and \$10 is sent to the Pittsburgh Metropolis Philoptochos. Anything over \$25 goes to Holy Cross Philoptochos. Or see any Board Member to pay your dues!</p>
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Save the date (*pending current conditions*) ...

Palm Sunday, April 12, 2020 Fish Luncheon

sponsored by Holy Cross Philoptochos

Adults \$10/Children (6-12) \$5/5 and under FREE