



Church website: www.hrocbv.org

Church Social Hall: (724) 929-7448

Holy Resurrection Orthodox Church

222 Mary Street, Rostraver Township, PA
(Serving the faithful of Belle Vernon and surrounding areas)

Reverend Father Stephan Gresh

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Ordained Reader

& Choir Master: Peter Merella: (724) 787-2031

September 20, 2020

Glory be to Jesus Christ! Glory be Forever!

Services	Sat., Sept. 26 th	Repose of Apostle/Evangelist John the Theologian	
		Hours	8:45 am
		Divine Liturgy	9 am
		Great Vespers	7 pm
	Sun., Sept. 27 th	Martyr Callistratus	
Hours		9:45 am	
Divine Liturgy		10 am	
	Mon., Sept. 28 th	Our Holy Father Charlton	
Hours		8:45 am	
Divine Liturgy		9 am	

Epistle

(2 Corinthians 4:6-15)

For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.

We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; *we are* perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed –

always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

So then death is working in us, but life in you.

And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "*I believed and therefore I spoke,*" we also believe and therefore speak,

knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present *us* with you.

For all things *are* for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

Gospel

(Matthew 22:35-46)

Then one of them, a lawyer, asked *Him a question*, testing Him, and saying,

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?”

Jesus said to him, “***You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.***’

“This is *the* first and great commandment.

“And *the* second is like it: ‘*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*’

“On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them,

saying, **“What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?”** They said to Him, *“The Son of David.”*

He said to them, **“How then does David in the Spirit call Him ‘Lord,’ saying:**

‘The LORD said to my Lord,

“Sit at My right hand,

Till I make Your enemies Your footstool?’

If David then calls Him ‘Lord,’ how is He his Son?”

And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.

*Take time to read the scriptures to prepare your heart and mind
for Sunday’s Liturgy.

Next Week -- Epistle: 2 Corinthians 6:1-10

Gospel Reading: Luke 5:1-11

Announcements:

Notes from Parish Council: Parish Council conducted its first in person meeting since the beginning of the pandemic with all Council members maintaining social distancing. Below are some important meeting updates:

1. Treasurer’s Report:
 - YTD: Total Income = \$59,580.60 - Total Expenses = \$63,294.51 = Difference of -\$3,713.91
 - \$2,961.08 school tax due on September 30th
2. The council approved increasing the permitted capacity from 25 to 40. This is based on the amount of space in the church to be able to maintain the recommended social distancing.
3. We plan to still have the three liturgies until the end of September. Starting in October, that will be reduced to two liturgies per week based on feedback from the parishioners.
4. The next Parish Council meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, October 13th at 7 p.m.**

The Orthodox Pen Pal Program is being hosted by Telos POP, an organization working to strengthen Orthodox Communities. They are connecting Orthodox Youth from all over via letter writing. Any Orthodox Christian in Grades 7 - 12 is more than welcome to join. See below letter for more information.

Dear Reverend Fathers, Youth Directors, Parents, and Students,

I joined with TelosPOP, an organization funded by HC/HC+ working with Young Adults to take on projects which will help to encourage thriving Orthodox parishes.

I am undertaking a project aimed at strengthening the faith of our American Orthodox youth, which I am calling the Orthodox Pen Pal Program. (OP^{^3})

Who: Orthodox youth from around the country, grades 7 - 12.

What: Each participant will be paired with another student.* The participants will exchange letters introducing themselves, getting to know one another, sharing their experience as Orthodox Christian youth, and discussing monthly prompts.**

Where: Communications from the program to the students and parents will be via the Remind App. Each student will fill out the Sign-Up Questionnaire. (A link will be provided) They will be contacted with their first prompt and partner's name. Each student will write their letter and mail it to a central address (to maintain data privacy), it will then be forwarded to the recipient's address. (These will be physical letters via first-class mail - way more exciting than email)

When: The Students will be urged to sign up ASAP so initial letters can be mailed by the end of September. Students will be asked to write a minimum of one letter per month to their pen pal over at least five months.***

Why: In the United States, 1 out of every 328 people identifies as an Orthodox Christian. This leads to many students being the sole Orthodox Christian in their class at school, their peer group, their sports team, etc. This can feel very isolating and make it hard for the student to maintain an Orthodox lifestyle when societal/peer pressures are so heavy

The short term goal is for the students to:

- Be introduced to a new friend in the Orthodox world while exploring and strengthening their Orthodox Faith through shared experience as well as Orthodox discussion prompts
- Show students the universality of a faith we tend to forget is so widespread

The long term goal is for the students to :

- Build connections with other Orthodox Youth and feel less like a minority
- Give one another an unbiased sounding board for the difficulties of growing up Orthodox in our secular society and offer support to one another in their Spiritual Journeys
- Expand the students' community beyond their parish and see the differences as well as the overwhelming similarities in the experiences of Orthodox youth throughout the country
- Realize that they can be "at home" anywhere there is an Orthodox Church
- Possibilities to encourage one another through these meaningful Orthodox relationships become endless with college choices/travel/camp attendance etc

* Students will be paired based on multiple factors in the Sign-Up Questionnaire

** age appropriate writings from the church fathers, Saints' lives, prayers, Bible passages, etc.

*** If after exchanging a minimum of 7 letters over at least 5months, the participants would like to share personal mailing addresses in order to continue writing letters, that will be an option. This must be approved by the parents of both students in order for the information to be shared.

In Christ,

Varah Lynette Kambourglos Kappatos (varah.lynette@gmail.com)

HELP WANTED, NO EXPERIENCE or SPECIAL TRAINING NECESSARY, HOURS FLEXIBLE! Where could you find a help wanted ad like this? Help is needed in tackling the weeds that have been growing around the church. With the donation of some of your time to fill a plastic grocery bag with weeds you can put a tremendous dent into this project. Please consider stopping by the church whenever you can to lend a hand! It's a great opportunity to get out as well as maintaining social distancing! **Teamwork works wonders!** Thank you in advance! Please bring your own gardening equipment.

From Fr. Stephan:

Recently, parishioners, as well as friends, neighbors, and even strangers who recognize me as a clergy express their concerns in regards to the civil/political unrest as well as the corona virus situation.

Now, more than ever, we need to come together as the “Body of Christ” and let the “Light of Christ” shine through us. I am going to ask that everyone in the parish add these special petitions to their daily prayers.

Again, we pray, O Lord, that You come to our aid now during the global spread of the Coronavirus and be with the families of those who are sick and who have died. May the sick regain their strength and health, and as they worry and grieve, defend them from further illness and despair. Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working together and neighbors from helping one another. Give wisdom and strength to our federal government, our state governments, together with the leaders of all nations, and give them foresight to act with charity and true concern for the well-being of the people they serve. Give them the added wisdom to invest in long-term solutions that will help prepare for and prevent future outbreaks. O Lord hear us and have mercy.

Again, we pray, O Lord, that You be with the doctors, nurses, researchers, and all medical professionals who seek to heal those affected and who put themselves at risk in the process. Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders. We pray that You stay by our side in this time of uncertainty and sorrow. Whether we are home or abroad, surrounded by many people suffering from this illness or only a few, we pray that You stay with us as we endure and mourn, prepare, and persist. O Lord hear us and have mercy.

Petitions at the Augmented Litany in a Time of Civil Unrest

Again we pray for this country and for all its cities, towns, and countrysides that are riven by strife; for all those who are victims of violence, of hatred and injustice, of disorder and unrest, and especially for those who have been killed, that they might find their repose in thee; for all who are beset by anger and fear; for those in civil authority and all who enforce the law; and for all the people of this land: for justice, godly liberty, mercy, a peaceful life, and remission of our sins. O Lord hear us and have mercy.

Again we pray that all people of this land, its rulers and authorities, its citizens and all who reside here, might be enlightened with the light of thy Gospel and thy commandments, unto peace and good order and love for one another, so that we might easily and safely pass from our temporary homeland here to, our true homeland with thee in heaven. O Lord hear us and have mercy.

Update from Fr. Stephan:

Westmoreland and the surrounding counties are currently “green”, however, protocols are updated almost weekly. To continue maintaining the safety and wellbeing of our parishioners, we are keeping our attendance number at 25 at each of the three services in addition to following the below Precautions. As we continue to endure during these difficult and trying times, we must remember *“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of sound mind.”* (2 Timothy 1:7)

Precautions that are now in place include:

- a) We will ***maintain social distancing***. Every other pew has been taped off. This provides 6’3” between rows. The center isle is 5’ wide so available rows alternate from side to side. For right now we are asking that two people sit in each pew unless they are a family group. This may change as things open up further.
- b) ***Masks are now mandatory in public spaces where the general public is admitted***. Example: when you come to communion Fr. Stephan will wear a mask so that you will be able to receive.
- c) Fr. Stephan will use an ***individual spoon for each communicant***. Every spoon will be cleaned and sanitized by Fr. Stephan.
- d) ***One of the parish council members will act as a greeter*** opening the doors and help to facilitate activities.
- e) There will be ***NO congregating at the candle stand***. The prayer/candle forms will be available in the pews. Fill them out at your seats. Drop in baskets at the candle stand.
- f) The ***doors are required to be locked at the start of service*** so please plan to be early! Signs will be posted on the doors.
- g) ***Fr. Stephan will continue to call to schedule***. If you sign up for a day and are not going to be able to attend, let Fr. Stephan know ASAP so that someone else has the opportunity to attend. Fr. Stephan is required to keep a log of every one who attends.
- h) The Church is cleaned and sanitized after each service. Please be considerate and make our jobs easier. ***If you use a service book please leave it on the pew so that it can be sanitized***.