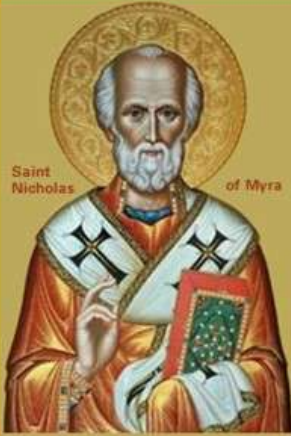


SUNDAY OF THE PUBLICAN AND PHARISEE



*Icon of the Publican and Pharisee*



**ST. NICHOLAS OF MYRA  
BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

*2200 Arctic Boulevard  
Anchorage, AK 99503*

**BL. THEODORE ROMZHA  
BYZANTINE CATHOLIC MISSION**

*Sacred Heart Church 1201 E Bogard Rd,  
Wasilla, AK 99654  
2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month*



Administration

His Eminence, Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skurla DD  
Archeparchy of Pittsburgh

Apostolic Administrator, Bishop Kurt Burnette for  
Holy Protection of Mary Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Phoenix

Parish Administration: Reverend Father Vasyl Mutka

Office Hours: Monday through Friday 10am-4pm (Please Call before coming to the office)

Phone: (907) 277-6731

E-mail: [pastorstnicholas@yahoo.com](mailto:pastorstnicholas@yahoo.com)

[www.ak-byz-cath.org](http://www.ak-byz-cath.org)



**WELCOME TO ALL PARISHIONERS & GUESTS WHO HAVE JOINED US TODAY**

Whether you're searching for a new church home or just visiting, we're glad you're with us today. If you are looking for God, have a prayer request, looking for more information about the Eastern Catholic Church, would like to join our parish, or would like to speak with Fr. Vasyl, he will be happy to talk to you. Please join us for our coffee hour in the Parish hall following the Divine Liturgy. We want to get to know you! God bless you!

## **Schedule of Services**

### **FEBRUARY 9—FEBRUARY 16, 2025**

**Sunday, February 9—Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee; Leave-taking of the Meeting**

9:15-9:45 am Confessions

9:40 am 3rd Hour

10:00 am Divine Liturgy *For parishioners, founders, donors, decorators of our St. Nicholas Parish & Wasilla Mission and for their relatives*

3:15-3:45 pm Confessions

4:00 pm Divine Liturgy in Wasilla

**Monday, February 10**

9:30 am Morning Prayer

**Tuesday, February 11**

9:30 am Morning Prayer

**Wednesday, February 12**

6:30 pm Divine Liturgy

**Thursday, February 13**

No Divine Liturgy

**Friday, February 14**

9:30 am Divine Liturgy

**Saturday, February 15**

4:15-4:45 pm Confessions

5:00 pm Vespers/Divine Liturgy

**Sunday, February 16—Sunday of the Prodigal Son**

9:15-9:45 am Confessions

9:40 am 3rd Hour

10:00 am Divine Liturgy *For parishioners, founders, donors, decorators of our St. Nicholas Parish & Wasilla Mission and for their relatives*

**Do not forget prayer—it is the life of the soul.**

*+ St. Nikon of Optina*



**Please remember in your prayers:**

**For health and salvation:** Fr. Chris Zegger, Fr. Joseph Wargacki, Fr. Robert, Fr. Eric, Veronica Frazier, David Bich, Denise, Ed, Dennis, Max, Aniela, Ken Wake, Molly Buggy, Kim Bryan, Shawn, Anna Gage, Oceana Grabianowski, Anthony Heller, Solanche Stone, Dorothy Savok, Spruce Lynch

**For repose of the departed:** +Bishop Gerald N Dino, +Fr. Michael Artim, +Christine Vincent, +Corine Hurst, +Ruth Langley Ayers

Please pray also for all our benefactors, friends, neighbors and anyone we may have forgotten. Please let Fr. Vasyl know if you would like to add new names to the prayer list and also notify him about any sick and/or hospitalized parishioners and family members.

**Year-End Contribution Acknowledgement:** Please pick up your year-end contribution letter. Each donor has an envelope that contains this information. Check the welcome table in the hallway. If you don't see your name on an envelope, please see Sharry. Thank you for your support of our parish. God bless you.

**ECF:** Next Sunday, February 16, will be an Adult Eastern Christianity class at 12:45 p.m. The theme for this class is "God's mercy and His grace." Adults and young adults are encouraged to attend as part of their spiritual development.

**Alive in Christ** (retreat for youths): The Eparchy of Phoenix Vocation Office is pleased to announce our upcoming 2025 Alive in Christ Camp. This year's camp will take place on July 10-13, 2025 at Palomar Christian Conference Center in San Diego County, California. This ascetical boot camp is for boys aged 7- 17 and for dads/guardians, with an emphasis on vocational discernment and growth in the life in Christ.

**All Souls Saturdays:** We have 5 All Souls Saturdays to commemorate our dead relatives. The first All Souls Saturday will be on February 22, 2025. Envelopes "All Souls Saturdays" are available on the welcome table on the hallway and also in the narthex of the church.

**Sunday Coffee Hour:** Dear parishioners, every Sunday we have Putlock. Please bring your favorite food for sharing. Thank you for your open-heartedness.



2025 Kodiak Island

**BISON HUNT RAFFLE**



2018 Winners Britany Brown & Cassie Rogers of North Pole, Alaska

**PRIZE DESCRIPTION**

- > Guided hunt on "Kodiak Game Ranch", Kodiak Island
- > Guaranteed 2 to 4-year-old bull (Head, meat, and hide)
- > Up to three days' meals and lodging with ground transportation during hunt
- > No hunting license required (private ranch)
- > Travel to and from Kodiak is not included.
- > Hunt scheduling to be arranged by winner (Optimum period is September through January)

OR

- > \$3,500 CASH

Drawing is 10 AM, May 11, 2025, at St. Ann's Hall, Co-Cathedral of Nativity of BVM in Juneau

One drawing for each 1300 Tickets Sold!

Ticket Price \$20.00 - Tickets are transferable - Need not be present to win.

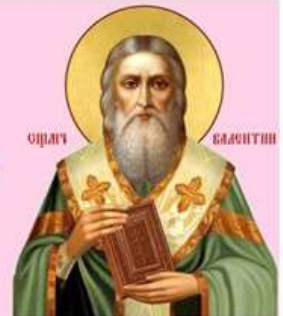
The proceeds benefit Knights of Columbus charitable works in Alaska.

Alaska Permit # 1631 - Winners posted at [www.alaskakofcstate.com](http://www.alaskakofcstate.com).

Winners of 2024 Raffle were Trygve Haugen, Fairbanks; Anthony Alfonso, Palmer; Colette Cartner, North Pole; Richard Czech, Fairbanks; Thomas Laird, Grand Junction CO.

For tickets contact Fr. Vasyl

**Friday  
February 14**



**First class Relic of Hieromartyr Valentine will be available for veneration in our church.**

**Please share this information with your family, loved ones, neighbors, friends and anyone who might be interested in this event.**

**Schedule of services:**

**9:30 am—Divine Liturgy  
Prayer to St. Valentine**

**There will also be an opportunity to pray and venerate the First class Relic of St. Valentine on Sunday, February 16.**

**ANSWERING GOD'S CALL:** "O God, be merciful to me a sinner." The Publican prayed simply for mercy, and our Byzantine prayer services begin with these simple words. Do you want to receive and share this mercy by giving your life to prayer as a religious, monastic, priest or deacon? Contact the Vocations Office at 602-861-9778 or email: [vocations@ephx.org](mailto:vocations@ephx.org)

#### **Vocation Icon:**



Everyone in the parish is invited to have this icon in their home for a week of special prayer for vocations. Please sign up on the sheet that you can find in our parish hall. If you would like to take the icon again, please feel free to do it. Please bring the Icon on the following Sunday and leave it on the Tetrapod for the next family.

*Thank you for your prayerful support to those who have recognized the calling of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

#### **Prayer for Vocations**

Lord our God, older than all creation, you have made us in your image and likeness.

You have given us the gift of the Holy Spirit through your servants who proclaim the good news of your Church all that is necessary for our sanctification.

We humbly beg you, do not leave your people deprived of spiritual gifts, but grant us an abundance of vocations to your holy priesthood, the diaconate and consecrated life, and to lives dedicated to your service.

Open the hearts of men and women to hear your words, "Come, follow me!"

Indeed, do not leave us orphans, but be with us through your Holy Spirit, who is present everywhere and fills all things, and who raises up mere mortals to divine service by the mystery of his grace.

Truly you will never forget your promise to be with us always, until the end of the world, but forgive us if we have, in our weakness, failed to follow you as we should.

For you alone are holy now and ever and forever. Amen.

**Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee:** Today is the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee, named after the gospel reading we hear this Sunday, the story Jesus gave about a Publican who goes to the temple to pray and the publican who goes to the temple to pray. Last night, at Vespers, we opened a service book and began using it in our church services – the Lenten Triodion. It is only used during Lent so that we can say we've entered the fast – but we're not fasting. Instead we are preparing ourselves for the Great Fast. And one of the first things the church tells us in our preparation for fasting is: don't fast! Don't fast on Wednesday of this week and don't

fast on Friday of this week that we might not become like the Pharisee in today's gospel, thinking that it's the fast that saves us; thinking that it's prayer that saves us. Remember, our Lord says at one place in the gospels, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord' will enter the kingdom of heaven."

If we take a closer look at the Pharisee in today's gospel we'll notice that he was a good man. He fasted regularly. He went to the temple regularly. He tithed regularly. But when he prayed that's all he talked about. And so he says to God in his prayer, "I thank you God that I'm not like other people, robbers, evildoers....or even this publican. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get." Such a prayer is not pleasing to God who distances Himself from evildoers. Many of the holy fathers teach us that humility is the mother of all virtues. It opens the doors to our salvation. It was this virtues that adorned the heart of the publican and not the Pharisee even though he had many good deeds.

Holy Scripture, both the Old and New Testament, are filled with examples of the dangers of pride. This is the reason the Church decided to give us this morning's gospel reading to begin our preparation for Great Lent, that we be given this lesson about humility.

We need to be sober-minded and always aware of our sins. As our holy St. Bishop Nicholas points out, God is more pleased when man numbers his sins and not his good deeds, because He is our Physician and comes to our bed and asks us our pains. Foolish is the man who conceals his pain speaks to the Physician of his good health and wise is the one who tells him of all his pains. St. John Chrysostom says that to sin is evil but to not speak about it is the greatest sin for we unless we speak about it we'll find no cure.

This is precisely the goal and aim of Great Lent. Yes, we are to fast and abstain from certain foods, but that's not the point – the point is to change and grow closer to God.

May the Lord strengthen us in our faith that we approach the coming Lenten season with a humble heart.


*"...no one should presume upon his own righteousness nor distrust God's mercy which shines out more pre-eminently then, when the sinner is made holy and the downcast lifted up. For the measure of heavenly gifts does not rest upon the quality of our deeds, nor in this world, in which "all life is temptation," is each one rewarded according to his deserving, for if the Lord were to take count of a man's iniquities, no one could stand before His judgment."*

*St Pope Leo the Great*

# OUR JOURNEY TO PASCHA! 2025

Created by Fr. Jonathan Bannon (ACROD)

Adapted by Fr Vitalii Stashkevych (BCC) for the Gregorian Calendar

SUNDAYS	THEMES / GOSPEL READING	HOW TO PARTICIPATE:
Fast - Free Week FEBRUARY 9 <sup>TH</sup>	 <i>TRIODION WEEKS</i> <b>Publican and the Pharisee</b> Epistle: 2 Timothy 3:10-15 Gospel: Luke 18:10-14	Show compassion on the poor and distressed. Trust in God, not yourself and ask for His help before every task this week.
Normal Fast Week FEBRUARY 16 <sup>TH</sup>	 <b>The Prodigal Son Returns!</b> Epistle: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 Gospel: Luke 15:11-32	Schedule a Confession. Every morning say, "Today I will be humble." Use up/freeze meats this week.
Meatfare FEBRUARY 23 <sup>RD</sup> FAREWELL TO MEAT TODAY	 <b>The Last Judgement</b> Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2 Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46	Pray facing East this week. Christ is returning from the East and we wait for Him! Use up/freeze dairy this week.
Cheesefare MARCH 2 <sup>ND</sup> FAREWELL TO CHEESE TODAY	 <b>Adam and Eve are cast from Paradise!</b> <i>FORGIVENESS SUNDAY</i> Epistle: Romans 13:11-14:4 Gospel: Matthew 6:14-21	Ask each other for forgiveness each evening this week before bed.
1 <sup>ST</sup> Sunday of Lent MARCH 9 <sup>TH</sup>	 <i>GREAT LENT BEGINS WITH FORGIVENESS VESPERS</i> <b>SUNDAY of ORTHODOXY</b> Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2 Gospel: John 1:43-51	Bring an icon to church for a procession.
2 <sup>ND</sup> Sunday of Lent MARCH 16 <sup>TH</sup>	 <b>ST GREGORY PALAMAS</b> Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3 Gospel: Mark 2:1-12	Bring a prayer rope to be blessed today! Use it and pray the Jesus Prayer each day this week.
3 <sup>RD</sup> Sunday of Lent MARCH 23 <sup>RD</sup>	 <b>VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS</b> <i>HALF WAY TO PASCHA!</i> Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-5:6 Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1	Wear your cross to church and kiss the cross each morning with a bow!
4 <sup>TH</sup> Sunday of Lent MARCH 30 <sup>TH</sup>	 <b>ST JOHN of the LADDER</b> Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20 Gospel: Mark 9:17-31	Every time you climb stairs this week ask St. John to help you reach Paradise with the sign of the cross!
5 <sup>TH</sup> Sunday of Lent APRIL 6 <sup>TH</sup>	 <b>ST MARY of EGYPT</b> Epistle: Hebrews 9:11-14 Gospel: Mark 10:32-45	Ask the Theotokos to offer you and the world pure thoughts and ideas this week.
PALM SUNDAY APRIL 13 <sup>TH</sup> GREAT WEEK BEGINS	 <i>GREAT AND HOLY WEEK</i> <b>ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM</b> Epistle: Philippians 4:4-9 Gospel: John 12:1-18	Place your palm branches and pussywillows behind an icon at home and in your car!
GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY APRIL 18 <sup>TH</sup>	 <b>GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY</b> <i>JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS</i> CHECK WITH YOUR PARISH FOR ROYAL HOURS AND VESPERS SCHEDULE	Refrain from TV, Internet & Phones to honor Christ's Death.
FEAST OF FEASTS! APRIL 20 <sup>TH</sup> NO FASTING!	 <i>BRIGHT WEEK</i> <b>HOLY PASCHA! (CHRIST IS RISEN!)</b> Epistle: Acts 1:1-8 Gospel: John 1:1-17	Greet everyone with "CHRIST IS RISEN!" & say it before good morning and goodnight!

# Parish Giving

## Great news for those donating online

Now you can use our new online giving tool to tithe online using your credit card or bank account information. You can also do a one-time donation or set up weekly donations! You will receive a receipt and statement immediately after donating. The software takes a very small percentage of the donation, but its worth it for the ease of the system. You can donate at:

<https://donorbox.org/support-st-nicholas-and-help-us-grow>



## Tithes & Attendance:

February 2

Tithes: \$ 1671.74

Attendance: 46

Thank you for your support and love for our Parish.

Also, feel free to send in your regular tithe check by mail to:

2200 Arctic Blvd,

Anchorage, AK 99503.

It is very important that we continue to give a percentage of what Our Lord has given us, and continue to support the structure and ministry of the parish. Thank you!

**Fred Meyer Rewards:** St. Nicholas of Myra participates in the community rewards program with Fred Meyer stores which gives a



percentage of purchases by those signed up with the program to

St. Nicholas. It does not cost anything for customers. Fred Meyer pays out each quarter and will send a check if it's above a certain amount.



It won't cost parishioners and friends of St. Nicholas anything to participate. The steps to participate are:

2)Set up an online account.

3)Log into the account and search for Community Rewards.

4)Search for **Saint Nicholas of Myra Byzantine Catholic Church** or our account number **QD147** and select as the charity to receive the funds.

5)Shop at Fred Meyer as you normally would and the St. Nicholas account will automatically be credited.

Thank you!

Support Your business  
While You  
Support Our Church  
ADVERTISE HERE

Support Your business  
While You  
Support Our Church  
ADVERTISE HERE

## PASTORAL MINISTRY AND SACRAMENTS:

SACRAMENT of CONFESSIONS: on Sundays and Holy Days: 30 min. before Divine Liturgy and other days, by appointment.

HOLY COMMUNION: for the sick, by appointment, anytime.

BAPTISMS - by appointment.

MARRIAGES - by appointment, at least 6 months in advance.

FUNERALS - by appointment.

ANOINTING of the sick, hospital visits - by appointment, anytime

### Safe Environment:

The Eparchy, within all its parishes, institutions, and programs, is committed to assuring a Safe Environment in ministry for its children and vulnerable adults that conforms to the USCCB Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. For additional information regarding the eparchial Safe Environment Program or to report any concerns, please contact:

**Subdeacon Paul Kilroy, Safe Environment Program Coordinator**

Cell: (480) 745-0316 ~ Office: (602) 861-9778 ext. 204 ~ Email: [sbdcnkilroy@ephx.org](mailto:sbdcnkilroy@ephx.org) -

or -

**Victim Assistance Coordinator, Deacon Michael Hanafin**

Cell: (480) 307-5182 ~ Email: [vac@ephx.org](mailto:vac@ephx.org)

### *Publican and Pharisee: Humility vs Self-Righteousness*

This parable represents to us two chariots on the race course, each with two charioteers in it. In one of the chariots it places righteousness with pride, in the other sin and humility. You see the chariot of sin outstrip that of righteousness, not by its own strength but by the excellence of humility combined with it, but the other is defeated not by righteousness, but by the weight and swelling of pride.

For as humility by its own elasticity rises above the weight of pride, and leaping up reaches to God, so pride by its great weight easily depresses righteousness. Although therefore you are earnest and constant in well doing, yet think you may boast yourself, you are altogether devoid of the fruits of prayer. But you that bears a thousand loads of guilt on your conscience, and only

think this thing of yourself that you are the lowest of all men, shall gain much confidence before God.

And He then goes on to assign the reason of His sentence. For every one who exalts himself shall be abased, and he that humbles himself shall be exalted. The word humility has various meanings. There is the humility of virtue, as, a humble and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. There is also a humility arising from sorrows, as, He has humbled my life upon the earth. There is a humility derived from sin, and the pride and insatiability of riches. For can anything be more low and debased than those who grovel in riches and power, and count them great things?

*Saint John Chrysostom*