From The Ambon

St Michael Orthodox Church

512 Winter St., Old Forge, PA

Phone: 570-457-3703

Web: www.stmichaelof.org Facebook: stmichaelof1891PA

Priest Michael Shepherd (frmichael@stmichaelof.org)

Chair - Tammy Wytovich (chair@stmichaelof.org)

Vice Chair - Danny Pregmon (vicechair@stmichaelof.org)

Secretary - Vitaliy Rakovsky (office@stmichaelof.org)

Treasurer - Joseph Hart (treasurer@stmichaelof.org)

Christ Is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

May 16th, 2026 6th SUNDAY OF PASCHA — Tone 5. Blind Man.

Icon of the Mother of God "of the Passion". Apostle Andronicus of the Seventy and his fellow-laborer, Junia (1st c.). Saint Euphrosynē, Great Princess of Moscow (1407). Martyrs Solochon, Pamphamer, and Pamphalon, at Chalcedon (284-305). St. Stephen, Archbishop of Constantinople (893).

Birthdays, Anniversaries, & Service Schedule for May

Birthdays: Uriel Vo (5/30); Daniel Jones (5/30)

Nameday: Helen Wytovich (5/21); Emily Krenitsky (5/30)

Baptism: Uriel Vo (5/4); Fr Michael and Matushka Emilia Shepherd (5/8); Maximus Shepherd (5/16); Rodion Shepherd (5/18)

Anniversary: Fr Michael Shepherd - 8th Priest Ordination (5/26/18)

Travelers:

Prosphora Schedule: PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE HELP! We need families to start baking prosphora at home. Please sign up. *The Church has a prosphora kit if you would like to borrow it. THE CHURCH NEEDS YOUR HELP. THIS IS AN OFFERING FOR THE PEOPLE BY THE PEOPLE. Thank you to Maura, Beverly and Elise for the offering this morning.*

May 24 - Shepherd
May 31 - Polzella
June 7 -

Counting: HELP! Please sign up and count our donations. Please stay and help. Thank you David for assisting today.

May 24
May 31
June 7

Reader's Schedule

May 24 - V: Joseph / L: Emilia H.

May 31 - V: Uriel / L: Blaise

June 7 - V:Michael / L: Uriel

PLEASE SING ALONG! *Singing the hymns and responses to the litanies throughout the services is encouraged!*

AGAPE Meal Plan - Please sign up downstairs

May 24 - Cold Cuts
May 31 - Baked Potato Bar
June 7

Coffee Hour/Agape Meal: *Please stay and join us for a cup of coffee so we may break bread with each other. This will allow us to get to know each other and see how we can help each other.*

SUN, May 17th: 9:10 AM - Hours & DL
6th SUNDAY OF PASCHA — Tone 5. Blind Man.
Parish Council meeting After Liturgy

WED, May 20th: 5:00 PM Great Vespers w/Litya
THURS, May 21st: 8:40 AM - Hours & DL
The Ascension of our Lord.

SAT, May 23rd: 5:00 PM Great Vespers
SUN, May 24th: 9:10 AM - Hours & DL
7th SUNDAY OF PASCHA — Tone 6. Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council.

(Church work day) SAT, May 30th: 5:00 PM Great Vespers w/Litya SUN, May 31st: 9:`10 AM - Hours & DL **8th SUNDAY OF PASCHA — Tone 7. Holy Pentecost: Feast of the Holy Trinity**
Kneeling Vespers immediately following Liturgy

DEAR GUESTS AND FRIENDS: *A most sincere and heartfelt welcome to you from our community. According to the ancient traditions of the Orthodox Church, the Sacrament of Holy Communion is to be administered only to Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves by prayer, fasting, and a recent (monthly) confession. If you have questions please ask Fr Michael! Visitors, if you did not introduce yourself to Fr Michael at Vespers, please refrain from Holy Communion.*

Parish Prayer List

NEWLY DEPARTED:

DEPARTED: *Evelyn* Flynn (5/5); *Jean* Staviski Mori (5/6); *Volodymyr* Danylets (5/9); *Marie* Raskausakas (5/12); *Paul* Bezuhly (5/15); *Harry* Krevko (5/16); *Alexander* Pritchyk (5/18); *Walter* Pregmon (5/19); *Dennis* Pregmon (5/25); Rose Macheska (5/26)

Please remember in your prayers LIVING:

Ill-afflicted *Archpriest(s) John Nightingale,* & *Theodore* Orzolek

All those caring for the sick and suffering at this time throughout the world, especially our families and friends: *Edward* Sevensky, *Margaret* Pregmon, *Daniel* Jones, *Michae*l Sokol, *Michael* Krenitsky, *Bernie* Elko, *Nadia* Macheska, *The child of God Abigail, Helen* Wytovich, *Marie* Pasternak, *Eli & Paula* Stavisky, *Marie* Pozella, *Walter* Prichyk

Servants of God: *Mark* Bezhuly, *David & Kathy* Barsigian, *Alexa* Barsigian & *Bobby* Wolfel, *Patricia* Jones, *Anne* Buday, *Emily* Krenitsky, *Gregory* Krenitsky, *Barbara* Sevensky, *Beverly* Elko, *Nicole* Earl, *Anna* Tyrpak, *Sandy & Danny* Pregmon, *Marie* Pritchyk, *Michael & Euphemia* Keklak, *Justin & Elisabeth* Kane, *Maria & Vitaliy* Rakovsky, *Ekaterina & Anna*, *George, Natasha, Rosa, & Lucia* Coyoy, *Mat. Emilia, Reader Blaise, Maximus, Rodion, Savina* Shepherd, *Joseph, Emilia, Judah, Nadezda, & Silas* Hart, *Tammy* Wytovich, *Paulette* Ezbiansky, *Uriel* Vo *& Maura* Elko, *Mary* Krevko, *Elisabeth, Jacob, & Juliette* Halford, *Tammy, Justin, Niko, & Katya* Williams, *Paul* Dunay, *Anastasia, Sophia, & Luke, Darlene* Shaffer, *Sophia, & Anastasia* Polzella, *David* Jadick, *Sandra* Condone, *Timothy* & *Holly* Granville, *Maxim* Granville, *Christopher* Yeisley, and *Gabrie*l, Mother *Katherine*, *Diane, Mitch, Christina, & James*

Catechumens: *Marley, Tulia, & Magnolia* Connolly, *Neva* Yeisely, *Zachary* Nikl,

Seekers: *Vincent* Bonello, *Rebecca* Burns, *Ken* Nikl

Treasury "... but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal." Jesus Christ

How Much is my tithe

Weekly	2%	4%	5%	10%
$200	$4	$8	$10	$20
$500	$10	$20	$25	$50
$750	$15	$30	$37	$75
$1000	$20	$40	$50	$100
$1500	$30	$60	$75	$150

WEEKLY GIVING UPDATE: We thank you for your continued giving in gratitude for all that our loving God does for each of us, for His Holy Church, **and** all the blessings we receive through her.

MAY Income: $11,117.00

MAY Expenses: $4,948.84

Weekly Cost to Keep the Church Open: $3,740.85

Monthly Cost to Keep the Church Open: $14,963.58

Words of Wisdom From the Saints & Teachers

Today Readings

Epistle: (38) Acts 16:16-34
Gospel: (34) John 9:1-38

EPISTLE
Deacon: Let us attend!
Priest: Peace be unto all!
Reader: And to thy spirit.
Deacon: Wisdom!
Reader: The Prokeimenon in the 8th Tone, a Psalm of David: Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God.
Choir: Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God.
Reader: In Judah God is known; His name is great in Israel!
Choir: Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God.
Reader: Pray and make your vows
Choir: Before the Lord our God.
Deacon: Wisdom!
Reader: The reading from the Acts of the Holy Apostles.
Deacon: Let us attend!

[(38) Acts 16:16-34] In those days, as we apostles were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by soothsaying. * She followed Paul and us, crying, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." * And this she did for many days. But Paul was annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, "I charge thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour. * But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market place before the rulers; * and when they had brought them to the magistrates they said, "These men are Jews and they are disturbing our city. * They advocate customs which it is not lawful for us Romans to accept or practice." * The crowd joined in attacking them; and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. * And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely. * Having received this charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. * But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, * and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and every one's fetters were unfastened. * When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. * But Paul cried with a loud voice, "Do not harm thyself, for we are all here." * And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas, * and brought them out and said, "Men, what must I do to be saved?" * And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy household." * And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all that were in his house. * And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their wounds, and he was baptized at once, with all his family. * Then he brought them up into his house, and set food before them; and he rejoiced with all his household that he had believed in God.

Priest: Peace be unto thee, Reader.
Reader: And to thy spirit.

ALLELUIA
Deacon: Wisdom!
Reader: In the 8th Tone: AL-LE-LU-IA!
Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!
Reader: Look upon me and have mercy on me.
Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!
Reader: Direct my steps according to Thy word.
Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

GOSPEL [(34) John 9:1-38] At that time, as Jesus passed by, He saw a man blind from his birth. * And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" * Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be made manifest in him. * We must work the works of Him Who sent Me, while it is day; night comes, when no one can work. * As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the world." * As He said this, He spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle and anointed the man's eyes with the clay, * saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing. * The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar, said, "Is not this the man who used to sit and beg?" * Some said, "It is he"; others said, "No, but he is like him." He said, "I am the man." * They said to him, "Then how were thine eyes opened?" * He answered, "The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash'; so I went and washed and received my sight." * They said to him, "Where is He?" He said, "I do not know." * They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. * Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. * The Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." * Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for He does not keep the Sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" There was a division among them. * So they again said to the blind man, "What dost thou say about Him, since He has opened thine eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet." * The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight, * and asked them, "Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? How then does he now see?" * His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; * but how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know Who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age, he shall speak for himself." * His parents said this because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if any one should confess Him to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue. * Therefore his parents said, "He is of age, ask him." * So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and said to him, "Give God the praise; we know that this man is a sinner." * He answered, "Whether He is a sinner, I do not know; one thing I know, that though I was blind, now I see." * They said to him, "What did He do to thee? How did He open thine eyes?" * He answered them, "I have told you already, and ye would not listen. Why do ye want to hear it again? Do ye too want to become His disciples?" * And they reviled him, saying, "Thou art His disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. * We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where He comes from." * The man answered, "Why, this is a marvel! Ye do not know where He comes from, and yet He opened my eyes. * We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if any one is a worshiper of God and does His will, God listens to him. * Never since the world began has it been heard that any one opened the eyes of a man born blind. * If this man were not from God, He could do nothing." * They answered him, "Thou wast born in utter sin, and wouldst thou teach us?" And they cast him out. * Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him He said, "Dost thou believe in the Son of God?" * He answered, "And Who is He, sir, that I may believe in Him?" * Jesus said to him, "Thou hast seen Him, and it is He Who speaks to thee." * He said, "Lord, I believe"; and he worshiped Him.

Acts 16:24 *In the Inner Prison* **PAUL'S POWER SHOWN IN WEAKNESS. ST JOHN CHRYSOSTOM:** Do you see how his power was perfected in weakness? If Paul had been freed and had shaken that building, the event would not have been so wonderful. "Therefore," he says, "remain in chains! Let the walls be shaken from every side, and let the prisoners be freed!—so that my power may appear all the greater, when through you, the one confined and in fetters, all who are in chains are freed." This is what amazed the jailer, that Paul, held in such constraints, was able, through prayer alone, to shake the foundations, open the doors of the prison and free all who were in chains. HOMILIES CONCERNING THE STATUES 1.16. Martin, F., & Smith, E., eds. (2006). *Acts* (pp. 204–205). InterVarsity Press.

JOHN 9:3 DOES HE SUFFER FOR THE GLORY OF GOD? ST JOHN CHRYSOSTOM: Here again is another difficulty if [it is true that] it was not possible that the glory of God should be shown without this man's punishment. Certainly it was not impossible, for it was possible. But it happened so "that [God's glory] might be made evident even in this man." One might ask, however, Did he suffer wrong for the glory of God? Tell me what he did wrong. For what if God had never willed to make him at all? But I assert that he even received benefit from his blindness. Because he recovered the sight of the eyes within. What were the Jews profited by their eyes? They incurred the heavier punishment, being blinded even while they saw. And what injury did this man have because of his blindness? For through his blindness he recovered his sight. As, then, the evils of the present life are not evils, so neither are the good things good. Sin alone is an evil, but blindness is not an evil. And he who had brought this man from not being into being also had power to leave him as he was. HOMILIES ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN 56.1. Elowsky, J. C., ed. (2006). *John 1–10* (p. 321). InterVarsity Press.

Announcements - Upcoming Parish & Diocesan Events Church Attendance

Silent Prayers and Confession: Every Wednesday 11:00AM - 1:30PM or you can make an appt for confession.

Remember that at the Great Entrance after each petition the priest will say "may the Lord God remember thee in His Kingdom……," the people should respond with "Amen." And at the end of the petitions, the priest will raise the chalice and say "You and all Orthodox Christians, may the Lord God remember thee in His Kingdom…… the people respond with "And to thy Holy Priesthood (Episcopacy), may the Lord God remember thee in His Kingdom always now and ever unto ages of ages." This is dialogue, a prayer if you will, between the concelebrant and the people.

Choir practice: Saturday's @ 4pm prior to vespers. If you would like to sing in the choir please make every effort to be at the practice.

WISH LIST! Please consider purchasing from our wish list as this will reduce our cost of expenses and will allow us to increase and focus our giving in other vital areas needed. Currently we are looking for small wooden boxes that we can dedicate at reliquaries. https://www.myregistry.com/giftlist/stmichaelsorthodoxchurcholdforgewishlist

St. Michael's Greeters Ministry *"I was a stranger, and you welcomed me."* Matthew 25:35 Our objective is to welcome visitors to the Parish, help them "feel at home" during the worship service, provide them with information about Orthodoxy and the Parish, invite them to Parish activities, introduce them to people of like interests, invite them back, follow-up to thank them for visiting us, and identifying whether we can help them in the future. Most people leave a church once they enter because no one greeted them. Please sign up to greet people.

STOMC Mens Group! New details coming!

Please sign up for coffee hour! There are sign up sheets downstairs by the offering basket. Also, please donate at coffee hour. Donate what you would spend on a cup of coffee. This is to replenish our plastic wear and supplies for coffee hour.

SPONSORS - An appeal for sponsors for our relics. We need wooden boxes donated, reliquaries purchased and donations to pay for the cost to put the icon of the saint in the lid of the box. We are estimating $300 to complete one reliquary/box. If you would like to sponsor your saint and we have that relic; please let us know. There is a sign up sheet in the Narthex. We have one donor already.

PROSPHORA - I am requesting the families who bake prosphora to come speak to me at coffee hour. I would like to get a rotation between the families and assign Sundays.

Kids Corner

Christ is risen! Hi kids! Silas here!
One of my favorite things about God is endless love. Of course, we know that He loved us so much that He would die and be tortured just for us! But what I love about this most, is that He loves every single person on earth the exact same! And there are billions and billions of people on the earth. You could pick two totally different, random people, and no matter who you pick, God will love them the same! Isn't that cool! Any two people, it doesn't matter who, and God loves them with equal love! It doesn't matter if those two people are rich and poor, or tall and short, or mean and kind! It doesn't matter if one doesn't like God and the other does, God loves them the same. He loves the poorest, rock-bottom person just the same as the richest, most powerful person alive. And He loves you and me just as much as any other two kids out there! Pretty mind blowing, right?
-FUN FACT: Did you know some people choose angels instead of saints for their patron saint or angel?
-TRIVIA! Do you know how many books are in the Bible?
ANSWER:
It's actually not 66, in Orthodoxy we have 76!
JOKE OF THE DAY! What are locusts' and honey's greatest predator? St. John the Baptist!

Reflection on the Sunday of the Blind Man
Christ is risen! Indeed he is risen!

“It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be manifest in him.” We know that all sickness, pain, and death came into the world on account of human sin; God did not make illness or death or any other evil thing. However, the words of our Lord offer us two important expansions on this basic affirmation. First, though sin is our ancestral inheritance, its specific consequences, in terms of sickness and death, are rarely a matter of personal blame or individual guilt. Rather, we are all guilty of the sins that lie behind the tragedy of illness and death. When we see seemingly unjust suffering, we should not ask: “Why did God do this?” Rather, we should blame ourselves and repent for the suffering that we have caused the world through our sin.

Second, the Lord reminds us that, although human sin is the cause of illness and suffering, nevertheless he can turn these consequences to good. As Joseph says, “You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good.” When Christ took on the consequences of sin through his suffering and death on the Cross, he made all human suffering, including illness, a potential pathway to salvation. Because of God’s saving providence, the man’s blindness – a consequence of our individual and collective sin – has been transformed into an opportunity for enlightenment, not just for the blind man, but for all who hear of this healing and witness it through the holy Gospel.

Reflections in Christ
by Metropolitan Tikhon