



**St. Nicholas**

MAIN STREET  
JACOBS CREEK, PA.

**Orthodox Church**

SIXTH STREET  
MONONGAHELA, PA.

WWW. ORTHODOXMON.ORG

VERY REV. EDWARD PEHANICH

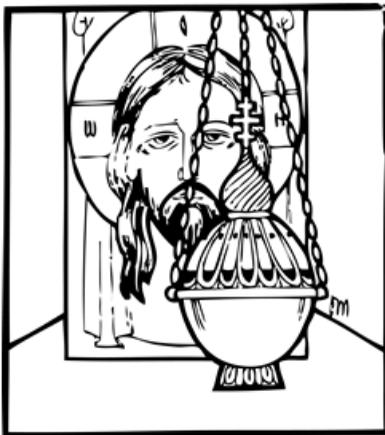
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**October 22, 2017**

*20<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost*

*Commemoration of the Holy Apostle James, son of Alphaeus*



**Christmas candy** order forms are now available in the vestibule. Help support our youth camping program! Deadline is November 12.

**Thank you** to all who helped prepare the bag lunches yesterday for the poor of Pittsburgh....along with cleaning the church.

**My heart goes out to homosexual men and women** who face a difficult struggle. I do not believe anyone chooses to be homosexual. A person would have to be insane to choose a sexual proclivity that fosters hatred and rejection, and in many cases, being ostracized by their friends and family. Many believe there are genetic and environmental influences that cause homosexuality, but this is not provable scientifically. I believe same-sex attraction

is the result of the fall, just as is all sin. And, just as all sin requires repentance and the acquisition of a contrite heart, so must the person who is actively involved in same-sex intimacy, repent, and turn to a life of chastity, with the aid of the Church's sacramental life.

During my years as a priestmonk I have counseled many young men and women who were struggling with same-sex attraction, and trying to live chaste lives as Orthodox Christians. I have come to believe that without the support of the Church, and the Christian community, the struggle these people face will be devastating, and will often end in alienation and defeat.

The answer to ALL passions of the flesh can be found within the Church. Just as Her founder, the Church is the fountain of compassion and mercy. It is not Christ's Church that fails people, but sometimes the very therapists (clergy) who can get caught up in the letter of the law rather than being grounded in the mercy and compassion and love that is the foundation of the Church. Christ is the head of His Church, and we need to mirror His image when dealing with the fallen nature of ALL people. Sin, whatever form it takes, is equal in the eyes of God. We must look only at our own sins and be quick to overlook the sins of our neighbors. As priests of the Most High God, we are called to be agents of His mercy and love, ever offering encouragement to those whom God has placed in our pastoral care. That some must learn to live their lives in chastity, requires the support of loving and understanding clergy, and strong Christian communities.

Finally, I would like to say that the need for intimacy is often the driving force behind sexual promiscuity in all its forms. We all need intimacy, but to confuse this need with sex is the main reason why so many people succumb to sexual sin. The need for intimacy can be fulfilled in deep friendships, but must ultimately find true fulfillment in an intimate relationship with God.

We must submit to the Gospel of Christ, and the long tradition of the Orthodox Church as a hospital for the soul. We are ALL in need of healing, and we all need God's love, and if we are to bask in the mercy of God, we need to be merciful to others. We must walk in the Light of Christ, and, with God's help, serve as agents of His mercy and love, letting the transformational power of His grace change us, and through our acquired love, all those around us. Saint Seraphim of Sarov told us that if we acquire inner peace, a thousand around us will be saved.

Abbot Tryphon

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**ACRY Annual** Deadline to be listed as a booster (\$3) or a memorial listing (\$6) is Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>. See the bulletin board.

**Lots o' Luck Calendar** for 2018-2019 stubs and money is also due. See Dan Timko or Becky Bobich.

