

St. Mary's Orthodox Church
217 First Street – Coaldale Pa 18218-1602
Phone: 570-645-2772
OUR WEBSITE: www.stmarysnativity.org

Rector: V. Rev. James Weremedic
Retired Attached: V. Rev Paul Ropitsky

Sunday, August 8, 2021
Choir Director: Wash King

7th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST. Tone 6. Afterfeast of the Transfiguration. St. Emilian the Confessor, Bishop of Cyzikus. Ven. Gregory the Iconographer, of the Kiev Caves. Translation of the Relics of Ven. Zosimas and Sabbatius of Solovétsky Monastery. St. Myron, Bishop of Crete. Martyrs Eleutherius and Leonidas of Constantinople, and many infants martyred with them. Ven. Gregory of Sinai.

Glory Be to Jesus Christ Glory Be Forever!

Troparion (Resurrection)

The Angelic Powers were at Thy tomb; the guards became as dead men.
Mary stood by Thy grave, seeking Thy most pure body. Thou didst capture hell
not being tempted by it. Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life. O Lord, Who
didst rise from the dead, // glory to Thee.

Kontakion (Resurrection)

When Christ God, the Giver of Life, raised all of the dead from the valleys of misery with His
mighty hand, He bestowed resurrection on the human race. // He is the Savior of all, the
Resurrection, the Life, and the God of all.

SERVICES

Sunday, August 8 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy
Sunday, August 15 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy (Dormition of the Theotokos)-Blessing of Flowers
Sunday, August 22 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy
Sunday, August 29 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy (Beheading of St. John The Baptist) Strict Fast Day
to follow: Parastas

Offerings for August 8

7-Day Vigils/Altar... In memory of Marion Pickenheim offered William Yelsh
Altar Candles... In memory of John & Helen Molotzak offered by John Molotzak
Eternal Lamp... In memory of Pauline Maholick offered by Julia Forte
Vigil Crosses ... For the health of Sal Herbert offered by Ted Bogosh
7-Day Vigils/Tetrapod... In memory of Kay & Paul Maliniak offered by William Yelsh
Decorated Candles/Tetrapod... In memory of Ronald Yurchak, Sr. offered by Gregory Yurchak

If anyone is in need of a priest, please call Father James Weremedic at 570-645-2772.
Visitation of the Sick and Infirm: If you are going into the hospital for any reason,
please inform Fr. James at the Rectory. Emergency Calls: Please call the Rectory
(570-645-2772) anytime (day or night) in an emergency.

CONFESSION

Confessions have resumed with minor modifications. Please call the rectory at
570-645-2772 and talk to Father James for a reservation. Call between 9:30 AM
and 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Individual schedule times will be spread
out during the week. Husband and wife can be scheduled together. Anyone
wanting to have a confession, but has concerns of COVID-19, should contact
Father James to make the appropriate accommodations.

Prayer List:

Matushka Lovey Ropitsky, Matushka Lisa Weremedic,
Andrew Balliet, Michael Birocik, Clark Bogosh, Theodore Bogosh, Emmalyn Naomi Buchanan,
Evanna Jane Buchanan, Stephanie Chmel, Raymond Danchak, Ilene Devine, Julia Forte, Ellen
Gundersen, John King, Michael Kulick, John Kushnir, Olga Kushnir, Nancy Lorchak, MaryAnn
Macenka, Mary Maholick, Mildred O'Shura, Anna Pisko, Olga Sidoriak, Martha Stafiniak, Martha
Teno, Elizabeth Warcholak, Russell Wishousky, Russell Yallas, & Marie Yurchak.

August Birthdays: 2- David Bogosh, 5- Rose Harkins, 14-David King, 22-Nancy Lorchak

August Anniversaries: 20- Dennis & Geri Vavra

Financials 8/1/21, Op. Acct:

Candles 62 - Altar Candles 820 - Offerings 589 – Non-Envelope 150 Holy Day 52

Donations 205 = Total \$1,878 Building Fund 26

Please continue to keep filling your church envelopes. Thank you!

Please use Amazon Smile when ordering from Amazon.

When you shop for gifts or merchandise at **[smile.amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com)**, Amazon Smile will donate a
portion of your eligible purchases to St. Mary's Orthodox Church
at no cost to you!

If you have any Redner receipts, please call or get them to Helen King. Please use your Boyer's
card when shopping at Boyers; if you need one call Helen King.

THE LIFE OF ST. NIPHON

Well travelled and highly revered are two ways we now describe **ST. NIPHON**, Patriarch of Constantinople. Let us give proper recognition to his spiritual qualities that were at times questioned during his tumultuous life.

Niphon was born in Greece in the 15th century. The hand of the Lord touched him at an early age, and while still in his teens, he decided to embrace the monastic life. He lived in a number of monasteries, ultimately making his way to Mt. Athos, where he quietly intended to spend the rest of his life.

Young Niphon discovered, however, that God had other plans for him! He was first selected to be Archbishop of Thessalonika, and when the patriarchal throne was vacant, Niphon was elected Patriarch of Constantinople. His reign was brief, lasting only 3 years. Pressured by both RELIGIOUS and POLITICAL enemies, he was forced to live in exile. Some ten years later, Niphon was reinstated as Patriarch. Once again, his enemies prevailed and in less than a year, Niphon was put out of office. This proved to be a blessing in disguise for this saintly hierarch. He returned to the monastery of Dionysiou on Mt. Athos.

Niphon has been given credit for compiling the "**Prayer of the Departing of the Soul**" used in requiem services in our Church. This blessing is read upon the death of a believer, for the forgiveness of their sins. The saint fell asleep in the Lord in 1508 A.D. at the age of 90.

Silent Prayer before reading the Holy Scripture:

Illumine our hearts, O Master Who lovest mankind, with the pure light of Thy divine knowledge. Open the eyes of our mind to the understanding of Thy gospel teachings. Implant also in us the fear of Thy blessed commandments, that trampling down all carnal desires, we may enter upon a spiritual manner of living, both thinking and doing such things as are well-pleasing unto Thee. For Thou art the illumination of our souls and bodies, O Christ our God, and unto Thee we ascribe glory, together with Thy Father, Who is from everlasting, and Thine all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen

Romans 15:1-7 (Epistle)

We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification. For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me." For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.

Matthew 9:27-35 (Gospel)

When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, "Son of David, have mercy on us!" And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord." Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it be to you." And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, saying, "See that no one knows it." But when they had departed, they spread the news about Him in all that country. As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a man, mute and demon-possessed. And when the demon was cast out, the mute spoke. And the multitudes marveled, saying, "It was never seen like this in Israel!" But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons." Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

Medical Bioethics: An Orthodox Christian Perspective for Orthodox Christians

by Protodeacon Basil Andruchow

(Continued from last week's bulletin)

Parish Ministry Resources - Medical Bioethics: An Orthodox Christian Perspective for Orthodox Christians - Orthodox Church in America (oca.org)

Artificial Life Support

“Extreme caution is to be exercised in decisions involving medical treatment, especially in the face of death. Extreme care is always in order to find the “royal path” between providing all necessary healing measures and merely prolonging the biological functioning of organs when human life is no longer possible, or even present.”

1992 OCA Synod of Bishops' Affirmations, “On Marriage, Family, Sexuality and the Sanctity of Life”—Sickness, Suffering and Death

The development of Artificial Life Support (ALS) also made tremendous advances during the latter part of the 20th century. These technologies, when properly and appropriately used, provide temporary body functions enabling a person's body to heal itself and return to normalcy. Many are sustained by ALS assistance while they are waiting for a suitable transplantable organ (see ***Organ Donation***, below). ALS is generally not regarded or proscribed as a permanent situation or solution. Two of the more common ALS methodologies, which in recent times have become somewhat controversial in life/death decisions, are Respiratory Assistance (Ventilator) and Tubal Nourishment and Hydration. ALS methodologies, when chronically used on a terminally ill and dying patient only serve to delay and prolong the dying process. The decision to remove all life support and to let a loved one pass into God's hands, while very difficult and emotional, is necessary in order to allow the person to make his/her transition from this world to the next. Arriving at this decision need not be, nor should it be undertaken, alone. The decision to remove ALS should take place after consultation with the person's physicians and in counsel with one's parish priest. Most importantly, this decision should take place in communion with God through prayer, asking for His guidance and help during this most trying and grief-filled time.

Deep Coma, PVS (Persistent Vegetative State) and Brain Death

A person in a deep coma or Persistent Vegetative State (PVS) presents a number of issues that concern our Church. The first consideration is whether the person is technically alive or dead. The answer to that question determines what ALS technologies should be used or not used.

Our Church continuously acknowledges Life and its attendant Sacredness. Where there is a clear chance of recovery, all medically available technologies should be used to support the life of the ill or injured person. On the other hand, if the person is terminally ill or gravely injured from which recovery is not expected, then to use ALS technologies to simply prolong the dying process, is basically immoral. It is important as Orthodox Christians to always keep in mind that “Death has lost its sting.” As sad and grievous as the death of a loved one can

be, we as Orthodox Christians also know that while biological life may end, our Life Eternal with God continues.

In deep coma and PVS situations, the criterion for life is brain activity within the cerebral cortex. It is activity in that region of the brain that defines the human condition. It is the place where decisions are made, organization takes place and speculative activities such as creative arts and philosophizing occur. In the absence of any activity in this region, the attending physician(s) will declare the person as "brain dead." Our Church recognizes and agrees with this conclusion. There is no rationale for the continued use of ALS systems to maintain a biological entity when no life force is present. Furthermore, the continued use of ALS may also make it difficult for the soul to leave the body.

The Dying Process

"Those who suffer, and those related to the suffering, are to be helped to find God in their affliction, and so to acquire the divine grace and power to transform their pain into a means of purification from evil, illumination from darkness and eternal salvation in the age to come."

1992 OCA Synod of Bishops' Affirmations, "On Marriage, Family, Sexuality and the Sanctity of Life"—Sickness, Suffering and Death

Generally speaking, there are two different but interrelated dynamics involved in the dying process: the physical shutting down of the body and the activities taking place on the spiritual-emotional-mental plane. No two people, if they are conscious and aware, manage the spiritual-emotional-mental activities in the same way.

As the body begins to shut down, there is a corresponding change in a person's metabolic and circulatory processes. This will result in certain natural signs and symptoms, such as, congestion with gurgling sounds, restlessness, incontinence, and increasing coolness in the hands, feet and legs, to mention a few. Further, most people, when they are told that they are dying, deal with it in stages. Elizabeth Kubler Ross describes five stages in her book, *Death and Dying*: Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression, and Acceptance.

Denial: *"I feel fine; this can't be happening."*

Anger: *"Why me? It's not fair!" "NO! NO! How can you accept this?"*

Bargaining: *"Just let me live to see my children graduate; I'll do anything, can't you stretch it out? A few more years."*

Depression: *"I'm so sad, why bother with anything? I'm going to die . . . what's the point?"*

Acceptance: *"It's going to be OK; I can't fight it, I may as well prepare for it."*

On the spiritual-emotional-mental plane, the person is preparing to detach not only from this world of 'things' but also from important relationships. As a consequence, many a person has recognized certain unresolved issues and/or unfinished business. Usually, this type of situation makes it difficult for the person to let go. Many times, restlessness is indicative of

this type of situation. The Hospice team can help a family identify the issue and in turn may be able to help the dying patient come to final resolution.

In the final stage and time before death occurs, the greatest gift that we can give to the patient is *Love* and the greatest gift that the dying patient can give to their family is *Love*. It is worthwhile to remember that hearing remains all the way to the end. Speak to your loved one in a soft tone of voice, identify yourself, gently hold the person's hands and say whatever you need to say to help the person to let go. And, by all means shed tears without hiding them from your loved one. Tears express our love and help us to let go.

Quality of Life, Euthanasia and Medically Assisted Suicide

“Scientific research and experimentation are to be undertaken with extreme caution in order not to bring greater evils and sufferings to humankind in place of intended blessings.”

1992 OCA Synod of Bishops' Affirmations, “On Marriage, Family, Sexuality and the Sanctity of Life”—Sickness, Suffering and Death

The term *euthanasia* originally was used and understood to mean a “good death.” However, in current times it has come to mean ‘to put an end to a person's life by a specific act.’ The Orthodox Church cannot and does not support such actions whether it is executed by the patient (suicide) or by any other party (individual or physician assisted suicide), even if the rationale is based on the ‘relief of suffering.’

There is the issue of removing life support systems from a terminally ill patient, which some have described as a form of passive euthanasia. While a terminally ill patient is generally described as someone who has been diagnosed as having only 6 months or less to live, the physical state and palliative care, including ALS, will vary greatly during that time period from the so-called beginning to the end. However, rather than a time window, it is better to view this situation from the standpoint of the dying process, wherein the body has initiated irreversible biological processes that will lead to imminent death. Under these circumstances, our Church is not against the removal of Artificial Life Support when it is agreed that the continuation will not lead to any demonstrable benefit and it is consistent with the patient's desires.

Preparation for the Funeral

Strictly speaking, funeral preparation is not a medical bioethics issue, but it is a related issue. It is an event arranged with thought and cares by the family and is part of the letting-go process. However, since this is emotionally difficult, arrangements are usually delayed until after the inevitable has occurred and the person has died. For those who are inclined to prepare for their funeral ahead of time and in concert with their family, there is a wealth of information available on the internet. A very good and detailed funeral planning document can be found on the web site: www.funeralplan.com.

(Please follow in next week's bulletin for the conclusion.)