

Parish Offerings – Sunday of the O.T. Holy Fathers – Dec. 24, 2017
Christmas — Dec. 25, 2017

“Everyone must give according to whatever he has inwardly decided; not sadly, not grudgingly, for God loves a cheerful giver.” (2 Cor 9:7)

Holy Ghost Church, McKees Rocks

Regular Offering (\$2,254.50) YP (\$7)	\$2,261.50
Holy Days (\$197) Christmas (\$3,424) YP (\$24)	3,645.00
Special Donation (In mem of Skalyo & Horvath Families)	25.00
Votive Candles	214.00
	<hr/>
	\$6,145.50

Holy Ghost Church, Northside

Regular Offering	\$474.01
Holy Days (\$60) Christmas (\$1,135)	1,195.00
Utilities (\$5) Christmas Décor (\$20)	25.00
Votive Candles	72.00
	<hr/>
	\$1,766.01

Church Attendance Last Week

Sat., 4:00 p.m. (49)

Sun., (MR) 9:00 a.m. (82); (NS) 11:00 a.m. (35)

CHRISTMAS EVE (MR) 9:00 p.m. (103);

CHRISTMAS (MR) 9:00 a.m. (73); (NS) 11:00 a.m. (44)

Synaxis of Theotokos — Tue, Dec. 26 (MR) 9:00 a.m. (21); (NS) 6:00 p.m. (9)

Feast of St. Stephen — Wed, Dec. 27 (MR) 9:00 a.m. (15); (NS) 6:00 p.m. (8)



Valerian F. Szal
 238 Helen St.,
 McKees Rocks, PA 15136
 Phone: (412) 331-9713
 Fax: (412) 331-6688
Michael P. Ferrell,
 Supervisor, CFSP
Our Family Still Serving Yours Since 1953



DESIGNS BY NANCY
 235 McCartney Drive,
 Moon Township 15108
 Phone: (412) 262-9141
 Nancde@aol.com
Nancy C. Debranski
Sewing, Alternations, Custom Embroidery and Unique Gifts

GCU
 Greek Catholic Union of the USA
 A Fraternal Benefit Society
 Lodge 390 offers Insurance and Annuity Benefits greater than most financial institutions. Info call Marge (412) 331-3577

This space available for ads for wishing someone birthday or anniversary greetings, get-well wishes, etc. Call the office (412) 771-3324

Please patronize our fabulous sponsors! They make it possible to bring you this weekly & informative S.O.T. without an added expense to the Church. New Sponsors please contact Church 9 til 1:00 p.m. Mon-Fri!



HOLY GHOST BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH
 225 OLIVIA STREET
 1437 SUPERIOR AVENUE
 McKEES ROCKS, PA 15136
 PITTSBURGH, PA 15212

THE SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

The Final Day of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ
New Year's Eve — December 31, 2017



Catholics of the Ruthenian – Byzantine Rite in full communion with the Pope of Rome

The Very Reverend Father Frank A. Firko, Pastor

The Reverend Deacon Michael Meaders (NS)

Rectory: (412) 771-3324; Church Fax: (412) 331-1870

MR School Hall Kitchen: (412) 331-5155

Web-site: www.holyghost-byzantinecatholic.org – E-Mail: ffaf334@verizon.net

SUNDAY RADIO (9:00 am WEDO 810 AM) & INTERNET DIVINE LITURGY

All Liturgical Services LIVE on UStream: www.Ustream.tv/channel/holy-ghost-church

Sunday Divine Liturgies
 Saturday (MR) 4:00 pm
 Sunday (MR) 9:00 am
 Holy Ghost (NS) 11:00 a.m.

Holy Day Divine Liturgies
 w/Great Vespers (Oblig)
 (MR): 7:00 pm
 Holy Day (MR) 9:00 am; (NS) 6:00 pm

Daily Divine Liturgy
 M-F (MR) 8:00 am
 Sat. (NS) 9:00 am.

Holy Mystery of Reconciliation: Sat (MR): 3:15 to 3:40 pm & Sun (MR) 8:15 to 8:40 am.; (NS) 10:30 am

Holy Mysteries of Initiation: Contact Church Office for Baptism, Chrismation and Eucharist.

Holy Mysteries of Anointing: Ask especially prior to surgery or any other time.

Holy Mystery of Matrimony: Contact pastor one year in advance; Pre-Cana Classes required.

Sponsor of Christian Initiation: Godparents must be practicing Catholics.

Religious Education Classes: (MR) Coordinator: Steve Puluka (412) 897- 4650.

GCU Lodge 390: (MR) Contact Randy Baden (412) 973-1085 for membership requirements.

Slavjane Folk Ensemble: (MR) Membership requirements contact Dean Poloka (412) 877-9351.

Carpatho-Rusyn Radio Broadcast: Every Sunday from 2:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. WPIT 730 AM.

Social Hall Rental: (MR) Contact Church Office.

New & Returning Parishioners: Welcome! Please register by phoning the Church Office.

Remember the Church in Your Will: Please be so kind as to remember the Church in your last will and testament. This helps to secure its future & a Byzantine Catholic witness to all!

THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH

December 31, 2017 Christmas Christian Greeting: Volume VII, Number 53
(Dec. 25 through Jan. 4)



Christ is Born! — Glorify Him!
Christos Razdajetsja! — Slavite Jeho!



Liturgical Services for the Week

Date Time Intention Requested By

Sunday after Christmas

Commemorating the Righteous Joseph, King David & Apostle James

SUN, Dec 31 9:00 a.m. (MR) + Elsie Eberle Karen Stebbins
11:00 a.m. (NS) + Agnes Knoll Joan Senchyshyn



FEAST OF THE CIRCUMCISION OF THE LORD & FEAST OF ST. BASIL

New Year's Day of 2018 — Solemn Holy Day — Mirovanije

51st Anniversary of Prayer for World Peace

Mon, JAN 1 9:00 a.m. (MR) + Mary Kotik (birthday) Wilma & George Racz
11:00 a.m. (NS) + Mary Agnes Kress Son: Bill & Kathe
(8th ann of passing)



Prefestive of Theophany

Tue, Jan 2 8:00 a.m. (MR) Thanksgiving for Blessings Eleanor & Basil Gramata

Wed, Jan 3 8:00 a.m. (MR) +Deceased Hubal Family Family

Thrs, Jan 4 8:00 a.m. (MR) Thanksgiving Mildred Terrek & Family
(50th Wed. Ann of Anne & Robert Sakara)

Vigil of Theophany

REQUIRED Simple Abstinence (no meat) or Equivalent Penance for World Peace

TRADITIONALLY RECOMMENDED but NOT Obligatory Strict Abstinence (no meat or dairy products)

Fri, Jan 5 8:00 a.m. (MR) Royal 6th Hour of Theophany
1:00 p.m. (MR) Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great + Fr. John Kasarda (birthday)

Anticipated Divine Liturgy of Theophany — Holy Day of Obligation

6:00 p.m. (NS) St. John Chrysostom Divine Liturgy w/ Great Sanctification of Water
+ Fr. Michael Knapik Joan Senchyshyn



Feast of Holy Theophany — Mirovanije

Baptism of Our Lord, God & Savior Jesus Christ — Holy Day of Obligation

Great Sanctification of Water will follow both Divine Liturgies

SAT, JAN 6 9:00 a.m. (MR) For the Parishioners of Both Parishes

Sunday anticipated Divine Liturgy of the Sunday after the Enlightenment

4:00 p.m. (MR) + Mary O. Culan Janet & Stan Stavish & Family

Sunday after the Enlightenment

Sun, Jan 7 9:00 a.m. (MR) For the Parishioners of Both Parishes
11:00 a.m. (NS) + Dolores + Tony Nee. Alice G. Slagle

General Announcements

All Birthdays will be published in SOT each week so that prayers may be offered on these special occasions. Please advise the Church office if your special day does not appear or if you wish your name and date not be published.

Note: Capitalized Names designate North Side parishioners

Birthdays: Dec 31 – Calahan Bedard, David Bubalo; Jan 2 – Stephanie Herron; Jan 3 – Bernadette Gunkel, Shirley Kotik; Jan 4 – George Broskey, Nicholas Gunkel; Jan 6 – Thomas Dubensky.

Pray For the Ill, Infirm & Shut-ins of Our Parishes

HOME: Irene Bordas, Margaret Beliunas, MARY ANN CONTI, Andrew Drukalsky, Iona Goyda, Beverly Harsh, Helen Hopey, MARTHA LUCAS, OLGA MANFREDO, Irene Palahunik, Elizabeth Petruna, MARLENE PFEIFFER, MARY SAHAYDA, Alice Sejka, Millie Sotak, Michael Spisak, ANNA TOTH, EVELYN VENTO, JOHN VEREB, Julia Wovchko, SHIRLEY YANOSKO.

MAPLEWOOD PC HOME (461 Maplewood Ave. Ambridge, PA 15003): Susan Dragosh, Doris Naughton.

HIGHLAND PARK CARE CENTER (745 North Highland Ave., Pgh, PA 15206): Linda Reiger. MASONIC VILLAGE (1000 Masonic Drive, Sewickley, PA 15143): Helen M. Kriska, Marjorie Preganz.

MARIAN MANOR (2695 Winchester Dr., Pgh, 15220): Irene Bednar, MICHAEL BARBUSH CHIPPEWA PLACE (7005 Stadium Dr., Apt 427, Brecksville, OH 44141): Stephen Katrenich.

FAIR OAKS ASSISTED LIVING (2200 W. Liberty Ave., Pgh, 15226): ANNA MARIE DEMIANCZYK.

LUTHERAN SENIORLIFE (500 Wittenberg Way, Mars PA 16046): William Zavidny.

Public questions on Catholic spirituality, moral & spiritual problems

Q. Is it possible to spend purgatory on Earth instead of after death? Can it be a combination of both? A. Answer by Catholic Answers: Purgatory is not for those who are alive; it is the purification of the deceased who are going to heaven. We can most definitely undergo purification while on Earth through our trials and sufferings, but that is not purgatory. Purification can take place in this life as well as the next, but purgatory refers to the specific state of a soul after death.

This Week's Sanctuary Lamps

Continue to burn before the real presence of our Lord, God & Savior Jesus

December 31, 2017 — January 6, 2018

(MR): In memory of Olga & Joseph Goyda

offered by Dgtr: Mary Ann Goyda

(NS): In memory of Olga & Anthony Jeletic

(MR) AVAILABLE FOR 2018

offered by Anonymous

(NS) AVAILABLE FOR 2018



McKees Rocks Announcements

SYMPATHIES EXTENDED — The *Spirit of Truth* announces the passing of **Agnes Rosko, 81**, of Coraopolis, PA, at Mercy Hospital, Pittsburgh, on Tuesday, December 26, 2017. The Valerian F. Szal Funeral Home handled the arrangements. The Funeral Divine Liturgy was celebrated on Friday, Dec. 29, 2017. Interment followed at St. Mark Cemetery, Kennedy Township; **John J. Singel, 71**, of Kennedy Township passed away on Saturday, December 23, 2017. Funeral arrangements were handled by the Valerian F. Szal Funeral Home. To the Rosko and Singel Families our Parish extends its most sincere sympathies. In blessed repose, grant O Lord, eternal rest to your servants Agnes and John, and remember them forever. Vicnaja Jim Pamjat'!



THANK YOU TO ALL OUR PIROHI WORKERS — Gratitude is expressed to all who sacrificially participated in this season's Pirohi Project. To extend this appreciation, all workers are invited to a post-Christmas celebration on **Wednesday, January 3, 2018** at the Grandview Buffet, Rivers Casino @ 12:00 noon. Please phone the Church office if you have not signed the list.



ECF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM NEXT WEEK — The second semester for the *ECF Program* commences next week, **January 7, 2018** following the Weekend Divine Liturgies. Parents, God-parents and Guardians, If your children are not enrolled in this program, please have them attend these religious education classes. Phone Steve Puluka (412) 344-6523. For those who are seeking a Holy Ghost Church Scholarship Subsidy for Parochial Education, this is an obligatory requirement.

TIMEFORA Coffee Break **COFFEE SOCIAL RESUMES ON THE FIRST WEEKEND OF THE MONTH** — Just a reminder that our Coffee Social resumes the first full weekend of each month. Join us next weekend for coffee and doughnuts following the Divine Liturgies.

CHRISTMAS DECORATION DISMANTLED FORTHCOMING — We no sooner set the Church up for Christmas and it will be time to dismantle it for another year. We will gather on **Monday, January 15, 2018 @ 6:00 p.m.** and ask an hour of your time in helping put away the festive decorations. The more assistance we can get, the faster we can all depart. Please consider assisting us, especially if you weren't able to help in the set up.

Northside Announcements

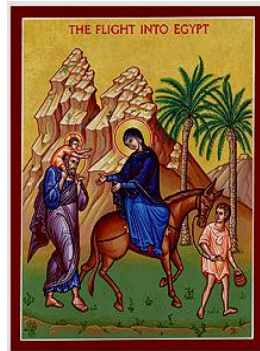
CHRISTMAS DECORATION DISMANTLED FORTHCOMING — We truly had a beautiful Christmas display for the past Great Holy Days. It's time to take them down following the Divine Liturgy on **Sunday, January 14, 2018**. Please consider your time in helping put away the festive decorations. The more assistance we can get, the faster we can all depart. All it takes is app. an hour of precious time!

WINNER OF THE GCU 50/50 RAFFLE — Although there were many winners of small gift cards, etc., that information could not be obtained. But the winner of the big cash prize of \$1,500 was **JIM MANGES** of Donora, PA with ticket number 038.

Christmas Story Continues

The Flight Into Egypt — GOSPEL Matthew 2:13-23

As we commemorate the flight into Egypt as we did on the day following Christmas. The Magi from the East, having worshipped the Lord in Bethlehem, were directed to return to



their home another way by command of an angel. Herod, that wicked king, planned to slaughter all the children in Bethlehem, but God saw Herod's intention and sent His angel to Joseph. The angel of God appeared to Joseph in a dream and commanded him to take the young Child and His Mother and flee to Egypt. Thus the words of the prophet were fulfilled: *Behold, the Lord rides upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt* (Isaiah 19:1). In old Cairo today, the cave where the holy family lived can be seen. Likewise, in the village of Matarea near Cairo, the tree under which the Most-Holy Theotokos rested with the Lord Jesus, as well as a miraculous spring of water under this tree, are visible. After having lived

for several years in Egypt, the holy family returned to Palestine, again in response to a command of an angel of God. Thus another prophecy was fulfilled: *Out of Egypt have I called my Son* (Hosea 11:1). Herod was dead and his wicked son Archelaus -a worthy successor of him in evil-sat on his bloodstained throne. Hearing that Archelaus was reigning in Jerusalem, Joseph returned to Galilee, to his town of Nazareth, where he settled in his own home. Herod's second son, Herod the Younger, who was somewhat less evil than his brother Archelaus, then reigned in Galilee.

The House is to receive God's Presence

In Preparation for another year of House Blessings:

What does it mean to ask God to bless something? All things in the world have been spoiled right along with us. God must bless His world again in order for it to be the way that He wants it to be. For this reason God sent His Son Jesus and the Holy Spirit to the world: to bless everyone and everything that He made, to make all things good again.



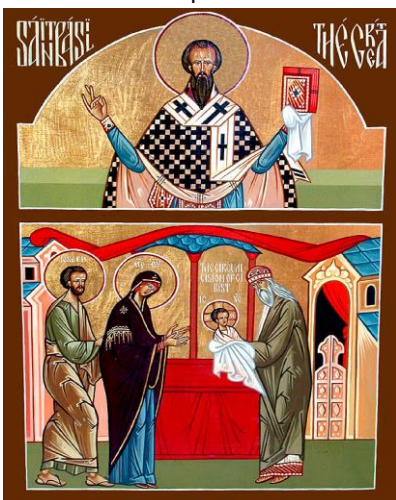
When the priest comes to bless our homes, he asks God to have mercy on the house, to rid it of every evil and to fill it with every blessing. What a wonderful way to begin the New Year! As the priest enters the house, he greets the family by saying: **Peace be to this house!** The response is: **And to all who dwell therein.** In a main room or at the icon corner place a candle, cross and/or icon on a clean linen cloth. • Have a small container of holy water that was blessed on the feast of Theophany. • Have all radios, stereos, televisions, etc., turned off for the blessing. • Please have all pets confined or restrained. • If you have any religious articles you wish to be blessed, please place them on the table by the holy water. • When the priest arrives have everyone present assemble in the prepared place. • Sing the festal Troparion and as much of the ritual as possible. In some places the cantor accompanies the priest, in others the priest goes alone. Therefore, participation is important. • By custom, in some places, the youngest member of the family, carrying a candle, leads the priest through the house for the blessing. The faithful remain quiet until the priest returns.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

January 1 New Year's Day: Feast of Circumcision & St. Basil - (MR) 9:00 a.m. & (NS) 11:00 am.
January 3 Pirohi Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, Grandview Buffet, Rivers Casino @ 12:00 noon.
***** Vigil of Theophany *****
January 5 8:00 a.m. Royal Hours (MR); 1:00 p.m. (MR) Great Vespers & DL of St. Basil the Great.
6:00 p.m. (NS) Divine Liturgy of Theophany — Holy Day of Obligation — Great Sanctification of Water.
January 6 HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION — (MR) 9:00 a.m. Theophany Divine Liturgy.
Great Sanctification of Water to take place after the Holy Day Divine Liturgy.
January 7 ECF Program resumes for the second semester.
..... NS Dismantling of Christmas Decorations following the Divine Liturgy.
January 15 MR Dismantling of Christmas Decorations at 6:00 p.m.

FEAST OF OUR LORD'S CIRCUMCISION & Feast of St. Basil the Great — January 1

The Mosaic Law prescribed that when a woman brought a male child into the world,



he had to be circumcised on the eighth day after his birth. Our Lord submitted to the circumcision prescribed by the Law on this day, which is the eighth day after His birth, and received, according to the announcement of the angel, the name which is above all names, "Jesus" or Savior. In celebrating the name day of the Lord today, we begin the New Year at the same time under the sign of the Nativity of Christ. Saint Basil the Great belonged, through his father also named Basil, to the province of Pontus, and through his Emmelia, to the province of Pontus, and through his mother Emmelia, to Cappadocia. He was born in Caesarea in Cappadocia

around 329-330. He studied in Caesarea, then in Constantinople under Libanius, and finally in Athens, where he became a close friend of Saint Gregory of Nazianzus. Shortly after his return to Caesarea which occurred about 356, he retired in solitude to the outskirts of Neocaesarea, where his mother and his sister Macrina already led the monastic life. It is at that time he composed his ascetical writings. He was ordained a priest by Eusebius, Archbishop of Caesarea, and at the death of the latter was elected in 370 to succeed him and rule the Church of Christ. He governed it for eight years, during which time he proved himself a witness of the truth in the face of heresy and full of courage before the threats of the Arian Emperor Valens. He died on January 1, in the year 379. The wisdom and the learning which fill his works, his Philokalia (extracts from the works of Origen), his Treatise on the Holy Spirit, his theological work against the Arian Eunomius, his ascetical writings, his monastic rules, his commentaries on Sacred Scripture, the panegyrics which he made of many saints, his correspondence, and finally the splendor and the force of his words, have won for him rightly the epitaphs of "Revealer of Heaven," and of the "Great."

General Announcements

LAST WEEK TO SIGN FOR ATTENDING ORDINATION — Deacon Vitalii Stashkevych will be ordained to the Priesthood on **Sunday, January 14, 2018 @ 3:00 p.m.** at St. John the Baptist Cathedral, Munhall by Archbishop Skurla. He and Mary Elizabeth are inviting both parishes to be present for the ordination. A special sign-up sheet is in the Church for your signature. Since his family is not able to come to America due to the fact that they are unable to obtain a visa from Ukraine. Let us support him by making plans to attend the ordination. **Today is the final day to make reservations.** Sign the list that is located in the (MR) Side Vestibule and (NS) Narthex located

at the Church's Entrance.

PASTOR EXTENDS GRATITUDE FOR CHRISTMAS REMEMBRANCE — Fr. Firko extends heart-felt thanks to all who remembered him by way of prayers, greeting cards, gifts and cooperation to ready the Church for this Christmas Season. A special thank you for all who attended the special Holy Day Services and the Holy Mystery of Reconciliation. God bless all of you for your remembrances, kindnesses & thoughtfulness!!!

YEAR END CONTRIBUTIONS — It's that time of year to think about filing our taxes. Our Holy Ghost wishes to credit you whatever you contribute in 2015. *The final day to submit any contribution for this tax year is **Sunday, December 31, 2017.*** Anything collected after that date will roll-over to the New Year 2018. For example, any of this year's Christmas Donations that arrive following this date will be accredited to 2018 for the following year's record. Please keep this in mind when you are preparing to file your income tax. Thank you for remembering your Church throughout 2017! May God bless your sacrificial generosity so that our Holy Ghost Church may continue to proclaim the Gospel and administer the Holy Mysteries (Sacraments). — **END OF THE YEAR INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTION RECORDS CAN BE SENT VIA E-MAIL IN JANUARY! PLEASE REQUEST IT NOW BY SUBMITTING YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS!**

THE WEEKLY S.O.T. IS AVAILABLE VIA EMAIL — Just as reminder that you are able to receive the weekly Church Bulletin via email by requesting it. If you are on vacation or perhaps unable to with good reason not to attend the Weekend Divine Liturgy, this would be a great way to stay up-to-date on the happenings at the Church. Request the S.O.T. Church Bulletin by emailing the pastor: ffaf334@verizon.net.

PLEASE WRITE AMOUNT ON YOUR ENVELOPES — Often times when our devoted Counters are dealing with several different envelopes (Sundays, Holy Days, Special Collections, etc.) it is possible that a donation slips by without a written amount on the envelope. Would you please help them out and place the amount on your envelope prior to placing it in the collection basket? Also, be sure that your checks are signed and that you place the contribution in the envelope. Often times, we receive envelope with no donation inside. It will be greatly appreciated!

CONVERT INFORMATIONAL CLASSES FORTHCOMING — We welcome all of you who have been attending Holy Ghost Church with your spouses and friends on a regular basis. Perhaps you would like to become a Catholic of the Byzantine Rite, but didn't know how to go about it. Our pastor is considering offering classes to introduce you to know what our Faith and Rite are about. You do not have to commit yourself officially in becoming Catholic. I'm sure that you must have many questions. If you are interested, please contact Fr. Firko.