

**Parish Offerings – The Sunday of Cross-Veneration
Third Sunday of The Great Fast — Mar. 19, 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 (\$1,776) YP (\$9) | \$1,785.00 |
| Holy Day (\$90) Easter Décor (\$352) | 442.00 |
| Initial Offering (\$15) B.C.W. (\$14) | 29.00 |
| Votive Candles | 84.50 |
| | \$2,340.50 |

Holy Ghost Church, Northside

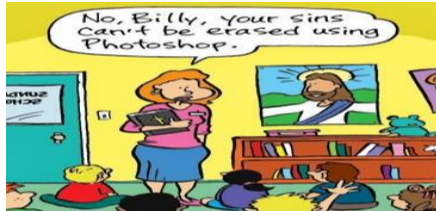
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|--|----------|
| Regular Offering | \$591.00 |
| HD (\$3) Easter (\$18) Flowers (\$83) | 104.00 |
| Utilities (\$43) Improvements (\$20) B.C.W. (\$14) | 77.00 |
| Votive Candles | 45.25 |
| | \$817.25 |

Church Attendance Last Week

(MR) Sat., 4:00 pm (43);

Sun., (MR) 9:00 am (83); (NS) 11:00 am (36)

IV Presanctified Divine Liturgy — Wed. (MR) 7:00 pm (21); Fri. (NS) 6:00 pm (n/a)



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

HAPPY SPRING
ALL RIGHT, WHO PLANTED THE FLOWER?!

DESIGNS BY NANCY
235 McCartney Drive,
Moon Township 15108
Phone: (412) 262-9141
Nancde@aol.com
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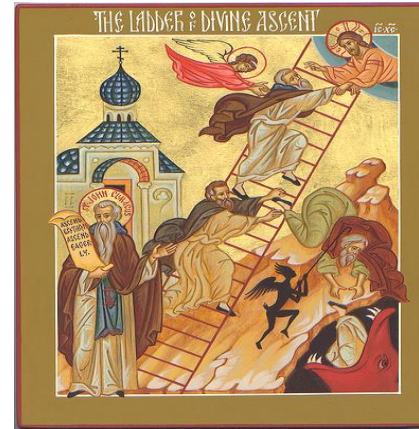
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Please patronize our fabulous sponsors! They make it possible to bring you this weekly & informative S.O.T. without an added expense to the Church. New Sponsors please contact Church 9 til 1:00 p.m. Mon-Fri!

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

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST

The Sunday of St. John Climacus — March 26, 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 Margaret Belinas (412) 331-3577 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

O John, our father, God-bearer, hermit of the desert and angel in the flesh, you received heavenly gifts by your fasting, vigils and prayers. You healed the sick and those coming to you with faith. Glory to Him Who gives you strength! Glory to Him Who crowned you! Glory to the Lord Who heals all through your intercession (Troparion of Great Vespers of St. John Climacus Sunday).

Mar 26, 2017 Christian Greeting Volume VII, Number 13



Glory to Jesus Christ! — Glory Forever!
Slava Isusu Christu! — Slava Na Viki!



Liturgical Services for the Week

| Date | Time | Intention | Requested By |
|---|-----------------|---|--|
| The Sunday of St. John Climacus | | | |
| 4th Sunday of The Great Fast — St. Basil Divine Liturgy | | | |
| SUN., Mar 26 (28) | 9:00 a.m. (MR) | Thanksgiving (25 th wedding ann) | Kathe & Bill Kress |
| | 11:00 a.m. (NS) | For the Parishioners of Both Parishes | |
| | 4:00 p.m. | Deanery Penitential Vespers at St. Pius Church, Carrick | |
| Mon, Mar 27, (29) | 8:00 a.m. (MR) | + Marsha Kurtanich (40 day of passing 3/15) | Parents: Dolores & Mike  |
| Tue, Mar 28 (30) | 8:00 a.m. (MR) | + Br. Felix Nowakowski, O.F.M. | Br. Regis, O.F.M. |
| REQUIRED SIMPLE ABSTINENCE (no meat) | | | |
| WED. Mar 29 (31) | 8:00 a.m. (MR) | 1 st & 3 rd Penitential Greatfast Hours | |
| | 6:30 p.m. (MR) | Sorrowful Mysteries of the Holy Rosary | |
| | 7:00 p.m. (MR) | Presanctified Divine Liturgy | |
| Penitential Canon of St. Andrew of Crete | | | |
| Thrs, Mar 30 (32) | 8:00 a.m. (MR) | Matins with Great Metanies | |
| | *1:00 p.m. (MR) | + Mary Frances Pungras | Sister: Anna Pungras Demianczyk |
| REQUIRED SIMPLE ABSTINENCE (no meat) | | | |
| FRI. Mar 31 (33) | 8:00 a.m. (MR) | 6 th & 9 th Penitential Greatfast Hours | |
| | 6:00 p.m. (NS) | Presanctified Divine Liturgy | |
| | 6:30 p.m. (MR) | Sorrowful Mysteries of the Holy Rosary | |
| AKATHISTOS SATURDAY | | | |
| Sat, Apr 1 (34) | 9:00 a.m. (MR) | + Joyce Buchko (birthday 3/26) | Nancy & Michael Ferrell |
| ***** Sunday anticipated St. Basil the Great Divine Liturgy of Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt | | | |
| | 4:00 p.m. (MR) | + Bilak + Charochak + Tomchak + Stachura Families | Families |
| The Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt | | | |
| 5th Sunday of The Great Fast — St. Basil Divine Liturgy | | | |
| SUN., Apr 2 (35) | 9:00 a.m. (MR) | For the Parishioners of Both Parishes | |
| | 11:00 a.m. (NS) | + Andrew Latta (4 th ann of passing 4/3) | Wife: Arlene & Family |
| | 4:00 p.m. | Deanery Penitential Vespers at SS. Peter & Paul, Duquesne | |

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: Mar 26 – James Gunkel, John Harbist, AIMEE HELMS; Mar 28 – LEAH TRAPL.

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

HOME: Irene Bordas, MARY ANN CONTI, Mary Culan, Andrew Drukalsky, Ilona Goyda, Beverly Harsh, MARTHA LUCAS, OLGA MANFREDO, Elizabeth Petruna, MARLENE PFEIFFER, Agnes Rosko, MARY SAHAYDA, GERARD SLAGLE, Michael Spisak, Mildred Terrek, ANNA TOTH, EVELYN VENTO, JOHN VEREB, Julia Wovchko.

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): MICHAEL BARBUSH, Irene Bednar.

CHIPPEWA PLACE (7005 Stadium Dr., Apt 427, Brecksville, OH 44141): Stephen Katrenich.

VALENCIA WOODS OF ST. BARNABAS (85 Charity Place, Valencia, PA 16059): Eleanor Kapko.

SUNRISE OF EAST COBB (1551 Johnson Ferry Rd., Marietta, GA 30062): AGNES KNOLL.

CARING HEIGHTS (234 Coraopolis Rd., Coraopolis, PA 15108): Margaret Beliuinas.

Public questions on Catholic spirituality, moral & spiritual problems

Q. How specific in detail must one be in confessing sins? **A. Answer by Catholic Answers:** We are bound to confess all our mortal sins, but it is well also to confess our venial sins. The chief qualities of a good Confession are three: it must be humble, sincere, and entire. By the "kinds of sin," it means the particular division or class to which the sins belong; that is, whether they be sins of blasphemy, disobedience, anger, impurity, dishonesty, etc. We can determine the kind of sin by discovering the commandment or precept of the Church we have broken or the virtue against which we have acted. By "circumstances which change the nature of sins" we mean anything that makes it another kind of sin. Thus to steal is a sin, but to steal from the Church makes our theft sacrilegious. Again, impure actions are sins, but a person must say whether they were committed alone or with others, with relatives or strangers, with persons married or single, etc., because these circumstances change them from one kind of impurity to another.

This Week's Sanctuary Lamps

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

March 26 — April 1, 2017

(MR): **In memory of Joyce Buchko** (birthday 3/26)

offered by Sister: Peggy McCusker

(NS): **In memory of Rita Lasko**

(MR) NONE AVAILABLE 2017

offered by Family

(NS) NONE AVAILABLE 2017



McKees Rocks Announcements

LENTEN PIROHI SALES CONTINUES FOR 2 ADDITIONAL WEEKS — the dates for the next sales are **March 31 & April 7**. Orders must be placed on the sheet at the Church entrances following the weekend Divine Liturgies, and/or by phone on Wednesdays from **9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon @ (412) 331-5155**. Eat-ins will still be available. Please continue to get the word out to the public. We still need pinchers! Please come to help us fulfill orders!



MEALS-ON-WHEELS SPAGHETTI FUND RAISER FORTHCOMING — The Allegheny West Meals-On-Wheels Kitchen will be holding a Spaghetti Dinner (includes salad roll w/butter, drink & dessert) at 900 Chartiers Avenue, McKees Rocks, PA, on **Sunday, April 2, 2017** to solicit funds for their program to help others. Adults (\$10) Children under 12 (\$4). Take-outs available. M.O.W.'s serves Crafton Heights, Elliot, McKees Rocks, Robinson, Sheraden and Stowe Township. You are encouraged to support their cause.

Northside Announcements

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: HAM BINGO ON PALM SUNDAY — We are planning a HAM BINGO on **Palm Sunday, April 9**. Early Birds: 2:00 p.m.; Regulars games: 3:00 p.m. Gift Baskets, 50/50 Raffle and Baked goods will also be available. We are asking for volunteers to make baked good, and also spend some time in helping at the bingo. We are in need of funds to pay bills! Please help us advertise by taking a poster and have it placed



so others can see it! We will, also, be applying for a Parish Expansion Grant from the G.C.U. Headquarters. If you can help with donations or prizes please call Lisa Plutto (412) 771-3915 or (412) 722-2746.

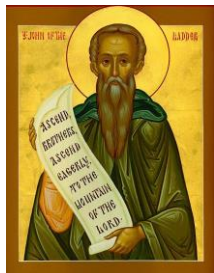
Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary:

Wednesdays & Fridays during the Lenten Season (MR) @ 6:30 p.m.

Join us in this Byzantine-Ruthenian Tradition to the Theotokos!

Saint of the Week — St. John Climacus — March 30

Saint John of the Ladder is honored by Holy Church as a great ascetic and author of the renowned spiritual book called THE LADDER, from which he is also called "of the Ladder" (Climacus). Although the book was written for monks, any Christian living in the world will find it an unerring guide for ascending to God, and a support in the spiritual life. There is almost no information about Saint John's origins. One tradition suggests that he was born in Constantinople around the year 570, and was the son of Saints Xenophon and Maria (January 26). John went to Sinai when he was sixteen, submitting to Abba Martyrius as his instructor and guide. After four years, Saint John was tonsured as a monk. Abba Strategios, who was present at Saint John's tonsure, predicted that he would become a great luminary in the Church of Christ. Known for his great wisdom and spiritual insight his superior directed that he put these instructions for others in writing. Saint John felt that such a task was beyond his ability, yet out of obedience he fulfilled the request. The saint called his work THE LADDER, for the book is "a fixed ladder leading from earthly things to the Holy of Holies..." The thirty steps of spiritual perfection correspond to the thirty years of the Lord's age. When we have completed these thirty steps, we will find ourselves with the righteous and will not stumble. THE LADDER begins with renunciation of the world, and ends with God, Who is love (1 John 4:8). Although the book was written for monks, any Christian living in the world will find it an unerring guide for ascending to God, and a support in the spiritual life.



Fourth Sunday of THE GREAT FAST

Encouragement Sunday: Necessity of Prayer & Fasting (Mk. 9: 17-31)

"I do believe! Help my lack of trust!" The healing of the possessed boy is

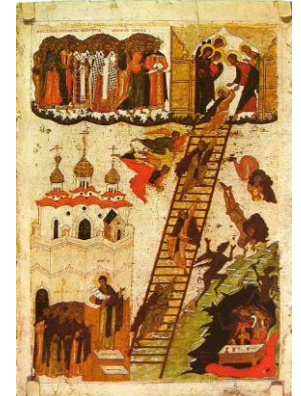


one of the longest miracle stories in Mark's Gospel (only the expulsion of the demons in 5:1-20 is longer). It is also one of the more detailed stories, becoming a bit complicated in the repetition of some of those details (e.g., in v. 22 the father of the boy tells Jesus what he has *already* told him in v. 18; the crowd gathers twice within the same story. Despite its length and detail, there is a very clear and simple message that Mark wishes to convey: **Anything is possible to one who trusts, and trust is deepened by prayer and fasting!**

Although Jesus is the one who heals the boy, it is the father's profession of faith that Mark holds up for his readers to imitate. Even in the most desperate moments, when prayer and trust seem useless, Jesus invites his followers to go one step further and pray like the boy's father: "I do believe! Help my lack of trust!"

The Ladder of Divine Ascent

The **Sunday of St. St John of the Ladder (Climacus)** is the fourth Sunday of The Great Fast It commemorates St. John Climacus (+ 649 a.d.), the author of the work The Ladder of Divine Ascent. Each of the Sundays of The Great Fast has a special theme. This Sunday's theme is St John's witness to the real spiritual struggle needed for entrance into God's Kingdom. It also is **encouragement** for the faithful to keep the goal of their Lenten efforts, for according to the Lord, *only "he who endures to the end will be saved"* (Mt 24:13). The Ladder describes how to raise one's soul and body to God through the acquisition of ascetic virtues. Climacus uses the analogy of Jacob's Ladder as the framework for his spiritual teaching. Each chapter is referred to as a "step", and deals with a separate spiritual subject. There are thirty Steps of the ladder, which correspond to the age of Jesus at his baptism and the beginning of his earthly ministry. Within the general framework of a 'ladder', Climacus' book falls into three sections. The first seven Steps concern general virtues necessary for the ascetic life, while the next nineteen (Steps 8-26) give instruction on overcoming vices and building their corresponding virtues. The final four Steps concern the higher virtues toward which the ascetic life aims. The final rung of the ladder—beyond prayer, stillness, and even dispassion is love.



LENT IS A TIME TO ATTEND CHURCH MORE OFTEN!

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS INCLUDING HOLY WEEK & EASTER

March 26 Penitential Vespers: St. Pius X Church, Carrick @ 4:00 p.m.
 March 29 Week V: WEDNESDAY: 8:00 a.m. (MR) 1st & 3rd Penitential Greatfast Hours.
 (MR) Presanctified Divine Liturgy @ 7:00 p.m.
 March 30 Penitential Canon of St. Andrew of Crete w/ Prostrations (MR) @ 8:00 a.m.
 March 31 Week V: FRIDAY: 8:00 a.m. (MR) 6th & 9th Penitential Greatfast Hours.
 Pirohi Sales.
 (NS) Presanctified Divine Liturgy @ 6:00 p.m. w/ reading of Hramoty.
 April 1 Akathistos Saturday imploring aid of the Theotokos in our ascetical practices (MR) 9:00 a.m.
 April 2 Final Deanery Penitential Vespers at SS. Peter & Paul Church, Duquesne, PA @ 4:00 pm.
 April 4 Evening of Repentance, St. John Cathedral @ 7:00 p.m. Ecumenical Service.
 April 5 Week VI: WEDNESDAY: 8:00 a.m. (MR) 1st & 3rd Penitential Greatfast Hours.
 (MR) Presanctified Divine Liturgy @ 7:00 p.m.
 April 7 The Final Day of The Holy & Great 40 Days Fast. & Final Day of Pirohi Sales.
 Lenten Daily Prayer (MR) @ 8:00 a.m. — Presanctified Divine Liturgy (NS) @ 6:00 p.m.
 Final Day of Pirohi Sales.
 April 8 Lazarus Saturday (MR) 9:00 a.m.
 April 9 Palm (Flowery) Sunday — All weekend Divine Liturgies commence 15 minutes earlier.
 Passion Vespers inaugurating Holy Week @ 2:00 p.m. followed by Confessions by extra Confessor.

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE (April 10 through April 15)

Great & Holy Monday (MR) Bridgroom Matins @ 8:00 a.m. & (MR) Presanctified Divine Liturgy @ 7:00 p.m.
 Great & Holy Tuesday (MR) Bridgroom Matins @ 8:00 a.m. & (NS) Presanctified Divine Liturgy @ 6:00 p.m.
 (NS) Confessions @ 6:15 a.m.
 Great & Holy Wednesday (MR) Bridgroom Matins @ 8:00 a.m. & (MR) Presanctified Divine Liturgy @ 7:00 p.m.
Great & Holy Thursday ... (MR) Betrayal Matins @ 8:00 a.m. & (MR) Vespers & St. Basil Divine Liturgy @ 7:00 p.m.
Great & Holy Friday . (MR) Passion Matins w/12 Passion Gospels @ 8:00 a.m. — (MR) Royal Hours @ 12:00 noon

(MR) CHURCH WILL REMAIN OPEN FROM 12:00 NOON UNTIL 3:00 pm FOR PRIVATE DEVOTION

(NS) Entombment Vespers w/Procession @ 5:00 p.m. & (MR) Entombment Vespers w/Procession @ 7:00 p.m.

ALL NIGHT VIGIL BEFORE THE TOMB (Please Signup)

Great & Holy Sat. (MR) Sepulcher (Jerusalem) Matins w/Procession @ 8:00 a.m. — (MR) Great Vespers w/St. Basil Vigil Divine Liturgy @ 2:00 p.m. — (NS) Resurrectional Matins & Solemn Blessing of Paschal Foods @ 5:45 p.m. — (MR) Resurrectional Matins & Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom followed by Solemn Blessing of Paschal Foods @ 7:45 p.m.

APRIL 16 – EASTER SUNDAY — THE RADIANT RESURRECTION — THE GREAT DAY

(MR) 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom followed by Solemn Blessing of Paschal Foods — (NS) 11:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.

SPECIAL LITURGICAL SERVICES THIS WEEK

THE GREAT CANON OF ST. ANDREW OF CRETE W/GREAT METANIES

The Matinal (Morning) Prayer of the Church containing the Canon of this beloved Saint of the Byzantine Church is celebrated on the **5th Thursday of The Great Fast**. It is a poetic lamentation of a Christian soul who discovers how much God loves him. Several Great Metanies are made while saying **“Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me!”** The beautiful liturgical service assists us in expressing our love to God and sorrow for our sins. The soul is purified in this penitential service. Come and join us as we pray together glorifying our Great & Holy Triune God.

AKATHISTOS SATURDAY

This liturgical service means “No Sitting.” It is a standing service celebrated in honor of the Most Holy Theotokos on the **5th Saturday of The Great Fast**. It beseeches her aid in helping to defend us against the dark spiritual forces of evil and centers our fidelity to prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Let us seek the Holy Virgin Mary’s assistance following the Morning Divine Liturgy

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

DEANERY PENITENTIAL VESPERS SCHEDULED — *The Great Fast Deanery Vespers* will be celebrated, each Sunday during The Great Fast Season at 4:00 p.m. preceded by *The Holy Mystery of Reconciliation @ 3:30 p.m.* The following churches have been selected to host a different week: **(4)**



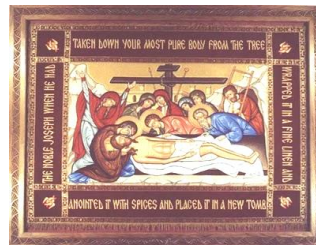
March 26 – St. Pius X Church, Carrick – Homilist: Monsignor Russell A. Duker; and (5) April 2 – SS. Peter & Paul Church, Duquesne – Homilist: Fr. Dennis Bogda. It was good to see so many from our parishes attending these services. If you haven’t done so, please join us. Fellowship of meatless soups and bread will be served following the liturgical services.

AN EVENING OF REPENTANCE RESCHEDULED DUE TO INCLIMATE WEATHER —The *“Evening of Repentance,”* at St. John Cathedral, Munhall scheduled for last Tuesday was cancelled due to the snow storm. It has been **rescheduled for Tuesday, April 4, 2017 @ 7:00 p.m.** A penitential fellowship will then take place at the Social Center comprising of a meatless soup and bread. Everyone is cordially invited.



Forgiveness

VIGIL TOMB WATCH SIGNUP SHEET NOW READY — It has always been a long standing custom that following the Entombment Vespers on Holy & Great Friday, the Church remains



open up to the Resurrectional Matins Holy Saturday evening to venerate the Most Pure Body of Our Savior in the Tomb. In today’s environs, we must be very careful that the Church is protected from vandalism. The McKees Rocks Parish will attempt to carry on this beautiful and solemn practice IF we can get enough of people to keep vigil before the Tomb, especially throughout the night. A special poster is now available for signatures. This vigil is open and encourages both Parishes to participate. If you

select a time slot, and someone else has signed, you may also sign in the same slot. It would be nice if a few individuals and/or families would share the same slots for safety reasons. If there aren’t enough to register throughout the night, the Church will discontinue this tradition. So, please sign early so that we may know if this activity will become a true reality.

MEN NEEDED TO HOLD CANDLES DURING PASSION GOSPELS — On Holy & Great Friday morning during the Passion Matins w/reading of the Twelve Gospels, the tradition of the Church always had 12 men holding candles as the Passion of the Lord Jesus was being proclaimed. We sure would like to keep this meaningful and sacred custom alive. It is open to all men of both parishes to participate. **Please register your name on the special sheet in the MR side vestibule or phone the Church Office.** Let us honor Our Lord for all that He endured for our salvation and redemption.

Carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull



EXTRA CONFESSOR FORTHCOMING — **Palm (Flowery) Sunday, April 9, 2017 following (MR) Passion Vespers @ 2:00 p.m.** — Our pastor is conscripting an additional Confessor to aid in hearing Confessions. *Please make every effort to make a good and worthy confession of sins as we prepare for the salutary events of Holy Week & Easter!* Use this opportunity to fulfill your Easter Duty Precept! You may also make your confession at the ordinary times listed on the front page of the S.O.T. A *Guide to Confession* is available in the narthex and vestibule of the Church.