

Parish Offerings – Sunday of the O.T. Holy Fathers
5th and Final Sunday of the Philipian Fast – Dec. 18, 2016

“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 (\$1,862) YP (\$11)	\$1,873.00
Holy Days (\$173) Christmas (\$358) YP (\$10)	533.00
Christmas Decor	35.00
Votive Candles	138.35
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	\$2,679.35

Holy Ghost Church, Northside

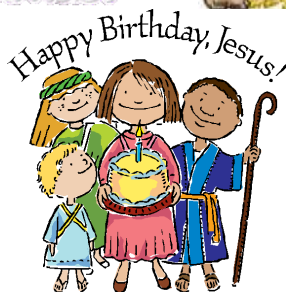
Regular Offering	\$330.00
Holy Days	10.00
Utilities	25.00
Votive Candles	25.00

Church Attendance Last Week \$390.00

(MR) Sat., 4:00 pm (60);
 Sun., (MR) 9:00 am (58); (NS) 11:00 am (25)



Valerian F. Szal
 238 Helen St.,
 McKees Rocks, PA 15136
 Phone: (412) 331-9713
 Fax: (412) 331-6688
Michael P. Ferrell,
 Supervisor, CFSP
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HOLY GHOST BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH
 225 OLIVIA STREET
 1437 SUPERIOR AVENUE
 McKEES ROCKS, PA 15136
 PITTSBURGH, PA 15212

NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
Christmas Day – December 25, 2016



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: (412) 331-5155

Web-site: www.holyghost-byzantinecatholic.org – E-Mail: ffa334@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 Belunas (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

Dec 25, 2016

Christian Greeting

Volume VI, Number 52



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



Liturgical Services for the Week

Date	Time	Intention	Requested By
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THE HOLY NATIVITY



of Our Lord, God & Savior Jesus Christ in the flesh

Christmas Day — Mirovanije — NO Simple Abstinence throughout the week
SUN., DEC 25 9:00 a.m. (MR) Christmas Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
For the Parishioners of Both Parishes



11:00 a.m. (NS) Christmas Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
+ Jay D. Mowery Joan Senchyshyn

SYNAXIS OF THE THEOTOKOS — 2nd Day of Christmas

Commemoration of Righteous Joseph, King David & Apostle James

Mon, Dec 26 9:00 a.m. (MR) + Raymond J. Herczak Carolyn A. Kohut
6:00 p.m. (NS) For the Parishioners of Both Parishes



FEAST OF THE HOLY APOSTLE, PROTO-MARTYR & ARCHDEACON STEPHEN — 3rd Day of Christmas

Tue, Dec 27 9:00 a.m. (MR) For the Parishioners of Both Parishes
6:00 p.m. (NS) + Rita Lasko Janet Johnson & Rose Koretzka
Wed., Dec 28 8:00 a.m. (MR) + George W. Hornak G.C.U. Lodge 390
Thrs., Dec 29 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Amelia Firko Dowell Family

NO SIMPLE ABSTINENCE TODAY (meat permitted) in the joy of the Holy Nativity of Our Lord

Fri., Dec 30 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Sr. Vladimir Chabala, OSBM Basilian Sisters

Final Day of Christmas — New Year's Eve

Sat, Dec 31 9:00 a.m. (NS) + Helen S. Lubinski Sandy & David Spontak

Feast of Our Lord's Circumcision — New Year Day Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

4:00 p.m. (MR) + Julianna + John Bordas Dgtr: Dolores & Steve Kosko

Feast of Our Lord's Circumcision — Feast of St. Basil — New Year Day — Mirovanije

SUN., JAN 1 9:00 a.m. (MR) + Mary Agnes Kress Son: Bill & Kathe Kress
(7th ann of passing)
11:00 a.m. (NS) For the Parishioners of Both Parishes

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 26 – George F. Lucas, Elissa Lucas; Dec 27 – Nickolas Kotik; Dec 29 – Chris Singel, Evelyn Yakubik; Dec 31 – Calahan Bedard, David Bubalo.

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

HOME: Margaret Belunas, Irene Bordas, MARY ANN CONTI, Mary Culan, Andrew Drukalsky, Ilona Goyda, Beverly Harsh, Norma Kacsur, Dolores Kosko, MARTHA LUCAS, OLGA MANFREDO, Debra Palahunik, MARLENE PFEIFFER, Agnes Rosko, MARY SAHAYDA, GERARD SLAGLE, ANNA TOTH, EVELYN VENTO, JOHN VEREB, Claudia Verner, Julia Wovchko.

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

OHIO VALLEY HOSPITAL (25 Heckel Road, McKees Rocks, PA 15136): Elizabeth Petruna

Public questions on Catholic spirituality, moral & spiritual problems

Q. Why is it that Rome claims to be a "church" but says that other churches are "ecclesial communities"?? **A. Catholic Answers Apologist:** Magisterial documents use the term *church* for the Catholic Church and for Christian denominations that maintain valid apostolic lines of succession (e.g., Eastern Orthodoxy). Those Christian denominations that have not maintained valid apostolic succession are called *ecclesial communities*. The purpose is to distinguish between groups that have maintained historic ties to the original apostles through apostolic succession and those that have not. It is not intended to be derogatory toward non-apostolic Christian denominations.

This Week's Sanctuary Lamps

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

December 25 — December 31, 2016

(MR): **In memory of Diane Voigt**

offered by Sister: Janet Sendro & Family

(NS): **Living & Deceased of Senchyshyn Family**

(MR) NONE AVAILABLE 2017 offered by Joan Senchyshyn. (NS) STILL AVAILABLE 2017

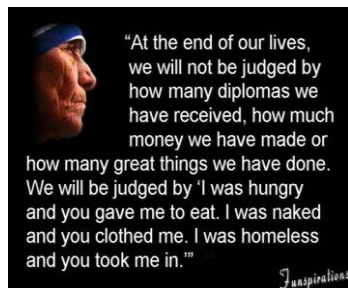


McKees Rocks Announcements



HOLY GHOSTS' TWO NEW ALTAR SERVERS — During last Saturday's Anticipated afternoon Divine Liturgy, **Thomas Rubish (junior server) & Andrew Petrilla (senior server)**, were installed as the newest altar servers. We welcome them to the rank of our Holy Ghost Altar Servers, and pray that they will render faithful and loyal service in this new and important ministry! Please pray for them!

GRATITUDE EXTENDED TO ALL WHO REMEMBERED THE POOR — During this joyous and sacred season of Our Savior's Holy Nativity, many of you have remembered the less fortunate of our neighborhood community. The past week, we sent what you have donated to two separate organizations the amount of \$294.00 each. Receiving your donations were **Focus On Renewal** and **McKees Rocks' Meals-On-Wheels**. It is good to know that your Christmas donations will be truly appreciated



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 an envelope with no donation inside. It will be greatly appreciated!

Northside Announcements

GRATITUDE EXTENDED TO ALL WHO REMEMBERED THE POOR — During this joyous and sacred season of Our Savior's Holy Nativity, many of you have remembered the less fortunate of our neighborhood community. The past week, we sent what you have donated to **Light of Life** on the Northside in the amount of \$196.00. It is good to know that your Christmas donations will be truly appreciated



SANCTUARY LAMPS STILL AVAILABLE IN 2017 — There are still plenty of Sanctuary Lamp dates available for 2017. The stipend per candle offering is \$10.00. If you have not reserved a SL for the New Year this is your opportunity to do so before they are taken. Write your intention on a regular envelope and the date you would like, if available, with the stipend on the inside and place it in the collection basket. If your date is already taken, the closest possible date will be reserved for you.

SPECIAL GRATITUDE TO THE JUGAN FAMILY — A special thank you goes out to Carol Jukan and her Daughters, Abigail and Isabella for their most generous donation of \$1,500.00 to our Holy Ghost Church in honor of her parents & Baba & Didi, Irene & Milan Jukan. May God richly bless you as we celebrate Our Savior's Holy Nativity!

Have a Blessed & Merry Christmas!!

CHRISTMAS STORY CONTINUES

Synaxis Feast & Flight Into Egypt

GOSPEL Matthew 2:13-23

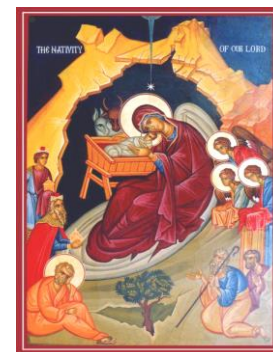
On the second day of the Nativity, the Byzantine Catholic Church gives glory and thanksgiving to the Most-holy Theotokos, who gave birth to our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ. This feast is called "the Synaxis" because on this day all of the faithful gather to glorify her, the Most-Holy Theotokos, and to solemnly and universally celebrate a feast in her honor. We also commemorate the flight into Egypt. 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.

Troparion of Christmas And the Ruthenian (Rusyn) Tradition

An aspect of the liturgical tradition that many present day Byzantine Catholics have lost occurs in the Christmas Troparion. Many of you should remember your parents and grandparents bowing slightly and making the sign of the Cross over themselves each time the **Christmas Troparion** was sung. A slight bow with a sign of the Cross should be made during the phrase: "... have learned from a star to worship (+) You the Sun of Justice. **On the word worship we are to bow and bless ourselves.** Let us revive the tradition of the founders and benefactors of our Holy Ghost Church and transmit to our children and others this unique manner of glorifying the newly-born Christ Child.



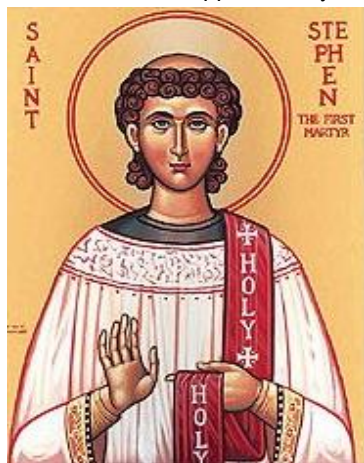
CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

December 25 9:00 a.m. (MR) Christmas Divine Liturgy; 11:00 a.m. (NS) Christmas Divine Liturgy.
 December 26 2nd Day of Christmas: Synaxis of the Theotokos — (MR) 9:00 a.m. (NS) & 6:00 p.m.
 December 27 3rd Day of Christmas — Feast of St. Stephen DL — (MR) 9:00 a.m. & (NS) 6:00 p.m.
 December 30 Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, Golden Corral @ 6:00 p.m.
 December 31 Final Day of Christmas — New Year's Eve Divine Liturgy — (MR) 4:00 p.m.
 January 1 New Year's Day: Feast of Circumcision & St. Basil - (MR) 9:00 a.m. & (NS) 11:00 a.m.
 (NS) Pot-Luck Luncheon following the Divine Liturgy at Social Center
 January 5 8:00 a.m. ROYAL HOURS OF THEOPHANY; 1:00 p.m. Great Vespers w/ DL of St Basil;
 (MR) 7:00 p.m. Divine Liturgy w/ Sanctification of Water.— Holy Day of Obligation.
 January 6 HOLY THEOPHANY — HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION — SANCTIFICATION OF WATER
 Divine Liturgies & Mirovanije: (MR) 9:00 a.m.; (NS) 6:00 p.m.

Saint of the Week

Holy Apostle, Proto-Martyr & Archdeacon Stephen — December 27

The Holy Apostle, Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen was the eldest of the seven deacons, appointed by the Apostles themselves, and therefore he is called



“archdeacon.” He was the first Christian martyr, and he suffered for Christ when he was about thirty. In the words of Asterias, he was “the starting point of the martyrs, the instructor of suffering for Christ, the foundation of righteous confession, since Stephen was the first to shed his blood for the Gospel.” Filled with the Holy Spirit, Saint Stephen preached Christianity and defeated Jewish teachers of the Law in debate. The Jews maligned Saint Stephen, saying that he had uttered blasphemy against God and against Moses. Saint Stephen came before the Sanhedrin and the High Priest to answer these charges. He gave a fiery speech, in which he

recounted the history of the Jewish nation, and denounced the Jews for persecuting the prophets, and also for executing the promised Messiah, Jesus Christ (Acts ch. 7). During his speech, Saint Stephen suddenly saw the heavens opened and Jesus Christ standing at the right hand of God. The Jews shouted and covered their ears, and rushed at him. They dragged him out of the city and stoned him, but the holy martyr prayed for his murderers. Far off on the heights stood the Mother of God with the holy Apostle John the Theologian, and She prayed fervently for the martyr. Before his death Saint Stephen said, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. O Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.” Then he joyfully gave up his pure soul to Christ. The body of the holy Protomartyr Stephen, left to be eaten by beasts, was secretly taken up by the Jewish teacher Gamaliel and his son Habib, who buried Stephen on his estate. They both believed in Christ, and later received holy Baptism.

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE TRADITIONAL THREE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS —



The first three days of Christmas are Festive Holy Days that the Church attaches great spiritual importance to the Most Holy Eucharist. Jesus is the Bread that has come down from Heaven and is truly the essential Bread of Life. *Thru these three days* the Church emphasizes that in the Holy Eucharist that **GOD IS WITH US** in the most intimate way possible here on earth. Therefore, **the Church exhorts all the faithful to worthily receive Holy Communion on these three solemn days.** Make it

a point to avail yourself to these innumerable graces and to offer your Communion for those special intentions you desire to be answered!

SEASONAL GREETING FOR THE NEXT TWO WEEKS — During this time of Christ until January 5, the greeting that we salute each other with is **CHRIST IS BORN! (Christos Razdajetsja!)**. The response is **GLORIFY HIM! (Slavite Jeho!)** Let us glorify the Lord this festive season by greeting and responding with this ancient custom celebrating the Lord Jesus' Birth!

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!!!

CHRISTMAS VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION DINNER THIS WEEK — The Church cannot operate very well if it weren't for volunteers! To show appreciation for all who volunteered in some aspect of parish life throughout 2016, a **Parish Appreciation Dinner at the Golden Corral, Robinson Township** will be held on **Friday, December 30, 2016 @ 6:00 p.m.** This includes all Altar Servers, St. Aquilina Ministry, Ushers, Cantors, Readers, Office Personnel, Collection Counters, Church & Rectory Cleaners and Decorators, Altar Cover changers, Catechists, Radio Ministry, etc. A list is now located in the vestibule of the Church. *Final day for signing is Dec. 27.*



YEAR END CONTRIBUTIONS THIS WEEK — 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 Wednesday, December 28, 2016.* Anything collected after that date will roll-over to the New Year 2017. For example, any of this year's Christmas Donations that arrive following this date will be accredited to 2017 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 2016! 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!