

## Parish Offerings – Sunday of the O.T. Forefathers

4th Sunday of the Philippian Fast – Dec. 11, 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 (\$1,796) YP (\$7)	\$1,803.00
Holy Days (\$288) Christmas (\$140)	428.00
Christmas Decor	140.00
Votive Candles	100.35
	<hr/>
	\$2,471.35

### Holy Ghost Church, Northside

Regular Offering	\$489.06
Holy Days (\$35) Christmas Flowers (\$15) Christmas (\$50)	100.00
Special Donation (Roof Fund by Barbara Bates)	500.00
Votive Candles	39.74

**Church Attendance Last Week** \$1,128.80

(MR) Sat., 4:00 pm (41);

Sun., (MR) 9:00 am (80); (NS) 11:00 am (35)



Thanks to Dad Hergewald (See Luke 2:1-16) 12-20-2001  
SORRY FOLKS, WE'RE BOOKED SOLID ... GOD HIMSELF COULDN'T GET A ROOM HERE TONIGHT

**No Christ - No Christmas**

**Know Christ Know Christmas**  
Jesus is Lord  
Philippians 2:11

**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

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## HOLY GHOST BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

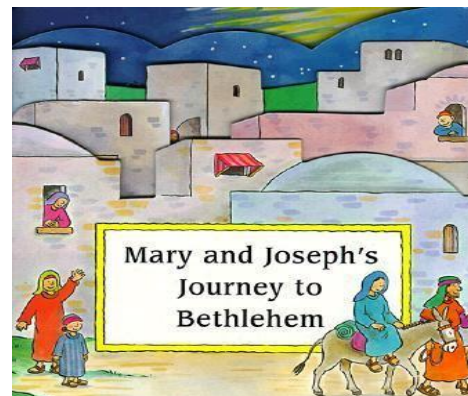
225 OLIVIA STREET  
1437 SUPERIOR AVENUE

McKEES ROCKS, PA 15136

PITTSBURGH, PA 15212

## THE SUNDAY OF THE O.T. HOLY FATHERS

5<sup>TH</sup> & Final Sunday of the Philippian Fast — December 18, 2016  
**SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS**



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](http://www.holyghost-byzantinecatholic.org) – E-Mail: [ffaf334@verizon.net](mailto: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](http://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.

Slaviane 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 18, 2016

Seasonal Greeting

Volume VI, Number 51



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



## Liturgical Services for the Week

Date

Time

Intention

Requested By

### Sunday of the Old Testament Holy Fathers

**5th & Final Sunday of the Philippian Fast — Sunday before Christmas**

SUN., Dec 18 (34) 9:00 a.m. (MR) + Cantor: John Fejka Dgtr: Susie Fejka

(8th ann of passing 12/16)



11:00 a.m. (NS) For the Parishioners of Both Parishes

3:00 p.m. (MR) Guest Confessor for Holy Mystery of Reconciliation

Mon, Dec 19 (35) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Helen Perschy Son: Kurt  
(14th ann of passing 12/16)



**Prefestive of Christmas**

Tue, Dec 20 (36) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Edward Zotyak Wife: Florence



**RECOMMENDED SIMPLE ABSTINENCE** (no meat) or **Equivalent Penance** (your choice)  
for the intention of the return of our beloved to Church

Wed, Dec 21 (37) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Peter Payda (birthday) Macrina Halder



Thrs., Dec 22 (38) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + James A. Ondich Moro Family  
(1st ann of passing)

**REQUIRED Simple Abstinence** (no meat) or **Equivalent Penance** for the return of beloved to Church

Fri., Dec 23 (39) 8:00 a.m. (MR) **ROYAL HOURS FOR CHRISTMAS**  
1:00 p.m. (MR) + Alice Smoley Dgtr: Mary Ann



**Vigil of Christmas — Saturday before Christmas: RECOMMENDED Simple Abstinence** (no meat)

Sat, Dec 24 (40) 9:00 a.m. (NS) + Fr. Richard J. Whetstone Anna Marie Demianczyk



8:00 p.m. (MR) **Great Compline with Litia followed by the singing of Christmas Carols**

9:00 p.m. (MR) **Christmas Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great**  
Special Intention of the Pastor



### THE HOLY NATIVITY

of Our Lord, God & Savior Jesus Christ in the flesh  
Christmas Day — Mirovanije

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 Mowery Joan Senchyshyn

## 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 18 – Lauren Kovacs; Dec 19 – Alexander Alman; Dec 20 – GEORGE HUNDANICK; Dec 21 – Timothy J. Gunkel; Dec 22 – Barbara Godfrey; Dec 24 – ABIGAIL RUSH.

### 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, Elizabeth Petruna, 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.

### Public questions on Catholic spirituality, moral & spiritual problems

**Q.** If one can be of another faith that rejects Church teachings and still reach the kingdom of heaven, then what's the point of being a Catholic? **A.** **Catholic Answers Apologist:** 1. Catholicism is true. 2. Unless we strive to be faithful to the truth to the best of our understanding, we will not be saved. 3. The farther one is away from the Church, the less the chance of making it to heaven. 4. Those who culpably refuse to embrace the truth in the Church cannot be saved because they are ultimately rejecting Christ.

### This Week's Sanctuary Lamps

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

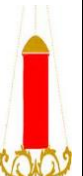
**December 18 — December 24, 2016**

(MR): **In memory of Andrew Wahal** (2nd ann of pass 12/16)

offered by + Elizabeth Mross

(NS): **In memory of David S. Chesmar, Jr. Family**

(MR) NONE AVAILABLE 2017 offered by David S. Chesmar, Jr. (NS) STILL AVAILABLE 2017





## McKees Rocks Announcements

**A TASK WELL DONE!!!** — Heartfelt thanks is extended to all who have graciously taken an angel from the Angel Tree, and turned it into a precious gift for a less-fortunate child in our local area for Christmas. The Holy Family Social Services and Family Foundation in Emsworth have gathered these gifts this past week and will distribute them to the children in time for Christmas. You were indeed very generous! A special thank you to the G.C.U. Lodge 390 for sponsoring this annual project. Enormous gratitude goes out to Barbara & Peter Stecko for sacrificing their time to make this event come to fruition for the children! God bless all of you and know that this is pleasing to Our Lord, and making a child very happy and loved this Christmas Season.

**SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR BYZAN-TEENS FOR FLOWER DELIVERY** — Heartfelt gratitude is extended to our Youth Group and their chaperones for delivering the Parish Christmas Flowers to most of our shut-ins this past week. The shut-ins are special parishioners, who can no longer attend Church services. The offering of their prayers and sufferings for our Parish are precious before the Lord Who pours out His special graces to us! Grant, O Lord, to our Youth Group and to our parish shut-ins, peace, health and salvation for many happy and blessed years! Na Mnohaja I Blahaja L'ita!

**GRATITUDE FOR FLOWER ARRANGEMENTS & ALTAR CLOTHS** — Our Church could never look so beautiful unless volunteers come together and sacrifice their time for this display. We would like to especially thank the Herron Family for placing the flowers in the Church for this Nativity Season. Also, a special thank you is extended to Mary Elizabeth Kacsur for "stepping into the shoes" of our beloved + Elsie Eberle in the ministry of changing the altar cloths appropriate for the different liturgical seasons. Elsie will never be replaced, but Mary is a capable disciple who learned the art very quickly! God Bless you! Na Mnohaja I Blahaja L'ita!!!

**DECEMBER FOOD DRIVE ENDS TOMORROW** — In our love for the less fortunate, we are collecting and dispersing nonperishable food items to *Focus On Renewal* in time for Christmas. Please bring non-expired items to the Church and place them at the entrances of the Church. They will be delivered on Monday, Dec. 19. For additional information contact Elaine Kurtanich (412) 370-9092.



## Northside Announcements

**COVERED DISH LUNCHEON ON NEXT SUNDAY ON NEW YEAR'S DAY** — Originally, it was called a Pot-Luck Luncheon. More appropriately it should be referred to as a covered dish consisting as the main feature: Pork and Sauerkraut to follow the Sunday New Year's Day Divine Liturgy at the Social Hall. The Church will provide the Coffee and Soda Pop. We need to know today if you are interested. Please sign the list in the narthex! It is open to both Parishes.

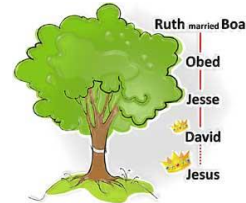
**Come O Jesus Our Savior, Redeem and Save Us!**

## Explanation of this Week's Liturgical Services of Preparation

### The Sunday of the Old Testament Holy Fathers

**TODAY'S GOSPEL Matthew 1:1-25**

The **Sunday of the Holy Old Testament Fathers** is the Sunday before the Nativity. They comprise all the righteous ancestors of Christ related to the Christ-Child, according to the flesh, from Abraham to Joseph, the spouse of the Holy Virgin Mary who form the ancestral family tree of Jesus. They waited patiently with faith in the hope that God would soon send to them the promised Messiah. They truly anticipated the Savior's coming. At today's Divine Liturgy the **genealogy** is proclaimed from Matthew's Gospel. In these few remaining days remaining in the Philippian Fast *Let us continue to keep company with Mary and Joseph on the journey to Bethlehem with the joy that is so to come with the birth of our Lord, God & Savior Jesus Christ. Let us not refrain from our prayer, abstinence, almsgiving of mercy, confession of sins, and attendance at Divine Liturgies so that with God's grace we may witness to this good news to those around us.*



### The Royal Hours & Great Vespers w/DL

This early morning liturgical service at **8:00 a.m.** Christmas Eve referred to as the **ROYAL HOURS** (due to the glorification of Christ's Kingship) reminds us of the fulfilling prophecies of the Old Testament regarding the coming of God's promised Messiah. These promises are fulfilled in Jesus Christ, true God — true Man. This morning prayer of praise honors the Holy Nativity. We glorify God for keeping His Promise and for filling us with joy! At **1:00 p.m.** we once again gather to celebrate Our Savior's Nativity in the flesh with the official evening prayer of the Church.. Come, let us adore Him by joining us in this day of prayer!

### The Holy Supper

Following today's Liturgical service, we ready to prepare and eat the Holy Supper (Svjata Vecerja). This has been a cherished custom of our Ruthenian (Rusyn) Byzantine Catholic people for several years. On this Holy Evening (Svjatj Vecer) the family begins by singing the Troparion and Kontakion of the Holy Nativity. Prior to the main course, it is customary to distribute to each a small piece of prosphora (communion bread) on which honey has been spread together with small piece of garlic. This is an annual reminder that with Jesus, the Messiah, the Bread of Life, we are sustained in the sweetness and bitterness that face us in life. This was always a day of strict abstinence meal (no meat or dairy). Although it is no longer mandatory, we should at least observe simple abstinence (no meat) concluding with this holy meal. After we partake of the True Bread of Life, Jesus the Messiah, at the Divine Liturgy in Holy Communion, can we then celebrate fully with the goodness of all foods.

### Great Compline w/litia

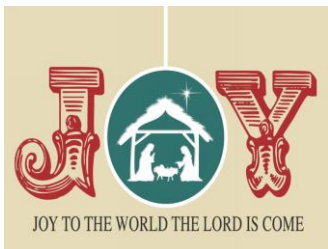
Prior to the Divine Liturgy for Christmas Day, we are called together to celebrate the official Night Prayer of the Church. This service is called *Great Compline w/litia* that is, the blessing of the bread, wheat, wine and oil. The holy bread and blessed oil are then distributed at the Mirovanije. This service is to fill us with joy in expecting the Messiah birth with the singing of the ancient hymn "God with us!" (S'Nami Boh!). Come and participate in this 8:00 p.m. liturgical service!

## CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

December 18 .....	Holy Mystery of Reconciliation (Confessions) for ECF Students ..... (MR) Extra Confessor for Holy Mystery of Reconciliation @ 3:00 p.m.
December 20 .....	(NS) Holy Mystery of Reconciliation @ 6:00 p.m.
December 24 .....	(MR) 8:00 a.m. Royal Hours; (MR) 1:00 p.m. Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom. ..... 8:00 p.m. (MR) Great Compline followed by Christmas Carols; 9:00 p.m. Christmas Divine Liturgy.
December 25 .....	9:00 a.m. (MR) Christmas Divine Liturgy; 11:00 a.m. (NS) Christmas Divine Liturgy.
December 26 .....	2 <sup>nd</sup> Day of Christmas: Synaxis of the Theotokos — (MR) 9:00 a.m. (NS) & 6:00 p.m.
December 27 .....	3 <sup>rd</sup> 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 am. ..... (NS) Pot-Luck Luncheon following the Divine Liturgy at Social Center.

## CHRISTMAS DIVINE LITURGY

The Christmas Divine Liturgies will be celebrated on (MR) **Christmas Eve, Dec. 24 at 9:00 p.m. and Christmas Day, Dec. 25 at 9:00 a.m. and (NS) 11:00 a.m.** We come together

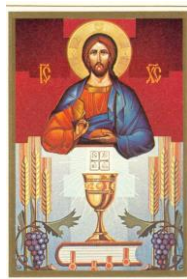


as a parish family to celebrate Our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ's Nativity according to the flesh. Festive melodies and traditional carols are joined together as we raise our hearts and voices praising God the Father for sending our His Divine Son, Jesus Christ, to sanctify us through God the Holy

Spirit. Christmas has a 7-day post-festive period in which the message of Christ's Birth is reiterated in a celebratory manner. **THERE IS NO FASTING OR ABSTINENCE ON CHRISTMAS DAY IN THE JOY OF OUR SAVIOR'S NATIVITY ACCORDING TO THE FLESH!**

## 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. *During 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 receive Holy Communion on these three solemn days. Make it a point to avail yourself to these innumerable graces and to offer a worthy reception of Holy Communion for those special intentions you desire to be answered!



## Seasonal Greeting During Christmas

During this time of Christ until January 4, 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 Byzantine Catholic tradition celebrating the Lord Jesus' Nativity!

## THE MANGER IN BETHLEHEM'S CAVE

The scriptures reveal that Jesus was born in a manger in a cave of Bethlehem of Judea because there wasn't any room in the local Inn. In commemoration of these facts a Nativity Manger set is placed in the Church. We come to the Holy Manger and offer our



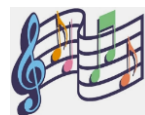
prayers to the newly born Christ Child during the Holy Nativity Season. As we pray at the Holy Manger of the Christ Child and reflect upon the humble scene, we must ever realize the tremendous debt of gratitude that we owe to Jesus, the Son of God, for having come into the world in order to save us. The Holy Manger of the Lord's Nativity will be blessed prior to the Divine Liturgy on Christmas Eve along with the Christmas trees and Poinsettias. Make a visit to the Holy Manger sometime during this Holy Season, and recite the Troparion prayer that is placed.

### EXTRA-CONFESSOR FOR THE HOLY MYSTERY OF RECONCILIATION — A special date

and time have been set for the Holy Mystery of Reconciliation prior to Christmas. It will take place in **MR on Sunday, December 18, 2016 @ 3:00 p.m. & on the NS, Tuesday, December 20, 2016 @ 6:00 p.m.** Our pastor is conscripting a priest-confessor for this purpose. Please make every effort to make a good and worthy confession of sins before Christmas! Prepare the Bethlehem of your soul and the manger of your heart for Our Lord's Holy Nativity. If you have not made a Confession of sins in many years, please do so at this time! You may, also, make your Confession at the ordinary times listed on the front page of the S.O.T.



### ARCHIEPARCHIAL CHOIR "CHRISTMAS AT THE CATHEDRAL" — The AC invites you to share the spirit and joy of the Nativity season as they present "Christmas at the Cathedral."



This annual choral event takes place this afternoon, **Sunday, December 18, 2016 @ 2:00 p.m.** at the Cathedral, 210 Greentree Road, Munhall. Following the sing-along finale, a hospitality reception with refreshments and Christmas treats will be held in the lower level of the Cathedral. Let us support the Choir, since the Choir Director, Darlene Fejka, and many of our parishioners are members.

**CHRISTMAS VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION DINNER** — 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, 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** — 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!**