

Parish Offerings – 25th Sunday after Pentecost — December 1, 2019

“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 (\$2,867) YP (\$13)	\$2,880.00
Holy Days (\$90) Christmas (\$5) Thanksgiving (\$244)	339.00
Christmas Décor	330.00
Votive Candles	183.01
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	\$3,732.01

Holy Ghost Church, North Side

Regular Offering	415.00
Holy Days (\$25) Thanksgiving (\$65)	90.00
Christmas Décor (\$15) Utilities (\$25) Improvement (\$50)	90.00
Votive Candles	56.00
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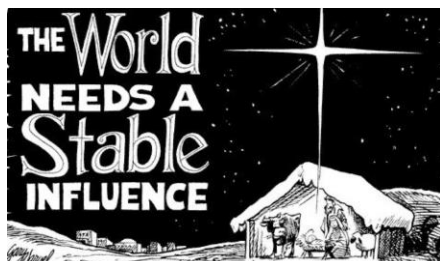
Church Attendance Last Week \$651.00

(MR) Sat, 4:00 p.m. (40)

Sun, (MR) 9:00 a.m. (80); (NS) 11:00 a.m. (24)



Christmas is coming...Ho ho ho



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

Perhaps they are not stars in the sky but rather openings where our loved ones shine down to let us know they are happy.

Lessons Learned In Life

DESIGNS BY NANCY
235 McCartney Drive,
Moon Township 15108
Phone: (412) 580-1545
Nancde@aol.com

Nancy C. Debranski
Sewing, Alterations, Custom Embroidery and Unique Gifts

GOU
Greek Catholic Union of the USA
A Fraternal Benefit Society

NWPL offers Insurance and Annuity Benefits greater than most financial institutions. Info call Tina (412) 859-9597

Heartfelt Thank You to all who sent me sympathy cards.

Love, Velma

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 Office 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 26th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
4th Sunday of the Philippian Fast — IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
December 8, 2019



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
Liturgical Services LIVE: www.Youtube.com then type: Holy Ghost Church Live Stream

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.
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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 Northwest Pittsburgh Lodge: (MR) Contact Tina Burns (412) 859-9597 for membership.
Slavjane Folk Ensemble: (MR) Membership requirements contact Bob Bartko: (412) 779-0195.
Carpatho-Rusyn Radio Broadcast: Every Sunday from 2:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. WPIT 730 AM.
Social Hall Rental for Parishioners: (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!

SPIRIT OF TRUTH

When the Most High descended and confused tongues, He scattered the people; but when He distributed the tongues of fire, He called all men to unity. Therefore, with one voice, let us glorify the Most Holy Spirit (Matins of Pentecost Sunday).

Dec 8, 2019 Seasonal Greeting Volume IX, Number 49



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



Liturgical Services for the Week

Date Time Intention Requested By

26th Sunday after Pentecost

4th Sunday of the Philippian Fast — Immaculate Conception

SUN, Dec 8 (24) 9:00 a.m. (MR) For the Parishioners of Both Parishes
11:00 a.m. (NS) + Bishop Andrew Pataki (8th ann of passing)
+ Fr. John Kasarda (11th ann of passing)

Mon, Dec 9 (25) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Cifrulak + Kulka Families Kathy & John Kulka

Tue, Dec 10 (26) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Emory Holowatch Anna Myers

The Philippian Fast — 40 days before Christmas

RECOMMENDED SIMPLE ABSTINENCE (no meat) or Equivalent Penance (your choice)

for the intention of the return of our beloved to the fullness of the Faith

Wed, Dec 11 (27) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Mary Spontak Grandson: Robert & Joyce
(70th ann of passing 12/13)

Commemoration of Our Lady of Guadalupe — Our Lady of the Americas

Thrs, Dec 12 (28) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Marlene Andrascik Niece: Janet Herczak
(40th day of passing 12/13)

REQUIRED SIMPLE ABSTINENCE (no meat) or Equivalent Penance (your choice)

for the intention of the return of our beloved to the fullness of the Faith

Fri, Dec 13 (29) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Andrew Kundrat, Jr. Theresa Kundrat
(34th ann of passing)

Sat, Dec 14 (30) 9:00 a.m. (NS) For the Parishioners of Both Parishes



Anticipated Divine Liturgy of the Sunday of the Old Testament Forefathers
4:00 p.m. (MR) + Mike Palahunik M/M Burt Cifrulak

Sunday of the Old Testament Forefathers

5th Sunday of the Philippian Fast

SUN, Dec 15 (31) 9:00 a.m. (MR) + Cantor John Fejka Dgtr: Susie
(11th ann of passing 12/16)

11:00 a.m. (NS) + Joseph R. Shamonsky Joan Senchyshyn
(40th day of passing 12/23)

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

Dec 9 – Alice Sejka, Daniel Skreptach; Dec 11 – Thomas Rubish, Michael Spisak;
Dec 12 – Florence Charochak; Dec 13 – Nicholas Harsh; Dec 14 – CHRISTOPHER MEADERS, Steven Puluka, Roberta Rubish.

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

HOME: Margaret Belionas, Helen Best, Irene Bordas, Florence Charochak, Margaret Cifrulak, MARY ANN CONTI, Ilona Goyda, Beverly Harsh, GEORGE HUDANICK, SR., MARTHA LUCAS, OLGA MANFREDO, Joseph Mitro, Mike Muska, Irene Palahunik, MARLENE PFEIFFER, Lisa Plutto, Betty Spisak, EVELYN VENTO, SHIRLEY YANOSKO.

MAPLEWOOD PC HOME (461 Maplewood Ave. Ambridge, PA 15003): Doris Naughton.
HIGHLAND PARK CARE CENTER (745 North Highland Ave., Pgh, PA 15206): Linda Reiger.
BRIGHTON REHAB & WELLNESS CENTER (246 Friendship Circle, Beaver, PA 15009): Mary Susan Dragosh.

MARIAN MANOR (2695 Winchester Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15220): Irene Bednar.
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.
LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR (1028 Benton Ave., PGH 15212): MARY SAHAYDA
VETERANS HOSPITAL (1010 Delafield St., Pittsburgh, PA 15215): JOHN VEREB.
VANADIUM WOODS VILLAGE (50 Vanadium Road, Bridgeville, PA 15017): Helen Hopey.

Public questions on Catholic spirituality, moral & spiritual problems

Q. Why do we have to go to Confession? Why can't we just go to God for forgiveness? A. Answer by a Catholic Apologist: God has given us the awesome gift of Confession because He wants to reach us through the Church, the community of believers (1 Thess 5:12-13). God wants us to be a family (1 Tim 3:15), so He gave us spiritual fathers in the priesthood. The priests have the authority to administer His forgiveness to us (CCC 1461). Jesus told the apostles, "Whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven". In short Confession is one of Christ's gifts to us. It is a wonderful spiritual treasure, a great gift we should rejoice in. Actually, we can go "directly" to God, but also through His Church. God sees the two as necessarily linked (Lk 10:16; CCC 858)... Confession helps us to grow in the virtue of humility. Humility is the first step towards true repentance (Mt 23:12). Humility is "honesty." If we are humble, we are able to honestly focus on our own faults. The priest can keep us more objective about our sins.

This Week's Sanctuary Lamps

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

Dec. 8 — Dec. 14, 2019

(MR) In memory of Dorothy Yankel

offered by Brother: George Lucas

(NS): In memory of Elizabeth Schaffer

(MR) STILL AVAILABLE FOR 2020

offered by Sister: Velma Seman

(NS) STILL AVAILABLE FOR 2020



McKees Rocks Announcements

LAST WEEK FOR PIROHI SALES — This will be the last week for Pirohi prior to Christmas. **Orders must be placed on the sheet at the Church entrances following the weekend Divine Liturgies, or by phone on Wednesday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon @ (412) 331-5155.** We will only be making a limited amount under this continued format. Eat-ins are still available. We could use additional help, especially pinchers when we resume!



PIROHI VOLUNTEER LUNCHEON FORTHCOMING — This year's luncheon will take place on **Monday, December 30, 2019 @ 1:00 p.m.** It will take place at the Rivers Casino Grand View Buffet. If you have contributed your precious time in working these past few weeks, please sign the list that is being provided or call the Church Office (412) 771-3324. Hoping this time during this festive season will accommodate your schedule



NEXT SUNDAY IS THE LAST WEEK FOR DECEMBER FOOD DRIVE — In our love and compassion for the less fortunate, we are collecting and dispersing nonperishable food items in time for Christmas. Last day will be December 15. Please continue to bring non-expired items to the Church and place them in the provided boxes. For additional information contact Elaine Kurtanich (412) 370-9092.



Northside Announcements

CHURCH BOILER PIPE NEEDS REPAIRED — The Pennsylvania Sewer & Water Authority (PSWA) informed us of excess water being used at the Church. Following an investigation, we noticed that a section of the boiler pipe became pitted and was leaking water. We applied a temporary fix using duct tape until we can get someone in to remedy the problem. This will not happen until this Friday, Dec. 13. It's going to be another costly repair.



GRATITUDE TO THOSE WHO DECORATED THE CHURCH — A special thank you is extended to all who came to decorate the Church this past week at both parishes. We are always in need of volunteers especially in decorating the Church for this special time of the year. Remember that all of us reap its benefits. The Church looks beautiful! We now await the Christmas flowers. We could not have done it without you!



SEND A CHRISTMAS CARD TO OUR RETIRED AND ILL PRIESTS — Although you may not know them, they will surely appreciate a remembrance: (1) Former (MR) pastor, **Fr. Robert Karl**, 235 Logan Road, Gibsonia, PA 15044; (2) Former (NS) pastor **Monsignor Peter Tay**, 1200 San Pedro, Pittsburgh, PA 15212.. Let them know that you are from Holy Ghost Church.



Meditation on today's Gospel

Showing Gratitude for healing the leprosy of Sin!

Like 17:12-19

Luke observes that the one grateful leper "was a Samaritan" (v.16). Why are no observant Jews – the chosen people of God, the people of the covenant – among

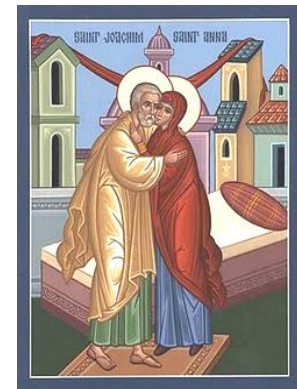


the grateful? No, the grateful leper is the one who is doubly outcast. He is both a leper and a Samaritan. This "Untouchable" is the one who stops to praise God in Jesus' healing. Luke has given us a picture of another "good Samaritan" (cf. 10:25-27). The story foreshadows the coming of the kingdom of God to the Gentiles (cf. Also "this foreigner" in v.18), a major theme throughout both Luke and Acts (e.g., 24-47 and Acts 1:8). In the cleansing of these lepers God was acting through Jesus, and so God must be thanked through Jesus. As a form of prayer, Christian gratitude must be offered through Jesus

Christ. The salvation of the grateful leper represents more than physical healing. The lepers' salvation reflects his awareness through faith of God's gracious presence. As Christians we are called to follow the example of this grateful leper and let the grace of gratitude transform our daily lives.

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception

Today, we celebrate this important feast. What is it all about? It is about the soul of the Virgin Mary whom God had chosen from all eternity to be the Mother in the flesh of the Incarnate Word was created full of grace and free from original sin, united to a body formed according to the laws of nature through the operation of love of her parents, Joachim and Anne. This privilege, accepted throughout the centuries, was officially proclaimed as a dogma by Pope Pius IX in the year 1854. It is known in the Catholic Church as the Immaculate Conception. It is the title that the Mother of God gave to St. Bernadette when she declared herself to be "The Immaculate Conception" prior to the Church's official proclamation.



O Most Holy Mother of God, Save Us!!!

Thank you St. Nicholas for gracing us with your presence today!

Calendar of Upcoming Events

December 8 Archdiocesan & Parochial St. Nicholas Catechetical Program Celebration.
 December 15 Holy Mystery of Reconciliation (Confessions) for ECF Students following the DL.
 Holiday Sounds: Christmas Cookie Cabaret, St. John Cathedral, Munhall @ 3:30 p.m.
 December 21 Installation of two New St. Aquilina Ministry servers.
 December 20 (NS) Holy Mystery of Reconciliation (Confessions) @ 6:00 p.m.
 December 22 (MR) Holy Mystery of Reconciliation (Confessions) @ 3:00 p.m.
 December 24 (MR) 8:00 a.m. Royal Hours; (MR) 1:00 p.m. Vespers w/DL of St. Basil the Great.

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 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. & 6:00 p.m.
 December 30 ... Pirohi Project Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon, Casino Grand View Buffet @ 1:00 p.m.
 January 1 New Year's Day: Feast of Circumcision & St. Basil - (MR) 9:00 a.m. & (NS) 11:00 a.m.
 January 2 Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, Golden Corral @ 6:00 p.m.

Saint of the Week

The Holy Martyr Boniface — December 19

The Holy Martyr Boniface was the slave of a rich young Roman woman named Aglaida and he dwelt with her in an iniquitous cohabitation. But they both felt the sting of conscience and they wanted somehow to be cleansed of their sin. And the Lord granted them the possibility to wash away their sin with their blood and to finish their life in repentance. Aglaida learned that whoever keeps relics of the holy martyrs in the home and venerates them receives great help in gaining salvation. Under their influence, sin is diminished and virtue prevails. She arranged for Boniface to go to the East, where there was a fierce persecution against Christians, and she asked him to bring back the relics of some martyr, who would become a guide and protector for them. Arriving at Tarsus in Cilicia, proceeded to the city square, where they were torturing Christians. The judge asked Boniface who he was. He replied, "I am a Christian," and then refused to offer sacrifice to idols. They stripped him and hung him upside down, beating him so hard that the flesh fell from his body, exposing the bone. They stuck needles under his nails, and finally they poured molten tin down his throat, but by the power of the Lord he remained unharmed. The people who witnessed this miracle shouted, "Great is the God of the Christians!" St Boniface was then sentenced to beheading by the sword. An angel appeared to Aglaida in her sleep and told her to prepare herself to receive her former slave, now the brother and fellow-servant of the angels. Aglaida summoned the clergy, and she received the holy relics with great reverence. Then she built a church on the site of his grave and dedicated it to the holy martyr. There she enshrined his relics, glorified by numerous miracles. After distributing all her wealth to the poor, she withdrew to a monastery, where she spent fifteen years in repentance, then fell asleep in the Lord. She was buried beside St Boniface.



Come O Jesus Our Savior, Redeem and Save Us!

General Announcements

TODAY'S THE 4TH SUNDAY OF THE PHILIPPIAN FAST — We continue our 4th week into this minor penitential period and continue to follow Mary and Joseph to



Bethlehem by preparing ourselves for the spiritual meaning of Christmas. It is through prayer, abstinence, almsgivings, frequent confession of sins, works of virtue and additional participation in Divine Liturgies, we can accomplish this end. Together as a parish, let us collectively practice simple abstinence (no meat) or an equivalent penance on Wednesdays (recommended) and Fridays (required) for the

intention of the return of our beloved back to Church. The color **PURPLE** is worn as a sign of **ROYALTY** of the One to be born in Bethlehem.

2020 CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES & CALENDARS ARE IN (MR) CHURCH BASEMENT & (NS) NARTHEX —Your 2020 *Contribution Envelopes* are available for distribution. **Please look for your name and not your current number.** If you were inadvertently missed or would like a box of envelopes, please call the Church office. **Please do not use your 2020 until January!**



SPECIAL TIMES FOR THE HOLY MYSTERY OF RECONCILIATION BEFORE CHRISTMAS — Special Confession times has been arranged to the following days & times to accommodate making a good Confession prior to Our Lord's Holy Nativity. **NS - Friday, December 20, 2019 @ 6:00 p.m. & MR - Sunday, December 22, 2018 @ 3:00 p.m.** *Please make every effort to make a good and worthy*



Also, Confessions are available at the regular times as indicted on the front of the S.O.T. Church Bulletin. *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 haven't made a Confession in many years, please do so at this time! A special guide is provided for you to examine your conscience can be picked up in the side vestibule & narthex. ***Please prepare your souls to be the New Bethlehem and your hearts to be a fitting Manger for Our Lord on Christmas Day!***

ARCHIEPARCHIAL CHOIR "CHRISTMAS AT THE CATHEDRAL CENTER" — The AC invites you to share the spirit and joy of the Nativity season as they present "Holiday Sounds: Christmas Cookie Cabaret." This annual choral event takes place next **Sunday, December 15, 2019 @ 3:30 p.m.** at the Cathedral Center, 210 Greentree Road, Munhall. Following the sing-along finale, a hospitality reception with a Cookie Cabaret Sale will be held in the Cathedral Center. Admission is FREE (Donations accepted).

