

**Parish Offerings – Sunday after Christmas — Dec. 29, 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 (\$3,391.50) YP (\$20) .....	\$3,411.50
Holy Days .....	187.00
Christmas (\$435) YP (\$10) .....	445.00
Votive Candles.....	124.50
	<hr/>
	\$4,168.00

**Holy Ghost Church, Northside**

Regular Offering .....	\$417.50
HD (\$25) Christmas (\$535) .....	560.00
Special Donation (Church Boiler Pipe by Lisa Plutto) .....	100.00
Votive Candles.....	62.00
	<hr/>
	\$1,139.50

**Church Attendance Last Week**

Sat (MR), 4:00 p.m. (48); Sun., (MR) 9:00 a.m. (66); (NS) 11:00 a.m. (30)  
 Circumcision of the Lord – Feast of St. Basil the Great – New Year’s Day  
 Wed., (MR) 9:00 a.m. (20); 11:00 a.m. (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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**Nancy C. Debranski**  
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**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 Tina (412) 859-9597

**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 tile 1:00 p.m. Mon-Fri!**

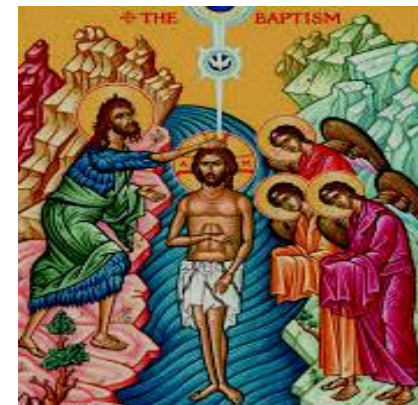
**HOLY GHOST BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

225 OLIVIA STREET  
 McKEES ROCKS, PA 15136

1437 SUPERIOR AVENUE  
 PITTSBURGH, PA 15212

**THE SUNDAY BEFORE THE ENLIGHTENMENT**

**Sunday Before Theophany — January 5, 2020**



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

**The Very Reverend Father Frank A. Firko**

**Pastor, Administrator & Protopresbyter**

**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](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**

**Liturgical Services LIVE: [www.Youtube.com](http://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 - Vigil Holy Days (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 Lodge 390: (MR) Contact Randy Baden (412) 973-1085 for membership requirements.

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: (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

Zebulun make ready. Nephtali prepare yourself. O River Jordan stand and leap for joy to receive the Master coming to be baptized. O Adam rejoices with the first mother Eve, and do not hide yourselves as once you did in Paradise. For seeing you naked, Christ has appeared to put on the first robe. He has appeared to renew all creation (Troparion of the Prefestive of Theophany).

January 5, 2020

Seasonal Greeting (Jan 5-14):

Volume X, Number 1



Christ is Baptized! — In the Jordan!  
Christos Krescajtsja! — Vo Jordani!



## Liturgical Services for the Week

Time

Intention

Requested By

### Sunday before the Enlightenment

**Sun, Jan 5** 9:00 a.m. (MR) For the Parishioners of Both Parishes  
11:00 a.m. (NS) + William (Bill) Gogal Mary Sahayda

*Theophany Divine Liturgy with the Great Sanctification of Water — Holy Day of Obligation*  
\*\*\* 6:45 p.m. (MR) For the Parishioners of Both Parishes

### Feast of Holy Theophany — Holy Day of Obligation Baptism of Our Lord, God & Savior Jesus Christ — Mirovanije

**MON., JAN 6** \*\*\* 8:45 a.m. (MR) + George Kurtanich Kathy Kulka  
\*\*\* 5:45 p.m. (NS) + Anna Toth (1<sup>st</sup> ann of passing) Mary Ann Smoley

#### Synaxis of St. John the Baptist



Tue., Jan 7 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Josephine Zula (9<sup>th</sup> ann of passing) Zula Family

Wed., Jan 8 8:00 a.m. (MR) Thanksgiving for Blessings received Eleanor & Son George

Thrs., Jan 9 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Andrew J. Drukalsky (birthday) Sister: Eleanor Masters

*REQUIRED SIMPLE ABSTINANCE (no meat) or Equivalent Penance for Peace in the whole world*

Fri., Jan 10 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Holy Souls in Purgatory Joseph A. Cehula, T.O. Carm.

#### Saturday after the Enlightenment

Sat., Jan 11 9:00 a.m. (NS) For the Parishioners of Both Parishes



Sunday anticipated Divine Liturgy of the Sunday after the Enlightenment

4:00 p.m. (MR) + John R. Debranski (birthday) Dgtr: Nancy

### Sunday after the Enlightenment

**Sun., Jan 12** 9:00 a.m. (MR) + Barbara + Andrew + Mary Ivano Julia Haluska

11:00 a.m. (NS) + Peter A. Smoley Dgtr: Mary Ann  
(47<sup>th</sup> ann of passing 1/17)

## 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 date not be published.

*Note: Capitalized Names designate North Side parishioners.*

**Birthdays:** Jan 5 – John Kutchmark; Jan 6 – Thomas Dubensky; Jan 7 – ISABELLA RUSH; Jan 10 – MARY ANN SMOLEY; Jan 11– Dennis Uram.

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

**HOME:** Margaret Beliyas, Helen Best, Irene Bordas, Florence Charochak, Margaret Cifrulak, MARY ANN CONTI, Iлона Goyda, Beverly Harsh, MARTHA LUCAS, OLGA MANFREDO, Irene Muha, 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 Rd, Apt 230 Bridgeville, PA 15017): Helen Hopey.

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

**Q.** Why is it so important to go to Church? **A. Answer by a Catholic Apologist:** Why is it important for a lover to be with his beloved? If we love God, we will want to spend time with Him in the way He wants us to. God wants us to give ourselves to Him in worship (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:18-19; CCC 2096). And He wants us to do it through His Son's own self-surrender and sacrifice, the Eucharist (Lk. 22:17-19; CCC1389). All that requires our going to Church as God commands (Heb. 10:25). Another reason for going to Church: We receive special graces by worshipping God and by receiving the Eucharist (Jn. 6:56). Going to Church can change us and convert our hearts. It can teach us we are not the center of the universe — God is — and He deserves our praise and thanksgiving (Rev. 5:12; Psalm 145:1-3; CCC 300). One more point: If we are not worshipping God, we are worshipping something else — ourselves, television, a movie star or a sports team. Not going to Church does not mean we won't worship anything, only that we will worship the wrong thing (CC 2113).

### This Week's Sanctuary Lamps

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

**Jan. 5, 2020 — Jan. 11, 2020**

(MR) In memory of Andrew J. Drukalsky (100<sup>th</sup> birthday remembered)

offered by Family

(NS): In memory of Diane Voight (8<sup>th</sup> ann of passing 1/17)

(MR) STILL AVAILABLE FOR 2020

offered by Sister: Janet Sendro

(NS) STILL AVAILABLE FOR 2020

## Holy Ghost, McKees Rocks

**OUR PIROHI PROCEEDS FROM THIS PAST SEASON** — Balance in Pirohi Parish Savings \$96,125.68. *Parish Savings & Share* interest: \$529.46 Total Proceeds Nov. to Dec. 2019 \$18,192.00; Minus Pirohi Expenses (\$3,452.53); Minus Cathedralicum: (\$720.17); Rivers Casino (\$336.00); Profit sent to Pirohi Parish Savings & Share: \$13,683.30; Current Balance in our *Parish Savings & Share*: \$110,338.44. Plans will be underway to initiate the renovation our two Church Basement Restrooms; and the two Restrooms in the gym. Our heating system in the school gym placed a temporary hold on the project. Thank you for your patience!

**TWO NEW SAINT AQUILINA MINISTRY INDUCTEES** — During the December 23<sup>rd</sup> Saturday's before Christmas afternoon Divine Liturgy, **Olivia Leasure & Madelyn Usouski** were appointed as the newest member of the St. Aquilina Ministry. The task allows girls to assist the Altar Servers and Ushers by distributing the weekly Spirit Of Truth (S.O.T.) Church Bulletin and also to help with the Mirovanije of the blessed bread on certain holy days and the Sunday that follow. We welcome Olivia & Madelyn to this ministry of service, and pray that they will render faithful and loyal service ministry! God grant them many years!



**ECF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM NEXT WEEK** — The second semester for the *ECF Program* commences next week, **January 12, 2020** 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) 897-4650. For those who are seeking a Holy Ghost Church Scholarship Subsidy for Parochial Education, this is an obligatory requirement. Also, the attendance has been very low last semester. Please be sure your children are enrolled and there each week. Our teachers sacrifice their time in preparing the lesson plan so that all children may benefit in religious education.

**COFFEE SOCIAL RESUMES ON THE FIRST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH** — Just a reminder that our Coffee Social resumes the first full weekend of each month. We appreciate Bunny Zavidny for all the years that she coordinated this project following the Saturday Divine Liturgy. She can no longer do it. We are looking for someone to take her place for this once a month social on Saturdays. Join us today for coffee and doughnuts following the Sunday Divine Liturgy.

**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 **Sunday, January 19, 2020 following the Divine Liturgy** 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.

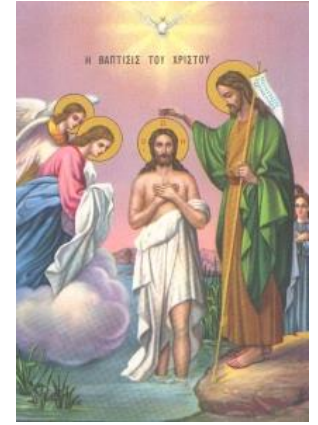
## Holy Ghost, Northside

**CHRISTMAS DECORATION DISMANTLED** — We no sooner set the Church up for Christmas and it will be time to dismantle it for another year. Following the Divine Liturgy on **Sunday, January 19, 2020**, we are asking all volunteers to help put away the festive decorations. The more assistance we can get, the faster we can all depart. Please consider offering an hour of your time, especially if you weren't able to help in the set up.

## SUNDAY BEFORE THE ENLIGHTENMENT

### The Meaning of this Third Important Feast of the Liturgical Year:

The term "Enlightenment" refers to BAPTISM. This week we will celebrate the Baptism of our Lord in the Jordan River by John. It is the Revelation of the Holy Trinity. The observance of this feast is not merely intended to commemorate the historical act of Jesus' baptism, but rather to celebrate the identification of Jesus as the Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed One whose coming was foretold by the prophets. What happened at the banks of the Jordan River was a mystical event. The Spirit of God was seen descending upon Jesus in the form of a dove and a voice was heard from the heavens declaring, "This is my beloved Son, My favor rests on Him." (Mark 1:11) Prior to this moment, Jesus was recognized as merely a carpenter from Nazareth, the son of Mary and Joseph. After His baptism. He was now identified as the Son of God. This is why the feast day is referred to as "Theophany," a term which literally suggests a "God revelation/appearance." John's role in this event was not simply as baptizer, but also as prophet. He foretold the coming of the Kingdom. The theme of his preaching was, "One more powerful than I is to come after me!" (Mark 1:7) John witnessed the fulfillment of this prophecy at the Baptism of our Lord. We, too, like John, are called to be prophets. We, like John, prepare the way of the Lord by the way we conduct our lives, by the way we choose our words, and by the way we treat others. May we invite our Lord to come within us during this festive season so that we, in turn, might prepare a place for Him in others. "Where two or three are gathered in My name, there I am in their midst," says the Lord.



### 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 there-in.** 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

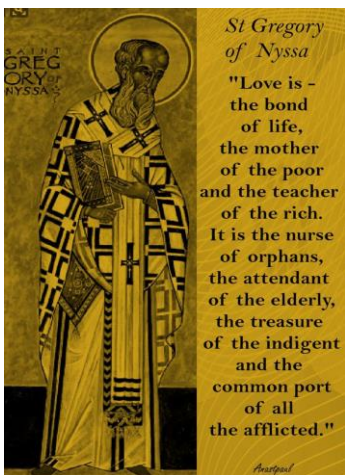
January 5 .....Holy Day of Obligation — (MR) Vigil Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great @ 6:45 pm.  
 January 6 ..... Feast of Theophany — Divine Liturgy of St. Basil & the Great Sanctification of Water —  
 Holy Day of Obligation — (MR) 8:45 a.m. & (NS) 5:45 p.m.  
 January 19 ..... Dismantling of the (MR) Christmas Decorations following the Sunday Divine Liturgy.  
 ..... Dismantling of the (NS) Christmas Decorations following the Sunday Divine Liturgy.  
 January 18-25 ..... Annual 8 days of Prayer for Christian Unity.  
 January 22 .....47<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the infamous Roe vs. Wade Decision legalizing abortion.  
 January 30 ..... Feast of the 3 Holy Hierarchs – Simple Holy Day – (MR) 9:00 a.m.; (NS) 6:00 pm.

## Saint of the Week:

### Our Father among the Saints, Gregory of Nyssa

January 10

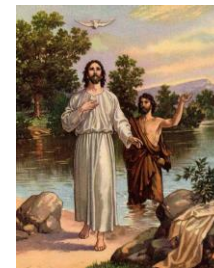
Saint Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa, was a younger brother of St Basil the Great (January 1). His birth and upbringing came at a time when the Arian disputes were at their height. Having received an excellent education, he was at one time a teacher of rhetoric. In the year 372, he was consecrated by St Basil the Great as bishop of the city of Nyssa in Cappadocia. St Gregory was an ardent advocate for the True Faith, and he fought against the Arian heresy with his brother St Basil. Gregory was persecuted by the Arians, by whom he was falsely accused of improper use of church property, and thereby deprived of his See and sent to Ancyra. In the year 381 St Gregory was one of the chief figures of the Second Ecumenical Council, convened at Constantinople against the heresy of Macedonius, who incorrectly taught about the Holy Spirit. At this Council, on the initiative of St Gregory, the Nicene Symbol of Faith (the Creed) was completed. In the year 383, St Gregory of Nyssa participated in a Council at Constantinople, where he preached a sermon on the divinity of the Son and the Holy Spirit. In 386, he was again at Constantinople, and he was asked to speak the funeral oration in memory of the empress Placilla. St Gregory of Nyssa was a fiery defender of True Faith dogmas and a zealous teacher of his flock, a kind and compassionate father to his spiritual children, and their intercessor before the courts. He was distinguished by his magnanimity, patience and love of peace. Having reached old age, St Gregory of Nyssa died soon after the Council of Constantinople. Together with his great contemporaries, Saints Basil the Great and Gregory the Theologian, St Gregory of Nyssa had a significant influence on the Church life of his time. His sister, St Macrina, wrote to him: "You are renowned both in the cities, and gatherings of people, and throughout entire districts. Churches ask you for help." St Gregory is known in history as one of the most profound Christian thinkers of the fourth century.



**(MR) Holy Ghost sponsoring Sunday's Carpatho-Rusyn Society Radio Program Sunday @ 2:30 p.m. WPIT 730 AM on the Radio Dial!**

# General Announcements

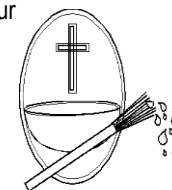
**FEAST OF THEOPHANY THIS WEEK – Monday, January 6, 2020**, is the *Feast of Holy Theophany*. It the Baptism of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ and is a **Holy Day of Obligation**. Remember we are obliged to attend the Divine Liturgy on this day! It is on this Feast that water is greatly sanctified or solemnly blessed. *There will be three Divine Liturgies: (MR) Sunday at 6:45 p.m. and (MR) Monday at 8:45 a.m. and (NS) 5:45 p.m.* Please remember to bring your own container for the newly sanctified water. Each home should have newly blessed water. Last year's holy water is to be discarded reverently in a place that is not trampled upon. **DO NOT** pour it down the drain. If you find it difficult to discard bring it to the Church. The Northside has a holy sink that drains into the ground beneath the church. You are encouraged to use the newly sanctified water throughout the New Year by anointing yourself with it and even drinking it.



**SYMBOLS USED IN THE GREAT SANCTIFICATION OF WATER —** The lengthy text prayed by the celebrant over the water is an ancient one. It is accredited to St. Sophronius of Jerusalem (7<sup>th</sup> century). During the solemn blessing of water (which we refer to in Church Slavonic as the "Sanctification of Water") four different actions are prescribed by the priest upon the water: (1) the emersion of the **TRIPPLE BRANCH CANDLE** (called the Trojca meaning three) symbolizing the presents of the Holy Trinity at the Jordan River when Jesus was being baptized; (2) the breathing over the water symbolizing the **BREATH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT** that gives life to the water as well as dispelling any diabolical activity contained in it; (3) the **HAND OF THE PRIEST** into the water in the form of four Greek letters (IC XC initials for Jesus Christ) demonstrating the presence of Our Savior in the water; and finally (4) the **HAND CROSS** is submerged into the water as the final act of sanctifying the water by this precious symbol that has destroyed Satan's power over it



**WHY YOUR HOME SHOULD BE BLESSED EACH YEAR —** Traditionally, the priest personally visits his parishioners each year to pray with them in the place where they live, and to bless their surroundings with the newly sanctified water of Theophany. By sanctifying our home, we extend the grace of God to our individual dwellings. Just as our souls, so also our homes become tainted by the sins of those living in them and consequently lose God's protective power. *We cleanse our souls of sins at least once a year and the church is blessed with the newly blessed water every year, so should our homes be sanctified with Holy Water to invoke God's blessings and protection on it and its inhabitants.* As we renew the insurance on our home every year, so we should renew our insurance of God's protection and His blessing which is of greater importance and more effective. If you would like to have your home blessed, please call the Church office.



**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 indicated. Would you please help us and place the amount on your envelope?!? Be sure that your checks are signed with the new year and that you place the contribution in the envelope or if several envelopes with one check attach with a paperclip. Often we receive an envelope with nothing inside. Submit all envelopes even if writing one check. It helps our bookkeeping!