

Parish Offerings – 26th Sunday after Pentecost — November 29, 2020

“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 (\$1,968.25) YP (\$8)	\$1,976.25
Holy Days (\$38) Thanksgiving (\$1,272) Christmas Décor (\$80)	1,390.00
Special Donation (In Memory of Agnes Bialek)	30.00
Special Donation (In Memory of Irene Palahunik)	150.00
Votive Candles	144.00
	<hr/>
	\$3,690.25

Holy Ghost Church, Northside

Regular Offering	\$250.00
Holy Days (\$1) Thanksgiving (\$7) Christmas Décor (\$50)	58.00
Special Donation (In Memory of Dorothy Kost Hanasik)	80.00
Votive Candles	29.50
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	\$417.50

Church Attendance Last Week

Sat., 4:00 p.m. (27)

Sun., (MR) 9:00 a.m. (51); (NS) 11:00 a.m. (23)



Christmas is coming...Ho ho ho



SOMEONE TO BLESS TODAY!

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

THE World NEEDS A Stable INFLUENCE

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

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 Office

HOLY GHOST BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

225 OLIVIA STREET
1437 SUPERIOR AVENUE

McKEES ROCKS, PA 15136
PITTSBURGH, PA 15212

THE 27th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

4th Sunday of Philipian Fast — Feast of St. Nicholas
December 6, 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 E. 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 Lodge 390: (MR) Contact Tina Burns (412) 859-9597 for membership requirements.

Slavjane Folk Ensemble: (MR) Membership requirements contact Bob Bartko: (412) 779-0915.

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

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).

December 6, 2020 **Seasonal Greeting** **Volume X, Number 49**



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



Liturgical Services for the Week

Date *Time* *Intention* *Requested By*

27th Sunday after Pentecost

St. Nicholas, Wonder-Worker — 4th Sunday of Philippian Fast

SUN., Dec 6 (22) 9:00 a.m. (MR) + Michael Safranko (*birthday 12/13*) Grand-Dgtr: Zizi
11:00 a.m. (NS) + Tony Nee (*13th ann of passing 12/7*) Slagle & Harper Families

Prefestive of the Immaculate Conception

Mon, Dec 7 (23) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Cifrulak + Kulka Families Kathy & John Kulka

Feast of the Immaculate Conception

Solemn Feast: Pure Conception of St. Anne — Patroness of Our Country

Tue., Dec 8 (24) 9:00 a.m. (MR) *For the Parishioners of both Parishes*
6:00 p.m. (NS) + Bishop Andrew Pataki (*9th ann of passing*) + Bishop Gerald Dino
+ Fr. John Kasarda (*12th ann of pass*) + Fr. Athanasius Pekar

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

Wed, Dec 9 (25) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Ann Lubas (*7th ann of passing*) Dgtr: Nancy, Jeno & Nina

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

REQUIRED SIMPLE ABSTINENCE (no meat) or Equivalent Penance (your choice)
for the intention of the return of our beloved back to God and His Church

Fri, Dec 11 (27) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Holy Souls in Purgatory Joseph A. Cehula, T.O. Carm.

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

Sat, Dec 12 (28) *** 8:30 a.m. (NS) *For the Parishioners of Both Parishes*

Sunday anticipated Divine Liturgy of the Twenty-Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

4:00 p.m. (MR) + Amelia M. Sotak Leyte, Mike & Mike Tomchak

Sunday of the Old Testament Forefathers

5th Sunday of the Philippian Fast

SUN., Dec 13 (29) 9:00 a.m. (MR) + John Fejka (*12th ann of passing 12/16*) Dgtr: Susie
11:00 a.m. (NS) + Pauline + Mitchel Bodnarchuk Son: Paul & Leslie
(*ann of passings*)

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 9 – Alice Sejka, Daniel Skreptach; Dec 11 – Thomas Rubish, Michael Spisak.; Dec 12 – Florence Charochak.

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

HOME: Margaret Beliuans, Helen Best, Richard Billy, Irene Bordas, Florence Charochak, Margaret Cifrulak, MARY ANN CONTI, Ilona Goyda, TAMARA HARDING, Beverly Harsh, Olga Manfredo, Joseph Mitro, Irene Muha, MARLENE PFEIFFER, Lisa Plutto, Anna May Sejka, Betty Spisak, Anita Wolsko, 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.

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, # 230, Bridgeville, PA 15017): Helen Hopey.

UPMC PASSAVANT (9100 Babcock Boulevard, Pittsburgh, PA 15237): Shirley Kotik

Public questions on Catholic spirituality, moral & spiritual problems

Q. How should one explain to a Protestant why it was necessary for Mary to be conceived without original sin? **A. Answer by a Catholic Apologist:** Original sin is the deprivation of sanctifying grace. In the present condition of the human race, we cannot function properly if we have been conceived with original sin. Being conceived in this way damages the person such that they are born with a fallen nature. This damage is known as the stain (Latin, macula) of original sin. To cause Mary to be born without original sin and its stain (i.e., immaculate), God infused sanctifying grace into her soul at the moment of her conception. Mary was given the special privilege of being conceived without original sin (with sanctifying grace) and without the damage or stain such a conception causes. This was done to equip her with the graces needed to make her a fit Mother for the Redeemer and for the Church. Mary's preservation from original sin was accomplished in anticipation of her Son's redemptive work. Therefore, Jesus is also Mary's Savior. Because of what he would do on the cross, this grace was given to her early. The gracious character of this blessing is also the reason that Anne and Joachim did not need to have it: It was a grace God could give to anyone at any time. He chose to give it to Mary to make her a fitting mother for his Son.

This Week's Sanctuary Lamps

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

Dec. 6 — Dec. 12, 2020

(MR): **In memory of Helen & George Lucas**

offered by Lucas Family

(NS): **In memory of Joyce & Mary D. Hrivnak**

(MR) Available for 2021

offered by Firko Family


(NS) Available for 2021



McKees Rocks Announcements

E.C.F. ST. NICHOLAS CELEBRATION TODAY — Following the 9:00 AM Divine Liturgy our Religious Education Students will be hosting the Annual St. Nicholas Program. We thank all of you who have called in reservations to be present to support our students. The program has been setup in a safe environment during the pandemic.

YOUTH GROUP STILL TAKING ORDERS THE VIRTUAL WAY — Every two years our Youth Group attends the **Byzan-TEEN Rally**. It is a wonderful chance for our youth to meet other Byzantine Catholics from across the country. In 2021 we are hoping to send 7 teens and 2 chaperones to Mt. St. Mary's University in Maryland. In order to defray the cost, the Holy Ghost Youth Group is holding a virtual fundraiser from Sarris Candies. This is a contactless fundraiser and all purchases will be shipped directly to the buyer free of charge. You can purchase anything from the company and we will receive 25% of the sale. Just follow these steps and candy will be on the way

 **FUNDRAISING**

1. Go to sarriscandiesfundraising.com
2. Go to the "fundraising" tab.
3. Our group code is 10-3617.
4. You do not have to put in a teen's name unless you want to.
5. Shop!

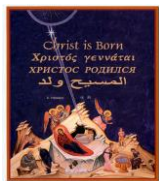
North Side Announcements

SYMPATHY EXTENDED — Just prior to this printing, the S.O.T. received word of the passing of parishioner, **Evelyn Vento** residing in Cranberry Township, PA. Details will appear at a later date. We extend our condolences to the Vento Family. May Evelyn's soul be remembered forever by Our Lord. Vicnaja Jej Pamjat!



RESULTS OF BAKELESS BAKE SALE NEXT WEEK — The donations for this GCU Matching Funds Event have now arrived. We will be counting them for the both parishes. Totals will be announced in next week's edition of the Spirit of Truth (S.O.T.)

GRATITUDE TO THOSE WHO DECORATED THE CHURCH — A special thank you is extended to all who came to decorate the NS & MR Churches this past week. We are always in need of volunteers especially in decorating the Church for this special time of the year, and during the Covid-19 Pandemic. 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

Tuesday, we celebrate this important solemn 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 of the Incarnate Word (Jesus) and 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 a young girl, St. Bernadette, when she appeared and 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!

General Announcements

Calendar of Upcoming Events

December 8 Feast of the Immaculate Conception — (MR) 9:00 am & (NS) 6:00 pm.
 December 20 Holy Mystery of Reconciliation (Confessions) for ECF Students following the DL.
 Special Holy Mystery of Reconciliation time for all — (MR) 3:00 pm.
 December 22(NS) Holy Mystery of Reconciliation (Confessions) @ 6:00 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 262nd Day of Christmas: Synaxis of the Theotokos — (MR) 9:00 a.m.
 December 27 3rd Day of Christmas – Feast of St. Stephen .
 January 1 New Year's Day: Feast of Circumcision & St. Basil - (MR) 9:00 a.m. & (NS) 11:00 am.

Saint of the Week — December 6

Feast of St. Nicholas of Myra, the Wonder-Worker

This glorious saint, was the only son of his eminent and wealthy parents, Theophanes and Nona, citizens of the city of Patra in Lycia. Since he was the only son bestowed on them by God, the parents returned the gift to God by dedicating their son to Him. **St. Nicholas** learned of the spiritual life from his uncle Nicholas, Bishop of Patara. Following the death of his parents, Nicholas distributed all his inherited goods to the poor, not keeping anything for himself. As a priest in Patara, he was known for his charity, even though he carefully concealed his charitable works, fulfilling the words of the Lord: Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand is doing (Mt 6:3). By God's wondrous providence, Nicholas was chosen as the archbishop of the city of Myra in Lycia. Merciful, wise and fearless, Nicholas was a true shepherd to his flock. During the persecution of Christians under Diocletian and Maximian, he was cast into prison, but even there he instructed the people in the Law of God. He was present at the First Ecumenical Council of Nicea [325] and, out of great zeal for the truth, struck the heretic Arius with his hand. For this act he was removed from the Council and from his archiepiscopal duties, until the Lord Christ Himself and the Holy Theotokos appeared to several of the chief hierarchs and revealed their approval of Nicholas. A defender of God's truth, this wonderful saint was ever bold as a defender of justice among the people. On two occasions, he saved three men from an undeserved sentence of death. Merciful, truthful, and a lover of justice. He appeared both in dreams and in person to those who called upon him, and he helped them easily and speedily, whether close at hand or far away. In old age he became ill for a short time and entered into the rest of the Lord, after a life full of labor and very fruitful toil, to rejoice eternally in the Kingdom of Heaven, continuing to help the faithful on earth by his miracles and to glorify his God. He entered into rest on December 6, 343. *He is the Patron of our Byzantine-Ruthenian (Rusyn) Catholic Church. N.B. In 1975, at the annual St. Nicholas Banquet, William Penn Hotel, Pittsburgh, Archbishop Kocisko consecrated the Archeparchy to St. Nicholas.*



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

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 for 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.

2021 CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES & CALENDARS NOW AVAILABLE IN (MR) CHURCH BASEMENT & (NS) NARTHEX — Your 2020 *Contribution Envelopes* will be ready for pickup today. **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 2021 until January!** Again, we wish to thank the **Valerian F. Szal Funeral Home and Thomas P. Kunsak Funeral Home** for sponsoring our calendars this year



BOTH HGCs CONTINUE PARTICIPATING IN THE DECEMBER FOOD DRIVE — Thank you to all that have participated in the Thanksgiving Food Drive. You have made a difference! In our continued love for the less fortunate, both parishes will continue holding a non-perishable food drive to be delivered to the *Interfaith Churches Food Bank, McKees Rocks* in time for Christmas. Please bring the non-expired items to the Church and place them at the entrance. For additional information contact Elaine Kurtanich (412) 370-9092. Once again, we are grateful to her for leading this project.



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 2020, a **Parish Appreciation Dinner at the Golden Corral, Robinson Township** will be tentatively held (depending on local Covid-19 regulations) on **Wednesday, December 30, 2020 @ 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. This Dinner also includes all Pirohi Workers who will not be able to attend their luncheon buffet. A list is now located in the (MR) vestibule, and (NS) Narthex of the Church. *Final day for signing Sunday, December 27.*



GRATITUDE FROM INTERCHURCH FOOD BANK — This McKees Rocks Food Bank recently sent the following thank you note: "Dear Holy Ghost Members: We appreciate your very generous donation of non-perishable food to the Interchurch Food Bank. With the number of our clients increasing again, especially this time of year, your donation was just in time to help meet those needs — Sincerely, Donna Pollard"

