

Parish Offerings – Sunday of 1st Ecumenical Council — May 16, 2021

“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 (\$2,177) YP (\$8)	\$2,185.00
Holy Days (\$544.75) YP (\$2) Easter (\$10)	556.75
Seminary	10.00
Votive Candles	97.25
	<hr/>
	\$2,849.00

Holy Ghost Church, North Side

Regular Offering	\$305.00
Holy Days	30.00
Utilities (\$40) Improvement (\$40)	80.00
Votive Candles	60.21

Church Attendance Last Week \$475.21

(MR) Sat., 4:00 p.m. (36)

Sun., (MR) 9:00 a.m. (50); (NS) 11:00 a.m. (28)

**THERE IS NO BETTER TEACHER
THAN THE HOLY SPIRIT
& NO BETTER TEXT
THAN GOD'S
WORD.**



**The smile on my face
doesn't mean my life is
perfect.**

**It means I appreciate
what I have and what I
have been blessed with.**

I choose to be happy

 <p>Valerian F. Szal 238 Helen St., McKees Rocks, PA 15136 Phone: (412) 331-9713 Fax: (412) 331-6688 Michael P. Ferrell, Supervisor, CFSP <i>III Serving Yours Since 1953</i></p>		<p>DESIGNS BY NANCY 235 McCartney Drive, Moon Township 15108 Phone: (412) 580-1545 Nancde@aol.com</p> <p>Nancy C. Debranski <i>Sewing, Alternations, Custom Embroidery and Unique Gifts</i></p>
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 <p>GCU Greek Catholic Union of the USA <i>A Fraternal Benefit Society</i></p> <p>NWPL offers Insurance and Annuity Benefits greater than most financial institutions. Info call Tina (412) 859-9597</p>	<p>This space available for ads for wishing someone birthday or anniversary greetings, get-well wishes, etc. Call the office</p>	<p>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</p> 
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HOLY GHOST BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

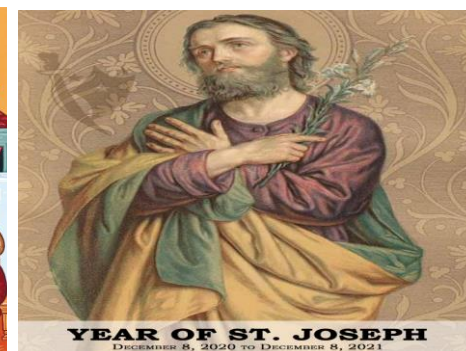
225 OLIVIA STREET
1437 SUPERIOR AVENUE

McKEES ROCKS, PA 15136
PITTSBURGH, PA 15212

THE DESCENT OF THE ALL-HOLY SPIRIT

Pentecost Sunday — Patronal Feast Day — Rusalija

May 23, 2021



YEAR OF ST. JOSEPH
DECEMBER 8, 2020 TO DECEMBER 8, 2021

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

<p>Sunday Divine Liturgies Saturday (MR) 4:00 pm Sunday (MR) 9:00 am Holy Ghost (NS) 11:00 a.m.</p>	<p>Holy Day Divine Liturgies w/Great Vespers (Oblig) (MR): 7:00 pm Holy Day (MR) 9:00 am; (NS) 6:00 pm</p>	<p>Daily Divine Liturgy M-F (MR) 8:00 am Sat. (NS) 9:00 am.</p>
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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: Internet Sunday afternoon: Rusyn.fm at 3:30 pm. Archive: c-rsmedia.org.

New & Returning Parishioners: Welcome! Please register by phoning the Church Office.

Remember the Church in Your Will: Please be so kind 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

Behold, we celebrate today the Feast of Pentecost, the descent of the Holy Spirit, the fulfillment of the promise and the realization of hope. How wonderful and awesome is this great mystery! Therefore, O Lord and Creator of all, we cry out: Glory to You! *(Great Vespers of Pentecost)*

May 23, 2021

Seasonal Greeting:

Volume XI Number 21



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 DESCENT OF THE ALL-HOLY SPIRIT

Pentecost Sunday – Patronal Feast — Rusalija

Traditional Kneeling Prayers are introduced prior to the Final Blessing

SUN., May 23 9:00 a.m. (MR) + Eleanor Kulka Children: Kathy & John.
(8th ann of passing 5/26)

11:00 a.m. (NS) + Anna Spontak Son: Bob & Joyce
(17th ann of passing 5/22)



PENTECOST MONDAY - FEAST OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY – SIMPLE HOLY DAY

Procession to the four corners of the Church proclaiming the Gospel

Traditional NO FASTING/ABSTINENCE this week in the Joy of the coming of the Holy Spirit

Mon, May 24 9:00 a.m. (MR) For the Parishioners of Both Parishes
6:00 p.m. (NS) For the Parishioners of Both Parishes

Tue, May 25 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Margaret "Peg" Krulak Dgr: Barb & Peter Stecko
(5th ann of passing 5/22)



Wed, May 26 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Emory Holowatch *(3rd ann of passing 5/24)* Anna Myers

Thrs., May 27 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Elizabeth Mross Margaret & James Lautenschlager
(6th ann of passing)

NO FASTING/ABSTINENCE this week in the Joy of the coming of the Holy Spirit

Fri, May 28 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Anna + George Skalyo Dgr: Joyce & Jim Walsh



Final Day of the Feast of Holy Pentecost

Sat, May 29 9:00 a.m. (NS) For the Parishioners of Both Parishes

Sunday anticipated Divine Liturgy of All Saints – First Sunday after Pentecost

4:00 p.m. (MR) + Evelyn Squires Bro: Steve & Dolores Kosko



SUNDAY OF ALL SAINTS



1st Sunday after Pentecost — Memorial Day Weekend

SUN., May 30 9:00 a.m. (MR) Health & Welfare Wife: Norma & Family
of Peter Kacsur *(90th birthday 6/7)*

11:00 a.m. (NS) + Anna Pungras Dgr: Anna Demianczyk

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

May 23 – Carl Bates, Janet Herczak; May 25 – George Lucas, Nicholas Rosko;
May 27 – Edward Wovchko, May 28 — Anne Kurtanich.

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

HOME: Margaret Beliunas, Irene Bordas, Florence Charochak, Ilona Goyda, TAMARA HARDING, Beverly Harsh, GEORGE HUDANICK, SR., Peggi Lucas, OLGA MANFREDO, Irene Muha, MARLENE PFEIFFER, Lisa Plutto, Betty Spisak, Anita Wolsko, Nancy (Shanta) Wauthier.

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.
VETERANS HOSPITAL (1010 Delafield St., Pittsburgh, PA 15215): JOHN VEREB.
THE RESIDENCE AT WILLOW LANE (30 Heckel Rd., MR, PA 15136): Helen Best, Marge Cifruk.

Public questions on Catholic spirituality, moral & spiritual problems

Q. Mark states that blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is an unforgivable sin. Is this held true in the Catholic Faith? A. Answer by Catholic Answers: First we must define what is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. The Catechism states: "Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven." There are no limits to the mercy of God, but anyone who deliberately refuses to accept his mercy by repenting, rejects the forgiveness of his sins and the salvation offered by the Holy Spirit. Such hardness of heart can lead to final impenitence and eternal loss (CCC 1864). Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is to refuse God's mercy. It is a refusal to repent of sin. God does not bring anyone into his kingdom against his/her will. Human persons have the ability to reject God's mercy and refuse forgiveness of sins which leads to eternal separation from God.

This Week's Sanctuary Lamps

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

May 23 — May 29, 2021

(MR): In memory of the Margo Family

offered by Margaret & James Lautenschlager

(NS): In memory of Anna Spontak *(17th ann. of passing 5/22)*

(MR) None available 2021

offered by Son: Bob & Joyce

(NS) None available 2021



General Announcements

McKees Rocks

OUR (MR) HOLY GHOST GRADUATES AND THEIR PLANS — Our Holy Ghost Graduate: **COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY — ANNA M. STEBBINS**, graduated on May 20, 2021 from the St. Anthony Program at Duquesne University. She will be pursuing employment through the Washington County's Vocational Placement. She is interested in their program, "Cribs for Kids," which assists unwed mothers with gathering and packaging needed infant items in assisting their children; **HIGH SCHOOL — KRISTIN E. RUUD** will be graduating on June 8, 2021 from Propel Montour High School, McKees Rocks. She will be attending Clarion State University, Clairton in the Fall Semester majoring in



Biology/Ecology. She has received several scholarships to assist her to achieve this goal. May God grant to Kristin health and happiness for many blessed years!

ANONYMOUS FLOWER DONOR DONATES ROUND 4 WITH FLOWERS ADORNING OUR BLESSED MOTHER'S ICON — Once again, an anonymous source donated a beautiful flower arrangement to be placed before the Blessed Mother's icon on the iconostasis. May is the month of the Holy Virgin Mary. We thank whoever you are, and we commend you and your intentions before the feet of the Holy Theotokos. Let us remember that each of us can place a spiritual bouquet before her on all Fridays this month, as we pray the Holy Rosary commencing at 6:00 p.m.



PARISH ADVISORY COUNCIL & FINANCIAL COUNCIL MEETING — Members are advised that our PAC/FAC Meeting is slated for **Tuesday, June 15, 2021** in the Church office. Please place this date on your calendar.

North Side

SYMPATHY EXTENDED — The *Spirit of Truth* announces the sudden passing of parishioner, **William "Bill" Polka, 73**, who passed away at his North Side home, on Sunday May 16, 2021. The Thomas P. Kunsak Funeral Home, on California Avenue, handled the arrangements. A Parastas was offered this past Friday @ 4:00 p.m. The Funeral Divine Liturgy followed Saturday, May 22, 2021 @ 12:00 noon. Interment took place at Christ Our Redeemer Cemetery, North Side. Our Parish extends its most sincere sympathy to the Poloka Family. In blessed repose, grant O Lord, eternal rest to your servant William, and remember him forever! Vicnaja Jemu Pamjat'!



PARISH ADVISORY COUNCIL & FINANCIAL COUNCIL MEETING — Members are advised that our PAC/FAC Meeting is slated for **Sunday, June 13, 2021** following the Divine Liturgy. Please place this date on your calendar.

Don't Forget to Wear GREEN Again Next Weekend for All Saints Sunday!

The 3-Bar Glorified Cross is turned back to the Crucified Cross on the Feast of Pentecost.

PENTECOST SUNDAY — RUSALJA

Old & New Law Explanation of the Pentecost Celebration

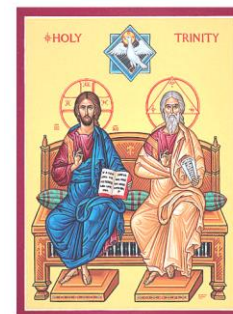
In the Old Testament, Pentecost was the feast which occurred fifty days after Passover. As the Passover feast celebrated the exodus of the Israelites from the slavery of Egypt, so Pentecost celebrated God's gift of the Ten Commandments to Moses on Mount Sinai. In the new covenant of the Messiah, the New Passover event takes on its new meaning as the celebration of Christ's Death and Resurrection, the "exodus" of men from this sinful world to the Kingdom of God. And in the New Testament as well, the Pentecostal feast is fulfilled and made new by the coming of the "new law," the Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Disciples of Christ.



The Divine Liturgy of Pentecost recalls our baptism into Christ with the verse from Galatians again replacing the Thrice-Holy Hymn. Special verses from the Psalms also replace the usual antiphonal psalms of the Divine Liturgy. The Epistle and Gospel proclamation tells of the Spirit's coming to men. The Kondakion sings of the reversal of the Tower of Babel as God unites the nations into the unity of his Spirit. The Troparion proclaims the gathering of the whole universe into God's net through the work of the inspired apostles. The hymns "O Heavenly King" and "We have seen the True Light" are sung for the first time prior to Easter, calling the Holy Spirit to "come and dwell in us", and proclaiming that "we have received the heavenly Spirit." The church is decorated with flowers and the green leaves of the summer to show that God's Divine Breath comes to renew all creation as the "Life-Creating Spirit." In Hebrew the word for Spirit, breath and wind is the same word, ruah. *The figure below the icon is called The Cosmos who represents the world holding the good news that the Holy Apostles who were mandated to spread to all inhabitants of the earth.*

Feast of the Most Holy Trinity

The first day of the Pentecost Postfestive commemorates the unity of the Holy Trinity's role in our salvation. God the **FATHER** sent His Only-Begotten Son to save mankind; God the **SON** redeemed mankind by His death upon the Cross and rose from the dead; and God the **HOLY SPIRIT** sanctifies mankind pouring out His Gifts and Fruits upon all who approach Him in faith, reverence and devotion. Let us pause by participating in the Divine Liturgy rendering humble and heart-felt thanks for all that the Triune God has done and continues to do for us leading us to salvation!



One Week Remaining to fulfill Your Easter Duty!

Calendar of Upcoming Events

May 23 Pentecost Sunday — Patron of our two Parishes.
 May 24 ... Pentecost Monday — Feast of the Most Holy Trinity – (MR) 9:00 a.m. & (NS) 6:00 p.m.
 May 25 Clergy Days at the Cathedral.
 May 30 Sunday of All Saints — Final Day for fulfilling Easter (Paschal) Duty.
 June 6 Quarterly meeting of our Local GCU Lodge via virtual participation @ 2:00 p.m.
 June 12 Practice of those preparing for First Reconciliation in MR Church @ 11:00 a.m.
 Renewal of Baptismal Promises and Corporate Communion of 1 child @ 4:00 p.m. DL.

Saints of the Week

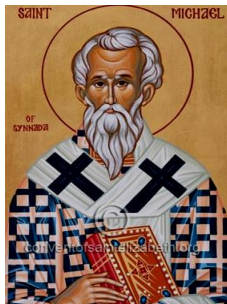
THE THIRD FINDING OF THE HEAD OF THE BAPTIST, JOHN — May 25

The Third Discovery of the Venerable Head of the Holy Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John occurred in about the year 850 (see the account of the First and Second Discoveries on February 24). The head of St John the Forerunner was found in the city of Emesia during a time of unrest at Constantinople connected with the exile of St John Chrysostom (November 13). It was transferred to Komana during the Saracen raids (about 820-820) and it was hidden in the ground during a period of iconoclastic persecution. When the veneration of icons was restored, Patriarch Ignatius (847-857) saw in a vision the place where the head of St John the Forerunner was hidden. The patriarch communicated this to the emperor, who sent a delegation to Komana. There the head was found a third time around the year 850. Afterwards the head was again transferred to Constantinople, and here on May 25 it was placed in a church at the court. Part of the head is on Mt. Athos. The Third Discovery of the Head of John the Baptist is commemorated on May 25.



Venerable Michael, Confessor & Bishop of Synnada — May 23

From his youth Michael longed for the monastic life and was sent to a monastery on the coast of the Black Sea. At the monastery he engaged in spiritual struggles and was soon glorified by gifts from the Lord. Once, during a harvest, when the people were weakened by thirst, an empty metal vessel was filled with water by the prayer of the monks. Patriarch Tarasius consecrated Saint Michael as bishop of the city of Synnada. Through his holy life and wisdom, Saint Michael won the love of believers. He was present at the Seventh Ecumenical Council at Nicea in 787. When the Iconoclast heretic Leo the Armenian (813-820) assumed the throne, he began to expel hierarchs from their Sees, appointing heretics in their place. Saint Michael defended the True Faith, bravely opposing the heretics and denouncing their error. Leo the Armenian brought Saint Michael to trial, but not fearing torture he answered resolutely, “I venerate the holy icons of my Savior Jesus Christ and the All-Pure Virgin, His Mother, and all the saints, and it is to them I bow down. I shall not obey your decrees to remove icons from churches.” Leo then banished Saint Michael to the city of Eudokiada, where the confessor died about the year 821.

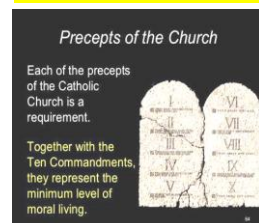


General Announcements

THE GREEN HOLY DAYS AND KNEELING PRAYERS — The Holy Feast of Pentecost was popularly called **RUSALJA** by the Ruthenian (Rusyn) people who were the founders and benefactors of our parish. Prior to the missionary efforts of Saints Cyril & Methodius (9th century), the pagan Slavs embraced Rusalja (the god of new spring and budding nature) and held a festival during this time of the year. Decoration from various greens, and **LINDEN** (lipa) branches were predominantly used. Following their conversion to Christianity, the Church retain the idea of green decorations in Church and at the door entrance of their homes, seeing and celebrating in them the symbol of **NEW LIFE** that the Holy Spirit brought forth on Pentecost Sunday. The week of Pentecost was also referred to as the **GREEN HOLY DAYS** (Zeleni Svjata). *Let us glorify the Holy Spirit, Who brings LIGHT & LIFE, by wearing something GREEN throughout the week, and also at next weekend’s Divine Liturgy of All Saints!*



NEXT WEEKEND — LAST DAY TO FULFILL EASTER DUTY — All Christian Faithful are OBLIGED to sacramentally CONFESS their Mortal Sins and to receive the Divine Eucharist during the Paschal (Easter) Period (Canon 708). This is traditionally known as the EASTER DUTY. Voluntary neglect of this Church precept is a serious (mortal) sin. Not only does it prohibit one from receiving the Eucharist, but also makes one ineligible to stand as Godparent/Sponsor at the Holy Mysteries of Initiation (Baptism/Chrismation/Eucharist). Please take care of this responsibility with Confession of Serious Sins & a Holy and Worthy Reception of Holy Communion A.S.A.P.



GCU NORTHWEST PITTSBURGH LODGE MEETING IN TWO WEEKS — The first quarter meeting will be **VIRTUAL** on **Sunday, June 6, 2021 @ 2:00 p.m.** All members are expected to participate by dialing 1 (605) 472-5351. Then type in the Access Code: 451303#. You may direct your questions and/or concerns to Steve Puluka @ (412) 897-4650.



Pope gives Spiritual Direction when experiencing Prayer Difficulty

Dear Brothers and Sisters: In our continuing catechesis on Christian prayer, we now consider some common difficulties we encounter in our practice of prayer. **The first is distraction.** Prayer, like study and work, demands concentration and mental discipline. This calls for our cultivation of the virtue of vigilance, by which we focus our lives on doing the Lord’s will daily in expectation of his return. A **second difficulty is the experience of spiritual aridity**, moments of dryness when our hearts – as the Catechism teaches – have “no taste for thoughts, memories, and feelings, even spiritual ones” (No. 2731). The spiritual masters acknowledge that the life of faith involves times of consolation but also of desolation, when we share in the Lord’s sufferings. A **third difficulty is acedia or sloth**, a form of spiritual fatigue that leads to the deadly temptation to abandon prayer altogether. The saints faced these same difficulties in their prayer and they teach us that true progress in the spiritual life comes about through daily perseverance, like that of Job who remained constant even amid his many afflictions. As we strive to grow in our own life of prayer let us ask for the grace of perseverance, confident that our loving Father will grant us, through the Son and in the Spirit, all that we need to draw us ever closer to him.

