

Parish Offerings – O.T. FOREFATHERS SUNDAY – December 12, 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 (\$4,275) YP (\$5)	\$4,280.00
Holy Days (\$234) YP (\$4) Christmas (\$20)	258.00
Christmas Décor	115.00
Votive Candles	101.00
	<hr/>
	\$4,754.00

Holy Ghost Church, North Side

Regular Offering	\$822.50
Holy Days (\$90) Christmas (\$320) Christmas Decor (\$60)	470.00
Utilities (\$20) Improvements (\$25)	45.00
Votive Candles (\$88) Collection for the Poor (\$5)	93.00

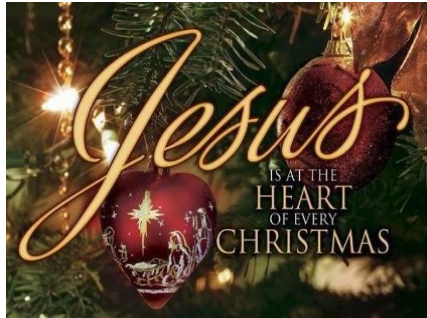
Church Attendance Last Week \$1,430.50

(MR) Sat., 4:00 p.m. (17)

Sun., (MR) 9:00 a.m. (53); (NS) 11:00 a.m. (32)



Thanks to Nadine Falfard (See Luke 2:1-16) 12-24-2001
THAT'S THE BEST ONE-STAR HOTEL THAT I'VE EVER SEEN



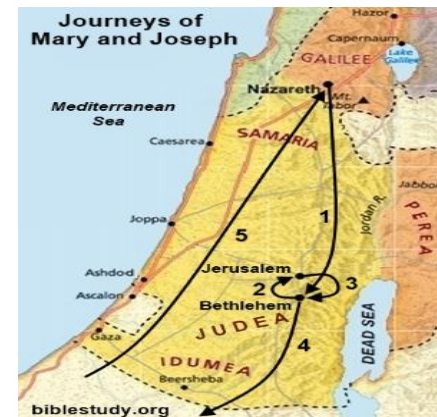
HOLY GHOST BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

225 OLIVIA STREET
1437 SUPERIOR AVENUE

McKEES ROCKS, PA 15136
PITTSBURGH, PA 15212

THE SUNDAY OF THE O.T. HOLY FATHERS

5th & Final Sunday of the Philippian Fast — December 19, 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

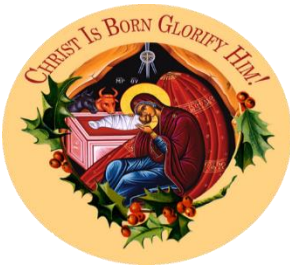
MR School Hall Kitchen: (412) 331-5155

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

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
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DESIGNS BY NANCY
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Nancde@aol.com

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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.

GCU
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

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 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 Mystery 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

December 19, 2021 **Christmas Christian Greeting:** Volume XI, Number 51

(Dec. 24 through Jan. 4):

Christ is Born! — Glorify Him!
Christos Razdajetsja! — Slavite Jeho!



Date **Time** **Intention** **Requested By**

Sunday of the Old Testament Holy Fathers

5th and Final Sunday of the Philippian Fast


SUN., Dec 19 (35) 9:00 a.m. (MR) Special Intention Christine & Al Barnash
11:00 a.m. (NS) + Shirley + Robert Yanosko Dgtr: Ruth
3:00 p.m. Extra Confessor for Holy Mystery of Reconciliation (Confessions)

Prefestive of Christmas

Mon, Dec 20 (36) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Emory Holowatch Anna Myers
Tue, Dec 21 (37) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Ronald P. Larko Puluka Family



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 22 (38) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Julia (Miklos) Sibenak (birthday) Son: Steven
Thrs, Dec 23 (39) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Alice Smoley Dgtr: Mary Ann
(19th ann of passing)

Vigil of Christmas

REQUIRED Simple Abstinence (no meat) or Equivalent Penance for the return of our beloved to Church
RECOMMENDED but NOT Obligatory Traditional Strict Abstinence (no meat or dairy products)

Fri, Dec 24 (40) 8:00 a.m. (MR) **ROYAL HOURS** in honor of the Holy Nativity
1:00 p.m. (MR) **Great Vespers w/ St. Basil Divine Liturgy**

+ Basil P. Gramata Son: George & Jennie Marinock

8:00 p.m. (MR) **Great Compline w/Litania followed by Christmas Carols & Candlelight procession**

9:00 p.m. (MR) **Christmas Divine Liturgy of St. Chrysostom**



HOLY NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST IN THE FLESH

Christmas Day — Holy Day of Obligation — Mirovanije

SAT, DEC 25 9:00 a.m. (MR) For the Parishioners of Both Parishes

11:00 a.m. (NS) + George Hudanick, Sr. (birthday 12/20) Wife: Dolores & Family



Day anticipated Divine Liturgy for Sunday after Christmas & Feast of the Synaxis, Righteous Joseph, King David and the Holy Apostle James, relative of the Lord

4:00 p.m. (MR) NO DIVINE LITURGY SCHEDULED SINCE IT'S CHRISTMAS DAY

SYNAXIS OF THE THEOTOKOS — 2ND DAY OF CHRISTMAS

SUN., DEC 26 9:00 a.m. (MR) + H. Jayne Skreptach (birthday 12/17) + Eleanor, Kathy & John Kulka
11:00 a.m. (NS) For the Parishioners of Both Parishes

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 24 – Lisa Plutto, ABAGAIL RUSH; **DEC 25** – JESUS.

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

HOME: Margaret Beliuinas, Irene Bordas, Florence Charochak, DEACON MICHAEL MEADERS, Ilona Goyda, TAMARA HARDING, Beverly Harsh, Tim Kacsur, Dolores Kosko, Steve Kosko, BETTY LORINC, OLGA MANFREDO, Joseph Mitro, Irene Muha, MARLENE PFEIFFER, Dan Pikras, Lisa Plutto, Betty Spisak, Anita Wolsko, Nancy (Shanta) Wauthier, Evelyn Yakubik

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, Margaret Cifrutlak, Mildred Terrek.

Public questions on Catholic spirituality, moral & spiritual problems

Q. Why wasn't Jesus named "Emmanuel," as the angel told Joseph that he should be named? **A. Catholic Answers Apologist:** The word Emmanuel translates to "God is with us." Matthew recalls the messianic prophecy from Isaiah 7:14 and states that its ultimate fulfillment is found in Mary's Son: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel" (Matt. 1:23). "Name," in this sense, does not refer to the actual name Joseph and Mary were to give to their Son (cf. Matt. 1:21, Luke 1:31); in this case, the word is used in the sense of "to call" (i.e., "they shall call his name Emmanuel," cf. Is. 7:14). Analogously, one could say of baseball legend, Babe Ruth, "They called him the Sultan of Swat," without intending to mean that "the Sultan of Swat" was George Herman Ruth Jr.'s given name. Just as Babe Ruth's nickname was meant to indicate that Ruth was a great hitter, so Emmanuel indicates that the expected Messiah would be "God with us." Emmanuel, "God is with us," also calls to mind the last verse in Matthew (28:20): "Behold, I [Jesus] am with you always, until the end of the age."

This Week's Sanctuary Lamps

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

December 19 — December 25, 2021

(MR): **In memory of Olga & Joseph Goyda**

offered by Dgtr: Mary Ann

(NS): **In memory of Vivianne Grace Trapl**

(MR) Now available for 2022

offered by Dad, Mom & Sister

(NS) Now available for 2022



McKees Rocks Announcements

OUR PARISH VOCATION RECEIVES MINOR ORDERS — On Saturday, December 11, 2021,



at the Munhall Cathedral, Seminarian Luke Iyengar received the first of four steps to the Holy Priesthood, Archbishop Skurla. prior to the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, bestowed the minor order of Reader, Server and Cantor and by tonsure (cutting a piece of his hair) raised him to the clerical state. He now awaits the call to the Subdiaconate in the future. We extend our most sincere congratulations to Seminarian Luke that God grant him, his Mom, Maria and his Sister, Anita, peace, health and happiness for many blessed years! Na Mnohaja I Blahaja L'ita!

THERE WILL BE NO AFTERNOON 4:00 PM DIVINE LITURGY ON CHRISTMAS DAY!

North Side Announcements

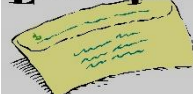
BASEMENT FLOODED IN PARISH RECTORY THIS PAST WEEK — Due to the heavy rain several days ago, water backed up through the rectory basement sewers and saturated the carpeting leading to the basement office. Matt Mertz Plumbing was called to the rescue, and snaked the lines clearing the problem. We pray that no additional problems like this may occur. Newly ordained Fr. Michael Kunitz, along with his wife, Jenine, have been resided in the rectory for the past few months. He recently received his assignment this past week as administrator of Holy Spirit Church, Pittsburgh (Oakland) and St. Pius X Church, Pittsburgh (Carrick) effective on Dec. 22.

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 2021, a **Parish Appreciation Dinner at the Golden Corral, Robinson Township** will be held on **Thursday, December 30, 2022 @ 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 26.*



2022 CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES & CALENDARS NOW AVAILABLE IN (MR) CHURCH BASEMENT & (NS) NARTHEX — Your *2022 Contribution Envelopes* will

Offering Envelopes



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 2022 until January!** *If you have not contributed in two years, you will have to call the church office to be reinstated.*

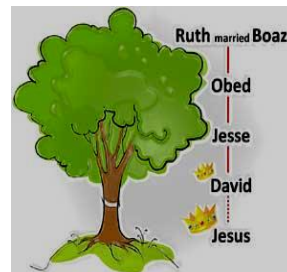
This helps us to keep costs down. Again, we wish to thank and ask God's blessings on the **Valerian F. Szal Funeral Home and Thomas P. Kunsak Funeral Home** for sponsoring our new year calendars.

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 forms 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*

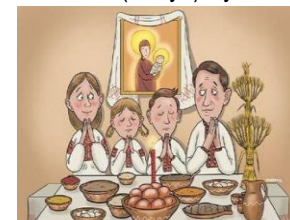
keep company with Mary and Joseph on the journey to Bethlehem with the joy that is so to come with the birth of our Lord, God & Savior Jesus Christ. Let us not refrain from our prayer, abstinence, almsgiving of mercy, confession of sins, and attendance at Divine Liturgies so that with God's grace we may witness to this good news to those around us.

The Royal Hours & Great Vespers D.L.

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) glorify 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 known as **GREAT VESPER S W/DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. BASIL THE GREAT..** Come, let us adore Him by joining us in this day of prayer!

The Traditional Holy Supper

Later this afternoon, we are getting 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 (Svjatjy 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.



Calendar of Upcoming Events

December 19 Holy Mystery of Reconciliation (Confessions) for ECF Students following the DL. Special Holy Mystery of Reconciliation time for all — (MR) 3:00 pm.
 December 24 (MR) 8:00 am Royal Hours; (MR) 1:00 pm 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.
****** NO 4:00 PM ANTICIPATED SUNDAY DIVINE LITURGY ON SATURDAY, CHRISTMAS DAY ******

 December 26 2nd Day of Christmas: Synaxis of the Theotokos — (MR) 9:00 a.m.. (NS) 11:00 am.
 December 27 3rd Day of Christmas – Feast of St. Stephen . (MR) 9:00 a.m.; (NS) 6:00 pm.
 December 31 New Year's Day Anticipated: Feast of Circumcision & St. Basil - (NS) 6:00 pm.
 January 1 New Year's Day: Feast of Circumcision & St. Basil - (MR) 9:00 am.

Saint of the Week — December 21

The Holy Virgin-Martyr Juliana of Nicomedia

The Holy **Virgin-Martyr Juliana**, daughter of an illustrious pagan named Africanus, was born in the city of Nicomedia. As a child, she was betrothed to a

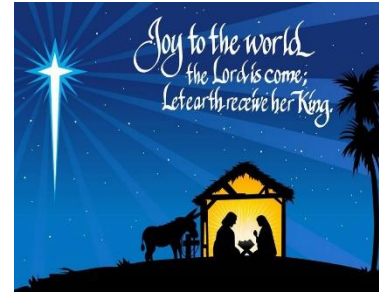


certain Elusius, one of the emperor's advisors. Saint Juliana was endowed with a profound intellect and goodness of soul. She saw through the delusion and deception of the pagan faith, and secretly accepted holy Baptism. When the time of her wedding approached, Juliana refused to be married. Her father urged her not to break her engagement, but when she refused to obey him, he began to beat her viciously. Then Africanus handed his daughter over to the Eparch, who happened to be Elusius, Juliana's former fiancé. Elusius fervently asked Juliana to marry him, promising not to require her to abandon her faith. Saint Juliana refused and said that she'd rather be put to

death. They beat the saint both long and harshly, but after each beating she received healing and new strength from God. Her punishment took place before a large number of people. Of these, 500 men and 150 women came to confess Christ after witnessing the steadfastness and courage of the holy virgin miraculously healed from her wounds. They were all beheaded, and were baptized in their own blood. Convinced of the futility of attempting to separate the holy virgin from her heavenly Bridegroom (Jesus), Eleusius sentenced Juliana to death. She accepted the sentence with joy and glorified the Lord for permitting her to receive a martyr's crown. The holy Martyr Juliana was executed in the year 304.

The Christmas Divine Liturgy

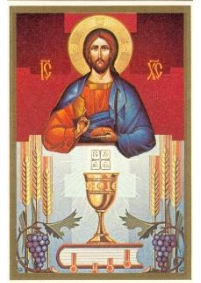
The Christmas Divine Liturgies will be celebrated on **(MR) Christmas Eve, Dec. 24 at 9:00**



p.m. and (MR) 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.

The Traditional Three Days of Christmas — Let us Celebrate Together

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 Christmas until January 4 morning, the greeting that we address each other 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 and glorifying the Lord Jesus' Nativity!

SPECIAL TIMES FOR THE HOLY MYSTERY OF RECONCILIATION TODAY — Special Confession times has been arranged to the following days & times to accommodate making a good Confession prior to Our Lord's Holy Nativity: **MR -**



Sunday, December 19, 2021 @ 3:00 p.m. Confessions are always available if you are not able to make the scheduled times. Just call the Parish Office. **Please make every effort to make a good and worthy Confession for Christmas. Prepare the Bethlehem of your soul, and the manger of your heart for a fitting place of the Christ-Child.** Today, we welcome Fr. Donald Voss, pastor of St.

Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church, McKeeport to assist our pastor in hearing Confessions. A special guide is provided for you to examine your conscience and can be picked up in the side vestibule & narthex.

Archieparchial Choir HAS CANCELLED its Sunday Afternoon Christmas Program