

Parish Offerings – 26th Sunday after Pentecost — December 4, 2022

“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 (\$2,205) YP (\$14)	\$2,219.00
Holy Day (\$230) YP (\$2)	232.00
Thanksgiving (\$122) Christmas Décor (\$305)	427.00
Votive Candles	100.50
	<hr/>
	\$2,978.50

Holy Ghost Church, Northside

Regular Offering	\$686.00
Holy Days (\$50) Thanksgiving (\$15) Christmas (\$30)	95.00
Christmas Décor (\$75) Utilities (\$40) Improvement (\$45)	160.00
Votive Candles	40.00
	<hr/>
	\$981.00

Church Attendance Last Week

Sat., 4:00 p.m. (24)

Sun., (MR) 9:00 a.m. (72); (NS) 11:00 a.m. (29)

St. Nicholas — Tue., Dec 6 (MR) 9:00 am (8); (NS) 6:00 pm (8)

Immaculate Conception — Thurs, Dec 8 (MR) 9:00 am (10); NS 6:00 pm (10)



Valerian F. Szal

238 Helen St.,
McKees Rocks, PA 15136

Phone: (412) 331-9713
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Michael P. Ferrell,
Supervisor, CFSP

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North Side Parishioner

Alan Valeriano
(412) 638-3417
PA #172378

Sponsors make it possible to bring you this weekly & informative S.O.T. without incurring an added expense to the Church. New Sponsors please contact Church office.



HOLY GHOST BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

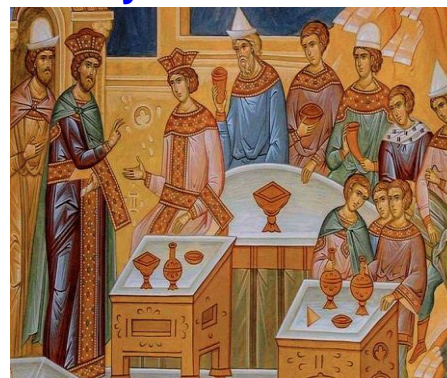
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McKEES ROCKS, PA 15136
PITTSBURGH, PA 15212

THE 27th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

4th Sunday of the Philippian Fast

Sunday of the Fore-Fathers — December 11, 2022



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.

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) 779-0915.

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

THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH

December 11, 2022

Seasonal Greeting

Volume XII, Number 50



Glory to Jesus Christ! — Glory Forever!

Slava Isusu Christu! — Slava Na Viki!

Liturgical Schedule of the Week

Date Time Intention Requested By

27th Sunday after Pentecost

4th Sunday of the Philippian Fast

Sunday of the O.T. Fore-Fathers

SUN, Dec 11 (27) 9:00 a.m. (MR) + Christina Michalim Husband: Wallace & Family
(1st ann of passing 12/23)

11:00 a.m. (NS) + Nicholas Senchyshyn (birthday 12/16) Dgtr: Joan

3:00 p.m. (MR) Extra Confessor for Holy Mystery of Reconciliation (Confessions)

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

Mon, Dec 12 (28) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Julia Swayka MaryEllen & John Olick
(21st ann of pass 12/11)

Tue, Dec 13 (29) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Andrew Kundrat, Jr. Theresa Kundrat

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 14 (30) 8:00 a.m. (MR) Special Intention Karen & John Matichko

Thrs, Dec 15 (31) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Florence Kraly Zula Family
(13th ann of pass 12/16)

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 16 (32) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Helen Perschy Son: Kurt
(20th ann of passing) 

Sat, Dec 17 (33) 9:00 a.m. (NS) For the Parishioners of Both Parishes

Sunday anticipated Divine Liturgy of the 28th Sunday after Pentecost — 5th Sunday of the Philippian Fast

4:00 p.m. (MR) + Nicholas Terrek (birthday 12/19) Wife: Mildred & Family

28th Sunday after Pentecost

5th & Final Sunday of the Philippian Fast

Sunday of the O.T. Holy Fathers

SUN, Dec 18 (34) 9:00 a.m. (MR) + Cantor: John Fejka Dgtr: Susie
(14th ann of passing 12/16)

11:00 a.m. (NS) + Alice H. Smoley (20th ann of passing 12/23) Dgtr: Mary Ann

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 11 — Thomas Rubish; Dec 12 — Florence Charochak; Dec 13 — Nicholas Harsh; Dec 14 — CHRISTOPHER MEADERS, Steven Puluka, Roberta Rubish; Dec 15 — LARISA PFEUFFER.

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

HOME: Margaret Beliunas, Florence Charochak, GEORGE FECIK, DEACON MICHAEL MEADERS, Ilona Goyda, TAMARA HARDING, Beverly Harsh, Steve Kosko, ARLENE LATTA, KIRK LATTA, BETTY LORINC, Irene Muha, Kurt Perschy, MARLENE PFEIFFER, Dan Pikras, 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.

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, Dorothy Ann Karl, Mildred Terrek.

ASHTON COMMONS (551 Cooper St., Wexford, PA 15090): Irene Bordas.

LUTHERAN SENIORLIFE (500 Wittenberg Way, Mars PA 16046): A. SHIRLEY KALANAS.

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 Christ

Dec 11 — Dec 17, 2022

(MR): In memory of Cantor: John Fejka (14th ann of passing 12/16)

offered by Dgtr: Susie

(NS) In memory of Nicholas Senchyshyn (birthday 12/16)

(MR) Limited available for 2023

offered by Dgtr: Joan

(NS) Available for 2023

General Announcements

McKees Rocks

PHILIPPIAN FAST PIROHI SALES LAST WEEK OF SALES — Our Pirohi Sales enter the final week of sales on **December 16**. Orders must be placed on the sheet at the Church entrances following the weekend Divine Liturgies, or by phoning on **Wednesdays from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon @ (412) 331-5155**. Eat-ins will still be available. We could still use additional help, as we begin to fulfill Christmas orders! Thanks to all of you who continue to make this project profitable to the Church. Once again, we can use pinchers. God bless you.



PIROHI VOLUNTEER LUNCHEON ARE BEING PLANNED — To show our appreciation to all those who worked the last few weeks, a special luncheon is being planned for **Wednesday, December 28, 2020 in the afternoon**. More details will be listed in next week's S.O.T. Also, a signup list will be available at the sales next Friday. It looks as though it will be on Wednesday, December 28, 2022.



NORTHWEST PITTSBURGH LODGE DELIVERS SUPPLIES TO CARING HEIGHTS — Our Holy Ghost Church contributed supplies to Caring Heights Personal Care Facility for the Christmas Season through our local Northwest Pittsburgh Lodge recently. The staff of Caring Heights were very thankful. The gifts will make their social activities a joyful one for the residence. Delivering the gifts were President, Tina Burns, with the assistance of GCU members, Norma and Peter Kasur.

BANNS OF MARRIAGE I — This is the first announcement of the upcoming marriage of **Seminarian-Reader Nathaniel James Tapsak (Holy Ghost Church)**, and **Natalia Elizabeth Wohar (Holy Ghost Church)** Monday afternoon, December 26, 2022. If anyone knows why these individuals cannot contract marriage, please notify the rectory office and ask to speak to the pastor.

NORTH SIDE

INITIAL PLANS TO REPAIR CHURCH ENTRANCE STEPS — The concrete steps leading into the church are badly in need of repair. An estimate is being for this Spring project.

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 23, 2022 @ 6:00 p.m. & MR - Sunday, December 11, 2022 @ 3:00 p.m.** Please make every effort to make a good and worthy Confession. Also, Confessions are available at the regular times as indicated on the front of the S.O.T. Church Bulletin. A special guide is provided for you at the entrances of the Church to examine your conscience and can be picked up. **Prepare your soul to be the New Bethlehem and your heart to be a fitting Manger for Our Lord on Christmas Day!**



Meditation on Today's Gospel

The way back to the Kingdom of God had been restored — Lk. 14:16-24

This familiar parable of the Banquet is proclaimed in the Church each year just two Sundays before the feast of our Lord's Nativity. In it we are reminded of the great care with which God prepared the way of His coming. All of the Law and the Prophets



look forward to this moment, the moment when the God/man Jesus Christ comes into the world. The whole world was prepared by them for this great event. As the parable tells us the King — that is God — has prepared a great feast for us and has invited us to come and enter into the joy that He has prepared for us.

However, there were some who refused this invitation, considering their own affairs to be more important or more desirable than the feast of the King. Although God had chosen them, they did not choose God. Is this not like our first parents Adam and Eve? They too were chosen by God but they did not choose God and so were cast out of paradise. But our Creator, not willing to abandon His creation, prepared a way that we might return to Him. This preparation covered centuries and millennia of time; it was defined by the law and prophets. The Way that God prepared for us to return to Him is in fact the Person of Jesus Christ, God Himself taking human flesh and dwelling among us. Just as through Adam all men fell into sin and corruption and death, now through Jesus Christ all men were invited to rise out of that condemnation and live again according to the love and grace of God. The Way back to the Kingdom of God had been restored. We had again been chosen by God. But some refused, instead choosing to follow their own desires. If we have refused may we now return to the Lord with our whole heart!

Pope Francis Speaks

Pope's General Audience at St. Peter Square

Dear brothers and sisters: In our continuing catechesis on discernment, we have discussed the experience of spiritual "consolation", that sense of deep inner joy, a gift of the Holy Spirit, which enables us to sense God's comforting presence and providential care in all things, even moments of trial and difficulty. Authentic consolation is the fruit of divine grace, drawing us to grow in love of the Lord and our neighbor, to discern God's will in our lives and to carry out works of spiritual and practical charity. Saint Ignatius tells us that true prayer bears good fruit at every stage: in its beginning, its middle and its end. It is important to discern the fruits of our prayer and to learn to recognize the hidden temptations that would deceive us into substituting a lesser for a greater good. A great aid to discerning authentic consolation is the daily examination of conscience, which purifies our minds and hearts, and opens them to God's will for our growth in holiness and in union with him.



Calendar of Upcoming Events

December 11 Extra Confessor for Holy Mystery of Reconciliation (Confessions) @ 3:00 p.m.
 December 18 Holy Mystery of Reconciliation (Confessions) for ECF Students.
 December 23 (MR) 8:00 a.m. Royal Hours; (MR) 1:00 p.m. DL of St. John Chrysostom.

Saturday, Christmas Eve (No afternoon Divine Liturgy)

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. & (NS) 6:00 p.m.
 December 30 Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. (To be determined).
 December 31 Sunday Vigil Divine Liturgy Schedule: (MR) 4:00 p.m.
 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 13

The Holy Martyr Eustratius at Sebaste & His Companions

The Holy Martyr Eustratius at Sebaste & His Companions The Holy Martyrs Eustratius, Auxentius, Eugene, Mardarius, and Orestes (the Five Companions) suffered for Christ under the emperor Diocletian (284-305) at Sebaste, in Armenia. Among the first Christians imprisoned and undergoing torture at that time was Saint Auxentius, a presbyter of the Arabian Church. One of those who witnessed the steadfastness of the Christians was the noble military commander Saint Eustratius, the city prefect of Satalios, and archivist of the province. He was secretly a Christian, and when he openly confessed his faith, he was subjected to torture. They beat him, and put iron sandals studded with sharp nails on his feet, then forced him to march to the city of Arabrak. Witnessing the arrival of Saint Eustratius in Arabrak, one of the common people, Saint Mardarius, confessed that he was also a Christian like Saint Eustratius. He was arrested and cast into prison. Holes were drilled in his ankles, and ropes were passed them. He was suspended upside down, then heated nails were hammered into his body. He died a short time later. To him is attributed the prayer "O Master Lord God, Father Almighty ..." (which is read at the end of the Third Hour). As for Saint Eugene, they ripped out his tongue, they cut off his hands and feet, and then they beheaded him with a sword. Saint Auxentius was also arrested and beheaded. The young soldier Saint Orestes confessed himself a Christian and stood trial for this "crime." He was sentenced to be stretched out upon a red-hot iron bed, and became frightened when he approached it. Encouraged by Saint Eustratius, he made the Sign of the Cross and got onto the heated bed, where he surrendered his soul to God. Saint Eustratius was sentenced to be burned alive on December 13. As he was being led to his death, he prayed aloud ("I magnify Thee exceedingly, O Lord, for You have regarded my lowliness...")



General Announcements

SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FORE-FATHERS CELEBRATED TODAY — This is the Sunday that falls between December 11-17, the second Sunday before the Nativity. We



commemorate the FORE-FATHERS of Christ according to the flesh who are remembered on this **4th Sunday and 27nd Day of the Philippian Fast**. All the great Fathers and Prophets of the Old Testament, starting with Adam, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, including Holy Prophet Elijah and Daniel, and concluding with Holy Prophet Zechariah, Joachim and Anne, Holy Prophet and Forerunner John the Baptist and The Theotokos.

They lived before the Law and under the Law, especially the Patriarch Abraham, to whom God said, "In thy seed shall all of the nations of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 12:3, 22:18). *Let us keep company with Mary and Joseph on the journey to Bethlehem as we contemplate our place at the banquet with the Holy Fore-Fathers. Through prayer, abstinence, almsgiving of mercy, and frequent confession of sins, and attendance at Divine Liturgies we are empowered to follow the journey to this end.*

Come O Jesus Our Savior, Redeem and Save Us!

2023 CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES & CALENDARS NOW AVAILABLE IN (MR) CHURCH BASEMENT & (NS) NARTHEX — Your 2023

Contribution Envelopes are 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 2023 until January! As mentioned, your new box of envelopes may not have the same number.** 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



HGCs CONTINUE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DECEMBER FOOD DRIVE — In our



love for the less fortunate, our both parishes will be holding an annual non-perishable food drive to be delivered to the *Inter Faith Churches Food Bank, McKees Rocks* in time for Thanksgiving and 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.



DEANERY EVENT IN PREPARATION OF OUR LORD'S COMING

— The Greater Pittsburgh Protopresbytery is sponsoring a Philippian Fast Moleben **on December 18, @ 3:00 p.m. at St. John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church**, Kohler Street, Lyndora, PA. Let's be represented. Confessions are at 2:30 p.m. Fellowship of light refreshments follow the Moleben.