

Parish Offerings – Sunday OT Fore-Fathers — December 11, 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 (\$1,973) YP (\$13)	\$1,986.00
Holy Day (\$424) YP (\$4) Christmas (\$145)	573.00
Christmas Décor	202.00
Votive Candles	105.50
	<hr/>
	\$2,866.50

Holy Ghost Church, Northside

Regular Offering	\$607.50
Holy Days	20.00
Christmas Décor (\$10) Utilities (\$25)	35.00
Votive Candles	67.60
	<hr/>
	\$730.10

Church Attendance Last Week

Sat., 4:00 p.m. (32)

Sun., (MR) 9:00 a.m. (74); (NS) 11:00 a.m. (26)



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McKees Rocks, PA 15136

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Michael P. Ferrell,
Supervisor, CFSP

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North Side Parishioner

Alan Valeriano
(412) 638-3417
PA #172378

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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

225 OLIVIA STREET
1437 SUPERIOR AVENUE

McKEES ROCKS, PA 15136
PITTSBURGH, PA 15212

THE SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS

5th & Final Sunday of the Philippian Fast
Sunday of the Holy Fathers — December 18, 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 18, 2022

Seasonal Greeting

Volume XII, Number 51



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



Liturgical Schedule of the Week

Date Time Intention Requested By

Sunday Before Christmas

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 Dgr: Susie
(14th ann of passing 12/16)

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

Mon, Dec 19 (35) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Timothy Kacsur Anonymous

Prefestive Days of Christmas

Tue, Dec 20 (36) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Emory Holowatch Anne Myers

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 21 (37) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Firko + Hrivnak + Onesi Karen & John Matichko
+ Korim Families

Thrs, Dec 22 (38) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Julia (Miklos) Sibenak (birthday) Son: Steven

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 23 (39) 8:00 a.m. (MR) ROYAL HOURS OF CHRISTMAS
1:00 p.m. (MR) + Viola + David Chesmar David S. Chesmar, Jr.
(rescheduled from 11/16)

Vigil of Christmas

Recommended Traditional Strict Abstinence (no meat or dairy products)

Sat. Dec 24 (40) 9:00 a.m. (NS) + Agnes Knoll Son: William

There is NO 4:00 p.m Divine Liturgy

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. Basil the Great

HOLY NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST IN THE FLESH

Christmas Day — Holy Day of Obligation — Mirovanije

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

11:00 a.m. (NS) + Dolores + George Hudanick, Sr. Children: George, Paul, Janet:



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 18 — Diane Kosko. Lauren Kovacs; Dec 24 — Lisa Plutto, ABIGAIL RUSH; Dec 25 — JESUS, SON OF GOD & OUR SAVIOR.

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

HOME: Margaret Beliunas, Florence Charochak, DEACON MICHAEL MEADERS, Ilona Goyda, TAMARA HARDING, Beverly Harsh, Steve Kosko, ARLENE LATTI, KIRK LATTI, 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 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 Christ

Dec 18 — Dec 24, 2022

(MR): In memory of Mary & Alex Bilak & Anna & Stephen Charochak
offered by Great-Grandson: Mike Tomchak

(NS) In memory of Elizabeth (Seman) Shaffer

(MR) Limited available for 2023

offered by Sister: Velma

(NS) Available for 2023



General Announcements

McKees Rocks

PIROHI VOLUNTEER LUNCHEON SCHEDULED FOR CHRISTMAS WEEK — To show our appreciation to all those who worked the last few weeks, a special luncheon is scheduled for **Wednesday, December 23, 2020 at Rockefeller's Grille @ 12:00 noon.** If you are a Pirohi Volunteer please sign the list located in the side vestibule or phone the Church office (412) 771-3324 by Noon, Monday, Dec 19. If you have already signed please follow through with this commitment so that we won't be charged for absentees.

ANOTHER YEAR & TASK WELL DONE!!! — Heartfelt thanks is extended to all who have graciously taken an angel from the Angel Tree, and turned it into a precious gift for a less-fortunate child in our local area for Christmas. The Holy Family Social Services in Emsworth and Family Foundation in McKees Rocks have gathered these gifts this past week and will distribute them to the children in time for Christmas. You were indeed very generous! A special thank you to the G.C.U. Northwest Pittsburgh Lodge for sponsoring this annual project. Enormous gratitude goes out to Barbara & Peter Stecko for sacrificing their time to make this event come to fruition for the children! God bless all of you and know that this is pleasing to Our Lord, and making a child very happy and loved this Christmas Season.



BANNS OF MARRIAGE II — This is the second 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

FINAL TALLY FOR FUND RAISING — Restaurant Gift Cards, Baseless Bake Bakesale & 50/50 Raffle: Total with GCU Matching Funds: \$7,339.00 minus the Cathedraticum (\$366.95) totals \$6,972.00. We are grateful for all those who contributed to this project and to the GCU who matched these funds.

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.** Please make every effort to make a good and worthy Confession. Also, Confessions are available at the regular time as indicted 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!**

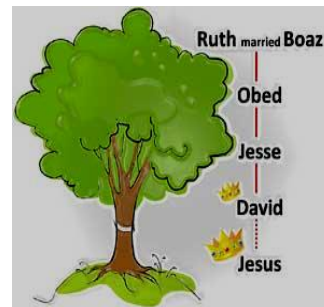
SEND A CHRISTMAS CARD TO OUR RETIRED AND ILL PRIESTS — Although you may not know them, they will surely appreciate a remembrance: (1) Former pastor, (MR) **Monsignor Russell A. Ducker, Mt. Macrina Manor, 520 W. Main Street, Uniontown, PA 15401.** (2) Former (NS) pastor **Monsignor Peter Tay, 1200 San Pedro, Pittsburgh, PA 15212.** Let them know that you are from Holy Ghost Church.

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*

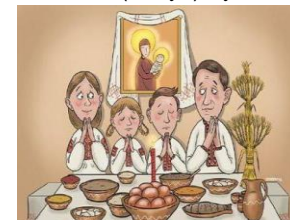
keep company with Mary and Joseph on the journey to Bethlehem with the joy that is so to come with the birth of our Lord, God & Savior Jesus Christ. Let us not refrain from our prayer, abstinence, almsgiving of mercy, confession of sins, and attendance at Divine Liturgies so that with God's grace we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

The Royal Hours & Divine Liturgy

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 the Prefestive of the Nativity of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ. 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 (Svjatyj 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

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 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.

General Announcements

SUNDAY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT HOLY FATHERS is the Sunday before the Nativity of the Lord (December 18-24). On this day the Church honors all those who were well-pleasing to God from all ages, from Adam to St Joseph the Betrothed of the Most Holy Theotokos, those who are mentioned in the genealogy of Luke 3:23-38. The holy prophets and are also remembered on this day, especially the Prophet Daniel and the three holy youths. The previous Sunday, the Sunday of the Forefathers, the Church commemorated all the righteous of the Old Testament who awaited the coming of Christ, this day remembers all those in the Old Testament who were related to Christ by blood and those who spoke of his birth as a man. This Sunday is part of the Forefeast of the Nativity, which strictly speaking begins on December 20.

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 TODAY — The Greater Pittsburgh Protosprebytery is sponsoring a Philippian Fast Moleben today, **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.