

Parish Offerings – Sunday of Publican & Pharisee — January 21, 2024

“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 (\$4,441) YP (\$10)	\$4,451.00
Holy Days (\$30) Christmas 2023 (\$100)	130.00
Initial (\$63) B.C.W. (\$140)	203.00
Votive Candles (\$100) Coffee Social (\$19)	119.00
	<hr/>
	\$4,903.00

Holy Ghost Church, North Side

Regular Offering (\$648) YP (\$1)	\$649.00
Holy Days (\$15) Improvement (\$5) Initial (\$8) B.C.W. (\$56)	94.00
Votive Candles	51.50

Church Attendance Last Week \$794.50

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

(MR) 9:00 a.m. (71); (NS) 11:00 a.m. (27)



Valerian F. Szal

238 Helen St.,
Phone: (412) 331-9713

Michael P. Ferrell,
Supervisor, CFSP

Our Family Still Serving Yours Since 1953



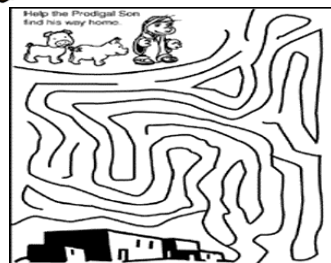
Greek Catholic Union of the USA
A Fraternal Benefit Society

GCU offers Insurance and
Annuity Benefits greater than
most financial institutions. Info
call Randy
(412) 973-1085



North Side Parishioner

Alan Valeriano
(412) 638-3417
PA #172370



HOLY GHOST BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

225 OLIVIA STREET
1437 SUPERIOR AVENUE

McKEES ROCKS, PA 15136
PITTSBURGH, PA 15212

THE SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON

The 3rd Pregreat Fast Sunday — January 28, 2024



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 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.

d, Personal Care & Hospitalized: Phone Church Office ASAP.

Sponsor of Christian Initiation: Godparents must be practicing Catholics.

Religious Education Classes: (MR) Coordinator: Subdeacon Luke Iyengar (412) 863-3285.

Carpatho-Rusyn Radio: Internet Sunday afternoon: Rusyn.fm at 3:30 pm. Archive: c-rsmedia.org.

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 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).

January 28, 2024 **Seasonal Christian Greeting:** Volume XIV, Number 4

Glory to Jesus Christ! — Glory Forever!

Slava Isusu Christ! — Slava na Viki!

Liturgical Services for the Week

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

Sunday of the Prodigal Son

3rd Pregreat Fast Sunday

SUN, Jan 28 9:00 a.m. (MR) + Joseph Hrebenak Dgtr: Maria, Subdeacon Luke & Anita
(38th ann. of passing 1/16)

11:00 a.m. (NS) + Peter A. Smoley (51st ann of passing 1/17) Dgtr: Mary Ann

Mon, Jan 29 *** 7:30 a.m. (MR) + Yvonne Shanta (memorial) Beverly Vento & Family
10:00 a.m. (MR) Funeral of John D. Marks

Anticipated Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the 3 Holy Hierarchs due to Tuesday's 7:00 p.m.

Parastas of + Msgr. Duker at the Cathedral

(Monday) 6:00 p.m. (NS) For the Parishioners of Both Parishes

Feast of the 3 Holy Hierarchs — Simple Holy Day

TUE., Jan 30 9:00 a.m. (MR) Health of Nancy (Shanta) Wurthier Beverly Vento & Family

Wed, Jan 31 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Irene O. Bordas Bell & Zoldas Families

Prefestive of the Encounter of Our Lord Feast

Thrs, Feb 1 *** 7:30 a.m. (MR) + Myron F. Kundrat (13th ann of pass) Theresa Kundrat

ENCOUNTER OF THE LORD Solemn Blessing of Candles — Mirovanije

FRI., Feb. 2 9:00 a.m. (MR) Special Intention Fr. Firko

6:00 p.m. (NS) For the Parishioners of Both Parishes w/ reading of Hramoty following

First Universal All Souls Saturday

Sat, Feb 3 *** 9:00 a.m. (MR) First Universal All-Souls w/reading of Hramoty

Sunday anticipated Divine Liturgy of the Sunday of Meat-Fare — 4th Pregreat Fast Sunday

4:00 p.m. (MR) + Monsignor Russell A. Duker Fr. Firko

Sunday of Meat-Fare — 3rd Pregreat Fast Sunday

SUN, Feb 4 9:00 a.m. (MR) + Geraldine Babin Gnd-Chdrn: JT, Alex, Michael & Jon Meador

11:00 a.m. (NS) + Julia + Andrew Kittan Family

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 to be published.

Note: Capitalized Names designate North Side parishioners

Jan 29 — Richard Cifrulak, Gary Schelling; **Jan 31** — Burt Cifrulak, GARY MULLEN, DAMIAN TRAPL; **Feb 1** — Karen Grzywinski; **Feb 2** — Peggy Lucas, Rosemarie Nazak.

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

HOME: Margaret Beliunas, Diane Bell, Florence Charochak, DEACON MICHAEL MEADERS, Ilona Goyda, TAMARA HARDING, Bernice Herrick, Kathe Kress, Julia Kutchmark, ARLENE LATTA, KIRK LATTA, Nancy Lecci, BETTY LORINC, Irene Muha, JOHN NEWPORT, Kurt Perschy, MARLENE PFEIFFER, Elizabeth Poznak, Betty Spisak, Anita Wolsko.

HIGHLAND PARK CARE CENTER (745 North Highland Ave., Pgh, PA 15206): Linda Reiger.

VETERANS HOSPITAL (1010 Delafield St., Pittsburgh, PA 15215): JOHN VEREB.

THE RESIDENCE AT WILLOW LANE (30 Heckel Rd., McKees Rocks, PA 15136): Helen Best, Margaret Cifrulak. Mildred Terrek.

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

ALLEGHENY GENERAL HOSPITAL (320 E. North Avenue, PA 15212): Albert Kovacs, Sr. Nancy (Shanta) Wurthier.

HERITAGE VALLEY SEWICKLEY (720 Blackburn Rd., Sewickley, PA 15143): Steve Kosko.

Public questions on Catholic spirituality, moral & spiritual problems

Q. Why exactly is sexual intercourse outside of marriage a mortal sin? **A. Answer by Catholic Answers:** Sexual intercourse outside of marriage is a grave sin because in order to perform the acts that lead to the bringing forth of new life, the couple need to be united in a stable, permanent union that guarantees that the child to be born can be cared for and brought up for the service of God and neighbor in a consistent and reliable way. The principal end of sexual intercourse is the procreation of children, and so the pleasure of the couple or the satisfaction of desire is only right if it is in the context of a union that can take care of the new life. This means that the man and woman have to love each other in so committed a way that they are willing to bear children to each other. To deal with sexual intercourse in any less careful way is a grave sin.

This Week's Sanctuary Lamps

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

January 28 — February 3, 2024

(MR): **In memory of Terrek & Mikovitz Families**

offered by Mildred Terrek & Family

(NS): **In memory of Helen Seman Lucy**

(MR) AVAILABLE FOR 2024

offered by Sister: Velma

(NS) AVAILABLE 2024

General Announcements

McKees Rocks

FORMER HOLY GHOST PASTOR PASSES AWAY — The *Spirit of Truth* announces the unexpected passing of former Pastor, Monsignor Russell A. Duker, S.E.O.D., 80, at Mt. Saint Macrina Manor, Uniontown on Monday, January 22, 2024. He was the pastor of Holy Ghost Church from 1982-1992. The Savolskis-Wasik-Glenn Funeral Home, Munhall, PA, is handling the arrangements. He is survived by a Sister: Peggy Duker-Chabala & a Sister-in-law: Janet Duker. He is also survived by several nephews and nieces. Viewing will be at St. John the Baptist Cathedral, Munhall on Tuesday, January 30 from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. followed by a Parastas Part I @ 7:00 p.m.; and Wednesday, January 31 from 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. followed by Parastas Part II @ 7:00 p.m. Bishop Robert M. Pipta will be the principal celebrant, of the Funeral Divine Liturgy on Wednesday, Feb. 1 10:00 a.m.. Interment will take place at Calvary Cemetery, Mt. Saint Macrina. If you are unable to attend in person, the Funeral Services will be televised on the internet: www.stjohnsbyzantinecathedral.com. Our Parish extends its most sincere sympathies to the Duker Family. In blessed repose, grant O Lord, eternal rest to your servant, the Priest, Monsignor Russell, and remember him forever. Vičnaja Jemu Pamjat'!



SYMPATHY EXTENDED — The *Spirit of Truth* announces the passing of parishioner, **John D. Marks, 97**, of McKees Rocks at Concordia Villa of St. Joseph, Baden, PA on Monday, January 22, 2024. He will be laid to rest next to wife, Ann at Resurrection Cemetery, Moon Township.. He is survived by Son: Gary (Anna): and Dgtr-in-law Kathy (who just lost her husband, Kurt, John's Son several weeks ago). Also, he is survived by several grandchildren and one great grandchild. The Valerian F. Szal Funeral Home is handling arrangements. Parastas is Sunday, January 28 at 1:15 p.m. The Funeral Divine Liturgy is on Monday, January 29 @ 10:00 a.m. In blessed repose grant O Lord, eternal rest to your servant John, and remember him forever. Vičnaja Jemu Pamjat'!



PARISH & FINANCIAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING — The members of the PAC/FAC are reminded of meeting change now slated for **Saturday, February 10, 2024 @ 2:00 p.m. in the Church office.** Major agenda is the 2023 Church Financial Report. Please place this date on your agenda.

PIROHI PROJECT WILL RESUME PRIOR TO HOLY WEEK — It has been decided that the Pirohi Project will now continue sales on the following Friday dates: **Feb. 16, 23, Mar. 1, 8, 15, & 22 (no sales on Great Friday).** We would appreciate additional volunteers especially pinchers! **Remember, all orders must be placed on the Wednesday prior to the sale date between 9:00 a.m. & 12:00 noon. Call: (412) 331-5155. If you are able to place advertising posters, please take a few by the Church entrances. It will be greatly appreciated!**



NORTH SIDE

PARISH & FINANCIAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULED — The members of the PAC/FAC are reminded of meetings on **(NS) Sunday, February 11, 2024 following the Sunday Divine Liturgy in the Church.** Major agenda is the 2023 Church Financial Report. Please place this date on your agenda.

TODAY'S GOSPEL MEDITATION

PREPARING FOR THE GREAT FAST

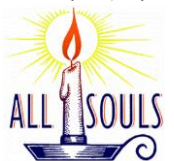
The 3rd Pregreat Fast Sunday — THE RETURN BACK to the Father (Lk 15: 11-32)

Who does not know this parable from the Gospels? Even non-Christians use the expression "like the prodigal son." But how often do we really understand it? By our sins, but even more by our forgetfulness, we distance ourselves from God and His Kingdom, we go off alone to "a far country." We waste the talents which God has given us. And we become spiritually impoverished; we begin to be in want. This is unavoidable; we were created for God's Kingdom, so we are not capable of being truly happy and satisfied anywhere else. But we are afraid to turn to God, so we seek happiness and satisfaction from transitory things which can never satisfy us. Returning to the Father in repentance will assure us of salvation. We must remember the heavenly city which is the goal of our pilgrimage. We must realize that in this world we are all exiles, we are all "displaced" from our true Home in the Heavenly Kingdom. That gift of memory, of understanding of our situation, enables us to resolve, like the Prodigal Son: "I will get up and go back to my Father!" With this realization, we resolve to make the effort during The Great Fast, to travel this spiritual road back to the Heavenly Kingdom. It is not easy; it will take time and energy, and sometimes we shall be tired and weary. But we will not be alone; Jesus is with us, and so are all the Saints, and the Father is awaiting us with a loving, joyful welcome.



Remembering all the Departed on 5 Universal All-Souls Saturdays

The Byzantine Catholic Church has, since the ninth century, established a special day of prayer for the departed known as All Souls Saturday. There is a "universal commemoration" and prayer for "all the souls departed in the faith," fittingly then, in English, we call these Saturdays – All Souls Saturdays. **In the Byzantine Liturgical Year there are five All Souls Saturdays namely, Meat Fare Saturday, the Second, Third and Fourth Saturdays of The Great Fast, and the Saturday before Pentecost.** The first commemoration prior to the Lenten Season begins with Meat-Fare Saturday as a special day of prayer for the deceased. It can be traced down to the sixth and seventh century. On Meat-Fare Sunday we liturgically commemorate the Terrible or Last Judgment (**Mt. 25:31-46**). Therefore, on the previous day, we, in our charity, intercede with the merciful Judge for the deceased. In the Byzantine Church, official lists of the deceased members of individual families are submitted to the pastor. These were called Hramoty, from meaning a written letter or document. The list of the deceased members of a family made in booklet form was used at the services for the deceased. The custom of announcing the names of the deceased during the liturgical services, as stated above, can be traced back to the first centuries of Christianity. Already in the fourth century, the practice was strongly defended by St. Epiphanius (+403) as a "firmly established tradition" in the Church. He writes: Concerning the ritual of reading the names of the deceased, what can be more useful or suitable; what can be more worthy of admiration? (Panaretos 75, 8). *Following the Friday, Feb. 2nd Holy Day Divine Liturgy (NS) @ 6:00 p.m. & (MR) following the Divine Liturgy on Saturday Feb 3 @ 9:00 a.m.*



Calendar of Upcoming Events

February 2 .Traditional Solemn Blessing of Candles prior to each Divine Liturgy (MR) 8:50 a.m.; (NS) 5:50 p.m. followed by the reading of the Hramoty

February 3 The 1st Universal All Souls Saturday (MR) at 9:00 a.m.

February 10 (MR) PAC/FAC Meeting Saturday @ 2:00 p.m.

February 11 (NS) PAC/FAC Meeting following the DL

February 12 **PURE MONDAY: The Beginning of the Holy 40 Days Fast — NO MEAT AND DAIRY PRODUCTS.**
(MR) 1st & 3rd Greatfast Hours @ 9:00 a.m.(NS) Great Penitential Canon of St. Andrew of Crete with Great Metanies @ 6:00 p.m.

February 14**PURE WEDNESDAY:** (MR) 1st & 3rd Greatfast Hours @ 8:00 am; (MR) Rosary @ 6:30 p.m.; (MR) Presanctified Divine Liturgy @ 7:00 p.m.

February 16**PURE FRIDAY:** (MR) 1st & 3rd Greatfast Hours @ 8:00 am; (MR) Rosary @ 6:30 p.m.; (NS) Presanctified Divine Liturgy @ 6:00 p.m.

SOLEMN HOLY DAY THIS WEEK

The Encounter of the Lord — February 2

The **fortieth day** after His birth, the All-Holy Virgin brought her Divine Son into



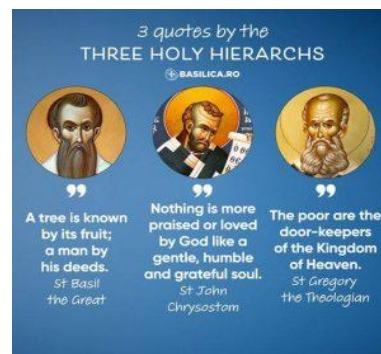
the Temple of Jerusalem, in accordance with the Law, to dedicate Him to God and to purify herself. "Consecrate to me every first-born that opens the womb among the Israelites both of man and beast, for it belongs to me" (Exodus 13:2 & Leviticus 12:2-7). Even though neither the one nor the other was necessary, nevertheless the Lawgiver did not, in anyway, want to transgress His own Law whom He had given through Moses, His servant and prophet. At that time, the high-priest Zachariah, the father of John the Forerunner, was on duty in the Temple ["serving as a priest before God in the order of his division" St. Luke 1:8]. Zachariah placed the Virgin, not in the temple area reserved for women but rather in the area

reserved for virgins. On this occasion, two unusual persons appeared in the Temple: the Righteous Simeon and the Prophetess Anna, the daughter of Phanuel. The righteous Simeon took the Messiah in his arms and said: "Now, Master, You may let Your servant go in peace, according to Your word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation" (St. Luke 2: 29-30). Simeon also spoke the following words about the Christ-child: "Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel" (St. Luke 2:34). Then Anna, who from her youth served God in the Temple by fasting and prayer recognized the Messiah and glorified God and proclaimed to the inhabitants of Jerusalem about the coming of the long-awaited One. The Pharisees present in the Temple, who having seen and heard all, became angry with Zachariah because he placed the Virgin Mary in the area reserved for virgins and reported this to King Herod. Convinced that this is the new king about whom the Magi from the east spoke, Herod immediately sent his soldiers to kill Jesus. In the meantime, the Holy Family had already left the city and set out for Egypt under the guidance of an angel of God. The Feast of the Encounter of our Lord in the Temple was celebrated from earliest times but the solemn celebration of this day was established in the year 544 A.D. during the reign of Emperor Justinian.

General Announcements

FEAST OF THE 3 HOLY HIERARCHS ON TUESDAY — In the month of January, each of these saints has their own feast day. **St. Basil the Great, January 1; St. Gregory the**

Theologian, January 25; and St. John Chrysostom, January 27. This combined feast day, January 30, was instituted in the eleventh century during the reign of Emperor Alexius Comnenus. At one time a debate arose among the people concerning who of the three is the greatest? Some extolled Basil because of his purity and courage; others extolled Gregory for his unequaled depth and lofty mind in theology; still others extolled Chrysostom because of his eloquence and clarity in expounding the Faith. Thus some were called Basilians, others Gregorgians, and the third were



called Johannites. This debate was settled by Divine Providence to the benefit of the Church and to an even greater glory of the three saints. Bishop John of Euchaita (June 14) had a vision in a dream: At first, all three of these saints appeared to him separately in great glory and indescribable beauty, and after that all three appeared together. They said to him, "As you see, we are one in God and there is nothing contradictory in us; neither is there a first or a second among us." The saints also advised Bishop John that he write a common service for them and to order a common feast day of celebration. Following this wonderful vision, the debate was settled in this manner: **January 30** would be designated as the common feast of these three hierarchs. The Greeks consider this feast not only an ecclesiastical feast but their greatest national school holiday.

ADDITIONAL SANCTUARY LAMPS AVAILABLE IN 2024 FOR BOTH PARISHES

— Sanctuary Lamps are currently available for your intentions at both parishes. They are \$10.00 each and are burned before the Tabernacle of Our Lord Jesus' Real Presence throughout the week. Submit your request and stipend in a regular envelope and who it is that is offering.



ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION SCHEDULE — January 28: Subdeacon Luke, "Sealed with the Spirit" on Holy Chrismation. These courses will begin at 10:30 a.m. in the McKees Rocks Basement.

DEANERY PENITENTIAL VESPERS SCHEDULED — *The Great Fast Deanery Vespers* will be celebrated, each Sunday during The Great Fast Season at 4:00 p.m. preceded by The Holy Mystery of Reconciliation @ 3:30 p.m. The following churches have been selected to host a different week:

(1) **February 18 — Holy Spirit Church, Pittsburgh (Oakland) – Homilist: Fr. Andrew Deskevich;** (2) **February 25 – Holy Ghost Church, McKees Rocks – Homilist: Fr. Vasyl Polyak;** (3) **March 3 – Saints Peter & Paul Church, Braddock – Homilist: Fr. Michael Kunitz;** (4) **March 10 – St. John Chrysostom, Pittsburgh (Greenfield) – Homilist: Fr. David Abernethy;** and (5) **March 17 – Saint John the Baptist Church, Lyndora – Homilist: Fr. Frank A. Firko.** This will be a great penitential practice of prayer & self-denial if you wish to take it upon yourselves. Please make an effort to join us. Fellowship of meatless soups and bread will be served following the liturgical services.

