

Parish Offerings – Sunday of the Prodigal Son — January 28, 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 (\$2,276) YP (\$9)	\$2,285.00
Holy Days (\$115) Christmas 2023 (\$100) Easter 2024 (\$30)	245.00
Initial (\$33) B.C.W. (\$56) Flower Décor (\$15)	104.00
Votive Candles (\$182) Coffee Social (\$37)	219.00
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	\$2,853.00

Holy Ghost Church, North Side

Regular Offering (\$706) YP (\$1)	\$707.00
Holy Days (\$60) Utilities (\$60)	120.00
Votive Candles	43.50

Church Attendance Last Week \$870.50

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

(MR) 9:00 a.m. (71); (NS) 11:00 a.m. (32)

Three Holy Hierarchs Mon, Jan 29 — (NS) 6:00 pm (3); Tue, Jan 30 — (MR) 9:00 am (7)

Encounter Oof the Lord Fri. Feb 2 — (MR) 9:00 a.m. (20); (NS) 6:00 p.m. (9)

The Corporal Works of Mercy

- Feed the hungry
- Give drink to the thirsty
- Clothe the naked
- Shelter the homeless
- Visit the sick
- Visit the imprisoned
- Bury the dead

The Spiritual Works of Mercy

- Admonish the sinner
- Instruct the ignorant
- Counsel the doubtful
- Comfort the sorrowful
- Bear wrongs patiently
- Forgive all injuries
- Pray for the living and the dead



Valerian F. Szal

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

Michael P. Ferrell,
Supervisor, CFSP

Our Family Still Serving Yours Since 1953

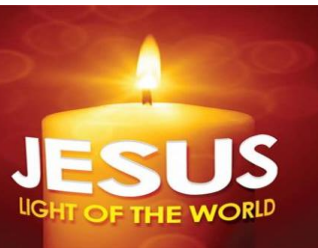


GCU offers Insurance and
Annuity Benefits greater than
most financial institutions. Info
call Randy
(412) 973-1085



North Side Parishioner

Alan Valeriano
(412) 638-3417
PA #172370



May God
Shine Down
His Blessings
On You
Today!



HOLY GHOST BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

225 OLIVIA STREET
1437 SUPERIOR AVENUE

McKEES ROCKS, PA 15136
PITTSBURGH, PA 15212

THE SUNDAY OF MEAT-FARE

The 4th Pregreat Fast Sunday — February 4, 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).

February 4, 2024

Seasonal Christian Greeting: Volume XIV, Number 5



Glory to Jesus Christ! — Glory Forever!

Slava Isusu Christ! — Slava na Viki!

Liturgical Services for the Week

Date	Time	Intention	Requested By
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

Mon, Feb 5	8:00 a.m. (MR)	+ Susan Gramata Cusatis	Eleanor Gramata & Son: George
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Final Day of the Encounter Feast

Tue., Feb 6	8:00 a.m. (MR)	Health & Welfare of Irene Burik	Beverly Vento & Family
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Wed, Feb 7	8:00 a.m. (MR)	+ Annamae Smyda (4 th ann of passing)	MaryEllen & John Oslick
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Thrs, Feb 8	8:00 a.m. (MR)	+ John J. Koza, III (3 rd ann of pass 2/3)	Fr. Firko
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REQUIRED SIMPLE ABSTINENCE (no meat) **or Equivalent Penance** (your choice)
for reparation for the sins of abortion & the destructive sin of racism in our country

Fri., Feb. 9	8:00 a.m. (MR)	+ Elsie + Francis Eberle	Dgtr: Mary Lyn Condulcci
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Commemoration of the Holy Ascetics

Sat, Feb 10	9:00 a.m. (NS)	For the Parishioners of Both Parishes	
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Sunday anticipated Divine Liturgy of the Sunday of Cheese-Fare – 4th Pregreat Fast Sunday

4:00 p.m. (MR) + Irene + Alex Bilak, Sr. Dgtr: Leyte, Mike & Mike Tomchak



Sunday of Cheese-Fare

The 5th & Final Pregreat Fast Sunday

Forgiveness Sunday

SUN, Feb 11 9:00 a.m. (MR) + Forgotten Souls in Purgatory Joseph A. Cehula, T.O. Carm.

11:00 a.m. (NS) + Monsignor Peter Tay Mary Ann Smoley

2:00 p.m. (MR) *Forgiveness Vespers w/anointing of Oil of Gladness
Initiating The Great Fast Season.*

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

Feb 4 – Madelyn Nazak, Kerri Poloka; **Feb 8** – Peggy McCusker

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, Steve Kosko, 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 Cifrutlak, Mildred Terrek.

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

FORBES REGIONAL HOSPITAL (2570 Haymaker Rd., Monroeville, PA 15146): Nancy (Shanta) Wurthier.

HERITAGE VALLEY KENNEDY (25 Heckel Rd., McKees Rocks, PA 15136): Albert Kovacs, Sr.

Public questions on Catholic spirituality, moral & spiritual problems

Q. Can I have a Mass (Divine Liturgy) said for the repose of the soul of my Protestant friend? And what happens to my prayers if he or she is in heaven already or, God forbid, hell? **A. Answer by a Catholic Apologist:** You can, and should, have a Mass (Divine Liturgy) said for your Protestant friend, or anyone for that matter. If the one we are praying for is in heaven, he is not in need of our prayers. If he is in hell, no prayer can benefit him. But because the Church does not presume to know if any particular soul is damned, we are not to judge but to pray. The rest is up to God. Only God judges the heart (cf. 1 Sm 16:7).



This Week's Sanctuary Lamps

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

February 4 — February 10, 2024

(MR): **In memory of Irene & Alex Bilak, Jr.**

offered by Dgtr: Leyte, Mike & Mike Tomchak

(NS): **In memory of Mary Seman Burnworth**

(MR) AVAILABLE FOR 2024

offered by Sister: Velma

(NS) AVAILABLE 2024

General Announcements

McKees Rocks

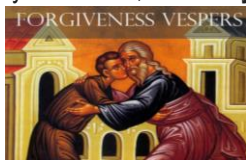
PIROHI PROJECT WILL RESUME PRIOR TO HOLY WEEK — It has been decided that the Pirohi Project will now continue sales on the following Friday dates: **Feb. 16, 23, Mar. 1, 8, 15, & 22 (no sales on Great Friday).** We would appreciate additional volunteers especially pinchers! **Remember, all orders must 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!**



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.

HOLY GHOST YOUTH GROUP BAKE SALE TODAY — Our Byzan-Teens Youth Group are having a Bake Sale today following the 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy. Once again, they are raising funds to take them to the Youth Rally held in San Diego in July. Let us assist them for this important social activity. They will be representing our Holy Ghost Church.

FORGIVENESS VESPERS NEXT SUNDAY — Next Sunday Afternoon, **February 11, 2024 @ 2:00 p.m.** in McKees Rocks, we will gather to bring in the Penitential Season of The Great Fast. **Anointing with blessed oil will be administered to strengthen us on the Lenten Journey.** Please set aside this time and join us as we embark in this season of penance.



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.

GRATITUDE FOR THE TWO SPECIAL DONATIONS

For the MR Parish: We wish to extend heart-felt gratitude for a special Memorial Donation of \$500.00 in memory of parishioner + **Stephen Katrenich** who passed away on January 2, 2024. This monetary gift was presented by his children: Tom & Barb. May God remember your kindness to His Church!

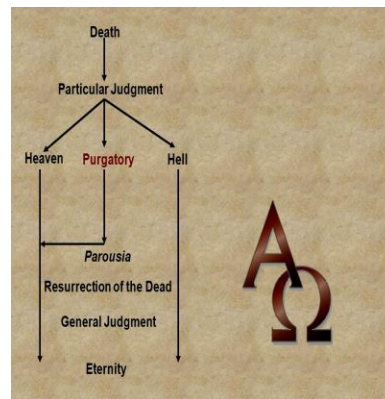
For the NS Parish: We wish to extend heart-felt gratitude for a special Memorial Donation of \$200.00 in memory of parishioners + **Dolores + George Hudanick, Sr.** This monetary gift was presented by their son: Paul. May God remember your kindness to His Church!

Today's Gospel Meditation

PREPARING FOR THE GREAT FAST (Matthew 25: 31-46)

The 4th Pregreat Fast Sunday — Evidence of REPENTANCE is EXPRESSED COMPASSION

What do we mean by "Meat-Fare"? — Meat-Fare Sunday indicates a farewell to meat

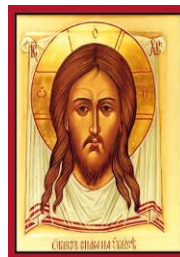


inasmuch as in the early Christian Church meat was no longer eaten from this time on throughout The Great Fast season (today is comparable to Marti Gras of the Western Church). In the Carpathian Mountains of Eastern Europe, the season of The Great Fast the Byzantine Catholic Ruthenian (Rusyn) faithful practiced "strict abstinence" (no meat and dairy products) for the entire Lent including Holy Week. Being an agrarian society with harsh weather conditions, a minimal amount of labor was performed, and a greater concentration was given to the Holy Fast. However, even in our

technologically advanced American society, we must make time to participate in The Great Fast services and maintain at least minimal fasting practices if we have the desire to express our love for the Lord. In this spirit, the Byzantine Catholic Church sets before us today the Last or "Terrible Judgment." Those, whom the Church was unable to convert through its instruction on the mercy of God in the Parable of the Prodigal Son, are now presented with the fear of hell in an attempt to affect them. The liturgical services are designed to fill us with salutary fear and sorrow for our sins. One of the requisites for repentance is the law of love by which Christ at His Judgment will measure all of us. Jesus describes in detail the Terrible or Final Judgment. Compassion and mercy were branded by early philosophers as weakness, but in reality they are the signs of a nobility of heart. Christ has taught us that all those who are filled with love for Him should realize that whatever they do for the poor and the afflicted is done for Him. In describing the Last Judgment, we are led to hope for mercy if we have been charitable to our neighbors. We must always realize that our Lord is merciful in the highest degree, but He is also just.

LENTEN REGULATION FOR THE BYZANTINE METROPOLITAN CHURCH

The following are the Lenten Regulations for The Archeparchy: The fasts of the liturgical year are to be kept....: **SIMPLE ABSTINENCE:** All the faithful of the Archeparchy who receive the Eucharist are bound to abstain from meat. **Simple Abstinence (no meat) is obligatory on all WEDNESDAYS & FRIDAYS of The Great Fast. STRICT ABSTINENCE** (No Meat or Dairy Products) is to be observed on the first day of The Great Fast — **PURE MONDAY, February 12 and on HOLY & GREAT FRIDAY, March 29** If you are unable to keep either abstinence for a just cause, you are to **seek a dispensation** from the pastor. These fasts include all Senior Citizens.



Calendar of Upcoming Events

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.
 Pirohi Sales.

SAINT OF THE WEEK

Virgin-Martyr Agatha of Palermo, Sicily

February 5

The Holy Virgin-Martyr Agatha was the fifteen-year-old daughter of rich and respected Christian parents from the city of Palermo (formerly Panormas) in Sicily. During the persecution under the emperor Decius (249-251), the city prefect of



Catania, Quintianus, having heard about Agatha's wealth and beauty, sent his soldiers after her to bring her to trial as a Christian. At Catania they housed the saint with a certain rich woman, who had five daughters. They all attempted to tempt Saint Agatha with fine clothes, amusements and entertainment, urging her to offer sacrifice to the pagan gods, but the saint disdained all these things. The more they tried to move her, the more resolute she became. She prayed that she might soon face martyrdom. During her interrogation under Quintianus, the holy martyr was swayed neither by the flattery, nor by the threats, and she was subjected to cruel torments. They also tried to remove her breasts with metal tongs, and when this failed, they used knives. The

holy Apostle Peter appeared to her in prison and healed her wounds. Saint Agatha was led to torture again, and Quintianus was astonished to see her completely healed, with no trace of cutting. Then the torture began once more. At this moment an earthquake took place in the city, and many buildings were destroyed. Among those killed were two of Quintianus's advisors. The terrified inhabitants rushed to Quintianus, demanding an end to Agatha's tortures. Fearing a revolt by the people, Quintianus sent Saint Agatha back to prison. There the martyr, offering thanks to God, peacefully surrendered her soul to the Lord.

General Announcements

SOLEMNLY BLESSED CANDLES STILL AVAILABLE —



It is an ancient tradition of our Byzantine Catholic Church to have candles solemnly blessed on February 2, the *Feast of the Encounter of the Lord with Simeon*. The Solemn Blessing of Candles symbolize "Christ the True Light that has come into the world." Candles are now available for purchase following the Divine Liturgy. Every home should have a blessed candle to be used throughout the year such as on anniversaries of Baptism, Chrismation, First Eucharist, Wedding Anniversaries, passing of a

loved one, storms, etc.

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.



INDIVIDUAL FINANCE REPORTS STILL AVAILABLE—



If MR Members would like a record of their 2023 individual financial report, please contact the office between 9:30 am to 1:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. If no answer, please leave a request on the voice-mail. Since there are few NS Members, Individual Financial reports are available in the (NS) narthex. Please discontinue using your 2023 envelopes. Your number may have changed!

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. Vasyi 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.



HOUSE BLESSINGS JUST ABOUT COMPLETED —



Our pastor is just about finished with house blessings. The weather has not been too cooperative this past week. He will continue this week. If you would like to be a part in continuing this ancient tradition of the Annual House Blessing, please contact the Church office A.S.A.P.

All Homes should always be blessed each year with this renewal blessing.