

Parish Offerings – 28th Sunday after Pentecost — December 1, 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 ss

Offertory (\$3,803) YP (\$9.00) Christmas (\$45) \$3,857.00
Holy Day (\$135) Thanksgiving (\$46) Christmas Décor (\$424) 605.00
Votive Candles 192.00

\$4,654.00

Holy Ghost Church, North Side

Regular Offering (\$650) Christmas (\$10) \$660.00
Holy Days (\$30) Thanksgiving (\$5) Arch Charities (\$5) 40.00
Votive Candles (\$37.25) Utilities (\$20) Improve (\$50) Chr. Decor (\$60) 167.25

Church Attendance Last Week \$867.25

Sat (MR), 4:00 p.m. (27)

Sun (MR) 9:00 a.m. (68); (NS) 11:00 a.m. (35)



Valerian F. Szal

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

Michael P. Ferrell,
Supervisor, CFSP

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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 29th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

4th Sunday of Philippian Fast — December 8, 2024
Feast of the Immaculate Conception



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 Father David A. Bosnich

Assistant Pastor (NS), Assigned to Chancery

The Reverend Deacon Michael E. Meaders (NS)

The Reverend Deacon Luke R. Iyengar (MR)

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) Co-Coordinator to Fr. Firko: Aimee Helms & Leah Trapl.

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

Remember the Church in Your Will: Please be so kind to remember the Church in your will.

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).

December 8, 2024

Seasonal Greeting:

Volume XIV Number 49



Glory to Jesus Christ! — Glory Forever!

Slava Isusu Christu! — Slava Na Viki!

Liturgical Services for the Week

Date	Time	Intention	Requested By
29th Sunday After Pentecost			
4th Sunday of the Philippian Fast — Immaculate Conception			
SUN, Dec 8 (24)	9:00 a.m. (MR)	+ Regina Mell	Holy Ghost Pirohi Workers
	11:00 a.m. (NS)	For the Parishioners of Both Parishes	
Mon, Dec 9 (25)	8:00 a.m. (MR)	+ Michael Muska	Bro: + Michael
	10:00 a.m. (MR)	Funeral of Sandra Rosko	
Tue, Dec 10 (26)	8:00 a.m. (MR)	+ Helen Kriska.	Regina & Karl Riegler
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 11 (27)	8:00 a.m. (MR)	+ Julia Swayka	MaryEllen & John Oslick (23 rd ann of passing)
Commemoration of Our Lady of Guadalupe — Our Lady of the Americas			
Thrs, Dec 12 (28)	8:00 a.m. (MR)	+ Robert Bordas	Family
REQUIRED SIMPLE ABSTINENCE (no meat) or Equivalent Penance (your choice) for the intention of the return of our beloved back to God and His Church			
Fri, Dec 13 (29)	8:00 a.m. (MR)	+ Andrew Kundrat, Jr.	Theresa Kundrat (39 th ann of passing)
Sat, Dec 14 (30)	9:00 a.m. (NS)	For the Parishioners of Both Parishes	

Anticipated Divine Liturgy of the O.T. Forefathers — CONFESSION FOLLOWS

4:00 p.m. (MR) + Mark A. Cifurulak

John Pajak

Sunday of the Old Testament Forefathers

5th Sunday of the Philippian Fast — CONFESSION FOLLOWS

SUN, Dec 15 (31) 9:00 a.m. (MR) + Cantor: John Fejka (16th ann of pass 12/16) Dgtr: Susie

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

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

Dec 9 – Alice Sejka, Daniel Skreptach; **Dec 11** – Thomas Rubish; **Dec 12** – Florence Charochak; **Dec 14** – CHRISTOPHER MEADERS, Steven Puluka, Roberta Rubish..

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

HOME: Dolores Babin, Margaret Beliuinas, Florence Charochak, Ilona Goyda, TAMARA HARDING, Bernice Herrick, Steve Kosko, ARLENE LATTA, KIRK LATTA, BETTY LORINC, DEACON MICHAEL MEADERS, Irene Muha, JOHN NEWPORT, Kurt Perschy, Betty Spisak, Anita Wolsko.

HIGHLAND PARK CARE CENTER (745 North Highland Ave., Pgh, PA 15206): Linda Reiger.
THE RESIDENCE AT WILLOW LANE (30 Heckel Rd., McKees Rocks, PA 15136): Helen Best, Mildred Terrek.

TAPESTRY SENIOR LIVING (550 Cherrington Parkway, Moon Township, PA 15108): Eliz. Posnak
CEDAR HILL REHAB CENTER (951 Broadhead Rd., Coraopolis, PA 15108): Nancy (Shanta) Wurthier.

Public questions on Catholic spirituality, moral & spiritual problems

Q. I am dating a Calvinist. He has been trying to understand my faith, and I struggle sometimes with the answers. He asked me where in the Bible do we get the belief in the Immaculate Conception? And if God did that for Mary, why wouldn't he do it for David, Abraham, or Moses? And why did Mary need to be immaculately conceived? **A. Catholic Answers Apologist:** It wasn't a matter of what God the Father did for Mary, but what he did for Jesus. What so many people don't understand is that **the Immaculate Conception of Mary is all about Jesus**. It was because he was to take on his human nature in her womb that God deigned her to be free of all sin and therefore "full of grace" (Lk 1:28). It would be unthinkable, given the revelation that we have in Scripture and Tradition, for him to be conceived in anything but a holy place. David, Abraham, and Moses weren't called to give birth to Jesus.

This Week's Sanctuary Lamps

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

December 8 — December 14, 2024

(MR): **In memory of Connie Stemm** (6th ann of passing 11/27)

offered by Mother-in-law: Bea

(NS): **In memory of Elizabeth Seman Schaffer**

(MR) AVAILABLE FOR 2025

offered by Sister: Velma

(NS) AVAILABLE 2025

General Announcements

McKees Rocks

PIROHI PROJECT WILL CONTINUE THIS WEEK — *Listed are the Friday sales dates: Dec. 13, & 20. Remember, all orders must be placed on the Wednesday prior to the sale date between 9:00 a.m. & 12:00 noon @ (412) 331-5155. MR & NS may sign the list located in the narthex on upcoming weekends.*



YOUTH GROUP TAKING CANDY ORDERS THE VIRTUAL WAY — Every two years our Youth Group attends the **Byzan-TEEN Rally**. It is a wonderful chance for our youth to meet other Byzantine Catholics from across the country. In 2026 we are hoping to send Teens on their next adventure. To defray the cost, the Holy Ghost Youth Group is holding a virtual fundraiser from Sarris Candies. This is a contactless fundraiser and all purchases will be shipped directly to the buyer free of charge. You can purchase anything from the company and we will receive 25% of the sale. Just follow these steps and candy will be on the way: Also, candy bars are being sold by the our Byzan-TEENS



FUNDRAISING

1. Go to sarriscandiesfundraising.com
2. Go to the "fundraising" tab.
3. Our group code is 10-3617.
4. You do not have to put in a teen's name unless you want to.
5. Shop!

PIROHI VOLUNTEER LUNCHEON IS BEING PLANNED — To show our appreciation to all those who worked the last few weeks, a special luncheon is being tentily planned for **Monday, December 30, 2024 at Central's Diner, Route 60, Robinson @ 12:00 noon**. More details will be listed in next week's S.O.T. Also, a signup list will be available at the Pirohi Kitchen beginning this Friday.

North Side

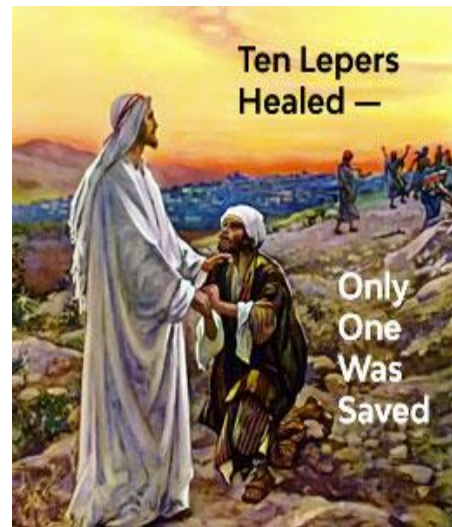
NEW CHURCH ROOF HAS AWARDED THE CONTRACT TO A LOCAL CONTRACTOR — The **R & B Roofing Contractor, Avalon, PA** has received the go-ahead to commence work on a NEW Church Roof. Over the past years rain water has been entering the Church. They will place a new shingled tile, repair the flashing and pressure wash the green stain from the copper domes.. **The total cost will be approximately \$50,000.00 including (if needed) the wood if it has to be replaced.** R & B will work around the honey bee habitation. The Parish Advisory Council, Financial Advisory Council, and Chancery have given the go ahead. This quoted price includes the permits from the City of Pittsburgh. Additional information will be forth-coming.

Meditation on Today's Gospel

Showing Gratitude for healing the leprosy of Sin!

Like 17:12-19

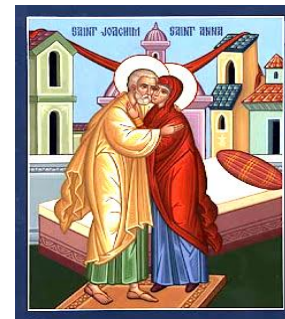
Luke observes that the one grateful leper "was a Samaritan" (v.16). Why are no observant Jews – the chosen people of God, the people of the convent – among the grateful? No, the grateful leper is the one who is doubly outcast. He is both a leper and a Samaritan. This "Untouchable" is the one who stops to praise God in Jesus' healing. Luke has given us a picture of another "good Samaritan" (cf. 10:25-27). The story foreshadows the coming of the kingdom of God to the Gentiles (cf. Also "this foreigner" in v.18), a major theme throughout both Luke and Acts (e.g., 24-47 and Acts 1:8). In the cleansing of these lepers God was acting through Jesus, and so God must be thanked through Jesus. As a form of prayer, Christian gratitude must be offered



through Jesus Christ. The salvation of the grateful leper represents more than physical healing. The lepers' salvation reflects his awareness through faith of God's gracious presence. As Christians we are called to follow the example of this grateful leper and let the grace of gratitude transform our daily lives.

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception

The soul of the Virgin Mary whom God had chosen from all eternity to be the Mother in the flesh of the Incarnate Word was created full of grace and free from original sin, united to a body formed according to the laws of nature through the operation of love of her parents, Joachim and Anne. This privilege, accepted throughout the centuries, was officially proclaimed as a dogma by Pope Pius IX in the year 1854. It is known in the Catholic Church as the Immaculate Conception. Come join us as we honor the Holy Theotokos's Most Pure Conception in the womb of her mother, St. Anne this week (cf. liturgical schedule). In most Eastern Rites, this day is referred to as the Conception of St. Anne.



O Most Holy Mother of God, Save Us!!!

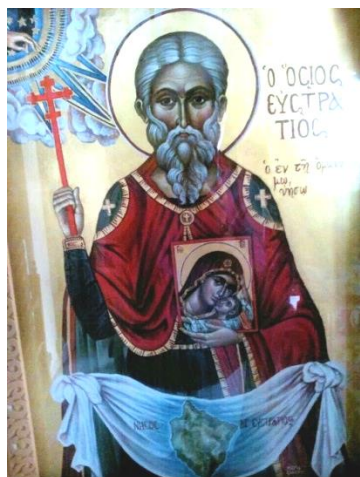
Thank you St. Nicholas for gracing us with your presence today!

Calendar of Upcoming Events

December 8	Solemn Feast of Immaculate Conception Parish & Archieparchial St. Nicholas Celebration.
December 15	Holy Mystery of Reconciliation (Confessions) for ECF Students.5 ... Extra time allotted for (MR) & (NS) Holy Mystery of Reconciliation (Confessions) following the Divine Liturgy.
December 24	(MR) 8:00 am Royal Hours); (MR) 1:00 pm DL of St. Basil the Great. ... (MR) 8:00 p.m. Great Compline, Christmas Carols & 9:00 p.m. DL of St. John Chrysostom
December 25	CHRISTMAS DAY DIVINE LITURGIES — (MR) 9:00 A.M.; (NS) 11:00 A.M.
December 26	2 nd Day of Christmas: Synaxis of the Theotokos — (MR) 9:00 a.m. (NS) & 6:00 p.m.
December 27	3 rd Day of Christmas – Feast of St. Stephen DL – (MR) 9:00 a.m. & (NS) 6:00 p.m.

Saints 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...”)

Come O Jesus Our Savior, Redeem and Save Us!

General Announcements

TODAY'S THE 4TH SUNDAY OF THE PHILIPPIAN FAST — We continue our journey into this minor penitential period following Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem by preparing ourselves for the spiritual meaning of Christmas. It is through prayer, abstinence, almsgivings, frequent confession of sins, works of virtue and additional participation in Divine Liturgies, we can accomplish this end. Together as a parish, let us collectively practice simple abstinence (no meat) or an equivalent penance on Wednesdays (recommended) and Fridays (required) for the intention for the return of our beloved back to Church. The color **PURPLE** is worn as a sign of **ROYALTY** of the One to be born in Bethlehem.



2025 CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES & CALENDARS NOW AVAILABLE IN (MR) CHURCH BASEMENT & (NS) NARTHEX — Your 2025 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 2025 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.



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 2024, a **Parish Appreciation Dinner at the Golden Corral, Robinson Township** will be on **Monday, December 30, 2024 @ 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 will be located next week in the (MR) vestibule, and (NS) Narthex of the Church. *Final day for signing Sunday, December 22.*



THE PITTSBURGH BYZANTINE CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESEAL CHOIR (PBCAC) invites faithful, friends and family to experience the joy and splendor of the Nativity season **on Sunday, December 22** as they present *'Neath the Star of Bethlehem: Hymns and Songs of the Nativity.* The hour-long choral program will begin at **2:00 pm at St. Elias Byzantine Catholic Church, 4200 Homestead-Duquesne Road in Munhall, Pa.** Admission is free, and there is also plenty of free, level parking.



GRATITUDE TO THOSE WHO DECORATED THE CHURCHES — A special thank you is extended to all who came to decorate the NS & MR Churches most recently. We are always in need of volunteers especially in decorating the Church for this special time of the year. Remember that all of us reap its benefits. The Church looks beautiful! We now await the Christmas flowers. We could not have done it without you!