

Parish Offerings – 29th Sunday after Pentecost — December 8, 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 (\$1,947) YP (\$6) Christmas (\$110)	\$2,063.00
Holy Day (\$384) YP (\$6) Christmas Décor (\$125)	515.00
Votive Candles (\$80) Thanksgiving (\$20)	100.00

\$2,678.00

Holy Ghost Church, North Side

Regular Offering (\$616.50) YP (\$1)	\$617.50
Holy Days (\$145) YP (\$5)	150.00
Votive Candles	75.50

Church Attendance Last Week \$843.00

Sat (MR), 4:00 p.m. (30)

Sun (MR) 9:00 a.m. (73); (NS) 11:00 a.m. (32)

Feast of St. Nicholas Dec. 6th — (MR) 9:00 a.m. (12); (NS) 6:00 p.m. (3)



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



Christmas is coming...Ho ho ho

HOLY GHOST BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

225 OLIVIA STREET
1437 SUPERIOR AVENUE

McKEES ROCKS, PA 15136
PITTSBURGH, PA 15212

THE SUNDAY OF THE O.T. FOREFATHERS

5th Sunday of Philipian Fast — December 15, 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 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 15, 2024

Seasonal Greeting:

Volume XIV Number 50



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

Liturgical Services for the Week

Date	Time	Intention	Requested By
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 (16 th ann of pass 12/16)	Dgtr: Susie
	11:00 a.m. (NS)	+ Nicholas Senchyshyn (birthday 12/16)	Dgtr: Joan
Mon, Dec 16 (32)	8:00 a.m. (MR)	+ Helen Perschy (22 nd ann of passing)	Son: Kurt
Tue, Dec 17 (33)	8:00 a.m. (MR)	+ Florence Kraly. (15 th ann of passing 12/16)	Zula Family
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 18 (34)	8:00 a.m. (MR)	+ Monsignor Raymond A. Balta	Fr. Firko
Thrs, Dec 19 (35)	8:00 a.m. (MR)	+ Michael Palahunik, Jr.	Anonymous
Prefestive of Christmas			
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 20 (36)	8:00 a.m. (MR)	+ Emory Holowatch	Anne Myers
Saturday Before Christmas			
Sat, Dec 21 (37)	9:00 a.m. (NS)	For the Parishioners of Both Parishes	

Anticipated Divine Liturgy of the Old Testament Holy Fathers

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

Sunday of the Old Testament Holy Fathers

6th & Final Sunday of the Philippian Fast

SUN, Dec 22 (38) 9:00 a.m. (MR) + Christina Michalism (3rd ann of pass 12/23) Husb: Wallace & Family
11:00 a.m. (NS) + Alice H. Smoley Dgtr: Mary Ann
(22nd ann of passing 12/23)

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 15 – LARISA BODNARCHUK PFEUFFER; **Dec 18** – Diane Kosko, Lauren Kovacs.

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

HOME: Dolores Babin, Margaret Beliuonas, 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. If God knows everything we do, then how come we have to go to Confession? **A.** Answer by a Catholic Apologist: We go to Confession to say "I'm sorry" for our sins, not to tell God something He does not already know. For example, you may know that your younger brother broke your Play Station Player, but wouldn't it be aggravating if he knew you knew, but still do not say "I'm sorry?" It would be a double slap in the face. In addition to saying "sorry" to God, Confession also reconciles us with the Church (CCC 1469). There is no such thing as a private sin. Every sin affects the world in a negative manner. There is always a ripple effect. When a Catholic accepts and takes advantage of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, he builds up the Body of Christ (Col. 1:24; CCC 1496). He is implicitly saying, "I believe in the Sacrament, and you should too." This affirmation of the Sacrament can lead others to live a sacramental life (2 Cor. 8:21).

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 15 — December 21, 2024

(MR): **In memory of Cantor: John Fejka** (16th ann of pass 12/16)

offered by Dgtr: Susie

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

(MR) AVAILABLE FOR 2025

offered by Dgtr: Joan

(NS) AVAILABLE 2025

General Announcements

McKees Rocks

PIROHI PROJECT ENDS THIS WEEK — *Here is the remaining Friday sale date: Dec 20.*



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 are welcomed. We could still use additional help, especially pinchers on this last week of sales.

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.

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 SIGNUP — To show our appreciation to all those who worked this winter season, a special luncheon is set for **Monday, December 30, 2024 at Central's Diner, Route 60, Robinson @ 12:00 noon**. Please sign the list. It will continue to be available this final Friday.

NEW LED-LIGHTING SYSTEM TO BE INSTALLED IN CHURCH — Plans are underway to change our current lighting system to LED. This will insure a brighter and cost-efficient system. Labor will begin early in the 2025 New Year,

North Side

NEW CHURCH ROOF PLANS ARE NOW UNDERWAY — The **R & B Roofing Contractor, Avalon, PA** has received a third payment amount to commence the project. Over the past years rain water has been entering the Church. They will place a new shingled tile, repair the flashing and pressure washing the green stain from the copper domes. 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.

THE LAST WEEK FOR DECEMBER FOOD DRIVE FOR BOTH PARISHES — Thank you to



all that have participated in the Thanksgiving Food Drive. You have made a difference! In our continued love for the less fortunate, both parishes will continue holding a non-perishable food drive to be delivered to the *Interfaith Churches Food Bank, McKees Rocks* in time for Christmas. Please bring the non-expired items to the Church and place them at the entrance. The following note was received from ICFB: "We are so grateful for your generous

Thanksgiving donation. We appreciate your continued support in helping us meet the needs of those in need especially during this time of year. May God richly bless you" — Donna Pollard.

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!

The Pope Speaks

Flashback Message of the Holy Apostle Paul & his Sufferings

Dear Brothers and Sisters: In the catechesis on the Acts of the Apostles, we see how with the



passage of time Paul's missionary apostolate is increasingly marked by suffering. His return to Jerusalem exposes him to a fierce persecution. Accused of preaching against the Law and the Temple, he is arrested and put in chains. After being interrogated by the Sanhedrin, Paul is taken to Caesarea where the Governor Felix and King Agrippa hear his case. Finally, having appealed to the Emperor, he begins his journey to Rome. In all this, Saint Luke brings out the similarity between Paul and Jesus, and presents Paul's sufferings as themselves an eloquent proclamation of the crucified and risen Lord. Indeed, his love for Christ

made his chains of captivity an instrument for spreading the liberating power of the Gospel. May Paul's example of perseverance amid trials, and his ability to view everything with the eyes of faith, strengthen us in fidelity, and confirm us in our vocation to be missionary disciples and witnesses to the joy of the Gospel.

Come O Jesus Our Savior, Redeem and Save Us!

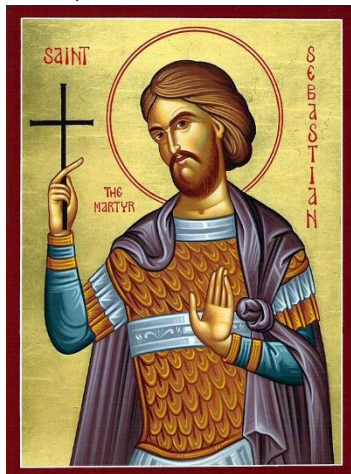
Calendar of Upcoming Events

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 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.
 January 1 New Year's Day: Feast of Circumcision & St. Basil - (MR) 9:00 a.m. & (NS) 11:00 am

Saints of the Week

The Holy Martyr Sebastian and His Companions December 18

The Holy Martyr Sebastian was born in the city of Narbonne in Gaul (modern France), and he received his education at Mediolanum (now Milan). He occupied the position of head of the imperial guards. St Sebastian was respected for his authority, and was loved by the soldiers and those at court. He was a brave man filled with wisdom, his word was honest, his judgment just, insightful in advice, faithful in his service and in everything entrusted to him. He was a secret Christian, not out of fear, but so that he could provide help to the brethren in a time of persecution. The noble Christian Deacon-Brothers Marcellinus and Mark had been locked up in prison, and at first they firmly confessed the true Faith. But under the influence of the tearful entreaties of their pagan parents (Tranquillinus and Marcia), and also their own wives and children, they began to waver in their intent to suffer for Christ. St Sebastian went to the imperial



treasurer, at whose house Marcellinus and Mark were held in confinement, and addressed the brothers who were on the verge of yielding to the entreaties of their family. Enemies reported him to Diocletian who reproached Sebastian for his supposed betrayal, and he commanded him to be led to a field and there to be bound to a stake so that archers would shoot arrows at him. "And the archers shot at him till he was as full of arrows" leaving him there for dead. Miraculously, the arrows did not kill him. The widow of Castulus, Irene of Rome, went to retrieve his body to bury it, and she discovered he was still alive. She brought him back to her house and nursed him back to health. The other residents of the house doubted he was a Christian. One of those was a girl who was blind. Sebastian asked her "Do you wish to be with God?", and made the sign of the Cross on her head. "Yes", she replied, and immediately regained her sight. Sebastian later stood on a step and harangued Diocletian as he passed by; the emperor had Sebastian beaten to death, and his body was thrown into a privy. But in an apparition, Sebastian told a Christian widow where they might find his body undefiled and bury it "at the catacombs by the apostles. Because of this, Sebastian is sometimes known as the saint who was martyred twice

Come O Jesus Our Savior, Redeem and Save Us!

General Announcements

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



FOREFATHERS of Christ according to the flesh who are remembered on this **5th Sunday and 33rd 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.*

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 is located in the (MR) vestibule, and (NS) Narthex of the Church. *Final day for signing is next Sunday, December 22.*



THE PITTSBURGH BYZANTINE CATHOLIC ARCHEPARCHIAL CHOIR (PBCAC) invites



faithful, friends and family to experience the joy and splendor of the Nativity season next **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.