

Parish Offerings – 25th Sunday after Pentecost — November 30, 2025

“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 (\$1,672) YP (\$11.05)	\$1,683.05
Holy Days (\$130) YP (\$2.05) Christmas (\$20) Initial (\$8)	160.05
Votive Candles (\$136.50) Thanksgiving (\$42)	178.50
	<u>\$2,021.60</u>

Holy Ghost Church, North Side

Regular Offering (\$786.) YP (\$2)	\$788.00
Holy Days (\$55) Collection for Poor (\$10) Thanksgiving (\$5)	70.00
Utilities (\$70) Improvements (\$5) Arch Charities (\$5)	80.00
Votive Candles	<u>154.25</u>
	\$1,092.25

Church Attendance Last Week

(MR) Sat., 4:00 p.m. (34); Sun., (MR) 9:00 a.m. (52); (NS) 11:00 a.m. (27)
 Dec 5 & 6 – St. Nicholas Feast Day — (NS) 6:00 pm (5); (MR) 9:00 am (15)



HOLY GHOST BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

225 OLIVIA STREET

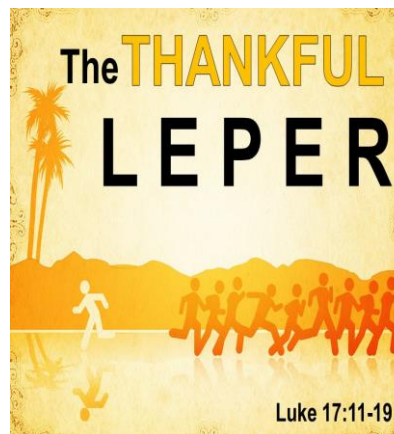
McKEES ROCKS, PA 15136

.. 1437 SUPERIOR AVENUE

PITTSBURGH, PA 15212

The 26th Sunday after Pentecost

4th Sunday of Philippian Fast — December 7, 2025



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

Website: 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.

Personal Care & Hospitalized: Phone Church Office ASAP.

Sponsor of Christian Initiation: Godparents must be practicing Catholics.

Religious Education Classes: (MR) Coordinator: Pastor (412) 771-3324.

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 will if you would like to request a Divine Liturgy (\$20) or Sanctuary Lamp (\$10) Please contact the Church Office. Also, Blessed Decorative Sacramental/Easter Basket Candles (\$15).



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



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 7, 2025

Volume XV, Number 50



Seasonal Christian Greeting:
Glory to Jesus Christ! — Glory Forever!
Slava Isusu Christu! — Slava Na Viki!



Liturgical Services for the Week

Date Time Intention Requested By

26th Sunday after Pentecost

4th Sunday of the Philippian Fast

SUN, Dec 7 (23) 9:00 a.m. (MR) *For the Parishioners of Both Parishes*
 11:00 a.m. (NS) + Monsignor Peter P. Tay Joan Senchyshyn
(2nd ann of passing 12/10)

FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Solemn Feast: Conception of St. Anne — Patroness of Our Country — Mirovanije

MON, Dec 8 (24) 9:00 a.m. (MR) + Cifrulak + Kulka Families Kathy & John Kulka
 6:00 p.m. (NS) *For the Parishioners of Both Parishes*

Tue, Dec 9 (25) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Anna Velma Seman Theresa Kundrat

RECOMMENDED SIMPLE ABSTINENCE (no meat) or Equivalent Penance (your choice)
or the intention of the return of our beloved to the fullness of the Faith

Wed, Dec 10 (26) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Albert P. Kovacs, Sr. Wife: Patty & Family

Thrs, Dec 11 (27) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Julia Swayka *(24th ann of pass.)* MaryEllen & John W. Oslick

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

Commemoration of Our Lady of Guadalupe — Our Lady of the Americas

Fri, Dec 12 (28) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Ronald J. Hirschfield Dgtr: Susan & Family

Sat, Dec 13 (29) 9:00 a.m. (NS) *For the Parishioners of Both Parishes*

Anticipated Divine Liturgy for the Sunday of the Old Testament Forefathers

4:00 p.m. (MR) Health & Welfare Karen (Nazak) Perreault

Sunday of the Old Testament Forefathers

5th Sunday of the Philippian Fast — CONFESSIONS FOLLOW

SUN, Dec 14 (30) 9:00 a.m. (MR) + Cantor: John Fejka *(17th 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 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 – Larisa (Bodnarchuk) Pfeuffer.

Pray for the Ill & Shut-ins of Our Parishes

HOME: Ted Babin, Margaret Beliunas, Dolores & William Boras, Monica Lemesh, Ilona Goyda, TAMARA HARDING, Michael Kachuta, Steve Kosko, Kenneth & Karen Krempasky, Theresa Kundrat, ARLENE LATTA, KIRK LATTA, BETTY LORINC, DEACON MICHAEL & CINDY MEADERS, John W. Oslick, Kurt Perschy, Betty Spisak, Anita Wolsko.

MAPLEWOOD PC HOME (461 Maplewood Ave. Ambridge, PA 15003): Doris Naughton.
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): Rosemarie Nazak, Mildred Terrek.

CEDAR HILL REHAB CENTER (951 Broadhead Rd., Coraopolis, 15108): Nancy Wauthier
TAPESTRY SENIOR LIVING (550 Cherrington Parkway, Moon Township, PA 15108): Eliz. Posnak
VANADIUM WOODS VILLAGE (50 Vanadium Rd, Bridgeville, PA 15017): Bea Stempkowski.
CONCORDIA OF BRIDGEVILLE (3560 Washington Pike, Bridgeville, PA 15017): Flo Charochak.
HIGHLAND HILLS POST ACUTE (1105 Perry Highway, Pittsburgh, PA 15237): Bernice Herrick.

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

December 7 — December 13, 2025

(MR): **Thanksgiving**

offered by + Dolores & Ted Babin

(NS): **In memory of Agnes & Anthony Knoll**

(MR) Some available for 2026 offered by Dgtr: Leslie O’Donnell (NS) Few available for 2026

General Announcements

PIROHI PROJECT WILL CONTINUE THIS WEEK — *Listed are the final Friday sales dates: Dec. 12, & 19. 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. Place your Christmas orders now!*



(MR) 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 July 2026 we are hoping to send our teens and chaperones to Cleveland. . 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:



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 BEING PLANNED — To show our appreciation to all those who donated time and effortlessly sacrificed time over the past few weeks, a special luncheon is being tentatively planned for Monday, December 29, 2025 at a place still being determined @ 12:00 noon. More details will be listed in next week's S.O.T. Also, a sign-up list will be available at the Pirohi Kitchen beginning this Friday.

GRATITUDE TO THOSE WHO DECORATED THE CHURCH — A special thank you is extended to all who came to decorate the NS & MR Churches last week. 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!



(NS) CONDOLENCES EXTENDED — The Spirit Of Truth (S.O.T.) announces the recent passing of **Mary Elizabeth Leonard, 63**, at home on Saturday, November 15, 2025. Among her mother and other siblings, she is survived by a sister and parishioner, Judith Bercik. Funeral arrangements were handled by the Prout Funeral Home, Coraopolis, PA. A Mass of Christian Burial was offered on Fri., November 21st. Our parish extends its most sincere sympathies to the Bercik & Leonard Families. In blessed repose, grant O Lord eternal rest to your servant Mary Elizabeth, and remember her forever! *Vičnaja Jej Pamjat'!* — Also, the S. O. T. was made aware of the passing of **Albert F. Stratemeier, 76**, of Monongahela, PA on July 12, 2025. Besides his immediate family, he is survived by his sister and parishioner, Mary Frances (Edward, Sr.) Spontak, and nephew Bradley (Johanna). Our parish extends its most sincere sympathies to the Stratemeier & Spontak Families. In blessed repose, grant O Lord eternal rest to your servant Albert, and remember him forever! *Vičnaja Jemu Pamjat'!*

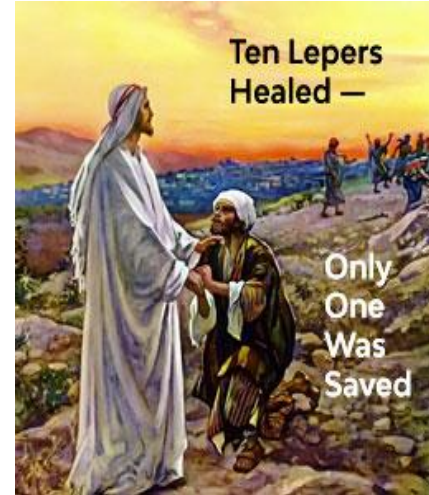


Meditation on today's Gospel

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 covenant – 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.

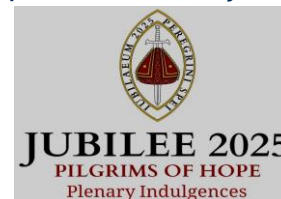


Join Us For A Special 2025 Jubilee Blessing Pilgrimage

On Sunday, December 21, 2025 @ 1:00 p.m., we will depart together by our vehicles on a Pilgrimage to the Cathedral in Munhall. This has been a designated place to receive a *Jubilee Indulgence* by the late Pope Francis. Details later. We will then stop for a mid-day lunch at the Waterfront. If interested, please sign. And join us and receive this special blessing (Indulgence) prior to the Nativity of Our Lord.

Jubilee Year Indulgences: What They Are and Aren't (Part II)

The Church offers special indulgences, which are remissions of the temporal punishment of *already forgiven* sins, *not* a "get out of jail free card" for future sins. Remitting that punishment—or aftereffects of forgiven sin—includes purifying us of our "unhealthy attachment to creatures" and other created things (CCC 1472). Indulgences are outlined in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC 1471-1479). They are either partial or plenary, remitting some (partial) or the complete (plenary) temporal punishment due to one's sins, including, again, that associated with our unhealthy attachments to ourselves, other persons, and things—attachments which *necessarily cannot exist* in heaven (see Rev. 21:27). Indulgences can be obtained for oneself or for one who has died (the faithful departed). Pilgrimages to designated holy sites, doing acts of charity, and receiving the sacraments of Reconciliation & Eucharist are emphasized. The Jubilee is a reminder of God's mercy and the call to live out the gospel more fully.



Calendar of Upcoming Events

December 7 Parish & Archieparchial St. Nicholas Celebrations.
 December 8 Solemn Feast of Immaculate Conception: (MR) 9:00 a.m. & (NS) 6:00 p.m.
 December 14 ... Holy Mystery of Reconciliation (Confessions) for ECF Students following the DL.
 Special Holy Mystery of Reconciliation time for all — (NS) following Sunday's DL.
 Special Holy Mystery of Reconciliation time for all — (MR) 3:00 pm.
 December 21 Jubilee Year of HOPE Pilgrimage to Cathedral to receive the gifted Indulgence.
 December 24 ... (MR) 8:00 a.m. Royal Hours; (MR) 1:00 p.m. Vespers w/DL of St. Basil the Great.

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 262nd 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 (MR ONLY) 9:00 a.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 — 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)

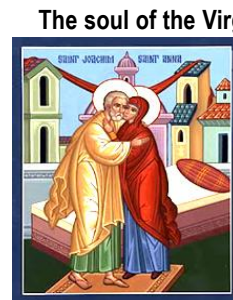


suffered for Christ under the emperor Diocletian (284-305) at Sebaste, in Armenia. Among the first Christians imprisoned and undergoing torture at that time was Saint Auxentius, a presbyter of the Arabian Church. One of those who witnessed the steadfastness of the Christians was the noble military commander 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...")

General Announcements

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.

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.

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 *Tuesday, December 30, 2025 @ 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 28.*



DECEMBER FOOD DRIVE — In our compassion for the area's less fortunate, we are collecting non-perishable items for the annual food drive to be delivered to the *Interfaith-Church Food Drive*, in time for Christmas. Please bring non-expired items to the Church and place them at the entrance. Julia & George Mosko will be delivering these items to the food bank in time for Christmas. For additional information contact Julia or George (412) 771-4244. Thank you to all who participated in our November Thanksgiving Drive.

2026 CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES & CALENDARS STILL BEING WORKED ON— Your *2026 Contribution Envelopes* will be ready for pickup very shortly. *We wish to thank the Valerian F. Szal Funeral Home and Thomas P. Kunsak Funeral Home* for sponsoring our calendars once again this year

