

Parish Offerings – 26th Sunday after Pentecost — December 7, 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 (\$2,921) YP (\$7)	\$2,928.00
Holy Days (\$369) YP (\$16) Christmas Décor (55.) (\$20) Christmas (\$10)	720.00
Special Donation (anonymous)	4,000.00
Votive Candles (\$177) Thanksgiving (\$50)	227.00
	\$7,875.00

Holy Ghost Church, North Side

Regular Offering (\$557.) YP (\$2)	\$559.00
Holy Days (\$35) Thanksgiving (\$2) Christmas Décor (\$55)	92.00
Special Donation (In mem of Tovcimak & Kost Fam by Shirley A. Marks)	70.00
Votive Candles (\$73) Improvements (\$35)	108.00
	\$829.00

Church Attendance Last Week

(MR) Sat., 4:00 p.m. (31); Sun., (MR) 9:00 a.m. (79); (NS) 11:00 a.m. (40)
Dec 8 – Immaculate Conception Feast Day — (MR) 9:00 am (2); (NS) 6:00 am (11)





Valerian F. Szal
238 Helen St.,
Phone: (412) 331-9713
Michael P. Ferrell,
Supervisor, CFSP

Our Family Still Serving Yours Since 1953



Christmas is coming...Ho ho ho



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

SUNDAY OF O.T. FOREFATHERS

5th Sunday of Philippians Fast — December 14, 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).

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 14, 2025



Volume XV, Number 51

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
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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

Mon, Dec 15 (31) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Florence Kraly (16th ann of passing 12/16) Zula Family

Tue, Dec 16 (32) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Helen Perschy (23rd ann of passing) Son: Kurt

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 17 (33) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Teofil Dlugoc Zuzanna Revilak

Thrs, Dec 18 (34) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Lorraine "Bunny" Zavidny Charochak Family

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

Fri, Dec 19 (35) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Emory Holowatch Anne Meyers

Prefestive of the Nativity of Our Lord

Sat, Dec 20 (36) 9:00 a.m. (NS) For the Parishioners of Both Parishes

Anticipated Divine Liturgy for the Sunday of the Old Testament Holy Fathers

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

Sunday of the Old Testament Holy Fathers

6th Sunday of the Philippian Fast — Cathedral Pilgrimage

SUN, Dec 21 (37) 9:00 a.m. (MR) + Christine Michalism Husband: Wallace & Family
(4th ann of pass 12/23)

11:00 a.m. (NS) + Alice H. Smoley Dgtr: Mary Ann
(birthday 12/23)

1:00 p.m. Depart for Jubilee of Hope Pilgrimage to Cathedral for Special Indulgence

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 14 – Steve Puluka, Roberta Rubish; Dec 15 – Larisa (Bodnarchuk) Pfeuffer;
Dec 18 – Diane Kosko, Lauren Kovacs; Dec 19 – Seminarian David Varga.

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. I am a Protestant overwhelmed by the guilt of sin. Is it permissible for me to confess my sins to a priest? I think that I would stay more focused on staying closer to the Lord if I were accountable to a mature Christian. A. Catholic Answers Apologist: Catholics do not primarily go to confession to stay focused, though the sacrament can help in this way. We go to confession because we believe that our sins are absolutely forgiven by Christ's absolution given through the ministry of the priest. When Jesus breathed on his apostles and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained" (John 20:22-24), we believe that he literally meant that. If you believe this also, then perhaps you need to be a Catholic. To believe that a Catholic priest has the power to forgive sin when one's own minister does not suggests that one is acknowledging some faith in the Catholic Church. Maybe you are closer to becoming one than you think. As it stands, one must hold the teachings of the Catholic Church to partake of its sacraments.

This Week's Sanctuary Lamps

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

December 14 — December 20, 2025

(MR): **In memory of Sandra Rosko**

offered by Anonymous

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

(MR) Some available for 2026

offered by Dgtr: Joan

(NS) Few available for 2026

General Announcements

FINAL WEEK OF THE PIROHI PROJECT — *This Friday will be the final week our Pirohi Project for 2025. Remember, all orders must be placed on 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!*



THE LAST WEEK FOR DECEMBER FOOD DRIVE FOR BOTH PARISHES — Thank you to all that have participated in this month's 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 non-expired items to the Church and place them at the entrance. The following note was received from ICFB: *"Dear Holy Ghost MR & NS: Words cannot express how grateful we are for your recent donation to the Interchurch Food Drive. Your donations helped us supplement and meet the needs in our community. God Bless"* — Donna Pollard. Also, we are most grateful to Juia & George Mosko (pictured in photo) for overseeing this annual project.



SAINT NICHOLAS CELEBRATION BRINGS JOY TO OUR ECF COMMUNITY — This year's annual ECF



Saint Nicholas Celebration was a beautiful gathering of faith, fellowship, and festive spirit within our parishes. Our GCU generously provided food and children's gift bags. Parishioners contributed delicious side dishes and desserts. The ECF students sang traditional & seasonal songs, the Youth Group read stories of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker, and there was a visit by St. Nicholas! We are grateful for everyone who contributed to this wonderful celebration

(NS) REBORN OF WATER AND SPIRIT — *Luka Paul Pfeuffer* was Reborn of Water and Spirit and became a full member of the Church through the Holy Mysteries of Initiation: Baptism, Chrismation and First Eucharist on Sunday, November 16, 2025. He was born on June 17, 2025. His parents are Thomas and Larisa (Bodnarchuk) Pfeuffer: residing in McKees Rocks. Sponsors were the infant's Grandparents: Leslie and Paul Bodnarchuk. The Patron Saint assigned to Luka is the Holy Apostle Paul (Feast Day is June 29). May God to Luka Paul, Peace, Health & Salvation for many happy and blessed years! *Na Mnohaja I Blahaja L'ita!*



(NS) CONDOLENCES EXTENDED — The Spirit Of Truth (S.O.T.) announces the passing of Irene D. Jugan, 89, at a personal care facility, Erie, under the care of her daughter, Carol Jugan on

Wednesday, November 26, 2025. The Thomas P. Kunsak Funeral Home on California Avenue handled the arrangements. The Funeral Divine Liturgy was offered on Wed., December 3rd. Interment was at Christ Our Redeemer Cemetery, Pittsburgh next to her beloved husband, Milan. Our parish extends its most sincere sympathies to the Jugan & Rush Families. In blessed repose, grant O Lord eternal rest to your servant Irene, and remember her forever! *Vičnaja Jej Pamjat'*



GIFT CARD NOT CLAIMED — The \$100.00 Eatn' Park Gift Card was not claimed last week. A second drawing winner was the Valeriano's from the North Side Parish. Congratulations!

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



Parable of the Great Banquet

Luke 14:16-24

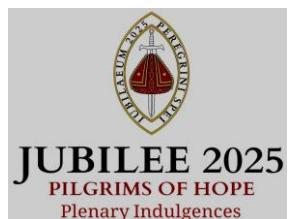
Sundays before the feast of our Lord's Nativity. In it we are reminded of the great care with which God prepared the way of His coming. All of the Law and the Prophets look forward to this moment, the moment when the God/man Jesus Christ comes into the world. The whole world was prepared by them for 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!

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: Conditions for obtaining this gift (Part II)

The Jubilee is a reminder of God's mercy and the call to live out the gospel more fully. This is Catholic Answers Jubilee Year quick guide on how to obtain this plenary indulgence during the Jubilee Year by fulfilling specific spiritual acts. These are: (1) Making a pilgrimage to a designated site; (2) Participating in Confession; (3) Receiving the Eucharist; (4) Praying for the pope's intentions, and (5) Being detached from all sin, even venial sin. Attachment to sin is when we do not detest a sin. We avoid the sin because we know it to be wrong or because we want to avoid punishment for the sin but we still have an attraction or desire of the sin (Matt. 26:41). In the secular world it is akin to wanting to do something but only avoiding it because it is against the law or has a severe penalty. As disciples of Christ are called not to just avoid sin but also to genuinely love what is good and pleasing to God and to detest what is evil and sinful. This is not easy due to Original Sin but with grace it is possible.



JUBILEE 2025
PILGRIMS OF HOPE
Plenary Indulgences

Calendar of Upcoming Events

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.

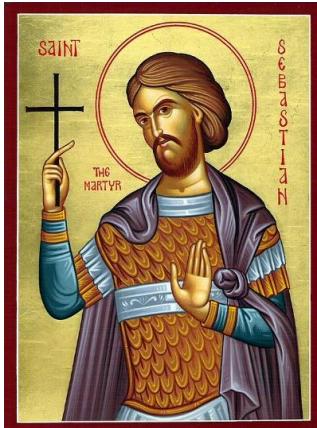
8:00 p.m. (MR) Great Compline followed by Christmas Carols; 9:00 p.m. Christmas Divine Liturgy.
December 25 .9:00 a.m. (MR) Christmas Divine Liturgy; 11:00 a.m. (NS) Christmas Divine Liturgy.

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 18

The Holy Martyr Sebastian and His Companions

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.

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 Forefathers. 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.*

An icon depicting the Forefathers of Christ. It shows a group of saints, including Adam, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and others, gathered around a central figure, likely the Theotokos or a prophet. The icon is set against a gold background.

TODAY'S THE 5TH SUNDAY OF THE PHILIPPIAN FAST — Continuing our journey into this minor penitential period we are 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.**

2026 CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES & CALENDARS STILL BEING WORKED ON — Your **2026 Contribution Envelopes** continue to be worked on 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



Come O Jesus Our Savior, Redeem and Save Us!