

Parish Offerings – Sunday of St. John Climacus — March 15, 2026

“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 (\$1,567) YP (\$4)	\$1,571.00
Holy Days (\$10) Eastern Europe Collection (\$50) Initial (\$130)	190.00
Votive Candles (\$126.50) Easter Décor (\$357)	483.50
	\$2,244.50

Holy Ghost Church, North Side

Regular Offering (\$660) YP (\$3)	\$663.00
Holy Days (\$30) Eastern Europe Collection (\$20) Utilities (\$20)	70.00
Votive Candles (\$137) Improvements (\$65) Easter Décor (\$110) ...	312.00

Church Attendance Last Week \$1,045.00

Sat (MR), 4:00 pm (27);

Sun., (MR) 9:00 am (64); (NS) 11:00 am (31)

3rd Great Fast Wed. — (MR) 7:00 pm (14); 3rd Great Fast Fri. — (NS) 6:00 pm (8)

4th Sunday of 5 Deanery Penitential Vespers – (Braddock) 4:00 pm (86)

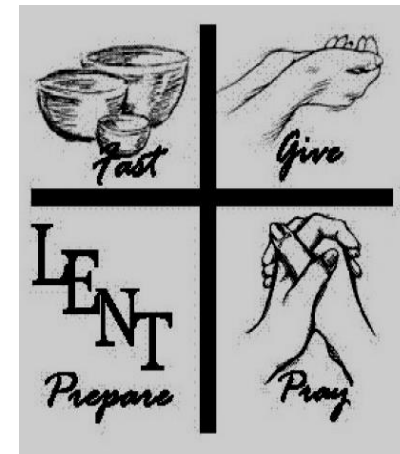


HOLY GHOST BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

225 OLIVIA STREET
1437 SUPERIOR AVENUE

McKEES ROCKS, PA 15136
PITTSBURGH, PA 15212

THE 5th SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST
St. Mary of Egypt Sunday — March 22, 2026



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

Website: www.holyghost-byzantinecatholic.org – E-Mail: ffaf334@verizon.net

SUNDAY RADIO (9:00 am WEDO 810 AM) & INTERNET DIVINE LITURGY

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!



In Memory

+ Anna + Michael Sejka
+ Helen + Anna May Sejka
By the Selka Family



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

THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH

March 22, 2026

Seasonal Christian Greeting: Volume XIV, Number 12

Glory to Jesus Christ! — Glory Forever!

Slava Isusu Christ! — Slava an Viki!



Liturgical Services for the Week

Date Time Intention Requested By

ST. MARY OF EGYPT SUNDAY

5th Sunday of The Great Fast — St. Basil Divine Liturgy

SUN., Mar 22 (35) 9:00 a.m. (MR) For the Parishioners of Both Parishes

11:00 a.m. (NS) + Michael Spontak (60th ann of passing 3/16) Grandson: Robert

4:00 p.m. Deanery Penitential Vespers at St. Pius X Church, Pittsburgh preceded by the Holy Mystery of Reconciliation by a Deanery Priest @ 3:30 p.m.

Mon, Mar 23 (36) 8:00 a.m. (MR) Health & Welfare of Jacob Gasser Gasser & Kendrach

Tue, Mar 24 (37) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Mildred "Mimi" Terrek Nancy & Michael Ferrell

FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION

Solemn Holy Day — Mirovanlje REQUIRED SIMPLE ABSTINENCE (no meat)

Wed, Mar 25 (38) 9:00 a.m. (MR) For The Parishioners of Both Parishes

6:00 p.m. (NS) + Ann Onesi Onesi & Stevens Families
(7th ann of passing)



Synaxis of the Archangel Gabriel

Thrs, Mar 26 (39) 8:00 a.m. (MR) + Julie Kutchmark Mel Weinstein

FINAL DAY OF THE HOLY & GREAT 40 DAYS FAST — REQUIRED SIMPLE ABSTINENCE (no meat)

Fri. Mar 27 (40) 8:00 a.m. (MR) 6th & 9th Penitential Greatfast Hours

6:00 p.m. (NS) Presanctified Divine Liturgy



LAZARUS SATURDAY

We now walk vicariously with Our Lord throughout the next 8 days

Sat, Mar 28 9:00 a.m. (MR) + Diane + William Bell Dgtr: Kim Zoldos & Family

Sunday anticipated St. John Chrysostom Divine Liturgy of the Royal Entry Into Jerusalem — Palm (Flowery) Sunday

*3:45 p.m. (MR) + Paul Robert Charochak Wife: + Florence
(52nd ann of passing 3/26)

ROYAL ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM

Palm (Flowery) Sunday — St. John Chrysostom Divine Liturgy

SUN., Mar 29 *8:45 a.m. (MR) For the Parishioners of Both Parishes

*10:45 a.m. (NS) + Anna Shirley Kalnas Family
(2nd ann of passing 3/13)

*2:00 p.m. (MR) Passion Week Vespers followed by Confessions

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

Mar 22 – Margaret Beliunas, Nicholas Rippole; **Mar 24** – Richard Billy, Ryan Zoldos;

Mar 25 – Wallace Michalisk; **Mar 26** – James Gunkel, AIMEE HELMS; **Mar 28** – LEAH TRAPL

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

HOME: Ted Babin, Margaret Beliunas, Dolores & William Boras, Susan Fejka, Ilona Goyda, TAMARA HARDING, Michael Kachuta, Steve Kosko, Theresa Kundrat, ARLENE LATTA, KIRK LATTA, Monica Lemesh, BETTY LORINC, DEACON MICHAEL & CINDY MEADERS, John W. Oslick, Kurt Perschy, Cindy Saber, 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.

CEDAR HILL REHAB CENTER (951 Broadhead Rd., Coraopolis, 15108): Nancy Wauthier

HIGHLAND HILLS POST ACUTE (1105 Perry Highway, Pittsburgh, PA 15237): Bernice Herrick.

FRIENDSHIP VILLAGE SOUTH HILLS (1290 Boyce Rd., Upper St. Clair, 15241): Bea Stempkowski.

Public questions on Catholic spirituality, moral & spiritual problems

Q. I've been forgiven in confession of certain sins but find myself dwelling on them. Should I confess them again? **A. Answer by Catholic Apologist:** If you feel compelled to confess these absolved sins anew because you experience renewed feelings of guilt, we encourage you not to. Through the ministry of his priest, God has indeed absolved you of these past sins. However, absolution doesn't necessarily mean you will automatically be freed from all of the pain and guilt associated with those sins. When that pain and guilt resurfaces again, simply pray to God that you renew your sorrow for these sins, thank him for his forgiveness, and ask his continued help in your moving forward in the right direction. And persist in thanking God for his absolution when bad memories resurface. Again, the reality of God's forgiveness of our sins is not necessarily accompanied by an automatic and permanent feeling of peace. But with the help of God, his priests and related sacramental graces, and the help of others, you will in time more deeply experience his peace (see John 14:27).

This Week's Sanctuary Lamps

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

March 22 — March 28, 2026

(MR): **In memory of Chirko & Charochak Families**

offered by + Florence Charochak

(NS): **In memory of Louise Georgevich** (1st ann of passing 2/27)

(MR) FEW AVAILABLE FOR 2026

offered by Anonymous

(NS) FEW AVAILABLE 2026



General Announcements

McKees Rocks & North Side

(MR) SYMPATHY EXTENDED — The *Spirit of Truth* announces the passing of McKees Rocks Parishioner, **Florence Charochak, 99**, formally of Coraopolis Road at the Concordia of Bridgeville Memory Care, Bridgeville, PA on Tuesday, March 10, 2026. Parishioner and niece, Leyte Tomchak, and Dale Charochak assisted her as her health declined in her later years of which she is eternally grateful. Flo was a long-time pincher at the Church's Pirohi Project. Funeral arrangements were handled by the Valerian F. Szal Funeral Home, McKees Rocks. A Funeral Divine Liturgy was celebrated on Friday, March 20, 2026. Interment followed at St. Mary Cemetery, McKees



Rocks next to her husband Bob and two daughters, Diane & Debra. In blessed repose, grant O Lord, *eternal* rest to your servant, Florence "Flo", and remember her forever! Vičnaja Jej Pamjat'!

(MR) PIROHI PROJECT FINAL WEEK — Our Pirohi Project continues orders/ sales for this final week **Mar. 27 (no sales on Great Friday)**. On this busy day 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 can place advertising posters, please take a few by the Church entrances. It will be greatly appreciated!**



(MR) BYZAN-TEEN CANDY SALES CONTINUE — Our Byzan-TEEN Youth Group is continuing its fund-raising event to prepare for the 2026 Youth Rally in Cleveland. Sarris Candy bars are available following the weekend Divine Liturgies this week for **\$2.00 (Carmel - \$3.00)**. Also, you may purchase candy from their website: www.sarriscandies.com and click on the **Fundraising tab. Type in the Group ID # 10-3617. The Organization name is Holy Ghost Youth Group.** A packaging fee will be applied. Let's assist them by purchasing candy bars! Last day is today, March 22.



(MR) & (NS) PUSSY WILLOWS CONTINUE TO BE NEEDED FOR PALM SUNDAY — We are in need additional Pussy Willows for our Palm (Flowery) Hopefully they will be ready to be harvested. We could always use additional single branches app. 12" in length. If you can help us out, please phone the MR Church Office. **Please do not purchase them.** They are expensive and usually are not nice looking as wild branches grow to be.



FIFTH SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST

FINAL SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST: Centering our lives on Jesus

For the third time, Jesus spoke of his passion and death (see also Mark 8:31-33; 9:30-32). His cross was to be the climax of his earthly mission. The Lord was clearly trying to impress upon his closest disciples that this would indeed occur. He was teaching them the doctrine of the cross. Certainly, John and James had heard all that Jesus said about his mission for they were among his closest disciples, the only ones privileged—along with Peter—to witness his transfiguration (see Mark 9:2-13). Despite all they had seen and heard, they asked Jesus to promise that they would sit at his side in places of honor when he came into his kingdom (Mark 10:37). They knew what Jesus was about, yet they still asked this question. What was going on in their minds at that moment that could make them disregard all they had learned? We often are like James and John when it comes to the things of God. Like these two sons of Zebedee, we have heard and seen much: we have heard the gospel proclaimed; we have pondered God's word in scripture; we understand the nature of our Lord's mission. Our minds can be so entrenched in the ways of this world, however, that what we've seen and heard drifts out of our minds when we must make decisions. The influence of the world is constantly pressing us, relentless in forcing upon us ways and standards which are opposed to what Christ taught. Each day we must center our lives on the truths we have learned in Christ so that they, not the world, can guide our lives. The author of the letter to the Hebrews warned: "We must pay the closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it" (Hebrews 2:1).



St. Mary of Egypt Commemorated Today

St. Mary is commemorated on the Fifth Sunday of The Great Fast. Her feast is on April 1. The Church holds her up as an example to the faithful during these fast days as an incentive for repentance. She died about the year 530 A.D. The biography of this wonderful saint was written by St. Sophron us, the Patriarch of Jerusalem. After living an immoral life, she was converted to the faith in Jerusalem. Having venerated the Cross, she entered the vestibule and, before the icon, gave thanks to the Mother of God. At that very moment she heard a voice saying: "If you cross over Jordan you will find real peace!" Immediately she purchased three loaves of bread and started out for the Jordan where she arrived that same evening. The next day she received Holy Communion in the Monastery of St. John and crossed over the Jordan River. She remained in the wilderness for forty-eight years in great torment, fear and struggle with passionate thoughts as though with wild beasts. She received Holy Communion for the final time from a priest-monk named Zosimus. After her death, Zosimus buried the body of this wonderful saint. When he returned to the monastery Zosimus related the entire history of her life and the miracles which he had personally witnessed. Thus, the Lord knows how to glorify penitent sinners. God doesn't reject anyone who comes to Him with a humble and contrite heart!!!



Calendar of Upcoming Events

March 21... Akathistos Saturday imploring aid of the Theotokos in our ascetical practices (MR) 9:00 a.m.
 March 25 Feast of the Annunciation — (MR) 9:00 a.m. & (NS) 6:00 p.m.
 March 27..... **The Final Day of The Holy & Great 40 Days Fast & Final Day of Pirohi Sales.**
**Final Lenten FRIDAY:** (MR) 8:00 a.m. 6th & 9th Penitential Greatfast Hours.
 (NS) Presanctified Divine Liturgy @ 6:00 p.m.
 March 28 Lazarus Saturday (MR) 9:00 a.m.
 March 29 Palm (Flowery) Sunday — All weekend Divine Liturgies
 commence 15 minutes earlier for Solemn Blessing of Palms & Pussy Willows.
 ... Passion Vespers inaugurating Holy Week @ 2:00 p.m. followed by Confessions.

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE (March 30 through April 4)

Great & Holy Monday (MR) Bridegroom Matins @ 8:00 a.m. & (MR) Presanctified Divine Liturgy @ 7:00 p.m.
 Great & Holy Tuesday (MR) Bridegroom Matins @ 8:00 a.m. & (NS) Presanctified Divine Liturgy @ 6:00 p.m.
 (NS) Confessions @ 6:30 a.m.
 Great & Holy Wednesday (MR) Bridegroom Matins @ 8:00 a.m. & (MR) Presanctified Divine Liturgy @ 7:00 p.m.
Great & Holy Thursday ... (MR) Betrayal Matins @ 8:00 a.m. & (MR) Vespers & St. Basil Divine Liturgy @ 7:00 p.m.
Great & Holy Friday . (MR) Passion Matins w/12 Passion Gospels @ 8:00 a.m. — (MR) Royal Hours @ 12:00 noon

**(MR) CHURCH WILL REMAIN OPEN FROM 12:00 NOON UNTIL 3:00 pm
 FOR PRIVATE DEVOTION**

(NS) Entombment Vespers w/Procession @ 5:00 p.m. & (MR) Entombment Vespers w/Procession @ 7:00 p.m.

ALL NIGHT VIGIL BEFORE THE TOMB (Please Signup)

Great & Holy Saturday (MR) Sepulcher (Jerusalem) Matins w/Procession @ 8:00 a.m. — (MR)
 Great Vespers w/St. Basil Vigil Divine Liturgy @ 2:00 p.m.

Great & Holy Sat. Evening (NS) Resurrectional Matins & Solemn Blessing of Paschal
 Foods @ 5:45 p.m. — (MR) Resurrectional Matins & Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
 followed by Solemn Blessing of Paschal Foods @ 7:45 p.m.

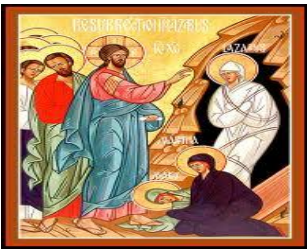
APRIL 5 – EASTER SUNDAY — THE RADIANT RESURRECTION — THE GREAT DAY

(MR) 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom followed by Solemn Blessing of
 Paschal Foods — (NS) 11:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom followed by
 Solemn Blessing of Paschal Foods.

Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary: Wednesdays during the Lenten Season (MR) @ 6:30 p.m.
Join us in this Byzantine-Ruthenian Tradition to the Theotokos!
PRESANCTIFIED DIVINE LITURGIES this week — (NS) Friday @ 6:00 p.m.

SPECIAL LITURGICAL SERVICES THIS WEEK

LAZARUS SATURDAY BEGINS THE LAST EIGHT DAYS — This Palm Friday, March 27
 terminates the *Penitential Season of the Holy & Great 40 Days Fast*. It was given to us “to bring profit to our souls.” It, however, DOES NOT mean that we terminate our Lenten abstinence efforts! It encourages us to continue the practice for an additional eight days. Beginning with *Lazarus Saturday* the Church points out that we now are given the privilege and opportunity to walk *vicariously* with the Lord. This happens by participating in each of the daily liturgical services offered until Resurrection Sunday. Please use this extraordinary time to be



with Our Lord in as many (if not all) upcoming Church services.

General Announcements

FINAL SUNDAY: SCHEDULE OF THE DEANERY PENITENTIAL VESPERS — *The Great*



Fast Deanery Vespers have been 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 5th and Final church is hosting this liturgical event: This afternoon's location, **March 22 – Saint Pius X,**

Pittsburgh, PA. This is a great opportunity to exercise a 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.

VIGIL TOMB WATCH SIGNUP SHEET NOW READY — It has always been a long-standing custom that following the Entombment Vespers on Holy & Great Friday, the Church remains

open up to the Resurrectional Matins Holy Saturday evening to venerate the Most Pure Body of Our Savior in the Tomb. In today's environs, we must be very careful that the Church is protected from vandalism. The McKees Rocks Parish will attempt to carry on this beautiful and solemn practice IF we can get enough of people to keep vigil before the Tomb, especially throughout the night. A special poster will soon be available for signatures.



This vigil is open and encourages both Parishes to participate. If you select a time slot, and someone else has signed, you may also sign in the same slot. It would be nice if a few individuals and/or families would share the same slots for safety reasons. If there aren't enough to register throughout the night, the Church will discontinue this tradition. So, please sign early so that we may know if this activity will become a true reality.

MEN NEEDED TO HOLD CANDLES DURING PASSION GOSPELS — On Holy & Great Friday morning during the Passion Matins w/reading of the Twelve Gospels, the tradition of



the Church always had 12 men holding candles as the Passion of the Lord Jesus was being proclaimed. We sure would like to keep this meaningful and sacred custom alive. It is open to all men of both parishes to participate. **Please register your name on the special sheet in the MR side vestibule or phone the Church Office.** Let us honor Our Lord for all that He endured for our salvation and redemption. This

demonstrates the love for Our Lord Who suffered the Passion & gave His Life for us!

PALM (FLOWERY) SUNDAY DIVINE LITURGIES BEGIN EARLIER — Palms and Willows

will be solemnly blessed prior to next weekend's Divine Liturgy with palms being distributed at the beginning in order to be held in worship. All services will begin 15 minutes earlier. Please reverently discard last year's palms and willows, by burying or burning them and disposing the ashes where they will not be walked on. If you live in an apartment or an area that you will have difficulty disposing of them, please bring them to the church and place them in the brown paper bag located by the holy water container. The church will see that they are properly disposed for you.