

## Mission Statement

Saints Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Parish is a member of the Byzantine Catholic Metropolitan Church of Pittsburgh who through the Holy Spirit is called to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As a community and family, we grow in faith and in the image and likeness of God by dedicating ourselves to welcoming, celebrating and caring for all of God's people.

**Mysteries of Initiation (Baptism, Chrismation & Eucharist):** Must be a registered, active, supporting member of the Parish Family. Pre-Baptism instructions are required. Contact Fr. Simeon to schedule.

**Mystery of Crowning:** Must be a registered, active, supporting member of the Parish Family. Must meet with Fr. Simeon before setting date and reserving your banquet hall. Pre-Cana program is required and three sessions with Fr. Simeon. The ceremony will be celebrated according to the prescription of the liturgical book of the Byzantine rite.

**Mystery of Reconciliation:** Celebrated Saturdays, 4:00 PM - 4:30 PM and upon request.

**Mystery of Anointing:** Celebrated upon request. Ideally celebrated in Church the Sunday before undergoing any surgical or other medical procedure.

**Visitation of the Sick:** The parishioners confined to their homes or nursing homes due to health reasons are visited monthly. Also, persons who are hospitalized are visited when Fr. Simeon is notified. It especially is important that a family member contact Fr. Simeon whenever a loved one is hospitalized.

**Funerals:** Families of the deceased or the funeral director must contact Fr. Simeon before setting and publishing the day and time of the funeral.

**Parish Membership:** We welcome anyone to become a parishioner of Saints Peter and Paul Parish. Only those who are registered are considered members of the Parish. When one registers to become a Parish Member, they assume the responsibility of rendering stewardship of time, talent and treasure to this Parish Family. Worship at this Parish is always expected. Registration is done only through the Pastor by appointment. The Parish Office should be notified as soon as possible of any change of address within the Parish as well as one's leaving.

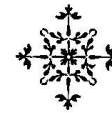
**Godparent/Sponsor Letters:** Must be a registered, active, supporting member of the Parish.

**Rectory Office Hours:** Sister Barbara and Lisa Mosko are in the Parish office from 11:30 AM – 2:30 PM on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Father Simeon is available on other days and times by appointment.

## GREETINGS FROM FATHER SIMEON

***CHRIST IS BORN!*** I would like to wish you and your loved ones a very blessed Christmas season and a happy, healthy New Year! Be assured that you will be remembered at my Divine Liturgies during this holy season. I am grateful that many of you have returned to celebrate the Divine Liturgies in church during this pandemic. I am very grateful for the many prayers and good wishes from all of you.

## ETERNAL MEMORY



Grant, O Lord, eternal rest to the soul of Your servant +**Steve Zombar** who has recently fallen asleep in the Lord. Please remember him and his family in your prayers.

## THE LAZORS THANK YOU

We would like to thank all of you for the Liturgies, all the prayers, and get well cards. That is what has gotten us through the surgery and recovery! Each and every day I am getting stronger and hope to be back to lead you through the Liturgy soon!

Greg and Cathie Lazor

## JUST A REMINDER

With Covid-19 still on the scene, please do not congregate or visit in the Social Hall before and after the Divine Liturgies. Thank you for your cooperation!

## CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES AND CALENDARS

**The 2021 Church Calendars and Contribution Envelopes are ready for pick-up in the Social Hall.** *If there is any name or address correction, if you are unable to locate your envelopes, or if you wish a set of envelopes, please call the office, or drop a note in the collection basket. **This year all envelope numbers were reassigned due to the number of deaths and relocation of former parishioners. Please discard your old envelopes at the end of 2020.** If you want proper credit for your contributions, you must use the envelopes you were assigned for the year 2021.*

*Our Parish family would like to thank the **Peter Rossi & Son Memorial Chapel** for their generosity in providing our calendars this year. God bless them for their kindness and generosity!*



## Divine Liturgy Attendance weekend of December 12:

5:00 PM: 39; 9:00 AM: 47; 11:00 AM: 46

**Our return to the Lord for all He has given us: . . . . . \$3,724.31**



- **Sun. Dec. 20** ECF Classes meet promptly at 10 AM. Try to come a few minutes early so that we can get the temperatures taken in the Social Hall. Parents are asked to remain until after temperatures are taken. Parents may wait for their children in the Social Hall, but they are asked to practice social distancing and to wear a mask.
- **Mon. Dec. 21** Church Cleaning Party 9:00 AM – Noon. We could use your help.
- **Thurs. Dec. 24** A day of strict fast and abstinence – No meat or dairy products.
- **Fast Free Time** Christmas Day through January 4, 2021.



### CHURCH DECORATING ... for the Nativity of Our Lord

We will be decorating our Church for the Feast of the Nativity of Christ on *Sunday, December 20<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 PM*. Please come and join us in preparing your Church for Christmas.

### MYSTERY OF DIVINE FORGIVENESS AND RECONCILIATION

We cannot appreciate the gift of “God with us” unless we are receptive. Let us make every effort to prepare ourselves for the coming of Christ by coming before Him and asking forgiveness of our sins . . .

**Tuesday: December 22: 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM**

## SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES FOR THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

December 24 – 6:00 PM, *Compline with Divine Liturgy*

December 25 – 9:00 AM, *Divine Liturgy*

December 25 – 11:00 AM, *Divine Liturgy*

## DECEMBER 20, 2020 SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

Sunday	20 Dec.	<i>SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS, OF THE ANCESTORS. Prefestive Day of Christmas. The Holy Martyr Ignatius the God-bearer.</i>
<b>(Vigil Liturgy)</b>	<b>5:00 PM 9:00 AM 11:00 AM</b>	<b>+Donald Terbovich – John &amp; Dianna Koza Prayer Intention of Rosary Society Members +Jim &amp; Kathy Adams – Jim &amp; Mary Elko</b>
Monday	21 Dec.	<i>Prefestive Day of Christmas. The Holy Martyr Juliana of Nicomedia.</i>
		<b>No Divine Liturgy</b>
Tuesday	22 Dec.	<i>Prefestive Day of Christmas. The Holy Great Martyr Anastasia.</i>
<b>(SPP)</b>	<b>8:30 AM</b>	<b>Health of Dr. Altawil – Mike &amp; Sue Johnson</b>
Wednesday	23 Dec.	<i>Prefestive Day of Christmas. The Holy Ten Martyrs of Crete. Commemoration of the Dedication of the Great Church of Holy Wisdom in Constantinople.</i>
<b>(SPP)</b>	<b>8:30 AM</b>	<b>Health of Virginia Pipa – Betty Blake</b>
Thursday	24 Dec.	<i>Vigil of Christmas. The Holy Great Martyr Eugenia.</i>
		<b>(Compline &amp; Divine Liturgy)</b>
	<b>6:00 PM</b>	<b>Intention of Parish Family</b>
Friday	25 Dec.	<i>CHRISTMAS, THE BIRTH OF OUR LORD, GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST. (Page 289)</i>
		<b>9:00 AM Intention of Parish Family</b>
	<b>11:00 AM</b>	<b>Intention of Parish Family</b>
Saturday	26 Dec.	<i>SYNAXIS OF THE THEOTOKOS. Saturday after Christmas. The Holy Martyr Euthymius, Bishop of Sardis.</i>
<b>(Vigil Liturgy)</b>	<b>5:00 PM</b>	<b>+Albert &amp; +Alice Koza – John &amp; Dianna Koza</b>
Sunday	27 Dec.	<i>SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS. MEMORY OF THE HOLY JOSEPH, HUSBAND OF MARY; OF DAVID, PROPHET AND KING; AND OF THE HOLY APOSTLE JAMES, BROTHER OF THE LORD. THE HOLY APOSTLE, FIRST MARTYR AND ARCHDEACON STEPHEN.</i>
		<b>9:00 AM Health of Ken Ferrance – Marjorie, Paul &amp; Cheryl</b>
	<b>11:00 AM</b>	<b>+Gail Byers – Wiley Byers</b>



## Attentive to the Word

### SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS – OF THE ANCESTORS

*Matthew 1: 1 – 25*

**Tone 4 Pg. 141 and the rest from  
Pgs. 285 – 287**

Most of us find seeing our family's genealogy or hearing stories about the people we grew up with as enjoyable as resurrecting the old Christmas decorations from the attic each year. We like to be reassured of who we are and where we came from. It gives us a sense of identity and of belonging to a particular community.

The opening lines of Matthew's Gospel should have a similar, although more profound, effect on us – if we don't get hung up on all those unfamiliar Hebrew names. Matthew's genealogy, his "family record of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham" is intended to illustrate for us in great detail how God guided salvation history from the call of Abraham the patriarch down through the generations to the birth of Jesus, the Messiah.

These men and women, Jews and Gentiles alike, are our spiritual ancestors. They are part of who we are and where we came from as believers. David, a ruddy-cheeked shepherd as deft with a slingshot as he was adept at the harp, chosen by God to rule Israel in its golden age of prosperity. Ruth, model of loyal friendship to Naomi and faithfulness to Yahweh, whom she chose to be her God. Joseph, husband of Mary and hero of Christians who are called on to discern God's will in difficult and unusual circumstances. And Mary herself, from whom we have so much to learn about hearing the word of God and heeding it.

As Advent runs its gentle course toward Christmas, let's spend a little time with our ancestors by rereading a few of their stories in Scripture. They can help us to know and appreciate who we are as a people who belong to one another and to our Church.

#### THE TROPARION AND KONTAKION OF CHRISTMAS

No holy day has so many hymns and songs celebrating the glories of the birth of the Son of God than does Christmas. This is true both of the liturgical hymns and of popular songs known as Christmas carols. In the Byzantine Church the festal anthems are "Your birth, O Christ Our God" (troparion) and "The Virgin Today" (kontakion). They

convey to us the theme and the spirit of the Christmas celebration in the Byzantine tradition.

The troparion "Your birth, O Christ Our God" is very ancient and we do not know its author. This troparion speaks only about the adoration of the Magi and not of the shepherds. The reason is that in the Byzantine tradition the adoration of the shepherds is celebrated on Christmas Eve while on Christmas day both the Gospel reading and the hymns concentrate on the Magi. Some see this as the tendency of Byzantine thought to emphasize the divinity of Christ. Actually, the reason is simply the concern to commemorate everything about Jesus' birth on Christmas day.

First the poet proclaims that the birth of Christ brought a new day and that the light characteristic of this day, which starts a new age, is the light of knowledge. It begins the period of human history when the darkness and ignorance about God is broken and the full daylight of the knowledge of the divine truth has dawned upon us. The troparion continues by saying that this new light of knowledge enabled the Magi, who until that time "worshipped the stars, to worship You, the Sun of righteousness and to know You the Dayspring from on high." The poet actually says that the Christmas star taught the Magi to worship this Sun of the new light. Just as the sun at its rising puts out all minor lights (i.e., stars), because its light is so overwhelming that the stars become invisible, so Jesus Christ shines above all other flickering lights. The new people of God live and move in the full daylight of truth about God since the sun of Righteousness began to shine and no power of darkness could overpower it or extinguish it. It will shine forever! The hymn ends with "O Lord, glory be to You." These are words of praise, glorification and of gratitude. God is with us! How fortunate we are!

The Kontakion "The Virgin Today" was written by the greatest and most famous of all Byzantine hymn writers, St. Roman the Melodist, sometime around 540 A.D. The poet uses the whole world for his stage: man and God, earth and heaven. Angels and shepherds, the Magi and the Star. All of this forms the background of the great and most wonderful event – the human birth of the Son of God for our sake: He who is always for us men becomes an infant, a child; becomes man. What a spectacle! The Virgin mother gives birth to Him who is beyond all existence and being and the earth comes offering a cave to Him who is beyond reach, who is unapproachable. Then there are the Angels who mix their praises with those of the shepherds. The Magi are journeying but guided by this strange star which leads them to Christ. All this cosmic orchestration glorifies the fact of the birth of the Son of God on earth.

*CHRIST IS BORN!*

*GLORIFY HIM!*