

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 Sts. 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 is in the Parish office from 10 AM – 2 PM Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Father Simeon is available on other days and times by appointment.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING . . .



We will be caroling for our Parishioners who are in Nursing homes or who are home-bound on **December 27**. We want them to know they are loved and missed. **We will meet at 12:45 PM in the Social Hall and hopefully leave at 1:00 PM.** We hope to be back by 4:00 PM. In this Year of Mercy, everyone is invited to join us in bringing joy to our Shut-ins.

CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES AND CALENDARS

The 2016 Church Calendars and Contribution Envelopes are ready for pick-up in the Social Hall. Please pick up your contribution envelopes 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 2015. If you want proper credit for your contributions, you must use the envelopes you were assigned for the year 2016.**

THE CHRISTMAS GREETING

It is certainly commendable to wish someone a "Merry Christmas." But how powerful a message is given by the traditional Byzantine Christmas greeting: "**Christ is Born!**" and the response: "**Glorify Him!**"



(PP) Divine Liturgy Attendance weekend of 13 December:

5:00 PM: **69**; 11:00 AM: **112**

Our return to the Lord for all He has given us: \$3,549.90

(SM) Divine Liturgy Attendance weekend of 13 December:

22 from St. Michael; **14** from St. Peter & Paul

Our return to the Lord for all He has given us: \$518.00



- **Sun. Dec. 20** ECF Religion Classes for our students – **9:30 to 10:45 AM.**
- **Sat. & Sun. Dec.19 & 20. St. Benedict Auxiliary Homemade Cookie Sale** after both Divine Liturgies, (just in time to help with your Christmas baking This is your golden opportunity to get delicious homemade cookies for Christmas. *Also, there will be a limited number of nut & other rolls for sale.*
- **Mon. Dec. 21 (PP) Church Decorating** – 9:00 AM. We can use your help. Many hands make light work. Come and join us!
- **(SM) Ladies** - Tentative dates for baking – Feb. 12 or 13 – Mark your calendars.

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 . . .

(PP) Confessions: 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM
Monday, Dec. 21 and Tuesday Dec. 22

(SM) Confessions: 7:45 AM Sunday, Dec. 20
There will be no confessions heard after Wednesday, December 23rd.

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES FOR THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY

(PP) December 24 – 6:00 PM, Compline with Divine Liturgy

(PP) December 24 – 10:00 PM, Divine Liturgy

(SM) December 25 – 9:00 AM, Divine Liturgy

(PP) December 25 – 11:00 AM, Divine Liturgy

NO FASTING FROM DECEMBER 25 THROUGH JANUARY 4

20 DECEMBER 2015

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

Sunday	20 December	<i>SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS, OF THE ANCESTORS. The Holy Martyr Ignatius the God-bearer.</i>
(Vigil Liturgy)	5:00 PM	+Anna Koza & +Dorothy Byers _ John & Dianna Koza
(SM)	8:30 AM	+Robert Banky – Marsha DiGirolamo
(PP)	11:00 AM	+Sister Mary John Semon – Benedictine Sisters
Monday	21 December	<i>Prefestive Day of Christmas. Holy Martyr Juliana of Nicomedia.</i>
		No Divine Liturgy
Tuesday	22 December	<i>Prefestive Day of Christmas. Holy Great Martyr Anastasia.</i>
(Chapel)	8:30 AM	+Kay Roscoe – Ralph & Janice Setting family
Wednesday	23 December	<i>Holy Ten Martyrs of Crete. Commemoration of the Dedication of the Great Church of Holy Wisdom in Constantinople.</i>
		No Divine Liturgy
Thursday	24 December	<i>Vigil of Christmas. Holy Great Martyr Eugenia.</i>
(PP)	6:00 PM	Intention of the Parish Family
(PP)	10:00 PM	Intention of the Parish Family
Friday	25 December	<i>CHRISTMAS, THE BIRTH OF OUR LORD, GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST.</i>
(SM)	9:00 AM	Intention of the Parish Family
(PP)	11:00 AM	Intention of the Parish Family
Saturday	26 December	<i>SYNAXIS OF THE THEOTOKOS. Saturday after Christmas. Holy Martyr Euthymius, Bishop of Sardis.</i>
(PP)	5:00 PM	+Sandra Bishop – Laureen & Sam Postlethwait family
Sunday	27 December	<i>SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS, MEMORY OF THE HOLY AND JUST JOSEPH, HUSBAND OF MARY; OF DAVID, PROPHET AND KING; AND OF THE HOLY APOSTLE JAMES, BROTHER OF THE LORD. HOLY APOSTLE, FIRST MARTYR AND ARCHDEACON STEPHEN. Venerable Father and Confessor Theodore.</i>
(SM)	8:30 AM	+Sally Johnson – St. Michael Altar/Rosary Society
(PP)	11:00 AM	+Mike Yurtin – Bob Karl



Attentive to the Word
Sunday Before the Nativity

Mt. 2:13 – 23

Troparion: Tone 5 p. 146

Rest of Propers: pp. 285 – 287 for Dec. 20

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. Think about how Rose on *The Golden Girls* is constantly coming up with anecdotes and moral lessons culled from the townsfolk back home in St. Olaf. Or consider how Garrison Keillor has delighted audiences with his stories about the good citizens of Lake Wobegon, Minnesota.

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 the Philip's Fast runs its gentle course toward the Nativity, let's spend a little time with our ancestors by rereading a few of their stories in Scripture. Like the folks back in St. Olaf and Lake Wobegone, they can help us to know and appreciate who we are as a people who belong to one another.

CHRIST IS BORN!

GLORIFY HIM!

THE INCARNATION OF OUR LORD

Christmas is one of the most joyful times of the year. Yet it is also a time when many people struggle with loneliness, isolation, and rejection. The very season that should bring a sense of belonging and sharing with family and friends can leave many feeling as though they are not a part of anything or anyone. This is certainly not what God intended when He sent His message of love to earth on that first Christmas.

That night, the shepherds who were watching over their flocks received word of good cheer, glad tidings, and eternal hope—the same message God has for us today. We might have expected that kings, princes, or men and women of great wealth and power would be the first to hear the divine birth announcement. But the heavenly Father chose instead to send it to the ones society often viewed as outcasts: shepherds, who could not always worship in Jerusalem due to the earthy nature of their work. These forgotten individuals may have wondered if their lives really counted for anything. And the answer was yes! God came to them as He does to us today.

"An angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them ... The angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord' ... Suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased'" (Luke 2:9-11).

Christmas is a time of communication—of telling others that you love and care for them. But also it is a time when God wants to communicate His personal love to you and me. In our Vigil and Christmas liturgical services, we take a deeper look into the amazing Gift: that was given on the first Christmas and how we can learn to worship Him with our entire lives.

GREETINGS FROM FATHER SIMEON

I would like to wish you and your loved ones a very blessed Christmas season. May the reality of Christ's birth be ever present throughout the New Year. Be assured that you and your intentions will be remembered at each Divine Liturgy I celebrate during this season. It is my prayer that you will know the love of Jesus this Christmas season. I am filled with gratitude for the many prayers and good wishes from all of you. Christ is Born!