

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.

ALTAR SERVER CLASS

Several of our young people have voiced a desire to assist our priest as altar servers. We will be scheduling an instruction class soon. The opportunity to become an altar server is open to all children who have made their First Reconciliation. It requires a commitment on the part of each child and parent for regular attendance at the Divine Liturgy and other Liturgical Services. There will be a "Sign-up Sheet" on the bulletin board in the Social Hall for those who wish to make that commitment.

DAY OF REFLECTION FOR CATECHISTS & INTERESTED ADULTS – MARCH 12 at St. John's Cathedral, Munhall, PA.

... entitled "Iconography: No separation between Humanity and Divinity." The presenter is Father Elias Rafaj, who is both an Iconographer and an excellent teacher. He has the gift of taking a difficult theological concept and explaining it in a way anyone can understand. Brochures are on the Belvedere side entrance. (Perhaps we could car pool?)

CHOCOLATE BYZANTINE CROSS SALE

We will have *Chocolate Byzantine Crosses* for sale for Easter. The orders must be **prepaid** and must be **in the office by 6 March 2016**. Envelopes are located at the Church entrances for those interested in purchasing *Dark, Milk or White Chocolate Crosses*. The purchase price is \$5.00 each.

"CHANGED BY THALERHOF"... The Warren Carpatho-Rusyn Society is sponsoring a documentary film depicting the Carpatho-Rusyns and their internment in the concentration camps of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1914. The film is being shown at the Butler Institute of American Art on Sunday, February 28, 2016 at 2:00 PM. It is a highly recommended and free event.



(PP) Divine Liturgy Attendance weekend of 21 February:

5:00 PM: 65 ; 11:00 AM: 105

Pre-sanctified Liturgy: 20

Our return to the Lord for all He has given us: \$3,045.75

(SM) Divine Liturgy Attendance weekend of 21 February:

21 from St. Michael; 8 from St. Peter & Paul

Pre-sanctified Liturgy: 12 from St Michael; 7 from St. Peter & Paul

Our return to the Lord for all He has given us: \$455.00



- **Sun. Feb. 28** ECF Religion Classes - 9:30 to 10:45 AM.
- **Sun. Feb. 28** Bible Study 4 PM in the Social Hall – Session 3.
- **Wed. Mar. 2** St. Vincent de Paul Meals Program – 9 AM to 2 PM – We can use your help.
- **Sat. Mar. 5** Fourth All Souls Saturday – 9 AM Divine Liturgy with reading of Diptyches.
- **Tues. Mar. 8** Important Ladies Guild Meeting – 7 PM in the Social Hall.
- **Thurs. – Fri. Mar. 10 – 11** Ladies Guild Nut roll Baking. Reminder: Ladies are in the Social Hall to take orders before and after the week end Liturgies



NUTROLLS AND PASKA BREADS

The Ladies Guild will be baking Rolls and Paska Bread for the Feast of the Resurrection. **Advance orders only!** Rolls available are nut, apricot, poppy, apricot-nut, and lekvar (prune). Rolls are \$10 each and will be ready for pick up on the weekend of 12 & 13 March. Both regular paska bread and paska bread with raisins are available for \$6 each. Paska bread will be ready for pick up on the weekend of 19 & 20 March. **Order forms are located in the Social Hall. Deadline to place your order is 6 March 2016.**

WANTED . . . PUSSYWILLOWS

It seems a little strange to be asking for pussywillows in the month of February, but with the spring-like weather that we have been experiencing, some plants and pussywillows have already emerged from their winter nap. Please . . .when your pussywillows **begin** to blossom, please cut them and bring them to church. We will store them here until Palm Sunday. DO NOT PUT THEM IN WATER.

A GREAT BIG THANK YOU!

The St. Michael's Ladies extend a heartfelt "Thank You" to Father Simeon and SS. Peter and Paul parishioners for the use of the Social Hall and the kitchen for their baking project. They also wish to thank all of you who ordered their delicious pastries. They were able to raise \$1,500.00 which will help defray the cost of necessary maintenance projects.

28 FEBRUARY 2016

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

Sunday	28 February	<i>THIRD SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST. VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS. Our Venerable Father and Confessor Basil, Fellow Ascetic of Procopius.</i>
(Vigil liturgy)	5:00 PM	+Michael Begeny – Barbara & Hose Avilies
(SM)	8:30 AM	Prayer Intention of Rosary Society
(PP)	11:00 AM	+Pauline Kostraba – Steve, Angela & Sam Kostraba
Monday	29 February	<i>Our Venerable Father Cassian.</i>
		No Divine Services
Tuesday	1 March	<i>Venerable Martyr Eudoxia. Holy Father David, Enlightener of Wales.</i>
		No Divine Services
Wednesday	2 March	<i>Mid Lent. The Holy Martyr Theodotus, Bishop of Cyrene.</i>
(SM)	6:00 PM	Pre-Sanctified Liturgy with observance of 4th All Souls.
Thursday	3 March	<i>The Holy Martyr Eutropius and his Companions, Cleonicus and Basiliscus.</i>
		No Divine Services
Friday	4 March	<i>Our Venerable Father Gerasimus of the Jordan.</i>
(PP)	6:00 PM	Pre-Sanctified Liturgy
Saturday	5 March	<i>Fourth All Souls Saturday. The Holy Martyr Conon</i>
(PP)	9:00 AM	Fourth All Souls Divine Liturgy with reading of Diptychs.
(PP)	5:00 PM	+Richard McGrath (40th day) – Ron Mosko
Sunday	6 March	<i>FOURTH SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST. MEMORY OF OUR HOLY FATHER JOHN CLIMACUS. The Holy Martyr Agapius and his Companions.</i>
(SM)	8:30 AM	+Michael Guinaugh – Michael & Sue Johnson
(PP)	11:00 AM	+Helen Sekula – Janice & Michael Clark



Attentive to the Word
Third Sunday of the Great Fast

Veneration of the Cross

Mark 8:34 – 9:1

Tone 7 p. 156 and p. 223 - 225

THE ROLE OF THE CROSS

From time immemorial, on Saturday evening of the third week in Great Lent, a cross is brought into the center of the church, and the entire following week is known as the Week of the Cross. We know that Great Lent is the preparation for Holy Week, when the Church will recall the suffering, crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ on the cross. Bringing out the cross in the middle of Lent is therefore a reminder of the goal of our deeper and more intense religious life during Lent. So it is appropriate to reflect here on the role of the cross, this most important and most prominent of all Christian symbols.

This symbol has two closely intertwined meanings. On the one hand, it is Christ's cross, that decisive event through which the earthly life and ministry of Jesus Christ was completed. It is a story of puzzling and terrifying hatred toward the One whose entire teaching focused on the commandment of love, whose entire preaching was the call to self-denial and sacrifice in the name of this love. Pilate, the Roman governor to whom the arrested, beaten, spit-upon Christ was brought, says, "I find no crime in him" (Jn 19:4). But this provokes an even louder outburst: "Crucify him! Crucify him!" shouts the crowd. And so the cross of Christ poses an eternal question aimed at the very depth of our conscience: why does goodness arouse not only opposition, but hatred? Why is goodness always crucified in this world? We usually avoid answering this question by placing the blame on someone else: if we had been there, if I had been there that terrible night, I would not have behaved as everybody else. But, alas, somewhere deep in our conscience we know that is not true. We know that the people who tortured, crucified and hated Christ were not monsters of some sort, possessed by some peculiar and unique evil. No, they were essentially "just like everybody else." Pilate even tried to defend Jesus, to dissuade the crowd; he even offered to release Christ as a goodwill gesture in honor of the holiday; when that failed he stood in front the crowd and washed his hands, showing his disagreement with this murder.

In a few strokes, the gospel draws for us a picture of this pathetic Pilate, his fright, his bureaucratic conscience, his cowardly refusal to follow his own conscience. Isn't this also exactly what happens in our own life and in life around us? Isn't this the most commonplace, the most typical of all stories? Isn't Pilate present within us all the time?

Isn't it true that when the moment comes for us to say a decisive, irrevocable no to falsehood, injustice, evil and hate, we give in to the temptation to "wash our hands"? Behind Pilate were the Roman soldiers, but they could certainly say in their own defense: we only followed orders, we were told to "neutralize" some trouble-maker who was causing disruption and disorder, so what's there to talk about? Behind Pilate, behind the soldiers, was the crowd, the same people who six days before had cried out "Hosanna" as they triumphantly welcomed Christ as He entered Jerusalem—only now their cry is "Crucify Him!" But they too have an explanation. Didn't the leaders, the teachers, the authorities tell them that this man was a criminal who broke the laws and customs, and therefore by law (always by law, always according to the appropriate statute) must die ... And so each of the participants in this terrible event was right "in their own eyes," since each had justification. Yet together, they all murdered a man in whom there was "found no crime." The first meaning of the cross, therefore, is its judgment of evil, or rather, of this world's pseudo-goodness, in which evil eternally rejoices, and which promotes evil's terrifying triumph on earth.

This brings us to the second meaning of the cross. After Christ's cross comes my cross, of which Christ said, "If any man would come after me, let him ... take up his cross daily and follow me" (Lk 9:23). This means that the choice everyone faced that night—Pilate, the soldiers, the leaders, the crowd and every person in that crowd—is a choice that is continually, daily set before each of us. Outwardly, the choice may come through something apparently insignificant to us, something secondary. But to conscience there is neither primary nor secondary, only truth and falsehood, good and evil. To take up one's cross daily is not merely to endure life's burdens and cares, but above all to live in harmony with conscience, to live within the light of the judgment of conscience.

Even today, with the whole world looking on, a person "who has no crime in him" can be taken away, tortured, beaten, put in prison or sent into exile. And all of this according to law, all according to obedience and discipline, all in the name of good order, for the good of all. And how many Pilates are washing their hands, how many soldiers are hurrying to carry out the orders of military discipline, how many people obediently, submissively cheer them on, or at best watch silently as evil triumphs?

As we bring out the cross, as we bow down before it, as we kiss it, let's recall its meaning. What does it tell us, to what does it call us? Let's remember the cross as a choice on which everything else in the world hangs, and without which everything the world is a triumph of darkness and evil. "For judgment I came into this world," Christ said (Jn 9:39). At this judgment, before the tribunal of crucified love, truth and goodness, each of us stands trial.

By Fr. Alexander Schmemmann