

## 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. Andrew to schedule.

**Mystery of Crowning:** Must be a registered, active, supporting member of the parish family. Must meet with Fr. Andrew before setting date and reserving your banquet hall. Pre-Cana program is required and three sessions with Fr. Andrew. 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. Andrew is notified. It especially is important that a family member contact Fr. Andrew whenever a loved-one is hospitalized.

**Funerals:** Families of the deceased or the funeral director must contact Fr. Andrew 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:** The Parish office is open from 10 AM – 2 PM Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Father Andrew is available on other days and times by appointment.



- **Sat. & Sun. Sept. 12 & 13** Coffee & Donuts in the Social Hall after both Liturgies.
- **Mon. Sept. 21** St. Benedict Auxiliary Meeting – 7 PM in the Social Hall – Bring a prospective member and a small wrapped gift for the dice game.
- **Tues. Sept. 22** St. Vincent de Paul Pizza Day – 9 AM to 2 PM – We can use your help.

## E.C.F. BEGINNING CLASSES ...

...are just around the corner. Letters and registration forms have been sent to parents of the children who have attended classes in the past years. If you have not received a registration form for your child or are in need of one, please call the office. Parents & Guardians: The success of our religious education program depends upon the cooperation and support of all of us. Our children are the future of our parish & our Church. Help us to assist you in the spiritual education of your children. **Classes begin Sunday, 4 October 2015. Those who have not yet registered, we ask that you to call the office on Monday and leave a message, so that we can get the books ordered.**

## BIBLE STUDY

Once again our Parish will be offering a Bible Study Class. *However, this time it will be conducted only on Sunday afternoon at 4 PM.* In these sessions, we will be studying the *Book of Revelation*. This is a 12 session course and **will begin Sunday, 20 September 2015.** If you are interested, please call the office to register. Envelopes are also available by the Belvedere Entrance for registration. Registrations are necessary so that we can order the number of books needed for the sessions. The cost for the materials is \$20.00.

**Thank You!** A Very Big “Thank-You” to the members of the Ladies Guild and to all those who helped to make our Parish Picnic a huge success – those responsible for coordination of the picnic, the “haulers”, the cooks, the set-up and clean-up crews, the good music, the photographers, the fun games, and those who brought their specialty to share. There truly was something for everyone! Thanks to all who came and enjoyed the afternoon of fun, food and camaraderie. We look forward to next year!

## Divine Liturgy Attendance weekend of 13 September:

5:00 PM: **69**; 11:00 AM: **81**

Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos: **12**

**Our return to the Lord for all He has given us: . . . . . \$3,286.85**

basil. Upon excavation there, three crosses were unearthed and a sign inscribed, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews". Not knowing which was Jesus' Cross, Helen asked a dying woman to kiss each of them. She kissed one. Then another. As soon as the woman kissed the third, she was immediately healed. That "Life-Giving" Cross gave life not only to that dying woman, but gives Life to each and every person who believes in the Sacrifice of Christ on the Cross and His Resurrection.

By order of Constantine and Helen, a church was built on this site and dedicated nine years later, A portion of the Cross itself was brought outside the Church of the Resurrection by Patriarch Makarios, who had witnessed the miracle at the historic site. He elevated the cross and blessed the people with it as they responded, "Lord, have mercy" (Kyrie, eleison). We copy this event at a special service as a cross on a tray decorated with basil or flowers is carried throughout the church. When we elevate the Cross and bow down before it in veneration, we rededicate ourselves to the Cross and proclaim that we belong to the Kingdom "not of this world," and that our only true and enduring citizenship is with the saints in the "city of God" (Eph 2:19; Heb 11:10; Rev 21-22).

St. Paul the Apostle said: "For the message of the Cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God..." (1 Cor 1:18) The Cross is our key to salvation—a giant plus sign in our lives; we are not alone with our problems and troubles we have the plus of God's presence and His wisdom, during moments of trouble if we add Christ, He will give us hope; if we acknowledge our sins the plus of God's mercy brings forgiveness.

To help us focus, this day is traditionally a day of strict fast. Many wear a Cross around the neck as a sign of faith, yet some make a mockery of the Cross and wear it as a fashionable piece of jewelry, or behave in ways unbecoming a Christian. This visible symbol means nothing if we do not have the Cross carved in our hearts, too. Christ was willing to suffer for others. In doing this He teaches us life, even with suffering has meaning. It is not pointless. Accepting it becomes an act of true love. God gave each of us free will to choose between having our life be meaningful by embracing its joys and sorrows so others may benefit in seeing us not grumbling and complaining about how imperfect it might at times seem to be. Exalt the cross in your life. The happiness and peace you seek is found in the way of the Cross, the way of Christ. For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. (Jn 3:16) It is up to you to choose Eternal Life. How? Show your faith in the Glorious Cross to those about you.

*By Phyllis Muryn Zaparaniuk*

**We bow to Your Cross, O Lord and we glorify Your Holy Resurrection!**

13 SEPTEMBER 2015

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

Sunday,	13 September	<i>SUNDAY BEFORE THE ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS. Commemoration of the Dedication of the Church of the Resurrection of our Lord in Jerusalem. Holy Bishop-Martyr Cornelius.</i>
	<b>(Vigil Liturgy) 5:00 PM</b>	<b>+George Tarchick – Robert Greskovich &amp; Beth</b>
	<b>(SM) 8:30 AM</b>	<b>+Michael Guinaugh – Jim &amp; Barb Hash</b>
	<b>(PP) 11:00 AM</b>	<b>+Kay Roscoe – John &amp; Kathy Shinosky Family</b>
Monday,	14 September	<i>FEAST OF THE ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS (Day of Strict Fast).</i>
	<b>(PP) 6:00 PM</b>	<b>+Fr. Andrew Chura – John &amp; Dianna Koza</b>
Tuesday,	15 September	<i>Post-festive Day of the Elevation of the Cross. Holy Great Martyr Nicetas. Venerable Father Symeon, Archbishop of Thessalonica.</i>
		<b>Chancery</b>
Wednesday,	16 September	<i>Post-festive Day of the Elevation of the Cross. Holy Great Martyr Euphemia.</i>
		<b>No Divine Liturgy</b>
Thursday,	17 September	<i>Post-festive Day of the Elevation of the Cross. Holy Martyr Sophia (Wisdom) and her three Children, Faith, Hope and Charity.</i>
		<b>No Divine Liturgy</b>
Friday,	18 September	<i>Post-festive Day of the Elevation of the Cross. Venerable Father Eumenicus the Wonder-worker, Bishop of Gortyna.</i>
		<b>No Divine Liturgy</b>
Saturday	19 September	<i>Saturday after the Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross. Holy Martyrs Trophimus, Sabbatius and Dorymedont.</i>
	<b>(PP) 5:00 PM</b>	<b>+Anne Slovinsky – Husband John and Family</b>
Sunday,	20 September	<i>SUNDAY AFTER THE ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS. Holy Martyr Eustace and His Companions. Holy Martyrs and Confessors, the Great Prince Michael and His Counsellor Theodore, Wonder-workers of Chernigov..</i>
	<b>(SM) 8:30 AM</b>	<b>+Sally Johnson – Bob &amp; Marianne Cabosky</b>
	<b>(PP) 11:00 AM</b>	<b>+Mary Reese – Becky Prest</b>



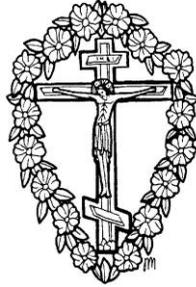
## Attentive to the Word

### ***Sunday Before the Exaltation of the Cross***

***John 3: 13-17***

***Pages 156-157 and 250-251***

**or Use the papers provided**



The reading that we just heard is part of Jesus dialogue with Nicodemus, the Pharisee. The Pharisees were the experts in the Law. They studied the Scriptures, they drew out the implications, and they were experts in all the details of religion and what you had to do. They dotted every *i* and crossed every *t*. They kept all the laws in scrupulous detail. But they developed a problem. They began to think that what they did was what saved us. They forgot that religion and faith is first of all about God acting in our lives, about God leading us and saving us, about God moving our minds, our hearts and our wills and drawing us to Himself. They made religion what *we do* and not what *God does*.

And when Jesus attracts Nicodemus because He performs such signs and wonders and he recognizes that "no man can perform signs and wonders such as you perform" Jesus gave him this answer: "No one has gone up to heaven except the One who came down from there" What a great truth, what a fundamental truth of our faith!

No one has gone up to heaven on his own merits. No one is tall enough. No ladder is high enough. No plane or rocket can go up to heaven. That's what the tower of Babel was all about in the Scriptures. The people thought that they could build a tower up to heaven and get to heaven on their own efforts.

The Church fathers use the expression that God lowered the heavens so that He could reach to the earth. "God so loved the world that He gave his only Son that whoever believes in Him may not die but may have eternal life." God reached down from the heavens, God sent His Son, God made the connection.

One of the most beautiful sights is always to watch an infant. And when an infant sees his parent he just reaches out, opens his arms – he is helpless -- but he knows that his parent will lift him up. That's how we must be before God! It is so wonderful to watch a parent reach down and just lift up that child. It is so normal for us to want to lift up our children.

The way the Jews prayed, the position that they prayed was with uplifted hands to God. It is the position of the Mother of God behind the Altar. O Lord I open my heart, my life, my being – everything to you. I stand before you helpless but I know that you hear me and listen to me. I want to praise You and bless You. The Scripture quotes Mary's praise of

God when she is called blessed and Elizabeth prophesies that she would be blessed among all women:

"My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit finds joy in God my Savior. For He has looked upon His servant in her lowliness; All ages to come shall call me blessed. God who is mighty has done great thing for me, Holy is His Name. His mercy is from age to age on those who fear Him. He has shown might with his arm, He has scattered the proud in their inmost thoughts. He has deposed the mighty from their thrones and raised the lowly."

Her prayer is a praise and blessing of God and His deeds in her life and that's how we are called to pray and to bless God.

That's why in the Liturgy we are called to raise our minds and our hearts and our hands and reach out to God in openness and trust, with open minds and open hearts to praise God and bless God. Let us lift up our hearts! Is the invitation for all of us to remember and be aware that God is the one who acts in our lives, that He is saving us, that He is giving us His Son Jesus. And that's how we pray when we remember all God's saving deeds!

I was packing all my paintings and icons yesterday. A couple I put aside. I am unable to leave behind because they have so much meaning for me. I was given a small paper icon of the Good Shepherd by Bishop Michael. When He gave it to me, he said "I have to give this to you because you are a good shepherd."

I know that Jesus is the Good Shepherd because the Good Shepherd watches and cares for the sheep. He protects and rescues them. He leaves behind the 99 and goes after the lost one. Jesus is the one who comes for us. HE is the shepherd of my soul. He is the one who lifts me up and carries me upon His shoulder. In Him I rest and find comfort. For truly I Believe: *God so loved that world that He gave His Only Son that whoever believes in Him man not die but may have eternal life.*

We know the One who came down from heaven to lift us up, to raise us up, to save us and that's what we live and celebrate in our faith and worship.

*By Fr John Zeyack*

### ***Lift up and Be Lifted By the Life-Giving Cross***

On September 14, right as we start the Church's New Year, is the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross. This feast is connected to the finding of the True Cross of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Early in the Fourth Century, after persecutions of Christians ended, there was freedom to express our religion and adorn the churches with symbols to express our faith. The Cross was just one of many symbols. Having new-found freedom, Emperor Constantine sent his mother, Empress Helen—a devout Christian—to Jerusalem to find and retrieve the Cross upon which Christ had been crucified.

After what seemed a fruitless search in the area where Jesus had been put to death, she detected a strong unknown scent of a plant called *vasilikos*, which we know as