

## 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.

## 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. *Confessions will be heard on Wednesday, 17 December before and after Emmanuel Moleben.*

## CHRISTMAS CAROLING . . .



We will be caroling for our Parishioners who are in Nursing homes or who are home-bound on **December 28**. We want them to know they are loved and missed. More information will be forth-coming. **Mark your calendars** and set aside an afternoon to join us for this important event.

## FAMILY FUN EVENING

A Family Fun evening is being planned for Sunday, 28 December beginning around 4 PM. The Nativity movie will be shown in our social hall and pizza, snacks and beverages will be provided. All are invited and welcome to enjoy an evening with your Parish Family and celebrate the Birth of our Savior. If you plan to attend, please indicate on the sign-up sheet located in the Social Hall.

## CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES AND CALENDARS

*The 2015 Church Calendars and Contribution Envelopes are ready for pick-up in the Social Hall. Our Parish family would like to thank the Sinchak and Sons Funeral Home for their generosity in providing our calendars again this year. God bless them for their kindness and generosity!*

*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 2014. If you want proper credit for your contributions, you must use the envelopes you were assigned for the 2015 year.***

**Divine Liturgy Attendance weekend of 7 December:**

5:00 PM: **92**; 11:00 AM: **103**

Feast of St. Nicholas: **30**    Maternity of Holy Anna: **31**

**Our return to the Lord for all He has given us ..... \$3,814.80**



- **Sun. Dec. 14** ECF Religion Classes – 9:30 AM to 10:45 AM.
- **Mon. Dec. 15** Church Cleaning Party – 9 AM to Noon. We can use your help to do a special cleaning for Christmas.
- **Wed. Dec. 17** Moleben to Emanuel – 6 PM – with **Confessions before and after the Moleben.**
- **Fri. Dec. 19** Church decorating for Christmas – 9:30 AM.
- **Sat. Dec. 20** St. Benedict’s Auxiliary Cookie Sale – after both Divine Liturgies. This is your golden opportunity to get delicious homemade cookies for Christmas. Also, there will be a limited number of nut rolls for sale.
- **Wed. Dec. 24** A day of strict fast and abstinence – No meat or dairy products.



### 90<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF PARISH FOUNDING

On January 7, 2015 our parish will celebrate the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding. This milestone anniversary will be commemorated on Sunday, **January 11** with a Divine Liturgy celebrated by Metropolitan William followed by a dinner in our Social Hall. Also we are looking for photographs from the life of the parish through the years. If you have any photos from any activities (i.e. Baptism, Wedding, First Communion, Choir, picnics, school, etc.) that you would like to share, please submit them to the Parish Office with your name on the back so that we can return it to you. We are planning to scan the photos into the computer to have a slide presentation through our media equipment in the hall. More information will follow as details are finalized. **We are accepting prepaid reservations. Reservation envelopes are available from Ladies Guild members in the Social Hall.** I hope you make every effort to celebrate this milestone with your parish family.

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES FOR THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY	
December 24 – <b>6:00 PM</b> , Compline with Divine Liturgy ( <i>Warren</i> )	<b>10:00 PM</b> , Divine Liturgy ( <i>Warren</i> )
December 25 – <b>9:00 AM</b> , Divine Liturgy ( <i>Newton Falls</i> )	<b>11:00 AM</b> , Divine Liturgy ( <i>Warren</i> )

14 DECEMBER 2014

### SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

Sunday,	14 December	<i>SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS. Holy Martyrs Thrysis, Leucas, Philemon, Appolonius ans Callinicus. Blessed Priest and Ascetic Father Nimatulla al-Hardini (Joseph Kassab).</i>
	<b>(Vigil Liturgy) 5:00 PM</b>	<b>+Jackvelyn Roof – Andrew &amp; Loretta Greskovich</b>
	<b>(SM) 8:30 AM</b>	<b>+Shirley Purdy Bretsik – Nancy DeAngelo</b>
	<b>(PP) 11:00 AM</b>	<b>+Victor Burick – 40<sup>th</sup> day</b>
Monday,	15 December	<i>Holy Martyr Eleutherius. Venerable Paul of Latra. Holy Father Stephen, Archbishop of Surozh.</i>
		<b>No Divine Liturgy</b>
Tuesday,	16 December	<i>Holy Prophet Haggai.</i>
		<b>No Divine Liturgy</b>
Wednesday,	17 December	<i>Holy Prophet Daniel and the Three Holy Children: Hananiah, Azariah and Mishael.</i>
	<b>6:00 PM</b>	<b>Moleben to Emmanuel</b>
Thursday,	18 December	<i>Holy Martyr Sebastian and his Companions.</i>
		<b>No Divine Liturgy</b>
Friday,	19 December	<i>Holy Martyr Boniface.</i>
<b>(Chapel)</b>	<b>8:30 AM</b>	<b>+Mary Karl – Mary Anne Karchut</b>
Saturday	20 December	<i>Saturday before Christmas. Prefestive Day of Christmas. Holy Martyr Ignatius the God-bearer.</i>
	<b>(Vigil Liturgy) 5:00 PM</b>	<b>+Sister Mary John Semon – Benedictine Sisters</b>
Sunday,	21 December	<i>SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS, OF THE ANCESTORS. Holy Martyr Juliana of Nicomedia.</i>
	<b>(SM) 8:30 AM</b>	<b>Health &amp; Welfare of Paul Simon – Marjorie &amp; Cheryl</b>
	<b>(PP) 11:00 AM</b>	<b>+Mary Reese (40<sup>th</sup> day) – Becky Prest</b>



## Attentive to the Word

### Sunday of the Forefathers

*Luke 14: 16-24*

*Pages 130 and 281 - 283*



This familiar parable is read in the Church each year just two Sundays before the feast of our Lord's Nativity. In it we are reminded of the great care with which God prepared the way of His incarnation. All of the Law and the Prophets look forward to this moment, the moment when the God/man Jesus Christ comes into the world. He is, in fact, the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets – the goal towards which they were all aiming. The whole world was prepared by them for this great event.

As the parable tells us the King – that is God – has prepared a great feast for us and has invited us to come and enter into the joy that He has prepared for us.

In the parable however, there were some who refused this invitation, considering their own affairs to be more important or more desirable than the feast of the King. Although God had chosen them, they did not choose God. Is this not like our first parents Adam and Eve. God had created them so that they might live in His love and in complete harmony with Him. But they chose to follow their own will and not to enter into the joy that God had prepared for them. They too were chosen by God but they did not choose God and so were cast out of paradise.

But our Creator, not willing to abandon His creation, prepared a way that we might return to Him. This preparation covered centuries and millennia of time; it was defined by the law and prophets; it was lived out time and time again in the history of God's chosen people, the children of Abraham until finally the Way was ready to be revealed in its fullness. The Way that God prepared for us to return to Him is in fact the Person of Jesus Christ, God Himself taking human flesh and becoming incarnate. Just as through Adam all men fell into sin and corruption and death, now through Jesus Christ all men were invited to rise out of that condemnation and live again according to the love and grace of God. The Way back to the Kingdom of God had been restored. We had again been chosen by God. But some refused this second choosing, instead choosing to follow their own desires.

Even so, our God, in His great love for us, holds the door open to all mankind that we might enter into this great feast that He has prepared for us. He calls us into His Kingdom even though we are poor and beggars, bringing nothing of our own to Him other than ourselves. He goes into the highways and searches out even those who did not know Him so that they might come and share in His joy. The invitations have been sent out, the doors are thrown open and we are invited to the feast of God's provision for our salvation. No matter who we are, no matter from whence we come, the doors to the Kingdom of God are open to us. We are called to set aside our own desires, our own will our own worldly pleasures and instead enter into the Life of the Holy Trinity, conforming our will to the will of Christ, reaping the joys and pleasures of the Kingdom of God in exchange for those of the world. We are called to come to Him.

Today we begin in earnest to move toward the feast of the birth of the God/man Jesus Christ. Today we are called to see the great preparation that has gone into this event, to marvel at the love and care of God for us that He would labor so long and with such great care for us. Today we look back at the whole of the history of the people of God and see that it is the history of God's preparation all leading to the moment when He would take flesh, become incarnate and enter the world as a child. Today you have been given an invitation to come and join the feast, to abandon the world and enter the Kingdom of God, to receive the Life of Christ. Today you have been chosen by God – will you then choose Him?



Never judge an unfinished picture. None of us is finished. Samuel Johnson said, "God Himself does not propose to judge a person until his life is over. Why should you and I?" A young man wore a button on his lapel which said, "PBPGINFWMY." When asked what it meant, he said, "Please be patient – God is not finished with me yet." A good thing to remember when we are tempted to criticize! St. Paul wrote, "Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of his heart. Then everyone will receive his commendation from God" (1Cor: 4:5).

C.S. Lewis said once, "Everyone says forgiveness is a lovely idea until we have someone to forgive." In preparing for the Nativity of Our Lord, it would be good for us try to rate ourselves from 1 to 10 as objectively as possible (with 1 being low and 10 high) on these two statements: \_\_\_ I am a forgiving person. \_\_\_ I am quick to forgive offenses against me.

*Anthony M. Coniaris*