

## 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. 5 & 6** Pilgrimage to Mt. St. Macrina, Uniontown, PA
- **Tues. Sept. 8** Ladies Guild Meeting – 7 PM in the Social Hall
- **Sat. & Sun. Sept. 12 & 13** Coffee & Donuts in the Social Hall after both Liturgies.
- **Sun. Sept. 13** Meeting of Oblates of St. Benedict – 2 PM at the Monastery
- **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.



## 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.

## 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. We encourage parents who have children ages 5 thru 18 to enroll in our ECF classes. We ask that you return the forms by September 6, 2015, so that we can order and receive the text books before the start of classes.

## Divine Liturgy Attendance weekend of 30 August:

5:00 PM: **90**; 11:00 AM: **109**

Feast of the Beheading of John the Baptist: **13**; Beginning of the Liturgical Year: **20**

**Our return to the Lord for all He has given us: . . . . . \$3,715.26**

endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us." (Romans 5:3-5).

We are called to be Christ's witnesses (Acts 1:8). Therefore, our life is to be a living testimony of the mighty power of God's love. It should reflect the respect we have for ourselves as a living temple of the Holy Spirit, and aspect for others, recognizing that God loves each person individually. We can be a witness to Christ in our personal relationships with others. Our code of ethical behavior will bring others to the saving power of Christ. We can be witness to Christ as an employer by giving our workers a fair wage for a day's work. We can create a business to employ other people. We can hire young persons to help them learn the value of work.

We can be a witness to Christ by receiving the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Repentance. We can be a witness to Christ by praying for our enemies and reconciling ourselves to those who have harmed us. We can be a witness to Christ by contributing or participating in causes that help the poor, clothe the naked, or shelter the homeless. A faithful and conscientious servant of Christ dares to be different by doing the right thing, at all times, in all places, and in every circumstance to the best of one's ability.

## THE NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS

When the time drew near for the birth of the Savior of the world, there lived in the Galilean city of Nazareth a descendant of King David, Joachim, with his wife, Anna. They were both pious people and were known not for their royal ancestry, but for their humility and charity.

Their entire lives were permeated with love for God and people. They lived to a ripe old age but never had children and this grieved them very much. In spite of their old age, they did not cease to petition God to send them children. They made a vow, that if a child were born to them, they would consecrate it to the service of God. At that time, every Jew hoped that his posterity would take part in the kingdom of the Messiah, that is, Christ the Savior. Therefore, every childless Jew was held in contempt by the others, for this was considered a great punishment by God for one's sins. This was especially trying to Joachim, as a descendant of King David, because from his seed Christ was to be born.

For their patience, great faith, love for God and for each other, God sent Joachim and Anna great joy. Toward the end of their lives a daughter was born to them. According to the command of an angel of God, She was given the name Mary. The birth of Mary brought joy not only to Her parents, but to all people, because She was foreordained by God to be the Mother of the son of God, the Savior of the world. The Nativity of the Holy Virgin Mary is celebrated by the Eastern Churches as one of its major holidays on September 8.

6 SEPTEMBER 2015

## SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

Sunday,	6 September	<i>FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST. Memory of the Miracle of the Holy Archangel Michael at Colossae in Chionia. Holy Martyr Eudoxius and His Companions.</i> <b>+George Syrko – Chris, Dawn &amp; Angela Nakell</b> <b>Prayer Intentions of the Rosary Society</b> <b>+Ida Ochtyun – Al &amp; Maria Butch</b>
	<b>(Vigil Liturgy) 5:00 PM</b> <b>(SM) 8:30 AM</b> <b>(PP) 11:00 AM</b>	
Monday,	7 September	<i>Pre-festive Day of the Feast of the Birth of the Theotokos. Holy Martyr Sozon.</i> <b>Pilgrimage – Uniointown, PA</b>
Tuesday,	8 September	<i>FEAST OF THE BIRTH OF THE THEOTOKOS.</i> <b>+Pat Mindek &amp; +Julie Riggs - Friends</b> <b>+Virginia Stempak – Betty Stempak</b>
	<b>(PP) 9:00 AM</b> <b>(SM) 6:00 PM</b>	
Wednesday,	9 September	<i>Post-festive Day of the Birth of the Theotokos. Holy and Just Grandparents of God Joachim and Anna. Holy Martyr Severian.</i> <b>+Mary Sohayda – daughter, Georgia Cassidy</b>
	<b>(Chapel) 8:30 AM</b>	
Thursday,	10 September	<i>Post-festive Day of the Birth of the Theotokos. Holy Martyrs Menodora, Mitrodora and Nymphodora.</i> <b>Chancery</b>
Friday,	11 September	<i>Post-festive Day of the Birth of the Theotokos. Venerable Mother Theodora of Alexandria.</i> <b>No Divine Liturgy</b>
Saturday	12 September	<i>Leave-taking of the Feast of the Birth of the Theotokos. Saturday before the Elevation of the Holy Cross. Holy Bishop-Martyr Autonomous.</i> <b>+George Tarchick – Robert Greskovich &amp; Beth</b>
	<b>(PP) 5:00 PM</b>	
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>+Michael Guinaugh – Jim &amp; Barb Hash</b> <b>+Kay Roscoe – John &amp; Kathy Shinsky Family</b>
	<b>(SM) 8:30 AM</b> <b>(PP) 11:00 AM</b>	



## Attentive to the Word

### *Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost*

*Mt. 22: 35-46*

*Tone 6, Pages 152-153*

It is not easy being a Christian. As a matter of fact, one would think that having all the machines and gadgets that make our lives simpler would give us more quality time to devote toward the Lord and His work. It is actually more difficult to remain faithful to the Gospel today because we are not physically under siege. "We are not contending against flesh and blood...but against the spiritual hosts of darkness." (Ephesians 6:12)

We don't see our homes being entered by government officials because we went to church on Sunday. We are not incarcerated because we educated our children in the ways of God nor are we stepped, interrogated and coerced to squeal on our neighbor's religious beliefs and actions. All in all, we lead quite plain, normal and regular lives. The problem lies in the measure of our commitment to Christ and our unwillingness to be His faithful witness.

Every day we are bombarded with the influences of popular culture, movies, books, magazines, television, radio, peers, neighbors, politicians and even parishioners and clergymen. The pressures of daily life may lead individuals into conflict with their own consciences. The real struggle between good and evil takes place within the heart, soul and mind of the believer. The same three factors of "heart," "soul" and "mind" are referred to by Christ as He speaks to the Pharisees in the Gospel concerning this same issue. He speaks out and teaches us that we ought not to love God partially, but to give all of ourselves to God.

This message is still declared to us in the Gospel reading on the 15th Sunday after Pentecost by Christ as He states: "Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." (Matthew 22:37). It is very easy to go along with the crowd, especially if failing to do so makes them turn on you. The Apostle Paul admonishes us "not to be conformed to this world, but to be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." (Romans 12:2).

We see Christ on trial everyday, but prefer to hide in the crowd trying to save "Barabbas" (Matthew 27:20) because of our unwillingness to stand up for Truth. We are afraid of the loneliness which we would feel apart from the mob. David the Psalmist said he would "rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked." (Psalm 84:10). The reality of this statement is brought out to us in the New

Testament through the words of Christ in the parable of the "Prodigal Son" (Luke , 15:17) when the prodigal declares within himself how much better off are the servants in his father's house than he is away from home.

We have to come to our senses and know that our true home is not in the havoc of this fallen world but in the peace and serenity of God's Kingdom. However, it is the fallen state of this world which constantly tries to pull us down because the devil wants to deprive us of that which he himself cannot inherit. Yet, within all the deception of this, the devil wants it to appear as if the turmoil and havoc of this world is the norm.

Thomas Merton (+1968) twentieth century American, Trappist monk and author said, "The Christian in whom Christ is risen dares to think and act differently from the crowd. He has ideas of his own, not because he is arrogant, but because he has the humility to stand alone and pay attention to the purpose and grace of God, which are often quite contrary to the purposes and the plans of an established human power structure. If we have risen with Christ, then we must dare to stand by Him in the loneliness of His Passion, when the entire establishment, both religious and civil, turned against Him as a modern state would turn against a dangerous radical." Are we willing to stand alone for what is right?

History always honors those who display courage. The Christian Church has always held its martyrs in high esteem. These faithful witnesses were "strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might for all endurance and patience with joy." (Colossians 1:11). Elijah, Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the Old Testament prophets are cited as examples of faith-filled people. "Through faith they conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight; some were tortured refusing to accept release. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword." (Hebrews 11:33-34).

The early martyrs of the Christian Church found solace and encouragement in these great cloud of witnesses (Hebrews 12:1) as examples of perseverance. Martyrs of every time and place have listened to Christ's comforting words, "Blessed are you when men shall revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on My account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in Heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you." (Matthew 5:11-12). Even though, "you will be hated by all for My name's sake (Luke 21:17-18), Christ promises us: "I am with you always even to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:20).

A Christian sees God's hand in every circumstances and aspect of his or her life. We have the power to turn every negative occurrence into an opportunity for a spiritual growth. "We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and