



Ss. Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church (Portage)
St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church (Beaverdale)
Ss. Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church (Dunlo)
Byzantine Catholic Archeparchy of Pittsburgh
Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skurla, D.D.
Served by: Very Rev. Fr. James A. Spontak
Fr. Deacon Daniel F. Perich
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Mysteries of Christian Initiation: There is to be **preparatory instruction** for parents and godparents prior to the celebration of the **Mysteries of Christian Initiation – Baptism, Chrismation, and Eucharist**. It is desirable that Christian Initiation be celebrated together with the Sunday Divine Liturgy, as the entire faith community welcomes its newest member. Those selected to be sponsors must be persons who are qualified to be a sponsor according to the norms of Church law and practice.

Crowning in Marriage: A **six month period of preparation** is to precede the marriage. Couples are to meet with the pastor before other arrangements are scheduled. The **Pre-Cana Program** offered by the Archeparchy in the spring of each year is a **required** part of the marriage preparation for all couples.

Holy Anointing & Pastoral Care of the Ill: Please contact the pastor prior to surgery or in the event of illness to require the **Mystery of Holy Anointing**. When you or a family member are hospitalized or enter a nursing home or other facility, **please inform the pastor**. Due to privacy regulations, hospitals and other facilities do not always notify the pastor; and it is best for the family.

Mystery of Repentance (Confessions): **Saturdays: 3:00 pm (Portage) and 4:30 pm (Beaverdale/Dunlo)**. Also, **½ hour before services [except Sunday]**, and by appointment. Confessions are in the priest's sacristy area, before an icon of Christ, before whom we are confessing our sinfulness.

Opportunities for Stewardship: Parishioners are asked to make a commitment of **Time, Talent, and Treasure...** **Work Parties** are scheduled the first Saturday of each month, and **Church Cleaning** is scheduled the first Monday, unless a Church Feast Day falls on the same date.

Troitsja & Bulletin Schedule

Sunday December 17 Troitsja Christina Goral Bulletins: Hunter Whitcomb & Cierra Goral

Sunday December 24 Troitsja Issabella Crum Bulletins: Christina Goral & Issabella Crum

Monday December 25 **Christmas Eve—10:00 pm**

Troitsja Evan Lenz Bulletins: Evan Lenz & Sydney Leturgey



A Prayer of Preparation for the Nativity of Our Lord

"O God and Father, the Almighty One, you created the human race in your image and likeness, and when we fell through disobedience, you promised to send a Savior When the fullness of time had come your only-begotten Son was born of the Virgin Mary. Now, most compassionate Lord, you bring us to these honored days of the Christmas Fast that we may do battle with the desires of the flesh and draw strength from the hope of Resurrection. Receive us, then, as penitents and forgive our wrongdoing, those done knowingly and unknowingly, through malice and through weakness. And may our prayers, our fasting, and our works of mercy rise up before you as incense, that in company with the Magi and the shepherds we too, with pure hearts, may be found worthy to bow down before the Nativity of Jesus Christ, your beloved Son. To him, together with you and your all-holy Spirit, belong glory, honor, and worship, now and ever and forever."

Mystery of Repentance [Confession]

To prepare for Christmas, the **Mystery of Holy Repentance** is scheduled for:

- On **Monday, December 18**, at Saints. Peter & Paul, Portage at 7:00 pm. **Father Robert Oravetz** from Holy Trinity, Conemaugh will be present with Father Jim for Confessions. A Penance Service begins at 7:00 pm, followed by Confessions.
- **Friday, December 22**, at Ss. Peter & Paul, Portage at 6:00 pm.
- **Saturday, December 23**, at Ss. Peter & Paul, Portage at 2:30 pm & at Ss. Peter & Paul, Dunlo at 4:30 pm

Please note that there are no Confessions scheduled on Christmas Eve--Sunday, December 24.

Christmas Community Choir Fest

The Portage **Christmas Community Choir Fest** is Sunday, December 17 6 PM at Bethany United Methodist Church. Everyone attending is asked to bring a non-perishable food item for the local food bank. Contact Joy at Bethany's office [736-8651] or bethany700@comcast.net.

Pilgrim Vocation Icon Program

This week, **Edward & Paulette Fedorko** will have the **Pilgrim Vocation Icon** Program to pray for vocations to the priesthood, diaconate, monastic and religious life. The **Pilgrim Vocation Icon** program is an opportunity to have this icon for the week to pray for and encourage vocations. Please sign up on the sheet in the narthex to have the Pilgrim Vocation Icon.

The Vigil of Christmas

- The Royal Hours of Christmas Eve [Office of Readings] are celebrated on Friday, December 22 at 8:00am and include psalms; hymns; Old Testament, Epistle, and Gospel readings. The Royal Hours are transferred from Christmas Eve, which this year Christmas falls on Sunday.
- Also, by tradition Friday, December 22 may be observed as a day of the strict abstinence from meat and dairy products.
- From Christmas to Theophany [December 25 to January 4] there is no fasting and abstinence.

Parish Saint Nicholas Celebration

We invite all of our parishioners to our Parish ***Saint Nicholas Celebration TODAY--Sunday, December 17*** following the Divine Liturgy. Our Eastern Christian Formation Students will present the ***"Jaslickari"—Bethlehem Carolers*** play. This enactment of a visit of shepherds to a family home was popular in Byzantine Catholic parishes. The play will be followed by the visit of Saint Nicholas.

Please come to enjoy this event, the program and also refreshments that will be served.

Eastern Christian Formation Calendar--Christmas & Theophany Season	
Sunday, December 24.....	No ECF
<i>Classes</i>	
Sunday, December 31.....	No ECF
<i>Classes</i>	
Sunday, January 7 2018.....	No ECF
<i>Classes</i>	
Sunday, January 14 2018.....	ECF Classes
<i>Resume</i>	

PARISH NEWS & COMING EVENTS

Church Calendars for 2018

The **2018 Church Calendars** are available. Please take only one calendar per family until everyone has received a calendar. We thank our sponsors for the 2018 Calendars:

Serenko-Claar Funeral Home (*Ss. Peter & Paul, Portage*)
Jean Kinley Funeral Home (*Beaverdale & Dunlo*)

2018 Offering Envelopes

The **2018 Offertory Envelopes** are available. When you pick up your box of envelopes, please also take those for family or neighbors who may not be present. Because envelope numbers change, please **write your name and address** on your envelope for the first few weeks of the New Year. Please continue to **write your name on your envelope each week** to ensure proper credit. If you are not registered to receive envelopes, contact the parish office at-736-9780.

Visits to the Homebound

Pastoral visits to homebound, those in nursing homes and other care facilities In preparation Christmas and Theophany are being made during the next few weeks,. If a family member would like to be added to the list of those visited for the Mysteries of Confession and the Eucharist, please call the rectory at your earliest convenience.

Liturgical Chant –Sundays after Pentecost

- The Troparion and other prescribed parts of the Divine Liturgy for **Sunday December 24, Resurrection Troparion Tone 4** may be found on [p. 141-142](#); and for **the Sunday Before Christmas, the Holy Ancestors**, on [p.285-287](#).
- The **"Our Father"**, **Tone 4** may be found on p.69.
- Please note instructions at the beginning of the Liturgy for opening hymns etc.

Schedule of Services for the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord

Christmas Eve: Sunday, December 24

Dunlo	<u>6:00 PM</u>	<i>Vespers with the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil</i>
Portage	<u>9:30 PM</u>	Christmas Carols
	<u>10:00 PM</u>	<i>Christmas Divine Liturgy</i>

Christmas Day: Monday, December 25

Portage	9:45 AM	Christmas Carols
	<u>10:00 AM</u>	<i>Christmas Divine Liturgy</i>

Giving Tree Project & Food Pantry Donations

Thank you for your generous response for the *Giving Tree* and for the *Portage Food Pantry* and the *Forest Hills Food Pantry*. *Food Pantry* Cash donations may also be made. We have also received a request for a *family of five* who suffered a fire for household needs: 12" skillet; two sets of twin sheets [twin girls]; phone; sweeper; blankets; dish clothes; towels; band aids; shampoo; deodorant; antiseptic cream; wash clothes. Please bring items to the ushers' room.

"Joyful Light" Seminary Newsletter

Enclosed within some of today's bulletins is a copy of "*Joyful Light*" newsletter, a semi-annual publication of the Byzantine Catholic Seminary of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Pittsburgh. It includes news about Seminary programs and also highlights the seminary students and faculty. You may also access the "*Joyful Light*" newsletter at the Seminary website: www.bcs.edu.

Remember In Prayer

Please pray for the health of *Elaine Kachmar; Alina Rusnak; George Yatsky; Barbara Raptosh; Roseann Chappell*, Tammy Whitcomb's mother; *Kathryn Mackovyak; Pauline Barelich; Ruby Moore; Charles and Joan Plishka; Tom Goncher; Patrick & Joan Ditko; Helena Ditko; Cliff Inman; Shawn Crum*; infant *Carson James*; infant *Basil*; *Ellen Colwell; Archpriest Dennis Bogda; Father Edward Lucas*; and all the ill & homebound.

2018 Assembly: Concern for our Future

Archbishop William Skurla has announced the **2018 Assembly: Concern for our Future**, which will be held on May 29 – 31, 2018 in Pittsburgh. Six themes were identified for the Assembly: 1) *Diversity*, 2) *Technology and Social Media*, 3) *Mixed Marriages*, 4) *Education*, 5) *Social Activities*, and 6) *Outreach to members who have left the church*. These were discussed and reviewed last Sunday, December 10 at a meeting here at Saints Peter and Paul Church, Portage. Our thanks to those who participated and contributed to this process. Our responses will be reviewed by the Commission preparing the Assembly. A second list which will be shared with all parishes. Parish communities will use this information to decide which responses will be the best suited for implementation at their parish.

Eternal Memory

You are asked to pray for the repose of the soul of **+Father John Salko** a retired priest of the Archeparchy who served at Saint John's Scottsdale, who has fallen asleep in the Lord on Friday, December 8.

Sanctuary Candle

The Sanctuary Candle is offered this week at Saints Peter and Paul, Portage in memory of **+Kiril** and **+Mary Garlina**, requested by John and Donna Novak of Erie, Pennsylvania..

The Sanctuary Candle is offered this week at Saint Mary, Beaverdale in memory of **+Paul Novak**, requested by John and Donna Novak of Erie, Pennsylvania..

The Sanctuary Candle is offered this week at Saints Peter and Paul, Dunlo in memory of **+George** and **+Ann Valko**, requested by John and Donna Novak of Erie, Pennsylvania..

OTHER NEWS & EVENTS

New Year's Eve at St. John's Hall Conemaugh

Please make reservations for New Year's Eve at St. John's Hall!!! Sun., Dec. 31, 2017, New Year's Eve at Saint John's Hall, 35 Main Street in Conemaugh. 8:30 P.M., Doors open. 9 PM--12:30 AM, Music, the Sound of "Swing City" [Jazz / "Big Band" / Swing / & more]

Beer, Wine, Soda provided; [other beverages BYOB]. Snacks, Hors D'oeuvres; Desserts; "Traditional Buffet" will be served at 10PM. \$25 per person. For Information and reservations call (814)539-8613 or (814) 539-8841

Hammond Organ Available

Our neighbor on Munster Road Hilda Sossong has a *Hammond Organ* which she would like to donate to someone who could use it. Please call 814-736-3838 for more information.

Homebound and Nursing Home Residents—Remember in Prayer

At Home: SS Peter & Paul (Portage): Dorothy Billy; Louise Halovich; Joseph Mandichak; Cathy Walters; Elsie Timura; Catherine Czapp **St. Michael (South Fork):** Michelle Maskal; **St. Mary (Beaverdale):** Nancy Andrako; Catherine McGough; **SS Peter & Paul (Dunlo):** Mary Louise Cimba.

Nursing & Other Care Facilities:

- **Saint Benedict Manor, Carrolltown,** Catherine Thrower [Dunlo];
- **Forest Hills Personal Care, Sidman:** Pauline Valko [Dunlo]
- **Meadow View Nursing Center [Berlin]:** Margaret Timura
- **Arbutus Park Manor:** Margaret Rachael [Dunlo]
- **Maple Winds:** Mary Yetsko
- **Autumn View:** June Nezneski
- **The Winds at Mattern Orchard, Duncansville:** Mary Vrabel
- **Amber Hills Ebensburg:** Edward Andrykovitch [Beaverdale]; *Father Ronald Borsuk*
- **John Paul II Manor, Cresson:** Kathryn Mackovyak
- **Rose of Sharon Home, Saint Michael:** Anna Garanich

The Philip's Fast – Preparation for Christmas

The *Philip's Fast* [November 15 - December 24] is our journey to the Feasts of Christmas and Theophany. This period of forty days is set aside for the disciplines of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Observance of this penitential season is voluntary

Liturgical Schedule 29th Week after Pentecost — December 17, 2017

Sunday of the Forefathers

Saturday December 16

Beaverdale **5:00 PM** Vigil Divine Liturgy

Sunday December 17

Portage **9:00 AM** Divine Liturgy
[+Frank Yetsko--40th Day Remembrance, by Pauline Yetsko & Family]

Monday, December 18

Portage **7:00 PM** Penance Service *followed by* Mystery of Repentance [Confessions]

Tuesday, December 19

Portage 7:45 AM The Third Hour
8:00 AM **Divine Liturgy** [+Emile Billy Sr., by Patricia & Charles Wilkinson]

Wednesday, December 20

No Divine Liturgy scheduled

Thursday, December 21

No Divine Liturgy scheduled

Friday, December 22

Portage **8:00 AM** **The Royal Hours of Christmas**
Portage **6:00 PM** Mystery of Repentance [Confessions]

Saturday, December 23

Portage **2:30 PM** Mystery of Repentance [Confessions]
Dunlo **4:30 PM** Mystery of Repentance [Confessions]

Sunday of the Holy Ancestors of Christ Sunday before Christmas

Saturday December 23

Dunlo **5:00 PM** Vigil Divine Liturgy [+Carolyn Garanich, by Pete & Theresa Valko]

Sunday December 24

Portage **9:00 AM** Sunday Divine Liturgy