



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
Rectory: 143 Church Drive Portage, PA 15946
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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

Monday December 25

Christmas Eve—10:00 pm

Troitsja Evan Lenz

Bulletins: Evan Lenz & Sydney Leturgey

Sunday December 31

Troitsja Sydney Leturgey

Bulletins: Ryan Lenz & Hunter Whitcomb

Sunday January 7

Troitsja Ryan Lenz

Bulletins: Christina Goral & Cierra Goral



Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

Celebrating Christmas is a splendid moment of the Church year. It is rich with family traditions and personal memories and is surrounded with the many festive elements that add to this feast. A wonderful way in which we express and amplify the meaning of the Birth of Christ is by Christmas Carols.

Last Sunday our Eastern Christian Formation students presented the *"Bethlehem Carolers"* or *"Jaslickari"* play. Sharing the good news of the Birth of Christ by visiting homes of fellow parishioners and singing Christmas carols has been a treasured custom of Eastern Christians for centuries. Our thanks once again to our Eastern Christian Formation students for their inspiring performance of this play. Thanks also to the Catechists for preparing the students and the details of costumes and setting. We are also most grateful to Kim Rucker and her family for the wonderful refreshments they prepared and served at this event.

May our singing of Christmas Carols renew within each of us the deep joy and simple yet sincere faith of the *"Bethlehem Carolers"*.

Our celebration of the Nativity continues this week with the *Feast of the Synaxis of Mary* on Tuesday, December 26 [Divine Liturgy at 7:00 pm] and the *Feast of the Holy Proto-Martyr Stephen* on Wednesday, December 27 [Divine Liturgy at 9:00 am].

Mysteries of Christian Initiation

Today, Sunday, December 24, *Emma Margaret Bailey* receives the **Mysteries of Christian Initiation** – Baptism, Chrismation, and Eucharist. Also, *Elijah Matthew Bailey* receives the Mystery of Holy Chrismation. Their parents are Lee Bailey and Jennifer Crum-Bailey. ***Many happy years!***

"O Lord, our Master and God, call your servant to Your holy enlightenment, and count her worthy of this great gift of Your holy baptism. Wash away the old self, and give her a new birth into everlasting life. Fill her with the power of Your Holy Spirit that she may be one with Your Christ..." [Service of Holy Baptism and Chrismation]

Pilgrim Vocation Icon Program

This week, *Kathy Sekerak* 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 Feast of Christmas—Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ

The *"Byzantine Catholic Hymnal for Nativity and Theophany"* will be available for services for Christmas and Theophany. They contain the traditional hymns for Christmas particular to our church in both English and Church Slavonic as well as the more common Christmas Carols in English.

The hymn booklets will be on the table in the back of church. Please remember to take a copy before going to your pew and return the booklet to the table in the back after the Divine Liturgy.

From *Christmas to Theophany* [December 25 to January 4] there is *no fasting and abstinence*.

**Byzantine Catholic Metropolitan Archeparchy Of Pittsburgh
Christmas Greetings 2017**

Christ is Born! Glorify Him! Dear People,

Heaven and Earth Rejoice as we celebrate the Birth of Our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ!

Each year we decorate, send Christmas greetings, gather our families, and come to our Churches to relive the story of the birth of a little child outside the city of Bethlehem. Our memories are filled with the images of icons of the birth, Christmas trees decorated, and beautiful Christmas lights which light up the inside and outside of our homes during the longest nights of the year. We include those with whom we celebrated in the past and who are present with us in spirit when we sing our songs of Christmas.

It is also a time we remember those who are in need this Christmas season. Like Mary and Joseph who were without a home on the first Christmas, many families struggle to survive. During the fall hurricane season many families lost everything. We are thankful for those who helped them through donations to collections to enable them to start over. Even though our parishes are small and often in need, the people of the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh generously gave to help them rebuild their lives so that they could celebrate this Christmas season with hope.

During the quiet evening and peace that comes after presents are opened and the Christmas meals have been served, we give thanks for God's gifts to us and to our families. We give thanks for being preserved from the disasters and challenges of the last year. If it has been a difficult year for you, we give thanks for the ability to recover and rebuild our lives. And, we give thanks for those who remained faithful as they have gone before us into eternal life.

As we give and receive gifts, we remember that our gifts are a reflection of the greatest gift, God's gift of his only begotten Son Jesus Christ. From the birth of a little child in a manger, we receive the vision from God of how to live our lives. All of our efforts to help our families and friends brighten our world and give us hope and joy of the life to come.

The Byzantine Catholic Church thanks you for your help and generous service during the past year. We hope and pray to continue to serve you in the New Year.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend William C. Skurla, D.D

Metropolitan Archbishop of Pittsburgh

Eastern Christian Formation Calendar--Christmas & Theophany Season

Sunday, December 24.....No ECF

Classes

Sunday, December 31.....No ECF

Classes

Sunday, January 7 2018.....No ECF

Classes

Sunday, January 14 2018.....ECF Classes Resume

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.

Liturgical Chant--The Birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ

- For the Vigil Divine Liturgy [Vespers with Divine Liturgy] on Christmas Eve [6:00 pm], a booklet with the service including all the prescribed proper parts will be distributed for use at this service.
- The Troparion and other prescribed parts of the Divine Liturgy for the **Birth of Our Lord – Christmas** are on pages 289-294.
- The Troparion and other prescribed parts of the Divine Liturgy for **Tuesday, December 26**, the **Synaxis of the Theotokos**, are on pages 294-297.
- The Troparion and other prescribed parts for **Wednesday, December 27**, the Feast of the **Holy Apostle and First Martyr Stephen** are on pages 298-300.
- The Troparion and other prescribed parts for **Sunday, December 31**, Resurrection Troparion Tone 5, may be found on p. 146-148; for the **Sunday after the Nativity and Memory of Joseph, David, and Apostle James, Brother of the Lord** on p.302-305.
- The **“Our Father”**, Tone 5 may be found on p.70.
- Please note instructions at the beginning of the Liturgy for opening hymns etc.

<u>Offerings for November</u>				
	<u>Nov 5</u>	<u>Nov 12</u>	<u>Nov 19</u>	<u>Nov 26</u>
Portage:	\$2,055.00	\$2,372.00	\$1,234.00	\$3,199.00
Beaverdale:	\$ 725.00	\$ 273.00	\$ 268.00	\$ 389.00
Dunlo:	\$ 235.00	\$ 155.00	\$ 88.00	\$ 461.00

Church Cleaning & Work Party for January

- The Church Cleaning for January is scheduled for **Monday, January 8**, at 9:00 am. *Please note* this change in schedule, due to the **Feast of the Circumcision—New Year’s Day** on Monday, January 1.
- The Work Party for January is scheduled for **Saturday, January 13**, at 9:00 am. *Please note* this change in schedule due, to the **Feast of Theophany** on Saturday, January 6.

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*; *Father Paul Tigyer*; *Trevor & Tiffany* who have asked for prayers for their pre-born baby; and all the ill & homebound.

Sanctuary Candle

The Sanctuary Candle is offered this week at Saints Peter and Paul, Portage in memory of *+Catherine Sekerak*, and *+Susan Sekerak* and *+Robert Novotny* requested by Kathy Sekerak.

OTHER NEWS & EVENTS

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

New Year's Eve--Sun., December 31 at St. John's Hall, 35 Main Street, 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" served at 10PM. \$25 per person. For 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

Liturgical Schedule *The Nativity of our Lord* — December 24, 2017

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

The Nativity of Our Lord--Christmas

Christmas Eve--Sunday December 24

Dunlo **6:00 PM** *Christmas Vigil Divine Liturgy*
Vespers with the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil

Portage **9:30 PM** Christmas Carols & Hymns from Compline
10:00 PM *Christmas Divine Liturgy*

Christmas Day--Monday December 25

Portage **9:45 AM** Christmas Carols
10:00 AM *Christmas Divine Liturgy*

Tuesday, December 26 **Synaxis of the Theotokos & Ever-Virgin Mary**

Portage **7:00 PM** Divine Liturgy

Wednesday, December 27 **Feast of St. Stephen-Apostle, Deacon & First Martyr**

Portage **9:00 AM** Divine Liturgy [+Tim Hanna, by Tony & Sue Kunko]

Thursday, December 28

No Divine Liturgy scheduled

Friday, December 29

No Divine Liturgy scheduled

Saturday, December 30

Portage **3:00 PM** Mystery of Repentance [Confessions]

Beaverdale **4:30 PM** Mystery of Repentance [Confessions]

Sunday after Christmas-& Leave-taking of Christmas

The Holy and Just Joseph; David; Holy Apostle James, Brother of the Lord.

Saturday December 30

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

Sunday December 31

Portage **9:00 AM** Sunday Divine Liturgy [+George Letzo, by Julie Brenna]