



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 to notify the pastor.

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

<u>Sunday November 25</u>	<u>Troitsja</u> Christina Goral	<u>Bulletins:</u> Cierra Goral & Bella Single
<u>Sunday December 2</u>	<u>Troitsja</u> Bella Koban	<u>Bulletins</u> Bella Koban & Ryan Lenz
<u>Sunday December 9</u>	<u>Troitsja:</u> Bella Single	<u>Bulletins:</u> Abby Koban & Evan Lenz

Parish Sunday Bulletin Available Online and by Email Transmission

In addition to printed copies of the bulletin, the Sunday bulletin is posted on the parish website, www.ByzantineCatholic.net and may be accessed there. To be added to the list to receive an email bulletin, send your email address to james_armand_spontak@verizon.net with this request.



Scripture Reflection...

During the six weeks following November 15, the time of *Philip's Fast* is observed in preparation for Christmas. Focusing our attention upon the approaching feast of Christmas as an event of spiritual renewal does not happen easily or without a conscious effort. In any attempt to approach this as a period for prayer, fasting, almsgiving we can become readily distracted. There is much that competes for our attention and time during the weeks ahead.

We are counseled in the Apostolic Reading heard today from Ephesians 6:10-17, "*Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the armor of God so that you may be able to stand firm against the tactics of the devil*" [Ephesians 6:10-11]. Several dimensions or tools of our faith are identified for their role and value in equipping us for the effort and exertion of the Christian life. In identifying and highlighting these, the Apostle Paul uses images of a soldier and his equipment for battle. He encourages us to put on "*the whole armor of God.*" This includes the "*shield of faith*", "*the helmet of salvation*", "*the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God*" [Ephesians 6:16-17].

Each of these can serve us as tools to assist us, to use this time of the Advent pre-Christmas season to accompany and strengthen us in our journey of faith.

Prayer for the Christmas Fast

"O Christ our Lord and our God, You did not think equality with God something to be grasped at, but You emptied Yourself, took the form of a slave and were born in human likeness. Enlighten us as we prepare to celebrate the feast of Your holy birth. Make us worthy to see the mystery of Your becoming human for us, while remaining God in eternity. Fill our minds with understanding, that we might see You even in the least of our brothers and sisters. You have given us the gift of Your Holy Spirit, You have loved us even to the point of Your saving death and glorious resurrection, grant us also a faith that cannot be confounded, a love that does not pretend, and a wisdom that is complete. You have said, "Unless you become like little children, you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven," grant that in this feast we may again experience the rebirth we were given in baptism, that we may sing out with the angels, "Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth to those on whom His favor rests." You have humbled Yourself, O Christ our God, may Your Name be exalted, together with the Name of Your eternal Father and the Name of Your all-holy, good and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and forever."

Pilgrim Vocation Icon

During the week of November 18, **Jackie & Amber Gordon** had the *Pilgrim Vocation Icon*. During the week of November 11, **Carol Goral** will have the *Pilgrim Vocation Icon*.

Please sign-up in the narthex to have the *Pilgrim Vocation Icon* to pray for vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and monastic religious life. Remember in your prayers the seminarians of the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh: **Deacon Tom Wells**; **Seminarian Kyprian Wojciechowski**; **Seminarian Robert Jones**; and **Seminarian John Welch**; and all the Seminarians and Seminary community.

Remembrance of Homebound Parishioners for Christmas

A Christmas remembrance is being prepared for our homebound parishioners. To help us prepare gift bags for homebound parishioners, please consider donating suggested gift items: *Seasonal/non-seasonal door decorations; tissues* [dollar store boxes]; *light scent body spray; word search books; lotions; lap blankets; shampoo*. You may also have ideas of your own. There will be a box in the narthex of each church to collect these items. Please bring gift items by **Sunday, November 25.**

Giving Tree Project &

Thanks for responding so generously to the *Giving Tree* requests for Christmas gifts for children in need. Our *Giving Tree* provides gifts at Christmas for children in need. The *Giving Tree* with tags listing gifts, recipients is in the back of church. When you select one of the decorations on the *Giving Tree* please sign on the list next to the tree [in the back of church], to keep track of the Christmas wish requests. The gifts are to be brought to Church by **Sunday, December 16.**

Food Pantry Donations

During the Philip's Fast donations of canned goods and non-perishable food will be collected for either the ***Portage Food Pantry*** or to the ***Forest Hills Food Pantry*** [from Beaverdale and Dunlo]. *Please do not bring food past the expiration dates.* Containers will be in the narthex.

This year, the *Portage Food Pantry* is assembling a December Gift with personal hygiene items to give to those receiving food. Each local church is asked to provide a different item. *Bars of soap* are requested from Saints Peter and Paul church, Portage. These may be placed with the Food Pantry donations in the narthex. Donations of cash may also be made.

PARISH NEWS & COMING EVENTS

Eastern Christian Formation Program...

There are no ***ECF*** classes today--Sunday, November 25 for the Thanksgiving Holiday.

Eastern Christian Formation classes are preparing for our parish Saint Nicholas celebration. ***Parents are asked to take note*** that practice sessions for this presentation will be held at the end of classes on Sundays, December 2 and 9. There will be a *later dismissal* on these days at 11:30 am.

Work Party & Church Cleaning for December

- The **Work Party** for December will be on **Saturday, December 1,** at 9:00 am.
- **Church Cleaning** will be on **Monday, December 3,** at 9:00 am.

Liturgical Chant –Sundays after Pentecost

- The Troparion and other prescribed parts of the Divine Liturgy for the ***28th Sunday after Pentecost*** [**December 2**], ***Resurrection Troparion Tone 3,*** may be found on p. 135-137.
- The *"Our Father"*, in **Tone 3** may be found on p. 68.
- Please note instructions at the beginning of the Liturgy for opening hymns etc.

Sanctuary Candle

The Sanctuary Candle this week is offered at Saints Peter and Paul, Portage, in memory of ***+Joseph*** and ***+Agnes Simala;*** requested by Marian Simala on the 69th Anniversary of their wedding.

Remember In Prayer

Please pray for the health of **George Pyo Jr.** [Memorial Hospital]; **Daniel Zalznock** [UPMC-Altoona]; **Father Edward Pyo**; **Marge Fleck**; **Dorothy Resconich**; **Joseph Raptosh**; **Bernadette Kostan**, **Brother Sean Mary Fitzwater, TOR**; **Patty Haschak**; **Emily Nezneski**; **Shawn Crum**; **Dorothy, Phil** and **Cathy Walters**; **Elizabeth Maskal**; **Alina Rusnak**; **George** and **Nancy Yatsky**; **Barbara Raptosh**; **Ruby Moore**; **Charles** and **Joan Plishka**; **Tom Goncher**; **Patrick & Joan Ditko**; **Helena Ditko**; **Cliff Inman**; **Father Paul Tigyer**; **Archpriest Dennis Bogda**; and all the ill & homebound.

OTHER NEWS & EVENTS

Portage Public Library Basket Raffle

The **Portage Public Library Basket Raffle** will be on December 9, from 11-1 PM. Join us for a special holiday basket raffle to support the Library. Chances are \$5 for 25 and can be purchased in the Library beginning on Saturday, November 24.

On Sunday, December 9, the drawings begin at 12:30 PM.

Metropolitan Cantor Institute

The **Metropolitan Cantor Institute** offers cantor instruction online, as well as through the annual summer course in Pittsburgh. The **Introduction to Church Singing is now free**. This class covers the basics of the cantor's role, the mechanics of singing, and the singing of basic responses at liturgical services. It can be taken at any time using a home computer, smartphone or tablet. This 8-week course, along with courses in liturgy and the Typikon, are free to all members of the Byzantine Catholic Church in the United States. . Please take a look at: <http://mci.archpitt.org/classes>.

Marriage Tribunal Workshop

Those interested in learning about the annulment process for divorced Catholics are invited to a free workshop with Jay Conzemius, JCL, judge and moderator; and Diane Kass, Tribunal Notary, of the Byzantine Catholic Metropolitan Tribunal and Diocese of Pittsburgh Tribunal.

Topics include: theology of marriage; ministry of the tribunal; marriage annulment types; why, when, how to start the petition for annulment process; and a process overview. Participants can ask questions and/or start the process. This presentation will be at Saint John's Cathedral, 210 Greentree Road, Munhall, on Tuesday, December 4, at 7 p.m. Reservations not required; if you plan to attend email archpitt@aol.com, or call Diane Kass [412-456-3033] for seating arrangements etc.

Christmas Preparation Retreat at Mount Saint Macrina House of Prayer

There will be a **Christmas Preparation Retreat** at the Mount Saint Macrina House of Prayer in Uniontown on Sunday, December 16, from 1:15 pm-5:30 pm. Includes Dinner. The retreat day will be presented by *Fr. Cyprian Constantine, OSB* on the theme: *"The Time of Salvation Is Near: Prepare by Prayer, Fasting, Repentance and Almsgiving"*.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be offered along with a conference and a prayer service. The program also includes dinner.

Offering: \$35. Registration by December 12. Call 724-438-7149; or email hpmsm@verizon.net.

Choir Christmas Program--Sunday December 16

The Pittsburgh Byzantine Catholic Archieparchial Choir will present *Christmas at the Cathedral* Sunday, December 16 at 2:00 pm at the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, 210 Greentree Road in Munhall. This program is themed "20 Years of Christmas Harmony" and features beloved hymns and carols celebrating the Nativity of our Lord and the many wonders of this most holy season. The hour-long program features selections from the Byzantine Ruthenian tradition in America, as well as those from Eastern and Western Europe.

A hospitality reception with refreshments and treats will follow the program in the lower level of the Cathedral. Admission is FREE, and there is also plenty of free, level parking.

Can't attend in person? Tune in at 2 pm Sunday December 16 to the Cathedral's LIVE webcast of the Christmas program online at <http://www.stjohnsbyzantinecathedral.com/cathedral/live>.

Portage Area School District *Secret Santa Program*

The Portage Area School District annual *Secret Santa Program* provides a joyful holiday for children in local families. Children receive toys, clothing; each family enjoys a holiday dinner, including turkey and pumpkin pie.

Donations can be mailed to: **PAHS Secret Santa Project; c/o Mary Ann George; 85 Mountain Ave.; Portage, PA 15946.** For questions, call Ms. George at 736-9636, extension #1310.

Wreaths Across America

Wreaths Across America of the Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War is December 15. A ceremony is at Noon in Prospect Cemetery. Please consider sponsoring a wreath for \$15. Sponsorship form is in the narthex. Help is needed to place the wreaths. To volunteer to place wreaths on December 15, contact Debra Novotny, 623 Grant Street, Portage PA 15946.

Homebound and Nursing Home Residents—Remember in Prayer

At Home: SS Peter & Paul (Portage): Dorothy Billy; Catherine Czapp Louise Halovich; Joseph Mandichak; Cathy Walters; Helen Zaher; **St. Michael (South Fork):** Michelle Maskal; **St. Mary (Beaverdale):** Nancy Andrako; Elaine Kachmar; Catherine McGough; **SS Peter & Paul (Dunlo):** George Yatsky.

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];
- **Autumn View:** June Neznieski
- **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
- **Just Like Home Personal Care, Cresson:** Dorothy Resconich