



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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Website: www.ByzantineCatholic.net

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

Sunday December 9 Troitsja: Bella Single

Bulletins: Abby Koban & Evan Lenz

Sunday December 16 Troitsja Lexie Slanoc

Bulletins: Hunter Whitcomb & Cierra Goral

Sunday December 23 Troitsja Bella Koban

Bulletins Bella Koban & Ryan Lenz

Parish Sunday Bulletin Available Online and by Email Transmission

The Sunday bulletin is posted on the parish website, www.ByzantineCatholic.net. To receive an email bulletin, send your email address to james_armand_spontak@verizon.net with this request.



“Question and Answer Box”

Earlier in the fall, a “*Question and Answer*” was placed in the narthex. This was to provide opportunity for inquiries on areas of faith and the life of the Church. A few questions have been received. I very much appreciate the significance of these questions. Some of the questions require some research to prepare an adequate and sufficient response. I will try periodically to prepare and offer some responses to these inquiries and others that may be received.

Question: “*Our Liturgy and traditions are similar to those of the Orthodox Church—what makes us Catholic?*” To begin it might be helpful to offer a few historical references. Yes, we share much in common with the Orthodox Church. We both derive from the ancient *Church of Constantinople*. For example, missionaries like Saints Cyril and Methodius who brought Christian faith to the regions of Central and Eastern Europe where our particular church developed came from Constantinople.

Constantinople later was called *Byzantium*. Hence, the term “*Byzantine*” has come to identify the heritage of those churches which trace their origin to the ancient Church of Constantinople. And so our Liturgy, the practices related to the Sacraments [Holy Mysteries], and the theology and spirituality of both Byzantine Catholic and Orthodox have this common root or origin. These have developed differently in some respects, but the essential elements are for the most part the same.

As to the question “*What makes us Catholic?*”, the separation between Catholics and Orthodox occurred in a more definitive way in 1054 AD. Reasons are both theological and political and deserve much more attention than could be given here even in a few paragraphs. Most Catholics and Orthodox who study this matter today seem to agree that it is the role of the Pope as the Bishop of Rome which is the really divisive issue. However, once again much more would need to be said about this. Our identify as “Catholics” and as “Byzantine Catholics” is to me a most important topic.

Parish Saint Nicholas Celebration

We invite all of our parishioners to our Parish ***Saint Nicholas Celebration*** on Sunday, December 16 following the Divine Liturgy. Our Eastern Christian Formation Students will present the “***Saint Nicholas Visits Mainline***”. ***Parents are asked to take note*** that practice session for this presentation will be held at the end of ***Eastern Christian Formation*** classes today--**Sunday December 9**. *Dismissal* is 11:30 am.

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

Mystery of Repentance [Confession]

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

- On **Wednesday, December 19**, at Saints. Peter & Paul, Portage at 7:00 pm. ***Father Brian Warchola*** from Saint Michael’s Catholic Church in Saint Michael will be present with Father Jim for Confessions. A Penance Service begins at 7:00 pm, followed by Confessions.
- **Saturday, December 15**, *Ss. Peter & Paul, Portage* at **2:30 pm**; *Ss. Peter & Paul, Dunlo* at **4:30 pm**
- **Saturday, December 22**, *Ss. Peter & Paul, Portage* at **2:30 pm**; *Saint Mary, Beavertdale* at **4:30 pm**

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

Christmas Eve: Monday, December 24

Beaverdale	<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: Tuesday, December 25

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

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** by December 16; or to the **Forest Hills Food Pantry** [Beaverdale and Dunlo] by December 8. The *Portage Food Pantry* is assembling a Gift with personal hygiene items for those receiving food. *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.

Giving Tree Project

Thanks for responding generously to the *Giving Tree* requests for Christmas gifts for children in need. The gifts are to be brought to Church by Sunday, December 16.

PARISH NEWS & COMING EVENTS

Church Calendars & Offering Envelopes for 2019

The **2019 Church Calendars** are available. Please take only one calendar per family until everyone has received a calendar. We thank our sponsors for the 2019 Calendars:

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

Liturgical Chant –Sundays after Pentecost

- The Troparion and other prescribed parts of the Divine Liturgy for the **Sunday December 16, Resurrection Troparion Tone 5**, may be found on p. 146-148; and for the **Sunday of the Forefathers** on p. 281-283
- The "*Our Father*", in Tone 5 may be found on p. 70.
- Please note instructions at the beginning of the Liturgy for opening hymns etc.

Visits to the Homebound

In preparation the Feasts of Christmas and Theophany, Father Jim will schedule visits to homebound parishioners or those in nursing homes and other care facilities. If you or 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.

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.

Remember In Prayer

Please pray for the health of **George Pyo Jr.**; **Daniel Zaliznock**; **Father Edward Pyo**; **Marge Fleck**; **Dorothy Resconich**; **Joseph Raptosh**; **John Rakar**; **Bernadette Kostan**, **Brother Sean Mary Fitzwater**, **TOR**; **Patty Haschak**; **Emily Nezeski**; **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**; **Kelly Colwell** Father Jim's niece; and all the ill & homebound.

Religious Gifts for Christmas Shoppers

- **Religious Gift Shop at Mount St. Macrina.** Visit the Mount Saint Macrina **Religious Gift Shop** at 500 W. Main Street, Uniontown PA 15401. Questions? Call 724.439.6180.
- The **Byzantine Seminary Press** web site at www.byzantineseminarypress.com displays crosses, icons, books. Call 412-322-8307 for information or to visit at 3643 Perrysville Avenue, Pittsburgh.
- **Christ the Saviour Seminary Bookstore** at 225 Chandler Avenue, Johnstown; to arrange an appointment to visit the bookstore, call 814-539-0116. Online orders at Orthodoxgoods.com.

Pilgrim Vocation Icon

During the week of December 2, **Jackie & Amber Gordon** had the **Pilgrim Vocation Icon**. During the week of December 9, **Carol Goral** will have the **Pilgrim Vocation Icon**. Please sign-up in the narthex to have the **Pilgrim Vocation Icon**. 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.

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 Saturday, November 24. On Sunday, December 9, drawings begin at 12:30 PM.

Portage Area School District Secret Santa Program

The Portage Area School District **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. Mail donations 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.

"Portage WinterFest" This Weekend...

The **"Portage WinterFest"** includes parishoner Dr. Jim Koban playing guitar and leading Christmas Carols at the Chatterbox, Sunday, December 9 at 2 pm.

Christmas Preparation Retreat at Mount Saint Macrina House of Prayer

Christmas Preparation Retreat at Mount Saint Macrina House of Prayer, Uniontown Sunday, December 16, 1:15-5:30 pm. Includes Dinner. 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; conference and a prayer service. 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 Archdiocesan Choir "**Christmas at the Cathedral**" on Sunday, December 16, 2:00 pm at the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, 210 Greentree Road in Munhall. A hospitality reception with refreshments will follow in the lower level of the Cathedral. Admission is FREE, and there is also plenty of free, level parking. Can't attend in person? LIVE webcast online at <http://www.stjohnsbyzantinecathedral.com/cathedral/live> 2 pm Sunday December 16

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** and covers the cantor's role, mechanics of singing, and singing basic responses. This 8-week course, and other courses are free. Please take a look at <http://mci.archpitt.org/classes>.

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 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
- **Just Like Home Personal Care, Cresson:** Dorothy Resconich

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 30th Week after Pentecost —December 9 2018

Twenty-ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Saturday December 8

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

Sunday December 9

Portage **9:00 AM** Sunday Divine Liturgy
[+Pasquale & +Elena Pieraccini, by Barbara & John Havrilla & family]

Monday, December 10

No Divine Liturgy scheduled

Tuesday, December 11

No Divine Liturgy scheduled

Wednesday, December 12

Portage 7:45 AM Our Lady of Guadalupe
The Third Hour
8:00 AM **Divine Liturgy** [+Barbara Carter, by Jane & Mary Lou Stiffler, Joyce Wert
Geraldine Berger, Kathy Stavoy & Beatrice Waxmunsky]

Thursday, December 13

Portage 7:45 AM The Third Hour
8:00 AM **Divine Liturgy** [+Joseph Lazor, by Kist Family]

Friday, December 14

No Divine Liturgy scheduled

Saturday, December 15

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

Sunday of the Forefathers

Saturday December 15

Dunlo **5:00 PM** Vigil Divine Liturgy [+JoAnn Tiller, by Cimba Family]

Sunday December 16

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