



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
Phone: 814-736-9780
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 p.m. (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 December 8</u>	<u>Troitsja:</u> Ryan Lenz	<u>Bulletins:</u> Jakob Czapp & Bella Koban
<u>Sunday December 15</u>	<u>Troitsja:</u> Easton Slanoc	<u>Bulletins:</u> Evan Lenz & Easton Slanoc
<u>Sunday December 22</u>	<u>Troitsja:</u> Kaleb Castel	<u>Bulletins:</u> Abby Koban & Ryan Lenz

Parish Sunday Bulletin Available Online and by Email Transmission

The Sunday bulletin is posted on the parish website, www.ByzantineCatholic.net. Also, like us on **Facebook at Sts Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church**. To receive weekly bulletin by email send your email address to james_armand_spontak@verizon.net with this request.



Feast of the Maternity of Holy Anna

Today we observe a feast of Mary the Theotokos, the *Maternity of Holy Anna*. The childless couple Joachim and Ann were given a child late in life. This demonstrated a wonderful and miraculous work of God. Anna, the mother of Mary the Virgin, joins the company of those in the Old Testament for whom a similar wonder occurred: *Sarah*, the mother of Isaac; and *Hanna*, the mother of the prophet Samuel. Each of these children would be a gift not only to his parents but to the whole of God's people.

So also, Anna is the Mother of the Theotokos; her conception in her barren old age is a sign that her daughter is foreordained to be the living temple and dwelling place of God's word.

"O Anne, the One who made waters gush forth from a rock bestows as a fruit of your womb, the ever-virgin Lady. Through her, our salvation will come. Because of this you were delivered from shame. No longer will you be on earth as a fruitless soil, for you have produced an earth which will bring forth the Tree of Life. According to his will, He delivered the human race from all shame when He became man out of his compassionate mercy."

"Before the nativity of the Son of God, it was fitting for the Father to bestow the most pure conception upon the Mother of God, who is betrothed of the Holy Spirit, that she might be filled with heavenly gifts in a manner beyond all other creatures. Glory and praise to the Lord who willed it so, the Creator of all things."

[Vesper Stichera, Feast of Maternity of Ann]

Parish Saint Nicholas Celebration

We invite all of our parishioners to our Parish *Saint Nicholas Celebration* next Sunday—a December 15 following the Divine Liturgy. Our Eastern Christian Formation Students will present **"Away in the Manger"**, the story of the night our Savior was born. **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 8. *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 **Thursday, December 19**, at Saints. Peter & Paul, Portage at 7:00 pm. **Father Vasyl Polyak** from Saint Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church in Patton will be present with Father Jim for Confessions. A Penance Service begins at 7:00 pm, followed by Confessions.
- **Saturday, December 14**, *Ss. Peter & Paul, Portage* at **2:30 pm**; *Saint Mary, Beaverdale* at **4:30 pm**
- **Saturday, December 21**, *Ss. Peter & Paul, Portage* at **2:30 pm**; *Ss. Peter & Paul, Dunlo* at **4:30 pm**

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.

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]. *Donations of cash may also be made and will be forwarded.* Please do not bring food past the expiration dates. Containers are in the narthex.

Giving Tree Project

Thank you for your response to the *Giving Tree* to provide gifts at Christmas for children in need. The gifts are to be brought to Church by Sunday, December 15.

PARISH NEWS & COMING EVENTS

Church Calendars & Offering Envelopes for 2020

The **2020 Church Calendars** are available. Please take only one calendar per family until everyone has received a calendar. We thank our sponsors for the 2020 Calendars:

Serenko-Claar Funeral Home (Ss. Peter & Paul, Portage)

Jean Kinley Funeral Home (Beaverdale & Dunlo)

The **2020 Offering Envelopes** for Beaverdale and Dunlo parishioners are available. The **2020 Offering Envelopes** for Saints Peter and Paul Portage will be available for Sunday, December 22.

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.

Online Faith Formation: *Preparing for the Feast of the Nativity.*

The Gift of God: Preparing for the Feast of the Nativity, by Rev. David Anderson on Wednesday, December 16 8:00 - 9:00 p.m. ET. As the Great Feast of the Nativity of the Lord draws closer, using the prayers of the Church in this holy season as our guide, we will ponder God's gift of Himself to us, and consider how we can respond by making a gift of ourselves to Him.

This course is offered as live webinar, free of charge. Register at EasternCatholic.org/Events.

Liturgical Chant –Sundays after Pentecost

- for **Sunday, December 15**, Resurrection Troparion Tone 2, may be found on p. 130-132; and for the *Sunday of the Forefathers* on p.281-283
- The "Our Father", in Tone 2 may be found on p. 67.
- Please note instructions at the beginning of the Liturgy for opening hymns etc.

Remember In Prayer

Please pray for the health of *Ella Hoffman*, great-niece of Dorothy Walters; *Barry Krisko*; *Marian Simala*; *Jennifer Crum Bailey*; *Michael Barelick*; *Kennady Grace Spaid*; *Joseph Lysic*; *Rose Single*; *Mary Donnelly*; *George Pyo Jr.*; *Daniel Zaliznock*; *John Rakar*; *Bernadette Kostan*, *Patty Haschak*; *Shawn Crum*; *Dennis Ratosky, Sr.*; *Dorothy, Phil* and *Cathy Walters*; *Alina Rusnak*; *Ruby Moore*; *Charles* and *Joan Plishka*; *Tom Goncher*; *Patrick & Joan Ditko*; *Helena Ditko*; *Cliff Inman*; *Father Paul Tigyer*; *Kelly Colwell*; *Sarah Kelt*; *Mary Beth Blackburn*; *Father Conan Timoney* of the Eparchy of Passaic, and all the ill & homebound.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of *+Father Gary Mensinger*, a priest of the Eparchy of Passaic, who fell asleep in the Lord on December 6. *Eternal Memory.*

Pre-Cana Preparation Program in 2020

The *Pre-Cana Preparation* program offered by the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh will be on Saturday, March 21 and Saturday, March 28 at Saints Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary in Pittsburgh. Those contemplating Marriage and the celebration of the Holy Mystery of Crowning in Marriage in 2020 are asked to note that the **Pre-Cana Program** is a required part of the marriage preparation. Information at www.archpitt.org; go to "Offices" and "Office of Religious Education".

OTHER NEWS & EVENTS

Forest Hills Community Band 2019 Christmas Concerts

The *Forest Hills Community Band* presents their *2019 Christmas Concerts* at the following:

- *Dunlo Fire Hall* Sunday, December 8 6:00 pm.
- *New Germany Grove hall* Sunday, December 15 6:00 pm.
- *Galleria Mall, Richland* Sunday, December 22 2:00 pm.

Free Admission

Portage WinterFest 2019

The Annual *Portage WinterFest 2019* is the weekend of Friday December 13-Sunday, December 15. Visit *Portage WinterFest* on Facebook for a complete schedule

Parishioner *Dr. Jim Koban* will play Christmas Carols on guitar on Saturday, December 14 in the evening; and again on Sunday, December 15 at 2:00 pm at the *Chatter Box* on Main Street.

Chili Cook-off During WinterFest

Looking for Chili Making Masters! *Hammers Street Church of God* is hosting a *Chili Cook-off* during WinterFest, on Saturday, December 14, from 2:30-6:00 p.m. *Prizes:* \$100 for the People's Choice; \$100 for Judges' Choice; Call 814-736-8216 to register and for more details.

Chili Tasters are also need. If you want to taste up to 16 entries, come to Hammers Street Church, 906 Hammers Street in Portage, 2:30-6:00 p.m. Only \$5 to taste them all!

Archieparchial Choir Christmas Concert The East Wind Symphonic Band and the Pittsburgh Byzantine Catholic Archieparchial Choir present Holiday Sounds: A Christmas Cookie Cabaret. Sunday, December 15, 3:30 PM at St. John Cathedral Center, Munhall, PA. Free admission; www.ewsb.org for more information.

Christmas Preparation Retreat: Mt, St. Macrina House of Prayer

Christmas Preparation Retreat at Mount Saint Macrina House of Prayer, Uniontown Saturday, December 14, 9:15 am to 1:00 pm. Includes Lunch. Presented by *Sr. Carol Petrasovich, OSBM* on the theme: "*Light Conquering Darkness*". How often do we really stop and reflect on how and why we are to prepare for the celebration of Christ's birth?

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

63rd Annual Saint Nicholas Celebration & Fundraiser

The **63rd Annual Saint Nicholas Celebration** benefitting the Byzantine Catholic Seminary of Saints Cyril and Methodius includes an additional fundraiser to benefit the Seminary--a raffle. The winner will receive twelve [12] **\$50 Gift Cards** to national restaurants, and \$1,500/cash. *The choice of restaurants will be determined on the locality where the winner lives.* Donation: \$10. The winning number is based on the PA Lottery Evening Pick 3 Number drawn on Sunday, December 15, 2019.

For a ticket for this benefit raffle, contact Father Jim.

Portage Area School District Secret Santa Program.

The Portage Area School District annual **Secret Santa Program** provides a joyful holiday for children in school district families. Children found toys, clothing, winter coats, and more under their trees on Christmas morning. Each family enjoyed a holiday dinner, with turkey and pumpkin pie!

Mail donations to: Portage Area High School Secret Santa Project; % Mary Ann George; 85 Mountain Avenue; Portage, PA 15946. For questions, call Ms. George at 736-9636, extension #1310.

Thank you for your generosity and for helping to support this project.

GCU Scholarship Applications Now Being Accepted

GCU will be accepting applications for their annual scholarship awards from October 1 to December 31. Scholarships are available for **GCU** members who are college students or those studying in any secondary education program. Also, two athletic scholarships (1 female and 1 male) are available for high school students.

For complete details and online application please visit: www.GCUusa.com/pages/scholarships.

Homebound and Nursing Home Residents—Remember in Prayer

At Home: SS Peter & Paul (Portage): Dorothy Billy; Catherine Czapp Louise Halovich; Joseph Mandichak; Michelle Maskal; Joseph Raptosh [*St. Michael's, Canonsburg*]; Stella Raptosh; Rita Thornton; Cathy Walters; Helen Zaher; **St. Mary (Beaverdale):** Nancy Andrako; Catherine McGough;

Nursing & Other Care Facilities:

- **Saint Benedict Manor, Carrolltown,** Catherine Thrower [Dunlo];
- **Arbutus Park Manor:** Margaret Rachael [Dunlo];
- **Autumn View:** June Nezneski;
- **Amber Hills Ebensburg:** *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

Pilgrim Vocation Icon

During the week of December 8, **Lori & Matt Murphy** will have the **Pilgrim Vocation Icon**.

The list to sign up for the **Pilgrim Vocation Icon** to pray for vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and monastic religious life is in the narthex. Please remember seminarians of the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh: **Lector Kyprian Wojciechowski**; **Lector Robert Jones**; **Seminarians John Welch**; **Luke Iyengar Nathaniel Tapsak**; Diaconate Studies candidates; and all of the Seminary community.

Liturgical Schedule 26th Week After Pentecost—December 8, 2019

Twenty-sixth Sunday after Pentecost Feast of the Maternity of Holy Anna

Saturday December 7

Dunlo **5:00 PM**

Vigil Divine Liturgy

Sunday December 8

Portage **9:00 AM**

Sunday Divine Liturgy

[+Pasquale & +Elena Pieraccini, by Barbara & John Havrilla & family]

Monday December 9

No Divine Liturgy scheduled

Tuesday, December 10

No Divine Liturgy scheduled

Wednesday, December 11

No Divine Liturgy scheduled

Thursday, December 12

Portage 7:45 AM

The Third Hour

8:00 AM

Divine Liturgy [+Ann & +Andrew Malchesky, by Paul Malchesky]

Friday, December 13

Portage 7:45 AM

The Third Hour

8:00 AM

Divine Liturgy [+Helen Ference, by Mary Frances Mandichak & Family]

Saturday December 14

Portage 3:00 PM

Mystery of Repentance [Confessions]

Beaverdale 4:30 PM

Mystery of Repentance [Confessions]

Sunday of the Forefathers

Saturday December 14

Beaverdale **5:00 PM**

Vigil Divine Liturgy

Sunday December 15

Portage **9:00 AM**

Sunday Divine Liturgy [+Frank Lysic, by George Pyo]