

*Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!***Schedule of Divine Services**

Saturday, December 17 5:00 PM +George Matus by Ray Graeca

Sunday, December 18 9:00 AM +Fr. Robert Karl by Jerry & Judy Rihn

Pages for Sunday's Divine Liturgy: Tone 3 page 135 & pages 285 - 287

Web Liturgy for Week of December 18, 2022 sponsored anonymously

In honor & memory of the hardworking volunteers of St. John Cathedral*Sanctuary Candle* is lit from December 18 – December 31**In Memory of +Alice Egidi by Anna Marie & Greg Chekan**

Schedule of Divine Services
for the
Feast of the Nativity

Friday, December 23

9:00 AM Royal Hours

Saturday, December 24 – Vigil, Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord

7:30 PM Compline with Carols

8:00 PM Divine Liturgy

Sunday, December 25 – Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

Monday, December 26 – Synaxis of the Theotokos

7:00 PM Divine Liturgy +Eugene Lucas by Karen Repasi

Tuesday, December 27 – Feast of the Protomartyr Stephen

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy +John Srsic by Dr. & Mrs. Severyn

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK AND SHUT-INS

AT HOME: Richard Lesko, *Ronald & Arletta Lutka*, Margie Seman, Teri Phares, Raymond Petro, Jr., Luke Pasternak, Marissa Stout, Tara Seman, Michael Matus, Patrick Singer, Joan Bodnar, Mary Ann Urban, Carole Srsic, Pauline Johnson, *Ann Havrilscak*, Aaron Spang, Janet Ducar, Mary Pavasko, Suzie (Wargo) Bodziach, Betty Martin, Teresa Sekel, Patty Schneider, Jeannie Pasternak, Janet Myers, Ethel Wahal, Joanne Smoley, Rich Scott

Italicized names indicate Parish Shut-ins. Other names are submitted prayer requests.

NURSING HOMES/REHABILITATION CENTERS/ASSISTED LIVING

Elsie Urban, Len Stagon, Eleanor Chekan, Sue Goda

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES THIS WEEK

17 Elsie Urban
20 Claire Hildenbrand
21 Arletta Lutka
21 Dennis & Pamela O'Hare (Anniversary)
24 Darlene Minydzak

OUR RETURN TO THE LORD FOR ALL HE HAS GIVEN ME:

Regular Offertory	\$3,230.00
Maintenance Fund	726.00
Holy Day	951.00
Flowers	395.00
Christmas	170.00
Archdiocesan Charities	10.00
Candles	85.25
Loose Cash	20.00
TOTAL	\$5,587.25

Special Donation

\$100 in Memory of +Joseph Raschak by Marilyn Beck Raschak

During these challenging times we thank you for your kindness and generosity.

In person Attendance: Saturday, December 10: **52**; Sunday, December 11: **58**

Live Stream Viewing: Saturday, December 10: **26** (WS); **44** (FB)
Sunday, December 11: **124** (WS); **74** (FB)

EMMANUEL MOLEBEN

The Pittsburgh Deanery will celebrate the Emmanuel Moleben for the Philip's Fast on **Sunday, December 18, 2022 @ 3:00 p.m. at St. John the Baptist Church, Lyndora**. There will be opportunity for the celebration of the Mystery of Reconciliation. All are invited and encouraged to attend as we prepare for the Feast of the Nativity.

COMMUNITY CHORUSES CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Mark your 2023 calendar **Sunday, January 8, 2023 at 3:00 pm**, for an uplifting inaugural event! Join your neighbors as they present a Community Choruses Christmas Concert on Sunday, January 8 at St. Gregory Byzantine Catholic Church in Upper St. Clair. St. Gregory's Chant Group will be joined by the Schola Cantorum of St. Michael the Archangel Roman Catholic Parish (St. Bernard Church in Mount Lebanon) and the Holy Trinity Carolers (Koliadnyky) of Holy Trinity Ukrainian Catholic Church in Carnegie for a program of seasonal choral and chant music in celebration of the Nativity of our Lord. Each group will sing selections and stage festive scenes from their respective traditions in Latin, Ukrainian, Ruthenian and English. This first-time affair will be presented at 3:00 pm at St Gregory Church, located at 2005 Mohawk Road in Upper St. Clair 15241. All are welcome to attend this gathering of joyous voices, which will be followed by a hospitality reception in the church hall. For more information/directions, visit www.stgregoryusc.org, or call 412-835-7800.

HOLIDAY KOLBASSI PICK UP

Pick up is **Saturday, December 17 and Sunday, December 18 2022 following the Divine Liturgies**. Thank you for your support.

"CATHEDRAL KITCHEN"

The "Kathedral Kitchen" has been restocked. We have Stuffed Cabbage: ½ dozen for \$18 and 1 dozen for \$30; quarts of *Halushki, Chili & Wedding, Potato/Green Bean, Mushroom, Chicken Gnocchi, Beef Vegetable, Creamy Potato, Pasta Fagioli (Ham & Bean) and Stuffed Cabbage soups* for \$7. If you would like to buy any please see Patty Bovee or Fr. Andrew.

PIROHI AVAILABLE

We have a very limited amount of potato/cheese pirohi available for purchase. Each dozen is \$10. Please see Fr. Andrew or Patty Bovee if you would like to purchase any. First come, first served basis.



Attentive to the Word

Sunday before the Nativity of our Lord

Hebrews 11:9-10 & 32-40

Matthew 1: 1-25

Our reading today is given to us on the Sunday which falls before the Nativity of Our Lord. In this gospel reading we see that St. Matthew has undertaken the immense task of documenting much of the genealogy of Our Lord and savior Jesus Christ. He traces the line according to Jewish custom through the father's lineage. In this case it goes through Joseph's lineage since he was assumed to be the father of the Lord. However in the gospel according to St. Luke we notice that Luke actually traces the lineage of the Lord through Mary, His actual mother, all the way back to Adam and Eve.

In this list that has been provided by Matthew we see many famous and some infamous names from the Old Testament. Within this list is a veritable who's who of the Scriptures. We see Abraham, the father of the Jewish people. We see his sons Isaac and Jacob. We see Jesse and David the king as well as his son the wise Solomon. And many, many, more. What we can't help but think about if we have read the Old Testament and have some familiarity with these names is just how truly human these men and woman listed here actually were. We see the faithful, but we also see some who lacked faith. We see liars and thieves, harlots and adulterers and even murderers. This is the family tree into which Jesus of Nazareth was born. I've often appreciated the saying "Friends are the family you choose." But in this case, the Lord chose to come into history and to make Himself a part of this family and it's twisted, often extremely flawed story. In this way, the Lord is not so unlike every one of us. If we dig back into our family histories we will no doubt find out that our family is not necessarily filled with saints but with a scrambled assortment of characters, some good, some not so good.

I want to tell you that the Lord did not make a mistake in coming to be a part of this family tree. The Lord became part of this family tree in order to save this tree, to heal this tree and to allow this tree to bear fruit that would feed the whole world, and indeed, the whole universe. The fact that the Lord Jesus chose to become part of this group of fallen men and women is a great blessing for us because indeed we are all fallen men and women. The lineage of the Lord is in some ways a symbol of the rest of humanity. We should fall on our faces and thank and glorify the God who would not accept to live far from His subjects but would love us so much that He came to be a part of this human experience. And He did this with no shortcuts. I read this week that a recent poll was taken in Britain. 2000 people between the ages of 21 and 38 were shown a picture of the

nativity scene and nearly 39 percent could not identify the baby. That is a sad state of affairs. How could the people lose sight of this most precious of historical events?

The Lord did not appear suddenly one day as a great prophet. Neither did He come riding on the clouds as the great messiah. He appeared as the smallest and the most vulnerable of all creation, a new born baby. He was fed at the Virgin's breast. He was nurtured and supported. He was hidden and protected while others sought His life. What love has the Lord had for us that He would agree to enter into such a life?! It is a mystery that we can never fully comprehend. Hundreds of years earlier the Prophet Isaiah received a vision and he wrote it for us "Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and His Name shall be called Emmanuel (God with Us)." God with us! Does this bring us joy? Does it fill us with wonder? Does it stir our senses?

Sometimes as Christians it is easy to be hard on ourselves. We struggle and we pray but we often have the nagging sense that we are not good enough. We get the feeling that we are still so far from perfection. And, we are right. We are indeed, still far from perfection. But don't despair, Christ isn't waiting for you to become perfect so that He can come to you. Christ wants to come to you because He wants to perfect you! He wants to make you holy. As often as you will open yourself to Him, He will come and dwell with you just as He came to dwell with humanity as part of this not so perfect family tree. Don't worry about your imperfections or your sins. The love of God does not depend on us. God sent His only begotten Son to wipe away our sins. Our task is to embrace Christ with gratitude. We can do this by being grateful for what the Lord gives us. We can do this by being obedient to His teachings, which enlighten and inform our lives. We can embrace Christ by settling down and praying thoughtfully, attentively, patiently, instead of rushing through it as if it is a chore.

We can embrace Christ by embracing His body, the Church, and allowing the prayers and sacraments to be a part of our day to day lives. We can embrace Christ by embracing the poor and the needy as Christ has embraced all of us who are poor and needy. We can embrace Christ by loving His All Holy Mother and the rest of the saints, who honored and lived and breathed the Lord Jesus. Those who honor the saints, honor Christ Himself.

Finally, we can embrace Christ as a newborn baby. Have you ever seen the way that people react to seeing a newborn? They melt, they are in awe, they pour out so much love and adoration on the little one. When we see a newborn our hearts can barely contain the feelings. Imagine just how much love and adoration we should give to the One who was born of a Virgin in order to die and give us life!

By Fr. James Guirguis

Mission Statement

Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Cathedral is a member of the Byzantine Catholic Metropolitan Church of Pittsburgh who through the Holy Spirit is called to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As a community and family, we grow in faith and in the image and likeness of God by dedicating ourselves to welcoming, celebrating and caring for all of God's people.

Mysteries of Initiation (Baptism, Chrismation & Eucharist): Must be a registered, active, supporting member of the parish family. Pre-baptism instructions are required. Contact Fr. Andrew to schedule.

Mystery of Crowning: Must be a registered, active, supporting member of the parish family. Must meet with Fr. Andrew before setting date and reserving your banquet hall. Pre-Cana program is required and three sessions with Fr. Andrew. The ceremony will be celebrated according to the prescription of the liturgical book of the Byzantine rite.

Mystery of Reconciliation: Celebrated Saturdays, 4:00 PM - 4:30 PM and upon request.

Mystery of Anointing: Celebrated upon request. Ideally celebrated in Church the Sunday before undergoing any surgical or other medical procedure.

Visitation of the Sick: The parishioners confined to their homes or nursing homes due to health reasons are visited monthly. Also, persons who are hospitalized are visited when Fr. Andrew is notified. It especially is important that a family member contact Fr. Andrew whenever a loved-one is hospitalized.

Funerals: Families of the deceased or the funeral director must contact Fr. Andrew before setting and publishing the day and time of the funeral.

Parish Membership: We welcome anyone to become a parishioner of St. John the Baptist Cathedral Parish. Only those who are registered are considered members of the Parish. When one registers to become a parish member they assume the responsibility of rendering stewardship of time, talent and treasure to this parish family. Worship at this parish is always expected. Registration is done only through the pastor by appointment. The Parish Office should be notified as soon as possible of any change of address within the Parish as well as one's leaving.

Godparent/Sponsor Letters: Must be a registered, active, supporting member of the parish.

Rectory Office Hours: Judy is in the parish office Monday – Friday from 9:00 AM – 2 PM. Father Andrew is available on other days and times by appointment.