

**SUNDAY BEFORE THE EXALTATION OF THE CROSS – BIRTH OF THE THEOTOKOS**  
**September 8, 2024**

*Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!*

**Schedule of Divine Services**

Saturday, September 7 **5:00 PM +Robert Wargo by Anna Marie Wargo & Family**  
Sunday, September 8 **9:00 AM +Mark Cifrulak by Nancy Cifrulak & Family**  
**+Bishop John Bilock (30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary)**

**Pages for Sunday's Divine Liturgy: Pages 156 – 157; 243 – 246; 248 – 249**

Web Liturgy for Week of September 8, 2024 sponsored by  
**Leonard and Felicia Simko**

*Sanctuary Candle* is lit from September 8 - 21  
**In memory of +Fr. Dennis Bogda by Elaine Bogda**

**EXALTATION OF THE CROSS**

**Friday, September 14 6:30 PM +Eugene Lucas by Marsha Hrabik**

**SUNDAY AFTER THE EXALTATION OF THE CROSS**

Saturday, September 14 **5:00 PM +Fr. Dennis Bogda by Debbie & Justin Cosgrove**  
Sunday, September 15 **9:00 AM +Bernard Oriss by Family**

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

Regular Offertory	\$1,431.00
Maintenance Fund	727.00
Holy Day	140.00
Loose Cash	20.00
Candles	66.00
Cemetery	65.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,449.00</b>

**Special Donation: \$300 by Kathleen Zavada**

*During these challenging times we thank you for your kindness and generosity.  
Please consider remembering St. John Cathedral in your will  
as a lasting legacy for future generations.*

## **PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK AND SHUT-INS**

**AT HOME:** Margie Seman, Teri Phares, Raymond Petro, Jr., Luke Pasternak, Marissa Stout, Tara Seman, Patrick Singer, Mary Ann Urban, Carole Srsic, Pauline Johnson, Aaron Spang, Suzie (Wargo) Bodziach, *Betty Martin*, Patty Schneider, Jeannie Pasternak, Janet Myers, Ethel Wahal, Paul Cherep.

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

## **NURSING HOMES/REHABILITATION CENTERS/ASSISTED LIVING**

Elsie Urban

## **SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES THIS WEEK**

- 9 Mary Katherine Janocko
- 10 Michael & Lorraine Pcholinsky (Anniversary)
- 10 Joseph M. & Kristen Varhola (Anniversary)
- 13 Robert Bodnar

**In person Attendance:** *Saturday, August 31: 34; Sunday, September 1: 50*  
*Beheading of John the Baptist: 15*

**Live Stream Viewing:** *Saturday, August 31: 23; Sunday, September 1: 56*  
*Beheading of John the Baptist: 14*

## **ECF CLASSES**

Eastern Christian Formation classes for the children of the parish are being organized. They will be conducted every other Sunday following the Divine Liturgy beginning September 8, 2024.

## **STUFFED CABBAGE DINNER**

We will be having a Stuffed Cabbage Dinner on Saturday, September 21 and Sunday September 22. *We are offering eat in or take out.* The dinner includes: Stuffed Cabbage, mashed potatoes, vegetables, roll & butter. **Price is \$13.00 per dinner. Dinners can be picked up on Saturday, September 21 from 3 – 6 PM and on Sunday, September 22 from 10 AM – 1 PM.** In addition we will be selling quarts of haluski and soup, our kolache and other baked goods as well as raffle tickets.

## **COFFEE & DONUT SOCIAL – SEPTEMBER 8**

Please join your parish family for a Coffee & Donut Social after the 9:00 AM Sunday Divine Liturgy on September 8, 2024.

## **BAKED GOODS**

We are looking for baked goods to sell during our Stuffed Cabbage dinner. Donations can be dropped off on Thursday, September 19 at 6 PM and Saturday, September 21 from 9 AM – 12 Noon.

## **GIFT CARDS AND LOTTERY TICKETS**

If anyone is able to donate gift cards or lottery tickets for our raffle trees at the Craft Show & Basket Extravaganza, please put them in an envelope in the collection basket and mark it “Lottery Tree.” Thank you in advance for any help you may be able to give.

## **BASKET EXTRAVAGANZA BASKETS**

We will hold our Basket Extravaganza on Sunday, November 10, 2024. We are in need of completed baskets or items to complete a basket. You can contact Diane Pochron at 412-303-6534 for any information or ideas for basket items. Thank you in advance for any help you may be able to give.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

October 19	Fall Craft Show
November 10	Basket Extravaganza
December 8	St. Nicholas Banquet-Seminary Benefit
December 15	Christmas Concert by East Winds Symphonic Band

## **SPAGHETTI DINNER**

SS. Peter & Paul Parish Club, Duquesne is sponsoring their annual Spaghetti Dinner on Sunday, October 27, 2024 from 1-5 PM. Adults: \$12; Children 6-10; \$6 Children 5 & Under; free. Raffles & baskets ... and as always all proceeds benefit the Church.

## **HOLIDAY BUS TRIP**

GCU Pittsburgh Constellation is sponsoring a one-day bus trip to tour The Christmas Story House and Museum as well as Castle Noel Tour on Saturday, November 16, 2024. Lunch will be included. The bus departs St. John Cathedral at 7:00 AM. Ticket Cost: GCU Members: \$140; Non-Members: \$195. There is a 30-guest minimum. Deadline to register is Sunday, October 13. If you have any questions, please contact Kim Kolesar at [kak210@comcast.net](mailto:kak210@comcast.net) or 412-999-5714.



# Attentive to the Word

*Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos*

*Galatians 6: 11-18*

*Luke 10: 38-42*

The birth of the Virgin Mary, which we commemorate on September 8/21, was prophesied by many Old Testament prophets. There is no account of her birth in the Bible, but information about her may be found in the Apocrypha. These are writings which are sometimes called The Lost Books of the Bible. The birth of the Virgin Mary as well as other information concerning her Presentation into the Temple, her parents Joachim and Anna, etc. may be found in the "Protoevangelion of James" which was written around the year 170. This book is often cited by early authors as St. Epiphanius, St. Andrew of Crete, St. Sophronius, St. John Damascene, and others.

Besides, these Apocryphal Books much may be learned about her life from the hymns for this day. St. John Damascene wrote: The day of the birth of the Holy Virgin is a day of universal happiness, because through her whole generations of mankind were renewed, and the grief of the mother of mankind, Eve, which was upon them was transformed into happiness.

This Holy Day is the first main feast day in the new Church Calendar which begins on September 1. This is appropriate for from this day the fulfillment of God's promise to Adam began.

On a multi-tier iconostas, in the center of the fourth row of icons we find the icon of the Virgin Mary. On the right and left sides of the same row we find the icons of the Old Testament prophets who made the prophecies concerning her birth.

Upon checking the Saints Calendar Books for this day we found that many famous and some miraculous icons are also commemorated on this day. Among them are the Pochaev (16th century), a very ancient icon in the Kholm Cathedral, The Kursk icon (1295), The Yaroslav Nativity icon (1659), The Siamsk Nativity icon (1524), the Sophia-Premudrost icon in Kiev, the Domnita icon in Chernigov (1696).

Roses are often used as a symbol of the Virgin Mary. If we examine the seed pod below the petals of a blooming rose, we will find that it is full of the seeds of new life, as was the Virgin Mary, who bore the body of Jesus in her being. "Thy Nativity, O Virgin, has proclaimed joy to the whole universe!"

*By Fr. Basil Stroyan*

## **THE EXALTATION OF THE VENERABLE AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS**

A tradition which took shape early and was definitely established in the Sixth century reports that Saint Helen, the mother of Emperor Constantine, rediscovered near Golgotha the three crosses which served to execute Christ and the two thieves. The healing of a dying woman

permitted Bishop Makarios to recognize, as being the Lord's Cross, the one whose contact effected the miracle.

The Holy Cross was preserved in the Basilica of the Resurrection until May 4, 614, the date on which the Persians carried it away after having taken the city of Jerusalem and destroying the Basilica. In 628, Emperor Heraclius defeated Chosroes and brought the Holy Cross back to Jerusalem. Heraclius took the venerable wood upon his shoulders and carried it back to Calvary with great pomp. According to legend, upon reaching the door of the church, the Emperor, magnificently dressed and wearing gold, was stopped by an invisible force. Zachary, the Bishop of Jerusalem, said to him: "Be careful, Emperor, that with these ornaments of triumph, you don't imitate sufficiently the poverty of Jesus Christ and the humility with which He carried His Cross." The Emperor laid aside his splendid clothes to dress himself in an ordinary cloak, and with bare feet, he was able to continue on his way.

The site where tradition places the discovery of the Holy Cross by Saint Helen is venerated in the crypt of the Holy Resurrection, in Jerusalem. This commemorative chapel was made form part of an ancient drain which existed in the time of Our Lord in Jerusalem. Filled up later on, it was used by Constantine's architects in the crypt of the basilica.

A part of the Cross, brought to Rome in the Sixth century, was exposed for the veneration of the faithful by order of the oriental Pope Sergius I (687-701), in the Church of the Savior.

That is why, equally in the East and the West, the feast of the Holy Cross had a considerable importance in the liturgical calendar from this epoch. It is made on Good Friday which is a direct reference. But, whereas the feast of Good Friday insists more on the historic event of Christ's Redemption, in His sufferings and death, today's feast more particularly represents for us the glorious aspect of this event, consequently, the instrument of execution on which the Lord died.

The Church calls to mind for us in the Office the Old Testament signs, the heralds of the Cross: the tree of Eden, by which we were lost (the Cross was meant to save us); Noah's ark which accomplished the salvation of the just (the Cross affected the same to sinners); Jacob crossing his hands to bless his son Joseph; Moses extending his arms to open in the Red Sea a door of salvation to the Israelites, then throwing some wood into the waters of Mara to sweeten their bitterness; the same Moses striking the rock with his staff to make life-giving water spring forth, and praying, with hands crossed, for the victory of the Jewish people over Amalec; the rod of Aaron; the brazen serpent, the predisposition in the Cross taken by the Jewish people around the Ark of the covenant...

The Cross is the instrument of the passion, the stool upon which the Lord rested His feet, the trophy of victory, the rampart of the Church, the cure of all ills, the honor of Christians.

Nevertheless, the texts of the Divine Liturgy maintain still more the spirit of the sorrowful Passion of the Lord, abandoned by His Father on the Cross, "a scandal for the Jews and a folly for the Greeks" (that is, the pagans).

This feast places before us the most profound mystery of suffering, which is no longer for us a revolting fatality, but a proof of supernatural love which lies for us in the Lord for the purification of our faults and already, by desire, in the exultation of His Glory. This holy day is a Fast Day on whatever day the Feast falls.

## 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 8:30 AM – 1:30 PM. Father Andrew is available on other days and times by appointment.