

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!

Schedule of Divine Services

Saturday, December 21 **5:00 PM** +Helen, +Stephen & +Stephanie Havrilla by
MM Nicholas S. Havrilla & Family

Sunday, December 22 **9:00 AM** +Arletta Lutka by Nicholas & Barbara Sowko

Pages for Sunday's Divine Liturgy: Tone 6 page 152 & pages 285 - 287

Web Liturgy for Week of December 22 sponsored by
Brian & Kimberly Piekut

Sanctuary Candle is lit from December 15 - 28
In memory of +Andrew Borsh by Agnes Borsh

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

9:00 AM **Royal Hours**

7:30 PM **Compline with Carols**

8:00 PM **Divine Liturgy**

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

9:00 AM **Divine Liturgy**

Thursday, December 26 – Synaxis of the Theotokos

6:30 PM Sister Elaine Kisinko for her health & Happiness by Cathy & George

Friday, December 27 – Feast of the Protomartyr Stephen

9:00 AM +Thomas Sarver by Paulette Winowich

SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS – DAVID, JOSEPH AND JAMES

Saturday, December 28 **5:00 PM** +Dolores Duda by Anna Marie Wargo

Sunday, December 29 **9:00 AM** +Elizabeth Bich by Pam & Brian Cody

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, Patty Schneider, Jeannie Pasternak, Janet Myers, Ethel Wahal, Paul Cherep, Andrew & Linda Deskevich, William Sabo

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

NURSING HOMES/REHABILITATION CENTERS/ASSISTED LIVING

Elsie Urban, Betty Martin

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES THIS WEEK

- 24 Darlene Minydzak
- 26 Robert Hildenbrand
- 26 Steven Ostheim
- 27 Mary Ann Urban
- 28 Joann Ostheim

In person Attendance: *Saturday, December 14: 62; Sunday, December 15: 64*

Live Stream Viewing: *Saturday, December 14: 24; Sunday, December 15: 65*

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

Regular Offertory	\$3,175.00
Maintenance Fund	419.00
Holy Day	55.00
Flowers	380.00
Christmas	260.00
Loose Cash	70.00
Candles	109.00
TOTAL	\$4,468.00

Special Donations: \$100 by Regis Onofrey; \$100 by Fred & Mary Ellen Petro;
\$100 by Anita Wisniewski; \$50 by Blaise Wisniewski

Cemetery Donation: \$1,000 by John M. Thompson

*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.*

I would like to wish you and your loved ones a very blessed Christmas season. May the reality of Christ's birth be ever present throughout the New Year. Be assured that you and your intentions will be remembered at each Divine Liturgy I celebrate during this season. With prayers that you will know the love of Jesus this Christmas season, I remain your fellow servant in the Lord,

Fr. Andrew

PRAYER BEFORE THE IMAGE OF THE NATIVITY

Lord, I pray to You and rejoice at the feast of the birth of Your Holy Son. Call forth the child from within me; cause me to wonder and to rejoice again in this ancient feast. With the shepherds, I come to the birth of Christ seeking a simple celebration, where the greatest gift will be myself given to You, O God and to others. May the star of Bethlehem, which shines brightly over our Savior's birth stand guard over us, filling us and all the earth with light and peace. Amen.

PEACE ON EARTH

When people attend church services weekly as they do other activities; when people do more praying than shopping; when there are longer lines at confessionals than at stadiums; when folks gather with family and friends than at night clubs; then we shall have "Christ in Christmas and Peace on earth."

THE CHRISTMAS GREETING

It is certainly commendable to wish someone a "*Merry Christmas.*" But how powerful a message is given by the traditional Byzantine Christmas greeting: "*Christ is Born!*" and the response: "*Glorify Him!*" Church Slavonic: *Christos Razdajetsja! Slavite Jeho!*

"JOYFULLY WE SING!"

The Archieparchial Choir invites all to share the spirit and joy of the Holy Nativity of our Lord on **Sunday, December 22, 2024 at 2:00 PM** at St. Elias Church, Munhall. A hospitality reception will follow. All are welcome.

HOLIDAY KOLBASSI SALE

Ss. Peter & Paul Men's Club, Duquesne kolbassi sale **DELIVERY IS SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21 AND SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2024.**

"CATHEDRAL KITCHEN"

The "Kathedral Kitchen" has been restocked. We have quarts of *Hahushki, Chili & Wedding, Chicken Noodle, Mushroom, Pasta Fagioli, Stuffed Cabbage, Tomato Basil, Stuffed Pepper soups* for \$7; Stuffed Cabbage: ½ dozen for \$18 and 1 dozen for \$30. If you would like to buy any please see Patty Bovee, Diane Pochron or Fr. Andrew.



Attentive to the Word

Sunday before the Nativity- of the Ancestors

Hebrews 11: 9-10 & 17-23

Matthew 1: 1-25

Matthew described the first circumstances of the birth of Jesus in the context of the prophecy spoken by Isaiah more than seven centuries earlier (Matthew 1:23; Isaiah 7:14). Matthew wanted us to realize that this birth was not an isolated event, but part of the unfolding of God's plan for the salvation of all. Since the very dawn of history when sin entered the world, a Savior had been promised (Genesis 3:1- 13,15). God revealed more and more of his mind to the people of Israel through faithful men and women who loved God and were open to his word. Matthew describes the beginning of that fulfillment. Jesus is Emmanuel, which means "God is with us." Salvation came in the person of Jesus Christ through the working of the Holy Spirit.

In Old Testament times, God communicated to devoted men and women, prophets and leaders in Israel, his plan and his desire to save his people. Their faithfulness and obedience to God contributed to the continued unfolding of the history of salvation. Because of their cooperation with God, we can see his marvelous love revealed through the centuries as he prepared for the coming of his Son.

Mary and Joseph were two who cooperated with God's plan with great faithfulness. In spite of many difficulties, Joseph was able to accept the plan of God in the circumstances of the conception of Mary's child. This turn of events was very different from any plans he may have had for his future marriage. He must have feared that Mary had committed adultery; yet, he was willing to cooperate with God. Matthew wrote that Joseph heard from the Lord - through an angel in a dream - and that he put his trust in what he heard. He did not doubt or fight against it, but acted upon it (Matthew 1:20-24). Joseph's response to God teaches us to listen and respond to him in our own lives, no matter how difficult his word may seem.

"Father, I want to be obedient and to cooperate with your plan for my life. Help me to be open to your word and give me the faith to trust and obey you. In these days before Christmas, I pray that you bring me into the eternal life of your Son who died to give me eternal life."

FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

"Today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord" (cf. Lk 2:11) From the infinite Kingdom of Heaven, the Word of God journeys to the small town of Bethlehem. The Light from Light enters a darkened world in the middle of the night. The Only-Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages, takes on flesh and is born of the lowly Blessed Virgin Mary. The All-Powerful God becomes vulnerable, unable to move His limbs as He is wrapped in swaddling clothes. The Word through whom all things were made, including blazing sun, relies on the embrace of His mother to keep Him warm. The King of Kings and the Lord of Lords is now under the guardianship of a humble carpenter. Isaiah says, "a child is born to us, a son is given us; upon his

shoulder dominion rests. They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace” (Is 9:5), but He sleeps this silent night in a manger — a trough for cattle. The glory of the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity is hidden under the veil of flesh, but not lost. His divine nature is perfectly united to human nature so that we might be able to see the living God face to face and be saved. Rejoice! Our God has come to save us!

Without eyes enlightened by faith, all that can be seen is a baby like any other. To those with faith, however, He is the Savior; He is God with us. Mary knows that “He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his Kingdom there will be no end” (Lk 1:32–33). Joseph knows that Jesus “will save his people from their sins” (Mt 1:21). The multitude of angels know Who He is and so they praise God saying, “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests” (Lk 2:14). The shepherds know that Jesus is the Savior because they are told by the angels. They believe and, along with the Magi, come to adore the Child, bowing down before Him.

Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary more than two millennia ago, yet we still say, “today is born a Savior” (cf. Lk 2:11). Jesus did not come only to be with those who would walk with Him two thousand years ago. He came for all. He came to offer salvation to all. He came to remain with us always. That is why He promised His apostles, “I am with you always, until the end of the age” (Mt 28:20). The Lord of all comes into our midst and makes his dwelling among us in a humble way. His divinity is fully present, yet unable to be seen without the eyes of faith. The Lord, of course, comes to be with us here in this church when the simple elements of bread and wine become the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ.

Today, the Lord’s manger is the altar. To this manger we come to feast. Today, the Lord is wrapped in swaddling clothes that look like bread and wine. Today, we are like the shepherds who come to kneel down and adore Him, our King, our Savior, the Christ Child. Today we, like the Magi, come to present gifts worthy of the King of Kings: the gift of our worship. Today, we sing with the angels who have not ceased praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest” (Lk 2:14). Today, we are like Mary, contemplating the Lord present among us. Today, we are like Joseph who watch over and guard the Lord’s presence. Today, we receive the Word made flesh into our bodies and souls. Today, we proclaim to the world with the angel, “do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people . . . a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord” (Lk 2:10–11). Today, therefore, is not unlike that Christmas day in Bethlehem.

The Shepherds and the Magi did not come to gaze upon a baby like any other. We have not come here to see the statue of a baby in a crèche as we could see in any store window. We, like the Shepherds and Magi have come to encounter the Living God. We have not come here today only to look back two thousand years in history. We have come here because we have seen the signs of the Lord’s coming. We have heard of His presence among us. We have walked in darkness, but have now come to be enveloped in Light. We have come to encounter Emmanuel — God with us.

Today is Christmas. Today is born our savior, Christ the Lord (cf. Lk 2:11).

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.