

*Christ is Born!    Glorify Him!*

**Schedule of Divine Services**

Saturday, December 20    **5:00 PM** +Andy Porvaznik by Drew Porvaznik

**Commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday of +Elsie Urban by Sam & Marilyn Manfredi**

Sunday, December 21    **9:00 AM** +Leonard Stagon by Ernest & Mary Ann Varhola

**Pages for Sunday's Divine Liturgy:    Tone 3 pages 135 - 136 & pages 285 - 287**

Web Liturgy for Week of December 21 sponsored by  
**Susan Sherwin**

*Sanctuary Candle* is lit from December 14 - 27  
**In memory of +Andrew Borsh by Agnes Borsh**

**SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS - DAVID, JOSEPH AND JAMES**

Saturday, December 27    **5:00 PM** +John Organiscak by Robert Bodnar & Family

Sunday, December 28    **9:00 AM** +Eleanor Chekan by David & Susan Pcsolar

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

Regular Offertory	\$1,542.00
Maintenance Fund	332.00
Holy Day	20.00
Flowers	400.00
Christmas	245.00
Candles	57.00
Loose Cash	40.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,636.00</b>

**Special Donation:    \$200 in memory of +Kenneth Hanselman**

*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, 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 Deskevich, Sr., William Sabo, Nick & Marion Mamula, Edward Salsgiver, Bob Stein, Dave Scott, Fr. Eugene Yackanich

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

## **DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES THIS WEEK**

- 21 Adelaide Hilzendeger
- 21 Dennis & Pamela O'Hare (Anniversary)
- 24 Darlene Minydzak
- 26 Robert Hildenbrand
- 26 Steven Ostheim
- 27 Mary Ann Urban

**In person Attendance:** *Maternity of Anna:* **22**

*Saturday, December 13:* **28**; *Sunday, December 14:* **30**

**Live Stream Viewing:** *Maternity of Anna:* **29**

*Saturday, December 13:* **41**; *Sunday, December 14:* **95**

## **Schedule of Divine Services for the Feast of the Nativity**

### **Wednesday, 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       |

### **Thursday, December 25 – Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord**

- |         |                |
|---------|----------------|
| 9:00 AM | Divine Liturgy |
|---------|----------------|

### **Friday, December 26 – Commemorating the Theotokos and Joseph**

- |         |                |
|---------|----------------|
| 6:30 PM | Divine Liturgy |
|---------|----------------|

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!*

### **CHRISTMAS CAROLS**

The Archieparchial Choir invites all to share the spirit and joy of the Holy Nativity of our Lord on **Sunday, December 21, 2025 at 2:00 PM** at St. Elias Church, Munhall. A hospitality reception will follow. All are welcome.

### **"CATHEDRAL KITCHEN"**

The "Kathedral Kitchen" is restocked. We have quarts of *Halushki & Wedding, Chicken Noodle, Chicken Gnocchi, Stuffed Cabbage, Pasta Fagioli, Beef Vegetable, Beef Barley, Mushroom, Tomato Basil soups and Chili* for \$7. **Stuffed Cabbage: ½ dozen for \$20 and 1 dozen for \$36.** Frozen *Potato/Cheese, Kraut, Cottage Cheese, Potato/Jalapeño, Levkar pirohi* for \$10 per dozen. If you would like to buy any please see Patty Bovee, Diane Pochron or Fr. Andrew.



# Attentive to the Word

*Sunday before Christmas - of the Ancestors*

*Hebrews 11:9-10 17-23 & 32-40*

*Matthew 1:1-25*

Each year, on the Sunday before Christmas, the our Church reads from the first chapter of the Gospel According to St. Matthew. Obviously, the first seventeen verses -- the genealogy -- are kind of "dense": your eyes glaze over reading them, my tongue ties trying to sing them in Church! But there's a wonderful message hidden in them, which, if you can discover it, points to the real meaning and power and joy of Christmas.

The key to the message is the women. This is a Hebrew genealogy; it should go from father to son, to son, to son, and so on. Who the mother is, is, genealogically speaking, irrelevant. But there are five women listed among Jesus' ancestors!

And Judas begat Perez and Zara of Tamar... (v. 3)

And Salmon begat Boaz of Rachab... (v. 5)

And Boaz begat Obed of Ruth... (v. 5)

And David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Uriah... (v. 6)

Who were these women? Tamar was the daughter-in-law of Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob, the "twelve patriarchs." He promised to marry her to three of his sons (one at a time!), but the first and second were wicked and the Lord killed them before they could give her a child, and Judah was taking his own good time before marrying her to the third, who was still quite young. So she took matters into her own hands, disguised herself as a harlot, and slept with her father-in-law, unbeknownst to him. Jesus is descended from Perez, one of the twin sons she bore him. (Genesis 38)

Rahab was a harlot living in Jericho. When Joshua, who was leading the Israelites after Moses' death, sent spies into Jericho to see how he could take the city, she sheltered them, and helped them to escape those who were pursuing them. Because of this, Joshua spared her and her household when he conquered Jericho. Jesus is descended from Booz (or Boaz), the son she bore Salmon. (Joshua 2)

Ruth was a foreigner, from Moab. She was married to one of the sons of a Hebrew couple, Elimelech and Naomi. When her husband died, rather than return to her own country and people, she decided to remain with Naomi: "Entreat me not to leave you, or to turn back from following after you; For wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, if anything but death parts you and me." Eventually, she was married to Boaz, the son of Salmon and Rahab. Jesus is descended from their son, Obed. (Ruth 1-4)

Finally, there's "her that had been the wife of Uriah, Bathsheeba. David saw Bathsheeba from his roof, one night, as she was bathing; he took a fancy to her, and slept with her. He had her husband, Uriah, one of his generals, killed by ordering him into "the forefront of the hottest battle" and commanding his men to abandon him there. David then took Bathsheeba as his wife. Their first son died, God's punishment for David's sins of murder and adultery. Jesus is descended from their second son, Solomon. (2 Samuel 11-12)

Why are these women listed in the genealogy of Christ? Strange enough (genealogically speaking) that women are listed at all -- but these women? And these scandalous unions? What's the message here?

Throughout human history, and in our own lives, we see -- painfully, tragically -- that which is whole, being broken; that which is high and holy, falling. The message here is that in human history, and very specifically, in our own lives, God can and does act to undo this tragedy. He takes what is broken and makes it whole; He takes what is fallen and raises it up! He produces, from this very humble, very "mortal" family tree, one who is capable of giving birth to His immortal Son. For the fifth and final woman in the genealogy is "Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ": Mary, who replied to the Archangel Gabriel, when he had delivered the shocking news of her impending maternity, with these words: "Behold the maidservant of the Lord. Let it be to me according to your word!" Mary, who is the fruit of this family tree, is the proof of God's ability, and His passionate desire!, to make right all the things that have gone wrong. By her free choice and assent, God Himself is born into the world to make it new, whole, and holy once more. By our free choice and assent, the same thing can happen to us, in us. If we are willing, God is able. If we are even willing to consider being willing, it's a start -- and trust me, sometimes it's enough! This is the real meaning and power and joy of Christmas. "Let it be to me according to your word!"

## **FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD**

“You know what happens when a portrait that has been painted on a panel becomes obliterated through external stains. The artist does not throw away the panel, but the subject of the portrait has to come and sit for it again, and then the likeness is re-drawn on the same material. Even so was it with the All-holy Son of God. He, the Image of the Father, came and dwelt in our midst, in order that He might renew mankind after Himself, and seek out His lost sheep, even as He says in the Gospel: I came to seek and to save that which was lost. This also explains His saying to the Jews: "Except a man be born anew." . . . He was not referring to a man's natural birth from his mother, as they thought, but to the re-birth and re-creation of the soul in the image of God.”

*from On the Incarnation by St. Athanasius the Great*

## 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.