



# Saints Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Church



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ADMINISTRATOR: FATHER VITALII STASHKEVYCH

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CONFESSIONS: 30 MINUTES BEFORE LITURGY

Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Tone 6

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### SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES FOR THIS WEEK:

Sunday	03/08/2020	11:00 AM	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of The Great Fast</i>	<b>+Olga Savko</b> <i>By David, Steven, Cathy</i>
Friday	03/13/2020	06:30 PM	<i>Translation of the Relics of Nicephorus - Patriarch</i> <i>Liturgy of Presanctified Gift</i> <i>Panachida for All Souls Saturday</i>	
Sunday	03/15/2020	11:00 AM	<i>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of The Great Fast</i>	<b>+Ruth A Drabik</b> <i>By Dan &amp; Monica Gazzo</i>

**SICK AND SHUT-INS** *Please remember in your prayers our parishioners who are sick, homebound, hospitalized, living in nursing facilities, or need your prayers for their personal intentions:*



*Andrew Cencarik, Don Downey, Phillip Fall, Anna D. Fialkovich, Mark Fialkovich, Benjamin Kaefer, Jr., John Kopay, Jr., Sylvia Kopay, Mary Anne Ference Mistick, Richard Paloscko, Nancy Pcolar, Bob Newton, Rebecca McCullough, Will McCullough Shirley Carmoney Torbich, Marie Churley, Joanne Skinta, John Gegick and Those serving in the Armed Forces.*

**\*\*If you have a family member in the hospital or other facilities, and would like us to remember them in prayer, contact Father Vitalii and we will be glad to publish their name in the bulletin – even if they are not a parishioner of Saints Peter & Paul Parish.**

### DIVINE SERVICES ATTENDANCE

The attendance for Friday, February 28, was 14; for Sunday, March 1, was 37.

### TRANSLATION OF THE RELICS OF SAINT NICEPHORUS, PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE



Commemorated on March 13

Saint Nicephorus was a dignitary at the court of the empress Irene (797-802), and then after receiving monastic tonsure, he became known for his piety. In the year 806 he was elevated to the patriarchal throne. The saint was a zealous defender of the holy Icons. When the Iconoclast emperor Leo the Armenian (813-820) came to rule, the saint in 815 was exiled to Prokonnis, where he died in the year 828.

In the year 846 the holy relics of Patriarch Nicephorus were opened, and were found incorrupt and fragrant. They transferred them from Prokonnis to Constantinople and placed them for one day in Hagia Sophia, and then transferred them to the Church of the Holy Apostles. The saint's hands are preserved in the Hilandar monastery on Mount Athos.

The saint left behind three writings against Iconoclasm. The main Feast of Saint Nicephorus is celebrated on June 2, but today we commemorate the finding and transfer of his holy relics.

**The Lord Calls us to do God's Will. Pray that you may know God's Will in your life; especially, if you have the inclination that you are being called to the ordained or consecrated life.** If you think God is calling you to be a priest, religious or deacon, **contact Fr. Vitalii Stashkevych.**



### PRAY FOR VOCATIONS

The **Byzantine Catholic Serra Club of Pittsburgh** is an organization that fosters and promotes priesthood and religious vocations in the Byzantine Catholic Church. They also support Seminarians, Priests and Religious Sisters in their sacred ministry. The Byzantine Serra Club meets monthly. If you would like to join, call William Kress 412-761-1499 or email [kb.kress@gmail.com](mailto:kb.kress@gmail.com)  
Join the Serrans in their work to ensure the future of our Church.

**THIS WEEK'S USHER TEAM - Team A**  
**OUR GIFTS TO GOD AND OUR CHURCH, MARCH 1<sup>ST</sup>, 2020:**

SUNDAY OFFERING	\$ 606.00
LOOSE CASH	36.00
CANDLES	21.00
MONTHLY	6.00
HOLY DAY	5.00
EASTERN EUROPE COLLECTION	195.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 869.00</b>

## CATHOLIC TEACHING

### ***"HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN AND IS SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE FATHER"***

"So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God." Christ's body was glorified at the moment of his Resurrection, as proved by the new and supernatural properties it subsequently and permanently enjoys. But during the forty days when he eats and drinks familiarly with his disciples and teaches them about the kingdom, his glory remains veiled under the appearance of ordinary humanity. Jesus' final apparition ends with the irreversible entry of his humanity into divine glory, symbolized by the cloud and by heaven, where he is seated from that time forward at God's right hand. Only in a wholly exceptional and unique way would Jesus show himself to Paul "as to one untimely born", in a last apparition that established him as an apostle.

The veiled character of the glory of the Risen One during this time is intimated in his mysterious words to Mary Magdalene: "I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brethren and say to them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." This indicates a difference in manifestation between the glory of the risen Christ and that of the Christ exalted to the Father's right hand, a transition marked by the historical and transcendent event of the Ascension.

This final stage stays closely linked to the first, that is, to his descent from heaven in the Incarnation. Only the one who "came from the Father" can return to the Father: Christ Jesus. "No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, the Son of man." Left to its own natural powers humanity does not have access to the "Father's house", to God's life and happiness. Only Christ can open to man such access that we, his members, might have confidence that we too shall go where he, our Head and our Source, has preceded us.

"and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." The lifting up of Jesus on the cross signifies and announces his lifting up by his Ascension into heaven, and indeed begins it. Jesus Christ, the one priest of the new and eternal Covenant, "entered, not into a sanctuary made by human hands. . . but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf." There Christ permanently exercises his priesthood, for he "always lives to make intercession" for "those who draw near to God through him". As "high priest of the good things to come" he is the centre and the principal actor of the liturgy that honours the Father in heaven.

Henceforth Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father: "By 'the Father's right hand' we understand the glory and honour of divinity, where he who exists as Son of God before all ages, indeed as God, of one being with the Father, is seated bodily after he became incarnate and his flesh was glorified."

Being seated at the Father's right hand signifies the inauguration of the Messiah's kingdom, the fulfilment of the prophet Daniel's vision concerning the Son of man: "To him was given dominion and glory and kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed."546 After this event the apostles became witnesses of the "kingdom [that] will have no end".

*(Catechism of the Catholic Church, "HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN AND IS SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE FATHER".)*

## PARISH MEMBERSHIP

We welcome anyone to become a parishioner of Sts Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church. 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 by the pastor.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT: BOOK OF SONG OF SONGS



Author: Solomon; Date: 970-723

Song of Songs is a mosaic of love poems which has a loosely defined plot. The original text does not include indications for each speaker, but most translations include notes naming the Bride and Groom characters based on the Hebrew pronouns used. Besides the Bride and Groom characters, there is a group of speakers often called

the Friends or the Daughters of Jerusalem (1:5). The book is attributed or dedicated to Solomon (1:1), but we don't have enough evidence to support or deny his authorship. Song of Songs is similar to some Egyptian love poetry of the same era.

Song of Songs has a long history of interpretation. Some commentators, seeking the literal sense of the book, have explained it as a celebration of conjugal love in marriage. The traditional Jewish interpretation identifies the Groom as the Lord and the Bride as the people of Israel. Early Christian interpreters understood the Groom as Jesus and the Bride as the Church. Both traditions have also applied interpretations which regard the Bride as an individual believer's soul. St. Bernard and St. John of the Cross are among the Church's foremost interpreters of this book. Other passages in the Old and New Testaments compare God's relationship with his people to a marriage (Isa 54:6; Hos 2:16-20; John 3:29; Rev 21). Therefore Song of Songs has often been read in the allegorical sense, which sees the Groom in the Song as fulfilled in the person of Christ.

The traditional interpretations of the book make more sense when the whole context of the Bible is taken into account. If we understand God's covenant with his people as a marriage covenant then it is easy to see God as Groom and his people as Bride.

Song of Songs can be a challenging read because there are many unusual words and proper nouns. It includes rare plants and spices along with unfamiliar place names. Yet the poetic imagery centers on young married love in ancient Israel. The man and the woman delight in one another's physical beauty and in the joys of conjugal love. The setting is in springtime at the royal court (6:8-9), in shepherds' fields (1:7-8) and in the royal gardens (5:1; 6:11). The Song is very sensual but delicately presented. It is not lustful since it does not reduce love to its sexual expression. Rather it extols the virtues of love, which is "stronger than death" and presents sex in the context of love of the whole person (8:6). The plot poses a difficulty because it is so inexact. It is no use searching for a straightforward story, but there are pieces of a story woven into the book. The climax is right around 5:1.

The book does not give us detailed history or theology, but if understood in the allegorical sense it reveals the passionate love of God for his people. Though he is a great and mighty king (1:4; 7:5), the Lord loves us ardently like a young Groom loves his Bride. The bridal imagery can be startling to us, but it simply shows the intensity of God's love. For all human love is a merely a dim reflection of God's perfect love.

## MARCH 15<sup>TH</sup> AFTERNOON LENTEN VESPER SERVICE AT STS PETER AND PAUL

Since we are having a Fasiangy and making the Haluski in house, I want to ask all of you to head the Soup Meal for after the March 16 Afternoon Vesper. This will all be your event/occasion. This will be easy. The soup, bread, probably a cheese plate etc. is all bought.

The Soup Meal is a special occasion for our church and as it brings the Lenten season of working to bring all of us together and serve the meal to the Bishop and the parishioners as a Lenten spiritual, reflective and giving time on what it means to be a follower of Christ.

**DEANERY PENITENTIAL VESPERS SCHEDULED**

The Great Fast Deanery Vespers will be celebrated, each Sunday during The Great Fast Season at 4:00 p.m. preceded by The Holy Mystery of Reconciliation at 3:30 p.m.

The following churches have been selected to host a different week:

March 8	SS. Peter & Paul Church, Duquesne	Homilist: Fr. Christiaan W. Kappes Confessor: Fr. Frank A. Firko
March 15	SS. Peter & Paul Church, Braddock	Homilist: Fr. Robert J. Karl Confessor: Msgr. Russell A. Duker
March 22	St. John the Baptist Cathedral, Munhall	Homilist: Fr. Frank A. Firko. Confessor: Fr. Valerian M. Michlik
March 29	Holy Ghost Church, McKees Rocks	Homilist: Fr. Andrew J. Deskevich; Confessor: Fr. Blichard

This will be a great penitential practice of prayer & self-denial if you wish to take it upon yourselves. Please make an effort to join us. Fellowship of meatless soups and bread will be served following the liturgical services

**PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS! ST. ELIAS EVENTS**

<b>Friday</b>	<b>March 13</b>	<b>Lenten Kitchen – 11:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>March 20</b>	<b>Lenten Kitchen – 11:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>March 27</b>	<b>Lenten Kitchen – 11:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>April 3</b>	<b>Lenten Kitchen – 11:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m</b>

In our menu: Baked Fish Dinner, Fried Fish Dinner, Fish Sandwich, Shrimp Dinner, Pirohi, Mac & Cheese, Noodle Haluski and Bake Sale.



**HOLY ORDERS**



It is the conviction of the Byzantine that Christ is the only priest, pastor and teacher of the Christian Church. He alone guides and rules his people. He alone forgives sins and offers communion with God, his Father.

It is also the Eastern conviction that Christ has not abandoned his people, but that he remains with his Church as its living and unique head. Christ remains present and active in the Church through his Holy Spirit.

The sacrament of holy orders in the Christian Church is the objective guarantee of the perpetual presence of Christ with his people. The bishops, priests, and deacons of the Church have no other function or service than to manifest the presence and action of Christ to his people. In this sense, the clergy do not act in behalf of Christ or instead of Christ as though he himself were absent. They are neither vicars of Christ, nor substitutes for Christ nor representatives of Christ.

Christ is present now, always, and forever in his Church. The sacramental ministry of the Church—the bishops, priests, and deacons—receive the gift of the Holy Spirit to manifest Christ in the Spirit to men. Thus, through His chosen ministers, Christ exercises and realizes His unique and exclusive function as priest, perpetually offering Himself as the perfect sacrifice to the Father on behalf of His human brothers and sisters. Through His ministers in the Church, Christ also acts as teacher, Himself proclaiming the divine words of the Father to men. He acts as the good shepherd, the one pastor who guides His flock. He acts as the forgiver and healer, remitting sins and curing the ills of men—physical, mental and spiritual. He acts as bishop, overseeing the community which He has gathered for Himself (1 Pet 2.25). He acts as deacon (which means servant or minister) for He alone is the suffering servant of the Father Who has come “not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many” (Mt 20.28).



The sacrament of holy orders takes its name from the fact that the bishops, priests and deacons give order to the Church. They guarantee the continuity and unity of the Church from age to age and from place to place from the time of Christ and the apostles until the establishment of God’s Kingdom in eternity.

As the apostles received the special gift of God to go forth and to make Christ present to men in all of the manifold aspects of his person and work, so the clergy of the Church receive the gift of God’s Spirit to maintain and to manifest Christ’s presence and action in the churches.

It is the doctrine of the Church that the clergy must strive to fulfill the grace given to them with the gift of the “laying on of hands” in the most perfect way possible. But it is also the doctrine of the Church that the reality and effectiveness of the sacraments of the Church ministered by the clergy do not depend upon the personal virtue of the ministers, but upon the presence of Christ who acts in his Church by the Holy Spirit.

*To be continued ...*

**JOAN SKINTA AT CARE CENTER**

Woodhaven Care Ceeter, c/o Joan Skinta Room 107, 2400 McGinley Rd., Monroeville Pa 15146

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

For security reasons, during 11:00 AM Sunday Liturgy, **the back door will be locked at 11:15 AM.** Also, please remember during the Weekly Liturgy, the back door will be locked. Please park your car in front of the church.

We all know what it’s like to want to stay in bed in the morning. We’re sleepy, comfortable, and warm; we would like to turn off the alarm clock and go back to sleep. Now it’s fine to do that every once in a while, when we really don’t need to get up and get going. But if we get in the habit of sleeping in, we’ll probably lose our jobs, neglect our families, and be less than the people God wants us to be.

And if we’re tempted to stay in bed sometimes, imagine how the paralyzed man in our gospel reading felt. He had probably stayed in bed his whole life; he could move only if people carried him. But Jesus Christ not only forgave his sins that day, He gave him the ability to stand up and walk. In fact, He commanded Him to “arise, take up your bed, and go to your home.” He was to get on with living the new life that Christ had given him.

But think for a minute about how hard it may have been for him to obey Christ’s command. He knew how to live as a paralyzed person, how to be dependent upon others. That’s probably the only life he had known and all of a sudden that changed.

Sometimes even people who know that they have ruined their lives are often terrified by the possibility of living differently. They may not like how they’ve lived so far, but at least they know how to live that way, they know what to expect. They’ve become comfortable with their lifestyles at some level. The same may have been true of this paralyzed man. So it was probably with fear and trembling that He got up, picked up his bed, and walked home.

In this season of Great Fast, we are all called to see ourselves in this paralyzed man. For we have become too comfortable with our own sins, our own habits of thought, word, and deed. Despite our best intentions, we live like slaves to our self-centered desires: pride, envy, anger, lust, self-righteousness, fear, laziness, so easily paralyze us. Sin has put down roots in our bad habits of how we think, act, speak, and relate to others and to God. We often can’t even imagine what it’s like to live free from the domination of our own passions and sins.

The good news is that we can all still do what so many truly repentant sinners did when they encountered Jesus: In humility, they opened their lives to His mercy. They touched the hem of His garment and fell down before Him; they cried, “Lord, I believe, help my unbelief” from the depths of their hearts; they left their nets, gave their goods to the poor, and literally gave up their lives to be His disciples and apostles. Like us, they were weakened by their sins and afraid of what the new life in Christ would entail. But they still obeyed our Lord’s command to: “Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.”

In Great Fast, we pray, fast, give to the needy, and mend our broken relationships with one another; as we prepare to celebrate the joy of Christ’s resurrection, we should turn away from any sin, bad habit, or unhealthy relationship that isn’t pleasing to God. If we take Fast seriously, we will often feel like someone recovering from paralysis. We will struggle, become uncomfortable, and wrestle with fears, frustrations, and doubts. Often, we will be tempted to stay in bed, to give up and take it easy. How tragic it would have been for the man in our gospel lesson to have done that, to have disobeyed the Lord’s command to embrace His healing and move forward into a new life. And how tragic it will be for us if we choose the false comfort of our sins and passions over the glorious freedom of the children of God.

But how truly wonderful it will be for us to use Great Fast as a time to wake-up, to recognize that it is through the challenges of repentance that we open our lives to the healing and peace of the Lord. Let us use these few weeks to turn from the weakness and slavery of sin to enter more fully into the strength and blessedness of life eternal that shines so brightly at Pascha. For the Lord’s command also applies to us: “Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.” In other words, accept and live the new life that Christ has given you. This was good, though difficult, news for the paralyzed man to receive; now it’s our turn to follow his example, to trust that the Lord really can heal us, and to obey His command to get on with our lives to the glory of God.

# THROUGH THE ROOF

## (MARK 2:1-12)

B O O T T W I J T P G N L L P H I U Q J A D B K C  
 Y J S Y C Q U K T Y D Y U U A J I M T T U K H B S  
 K Q L O J B A S N F V M F W D Y B F P W V B N I G  
 P S K F W P F M H E B S C R I B E S L K A U E F E  
 U P O A Y I A O R O K A L Q Y K R O J M E Y E W Y  
 Y O W V J T U R R J G O G O D P W S N I S E M L U  
 R M V C T S F J A W C S R N S G G E N O S A E R W  
 F B J A E A T T W L Z V Y B M K T P B L I E J J I  
 K B B L N L Q A P S Y Y H I U G F K J U S J Q B A  
 T O W O A B H A N S H T B S B P O J H D G A V B C  
 G H E Z R O O M K I K K I V S S R F H E J V E K L  
 E S L M S Z A U B A K W O C E O G T T H P K V J P  
 Y S V F L Z D E C G R L I U J T I Y J C Z U V K A  
 G R J M P N E N D W E W R U M A V T Y A F O L U I  
 M V D E U K B C W A N W F A F W E W R E B Z A M E  
 Q N D Q S O U Q A F C Z Y D G I N U D R B B I B Y  
 H G Z S T U U B K P V O B D O H K G C P K A L Y A  
 V D Z Q N B S N I U E S I R A J S H G G M M R R Q  
 V P O V D H T A E T C R D W V D T B S C Z Z U T A  
 G K W P R F T Y P O C A N T S U R V Q V B B U T O  
 S S H B A V D Q I M H K F A P O A S U U I T C C Y  
 N P Q Q Z I D U Y J R U B L U L E U M B Z P Q M E  
 B P I J E O Q Q B K E N E A T M H L J N F Z N P A  
 K R L I M N C T B G M U H O W O W H Q H Z F R M E  
 K B H C D H U H P H Q D T A B U I U L B B V U L Q

**ARISE  
 BED  
 BROKEN  
 CAPERNAUM  
 FAITH  
 FORGIVEN**

**GOD  
 HEARTS  
 HOUSE  
 JESUS  
 PARALYTIC  
 PREACHED**

**REASON  
 ROOF  
 ROOM  
 SCRIBES  
 SINS**