

HOLY SPIRIT BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

4815 5th Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213 - Rectory Phone: 412-687-1220

Website: holyspiritbycath.com - Email: holyspiritinformation@gmail.com

Administrator: Reverend Michael D. Kunitz, M. Div.

Email: FrMichaelKunitz@gmail.com

Cantor: Julia Revilak & Family

Sub-Deacon: Raphael Ruggiero

February 16, 2025

Sunday of the Prodigal Son

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

Sunday, Feb 16: Sunday of the Prodigal Son

10:25am Rosary, 10:45 am: Third Hour Prayer, 11:00 am Divine Liturgy

IHO Martina Revilak's Birthday by her Family

Monday, Feb 17: 6:00 pm Confessions, 7:00 pm Daily Vespers

Thursday, Feb 20: 12:00 pm Divine Liturgy LIVE STREAM from The Sharbel Center*

Friday, Feb 21: 6:00 pm Confessions, 7:00 pm Divine Liturgy

IHO Ann Csiszar 97th Birthday by the Revilak Family

Saturday, Feb 22: 1st All Souls Saturday

11:00 AM Divine Liturgy with Panachida

5:00 pm Confessions, 6:00 pm Great Vespers

Sunday, Feb 23: Sunday of Meat Fare

10:25am Rosary, 10:45 am: Third Hour Prayer, 11:00 am Divine Liturgy

IHO Sub-Deacon: Raphael Ruggiero's Birthday

Plenty of Divine Liturgies are open for intentions for this new year. If you would like to make an intention for a Liturgy, please call the office or fill out request form in the back of the church and give it to Fr. Michael.

SEEKING VOLUNTEERS: If you are interested in learning to lead Matins as a Reader's Service on Sunday before Liturgy, please see Father Michael. Matins is celebrated on the first Sunday of the month unless otherwise noted.

HOUSE BLESSINGS FOR THE THEOPHANY SEASON: Fr. Michael will be blessing homes as part of our Theophany Season tradition. Please sign up in the back of the church (narthex). This blessing can be done every year!

***FR. MICHAEL AT THE SHARBEL CENTER:** Fr. Michael has been asked to offer Divine Liturgy on Thursdays at the Sharbel Center, pending approval from the Metropolitan. Liturgy is at noon and can be watched through their website: www.saintsharbelcenter.org

PARISH PASTORAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING TODAY! We will be meeting in the hall after Liturgy.

MEATFARE SUNDAY POTLUCK: Next Sunday is the Sunday of Meatfare. Please bring a dish to pass for the parish's potluck meal following the Liturgy next Sunday. A sign-up sheet can be found in the back of the Church.

ORATORY LECTURE SERIES: THE ICONOCLASM CONTROVESRY & THE 2ND COUNCIL OF NICAIA

Thursday, Feb. 27 at The Pittsburgh Oratory 4450 Bayard Street. 6:30 pm Refreshments 7 pm Lecture/Discussion

Are Sacred Images idolatrous? Should we have Christian artwork? How do we understand the Commandment against graven images? Come join St. John Damascene, the Doctor of Christian Art to learn what the church teaches us about Sacred Images, Icons and how to pray with them.

PREPARATION FOR GREAT FAST: This pre-Lenten season is a valuable time for us to discern how we will use the Great Fast to strengthen our relationship with God. Prayer, fasting and alms giving can vary for each of us. Please see Fr. Michael with any questions.

COFFEE SOCIAL VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: In addition to attending services together, it is important that we spend time in conversation with one another. To make it truly a time of sharing – we ask everyone to sign up to host a Sunday. We look forward to seeing you!

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

May God grant our community many happy and blessed years!

Feb. 17 – Martina Revilak

Feb. 27 – Sub-Deacon Raffaele Ruggiero

ICONS AVAILABLE: There are several blessed icons in the church hall, there is no charge to take these home, though a free will offering for the benefit of the parish is welcome.

DEANERY PENITENTIAL VESPERS: The annual Great Fast Deanery Vespers schedule has been finalized! Every Sunday afternoon during the Great Fast, clergy and laity from all over the Deanery come together in a different parish to participate in the sacrament of Reconciliation at 3:30 Pm and to pray the Vespers, the evening prayer for Sundays during this penitential season at 4:00 PM. Each Vespers is followed by a meager meal of meatless soup. This is a wonderful opportunity for prayer, penance, self-denial, and fellowship. The schedule for this year is as follows:

March 9: St. John the Baptist Cathedral, Munhall PA with Homilist Fr. David Bosnich

March 16: Ss. Peter & Paul Church, Tarentum PA with Homilist Fr. Radko Blichar

March 23: St. Gregory Church, Upper St. Clair PA with Homilist Fr. Tyler Wisniewski

March 30: Ss. Peter & Paul Church, Duquesne PA with Homilist Fr. Frank Firko

April 6: St. Andrew Church, Gibsonia PA with Homilist Fr. Michael Kunitz

EPISTLE 1st Corinthians 6:12-20

“Everything is lawful for me,” but not everything is beneficial. “Everything is lawful for me,” but I will not let myself be dominated by anything. “Food for the stomach and the stomach for food,” but God will do away with both the one and the other. The body, however, is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body; God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take Christ’s members and make them the members of a prostitute? Of course not! [Or] do you not know that anyone who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For “the two,” it says, “will become one flesh.” But whoever is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Avoid immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the immoral person sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been purchased at a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body.

~In the world of twenty centuries past, the city of Corinth had a notorious reputation for its lewdness, loose-living, and promiscuity. In today’s holy epistle lesson, which is taken from his first letter to the Christians at Corinth, the Holy Apostle Paul warns them about the sins of sexual immorality. The Corinthians are warned sternly by Paul to remember that the Holy Spirit dwells within every Christian’s body. Thus, an intimate relationship exists between Jesus and each one of His followers. We long to solidify permanently this union with the Lord; but because we are yet in this life, we somehow feel incomplete and unfulfilled. We are detached or exiled from a lasting union with God. Paul emphasizes that there are sinful acts through which we intensify our estrangement from the state and place that we should be, that is united

with our Savior. When we perceive our alienation from God or sinfulness, then such a recognition should impel us to have SORROW for past sins. Through such contrition, we can experience true reunification with God our Father.

GOSPEL: Luke 15:11-32

Then he said, “A man had two sons, and the younger son said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of your estate that should come to me.’ So, the father divided the property between them. After a few days, the younger son collected all his belongings and set off to a distant country where he squandered his inheritance on a life of dissipation. When he had freely spent everything, a severe famine struck that country, and he found himself in dire need. So, he hired himself out to one of the local citizens who sent him to his farm to tend the swine. And he longed to eat his fill of the pods on which the swine fed, but nobody gave him any. Coming to his senses he thought, ‘How many of my father’s hired workers have more than enough food to eat, but here am I, dying from hunger. I shall get up and go to my father and I shall say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as you would treat one of your hired workers.”’ So, he got up and went back to his father. While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him, and was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him. His son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son.’ But his father ordered his servants, ‘Quickly bring the finest robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Take the fattened calf and slaughter it. Then let us celebrate with a feast, because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found.’ Then the celebration began. Now the older son had been out in the field and, on his way back, as he neared the house, he heard the sound of music and dancing. He called one of the servants and asked what this might mean. The servant said to him, ‘Your brother has returned and your father has slaughtered the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’ He became angry, and when he refused to enter the house, his father came out and pleaded with him. He said to his father in reply, ‘Look, all these years I served you and not once did I disobey your orders; yet you never gave me even a young goat to feast on with my friends. But when your son returns who swallowed up your property with prostitutes, for him you slaughter the fattened calf.’ He said to him, ‘My son, you are here with me always; everything I have is yours. But now we must celebrate and rejoice, because your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.’”

~~The Holy Apostle Luke recounts for us The Parable of the Prodigal Son. As Jesus tells this parable, we hear how the younger of two sons demanded that his father give him at once that inheritance which he normally would have received upon the father’s death. The young man wanted “to live it up” without any restraint from anyone. Taking his money, the young son went to live in a distant country and became a prodigal, that is recklessly extravagant. He squandered his undeserved wealth, depleting his supply of monetary funds. And when a terrible famine arose in that land, this foolish young man found himself penniless and friendless. At the end of this stupid and ill-conceived period of independence from moral principles, the prodigal son became repentant, returning to his father from this self-imposed exile. He showed his sincere SORROW and sought forgiveness from his father. The Church asks us to reflect upon our own lives and to recognize any estrangement from God. Then as a prodigal child, we must return from the exiled state of sin and show our Heavenly Father that we are truly sorry. Like the father of the prodigal son, God similarly will welcome us back into His home.

ON-LINE GIVING IS HERE! If you wish to make a monetary donation to our parish – you can do so on our website or by using this QR code. Remember every dollar helps support the mission of our parish community. Thank you.



PRAYER FOR OUR FOUR SAINTLY BISHOPS: Please pray for the causes of our four Sainly Bishops and ask them to intercede for your specific intentions: O Almighty God, our Lord, we bless You, we praise You, and we thank you for all the graces which You, in Your infinite mercy have bestowed upon us. We are especially grateful for giving us four saintly and heroic Bishops: **Bishop Theodore G. Romzha, Bishop Paul P. Gojdich OBSM, Bishop Basil Hopko, and Bishop Alexander Chira**, who, by their courage, charity, and intrepid faith, inspired our Ruthenian people in the darkest moments of their history. By their great sufferings, humiliating imprisonment, and violent death they gave living witness to their Catholic faith and glorified Your exalted name. Therefore, O

Gracious Lord, glorify them in return by Your divine power and inscribe their names in the book of Your Saints. For you are holy, our God, and we render glory to You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever, and forever, Amen. With Ecclesiastical Approbation
Acknowledgment of answered prayers: Postulator's office, 54 Riverview Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15214, U.S.A.

PRAYER FOR SEMINARIANS: **Saints Cyril and Methodius**, Venerable Apostles of the Slavs and Patrons of our Byzantine Catholic Seminary, we place our Seminarians in your loving care. Help them to grow in humility, meekness and prudence. Enkindle in them a burning zeal for souls. May their hearts be filled with the gifts of the Holy Spirit and may they learn to know and love the church so that they may always and everywhere think, speak and act with Her, the Glorious Spouse of Christ. May they become exemplars of generosity and detachment from the things of this world. But above all, O Venerable Patrons, help them to truly know, love and serve the Eternal High Priest, Our Lord Jesus Christ, Whose priests they aspire to be. Amen. St. Michael the Archangel, Defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the Devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray. And do thou, O Prince of the heavenly hosts, By the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits, who prowl throughout the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen