

HOLY SPIRIT BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

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

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Cantor: Julia Revilak & Family

Sub-Deacon: Raphael Ruggiero

March 30, 2025

4th Sunday of the Great Lent – John Climacus the Venerable

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

Sunday, Mar 30: 4th Sunday of the Great Fast – John Climacus the Venerable

10:25 am Rosary, 11:00 am Divine Liturgy

IMO Ruth Bacasa by Gerald & Alexandria Bacasa

Penitential Vespers 4:00 pm – Ss. Peter & Paul, Duquesne, PA

Monday, Mar 31: 6:00 pm Confessions, 7:00 pm Akathist to Our Lady of the Searcher for the Lost

Wednesday, Apr 2: 6:00 pm Confessions, 7:00 pm Presanctified Liturgy

IHO Scarlett Revilak's Birthday by her family

Friday, Apr 4: 6:00 pm Confessions, 7:00 pm Presanctified Liturgy

IHO Milan Revilak Sr.'s Birthday by his family

Saturday, Apr 5: Akathistos Saturday - service at St. Pius X in Carrick at 2:15pm

Parish Clean-Up Day 11am

5:00 pm Lecture on Holy Week & Pascha 6:00 pm Great Vespers

Sunday, Apr 6: 5th Sunday of the Great Fast – St. Mary of Egypt

10am Monthly Matins, 10:25am Rosary, 11:00 am Divine Liturgy

IMO Michael Dubansky by his brother & sister: Mark Dubansky & Sandy Anderson

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.

OUR LADY SEARCHER FOR THE LOST: Please join us tomorrow **Monday, Mar 31** as we pray the **Akathist to Our Lady of the Searcher for the Lost** for all those who are searching, struggling and in need of God's mercy and help. **Candles are available for purchase at \$10 each.** These beautiful services will take place every Monday during Lent.

OUTDOOR CLEAN UP DAY – Saturday Apr 5: Help is needed as we prepare the church for Easter. We will begin at 11am.

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.

PALM CROSS FUNDRAISER: The Revilak Family will once again be taking orders for **palm crosses at \$10 each.** These beautiful handmade crosses have been a special fundraiser for our parish. We hope you will support this project.

THREE RIVERS THEOSIS BYZANTINE CATHOLIC YOUNG ADULT GROUP monthly meeting will be **Saturday, Apr 5.** The topic will be **Holy Week & Pascha.** 5:00 pm Lecture, 6:00 pm Vespers followed by social hour. Everyone is welcome to join in these events.

DEANERY PENITENTIAL VESPERS: 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:

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

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

GREAT & HOLY FRIDAY VIGIL APRIL 18: Please consider signing up for a time between 8:30pm & Midnight (between Burial Vespers and Jerusalem Matins) A sign up sheet will be posted closer to Holy Week.

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!

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.

EPISTLE: Hebrews 6:13-20

When God made the promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, “he swore by himself,” and said, “I will indeed bless you and multiply” you. And so, after patient waiting, he obtained the promise. Human beings swear by someone greater than themselves; for them an oath serves as a guarantee and puts an end to all argument. So, when God wanted to give the heirs of his promise an even clearer demonstration of the immutability of his purpose, he intervened with an oath, so that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge might be strongly encouraged to hold fast to the hope that lies before us. This we have as an anchor of the soul, sure and firm, which reaches into the interior behind the veil, where Jesus has entered on our behalf as forerunner, becoming high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

~On this fourth great fast Sunday, the holy epistle lesson which is taken from the letter to the early community of Jewish Christians, provides us with ENCOURAGEMENT so that we would trust and hope in the various promises that God has revealed concerning our salvation. All of these promises are fulfilled in the person of Jesus, our High Priest. God has given His assurance that those who faithfully trust in Him for redemption definitely will receive His promise of eternal life. This should give us confidence as we continue with this last portion of the journey of the Holy Forty-Days Fast. As our High Priest Who has been sacrificed upon the sacred cross, Jesus has gone ahead to plead with God for each of us (His followers) so that we also could be assured of a place in the “New Life” of His heavenly Kingdom.

GOSPEL: Mark 9:17-31

Someone from the crowd answered him, “Teacher, I have brought to you my son possessed by a mute spirit. Wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, grinds his teeth, and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive it out, but they were unable to do so.” He said to them in reply, “O faithless generation, how long will I be with you? How long will I endure you? Bring him to me.” They brought the boy to him. And when he saw him, the spirit immediately threw the boy into convulsions. As he fell to the ground, he began to roll around and foam at the mouth. Then he questioned his father, “How long has this been happening to him?” He replied, “Since childhood. It has often thrown him into fire and into water to kill him. But if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.” Jesus said to him, “‘If you can!’ Everything is possible to one who has faith.” Then the boy’s father cried out, “I do believe, help my unbelief!” Jesus, on seeing a crowd rapidly gathering, rebuked the unclean spirit and said to it, “Mute and deaf spirit, I command you: come out of him and never enter him again!” Shouting and throwing the boy into convulsions, it came out. He became like a corpse, which caused many to say, “He is dead!” But Jesus took him by the hand, raised him, and he stood up. When he entered the house, his disciples asked him in private, “Why could we not drive it out?” He said to them, “This kind can only come out through prayer.” They left from there and began a journey through Galilee, but he did not wish anyone to know about it. He was teaching his disciples and telling them, “The Son of Man is to be handed over to men and they will kill him, and three days after his death he will rise.”

~We confidently hope and trust that salvation will be given by Jesus Christ to each of us who follow after Him. We can be certain of this! Today's holy gospel pericope offers us such ENCOURAGEMENT so that we could manifest hope and belief like the man who was introduced in this scriptural account. The Holy Evangelist Mark presents us with the desperate father of an epileptic boy who besought Jesus, saying: *"If you can, let Your heart be moved with pity, and help us."* Jesus replied that everything is possible for those who believe in Him as the Son of God. The father retorted, saying that He had faith, that he did believe. However, he added, *"Help me to believe more!"* This also must be our constant prayer, for although we do believe, we need divine help to increase our faith. As we continue with the journey of the Great Fast, we must pray and fast just as Jesus commands the apostles in this passage. Our reward for keeping to this task will be the right to participate in His eternal "New Life." We must not be distracted from attaining this goal!

AT THE DIVINE LITURGY TODAY: The Hebrew Christians are told that Jesus is preparing a place for them in His Kingdom. So, today's theme of ENCOURAGEMENT should bolster our own resolve to complete this great fast ascetical journey in order to be part of that Kingdom. With Saint John Climacus as our ideal, we continue to pray and fast, yet as our gospel says, we need to implore Jesus for increased faith: "Lord, help me to believe more!"

SACRAMENTAL RECONCILIATION WITH GOD - GREAT FAST CONFESSIONS: In her wisdom, the Church requires all faithful to make a sacramental confession during the Great Fast, as we commemorate the redemptive acts of Christ. Let us all approach the loving Lord Jesus during this penitential great fast season, seeking His merciful forgiveness through sacramental confession. In the Holy Mystery of Penance, we unburden ourselves of sin, and we reconcile ourselves with God as we receive His true peace. During the Great Forty-Days, remember to make your confession!

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 Saintly 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