

HOLY SPIRIT BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

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Cantor: Julia Revilak & Family

Sub-Deacon: Raphael Ruggiero

February 2, 2025

Sunday of Zacchaeus – Encounter of Our Lord with Simeon & Anna

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

Sunday, Feb 2: Zacchaeus - Encounter of Our Lord with Simeon & Anna

10am Monthly Matins, 10:45 am: Third Hour Prayer, 11:00 am Divine Liturgy

IHO Olga Revilak's Birthday – by the Revilak Family

Monday, Feb 3: 6:00 pm Confessions, 7:00 pm Divine Liturgy

IMO Fr. Emmanuel Gary Samayoa w/Panachida by Fr. Michael Kunitz

Friday, Feb 7: 6:00 pm Confessions, 7:00 pm Divine Liturgy (Open Intention)

Saturday, Feb 8: 5:00 pm Confessions, 6:00 pm Great Vespers

Sunday, Feb 9: Sunday of the Publican & Pharisee

10am Monthly Matins, 10:45 am: Third Hour Prayer, 11:00 am Divine Liturgy (**Open Intention**)

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!

TODAY IS CANDLEMAS: If you are interested in buying candles today – see Mary Dzurichko after liturgy.

COFFEE SOCIAL VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: In addition to attending services together, it is important that we spend time in conversation with one another. Starting in February – we would like to bring back the coffee social after liturgy. 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, Birthday

Feb. 27 ~ Sdn. Raffaele Ruggiero, Birthday

If you'd like your birthday or anniversary included, please contact Pani Janine

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.

AS WE APPROACH THE LENTEN GREAT FAST

This Sunday is Zaccheus Sunday, which begins our preparatory period for the Great Fast. While **fasting looks different for everyone** based on their station in life, physical needs, and spiritual growth, now is a good time to begin discerning what the Great Fast will look like for you. You may choose to reduce certain foods or technology use, add to your prayer rule, or something else meaningful to you. Fr. Michael is available to answer any questions.

AT THE DIVINE LITURGY TODAY

We are given the first signal that the Great Fast is approaching. As we begin to change our mood slowly, almost imperceptibly, the initial call to repentance now echoes. The Apostle Paul tells Timothy that such spiritual exercises are exemplary, but we alone must desire to accomplish them. In wanting to come close to God, we have to emulate Zacchaeus who let no obstacle stand in his way of meeting Jesus.

EPISTLE: 1st Timothy 4:9-15 (for Zacchaeus Sunday)

This saying is trustworthy and deserves full acceptance. For this we toil and struggle, because we have set our hope on the living God, who is the savior of all, especially of those who believe. Command and teach these things. Let no one have contempt for your youth, but set an example for those who believe, in speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity. Until I arrive, attend to the reading, exhortation, and teaching. Do not neglect the gift you have, which was conferred on you through the prophetic word with the imposition of hands of the presbyterate. Be diligent in these matters, be absorbed in them, so that your progress may be evident to everyone.

EPISTLE: Hebrews 7:7-17 (for the Encounter)

Unquestionably, a lesser person is blessed by a greater. In the one case, mortal men receive tithes; in the other, a man of whom it is testified that he lives on. One might even say that Levi himself, who receives tithes, was tithed through Abraham, for he was still in his father's loins when Melchizedek met him. If, then, perfection came through the levitical priesthood, on the basis of which the people received the law, what need would there still have been for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not reckoned according to the order of Aaron? When there is a change of priesthood, there is necessarily a change of law as well. Now he of whom these things are said belonged to a different tribe, of which no member ever officiated at the altar. It is clear that our Lord arose from Judah, and in regard to that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. It is even more obvious if another priest is raised up after the likeness of Melchizedek, who has become so, not by a law expressed in a commandment concerning physical descent but by the power of a life that cannot be destroyed. For it is testified: "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."

GOSPEL: Luke 19: 1-10 (for Zacchaeus Sunday)

He came to Jericho and intended to pass through the town. Now a man there named Zacchaeus, who was a chief tax collector and also a wealthy man, was seeking to see who Jesus was; but he could not see him because of the crowd, for he was short in stature. So, he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree in order to see Jesus, who was about to pass that way. When he reached the place, Jesus looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down quickly, for today I must stay at your house." And he came down quickly and received him with joy. When they all saw this, they began to grumble, saying, "He has gone to stay at the house of a sinner." But Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Behold, half of my possessions, Lord, I shall give to the poor, and if I have extorted anything from anyone I shall repay it four times over." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house because this man too is a descendant of Abraham. For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save what was lost."

GOSPEL: Luke 2:22-40 (for the Encounter)

When the days were completed for their purification according to the law of Moses, they took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, just as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male that opens the womb shall be consecrated to the Lord," and to offer the sacrifice of "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons," in accordance with the dictate in the law of the Lord. Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, awaiting the consolation of Israel, and the holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Messiah of the Lord. He came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to perform the custom of the law in regard to him, he took him into his arms and blessed God, saying: "Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in sight of all the peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel." The child's father and mother were amazed at what was said about him; and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be contradicted (and you yourself a sword will pierce) so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived seven years with her husband after her marriage, and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple, but worshiped night and day with fasting and prayer. And coming forward at that very time, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem. When they had fulfilled all the prescriptions of the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

THE ILLUMINATING ENCOUNTER FEAST BEING CELEBRATED TODAY.....

Today on Sunday, February 2nd, we observe ceremoniously The Feast of the Holy ENCOUNTER of our Lord JESUS CHRIST. This great feast commemorates the fact that forty days after the birth of the Child Jesus, His parents took Him to the great Temple at Jerusalem for His formal presentation to the Lord as stipulated by the Mosaic Law. Since Jesus was the first-born male child of a new Jewish family, Joseph and Mary were required to dedicate Him to the holy will of God. They thus brought their Child to the Temple for His ceremonial dedication to the service of Almighty God. Furthermore, Jesus' parents came to the Temple on this fortieth day in order to offer the prescribed sacrifice for the ritual purification after childbirth of His Most Holy Mother Mary. When the Holy Family arrived at Jerusalem's Temple, they met or encountered the venerable old Simeon and the aged prophetess Anna. These two elderly people represented collectively the entire Jewish nation. At this meeting therefore, the people of Israel were to have their first encounter with their Messiah. In the Sacred Encounter Feast, we thus see Jesus, Who Himself is THE Great High Priest, appearing publicly in the Temple forty days after His nativity, and there He encounters His people Israel, typified by Simeon and Anna. Similarly in our daily lives, each of us must desire to have a personal encounter with the Lord Jesus. And as we prepare to do so, we must purify ourselves through acts of penance. When we meet Jesus, we must present our very lives to Him as we dedicate our entire being to doing His holy will. Our daily meeting with the Lord Jesus will become a reality when we personally encounter Him through our prayers, by means of the sacramental mysteries, and by our everyday observance of the precepts and mandates given to us in the Word of God.

CANDLES BLESSED SOLEMNLY ON THE SPLENDOROUS ENCOUNTER FEAST....

On the Feast of the Enlightening Encounter of the Lord, which we are celebrating jubilantly today, on February 2nd, the Solemn Blessing of Candles takes place. As Simeon encountered Jesus in the Temple, he took the Divine Infant into the embrace of his arms, praying and thanking God. Simeon was the last "watcher" of Israel, looking-out for the dawn of the Messiah. He finally sees the day begin to break and recognizes the Light of the "Sun of Righteousness." The Venerable Elder then uttered his memorable prayer known as the "Nyn'i Otpuščaješī" in which he referred to the Child as "a Light for revelation to the Gentiles" (Luke 2:32a), thus proclaiming Jesus to be the Light that will shine upon the nations. The Lord Jesus is still that Light Which continues to shine in the world, and the burning candle symbolically reflects this basic fact of our holy Faith. The Light of Jesus must shine within us; and then through us, we must reflect the brilliance of His Light into this darkened world. The newly blessed holy candles, and non-blessed candles, are now available.

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