

HOLY SPIRIT BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

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SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2022

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

The Uniontown Pilgrimage takes place this weekend.

Please note the modified weekly schedule.

Sunday, September 4: Last 9am Sunday Liturgy until Spring ~ 8am Confessions

9am Divine Liturgy for Charles Bacasa, by Gerald and Alexandria Bacasa

Uniontown Pilgrimage ~ Fr. Michael will be leaving immediately after Liturgy.

4:30pm Confessions 5:30pm Divine Liturgy

Monday, September 5: Noon, Sixth Hour ~ 4:30pm Confessions, 5:30pm Vespers

Tuesday, September 6: Father's day off due to the feast Thursday

Thursday, September 8: The Nativity of the Theotokos

9am Selections from Matins

5pm Confessions, 6pm Divine Liturgy

Friday, September 9: Noon, Sixth Hour 5pm Confessions, 6pm Divine Liturgy

Saturday, September 10: 4:30 Confession, 5:30 Great Vespers

Sunday, September 11: Switch to Fall Schedule 10:45am Third Hour, 11am Divine Liturgy

for Ruth Bacasa by Gerald and Alexandria Bacasa

4pm Confession, 5pm Divine Liturgy

Confessions are available before Divine Liturgy. All divine liturgies are open for intentions. Call the office or fill out the request form in the back of church and leave it in the sacristy.

PARISH DIRECTORY ~ LAST CALL! If you wish to be included, please be sure to fill out the form in the back (Narthex) of the church before September 12. You can submit forms to Fr. Michael or Pani Janine. Families who have submitted already are listed at the back of the bulletin.

SUNDAY LITURGY TIME SWITCH

The Sunday Divine Liturgy will resume it's Fall-Spring time of 11:00 AM on September 11. Please don't forget!

ADULT ECF OPPORTUNITY.....On September 17 at 1pm we will host our next Eastern Christian Formation lecture at the Holy Spirit Parish Hall. The topic is "Preparing for Death the Byzantine Way." Fr. Michael strongly urges everyone to attend. Death is a critical part of our earthly and spiritual journey, and we should take care not to rush our preparation.

YOUTH EASTERN CHRISTIAN FORMATION

Catechism classes will be offered two Tuesdays a month starting at the end of September. This is open to all youth in grades Kindergarten through 12. This is a valuable opportunity to enrich the lives of our children, whether they are at a public school that does not teach religion, or at a Catholic school that does not understand what makes our tradition unique. Please stay tuned for more details. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Fr. Michael.

AT THE DIVINE LITURGY TODAY. .. Jesus likened the Kingdom of God to a vineyard in which we are called to be workers who bring forth the proper produce. This "Kingdom" on earth was established by Christ: it is His holy Church. The Apostle Paul was called to nurture this Church and to guide it in its infancy. We also are to be laborers for the Church who must build-up, advance, and increase it while we are in the "vineyard" of this earthly life.

EPISTLE: 1st Corinthians 16: 13-24

Brethren: Be on your guard, stand firm in the faith, and act like men. In a word, be strong. Do everything with love. You know that the household of Stephanus is the first fruits of Achaia and is devoted to the service of the saints. I urge you to serve under such men and under everyone who cooperates and toils with them. I was very happy at the arrival of Stephenas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, because they made up for your absence. They have refreshed my spirit as they did yours. You should recognize the worth of such men.

The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the assembly that meets in their house, send you cordial greetings in the Lord. All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

It is I, Paul, who send you this greeting in my own hand. If anyone does not love the Lord, let a curse be upon him. O Lord, come! The favor of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love to all of you in Christ Jesus.

~~~~~As the Holy Apostle Paul was preaching Christ's message throughout Asia Minor, he was increasing and advancing God's Kingdom. While he thus was establishing these new churches, he wrote to the Corinthian Christian community, telling them to remain firm in their faith. Paul terminates his first letter to the Corinthians by stressing that they should be steadfast examples of those who ascribe to the Kingdom of God, which is being established here on earth – His holy Church – and of which they are now a part. He exhorts them to guard against the forces of evil in the world and to stand with conviction in their faith, acting as mature Christian adults. As Paul concludes and sends his final greetings, he mentions by name some of his coworkers who are laboring like himself to establish the Kingdom of God. In a like manner even to the day, Jesus Christ sends His workers – the priests of the Church – to continue His work of bringing God's Kingdom to all peoples. The Church echoes for us today the words spoken about these men by the Holy Apostle Paul: "I beg you to recognize them as Christ's own ministers... You should appreciate having men like that!"

**GOSPEL: Matthew 21: 33-42 (Section 87)**

“Hear another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a hedge around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a tower. Then he leased it to tenants and went on a journey. When vintage time drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to obtain his produce.

But the tenants seized the servants and one they beat, another they killed, and a third they stoned. Again he sent other servants, more numerous than the first ones, but they treated them in the same way. Finally, he sent his son to them, thinking, ‘They will respect my son.’

But when the tenants saw the son, they said to one another, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and acquire his inheritance.’ They seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. What will the owner of the vineyard do to those tenants when he comes?”

They answered him, “He will put those wretched men to a wretched death and lease his vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the proper times.”

Jesus said to them, “Did you never read in the scriptures: ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; by the Lord has this been done, and it is wonderful in our eyes’?”

~~~~~The Kingdom of God is described by the Lord in terms of a parable in this gospel account which is taken from the Holy Evangelist Matthew. A landowner prepared a vineyard and leased it out to hired help. When vintage time approached, however, the workers never made a return to the owner for anything produced in the vineyard. In fact, they abused and drove away his representatives, and they even murdered the landlord's son when he was sent. In interpreting this parable, we can discern that God the Father is the owner of the vineyard, and it was leased to the Jews of the Old Covenant. When God's Son Jesus finally was sent into the vineyard, these stewards, who were to have produced the fruits of righteousness, killed him. Now stewardship has been entrusted to us, His people of the New Covenant. In this "vineyard of life," God has given us a task to accomplish for the building-up of His community – the Church. How well have we tended the vineyard, and what profits (recognition of His lordship, love and service) have been returned to God? We always must realize that if proceeds are not returned, the "Kingdom" will be taken from the "chosen people" and will be given to others who will produce the acceptable fruits. The workers must show progress!

HOLY DAY OBSERVED: THE BEHEADING OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.....

Last Monday, August 29th, our Byzantine Catholic Church commemorated solemnly The Beheading of the Precious Head of Saint John the Baptist. With this major holy day, we thus memorialize the sacred martyrdom of Saint John, the honored prophet, glorious precursor, and revered baptizer of our Redeemer, Jesus Christ. John's task was to prepare the Jews for the coming of the Messiah (Jesus) by calling them to repentance through baptism and by announcing that the "Kingdom of God" was already at hand. Jesus Himself referred to John as 'the greatest of the prophets.' John was the last old-testament prophet sent by God to the Chosen People of Israel, and he was the first of the new-testament prophets, preaching the baptism of repentance on the banks of the Jordan River. John the Baptist, thus, links the two testaments of the Holy Bible. It was toward the end of John's ministry that a great scandal occurred in Palestine in that King Herod Antipas, who ruled the province of Galilee, took his brother Philip's wife Herodias and married her. John the Baptist expressed his indignation and vehemently condemned the king's incestuous relationship. In retaliation, Queen Herodias sought to wreck her vengeance on John by having her daughter, Princess Salome, dance enticingly before Herod on his birthday. When the drunken king promised the sensuous dancing girl anything that she desired, Salome, at the instigation of her vindictive mother Herodias, asked for the head of John the Baptist on a platter. Because of his complete compliance with God's will for our salvation, John has been honored by the magnanimous Father as a Prince of Heaven, and he now stands at the left hand of his Cousin Jesus Christ the King where he exercises his intercessory powers in our behalf. By tradition, a strict fast is maintained on this holy day out of reverential respect for Saint John's horrific decapitation. As a demonstration of our love for God, put forth the sacrificial effort to keep this fast for the intention of vocations for our Church and for the welfare of our Parish. This is of vital concern to us.

THE CONCLUSION OF THE CHURCH CALENDAR YEAR...

This past Wednesday, August 31st, was the final day of the Ecclesiastical Calendar Year. As our Byzantine Catholic Church terminates each such year, it commends the year past to the honor of the Most Holy Mother of God. We pay tribute to her on this last day of the church calendar year, for we commemorate the historical discovery of her cincture, that is her belt or sash which was brought to the Byzantine capital city of Constantinople in the year 941. The All-Holy Virgin Mary is praised as the devoted Daughter of the forgiving Father, the merciful Mother of the salvific Son, and splendid Spouse of the sanctifying Spirit through her unique role as the Godbearer. Mary merited her queenship, and following the dormition event and her physical ascension into heaven, she now stands at the right hand for her Son Jesus Christ the King where she reigns as the Queen of Heaven. We thus extol the Most Pure Virgin Mary for her absolute and perfect fidelity to God and to His Son Jesus – her Child. As we terminate this old Ecclesiastical Year, we also begin the New Year under the protection of the Virgin Mary, our Heavenly Queen. O Most Holy Godbearer, save us!

THE BEGINNING OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL NEW YEAR...

Our Byzantine Catholic Church began The Ecclesiastical New Year on Thursday, September 1st. For the old testament Jews, the new year began in the month of Tishri which was comparable to our month of September. This was the season of the harvest and the time for offering sacrifices of thanksgiving to Almighty God. According to the Jewish calendar's calculation of the history of creation, this present year is reckoned to be 5783. Christian tradition relates, however, that Jesus began His public ministry in the month of September, leaving His hometown of Nazareth and embarking upon a three-year period as an itinerant preacher. Therefore, the First Nicean Ecumenical Council (325 A.D.) decreed that the church calendar year with the cycle for the various Christian feast days should begin annually on September 1st. Consequently in the Byzantine Empire, the civil year likewise began on the 1st of September, and this first day of the year was called the induction. Our contemporary computation of the civil calendar counts the years from the birth of Christ and begins on January 1st, hence the present year of 2022. However, the Byzantine tradition, the Church's redaction of the liturgical year numbers the years from the inception of biblical history, this being the year 7531. Let us begin again this Church New Year with the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the Alpha and the Omega – the "A" and the "Z" – the beginning and the End of all things. Make a definite resolution of this to be a very good church year for your individual spiritual life and for our entire parish! A very Happy New Year is extended to all!

HOLY SPIRIT NAMED THE CENTER OF UNIVERSITY OUTREACH

Metropolitan Skurla has decided that Holy Spirit, in addition to its regular status as our home parish, will also be the location of the “university parish,” through which the Archeparchy will seek to fulfill the spiritual needs of Byzantine Catholic College and University students. This initiative will be funded by the Archeparchy (not the parish). It is led by Fr. David Abernathy, with Fr. Michael and Fr. Miron Kerul-Kmec Jr. serving as chaplains. There will be adjustments to our weekday Liturgical schedule to accommodate additional services for the students, which regular parishioners are welcome to attend. We look forward to this great opportunity to share our rich faith and tradition with the community.

OPENING LITURGY FOR THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

We will formally welcome local students at our regularly scheduled Feast Day Divine Liturgy at 6pm on Wednesday, September 14. A reception will follow, and parishioners are welcome and encouraged to attend.

ECUMENICAL SERVICE..... On September 17 we will host an ecumenical prayer service for an end to the conflict in Ukraine. We’ll start in the parish hall and process around the church while praying the Akathist to the Precious and Lifegiving Cross.

9am: welcome, brief description of service

9:30am: service and procession

10am: optional light fellowship after the service concludes

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

PARISH DIRECTORY SUBMISSIONS SO FAR: Bacasa (Joseph, Gerald, and families), Carr, Dzurichko, Fello, Hays Tedder, Mackin, Meredith, Munizza, Petro, Revilak (Milan Sr., Milan Jr., Zuzana, Julia, and families), Ruggiero, Walicki, Warhola, Yuhaschek