

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 8, 2026

Third Sunday of Great Lent – Veneration of the Cross

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

Sunday, Mar. 8: Third Sunday of the Great Fast – Veneration of the Cross

7:00 am Matins 7:45 am Rosary, 8:00 am Divine Liturgy

IMO Earl Haag Sr. by Mary Dzurichko

6 pm Divine Liturgy

Monday, Mar 9: 6:00 pm Confessions, 7:00 pm Akathist Prayers to Our Lady Searcher of Lost Souls

Wednesday, Mar 11: NO SERVICES

Friday, Mar 13: NO SERVICES

Saturday, Mar 14: 4th All Souls Saturday 12:30 pm Divine Liturgy w/Panachida

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

Sunday, Mar. 15: Fourth Sunday of the Great Fast – John Climacus Venerable

7:00 am Matins 7:45 am Rosary, 8:00 am Divine Liturgy

IMO Gerald Bacasa Jr. by his parents, Alexandria & Gerald Bacasa Sr.

6 pm Divine Liturgy

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.

THANK YOU AGAIN! To everyone who helped make last week's Penitential Vespers such a success. Fr. Michael received many compliments from attendees on how beautiful the church looked and how well the meager meal went.

LENTEN CHARITY 2026: As Great Lent is a time for Fasting, Penance, Prayer, and Almsgiving, the parish will again take **monetary collections** for the local charity, **Community Human Services Food Pantry**. This group, based in South Oakland, helps the poor, homeless, and less fortunate right here in our neighborhood. Anything we're able to give will be greatly appreciated. Please speak with Mary Dzurichko if you're interested in donating.

BASKET RAFFLE TIME! Tickets are on sale now for our basket raffle/fundraiser. Among the baskets are four with beautiful hand painted eggs donated by Pani Janine and hand poured candles from parishioner Eugene Yeo! Plus, a special chance to win four tickets to a Pittsburgh Pirates game. These seats are 100 Level! We will be selling tickets through Palm Sunday. **Drawing will take place on Palm Sunday, March 29th.** Please see Mary Dzurichko or Lynne Walicki to purchase your chance to win something fun!

PLEASE NOTE Father Michael and his family will be out of town Tuesday afternoon through Friday night for a funeral.

PALM CROSS FUNDRAISER: It's time again for the annual Palm Cross fundraiser! Each Palm Cross is handmade and can be blessed after purchase. They are \$10 each. If you would like to order some, please let us know by emailing us at holyspiritinformation@gmail.com or by calling the rectory at (412) 687-1220 or by texting your order to (412) 726-1062. Pre-orders are taken no later than March 22nd. Crosses will be delivered starting on Friday March 27th – March 31st. Palm Crosses will also be available after 8:00 AM Divine Liturgy on Palm Sunday at Holy Spirit on March 29th. Cash or checks made out to Holy Spirit Church at the time of delivery or purchase. Thank you!

PASCHA BREAD SALE AT ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM: Looking to get some homemade Pascha bread for your Easter Basket this year? Our neighbors at St. John Chrysostom Byzantine Catholic Church are making loaves as a parish fundraiser. For more information, please reach out to St. John's at 412-421-1709 and/or at sjcbyzantinecc@gmail.com.

EASTERN CHRISTIAN FORMATION CLASSES (ECF): Our ECF program has begun meetings on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month at 5:00 pm in the church hall. We hope the program will continue to grow to weekly meetings. For more information, please see Eugene Yeo.

DEANERY PENITENTIAL VESPERS FOR GREAT LENT 2026: The Pittsburgh Protopresbytery of our Byzantine Catholic Archeparchy will hold its annual Order of Vespers on Sunday afternoons during the Great Fast from February 22nd through March 22nd. Every Sunday 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 pray the Vespers at 4:00 pm. Each Vespers is followed by a social hour focused on a meager meal of fast-friendly meatless soup. This is a wonderful opportunity for prayer, penance, self-denial, fellowship and to gather with fellow travelers in the Great Fast, spiritually preparing us on our way to receive the Lord in the Feast of Feasts, Great and Holy Pascha on April 5th. Confessions 3:30 pm – Vespers: 4:00 pm

3rd Sunday, March 8: Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Church - 225 Olivia St., McKees Rocks, PA 15136

Homilist: Fr. Vitalii Stashkevych

4th Sunday, March 15: Ss. Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church - 431 George St., Braddock, PA 15104

Homilist: Fr. Frank Firko

5th Sunday, March 22: St. Pius X Byzantine Catholic Church - 2336 Brownsville Rd, Pittsburgh, PA 15210

Homilist: Fr. Valerian Michlik

(PLEASE NOTE THERE WILL BE NO 6PM DIVINE LITURGY ON MARCH 22)

MARCH BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES: May God grant you many happy and blessed years!

3/2 Fr. Michael Kunitz

Don't see your birthday or anniversary? Let us know so we can update the directory!

THE OFFICE OF YOUTH & ADULT MINISTRY THROUGH THE ARCHEPARCHY WILL BE HOLDING AN ON-LINE GREAT FAST BIBLE STUDY DURING LENT This is a new program that will be held via Zoom and start at 6:00 pm. These sessions are designed for adults 35 and younger. For more information emails can be sent to youth@archpitt.org

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.

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

MORNING LITURGY COFFEE SOCIAL VOLUNTEERS: 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!

EVENING LITURGY SOCIAL: In addition to attending services together, it is important that we spend time in conversation with one another. Please join us in the hall following the liturgy for fellowship. We look forward to seeing you!

EPISTLE: HEBREW 4:14-5:6

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin. So let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and to find grace for timely help. Every high priest is taken from among men and made their representative before God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He is able to deal patiently with the ignorant and erring, for he himself is beset by weakness and so, for this reason, must make sin offerings for himself as well as for the people. No one takes this honor upon himself but only when called by God, just as Aaron was. In the same way, it was not Christ who glorified himself in becoming high priest, but rather the one who said to him: “You are my son; this day I have begotten you”; just as he says in another place: “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”

GOSPEL: MARK 8:34 – 9:1

He summoned the crowd with his disciples and said to them, “Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. or whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and that of the gospel will save it. What profit is there for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? What could one give in exchange for his life? Whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this faithless and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of when he comes in his Father’s glory with the holy angels.” He also said to them, “Amen, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see that the kingdom of God has come in power.”

A WORD FROM FR. MICHAEL

One of the loveliest features of our Parish here at Holy Spirit is our Stations of the Cross Icons. Many Catholics all over the world pray these stations and walk the way of the Cross as a powerful and moving devotion for their personal spiritual lives. Many here perhaps can recall praying at these stations every Friday in Lent, a common devotional practice still in the Roman Rite. This tradition is beautiful, but it is also a haunting reminder for us a Christians about that which is incumbent and unavoidable as we continue to journey in the faith.

It cannot be understated that the way of the Christian is the way of the Cross. The way of the Cross is a way of suffering, a way of self-sacrifice, a way of holy humiliation which is the most potent and tangible avenue in which God’s unconditional nonviolent love of friends and enemies is made manifest to the world. We cannot follow Christ if we refuse to carry our Cross and embrace the suffering which hangs ever present over the life of every Christian. The burden of the Cross is the burden placed upon us for the sake of our own sanctification, purification, and salvation. The Christian life is one which must not be afraid of embracing suffering. We are forced to acknowledge that if we wish to bear the name of Christ upon ourselves and wear a cross around our necks, we must live as Christ has called us to live, which is a life in emulation of His life.

While it is easy to focus on living the Christian life in the light of the power which Christ gives to His followers over certain evils, we must also remember that that power is most potently manifested in self-sacrifice. In bearing suffering, humiliation, and even injustice for the sake of the Gospel, we come to realize that Christ moves us not merely by the sweetness of His words, but more so by the integrity of His actions. As we celebrate this Exaltation of the Holy Cross, let us not hold in our hearts the anti-Christian values power, vainglory, and domination, but instead embrace the inscrutable and mysterious honor which is found only in the Cross and way of Christ.

Glory to Jesus Christ!

SAINT OF THE DAY: 3/8 **Our venerable father and confessor Theophylact of Nicomedia in Bythinia**, who was exiled for the sake of the cult of the holy icons and died at Strobilis in Caria. (845)

3/9 **The forty holy martyrs of Sebaste in Armenia.** They were comrades, not in blood, but in faith and obedience to the will of their heavenly Father. At the time of the emperor Licinius, after binding and savage tortures, they were ordered to pass the night naked at the coldest time of winter in a swamp in the open air. They consummated their martyrdom by the breaking of their legs at crucifixion. (320)

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.