

Holy Spirit Byzantine Catholic Church
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Monsignor Lawrence A. Dominik, Celebrant

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2021
THE TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
(THE THIRD SUNDAY OF THE HOLY PHILIPPIAN FAST)

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE FOR SAINT-NICHOLAS WEEK

Sunday, December 5: 11:00 a.m. – Sunday Divine Liturgy
• * For the Intention of our Holy Spirit Parish
• + George Bacasa (1st Anniversary) by Sisters and Brothers

Sunday, December 12: *The Twenty-Ninth Sunday After Holy Pentecost & The Fourth Sunday Of The Nativity Forty-Days Fast Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe*
11:00 a.m. – Sunday Divine Liturgy
• * For the Intention of our Holy Spirit Parish
• + Margaret Corlazzoli (35th Anniversary) by Mrs. Theresa Carr

Epistle: Colossians 1:12-18 Gospel: Luke 17:12-19

SACRED SEASON BEFORE CHRISTMAS: THE PHILIPPIAN FAST....

Yesterday on Saint Barbara's Day, the **4th of December**, we marked the halfway point in the lenten season of the **Philippian Fast**, our preparatory period for the **Holy Nativity Feast**. As we now embark upon the second half of this holy season, we focus our attention more fully on our preparation for Christ's coming at Christmas. The major feast that we shall celebrate tomorrow and the one to be observed on Wednesday provide us with relevant examples. The **Holy Virgin Mary** is our model of expectation as we await the arrival of her Son; and **Saint Nicholas**, our patron saint, gives us the examples of humility, meekness, and patience as we anticipate the Christ Child's coming among us again in this year of 2010. In the Old Testament, all of the prophets and righteous people watched for signs and signals from heaven that would announce the Messiah's coming. So now during the Philippian Fast, we join with these faithful ancients and wait in joyful anticipation for Jesus' coming anew to the Bethlehem of our hearts at Christmas of this year on Saturday, December 25th. Let us prepare ourselves through prayer, fasting, self-denial, and by making a worthy confession as we, with expectant hope, await the coming of **Emmanuel**, which means **God-is-with-us, s-nami-Boh!**

HOLY DAY HONORING SAINT NICHOLAS CELEBRATED TOMORROW....

Tomorrow on **December 6th**, we shall celebrate joyously **The Feast of our Holy Father SAINT NICHOLAS the Wonderworker, the Archbishop of Myra in Lycia**. Saint Nicholas was a fourth-century Byzantine Archbishop who attained great renown and achieved universal fame because of his tremendous generosity, his extreme humility, and his evangelical zeal in living-out the gospel principles. Nicholas was born toward the end of the third century into a very wealthy merchant family at Patara in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey). He was ordained a priest and eventually became the Archbishop of Myra, which was the capital city of the province of Lycia (today it is Demre, Turkey). As a hierarch of the Church, he participated in the First Ecumenical Council of Nicea in 325 A.D., and he died on December 6, 354 A.D. Then in 1087 A.D., in order to preserve his holy body from sacrilege, Italian merchants stole it from Myra ahead of the advancing Muhammadans and brought it to Bari, Italy, where it remains to this day. Saint Nicholas' cult is especially popular in Slavic countries. He is the patron saint of Ruthenia, and the Ruthenian people hold him in very high esteem. Moreover, Saint Nicholas is the patron of the entire Byzantine Catholic Church, and our Archeparchy of Pittsburgh is consecrated to his heavenly patronage. Because Saint Nicholas is our patron saint many times over, let us always honor his memory and seek his continued intercession for ourselves and for our Byzantine Catholic Church!

MARIAN FEAST ON WEDNESDAY – THE CONCEPTION OF SAINT ANN.....

The Feast of the CONCEPTION of HOLY ANN, when she conceived the Most Holy Godbearer, will be observed solemnly this coming **Wednesday, December 8th**. God the almighty Father had selected **MARY** from all eternity to be the Mother of His Son, but at the appointed time in history, **Joachim** and **Ann**, an aged childless couple, became the parents of this child. Ann conceived in a natural way in her old age, and then she gave birth to the infant girl who was called Mary. Through the Holy Conception Feast, the Church teaches us that although the Most Pure Virgin Mary was conceived in the womb of her mother Ann like any other mortal, she was nevertheless preserved from the effects of the original ancestral sin by a privilege that she alone received from God. Although part of fallen humanity, Mary was yet distinct from all other people in that sin could never become a reality in her person. This grace was bestowed upon the Holy Virgin Mary in view of the fact that she would some day become the **Godbearer**, carrying within herself the Son of God and giving human birth to Him. By being totally holy and pure, Mary thus was prepared for the awesome task of containing within her womb God the Father's only-begotten Son, Jesus. Our country, the United States of America, is dedicated to the heavenly patronage of the Most Holy Mother of God under the title of her Holy Conception. On this major holy day, let us pray to our heavenly patroness for our beloved homeland and for all of the American people!