

January 29, 2023  
Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee



**SAINT GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

*Fighting the Good Fight with Faith*

*Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever! - Slava Isusu Christu! Slava Na Viki!*  
*Слава Иисусу Христу! Слава на вики!*

Propers for this Sunday: Resurrectional Tone 1: pg.125 and for Publican & Pharisee: Pg. 215

Divine Services for the Week:

**SUN., JAN. 29**  
**8:30 A.M.**

**SUNDAY of the PUBLICAN and PHARISEE**  
**DIVINE LITURGY**

+ Lori Foister, 6<sup>th</sup> year after passing, offered by Sr. Mary Virginia

*(At St. Mary: Monday, January. 30, 6:00 PM, Divine Liturgy for Three Holy Hierarchs)*

**WED., FEB. 1**  
**6:00 P.M.**

**MEETING of our LORD HOLY DAY, Anticipated**  
**VESPERAL DIVINE LITURGY, Blessing of Candles**

**SUN., FEB. 5**  
**8:30 A.M.**

**SUNDAY of the PRODIGAL SON**  
**DIVINE LITURGY**

+ Ron Huchko, 19<sup>th</sup> year after passing, offered by Carol Huchko

**Don't Hide from Yourself** - To sustain my mask before others takes much energy. One clever way to maintain my mask and to avoid seeing myself as I am is to continuously compare my actions with the actions of those persons whom I consider less than myself. And into what a clever trap I have fallen, for I will always find someone whose outward actions appear to fall short of mine. I will constantly be looking outward toward others and never inward at the movements of my own heart. I will have taken upon myself the heart of the Pharisee, puffed up with emptiness, judgmental and condemning, while thanking God that I am not like another. I will have taken upon myself the heart of the Pharisee, but because of my mask, I will only know myself as the Publican.

*(Sister Seraphim Olsafsky)*

**Happy Birthday Greetings:**

None for the week

**Wedding Anniversaries this Week:**

None for the week

**Please Pray For Our Sick and Shut-ins**

Eileen Batcha, Rebecca Dickun Marianne Dove, Jean Herdt, Rebecca Hutcheon, Kevin Joray, Mary Ann Jugan, Neil Jugan, Mary Salamon

Josephine Maruhnich – **Beaver Elder Care** (616 Golf Course Road, Aliquippa, PA 15001)

Betty Polas – **Apple Blossom Senior Living** (125 Apple Blossom Way, #307, Moon Twp., PA 15108)

Carol Huchko – **Concordia at Villa St. Joseph** (1040 State St, Baden, PA 15005)

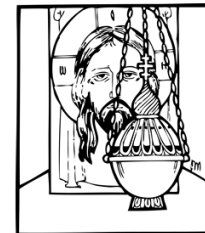
**Epistle Readers – Jan 29: Prudy Peya – Feb. 5: Jo Ann Hersh**

**Ushers – Stand in as needed**

**Troica Holders – Jan. 29: R. Mudron – Feb. 5: Francis Hersh**

**If you would like to be a Troica Holder, please see one of them following Liturgy.**

**We could always use the help!**



**THIS WEEK'S SANCTUARY LAMP**  
January 29 – February 4, 2023

*Burns before the real presence of our Lord for:*

**Our Parishioners,  
Living and Deceased**



*The Feast of the Meeting of the Lord was first observed in the Eastern Church as “The Encounter.” In the sixth century, it began to be observed in the West: in Rome with a more penitential character and in Gaul (France) with solemn blessings and processions of candles, popularly known as “Candlemas.” This feast day concludes the celebration of the Nativity and with the offerings of the Virgin Mother and the prophecy of Simeon, the events now point toward Easter.*

**Meeting of our Lord Holy Day, February 2**

The encounter of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ with Simeon and Anna is celebrated forty days after the Birth of the Savior on December 25th. On this day the All-holy Virgin brought her divine Son into the Temple of Jerusalem, in accordance with the Law, to dedicate Him to God and to purify herself (Leviticus 12:2-7), Exodus 12:2). Even though neither the one nor the other was necessary, the Lawgiver did not want in any way to transgress His own Law, which He had given through Moses, His servant and prophet. At that time, the high priest Zacharias, the father of John the Forerunner, was serving in the Temple. Zacharias placed the Virgin, not in the temple area reserved for women, but rather in the area reserved for virgins. On this occasion two very special persons appeared in the Temple: the elder Simeon and Anna, the daughter of Phanuel. The righteous Simeon took the Messiah in his arms and said: *Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation* (Luke 29-30). Simeon also spoke the following words: *Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel* (Luke 2:34). Then Anna, who from her youth had served God in the Temple by fasting and prayer, recognized the coming of the long-awaited One. But the Pharisees who were present in the Temple, having seen and heard all, became angry with Zacharias because he had placed the Virgin Mary in the area reserved for virgins, and they reported this to King Herod. Convinced that this was the new king spoken of by the Magi from the East, Herod immediately sent his soldiers to kill Jesus. In the meantime, the holy family had already left the city and set out for Egypt under the guidance of an angel of God. The Feast of the Meeting of Our Lord in the Temple was celebrated from earliest time, but the solemn celebration of this day was established in the year 544, during the reign of Emperor Justinian.



**Blessing of Candles for the Feast** - The blessing of candles on the Feast of the Presentation is closely related to the Gospel narrative, introducing Jesus as the “Light of the people” (Lk. 2, 32) The burning candle symbolizes the abiding presence of Jesus Christ in the midst of the Christian community as He, Himself, had promised: “*Where two or three are gathered in My Name, there I am in their midst.*” (Mt. 18, 20). For this reason, the ritual of the Church prescribes that at least two candles be lit on the altar at all liturgical services, and the greater the solemnity, the greater the number of candles used.

**Fellowship Coffee and Doughnuts**

*We extend a warm welcome to our parishioners, visitors, and friends. Following every Sunday Divine Liturgy, Fellowship Coffee and doughnuts are served in the Center. Join us!*

**Dates to Remember:**

- February 2<sup>nd</sup> – Meeting of Our Lord Holy Day
- February 10 – Pirohi Sale
- February 11<sup>th</sup> – First All Souls Saturday
- February 12<sup>th</sup> – Meat-fare Sunday
- February 19<sup>th</sup> - Cheese-fare Sunday
- February 20<sup>th</sup> – First Day of the Great Fast

**A Note from Fr. Geoff**

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

With the **Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee** we begin the Sundays of what is known as the *Lenten Triodion*. Now before us we have four Sundays before we enter the Great Fast. The Church - especially the Byzantine Church - has a lot of traditions of *preparation*. Fasting comes before a Feast. We prepare with prayer, special services, acts of devotion, and a change to our diet. Being that Pascha is the "Feast of Feasts" it makes sense that Lent is known as the *GREAT* Fast.

Holy Week prepares us for Pascha. Lent prepares us for Holy Week. And the four pre-Lenten Sundays give us an opportunity to prepare for Lent. We are mercifully given a few weeks to spend time thinking about how we'd like to approach the Great Fast this year.

There are, of course, the minimum expected requirements of our Church's canons. And there are the traditional fasting rules of the Byzantine Tradition. But beyond these *communal* aspects of our preparation, there is always a *personal* element to a fast. What is it that you, in your own particular and unique circumstances, would stand to benefit from this year? Would you benefit from a day or two each week fasting from the news? Would it help your soul to take a day a week to spend some time in silence and solitude? Perhaps you'd like to spend the time reading through a portion of holy Scripture - the Psalms, or the Gospels. Or perhaps you would do well to increase your exercise of generosity this year, giving time or treasure to an important ministry in the community.

If we take a few moments to think about it, I'm sure we could all come up with some ideas for how we might like to draw nearer to our Lord. I would challenge you to take some time these next few weeks to think about how to approach Lent this year. We are not yet in the Great Fast, but we will be soon. So let's make the most of it!

And, in the meantime, remember that it is tradition *not* to fast this week following the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee! Because the Gospel teaches us that it is not our fasting that is pleasing to God, but a contrite and humble spirit. I wish you a week of joy and peace in our Lord, who gave us the model of humility for us to follow in our spiritual life.

Yours in Christ,  
*Fr. Geoff*

## Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee

Today we are confronted with the parable-story of the Pharisee and of the Publican. The Publican was aware of his unworthiness, he was aware that he was unworthy of presenting himself before the face of God, but also of being admitted into the company of respectable people, people of whom God would approve. He came to the door of the Temple and could not cross the threshold because he knew that in this world – soiled, polluted, desecrated by human sin, by blood and evil in all its forms, the Temple was a place which was devoted to God alone.

As the Publican stood on the threshold he knew that he belonged to the realm of evil, and had no access into the realm of God; and yet, he felt the difference, he felt horror at himself and a sense of worship, of adoration with regard to the Divine Realm. He beat his chest and asked for mercy because there was nothing else he could hope for and count on.

The Pharisee stood right in the middle of the Church; he had walked in and taken his stand there as one who had the right to be there. Why? Not because he was a man of pure heart, but because he was faithful to every one of the formal rules established by the Synagogue, as a number of us are faithful to the outer, external rules of life that do not penetrate even through our skin, which do not reach our heart, which do not give a new shape and meaning to our thoughts.

So, again, we are confronted by two men and asked by Christ: who are you? Are you one who is so deeply aware of the sanctity of God that he knows that, apart from a God who would step down to us to heal and save, there is no access to Him. Or are we like the Pharisee who would say to God, throw it in His face: I have done all that is prescribed. You have nothing to ask of me!

Let us ask ourselves then: Do we imitate the Pharisee in deeds, outwardly faithful to all the tenets of our Christian Faith? And beyond this, do we allow our Faith to transform our heart, to rule our will, to enlighten our mind? This is the task which the Gospel offers us today. Think about it.

*“Seeing the dignity to which the humble are raised, and the deep abyss into which the proud fall, let us imitate the virtue of the Publican, and despise the sins of the Pharisee.”*

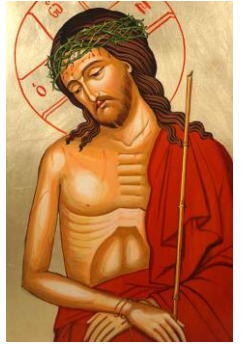
From Matins



*O God, be merciful to me a sinner!*

## Pre-Lenten Sundays

There are four more Sundays within Byzantine Pre-Lent (including today). The “Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee” calls us to consider our life, and to repent of our sins for repentance is the door through which we enter the Holy Forty Days Fast. The “Sunday of the Prodigal Son” calls us to “come to ourselves” and return to the Father, who eagerly awaits our return. The “Sunday of the Last Judgment” reminds us that while the Lord’s mercy is immeasurable even He does not forgive those who do not repent. And, finally, on “Forgiveness Sunday” we remember Adam’s expulsion from Paradise and the proper method of fasting (don’t put on a gloomy face).



## Non-Fasting Week

This week (from the Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee to the Sunday of the Prodigal Son) according to our Liturgical calendar, is a fast free week. The prayer of the Pharisee was to boast that he fasts twice a week. In order to eliminate all pride before the beginning of the Great Fast, the holy fathers directed that we do not fast at all this week.



## January 30: The Three Holy Hierarchs

### *Basil the Great, John Chrysostom and Gregory of Nazianzus*

Each of these saints have their own feast day. St. Basil the Great, January 1; St. Gregory the Theologian, January 25; and St. John Chrysostom, January 27. This combined feast day, January 30, was instituted in the eleventh century during the reign of Emperor Alexius Comnenus. At one time a debate arose among the people concerning who of the three is the greatest? Some extolled Basil because of his purity and courage; others extolled Gregory for his unequalled depth and lofty mind in theology; still others extolled Chrysostom because of his eloquence and clarity in expounding the Faith. Thus some were called Basilians, others Gregorians, and the third were called Johannites.

This debate was settled by Divine Providence to the benefit of the Church and to an even greater glory of the three saints. Bishop John of Euchaita had a vision in a dream: At first, all three of these saints appeared to him separately in great glory and indescribable beauty, and after that all three appeared together. They said to him, “As you see, we are one in God and there is nothing contradictory in us; neither is there a first or a second among us.” The saints also advised Bishop John that he write a common service for them and to order a common feast day of celebration. Following this wonderful vision, the debate was settled in this manner: January 30 would be designated as the common feast of these three hierarchs. The Greeks consider this feast not only an ecclesiastical feast but their greatest national school holiday.

ST. GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

1001 Clinton Street- Aliquippa, PA 15001

PASTOR: FATHER GEOFFREY MACKEY

Fr. Geoffrey's Direct Line: (412) 356-3698

OFFICE PHONE: 724-375-2742

FAX: 724-375-8776

ST. GEORGE CENTER: 724-375-6652

PARISH EMAIL: stgbyz@gmail.com

PARISH WEBSITE: www.stgeorgebyzantinecatholicchurch.org

Religious: Sr. Mary Virginia O' Carm

Holy Protection Convent, 1000 Clinton St. 724-378-0238



Cantors: Jo Ann Hersh, Louisa Hersh, David Klacik      Facilities Supervisor: John Poiarkoff

Grounds Keepers: Rich Mudron, Rob Dzumba, Francis Hersh

Holy Mystery of Reconciliation ..... Before and after Liturgies, or by appointment

Holy Mysteries of Initiation ..... Contact the pastor

Holy Mystery of Anointing ..... Contact the pastor prior to surgery or in the event of illness

Holy Mystery of Marriage ..... Contact the pastor six months prior to wedding

Pirohi Sales ..... 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of each month

St. George Ladies' Guild & Men's Club ..... Everyone welcome to participate

Opportunities for Stewardship ... ..Church and grounds cleaning and maintenance: Every Saturday,  
Pirohi making: 2<sup>nd</sup> week of each month.

*“Let your prayer be completely simple, for both the publican and the prodigal son were reconciled to God by a single phrase.”*  
*- St. John Chrysostom*