

December 17, 2023  
Sunday of the Forefathers



**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 4, pp. 141 – 142 & the Forefathers: and pp. 281 - 283

Divine Services for the Week:

- SAT., DEC. 16**      **SECOND SUNDAY before the NATIVITY, Anticipated**  
**SUNDAY of the FOREFATHERS**  
**4:30 P.M.**      **VESPERAL DIVINE LITURGY, Christmas Party Following**  
+ Lori Dickey Stevic, offered by Dwight & Mary Dickey family
- SUN., DEC. 24**      **SUNDAY before the NATIVITY, of the ANCESTORS**  
**8:30 A.M.**      **DIVINE LITURGY**  
+ Raymond Ozimok, offered by sons Richard & Eric Ozimok
- 7:30 P.M.**      **The NATIVITY of our LORD**  
**GREAT COMPLINE & DIVINE LITURGY for Christmas**  
**For the Parishioners**
- TUES., DEC. 26**      **SYNAXIS of the THEOTOKOS**  
**9:00 A.M.**      **DIVINE LITURGY**

(At St. Mary: Wednesday, Dec. 27, 9:00 AM, Divine Liturgy for St. Stephen Holy Day)

*He shall be born unto us, and God will be with us;  
And we shall find Him in the cave of Bethlehem.*

**Happy Birthday Greetings:**

December 18: Ethan Roush, December 21: Ella Zimmerman,  
December 22: Joanne Futato, Suzanne Klacik, Jaqueline Pinchot

**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

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

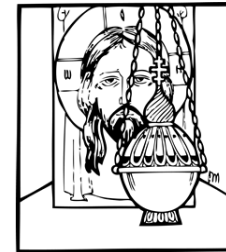
Betty Polas – **Apple Blossom Senior Living** (125 Apple Blossom Way, #307, Moon Twp., PA 15108)

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

**Epistle Readers – December 16: Joanne F. – December 24: Dan Pinchot, JoAnn Hersh**

**Ushers – Stand in as needed**

**Troica Holder s – December 16: M. Bobanic – December 24: R. Mudron, F. Hersh**



**THIS WEEK'S SANCTUARY LAMP**  
**December 10 - 16, 2023**

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

**+ Lori Dickey Stevic**

*(In Loving Memory)*

Offered By:

**Mother & Father**

Candles at the iconostas are donated in loving memory of + Wilda. David, by Gretchen David



*This icon is a detail of an  
icon of the Holy Forefathers  
and Patriarchs, who foretold  
the coming of the Messiah.*

# Christmas Dinner & Celebration

*A Christmas gift to you, our parishioners and friends*

**TODAY! Following Divine Liturgy.**

**Enjoy drinks and hour devours before dinner is served.**

## Christmas Market

The “Vintage Christmas Market” is set up in the Center during the Christmas Dinner. If there is anything you like, simply leave a donation for your purchase.

*Thank You!*



**The Christmas Eve Supper- Velija (Holy Supper)** brings the family together to partake in special foods and begin the holiday with many customs and traditions, which reach back to antiquity. The rituals of the Christmas Eve are dedicated to God, to the welfare of the family, and to the remembrance of the ancestors.

**The Tradition of Holy Super:** There are twelve courses in the Supper, because according to the Christian tradition each

course is dedicated to one of Christ’s Apostles. According to the ancient pagan belief, each course stood for every full moon during the course of the year. The courses are meatless because there is a period of fasting required by the Church until Christmas Day.

**A Traditional Rusyn Christmas Greeting:** For Holy Supper: “I greet you on the Feast of Christ’s Nativity and I pray that the Infant Jesus shower upon all of you His choicest blessings. May we all live in health, peace, and happiness and may we all celebrate another Christmas together. A Merry and Blessed Christmas! Christ is born! Glorify Him!”

*Come, O Jesus, our Savior, redeem and save us!*

## A Note from Fr. Geoff

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In just over a week, we will be celebrating the birth of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ. Though he is eternally-begotten of the Father and therefore without beginning or end, he was born in time, born in the flesh in a cave in Bethlehem of Judea. Jesus Christ's incarnation in the world was God's definitive answer to humanity's alienation. In Jesus God has become God-with-us (*Emmanuel*). This week I'd like to share another Advent sonnet by Malcolm Guite which, I think, beautifully expresses this wondrous mystery!

*O come, O come, and be our God-with-is,  
O long-sought with-ness for a world without,  
O secret seed, O hidden spring of light.  
Come to us Wisdom, come unspoken Name,  
Come Root, and Key, and King, and holy Flame,  
O quickened little wick so tightly curled,  
Be folded with us into time and place,  
Unfold for us the mystery of grace  
And make a womb of all this wounded world.  
O heart of heaven beating in the earth,  
O tiny hope within our hopelessness,  
Come to be born, to bear us to our birth,  
To touch a dying world with new-made hands,  
And make these rags of time our swaddling bands.*

May this final week of the Nativity Fast be for each and all of you a time of blessing and peace. And may our Lord bless you in the preparation and anticipation of the mystery of his Incarnation, for... Christ is among us! He is and will be!

Yours in Christ,

*Fr. Geoff*

*Come, O Jesus, our Savior, redeem and save us!*

## Sunday of the Forefathers

Today is the second Sunday before Christmas, and the Church commemorates the ancestors of Christ. On this Sunday Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and many other men and women are remembered and honored. All were flawed, but all proved, in the end, to be faithful. One by one their lives of faith in the flesh led to the birth of Christ who took flesh from their daughter,



Mary. Here in their numbers we find a family. This lineage begins with Abraham and Sarah, expands into multitudes, and then is compressed to one young virgin from whom the One prophesied about takes flesh. From him we have another expansion into the multitudes of all who have faith in Jesus Christ. In our numbers we, too, are incorporated by adoption into this family of faith.

The lives of these “persons of faith” whom we honor today reveal to us a lot about what it means to be committed, to honor God and shun idolatry, to be honest and truthful. These are the examples of what it means to be righteous. They are our ancestors of faith.

All too often, we are inclined to dismiss these men and women who are in the Church’s spotlight today as irrelevant pre-Christian Hebrews. The fact is that their lives comprise an important part of our Christian heritage because they lived in a manner that was totally dependent upon knowing God as an ever-present reality. Their lives were not compartmentalized or secularized. They all lived with the very same needs that we know, but their day to day choices were deeply rooted in a realization that one’s life is not his own, and that our entire life is in the hand of God who is the Source of every blessing, and that we live in a fleeting moment of this created world.

***By faith, You, O Christ, justified the Forefathers. Through them you betrothed yourself to a Church from all nations. The saints rejoice in glory because a glorious offspring has blossomed from their seed: the Mother who bore you without seed. Through their prayers, O Christ our God, have mercy on us.***

*Come, O Jesus, our Savior, redeem and save us!*

*Come, O Jesus, our Savior, redeem and save us!*

## Sunday of the Forefathers

All too often when we read the Gospel we keep the words of Jesus at arm’s length, never letting them sink in and really challenge our life. Why? Most of the time the reason that we would prefer to pass over our Lord’s teaching in a superficial way is because his teachings are truly challenging and life changing if we allow them to have their full impact. Today’s Gospel is one of those “challenging” teachings of Jesus. “Many are called but few are chosen,” Jesus tells us in the Gospel today and these words are spoken to us today just as much as they were spoken to Jesus’ hearers two thousand years ago. “*Many are called but few are chosen.*”

Among those who hear this Gospel passage today in the Church most will allow Jesus’ words to pass over them with little or no serious consideration. A few however, hearing these words will respond to Jesus by asking how one is to be “chosen.” The invitation to participate in God’s life, the invitation to salvation, is offered to all, as Saint Paul says in the Epistle, “Gentile and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, Barbarian and Scythian, slave and freeman.” However, not all respond to the invitation. Many then, and many today, find more important things with which to occupy their lives. The way of salvation begins with an invitation on God’s part, but to that invitation we must respond in a real way. All of us are invited to the wedding banquet (heaven), but not all of us will choose to go.

Choosing to go is not simply an intellectual act – it is not a matter of mere words. To go to the wedding banquet of God we must, as any good wedding guest must do, prepare ourselves. We must make ourselves acceptable to God so that when we arrive we will be chosen to enter. Are we willing to prepare ourselves to enter into heaven or will we find something more important to do with our lives?

### Come, Lord Jesus, Come!

What is the nature of the invitation? “Come, for look, all things are ready.” God the Father has prepared in Christ gifts for the inhabitants of the earth. Through Christ, he bestowed the forgiveness of sins, cleansing away of all defilement, communion of the Holy Spirit, glorious adoption as children, and the kingdom of heaven. To these blessings, Christ invited Israel, before all others, by the commandments of the Gospel. He has even said by the voice of the psalmist: “*But I have been sent as a king by him,*” that is, by God the Father, “*on Zion his holy mountain to preach the commandment of the Lord.*” (Psalm 2:6)



(St. Cyril of Alexandria)

As we prepare for the Christmas and Theophany holy days let us not lose sight of the fact that we have been invited to a Great Feast. Let’s not let the presents, trimming and other preparations blind us to the coming of the Savior. *Come, Lord Jesus, come!*

ST. GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH



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Cantors: Jo Ann Hersh, Louisa Hersh, David Klacik, Dan Pinchot

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.

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*O Christ the Savior, burning thirst of the Patriarchs, come to us and save us!*