

August 23, 2020
Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost
Leave-taking of the Dormition



SAINT GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH
Fighting the Good Fight with Faith

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever! ~ Slava Isusu Christu! Slava Na V'iki!

Divine Services for the Week:

SUN., AUG. 23 TWELFTH SUNDAY after PENTECOST,
Leave-taking of the Dormition
8:30 A.M. DIVINE LITURGY
+ Paul Valiga, requested Richard Mudron

The Lord's Day is the original feast day... a day of joy and freedom from work

(At St. Mary: Sat., Aug. 29, 9:00 A.M. Divine Liturgy for the Beheading of St. John the Baptist)

SUN., AUG. 30 THIRTEENTH SUNDAY after PENTECOST,
Post-festive Day of the Beheading of Forerunner and Baptist John
8:30 A.M. DIVINE LITURGY
+ Bertha Jean Gall, requested by Richard Mudron

Saturday: Beheading of St. John the Baptist

On Saturday, August 29 we commemorate the Beheading of St. John the Baptist. By tradition, a strict fast from meat and dairy products is observed on this day. This strict fast is to remind us of the strict life of St. John the Baptist and his martyrdom.

Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.

Happy Birthday Greetings This Week:

August 24: John Sirko

Wedding Anniversaries this Week:

None for the week

Please Pray For Our Sick and Shut-ins

HOME – Eileen Batcha, Natalie Jugan-Diaz, Rebecca Dickun, Marianne Dove, Jean Herdt, Rebecca Hutcheon, Kevin Joray, Mary Ann Jugan, Neil Jugan, Josephine Maruhnich, Mary Salamon, John Simunick, Bonnie Taylor

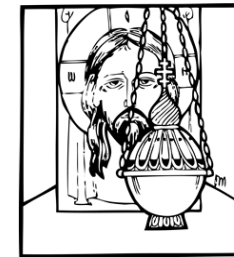
Hunter's Care Home (1916 Main St, Aliquippa, PA 15001) – Mary Poiarkoff

West Hills Health & Rehab Center (951 Brodhead Road, Coraopolis, PA 15108) – Alice Haber

Epistle Readers – Aug. 23: Joanne Futato – Aug. 30: Prudy Peya

Ushers – Aug. 23: F. Hersh/R. Dzumba – Aug. 30: R. Mudron/J. Yurosky

Troica Holders – Aug. 23: R. Mudron – Aug. 30: R. Dzumba



THIS WEEK'S SANCTUARY LAMP

August 23 - 29, 2020

Burns before the real presence of our Lord for:

+ Tom & Jack Seech
(In Loving Memory)

Offered By:

Sister, Mary Elizabeth



Your regular attendance and sacrificial offerings benefit the overall welfare of our Parish



Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel:

Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the malice and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly host, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan and all evil spirits who wander through the world for the ruin of souls. Amen.

prophetically described that day: *The just shall rejoice at the presence of God, they shall exult and dance for joy. Make a highway for him who rides on the clouds, rejoice in the Lord, exult in his presence. God will go forth, at the head of his people, and the heavens will melt at the presence of God. This God of ours is a God who saves, the Lord our God holds the keys of death.* (from Psalm 67).

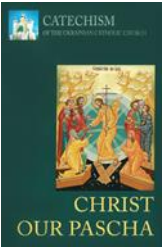
We hear the story of the beheading of the forerunner John, and shudder with shame and disbelief. How could the Savior God allow such a terrible end to his kinsman and faithful servant? With treachery and lust, the death is plotted of one so pure and righteous? But John himself was not disturbed, nor did he question God's ways. He gave himself over to the will of God, whose plan is ever for the good to those who love him.

We fast today, as if to honor the Forerunner who fasted always. We fast today, to separate ourselves from the passions that were so cruelly executed on the day of his death. Trumpets precede the entrance of the King into the banquet hall. Lightning precedes the thunderclap. A candle precedes the procession of the Holy Gospel. And we fast today to remind ourselves that humility precedes the gifts of God. How shall we boast? Even hours of patient vigil, even endless good deeds, even mountains of philanthropy are a pittance, amounting to nothing more than some camel hair and a leather girdle before God. It is a humbled spirit and contrite heart that is acceptable before the throne of grace. So on this feast we fast, becoming less, that God can become all. Lord, grant us the grace to humble ourselves, help us to persevere, even to the end.

Holy Kinsman of the Lord, prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John, pray to God for us!

Excerpt from Christ Our Pascha

Humankind—the Crown of Creation: Every human being that comes into the world is called to grow in likeness to God—to achieve divinization [also known as deification, the process of theosis]: “God has given us, through these things, his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of lust, and may become partakers of the divine nature” (2 Pt 1:4). This partaking in God’s nature constitutes human happiness. Likeness to God can be attained by us only by free choice and assent, and by cooperation with God’s grace. “Our likeness to God requires our cooperation. When the intellect begins to perceive the Holy Spirit with full consciousness, we should realize that grace is beginning to paint the divine likeness over the divine image in us.” (#124)



Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Today’s Gospel reading challenges us all so sharply. It begins with words that may be interpreted in more than one way: “Good Lord - what shall I do to have eternal life?” And the Lord answers, “Why do you call Me good”? Good is only God”. He does not say, “You are wrong”. He does not deny His right to be called good as God is good; and thereby, to those who have ears to hear, those who have a heart capable of perceiving the surpassing goodness of the Lord Jesus, surpassing all human goodness, all human beauty and truth - it is a testimony: Yes, you are speaking to your God, and it is your God that is to answer your question.

Then Christ gives us two indications. The one is: if you wish to have eternal life, keep the Commandments. The Commandments of God are not only rules of behavior (although, of course they are such), but as one of the Psalms puts it, should be in our inmost hearts. It should be from the depths of our heart that we accomplish the Commandments: not because we are commanded from outside, but because they have reached us with the ring of truth; not because God has spoken, but because with all our being we have answered “Amen!” This is true, this is life, and this is the way into eternal life.

When we hear Christ mentioning these Commandments - where are we? Who of us can say that he or she was faithful to every word of this short list that indicates that without which we cannot live? Where do we stand? Then Our Lord says to us quite clearly: “If you want perfection - give all you possess.” It is not only material things which we can give: every one of us has treasures hoarded in his mind and heart, in his soul, things which are more important to him than anything material, that is his wealth. Each of us should turn inward and ask himself, “Which is my peculiar treasure? What are those things which I will not give away even for life eternal, for God?”

Sometimes we go home like the young man, perhaps saddened, that neither are we keeping the Commandments, nor are we able to give away our most precious treasure: but remember - we will not go condemned, we will have been faced with an ultimate choice, and as long as we can struggle on earth - there is time. But let us not be enticed by the length of time: time flies, time goes - let it not be too late, let us turn to life, let us become all we are capable of being.



Ukrainian Food Festival

Our brothers and sisters at Ss. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church in Carnegie are hosting a Ukrainian Food Festival, September 11 & 12 from 11 AM to 7 PM. The festival will include delicious homemade foods, baked goods, and a basket raffle. For menu and full information and for ordering, visit: www.orthodoxcarnegie.org or call 412-527-5359. The church is located at 220 Mansfield Blvd. in Carnegie.

With God all things are possible! – If you want to learn the way and how the impossible becomes possible, listen. Jesus did not make this statement that what is impossible for man is possible for God merely so you could relax and do nothing and leave it all to God. No, He said this so that you could understand the importance of calling upon God to give you help in this rigorous contest and that you might more readily approach His grace. (*St. John Chrysostom*)

Nothing comes without effort. The help of God is always ready and near, but is given only to those who seek and work, and only to those seekers who, after putting all their powers to the test, then cry out with their whole heart: “Lord, help us!”

From the writings of St. Theophan the Recluse

The Poor and the Rich

As in the earthly life there are poor and rich, so also in the spiritual life, in the spiritual order, there are also poor and rich. As the poor ask charity of the rich and well-to-do, and cannot live without their help, so also in the spiritual order the poor must have recourse to the spiritually rich. We are the spiritually poor, whilst the saints, or those who shine even in this present life by their faith and piety, are the spiritually rich. It is to them that we needy ones must have recourse. We must beg for their prayers that they may help us to become simple as infants; that they may teach us spiritual wisdom, how to conquer sins, how to love God and our neighbor. And therefore pray for me, saints of God—prophets, apostles, martyrs, prelates, venerable and righteous men—that I may become like unto you!

- St. John of Kronstadt

Church Mice



August 29th

The Beheading of the Holy and Glorious Prophet and Forerunner and Baptist John



The Church sets forth for every day of the year so many saints, so that we can be inspired by their lives, rejoice in their virtues, and take comfort in their intercession. There are countless martyrs and many holy ascetics. There are numerous hierarchs and worthy priests and deacons. There are choirs of virgins, wonderworkers, holy fools, un-mercenary healers and passion-bearers. But there is only one baptist and forerunner, and he, among all those born of woman knows no superior.

Today we celebrate the day of his beheading, or rather the surrender of his life to God's plan. We come to the date of August 29th because this is the day of dedication of the Church built by Saint Helen for his relics in Sebaste, the site of his burial. In that place his holy relics were honored until they were disturbed by the apostate emperor Julian. But, imprisoned in that dark palace, John actually gave his life into God's hands shortly before the Jewish Passover.

And that is entirely fitting and suitable. For even at his holy death, John did not abandon his ministry of going before the Lord, preparing his way (Luke 1:76). He had leapt for joy in the womb of his mother Elizabeth at the visitation of the Savior and the Mother of God. He entered the desert before the Lord, and told the demons to prepare to address the Only-begotten in the flesh. He preached to the people of Israel to prepare the way of the Lord, and to make his paths straight (Luke 3:4). He pointed to the Lamb of God, and made his own disciples to be apostles of the Lord. Though innocent, he was arrested and accused unjustly, a forerunner of the chosen path that the blameless Christ would follow. Now, he gave his life over to death, but this did not mark the end of his ministry! He entered into the realm of the dead, into Hades where the righteous of all ages, the patriarchs, prophets and just ones from the creation of the world were waiting to be loosed from their bondage. He walked among the dead, in the kingdom of death, crying out for all those weeping there to prepare themselves to receive the Lord God! The time of their captivity was coming to an end, soon Christ the true God would by means of the Cross enter into their condition, and lead them forth into freedom, opening the gates of paradise and carrying them to the glory of the holy Resurrection. The voice of God the Word would be heard in their midst, and the darkness of death would be illumined with the eternal Light. The psalmist words ...

SAINT GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH



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**Cantors: Jo Ann Hersh, David Klacik,
Louisa Hersh**

**E.C.F. coordinator: Jo Ann Hersh
Facilities Supervisor: John Poiarkoff**

- Holy Mystery of Reconciliation Before and after Liturgies
- Holy Mysteries of Initiation Contact the church office
- Holy Mystery of Anointing Ask prior to surgery or serious illness
- Holy Mystery of Marriage Contact the church office eight months prior to wedding
- Religious Education Classes September through May, following Sunday Divine Liturgy
- Pirohi Sales 2nd Friday of each month, Sept. through May
- St. George Ladies' Guild & Men's Club Everyone welcome to participate



Let us try to learn Divine truth more by toil and sweat than by mere word, for at the time of our departure it is not words but deeds that will have to be shown.

- St. John of the Ladder