

WORLD

THE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC



Special
Christmas
issue!

THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE ARCHEPARCHY OF PITTSBURGH VOL. 67 NO. 14 CHRISTMAS 2022

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CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!





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MISSION

The mission of *The Byzantine Catholic World* is to spread the Gospel message in the rich tradition of the Byzantine Catholic Church; to encourage faithful to reflect the image of Christ in everyday activities of life; to offer spiritual formation through changing times; and to celebrate community among Byzantine Catholics in the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh, throughout the Metropolitan Church in America, and around the world.



BULLETIN BOARD

Upcoming events at the House of Prayer

The following events will take place at Mount St. Macrina House of Prayer, 510 W. Main St., Uniontown, Pa. To register for programs or more information, call 724-438-7149 or email hpmsm@verizon.net.

■ 1:30-3:30 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 8, **Open House**. Come and spend some time with the Staff in the warmth of the House of Prayer!

■ 6:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 27 to After Lunch Saturday, Jan. 28, **Winter Respite**. Silent Overnight Retreat with presenter Sister Carol. Offering: \$40. Registration due: Jan. 23.

■ 10-11:30 a.m. (in person), 6:30-8 p.m. (virtual) Monday, Feb. 6, 13, 20 and 27, **Monday Reading Series**. "Falling Upward" by Father Richard Rohr with presenter Sister Barbara Jean. Offering: \$15 per session. Registration due: Jan. 30.

■ 9:30 a.m.-noon Friday, Feb. 24, March 31 and April 28, **Personal Morning of Prayer**. Are you ready to let go of some of the business and pressures of your life to come apart and rest awhile? Spend time in silence, meditation and prayer. Free Will Offering.

■ 10 a.m.-noon Saturday, Feb. 25, **Day of Recollection**. "Grieving" with presenter TBA. Offering: \$35. Registration due: Feb. 20.

■ 6:30-8 p.m. Wednesday, March 1, **Evening of Recollection for Women**. Presenter: Father James Tringhese. Offering: \$35. Registration due: Feb. 24.

■ 6:30-8 p.m. Tuesday, March 7, **Evening for Men**. Presenter: Father James Tringhese. Offering: \$35. Registration due: March 1.

■ 10-11:30 a.m. March 9, 16, 23, 30, **Thursday Bible Study**. "Meeting the Prophets Jeremiah and Isaiah During Lent" with presenter Sister Melita Marie, OSBM. Offering: \$15 per session. Registration due: Feb. 23.

■ 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Saturday, March 11, **Lenten Day of Prayer**. Presenter Sister Ruth, OSBM. The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be offered along with a conference and prayer service. Offering: \$40 includes lunch. Registration due: March 6. ■

Christ is born! Glorify Him!



Metropolitan Archbishop William Skurla (center) joined other local religious leaders Nov. 18 for the annual blessing of the Creche in downtown Pittsburgh, Pa. Photo by Andrea Harhai.

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CHRISTMAS GREETINGS 2022



Peace for Ukraine

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

Dear People,

The Christmas message from the Gospel of Saint Luke,

“The angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.” (Luke 1:10-14)

And like the angels, we remember and proclaim the Christmas story of the birth of Jesus. And like the angels, we proclaim that the Lord will bring peace to the world.

A story of hope for the glory and peace for the world comes from the Christmas of 1914. The story remembers a celebration during the First World War. The armies were facing one another in trenches that stretched across the continent of Europe. It was a global war they believed was the war to end all wars.

Despite being surrounded by death and destruction, the soldiers on both sides took time to celebrate Christmas. During the cease fire, the shooting and bombs stopped, and the soldiers began to sing. The brass band played Christmas Carols. The soldiers went into no man’s land zone between the entrenched armies singing, exchanging gift of food and drink. They even played a game of football before they were called back to their trenches by their officers.

Unfortunately, the cease fire did not last and the First World War was not the war to end all wars. One hundred years later, the video images from the current trench war in Ukraine are disturbingly similar to the news reels of World War I. We try to follow the angel’s proclamation and not be afraid for we believe in the power of God to transform the hearts of leaders and bring peace to end the war.

We pray in a special way for peace in Ukraine. Two million soldiers are in pitched battle in trenches, on the sea and in the air. We pray for the souls of thousands of soldiers and civilians who have died or been injured. More than just a Christmas cease fire, we pray that a just and lasting peace can be reached soon. We thank all who have responded and given to the collection for support to those in Ukraine.

We pray also for the over ten million that have been forced from their homes and living in hope of someday returning. Just like Mary and Joseph on the first Christmas, they are wandering in search of a safe home in which to celebrate this Christmas. We pray for our families to be safe where ever winds of fate have moved them. May all our family and friends be blessed during the Christmas Season.

Jesus came to bring peace to the world. As he said in the Gospel of Saint John, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you (John 14.27). When we are at peace, our hearts are opened to all the gifts of the Holy Spirit. May the peace of Jesus Christ born in Bethlehem come into your hearts. We pray for that peace.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ William C Skurla

Most Reverend William C. Skurla, D.D.
Metropolitan Archbishop of Pittsburgh

“Overwhelmed with gratitude”

ST. NICHOLAS CHARITY DINNER AT ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHEDRAL IN MUNHALL, PA. CELEBRATES 65TH YEAR



by David Mayernik Jr.
Editor

This year’s 65th annual St. Nicholas Charity Dinner coincided on the same day as National Cookie Day.

It’s the first time it’s happened since the cookie celebration was instituted in 1987, according to Chris Singel, master of ceremonies.

But there’s no debating which is sweeter.

That’s because the annual dinner, held Dec. 4 at St. John the Baptist Cathedral in Munhall, Pa., benefits the Byzantine Catholic Seminary of SS. Cyril and Methodius in Pittsburgh, Pa

It is co-sponsored by the Greek Catholic Union, which is celebrating the 130th anniversary of its founding in 1892, and the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh.

George Juba, GCU president and CEO, presented Metropolitan Archbishop William Skurla with the fraternal organization’s annual contribution to the Seminary, which this year totaled \$125,000.

The organization has donated \$3.75 million to the Seminary since 1960.

“The Byzantine Catholic Seminary strives to be worthy of the magnanimous generosity of the GCU. We just witnessed one of countless charitable outreaches by the GCU to BCS. I am overwhelmed with gratitude,” Father Robert Pipta, Seminary Rector, said.

He also offered updates on the Seminary’s many ongoing projects:

■ A “special benefactor” has helped establish a Living Hope fund, a scholarship to assist men and women in becoming lay leaders so they are able to assist their priests in the works of the parish.

■ Twenty-one young men recently attended “Come and See,”

Story continued on page 5



Metropolitan Archbishop William Skurla



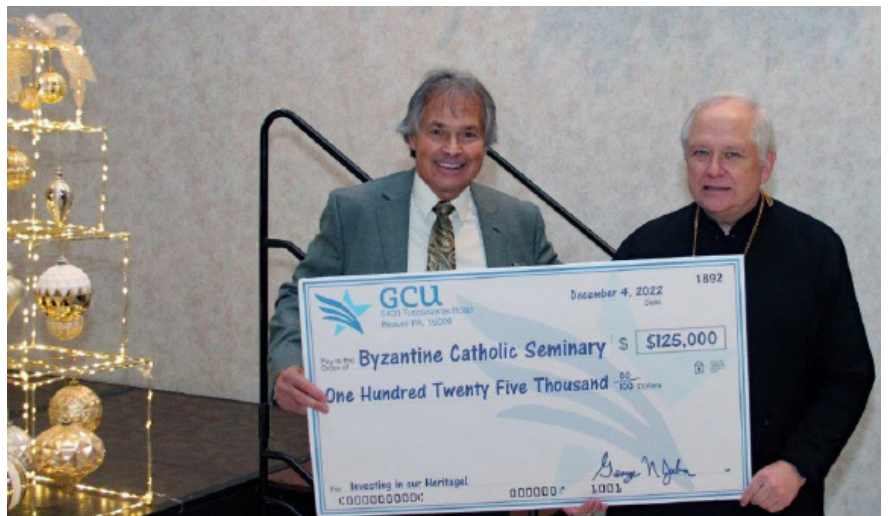
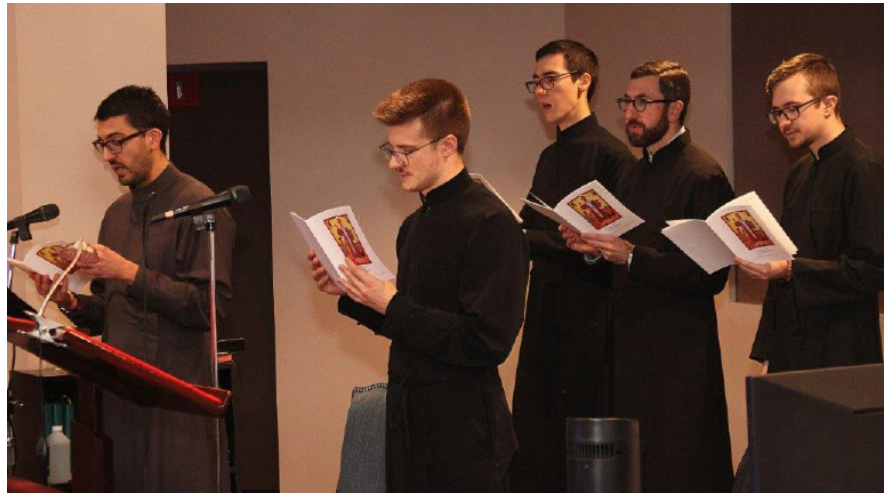
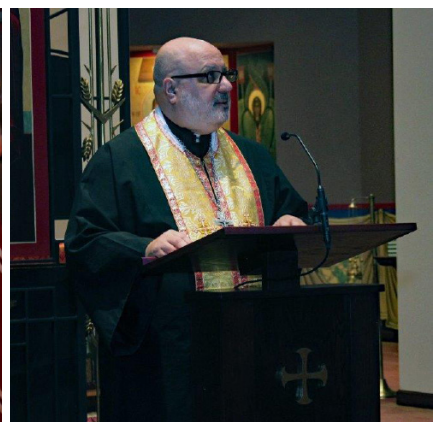
Father Robert Pipta, Rector, Byzantine Catholic Seminary of SS. Cyril and Methodius



George Juba, GCU President and CEO



Master of ceremonies Chris Singel

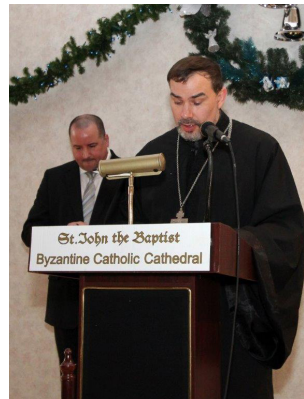




65TH ANNUAL ST. NICHOLAS CHARITY DINNER



Seminarians Deacon Timothy Kennedy, Thomas Donlin, Luke Iyengar, Nathaniel Tapsak, Tyler Wisniewski, Evan LeDoux, Joshua Johnson, Nicholas Krivacs, Mark Le Roy, and Allen Blehl.



St. Nicholas Charity Dinner

continued from page 4

the Seminary's annual discernment retreat.

"Their interest, enthusiasm and prayerfulness remain powerful signs of God's abiding presence in the hearts of those He calls to ordained ministry," Father Robert said.

■ A revamped website at www.bcs.edu is now online.

■ There are also "very exciting plans" underway for "Welcoming Our Past and Our Future," which will result in noticeable physical changes to the Seminary building on Pittsburgh's North Side.

In addition to the Seminary, GCU support includes donating \$10,000 each year to the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh and Eparchies of Parma, Passaic and Phoenix to support needs as determined by Archbishop William and respective Bishops.

The Eparchies can also apply for a \$10,000 grant to support a project.

He said as part of the GCU's "total transformation" of its internal structure, all Byzantine parishes will receive a \$2,000 donation in 2023.

George Juba also announced that he will present \$250 checks funded by the GCU Foundation to this year's 10 seminarians.

The Foundation was organized in 2007 and makes monetary grants for charitable, educational and religious purposes.

Seminarians receiving grants are: Evan LeDoux, Joshua Johnson, Thomas Donlin, Nicholas Krivacs, Deacon Timothy Kennedy, Allen Blehl, Mark Le Roy, Luke Iyengar, Tyler Wisniewski and Nathaniel Tapsak.

Seminarians sang "Joyful Tidings Come Our Way," and "Lo, How a Rose Ere Blooming" and St. Nicholas' hymn before dinner was served.

"It's been a tremendous period of growth during the last 10 years," Archbishop William, president of Seminary's Board of Directors, said.

He thanked everyone for their support of the Seminary and asked to continue to pray for vocations.

"It is a hope we continue to grow and have priests who fulfill all the things that have been done for the past 130 or 140 years here in the Byzantine Catholic Church in the United States."

The Greek Catholic Union, the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh, the Seminary and the St. Nicholas Celebration Committee thank everyone involved with the 2022 event who helped in any way to ensure its success. ■

65TH ANNUAL ST. NICHOLAS CHARITY DINNER



Photos by Nick Havrilla Sr.



ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHEDRAL IN MUNHALL, PA.

Where does Santa buy his kolache?

In November, St. John the Baptist Cathedral in Munhall, Pa. participated in a craft/vendor show at the Double Tree Hotel, Meadowlands to benefit the Washington City Mission.

Santa and Mrs. Claus were also in attendance for pictures.

Santa stopped by our booth to see what we were selling. They placed an order to be picked up at a later date.

On Saturday, Dec. 3, following the Homestead Parade, Santa and



Mrs. Claus made a detour and stopped by St. John Cathedral Center to pick up their order. ■



SS. PETER AND PAUL IN BRADDOCK, PA.

A Thanksgiving tradition

by Arleen Jama
SS. Peter and Paul, Braddock, Pa.

SS. Peter and Paul in Braddock, Pa. handed out their traditional Thanksgiving Bread Nov. 20.

This tradition is a “thank you” to our parishioners to whom we are forever grateful for their support, kindness, and love. ■



ASCENSION OF OUR LORD IN CLAIRTON, PA

Fundraiser fun

by Trish Roberts
Ascension of Our Lord, Clairton, Pa.

Ascension of Our Lord in Clairton, Pa held a spaghetti dinner fundraiser Oct. 23.

With the help of a great team of volunteers, the event was a success both financially, and according to

our customers, delicious with the best homemade spaghetti they ever tasted.

In addition to the dinners sold, a basket raffle, gift card raffle and bake sale were held.

We also provided church tours and sold cookbooks published by our parishioners. ■



ST. ELIAS IN MUNHALL, PA.

Food for thought

In thanksgiving to God for all of His blessings, parishioners of St. Elias in Munhall, Pa. collected food donations during the Thanksgiving holiday weekend for those less fortunate.

All the donations will go to the Rainbow Kitchen in Homestead, Pa. ■





The Sound of music

There are hymns and songs that are unmistakably a vital part of this time of year. On these two pages, readers of *The Byzantine Catholic World* share their special musical memories of Christmas past and present.

TEXT MESSAGES

by David Mayernik Jr.
Editor



Among my favorite Christmas songs are two that force me to channel my inner-Indiana Jones and dig out of my dad's vast collection of 45 RPM records each Christmas.

In case you're not aware, a "record" is a round piece of vinyl used to play music before the invention of the internet, iTunes and Spotify.

The first is "Snoopy's Christmas" (1967) by the Royal Guardsmen.

The jaunty tune—which begins solemnly with a German version "O Tannenbaum"—tells the tale of Snoopy being called into service on top of his dog house (which he imagines to be a World War II biplane) to fight his archenemy, the Red Baron.

It ends with the Baron being overcome with Christmas spirit: "The Baron then offered a holiday toast/and Snoopy our hero saluted his host."

The other is "Christmas Dream" (1974) by Perry Como of Canonsburg, Pa.

It was written by Broadway legends Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice for the 1974 Columbia film "The Odessa File" and is truly underrated:

The whole world needs, a Christmas dream

We need it to warm us, to calm us, to love us

To help us to dream our Christmas dream

The two songs could be categorized as being on opposite ends of the popular Christmas music spectrum.

But they each help put a smile on my face during the sometimes-hecktic Christmas season.

There are many more Christmas hymns and songs which fill people with the spirit of the season.

See this page and next, as readers share their special musical memories of Christmas past and present.

■ I'll end the year in this space the same way I have every year since 2016, with the closing lines of my favorite Christmas poem.

It was published in *The New Yorker* on Dec. 20, 1952 and is written by E.B. White, the author of beloved children's books "Stuart Little" and "Charlotte's Web."

Once again, it's worth a Google search to read the entire poem.

And last, we greet all skaters on small natural ponds at the edge of woods toward the end of afternoon. Merry Christmas, skaters! Ring, steel! Grow red, sky! Die down, wind! Merry Christmas to all and to all a good morrow!

Have a blessed Christmas and a healthy 2023! ■

Music has been an integral part of my family's life for as long as I can remember. Blessed with growing up in an extended multigenerational family, I especially enjoyed our holiday celebrations, which always included singing around a food-filled kitchen table.

Church hymns and carols of the season, along with beloved Rusyn folk songs—all filled with a rich, instinctive harmony of exuberant voices in soprano, alto, tenor, and baritone. But my most cherished memory of Christmas music is a singular moment on Christmas Eve 1983.

I was home in Johnstown, Pa., for the holidays, as always. My aunt had just finished bathing my 88-year-old grandmother, who had been in gradual physical and mental decline for the past year. Rarely verbal by then, she sat silently in the living room as I combed and braided her long hair to wrap in the traditional bun she always wore.

"It's Christmas Eve, Baba," I

said. "Everyone's getting ready for Midnight Mass. I'm going to sing with the choir. All our favorite Christmas songs. In Po Našemo, too."

Then I began singing the Tropar in Church Slavonic. I only got as far as "Roždestvo Tvoje Christe" when she started singing with me in a soft but clear and steady tone. I hadn't heard her speak in quite a while, let alone sing. A flood of emotions filled me as we finished the hymn together. I leaned over, kissed her cheek, and said, "Merry Christmas, Baba. Christos Raždajetsja," and she smiled.

I returned to my apartment and job in Harrisburg in the New Year. That was the last Christmas I shared with my beloved baba. She fell asleep in the Lord on January 20, 1984, but I hear her and feel her presence with me especially every time I sing our Christmas Tropar.

Veronica Varga
St. Mary, Johnstown, Pa.

A special Christmas memory connected with music is our dad teaching us the beautiful Byzantine Catholic Christmas hymn, "Heaven and Earth" (Nebo i zemlja).

He taught us the hymn in church Slavonic along with many other of the beautiful Byzantine Catholic hymns and Marian hymns.

We thank both our parents, Jim and Pam Vasilchek, for taking us to church and for teaching us the traditional spiritual songs and hymns of the Byzantine Catholic Church.

We now enjoy teaching our young children these hymns in English and Slavonic.

Emily Vasilchek
Saint Michael, Campbell, Ohio



Jim and Pam Vasilchek with their grandchildren

I used to collect Christmas LPs, but to my dismay, when we moved to a smaller dwelling, I had to part with hundreds of them. I still do have a huge collection of hundreds of Christmas CDs, and among those my favorites are Andy Williams' "Most Wonderful Time of the Year," Perry Como's "Christmas Dream," Nat King Cole's "The Christmas Song," and my favorite, the original Harry Simeone Chorale's "Little Drummer Boy."

I would get pretty upset when radio stations would cut off the end of that recording and not play it to the very last "ding" of the triangle, so when I had my own Christmas radio broadcasts back in the 70s & 80s, I made sure that I played every tune all the way from start to finish and didn't cut in with banter or an abrupt segue or commercial!

But the really sentimental tune which probably isn't known very popularly but brings a tear to my eye is "Christmas Bride" by the Ray Coniff Singers. Chokes me up every time!

The real old-country classics, however, which take me back to my childhood are the "Christmas in Croatia" and "Christmas in a Croatian Village" recordings by the Duquesne University Tamburitians in the early 60s. My Dad and Mom would play those LPs on our stereo record player over and over, and I never grew tired of hearing each song!

They were so joyous and full of life and spirit. Decades later, I had the honor and privilege of converting those old recordings into CDs for the D.U. Tamburitians and create a sing-along booklet so that many generations could enjoy these beautiful renditions for years to come.

Finally, one of my more recent joys was to have gathered the Archeparchial Choir back in 2006 to record an album of Byzantine hymns and carols - "Rejoice! Christ is Born!" - which contains so many beautiful traditional Byzantine Ruthenian songs, a number of which my father-in-law John Fejka used to sing during the Nativity season as the lead cantor at Holy Ghost Church in McKees Rocks.

He joined the heavenly choir in December of 2007, as have many Archeparchial choir members since we first began singing together in 1998. Our time together was precious, and it also brings a tear to my eye to recall all of the wonderful years that we sang together representing the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh at the "Christmas Celebration" at Heinz Hall each December until the annual event's finale in 2010. Many stories, many tears of joy, many more memories to be made!

Darlene Fejka
St. Gregory, Upper St. Clair, Pa.





The Sound of music

As a lifelong member of St. Elias in Munhall, so many of my fondest Christmas memories revolve around the singing of Christmas carols at our liturgies...especially the ones in our founders' Hungarian language.

In my early teenage years, we often went caroling to the shut-ins of the parish. Miss Peggy Katrincsak, the daughter of one of our first cantors, Professor John, was our leader. She taught us carols in Hungarian and then packed us all into her car to visit the various homes.

Miss Peggy was a small, red-headed spitfire and we often wondered how her feet could reach the pedals of her car, but we made our rounds and were warmly welcomed wherever we went...sometimes *too* warmly.

We were often offered homemade cookies and wine and Miss Peggy would tell us we had to take a sip so as not to offend our hosts!

But we always made it safely home with cherished memories of the people we visited. I later learned that her father, Cantor John, had started the old traditional "Betlehemsek" again in this country in 1917.

Miss Peggy also taught us songs to sing at a program held at the Carnegie Library of Homestead Music Hall. It was a program of carols sung by various area church choirs called "Carols Around the World". Our selection was one of the most beloved carols in the Byzantine tradition... "Angels from Heaven"...which we sang in Hungarian.

This program at the library was almost a precursor to a program held at Heinz Hall in Pittsburgh for many years by the Christian Leaders Fellowship, an ecumenical group of area Christian leaders to which our Archbishop belongs.

My love of our Byzantine music led me to join the Pittsburgh Byzantine Archeparchial Choir at its inception.

This choir sang for many years at this wonderful event where we sang together with choirs of various denominations. Participation in this choir expanded my language skills so I can now sing carols in many beautiful languages.

Every year the choir has a Christmas event which showcases our traditional Byzantine carols...in both English and Slavonic.

I am now the cantor at St. Elias. I hope the cantors John Katrincsak, Andrew Rotz, John Repasi, and Linda Gregory (granddaughter of John

Katrincsak) taught me well. I am trying to keep our traditions alive by singing the same carols they did every Christmas, both in Hungarian and English. Hopefully, future generations will remember with fondness the singing of these carols and keep the traditions for years to come.

In thanksgiving to God for all of His blessings, St. Elias parishioners collected food donations during the holiday weekend for those less fortunate. All the donations will go to the Rainbow Kitchen in Homestead, Pa.

Parishioners at St. Elias were treated to gold chocolate coins to commemorate the generosity of St. Nicholas.

Mary Caryl Planiczki
St. Elias, Munhall, Pa.

"We are the carolers from Saint John's and we are here to. 'Wish you a Merry Christmas; We wish you a Merry Christmas; We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!'"

That was how we used to introduce ourselves when we went Christmas caroling from Saint John Chrysostom Church in the Run in Greenfield in Pittsburgh, a few decades ago when I was a teenager. Then we would sing a few more traditional carols in Rusyn/Slavonic and some contemporary carols in English, especially if there were children at home.

We would start at the church about a week before Christmas. We would bundle up in warm clothes because we walked to the homes of many parishioners, beginning down there in the valley and then eventually up into the Greenfield neighborhood. On some streets we went to nearly every house because so many of us lived close to each other and close to the church. It might take us two or three nights to get to everyone.

It was something we looked forward to not only each year, but also to being old enough to go because it was something the "big kids" did. It is probably one of my fondest memories of the Christmas season because it was so different from what most people did for Christmas. I don't think it's something that could ever be repeated. People don't live close to each other and to the church like they used to and people don't walk places like they used to do either. I guess it's similar to the decades

before those decades when men used to dress up as shepherds and would carry a model church building and tell the Nativity story in song in parishioners' homes.

For my family today, my mom and brother and sisters and I still sing the traditional carols when we celebrate Christmas. It's another tradition that won't always be repeated because not a lot of people today learn the traditional carols. I hope I don't sound sad. Perhaps I sound nostalgic, which is what someone does when he's six decades old. They are actually good happy memories that are only a song away for me.

Father Stephen Wahal
Saint Michael, Donora, Pa.
Saint Mary, Monessen, Pa.
Holy Ghost, Charleroi, Pa.

For me, the special memory is of the Christmas carols we sang "po nasemu"...in our language" Church Slavonic. They were what we inherited from our ancestors, both the language and the music. And a lot of people today don't have that. It's a huge blessing that the language and the music still exists and has defined us for hundreds of years.

Betty Ann Kvartek
St. Michael, Canonsburg

Hello! Fellow Byzantines!

Well, as Christmases come and go, we all have a certain song that kind of puts you in the mood. My favorites are mostly religious ones. I'm not much for listening to "Grandma Got Ran Over by a Reindeer" or "Snoopy's Christmas," etc.

I mostly like the Christmas songs when they are done in "symphony-style" (without the words). Just calm and smooth melody.

It makes you sit back and think about the years that have passed. Some good and some not-so-good. "Music" is God's gift to the soothing soul.

We used to have a choir and I sang in it for 28 years. But it disbanded a few years ago, for various reasons. Mostly because of lack of participants. I really do miss singing my off-key bass with the others.

When I was young, growing up in a coal mine town called Windber, Pa., all the kids from the same street played together, thus meaning there were about 25 of us. Girls and boys alike, we did everything together. Which was no different at Christmas time. We would all get together and go door-to-door caroling. This was a good source of Christmas money besides shoveling sidewalks!

Today is a different time. I told my grandkids these same stories and they laughed. They can't comprehend yesterday's world.

In today's world, it's way opposite in everything. Everything is all commercialized. Everything is about

gifts and money and style. Christmas has somewhat taken a

back burner to things such as Halloween and alike.

Probably one of my favorite Christmas songs might be: Bing Crosby and David Bowie's duet together. Harmony is very key to this song.

Yes! Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. But there is also the celebration of our Savior.

Mike Lashinsky
St. John the Baptist, Scottdale, Pa.

I hear Christmas!

I hear the Jaslickari (Bethlehem Carolers) from St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church singing the Christmas Tropar in my Gnora Grandparents' living room in Monessen, Pa.

I hear my Tirpak Uncles and Aunts singing "Nebo I Zemla" and "Divnaja Novina" on Christmas Eve after our Holy Supper.

I hear my brother Bob singing "Oh, Holy Night" at Saint Mary's, Monessen, Christmas Eve.

I hear my parents singing "Rozdestvo Tvoje" (Your Birth O Christ) as they approached houses of family and friends for a Christmas visit. They would start on front steps or porches and sing the Tropar until the door was opened. Usually, the family joined in with the singing as they greeted each other with "Christos Razdajetsja!" (Christ Is Born!)

I hear my grandmother singing! On Christmas day, 1997, my Uncle George made a tape of his mother, Mrs. Hludzik and mother-in-law, Mrs. Gnora (my grandmother) singing Christmas Carols (Kolady). "When the Brilliant Star Shown" ("Koli Jasna Zvizda") is a highlight! There is also a section of the tape where my grandmother gives the Christmas toast, "Vincuju! Vincuju!" Having this tape is a family treasure.

As an alto in our Pittsburgh Byzantine Catholic Archeparchial Choir, I hear these carols and so many others, which bring me full circle in the wonder of "hearing" Christmas.

Mary Ellen Dudick
SS. Peter and Paul, Tarentum, Pa.

Every year at Christmas when we sing the Troparion, "Your birth O Christ our God..." my mind goes back to 1957 and the 11-year-old me.

Saturday mornings, my mother would send me out the door to walk up Ninth Street hill in Charleroi to Holy Ghost Church for Catechism class. December classes were choir practice with Cantor Stephen Levkulich, getting us ready to go Christmas caroling to the houses of our parishioners.

As we stood together in all those kitchens, Cantor Levkulich would start us off singing, "Roždestvo tvoje Christe Bože naš, vozsjija mirovi sv'it razuma: vo nem bo zvizdam služascii zvizdoju učachusja, Teb'i klañatisja Solncu pravdy, i Tebe v'idiťi so vysoty Vostoka: Hospodi slava Teb'i."

Not exactly "Jingle Bells!" Now, that is a really great cantor who could teach grade school children to sing "Roždestvo" and take them on the road!

Now in 2022, I still remember the words in Church Slavonic...but singing it in English, I need to use the book.

Dorothy Mayernik
St. Gregory, Upper St. Clair, Pa.



2022 *Year in Review*

Taking a look back...

As the year draws to a close and the calendar prepares to turn to 2023, it's important to take a look back to the previous 12 months.

Russia's war in Ukraine continues to be the story of the year.

Russia launched its invasion on Feb. 24, leading to many prayers for peace from the clergy and faithful of the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh.

Donations totaling more than \$500,000 were collected by the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh to help feed and support the homeless whose lives have been torn apart.

The funds were sent to the Eparchy of Mukachevo, located in Uzhhorod, Ukraine.

Also in 2022, faithful celebrated the risen Lord on Pascha, reignited parish activities such as summer picnics, and post-Divine Liturgy fellowship, and celebrated a return Sept. 5 to Mount St. Macrina in Uniontown, Pa. for the annual Pilgrimage in Honor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

The staff of *The Byzantine Catholic World* wishes you a Joyous Christmas and a Blessed New Year! ■

Feb. 18



Audience with Pope Francis

Metropolitan Archbishop William Skurla meets Pope Francis in Rome for a meeting of leaders of Eastern Catholics on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Liturgical Instruction of January 6, 1996. The conference was sponsored by the Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Churches. Foto ©Vatican Media .

March 6



A prayer for peace

Metropolitan Archbishop William Skurla was among the religious leaders who spoke at "A Prayer Gathering for Peace," a service at St. Paul Cathedral in Oakland (Pittsburgh), Pa. to show solidarity with the area Ukrainian community. Photo courtesy of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh-Communications Department.

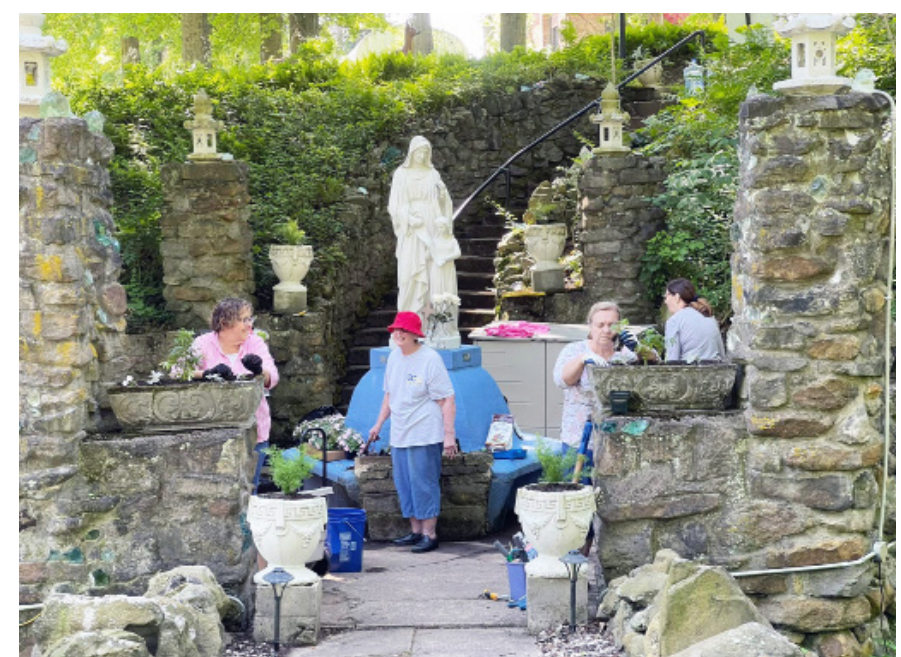
April 17



The Radiant Resurrection

Faithful of Archeparchy celebrate our Risen Lord and Savior. Clockwise from top: Procession at St. John the Baptist Cathedral in Munhall, Pa.; Archbishop William Skurla blesses Paschal food at the Cathedral; and young parishioners at St. Michael in Campbell, Ohio.

June 4



"Helping Hands Day"

Volunteers, including members of the Greek Catholic Union (GCU) and Uniontown Garden Club, assisted in sprucing up Mount St. Macrina in Uniontown, Pa. during the annual Helping Hands Day.



June 26



A Divine Liturgy celebrated the 125th year of St. John the Baptist Cathedral in Munall, Pa. The parish was founded on Jan. 16, 1897, building its first church on Third Avenue in Homestead, Pa. The new church would be named after St. John the Baptist, the patron saint of Greek Catholic Union Lodge 26 in Homestead. Pictured at top are altar server Marty Bovee, Father Thomas Dansak, Metropolitan Archbishop William Skurla, Very Rev. Andrew Deskevich and Seminarian Joshua Johnson.

Aug. 18



Faith & Fun Day returns

The 13th annual event returned for the first time since 2019 due to the pandemic with visits to Saint Anthony Chapel in the Troy Hill section of Pittsburgh, Pa.; Dave & Buster's restaurant and arcade in the North Hills; and PNC Park to see the Pittsburgh Pirates beat the Boston Red Sox, 8-2.

Sept. 2 to 5



Pilgrims flock to Mount St. Macrina

Metropolitan Archbishop William Skurla (above left) delivers the homily Sunday, during the Divine Liturgy at the 88th annual Pilgrimage in Honor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help at Mount St. Macrina in Uniontown, Pa. With the theme, "Theotokos, the Seeker of the Lost," this year's Pilgrimage returned to its four-day schedule over the Labor Day weekend for the first time since before the pandemic.

Oct. 15



Newly ordained

Metropolitan Archbishop William Skurla conferred Minor orders upon three seminarians and six Deacon candidates in the School of Diaconal Studies at St. John the Baptist Cathedral in Munall, Pa. The newly ordained came from the following parishes of the Archeparchy: Sub-Deacon Luke Iyengar and Reader Nathaniel Tapsak, Holy Ghost McKees Rocks, Pa.; Reader Tyler Wisniewski, St. John, Scottsdale, Pa.; John Cencich, St. Gregory, Upper St. Clair; Pa.; David Dominguez, St. John Chrysostom, Houston, Texas; Douglas King, St. Andrew, Gibsonia, Pa.; Barry Smith, St. Stephen, North Huntingdon, Pa.; and Michael Yewcic, Holy Trinity, Conemaugh, Pa.



The Archeparchy of Pittsburgh Chancery will be closed Friday, Dec. 23 and Monday, Dec. 26 in observance of Christmas.

Regular hours resume Tuesday, Dec. 27, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

The Chancery will also be closed Friday, Dec. 30 in observance of New Year's Day.

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412-231-4000

Reindeer tracks!

FOLLOWING OL' SAINT NICK



PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. — The North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) is getting ready to track Santa's yuletide journey! The *NORAD Tracks Santa* website at www.noradsanta.org features a Countdown Calendar, a Kid's Countdown Village complete with games and activities that change daily, and video messages from students and troops from around the world. The web site is available in eight languages: English, French, Spanish, German, Italian, Japanese, Brazilian Portuguese and Chinese. ■

Cathedral of St. John the Baptist

Schedule of Services - Christmas 2021

Very Reverend Andrew Deskevich, Rector



Friday, Dec. 23

9 a.m. Royal Hours

Saturday, Dec. 24

Vigil, Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord
Christmas Eve

8 p.m. Vigil Liturgy

Sunday, Dec. 25

Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord
Christmas Day

9 a.m. Divine Liturgy

Cathedral of St. John the Baptist
210 Greentree Road | Munhall, Pa. 15120 | 412-461-0944

View services LIVE on the web at
www.stjohnsbyzantinecathedral.com

DATES TO REMEMBER



DEC. 25

Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ

DEC. 26

Feast of the Synaxis of the Holy Theotokos

DEC. 27

Feast of the Holy Protomartyr Stephen

DEC. 31

Vigil of the Feast of the Circumcision of our Lord
Vigil of the Feast of St. Basil the Great
New Year's Eve

See more upcoming events at www.archpitt.org



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DECEMBER 20