

WORLD

THE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC

THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF PITTSBURGH

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Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

METROPOLITAN ARCHBISHOP WILLIAM C. SKURLA BLESSES CITY OF PITTSBURGH



Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skurla sprinkles holy water from a Mount Washington overlook during the annual Blessing of the City of Pittsburgh, Pa., an annual ecumenical Easter tradition of the Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania, on Holy Saturday, April 4.

“I Have Called You Friends”

YOUTH, YOUNG ADULTS GATHER AT HOLY TRINITY IN SYKESVILLE, PA. FOR “CONVERGE! 2026”

By Tara Bartz
St. Gregory, Upper St. Clair, Pa.

The Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry hosted “Converge! 2026” at Holy Trinity Byzantine Catholic Church in Sykesville, Pa. on Saturday, April 11. The theme for this second annual Archeparchial gathering of youth and young adults was “I Have Called You Friends.”

The day began with an opportunity to receive the Mystery of Reconciliation offered by Father Will Rupp of Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church in Hawk Run, Pa.; State College Byzantine Catholic Community and Campus Ministry in State College, Pa.; and Dormition of the Mother of God Byzantine



Catholic Church in Clarence, Pa.; and Divine Liturgy celebrated by Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skurla.

Father Nathaniel Tapsak of Holy Trinity and Father Vasyl Kadar of SS. Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church in Punxsutawney, Pa., and Saint Jude Thaddeus

Byzantine Catholic Church in Ernest, Pa., concelebrated. Father Deacon Luke Crawford served as deacon and Father Deacon Dennis Prestash was also present.

At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, emcee Natalia Tapsak of Holy Trinity clarified

Story continued on page 5

ETERNAL MEMORY CHRISTINA DOCHWAT

Noted iconographer

By Sister Elaine Kisinko, OSBM
Secretary to the Archbishop

Christina M. Dochwat fell asleep in the Lord on Thursday, March 26 at the age of 91. A world-class Ukrainian/American iconographer, she was a longtime resident of Jeffersonville (East Norriton Township), Pa.

Christina was born to Osep and Emilia (Cymbryla) Dochwat in the Village of Burkaniv, Ternopil Oblast, Ukraine on Sept. 22, 1934. In 1947 the family emigrated to the United States and they settled in Philadelphia.

After earning several degrees from colleges of Art and Design, Christina began her work as an iconographer in 1956. From then until 2006 she created beautiful icon screens, separate cycles of icons, frescoes, and mosaics for many Ukrainian and Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic Churches.

Her icons can be found on the icon screens in both chapels of the Seminary of SS. Cyril and Methodius and the Episcopal residence in Pittsburgh, Pa. Others are at the Chancery of the Eparchy of Passaic in Woodland Park, N.J. Greatly acclaimed is her magnificent Byzantine Ruthenian chapel on the lower level in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.

Story continued on page 3



Christina Dochwat

WORLD

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66 Riverview Avenue
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Fax: 412.231.1697
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Web site: www.archpitt.org

Archbishop William C. Skurla
President

David Mayernik Jr.
Editor

Sister Elaine Kisinko, OSBM
Copy Editor

Daniel J. Johnson
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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.

Helping Hands Day set for May 30 at Mount St. Macrina in Uniontown, Pa.

With grateful hearts, we warmly invite you to join the Sisters of St. Basil the Great in preparing for Pilgrimage — a special time when your presence, prayers, and helping hands are truly a blessing. Volunteering not only allows you to serve but also makes you part of a tradition that touches countless lives and forges new bonds of faith. This year, two meaningful opportunities await your generosity and spirit.

The first opportunity is Helping Hands Day, sponsored by the Greek Catholic Union of the U.S.A., which will take place at Mount St. Macrina in Uniontown, Pa. on Saturday, May 30.

On this day, we come together — young and old friends and family—to prepare for the 92nd annual Pilgrimage, a gathering that uplifts and strengthens the bonds of our faith community.

With every flower planted,

every shrine cared for, and every corner tended, we offer not only our labor but also our prayers and hopes for all who will come to the Pilgrimage — September 5 to 6.

Your service helps transform the grounds into a place of welcome and peace, ready to embrace pilgrims with beauty and grace.

If you can participate, please note the following:

The group will meet in the Trinity Center for coffee and donuts at 9:30 a.m. A brief prayer service will follow, and work will begin at 10 a.m.

Bring lawn tools (including brooms, rakes, weed whackers, etc.) for outside work. Bring brooms, mops, dust pans, etc., for any indoor cleaning.

Lunch will be served. To register or for additional information, please call Sister Joanne at 724-438-4940 or Greek Catholic Union at 1-800-722-8644.

On Saturday, Aug. 22, there will



be another organized preparation day, with a rain date set for Saturday, Aug. 29. Volunteers are asked to meet at the Trinity Center at 9:30 a.m. Please bring brooms, weed whackers, blowers, weeding tools, rakes, and clippers. Lunch will be provided.

For further information, please call Sister Joanne at 724-438-8644. ■

Guests of the Sisters of St. Basil the Great in Rome

Diane and Bob Grip of the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh were the guests of Mother Emanujila Vishka and the Sisters at the Generalate of the Sisters of St. Basil the Great on Via di Sant'Alessio in Rome, Italy.

This year, Diane is celebrating her 25th anniversary as a Basilian Associate. Bob has served at the Sisters' Labor Day pilgrimage in Uniontown, Pa. for decades as announcer and an usher.

From left to right: Sister Atanasia, Sister Terenya, Sister Sevastiana, Diane Grip, Bob Grip, Mother Emanujila, Sister Teodozija, and Sister Natalia. ■



BYZANTEEN

RALLY

AGES 13 THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL!

"TAKE COURAGE!"

I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD."
JOHN 16:33

JULY 9-12 2026

Registration is OPEN now!

Deadline to register is Friday, May 15, 2026

FULL PRICE \$380 AFTER APRIL 1

CLEVELAND OHIO

JOHN CARROLL UNIVERSITY

More info & registration Scan QR code



ETERNAL MEMORY

SISTER PETRONILLA PUHAK, OSBM

Like the gentle person she was, Sister Petronilla Puhak, OSBM fell quietly asleep in her chair, and woke up in Paradise. She was 94 years of age, and in the 76th year of her life as a Sister of St. Basil.

Sister Petronilla was born on Sept. 16, 1931, in Hazleton, Pa., the daughter of John and Anna (Timcho) Puhak. She entered the Sisters of St. Basil on March 3, 1950, and made her perpetual vows on April 11, 1955.

Her life was marked by several ministries: chief among these as teacher and principal, until 2002. She was known as an exceptional primary grade teacher. Her pupils lovingly followed her lead, as her gentle leadership guided them throughout the day.

Retiring from the teaching ministry after 48 years, Sister then found her niche in Pastoral Care at Mt. Macrina Manor. In this ministry, she became well loved by both residents and staff. Sister Petronilla was devoted to this ministry and often worked "overtime" to provide for the spiritual needs of both residents and staff.

When Sister Petronilla's health determined the need to retire from active ministry at the Manor, and later becoming a resident there, she continued to minister to both residents and staff alike, often visiting other residents, family members or staff at the nurses' stations.

One of her joys for many years was looking after Dash, the Manor's long-time resident cat, who thrived under her care. Dash was born with both hearing and sight impediments, but always knew when Sister Petronilla was beside him, and immediately responded to her gentle presence.

In his homily, Very Rev. Andrew Deskevich reflected on how providential it was that Sister's funeral be celebrated on the Feast of the Annunciation — providential because this was her life in Christ. In one of the Aposticha's for the Feast, we prayed that the Mother of God, upon hearing, did not understand the message of the Archangel, but she accepted the greeting with faith.

Sister Petronilla did not always

understand the mission given to her for ministry, but she accepted it in faith. Retiring from her teaching ministry, she accepted a new mission and ministry in Pastoral Care at Mt. Macrina Manor. In this ministry, as in her teaching ministry, she set the example through her own life; a life marked by care and love, deep faith and trust in God. As we continue our Lenten journey, we would do well to follow the example set for us by Sister Petronilla.

The Divine Liturgy was celebrated by Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skurla. Concelebrants were Very Rev. Andrew Deskevich; Rev. Jerome G. Botsko, Monastery Chaplain; Rev. Oleh Seremchuk, and Rev. Kyprian Wojchekowski. Rev. James Ragan was in attendance.

Sister Petronilla was the last surviving member of her immediate family. In addition to her community, she is survived by several nieces and nephews, some of whom were able to attend her funeral, namely: John and Paula Puhak Gallagher; Celeste Puhak



Sister Petronilla Puhak, OSBM

and Scott Howard; and Gregory and Marsha Puhak.

Sister Petronilla wished to be remembered for her deep faith and trust in God, her love of her family, her vocation, and her community. She also wished to be remembered for the love she had for teaching, for her ministry to the staff and residents at Mt. Macrina Manor, who lovingly referred to her as Sister "P," and for her quiet spirit. ■

ETERNAL MEMORY

SISTER EUPHEMIA KOPA, OSBM

Very early on Holy Saturday morning, Sister Euphemia Kopa, OSBM, fell asleep in the Lord and was welcomed into her new home in the heavenly Kingdom. She was 98 years of age and in the 80th year of her life as a Sister of St. Basil.

Sister Euphemia was born on July 1, 1927, in Penowa, Pa., the daughter of George and Mary (Luczanich) Kopa. She entered the Sisters of St. Basil on Jan. 9, 1946, and made her perpetual vows on Aug. 28, 1953.

From kindergarten to grade 2, her talents as a teacher at these levels shone brightly. Most likely, Sister Euphemia's best loved ministry was in preparing her students for the Mysteries of Reconciliation and Eucharist. Likewise, many former students can remember her with fondness as their second grade teacher.

After 52 years of teaching, Sister Euphemia retired from this ministry and returned to the monastery in Uniontown, Pa. There she assisted in baking and in the Vestment department. She will be most remembered, however, for her efficient preparation and execution of all details involved in the Medovniki project. Keeping on track of everything was the hallmark of her work. She brought the same enthusiasm to this project as she did to her teaching career.

Her teaching career took her to Connecticut, Indiana, Illinois, New Jersey, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. Often, she was also principal as well as teacher in these schools. In Uniontown at the monastery and prior to her exceptional work with the Medovniki, she was the administrator of the former St.

Basil's Home for Aging Women.

In his homily, Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skurla said the many accomplishments of Sister Euphemia were not only a gift to her community. In truth, they were an invaluable service to the Metropolitan Church of Pittsburgh, reaching far and wide beyond its borders.

Sister Euphemia, however, wanted to be remembered for her deep faith, her spirit of trust, for her vocation and for living out her life as a Sister of St. Basil.

In addition to her community, Sister Euphemia is survived by her sister-in-law Eleanore Kopa; her nieces Emily Ann, Susan, Kathie, Betty, Mary Ann, Gabriella, and Angeliq; and nephews Walter, William, Aaron, and Christian.

The Funeral Divine Liturgy was celebrated by Archbishop William. Concelebrants were Very Rev.



Sister Euphemia Kopa, OSBM

Andrew Deskevich; Rev. Jerome Botsko, monastery Chaplain; Rev. Kyprian Wojciehowski; Rev. Oleh Seremchuk; and Rev. James Ragan. Rev. James A. Spontak was in attendance. ■

ETERNAL MEMORY

CHRISTINA DOCHWAT

— NOTED ICONOGRAPHER

Story continued from page 1

Her passion for God, the Church, for Ukraine her people and their culture was profound. Her career was dedicated to that passion; her writing (painting) of icons had one overarching goal: "to bring people closer to God."

"The most important thing for me," she said, "is that my work

can motivate people to pray; when people pray in front of an icon, it is not my work, it is God's work."

Christina was preceded in death by her parents and her sister Lubow Szankowskyj. She is survived by her nephew Oleh, her extended family in Burkaniv, Ukraine; and her dear friend Jeannie Moon and her family.

The viewing was on April 7 at SS. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church in Phoenixville, Pa. The funeral Divine Liturgy

which followed was celebrated by Most Rev. Borys Gudziak, Metropolitan Archbishop of the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia. Interment was at St. Mary Ukrainian Catholic Cemetery, Elkins Park, Pa.

On a personal note: Christina once visited Mount St. Macrina in Uniontown, Pa. Afterward, I was privileged to drive her to the airport in Pittsburgh. On the way, she shared some of her life story. She began by saying that one of her earliest memories

was when she was about 5 years old, walking through a field of high grass, holding the hand of their old parish priest. He told her: "Christina, look for God everywhere and in all things."

She took this advice to heart, and she used to spend time tearing flowers apart looking for God.

She did not find God in the flowers, but I think that God certainly found her in the exceptional beauty, spirituality, and inspiration of her icons. ■

Marriage is an institution blessed by God

Cana of Galilee “Be fruitful and multiply” (Gen. 1:28)

PRE-CANA PROGRAM HELD AT THE SEMINARY OF SS. CYRIL AND METHODIUS IN PITTSBURGH, PA.

By The Office of Religious Education

Thirteen engaged couples came together on March 7 at SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary in Pittsburgh, Pa. to reflect on their understanding of marriage. (This program is held at the seminary to give the seminarians an opportunity to attend the sessions.)

The couples were reminded through the presentations that marriage is a pathway that leads both the man and the woman to union with God. No marriage is perfect and no honeymoon lasts forever. The ritual of crowning is a reminder of the call to self-sacrifice and self-denial.

“It is the nature of love to overflow, to be self-giving. Thus, it is no surprise that marriage is ordained not only to growing in love but to transmitting life. By its very nature the institution of marriage and married love is ordered to the procreation and education of the offspring and it is in them that it finds its crowning glory” (Marriage, Love & Life in the Divine Plan, USCCB).

The Office of Religious Education acknowledges with respect and gratitude the following parishes that sent couples to the 2026 Pre-Cana Program:

**Holy Trinity
Wall, Pa.**

**Church of the Resurrection
Monroeville, Pa.**

**SS. Peter and Paul
Patton, Pa.**

**St. Elias
Munhall, Pa.**

**SS. Peter and Paul
Braddock, Pa.**

**St. Mary
Morgantown, W. Va.**

**St. John the Baptist Cathedral
Munhall, Pa.**

**St. Gregory
Upper St. Clair, Pa.**

**St. Mary
Ambridge, Pa.**

**St. Michael
Hermitage, Pa.**

**SS. Peter and Paul
Warren, Ohio**

**Holy Trinity
Sykesville, Pa. ■**





“I Have Called You Friends”

YOUTH, YOUNG ADULTS GATHER AT HOLY TRINITY IN SYKESVILLE, PA. FOR “CONVERGE 2026”

Story continued from page 4

the terms “youth” (ages 12-18), “young adults” (ages 18-39), and “young people” (these two groups combined).

She also explained that this yearly event serves as a local version of World Youth Day and how the new name for it (“Converge!”) expresses that this is a day for young people from around the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh to unite in one place for reflection and celebration.

Participants then enjoyed lunch and fellowship, followed by a short keynote address given by Dr. Alexander Harb, which focused “on the oddity of being a Byzantine Catholic in today’s world” and the idea that “we are only able to be friends with the Lord if we are who we are.”

Dr. Harb is a Melkite Catholic and theology teacher from Birmingham, Ala., who holds a doctorate in Eastern Christian Studies from the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome. He is the author of “The Kingdom of the Heart: Meditations from the Christian East.”

Breakout sessions for both teens and young adults came next. The teens enjoyed a few “get to know you” games and participated in an interactive talk by Dr. Harb on what friendship is, how to be friends with one another, and how a digital world can make anxiety-free friendships difficult.

Young adults were treated to a presentation by Matthew and Hannah Ketcham of Holy Trinity, where the theme of friendship continued through reading, discussion, and reflection on how to live out Chapter 15 of the Gospel of John.

At the end of these sessions, both groups returned together for a lively game of “Archbishop Trivia,” where teams competed to see who could correctly answer the most questions about Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skurla.

Archbishop William then held a Q&A discussion with the attendees, giving insight into his life as Metropolitan Archbishop and the faith of our Byzantine Catholic Church.

The day concluded with announcements about upcoming events for youth and young adults, available on the Archeparchy’s website, www.archpitt.org, and with prayer.

Many thanks to all of the clergy, guest speakers, volunteers, organizers, and everyone who joined in this gathering. Details for “Converge! 2027” will be available in fall 2026. ■



2026 ByzantTEEN Spring Hike

7th Grade through High School

**SATURDAY
MAY 16**

**Raccoon Creek State Park
Wildflower Reserve**

Meet & Pick-Up at the Interpretive Center Parking Lot
525 Lincoln Hwy, 482 US-30, Clinton, PA 15026

Registration at 10:00 am

Hike begins at 10:15 am

Hike with activities, lunch, game stops and Interpretive Center visit: about 3 HOURS

Trail difficulty level: Easy to Moderate

Pack a Lunch!

Departure at 2:00 pm

“PREPARE THE WAY”
MATTHEW 3:3

REGISTER by May 12 via QR CODE
OR visit www.archpitt.org



Registration Fee \$5/person

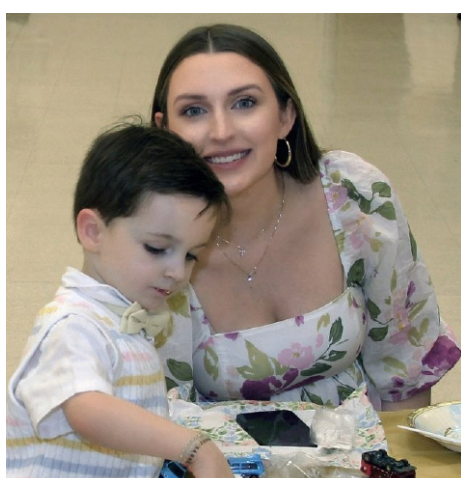
The Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry
The Byzantine Catholic
Archeparchy of Pittsburgh

PARISH NEWS

Celebrating the Radiant Resurrection

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHEDRAL IN MUNHALL, PA.

Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skurla and Very Rev. Andrew Deskevich celebrated Resurrection services at St. John the Baptist Cathedral in Munhall, Pa. ■



Photos by Nick Havrilla Sr.



Celebrating the Radiant Resurrection

ASCENSION OF OUR LORD IN CLAIRTON, PA.

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

Father Christopher Burke held Resurrection services at Ascension of Our Lord Church in Clairton, Pa. on Saturday evening.

Celebrants carried candles,

icons, and incense in a procession around the church.

Following services and Easter Liturgy, Father Chris blessed traditional baskets of food in the hall. Blessing of baskets was also held after Easter Liturgy on Sunday morning. ■



ST. ELIAS IN MUNHALL, PA.

Bright Monday

Father Vitalii Stashkevych reads the Resurrection Gospels with procession on Bright Monday at St. Elias in Munhall, Pa. ■



ST. GREGORY IN UPPER ST. CLAIR, PA.



Father Valerian Michlik is pastor.

ST. NICHOLAS IN GREENSBURG, PA.

By John Gomolak
St. Nicholas, Greensburg, Pa.

Father Vasyl Banyk, pastor at Saint Nicholas in Greensburg, Pa. was very busy during Holy Week and beyond.

The week's attendance was 200-

plus people. Many Easter baskets were blessed, confessions heard, and communion distributed.

On St. Thomas Sunday, a luncheon was held in celebration.

Photos by Sandra Yurcevich. ■



SS. PETER AND PAUL IN WARREN, OHIO

By John and Lisa Mosko
SS. Peter and Paul, Warren, Ohio

Father Miron Kerul'-Kmec blessed Easter baskets after Liturgies on Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday in the Social Hall. After the blessing of Easter

baskets on Holy Saturday, a social gathering was held where some parishioners shared the contents of their baskets. The church also provided some traditional Easter foods. A good time was had by all. ■



Celebrating the Radiant Resurrection

INFANT JESUS OF PRAGUE IN BOARDMAN, OHIO.

Father Michael Farynets blessed Easter baskets at Infant Jesus of Prague in Boardman, Ohio following Resurrection Matins on

Saturday and Easter Liturgy on Sunday. This beautiful tradition has been continued by many parishioners. ■



Easter Egg Hunt

Infant Jesus of Prague in Boardman, Ohio held their annual Easter Egg Hunt following liturgy on Palm Sunday for the children from Infant Jesus of Prague and St. Nicholas in Youngstown, Ohio.

A special thank you to Elaine Chachko, Debbie Patory,

Mary Sinowski and our parish organizations for organizing and donating to the Easter Egg Hunt.

We appreciate our guest — the Easter Bunny (Emma Boughner) — who made the event special for all the children. Everyone had a wonderful time! ■



HOLY SPIRIT IN PITTSBURGH (OAKLAND), PA.

By Mary Dzurichko
Holy Spirit, Pittsburgh (Oakland), Pa.

Palm Sunday at Holy Spirit in Pittsburgh (Oakland), Pa. began with the blessing of palms and pussywillows by Father Michael Kunitz, and the outdoor procession of parishioners on a beautiful Spring morning.

The Divine Liturgy was immediately followed by the welcoming into the catechumenate of Mr. Collin Lehman in the church narthex.

Being blessed with another lovely evening, the Good Friday procession of the *plascenitsa* (burial cloth) was also conducted

outside as members carried implements of the Crucifixion.

On Saturday evening, Mr. Lehman was received into the Church through the mysteries of Holy Baptism, Chrismation, and Holy Communion, before the Vigil Divine Liturgy for Pascha and the Resurrection Matins.

The delicious aromas filled the hall for both Saturday and Sunday Easter food blessings!

Our Holy Week services were accompanied by the beautiful harmonies of our cantors, the Singing Revilak Family.

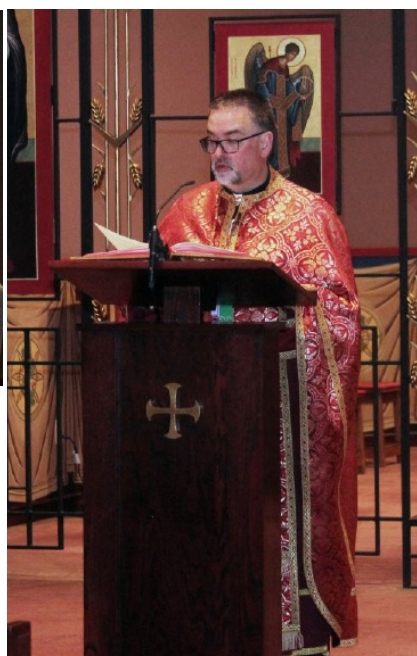
Christ is Risen! ■





Great and Holy Friday

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHEDRAL IN MUNHALL, PA.



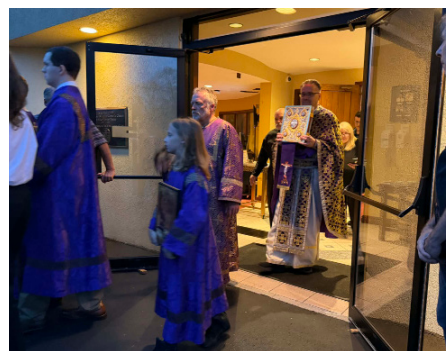
Photos by Nick Havrilla Sr.

ST. MICHAEL IN HERMITAGE, PA.



Father Kevin Marks is pastor.

ST. GREGORY IN UPPER ST. CLAIR, PA.



Father Valerian Michlik is pastor.

ST. ELIAS IN MUNHALL, PA.



Father Vitalli Stashkevych is pastor.



Palm Sunday

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHEDRAL IN MUNHALL, PA.



ASCENSION OF OUR LORD IN CLAIRTON, PA.

*By Trish Roberts
Ascension of Our Lord, Clairton, Pa.*

Father Christopher Burke blessed the palms and pussy willows on Palm Sunday at Ascension Church in Clairton, Pa.

After Liturgy, a pot luck luncheon was held in the hall and all were invited to attend. Guests played a few Easter games and the children got to meet the Easter Bunny.

The adults were grateful for the improved weather that morning so the Easter egg hunt could be held outdoors. The children gathered in the courtyard by the

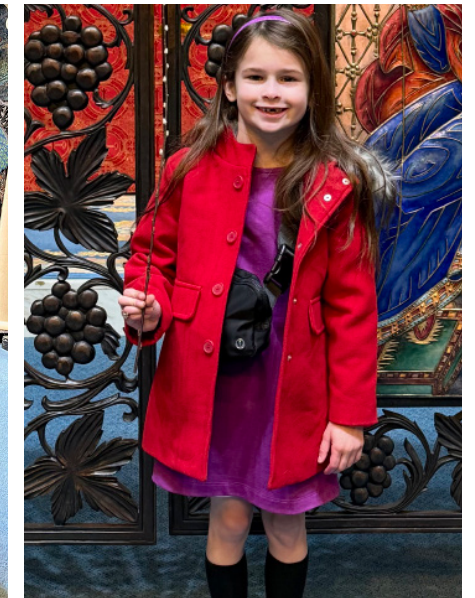


church, and with a little help from the Easter Bunny and Father Chris, they gathered colored eggs and treats. ■



ST. ELIAS IN MUNHALL, PA.

Pussy willows were blessed during Palm Sunday liturgy at St. Elias in Munhall, Pa. ■





ST. MARY IN JOHNSTOWN, PA.

The Light of Christ

By Father Timothy Fariss
St. Mary, Johnstown, Pa.

We describe the sacraments as a visible sign of an invisible reality. We see babies and initiates enter the water and what we don't see, the reality, is the purification of the catechumens. We see anointing with oil, but the reality is illumination and gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Lately, at St. Mary in Johnstown, Pa., we have been challenged to express our prayer vocally in the liturgy and visually. In some ways the children and child-like lead the way. We introduced taper candle boxes to ignite prayer intentions. Yes, children might be innocently attracted to the dancing flames in a sandpit and intrigued by the feeling of beeswax against their fingertips, but after a little instruction, we don't just light fires, but offer up prayers to God. A prayer is from the heart, but lighting a candle is way of exerting or lifting up our prayer. This lit prayer placed on the tetrapod before liturgy becomes a source of light for others to light their own candles and offer up their own prayers.

"No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house" MT 5:15 NRSV-CE.

The light within us, a prayer from the heart, ignites the candle, but also sometimes, if we are struggling to bring ourselves to true prayer, the candle lit outwardly can ignite the flame of the soul. Our children enjoy a very tactile faith. Kissing icons and the handcross, handling beeswax candles, smelling the plumes of incense, seeing the glimmer of golden halos as the sun beams shift from one window to the next throughout a prayer service, and tasting-and-seeing the Lord's goodness in the Holy Eucharist. And sometimes as adults embracing being childlike, we too enjoy our prayers arising like incense (Ps 140) as the deacon strolls through the aisles lifting our prayers aloft to the chiming of bells.

As the liturgy comes to an end and the tapers begin to wane, so too our prayer comes to an end. A final round of prayers are ignited as children partake of antidoron, the blessed bread remaining after the proskomedia rite, before heading home. As the final parishioners venerate the icon before leaving, all that remains from the day's worship is the lingering of prayers both left behind aflame before the altar and still ignited in our hearts on our way home. ■



SS. PETER AND PAUL IN TARENTUM, PA.

Joy and preparation: Palm Sunday Egg Hunt

By Father Vasyly Polyak
SS. Peter and Paul, Tarentum, Pa.

Palm Sunday at SS. Peter and Paul in Tarentum, Pa. was once again marked not only by the solemn beauty of the Divine Liturgy, but also by a joyful gathering that brought smiles to the faces of our youngest parishioners.

Following the liturgy commemorating Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem, families remained on the church grounds for our annual Easter Egg Hunt, a cherished tradition that combines joy, fellowship, and spiritual preparation for the celebration of Pascha.

As the service concluded and parishioners stepped outside, the atmosphere quickly transformed into one of excitement and anticipation. Children eagerly gathered, baskets in hand, ready to begin the hunt. With laughter echoing across the lawn, they set off in search of brightly colored eggs, carefully hidden by dedicated volunteers.

Each egg held small treats — candies, toys, and simple surprises — but beyond these gifts was a deeper reminder of the joy and new life that comes through the Resurrection of Christ.

The event provided not only entertainment for children but also an opportunity for the entire parish community to come together. Parents, grandparents, and friends watched with delight, sharing in the happiness of the children and enjoying time together in the fresh spring air.

Moments like these strengthen the bonds within our parish, reminding us that faith is lived not only in worship but also in

community.

Importantly, the day also offered a meaningful spiritual dimension. Before and after the festivities, the Sacrament of Confession was made available to parishioners, inviting everyone to prepare their hearts for the coming celebration of Pascha.

This combination of joyful activity and spiritual readiness reflects the richness of our tradition: even in moments of lighthearted celebration, we remain mindful of the deeper call to repentance, renewal, and reconciliation.

Following the egg hunt, parishioners gathered for a simple social time, sharing refreshments and conversation. This time together extended the spirit of the day, allowing families to connect, welcome newcomers, and continue building the sense of unity that defines our parish life.

We extend our sincere gratitude to all who made this event possible, especially our volunteers and parish families who contributed their time, energy, and care. Their efforts ensured that the day was not only well-organized but truly meaningful for everyone involved.

As we now enter the sacred days of Holy Week, the joy experienced on Palm Sunday remains with us as a gentle reminder: our journey toward Pascha is not only one of solemn reflection but also of hope and anticipation. The laughter of children and the warmth of community point us toward the greater joy that awaits in the Resurrection of our Lord.

May this joyful beginning inspire us all to continue our spiritual preparation, so that we may celebrate the Feast of Feasts with renewed hearts and a deeper sense of faith. ■



SS. PETER AND PAUL IN WARREN, OHIO

Easter kolachi, paska baking

By John and Lisa Mosko
SS. Peter and Paul, Warren, Ohio

It was all-hands-on-deck at SS. Peter and Paul in Warren, Ohio, as the Easter baking was under way: from grinding nuts to weighing out the dough, rolling and filling,

egg washing, baking and finally bagging the finished products. The kolachi and paska were simply delicious!

Thanks to all who put their labor of love into this Parish Guild fundraiser! ■



Baptism, Chrismation, Eucharist

By John and Lisa Mosko
SS. Peter and Paul, Warren, Ohio

It was a very special Palm Sunday for the Dudt family as their baby boy, Simeon Elias, was Baptized, Chrismated, and received the Holy Eucharist by Father Miron Kerul'-Kmec during the Liturgy.

Betty Blake and Ted Falatic were

honored to serve as Godparents. A light lunch provided by the Godparents was served in the Social Hall following Liturgy.

Welcome to SS. Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church, Simeon Elias! May God bless you! ■



Easter egg hunts

SS. PETER AND PAUL IN WARREN, OHIO

By Father Roman Andriitso
SS. Peter and Paul, Patton, Pa.

Our parish joyfully celebrated a traditional Easter egg hunt on Palm Sunday in a warm, springtime atmosphere. The children eagerly searched for colorful hidden eggs, filling their

baskets not only with treats but also with genuine joy and laughter. This shared event became a wonderful opportunity for families to gather together, strengthen the parish community, and share in the Paschal joy of Christ's Resurrection. ■



ST. JOHN IN LYNDORA, PA.

By Elizabeth Pocchiari
St. John, Lyndora, Pa.

St. John Byzantine Catholic Church in Lyndora, Pa. had their annual Easter egg hunt on

Palm Sunday. Children searched the grounds of the church for eggs filled with surprises. ECF students also sold three-bar Byzantine chocolate crosses as a fundraiser. ■





ST. GREGORY IN UPPER ST. CLAIR, PA.

Sunday of St. Thomas

By Father Valerian Michlik
St. Gregory, Upper St. Clair, Pa.

With perfect weather on the Sunday of St. Thomas, April 12, our annual Easter Egg Hunt took place on the parish grounds.

In front of the church and parish house our younger children raced around looking and filling their bags with those hidden eggs.

Our ByzanTeens also enjoyed

their Easter egg hunt which took place on the playground.

In the Church Hall food was ready as we all gathered for our Thomas Sunday Potluck luncheon which was enjoyed by all.

As we continue the Paschalia-Easter season we look forward to the upcoming events that bring us together as a parish family. ■



ASSUMPTION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD IN WEIRTON, W. VA

Ham, Lamb Dinner unites

By Mike Garan
Assumption of the Mother of God,
Weirton, W. Va

The aroma of roasted ham and lamb has been drawing St. Mary's parishioners back to their church hall in Weirton, W. Va. for more than four decades, turning Thomas Sunday into a celebration all its own. Since 1980, what began as a simple meal has grown into a cherished tradition — one that brings the parish family together to continue Pascha in a household setting.

While Easter Day is reserved for family gatherings, the following Sunday offers something different: a chance to reunite as a parish community. On this Thomas Sunday, parishioners and guests filled the hall with stories and laughter, keeping alive the spirit of Pascha and the bonds that define St. Mary's as more than just a place of worship.

In addition to St. Mary's time-honored ham and lamb, this year's buffet dinner mirrored menus of past years — mashed potatoes, kolbassi, green beans, corn, paska, mac and cheese, desserts and "pot luck." The experience continues to excite one long-time parishioner and galvanize a recent parish newcomer.

"I have attended nearly every dinner since the church began the tradition," Bill Molchan said.

The 84-year-old Weirton Steel retiree enjoys the variety of good food and the opportunity to socialize with his fellow parishioners.

"There are a lot of familiar faces here but I'm working on getting to know some of the younger people, too."

An accountant for the St. Paul Center for Biblical Theology in Steubenville, Ohio, Alden Rodzik joined St. Mary's last year and is becoming very familiar with the services and church's customs

— plus fitting in with the congregation.

"This is really cool," the Wilmington, N.C., native stated. "Although it's the first time I have attended this dinner, I feel very comfortable associating with others and enjoying the traditional menu of food."

Since day one, the Altar Society has been the heart and hands behind this custom, organizing every detail and preparing the meal so many have come to await.

According to Janet Winwood, who has organized the festivity for two decades, Msgr. Andrew Pataki (later Bishop of the Eparchy of Passaic) initiated the dinner 46 years ago.

"We used to roast a whole lamb in the church hall on Bright Saturday. Members of the Men's Club would spend all day garlic stuffing, roasting and slicing the lamb, cleaning the hall and arranging tables and chairs. And back then, we packed the church hall, running tables from end to end!"

As the congregation decreased in later years, however, Winwood said it became more convenient to have a local business prepare the lamb.

"For the last 15 years, Maryland Market in Steubenville has done the cooking and basting for us. The owner also gives St. Mary's a donation every time we order lamb from him."

Still in his first year as St. Mary's pastor, Father Luke Iyengar continues to be impressed by the parish's many programs and long-standing traditions — and the several families who have joined St. Mary's since October.

"This is my first ham and lamb dinner and I hope our Thomas Sunday celebration, like so many other things we do here, will continue to define our growing parish for generations to come." ■



"HAMMING" IT UP: St. Mary's parishioners Bill Molchan and Alden Rodzik "get chummy" after enjoying their Thomas Sunday "Ham and Lamb" dinner meals. Both expect to learn much from each other to bridge the 60-year gap between them.



ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST IN UNIONTOWN, PA.

All stories by Julia Pillar and Bonnie Balas

19th Egg EggStravaganza

The 19th Egg Eggstravaganza, held on March 22 at St. John Church in Uniontown, Pa. attracted a large crowd. The egg artists, vendors, large bake sale, Lenten foods offered, basket cover display, children's activities, and

hands-on pysanky making were all part of the very popular yearly event.

This family-oriented event was very successful and enjoyable for those attending. A great way to kick off the Easter season. ■



March Birthday Social

March Birthday Social was held on Sunday, March 29, after the Sunday Divine Liturgy. Birthday celebrants were recognized and a light meal and birthday cake

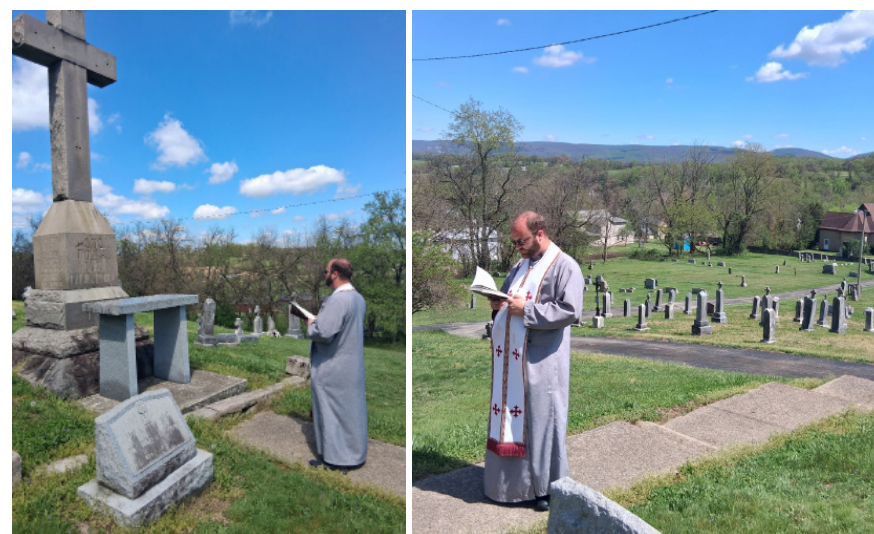
were served. The Social Ministry Spring/Easter Basket was awarded. Barbara Buchko was the basket winner. ■



Thomas Week

Weekend Divine Liturgies were celebrated with the breaking of the "ARTOS" bread to be shared with the congregation. Continuing through Thomas

Week, Father Kyprian Wojciechowski blessed the graves of departed loved ones in the St. John Parish Cemetery, as well as other local cemeteries. ■



Mon Valley Deanery Day of Reflection

On Sunday, March 15, a Lenten day of Reflection was held at St. John the Baptist Church in Scottsdale, Pa. Father Brian Norrell led the Lenten Sunday Vespers and spoke about "Reconciliation."



Confessions were made available for those in attendance. A light meal, refreshments, and fellowship time followed. ■

Preparing for Holy Week

Friday, March 27 was a busy day for parishioners of St. John Church, Uniontown. Parishioners were busily making palm and pussywillow bouquets, while smelling the sweet aroma of paska bread being baked by another group of parishioners in the

church kitchen. Others were busy decorating the church with sprays of palms and pussy willows. The Pre-Sanctified Gifts Liturgy that evening was followed by the Akathist Hymn to Mary. ■



Holy Week traditions observed

The traditional Holy Week services were held and concluded with a Great Friday Service with a burial procession with servers carrying icons, banners, and the plaschanitsa around the outside of the St. John Church. This was followed by "The Lamentations" led by Father Kyprian Wojciechowski.

took place which was followed by the blessing of Paschal baskets in the Social Ministry room.

Holy Saturday started with the Easter Vigil at which Father James Ragan concelebrated. In the evening, Resurrection Matins

The well-attended Easter Sunday Liturgy preceded the blessing of Paschal baskets in the church. An extension of Easter, Bright Monday Divine Liturgy ended with the Paschal Gospels being read at each corner in the church. Parishioners were very fulfilled with "new life" as "Christ is Risen" is sung repeatedly. ■



April Clergy Day of Prayer

The monthly Clergy Day of Prayer was hosted by St. John Church in Uniontown, Pa. Priests and deacons from the Archeparchy attended and Father Luke Iyengar

led off the discussion topic. Those in attendance were treated to a light lunch and refreshments provided by the Social Ministry group. ■





ECHOES EAST AND WEST: LISTEN, TEACH, SEND

A weekend of prayer, community, and formation

Eastern and Western Churches forming young people as disciples of Christ

Echoes East and West: Listen, Teach, Send

Rooted in the pastoral vision of the USCCB Framework for Ministries with Youth and with Young Adults: Listen, Teach, Send, this weekend retreat gathers members of the Eastern and Western Catholic Churches ministering to young people and families for a time of prayer, reflection, and shared mission rooted in Christ. Through keynote talks, the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, communal prayer, and opportunities for fellowship, participants will encounter the beauty of the Church's diverse traditions while deepening their commitment to Christ's call for their lives. By actively listening to one another, receiving the wisdom of the Church, and strengthening bonds of community, this retreat seeks to renew participants to be sent forth as joyful witnesses of the Gospel. All those serving in the church's ministries as youth ministers, young adult ministers, catechists, pastors, family life directors, coaches, campus ministers, scout leaders, and parents are invited to attend.

Who is this conference for?

- Ministers working with
- Youth & Young Adults
- Campus Ministers
- Catechists
- Priests, seminarians, and religious
- Ministry leaders who seek to engage young people, families, and parents

CONFERENCE DETAILS:

■ Welcome & Check-in, followed by the 6:30 pm Divine Liturgy (Maronite) at St. Sharbel Spirituality Center, and Dinner Buffet and Social.

■ Continues with Morning Prayer (Ruthenian) and Sessions on Listening and Teaching, with interactive small-group discussions. In the afternoon, visiting St. Anthony's chapel, followed by dinner and bowling.

■ Session on Sending, and the conference concludes with the Divine Liturgy (Maronite) at 11:00 am.

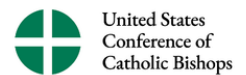


ECHOES EAST AND WEST: LISTEN, TEACH, SEND



Highlights of the Weekend:

- Divine Liturgy
- Testimonies of Faith
- Keynote Talks
- Meals and Fellowship
- Small Group Discussions
- Prayer, Encounter, and Dialogue



The Byzantine Catholic Archeparchy of Pittsburgh

[Register Here](#)

[Explore More Online Here](#)



LOCATION:

Our Lady of Victory Maronite Catholic Church, 1000 Tropical Ave, Pittsburgh, PA.. 15216

CONFERENCE FEE:

\$50 per person

Includes materials, snacks, meals (Friday dinner, Saturday lunch & dinner), a tour of St. Anthony's Chapel, and bowling

Payment Instructions:

Payments can be submitted online at the end of the registration form.

Recommended Hotels (for out-of-town attendees):

- Comfort Inn and Suites Pittsburgh South
- Days Inn by Wyndham Pittsburgh
- Holiday Inn Express and Suites Pittsburgh West
- Hampton Inn Pittsburgh/Greentree

To REGISTER, please fill in the form available at archpitt.org.

The registration deadline: May 15, 2026

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT EVENTS 2026

& more to come

MAY 16

SATURDAY / TEENS

2026 SPRING BYZANTEEN HIKE

Racoon State Park, PA

MAY 22-24

FRI-SUN

MINISTRY LEADERS WHO SEEK TO ENGAGE YOUNG PEOPLE, FAMILIES, AND PARENTS

ECHOES EAST AND WEST: LISTEN, TEACH, SEND

Our Lady of Victory Maronite Catholic Church, PITTSBURGH, PA

JULY 9-12

4 DAYS / TEENS

BYZANTEEN RALLY

John Carroll University, Cleveland, OH
Eparchy of Parma

AUG 2-4

FRI-SAT / COLLEGE STUDENTS

WORKING RETREAT

Mt. Macrina, Uniontown, PA

AUG 8

SATURDAY / TEENS

2026 BYZANTEEN SPLASH BASH & MORE AND BYZANTEEN RALLY REUNION

St. Nicholas Chapel, Beaver & Seven Oaks Country Club Swimming Pool, PA

SEP 12

SATURDAY / TEENS

2026 FALL BYZANTEEN HIKE & COOKOUT

Riverview Park and the Chancery, Pittsburgh, PA

OCT 3

SATURDAY / YOUNG ADULTS

2026 ARCHDIOCESEAL YOUNG ADULT PILGRIMAGE

Basilica and Shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon, North Jackson, OH

NOV&DEC

MONDAYS / YOUNG ADULTS

PHILIP'S FAST BIBLE STUDY FOR WOMEN

7:00 pm via Zoom

AND MORE

VISIT WWW.ARCHPITT.ORG

SCAN THE QR CODE AND FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK TO STAY CONNECTED!



The Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry
The Byzantine Catholic Archeparchy of Pittsburgh

youth@archpitt.org



LET'S CELEBRATE
MAIFEST
Dancing • Raffles • Food • Fun
A Spring Frolic with
Mädel Jäger
YOUR FAVORITE BROS IN HOSEN

Classic & Contemporary LIVE Music From
BAVARIA • AUSTRIA • SLOVENIA

**SATURDAY
MAY 16, 2026**
6:30pm to 9:30pm

\$40
INCLUDES
• Buffet dinner
• 1 Bar Drink

St. Gregory Hall
2005 Mohawk Road
Upper St Clair PA 15241

Visit us at www.stgregoryusc.org

Upcoming events at Mount St. Macrina

The following events will take place at Mount St. Macrina, 510 W. Main St., Uniontown, Pa.:

■ Helping Hands Day

Mark your calendars for Helping Hands Day on Saturday, May 30 at Mount St. Macrina in Uniontown, Pa. This is your chance to make a real difference. Join us as a volunteer to help prepare the grounds for Pilgrimage and be part of something truly meaningful. Your time and effort will help create a memorable experience for everyone.

■ Icon Writing Retreat:

4 p.m. Friday, May 15 to 3 p.m. Sunday, May 17. Led by Marylyn Barone. Icon of St. Photina, the Samaritan Woman. Materials, meals, and overnight accommodations provided. Space limited. Commuters welcome. Offering: \$425. Commuters: \$375. Registration due: May 8. To register for programs or more information, call 724-438-7149 or email hpmsm@verizon.net. ■

AROUND THE ARCHEPARCHY

1776 RAFFLE – St. John Chrysostom, 506 Saline St., Pittsburgh, Pa. Win \$1,776 in Cash or Meat Package and \$1,000 in Cash. Meat supplied by Lampert's Market, McKeesport, Pa. Winner responsible for picking up meat at Lampert's: 6 T-Bone Steaks, 6 NY Strip Steaks, 6 Delmonico Steaks, 6 Porterhouse Steaks, 6 Filet Mignon Steaks, 6# Baby Ribs, 5# Homemade Kielbassi, 6# Hot Sausage, 10# Chicken Breast, 10# Chicken Thighs, 2 Bags Natural Casing Wieners, and 25 Quarter Pound Burgers. Winning Number from the 7 p.m. Pennsylvania Pick 3 Lottery on Monday, June 29. Benefits St. John Chrysostom Chimney & Maintenance Fund. Donation: \$10. Void after 30 days. All unsold tickets property of St. John Chrysostom. Call Tony for tickets at 412-491-1938.

ST. PIUS X ANNUAL SPRING CRAFT AND VENDOR SHOW — 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday, May 2, St. Pius X, 2336 Brownsville Road, Carrick, Pa. There will be refreshments and baked goods for purchase. A Basket Raffle will also be held. There are still tables available for purchase. Call the Church at 412-881-8344 or Pat Geary at 412-759-2024.

STUFFED PORK CHOP DINNER IN CONEMAUGH — Sunday, May 3, Holy Trinity, 217 Fourth St., Conemaugh, Pa. Sponsored by the Blessed Bishop Theodore Romzha Men's Fraternity of Holy Trinity. Take-out only. For more information, contact Tom Oleksa at 814-487-4791.

ICONOGRAPHY WORKSHOP — This workshop is 4 p.m. Friday, May 15 to 3 p.m. Sunday, May 16, House of Prayer, Mount St. Macrina, 500 W. Main St., Uniontown, Pa. Marylyn Barone will conduct an iconography workshop for adults at all levels of experience featuring Saint Photini, the Samaritan Woman. Registration at 2:30 p.m. This includes Friday evening, all day Saturday and Sunday after liturgy until finished. You must be able to attend all three days to have a completed icon. Materials, meals and overnight accommodations provided. Commuters welcome. Offering: \$425; Commuters: \$375. The workshop will be limited to 15 people. Contact House of Prayer to register at 724-438-7149. Registration due: May 8. All icons will be on an 8 x 10 gesso covered board. Using a pre-prepared prototype, you will learn techniques for faces, garments, 23 karat gold gilding and background. The theology of iconography and specifically Saint Photini will also be presented. There will be the opportunity to attend services.

MAIFEST — 6:30-9:30 p.m. Saturday, May 16, St. Gregory, 2005 Mohawk Road, Upper St. Clair, Pa. Come hungry to start the evening with a full buffet dinner set to a background of spirited live music from Bavaria, Austria and Slovenia by Mädel Jäger, "Your Favorite Bros-in-Hosen." The evening rolls on with dancing and raffles, highlighted by a few surprises along the way. Doors open at 6:15 p.m. following Saturday Vigil. Tickets for this 21-plus event are \$40 per person. Includes buffet dinner, soft drinks and choice of one bar drink (beer or wine). Additional bar drinks will be available for purchase. Event tickets are sold following Divine Liturgies or visit www.stgregoryusc.org to purchase via Tithe.ly. Come celebrate and make Maifest YOUR fest!

SUPER SATURDAY FLEA MARKET — 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, May 30, St. Pius X, 2336 Brownsville Road, Carrick, Pa. Auditorium will be open for set-up at 8 a.m. Cost per table: \$20 for 1, \$35 for 2, \$50 for 3. Tables are 36 inches wide by 94 inches long. Electricity is available throughout the hall. Questions? Call the church 412-881-8344 to reserve a space.

DATES TO REMEMBER



MAY 6

Graduation Day

Byzantine Catholic Seminary of SS. Cyril and Methodius, Pittsburgh, Pa.

MAY 10

Mother's Day

MAY 12

26th annual Byzantine Catholic Seminary Lecture

The Genius of the Greek Catholic Eparchy of Mukachevo

MAY 14

Feast of the Ascension of our Lord

Chancery closed

MAY 19 TO 21

Clergy Days

MAY 24

Pentecost Sunday

MAY 25

Memorial Day

Chancery closed

See more upcoming events at www.archpitt.org

WORLD
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66 Riverview Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15214

Tel: 412-231-4000

Fax: 412-231-1697

Email: bcw@archpitt.org

Website: www.archpitt.org

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