

Saint Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church

(Saint Mary's Ruthenian Greek Catholic Church, Inc.)

On the Corner of East 15th Street and Second Avenue

Father Edward G. Cimbala, MAOL, D.Min. ~ Pastor

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Parish Office

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September 1, 2024

15th Sunday After Pentecost

September 8, 2024

Sunday Before the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Nativity of the Theotokos

LITURGICAL SERVICES

Sunday, September 1
10:00 AM

15th Sunday After Pentecost
Health and God's Blessing
Marion and John Fowdy
By Martha Kozar

Monday, September 2
+ Philip Chillak
with Panachida
by Chillak Family

Sunday, September 8
10:00 AM
Sunday Before the
Exaltation of the Holy Cross
Birth of the Theotokos
+Mikulas & +Anna Zihal
+Peter & +Anna Vislocky
By Mary Galus
Festal Anointing

Friday, September 14
6:30 PM
Vigil Liturgy for the Feast of
the Exaltation
of the Holy Cross
+Yuriy Holiba, Sr.
by Holiba Family

Sunday, September 15
10:00 AM
Sunday After the Exaltation
of the Holy Cross
+Janet Mencehino
by Elenor Ruchsak
Festal Anointing
and Blessing of Basil

WELCOME VISITORS

**“MY HOUSE SHALL BE
CALLED A HOUSE OF
PRAYER FOR ALL
PEOPLES.”** - Isaiah 56: 7

If you are a visitor to St. Mary's, we want you to know how deeply we appreciate your presence. Whether you have come from another part of the country, from across the world, or simply from another parish, we are grateful for your interest in our church. We warmly welcome you and hope you find our worship true and reverent. We consider you part of our family and would be more than honored by your presence in our spiritual home. For more information about becoming a parishioner, please see Fr. Ed.

Haven't Seen Someone in a While?

Let us stay connected as a community. If you have not seen someone in a while, reach out to them. A simple email or call can make a difference. Let them know that you miss seeing them, and I hope everything is okay. Please let him know if they want a visit from Fr. Ed. Your outreach can comfort and support our fellow parishioners.

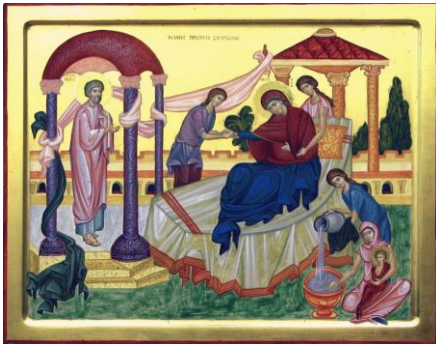
Byzantine Ruthenian Metropolitan Church to Host Jubilee Year of Hope Pilgrimage



Pope Francis has designated 2025 as a Jubilee Year, a time of profound spiritual significance. Archbishop William C. Skurla, Bishop Kurt R. Burnette, and Bishop Robert M. Pipta invite the people of the Byzantine Ruthenian Metropolitan Church of Pittsburgh to join them on a Pilgrimage to Italy from May 5 to 15, 2025, to celebrate the Jubilee Year of Hope. This pilgrimage costs only \$4,829 per person, which covers airfare from Newark Liberty International Airport, accommodations in first class/select hotels based on double occupancy, most meals, the services of an English tour director, comprehensive sightseeing all admission fees and hotel service charges and airport transfers in Italy.

Everyone is invited to come share during this prayerful celebration. People throughout the United States and Canada will be part of this exciting trip. With the celebration of the Divine Liturgy and other services, our pilgrimage will be a joyful journey designed to highlight our Byzantine Catholic faith, help us appreciate its historical past, and view the art inspired by the Church. For more information, please see Fr. Ed. Brochures may be found on the bulletin board outside the Social Hall.

Nativity of the Theotokos



The story of Mary's birth is not found in the New Testament but in the apocryphal writings, which are not part of the scriptures. The tradition of this feast teaches that Joachim and Anna were a pious Jewish couple who were among the small and faithful remnant - "the poor and needy" - awaiting the promised

messiah. The couple was old and childless and had prayed earnestly to the Lord for a child since, among the Jews, barrenness was a sign of God's disfavor. In answer to their prayer and as a

reward for their unwavering fidelity to God, the elderly couple was blessed with the child destined to become the Mother of the Messiah - Christ because of her goodness and holiness.

The fact that there is no Biblical verification of Mary's birth is incidental to the meaning of the feast. Even if the background of the event as celebrated in the Church is questionable from a historical point of view, the divine meaning of it “for us men and for our salvation” is obvious. There had to be one born of human flesh and blood who would be spiritually capable of being the Theotokos, and she had to be born into the world of persons who were spiritually capable of being her parents.

Therefore, the feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos glorifies the miracle of Mary's birth, Mary herself, and her righteous parents. It is also the celebration of the very first preparation for the world's salvation.

*Adapted from **The Orthodox Faith**, Vol. II, by Fr. Thomas Hopko.*

About the Icon

An elderly woman, robed in blue and attended by nurses and midwives, St. Anna is the central figure of this feast's icon. The Theotokos is shown both held in the arms of a nurse at her mother's bedside, beheld in wonder.

Happy New Year! September 1

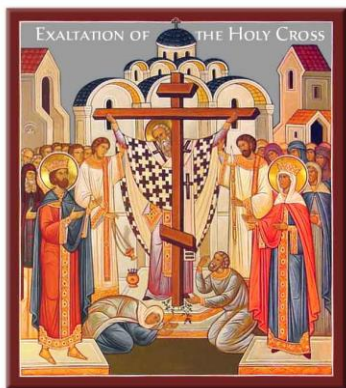


The First Ecumenical Council (Nicaea, 325) decreed that the Church year should begin on September 1. For the Hebrews, the month of

September was the beginning of the civil year (Exodus 23:16), the month of gathering the harvest and offering of thanks to God. It was on this feast that the Lord Jesus entered the synagogue in Nazareth (Luke 4:16-21),

opened the book of the Prophet Isaiah, and read the words: The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me; because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn (Isaiah 61:1-2). The month of September is also important in the history of Christianity because Emperor Constantine the Great was victorious over Maxentius, the enemy of the Christian Faith, in September. Following this victory, Constantine granted freedom of confession to the Christian Faith throughout the Roman Empire. For a long time, the civil year in the Christian world followed the Church year, with its beginning on September 1. The civil year was later changed, and its beginning transferred to January 1. This occurred first in Western Europe and later in Russia under Peter the Great.

Source: St. Nikolai Velimirovic
The Prologue of Ohrid – Volume Two.



THE FEAST OF THE EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS

As important as any of the feast days celebrating the exalted saints of the Church is the feast day held annually on September 14, a special tribute to the cross of

Jesus Christ. A reproduction of this cross is worn or displayed in every corner of the earth as a symbol of the mightiest faith in the entire universe.

The two timbers on which the Messiah died to save the world, priceless beyond measure, form the most familiar and beloved symbol in a world full of symbols and emblems. For nearly three hundred years after his death, the Cross was buried in obscurity, eventually to be salvaged through the efforts of a devout Byzantine emperor and his mother. The Emperor Constantine the Great was not only the first Christian emperor but, together with his mother, was honored with sainthood. His mother is honored for her determined efforts in the cause of Christianity. It was Constantine who beheld a vision in the sky in which the words 'en touto Nika were emblazoned, translating into “In this Sign Conquer,” etched across a brilliant cross of Jesus Christ.

Ordering that all the shields of his army bear the sign of the Cross, Constantine went on to subdue the state's enemies and establish the Christian faith, which has outlived his empire and will endure forever. Helen, the mother of Constantine and a saint of the Church, had the full support of her son when she decided to recover the cross of Christ. Although nearly three hundred years had elapsed since the Crucifixion, she was optimistic in her resolve to find the Cross and return it to the city of Constantinople.

After months of diligent search, painstakingly following every historic clue as to its whereabouts, Helen and her dedicated group of searchers discovered the Cross on 14 September 325 AD in the vicinity of Golgotha, where it had been buried in the dust of the centuries.

Why Bless Basil at the Feast of the Cross?

The herb basil has long been associated with the Exaltation of the Holy Cross feast. The word “basil” is derived from “Vasileios,” the Greek word for a king or person of royal lineage.

According to the liturgical tradition, the Holy Empress Helena, Mother of the Saint, and King Constantine found the location of the True Cross by digging for it under an enormous



growth of basil. Basil plants were reputed to have sprung up at the foot of the Cross where the Precious Blood of Christ fell, along with the tears of the Mother of God.

On the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, it is customary in the East to rest the image of the Holy Cross on a bed of basil before carrying it out for the veneration of the faithful. Also, in some areas, branches of basil are used throughout the temple as a festive decoration and to provide a heavenly scent in honor of the Feast. Blessed basil leaves may also be arranged in a bouquet at the foot of the “Golgotha” cross. The faithful can also use dried leaves taken from the feast as a sweet incense to burn at home as a blessing.

Special Prayers



Fr. Ed will be on a Pilgrimage to Fatima, Lourdes, and Santiago de Compostela from October 15 to 25. At these stops and during the celebration of the Divine Liturgy and other services, Fr. Ed would like to

remember your special intentions. Please list your intentions on the form in this bulletin and return this slip in the collection basket by September 29.

LITURGY REQUESTS FOR 2025

It is a beautiful part of our Byzantine Catholic tradition to celebrate the Divine Liturgy for the repose of the soul of a departed one or for an individual's health and personal intentions. **The Liturgy request calendar book for 2025 is now in.** Please do so now if you would like to request a specific date. **The stipend for the Divine Liturgy is \$20.00. The stipend for a Panachida is also \$20.00.** *(If you cannot pay the stipend, your request WILL be honored.)* **To provide greater availability to others, we ask that, at this time, the number of intentions per envelope cannot exceed two (2) weekend Divine Liturgies.** After January, additional intentions can be requested. To make your request, please fill out the form below, attach your check, and drop it in the collection basket.

Divine Liturgy Request

1) Intention: [] In memory of: [] Health & God's Blessings for:

Name

[] Divine Liturgy [] Panachida [] Both

Date Requested: _____

2) Intention: [] In memory of: [] Health & God's Blessings for:

Name

[] Divine Liturgy [] Panachida [] Both

Date Requested: _____

Offered By (Your Name): _____

Phone Number: _____

For Church Use: Date Received _____