

Saints Peter & Paul
Byzantine Catholic Church
107 South Fourth Street
Minersville, PA 17954

Dormition of St. Mary
Byzantine Catholic Church
131 South Morris Street
Saint Clair, PA 17970

Parish Office: (570) 544-2074

Website: www.sspeterandpaulminersville.com

Email: tvrgin@outlook.com

Served by: Very Reverend Gregory J. Noga, Pastor

SS. Peter & Paul Cantor: Mr. Paul Konkus St. Mary Cantor: Dr. Peter Yasenchak

CONFESSIONS: SS. Peter & Paul: Saturday 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. and Sunday 8:00 - 8:30 a.m. prior to Divine Liturgy and Daily prior to Divine Liturgy

St. Mary's: Saturday 3:00 PM

SICK CALLS: As scheduled, or anytime in case of an emergency. If anyone is homebound or hospitalized, please call the rectory (544-2074)

Bulletins are sponsored by

Mahal-Ritzel Funeral Home
Minersville, PA 544-5111

Mark J. Mahal - Funeral Director

The Samaritan Woman

The Fourth Gospel, attributed to Saint John the Evangelist, is used exclusively from Easter until Pentecost for the Sunday readings. The first chapter of John's Gospel is the proclamation used for the Divine Liturgy on Easter itself. This week, we are reminded of the story of Christ's encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob, and thereby Christ's fulfillment of the Old Testament. In one of the many unique stories of the Fourth Gospel not found in the Synoptics (Matthew, Mark or Luke), Jesus reveals himself as Messiah to this woman of Samaria and talks with her about the "water that I will give will become ... a spring of water gushing up to eternal life."

In the early days of His ministry, Jesus travels back and forth between Galilee and Jerusalem, and must pass through Samaria. The Samaritans were outcast Jews because they were not subject

to the Babylonian exile of the Israelites from other provinces. Therefore, when Jesus talks with this Samaritan woman, His disciples are surprised and in shock that He would carry on a conversation with a woman at the well, let alone a Samaritan. But as the story is explained, the woman's testimony about Jesus spreads through the nearby town, and because of her many come to hear His teachings. After hearing His word, they come to believe in Him, and proclaim Him "the Savior of the world." (Jn 4:42)

With water as the focal point of this encounter, we are once again reminded of our Baptism, and that Christ's Baptism is that of "eternal life" through "living water."

Archbishop Vsevolod of Scopelos

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SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN



Icon of Christ with the Samaritan Woman

**Sunday of the Samaritan Woman
Festal Tone**

Welcome to the parish communities of SS. Peter and Paul and St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Churches of Minersville and Saint Clare, Pennsylvania. We greet and welcome you to our Church. Our Church is a holy place. Our Church is where we get together in Jesus' Name. It is holy because we come here to worship, to be nourished in faith through Sacred Scripture and preaching, to open our hearts and minds to celebrate the mystery of salvation in Jesus Christ and to dedicate ourselves to a life of holiness and service to the Lord and others. The church building itself reflects this faith and calls us to enter into communion with God. We invite you to share our faith in Jesus Christ, to experience our worship and to live a life dedicated to the service of God and one another in Jesus' Name.

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April 28 – May 4, AD2024

Vigil of Sunday		
Saturday	4:00 p.m.	+ Florence M. Walaitis req. by daughter, Wendy Eaby*
Sunday	9:00 a.m.	Health and Blessing of the Parishioners* (livestreamed)
Monday	9:00 a.m.	No Divine Liturgy Today
Tuesday	9:00 a.m.	No Divine Liturgy Today
Wednesday	9:00 a.m.	+ Irene Tkachyk req. by MM Joseph Petrulick*
Thursday	9:00 a.m.	+ Joseph R. Gretskey req. by Metro Cremona Family*
Friday	9:00 a.m.	+ Mary Trutzel req. by John & Mary Barnes*
Saturday	4:00 p.m.	H&B Kate Ammon req. by Family*

*St. Mary
*SS Peter & Paul

Epistle Readers: 4/28 – Judy Kostura; 5/5 – Gail Burgess; 5/9 – Dolores Kramer; 5/12 – Anna Keer; 5/18 – Marie Wanchick; 5/19 – Ellen Sinkovich; 5/26 – Jennifer Keer.

Candle Offering: The candles in front of the Icons of the Mother of God and Jesus Christ and on the Sacramental Table are offered for the **Health and Blessings of the Parishioners**

Breakfast with Father:
We will pick up in September.

Dates to Remember:
May 10/11 Church clean up
May 19 Mothers/Fathers' Day Breakfast
June 9 Roast Beef Dinner

Details in current and future posters and other communication instruments.

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Saint Mary News:

Theresa Wagner and her family worked at the parish cemetery for two weekends and changed the appearance beautifully. I offer my sincere thanks and appreciation for their hard work. God will bless their hard work, I'm sure.

There is a very low balance in the Cemetery Account which necessitates transfer of fund from the main account. So, I call upon our members to generously donate to this cause. Remember, our ancestors worked diligently and continuously to maintain not only the church but theirs and ours final resting place. It behooves us to not let it depreciate in appearance and value.

In consideration of the diligent work offered by the Wagner family, I kindly ask those parishioners who have the ability, to join Theresa this coming weekend as the efforts at maintaining this parish treasure.

Landscaping costs amount to \$650.00 a cutting and during Spring and early Summer that can be twice a month.

Undoubtedly, a surprise was in store for these women. "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here; He is risen." The angels concluded by reminding them that Jesus predicted He would be crucified and would rise from the dead on the third day. These words of greeting were somewhat of a rebuke, "Why do you seek the living among the dead?" They are in fact a reminding rebuke to backward looking faith and backward look personalities.

If the family at the outset of this discourse had still suffered from depression and sorrow after they received the updated diagnosis, we would think something was wrong with their comprehensive abilities. We would say with some impatience, "Get rid of your long face! You cannot live as if it had never come. This is a time for rejoicing, not sorrow. Do not live in the past. The bad news is overcome. Live with the present enduring good news!"

Now there are some Christians who live life as if Christ were still in the tomb. It may be that some with misguided faith have placed too much emphasis on the Cross. Because we place the Cross everywhere around us, some misunderstand its meaning. Because it reminds us of the suffering and death of the Saviour for the sake of our salvation, we mistakenly believe Great and Holy Friday is more important than Resurrection Sunday. Some begin to think faith stops and ends with Great and Holy Friday and a Saviour Who dies.

The angelic powers of heaven condemn this kind of faith saying, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, He is risen!" The tomb is empty this day of the Resurrection. Perhaps we should emphasize the empty grave, the open tomb with as much enthusiasm as the Cross itself because it bears witness to the joy of our faith; it is precisely like the second, affirming, explaining and illuminating call from the physician. We are to remember the Cross; we also are to remember that Christ is risen from the dead. We worship, not a dying, martyred Jew, but a risen Saviour, Who assures us, "Because I live, you too, shall live."

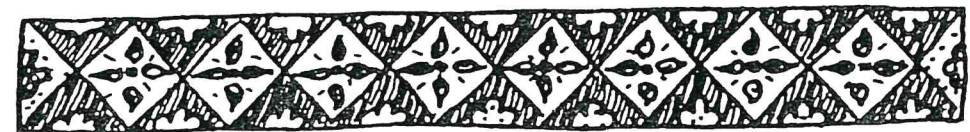
We have seen it is possible to have a backward looking faith. It is also possible to have a backward looking personality. Some people enjoy looking back at the unhappy days of their lives. They remember only their "crucifixions." They likely forget their "Resurrections." They see only the sorrows of life and they are outraged that life appears many times so miserable. How many husbands and wives see only the unhappy days of their marriage! An unfortunate incident which may have occurred years ago, remains alive and the center of their lives. Although they live in happier times, one or the other still wants to live in the past. They cannot leave Golgotha and its gripping and riveting pain to approach the empty reverberating with joy and gladness empty tomb of the Resurrection.

Some people complain about their childhood and how they were allegedly abused, which makes them unhappy many times in the present. What happened to us in our childhood is important, but it is also necessary to look at the present. It was unfortunate the doctor referred to the incorrect medical report. It was tragic he did not look at the date. It was a sad moment for the wife to have to tell her husband he had to face major difficulties. But to dwell on this and to think only of this is to forget the telephone rang a second time and the news was good, even very very good.

We must look beyond Great and Holy Friday, to the brightness of the Resurrection. Too many people live in the shadow of Holy and Great Friday rather than be drawn into the light of Christ's victory. Like the three women who went to the tomb, they are unaware that a new day of life and joy has come. The Resurrection is a strong rebuke to the backward looking faith and backward looking personality in so many people. We do not worship a dead Jew. We worship a living and victorious and triumphant Saviour!

The last word in our precious faith commitment is not the Cross. We remember the empty tomb. Christ's presence among us did not end with death and burial in a cave. Jesus rose from the dead. He met and reassured His friends and loved ones on the hills of Galilee. Today our lives will have joy and peace when we center our attention and our lives on crucifixion life, but emphasize Resurrection victory. It is time to abandon the backward look; it is time to look to the present and the future. We are Resurrection people; we are victory celebrants. If the Lord is to have meaning in our lives, it is not because He died so much, but that He died and rose, that He is alive, that He is with us now!

If we as people are to have some distinct real, genuine, authentic meaning for one another, it is because we are alive, not dead; because we are joyful and happily alive and not dead and sorrowing, but being of service in encouraging faith commitment in each other. Do not seek the living among the dead. "He is not here; He is risen!"



*God, I will thank you forever
for what you have done. With those who worship you,
I will trust you because you are good.*

PSALM 52:9

The Lord of the Pocketbook

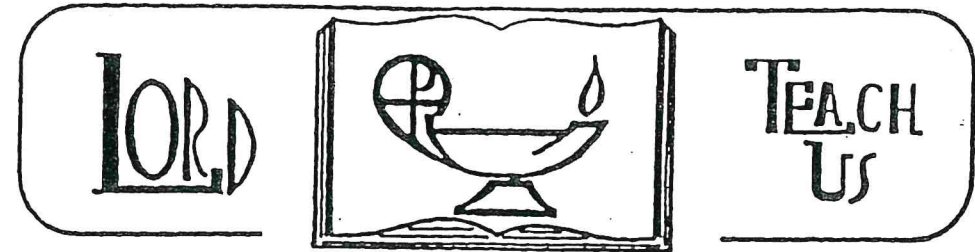
Following many years of faithful service as a dray horse, the old animal collapsed and died one day on the street. His owner, who depended on this poor old horse to earn a livelihood, was upset and worried, wondering how he could possibly afford another horse. A crowd gathered around this dreadful spectacle, telling the horse's owner how sorry they all were. Then a man named John Bright, who listened patiently to all the sympathies and concerns, stepped into the midst of the crowd, took off his hat, and put a five dollar bill into it. He then passed his hat among all the gathered sympathizers saying, "I'm sorry five dollars worth; how sorry are you for this man's misfortune?"

Whether we like it or not, whether we understand it or not, what we give away is one of the measures of our commitment to God. We all know that in every parish there are folks who live on a comfortable income but only sacrifice meagerly each week for their church and its support. They are something like a man who achieved fame and renown through a chain of restaurants he had established. Finally, however, he came to the end of his life as we all do. As he lay dying, his relatives gathered around to hear his final words. He said, as he breathed his last, "Slice the ham thin."

It has been said that often those who have been blessed with much, but give only a little in return are not really stingy. They may be kind-hearted people who would not ignore the obvious needs of the Church. The problem, instead, is a failure to realize that a complete and full commitment to our Heavenly Father includes allowing Him to be not only the Light of our lives and the Source of our faith, but just as importantly, the Lord of our pocketbooks and wallets.

How grateful are we? How deep is our commitment? Do we permit our faith to shine in every other area of our lives, but attempt to keep the dark recesses of our pocketbooks and wallets from His view? Is it unreasonable to expect that every committed believer should strive to give sacrificially of his income for the support of the work of Christ in our own midst? Has not Christ entrusted the care of His Body, the Church to us who are beneficiaries of its grace? When it comes right down to it, the Sunday morning offering speaks pretty loudly when it says: "O Lord, no matter what else we say or do here today, no matter how much we praise You and sing Your glory, this is what we really think of You! Amen."

We are pleased to acknowledge so many truly generous and sacrificial souls in our midst. And we salute them with gratitude to our Creator Who endowed them with generosity of soul. They recognize it is He Who has blessed us with our earthly treasure and they are humbly grateful to return a portion of His blessings to Him for the good care of His Church. His trust in them is not misplaced. God bless you, good and faithful souls!



PARENTS

Fathers do not anger your children. Bring them up with the training and instruction befitting the Lord. Ephesians 6:4

Then the Lord, your God, will increase in more than goodly measure the returns from all your labors, the fruit of your womb, the offspring of your livestock, and the produce of your soil; for the Lord, your God, will again take delight in your prosperity, even as he took delight in your fathers.' Deuteronomy 30:9

"With that he set off for his father's house. While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him and was deeply moved. He ran out to meet him, threw his arms around his neck, and kissed him. The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against God and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son.' The father said to his servants: 'Quickly bring out the finest robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and shoes on his feet. Take a fatted calf and kill it. Let us eat and celebrate because this son of mine was dead and has come back to life. He was lost and is found.' Then the celebration began." Luke 15:20-24

Wives should be submissive to their husbands as if to the Lord because the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is head of his body, the church, as well as its Saviour. As the Church submits to Christ, so wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church. He gave himself up for her to make her holy, purifying her in the bath of water by the power of the word, to present to himself a glorious church, holy and immaculate, without stain or wrinkle or anything of that sort. Husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. Ephesians 5:22-28

The rod of correction gives wisdom, but a boy left to his whims disgraces his mother. Correct your son, and he will bring you comfort, and give delight to your soul. Proverbs 29:15, 17

The Resurrection and Ascension

In the life of our Lord, Jesus Christ, there were exciting days, indeed beginning with dawn on the first day of the week after His burial and continuing for forty days to the moment of His Ascension from the two-mile long ridge, running north to south, called the Mount of Olives. The site of His Ascension was Jebel-et-Tur, the southernmost elevation on the ridge almost three thousand feet above sea level.

The focus during those days had switched from His ministry to His person. His Resurrection was challenged, as it continues to be even in some circles today.

Yet there was a guard at His tomb, a guard in the employ of the chief priests and the Pharisees. His tomb was secured and sealed by them, that is the company of chief priests and Pharisees and guards (Matthew 27: 62 – 66).

After the Resurrection of Christ, some of the guard reported to the chief priests what happened. Their response to the guards was, "...they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, telling them, "You are to say, "his disciples came by night and stole him while we were asleep." And if this gets to the ears of the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble" Matthew 28: 12 – 14.

These conspirators, from the chief priests to the lower ranking guard, knew full well that the body had not been stolen. Now, if the body had been stolen, would the thieves, whoever they would have been, have unwrapped the dead body before they carried it away? Both SS. John and Peter saw the burial clothes left behind in the tomb, along with the cloth that had covered his head. (John 20: 4 – 7).

The first person to whom Jesus appeared was Mary Magdalene. Now, if the Resurrection was just a fable and not fact, the perpetrators of the story would have chosen men as the first witnesses because in the patriarchal Jewish society of the time women did not have much credibility as witnesses.

Again, conjurers of the story of the Resurrection would have made sure that all of the participants were in agreement; no dissenters are permitted in a conspiracy. Yet, Mary Magdalene did not tell Peter and John, "Jesus Christ has risen from the dead!" What she told them was, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb and we do not know where they put him" John 20: 2. In St. Luke's gospel, the reaction to the story of Mary Magdalene, Joanna and Mary the mother of James, by the apostles was, "...their story seemed like nonsense and they did not

believe them" Luke 24: 10, 11. The reaction of Thomas, one of the Twelve, to the Resurrection was, "Unless I see the marks of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nail marks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe" John 20: 25.

Historical witness of the Ascension of Jesus Christ into heaven is found in Luke 24: 50 – 53 and in the Acts of the Apostles 1: 9 - 12.

The Ascension presupposes the Resurrection because that which ascended was His glorified body. The doctrine of the Resurrection is not alien to Jewish belief. Judaism teaches that the bodies of the dead will rise from their graves at some future time. In Jewish through, eschatological phenomena include the ingathering of the dispersed Jewish exiles, the war against Gog and Magog, the day of Judgment, the advent of the reign of the Mesisha, the resurrection of the dead and the re-establishment of the original paradise on earth (see Daniel 12: 2). The Resurrection and Ascension, then, are not extraneous to the theology of Judaism. Indeed, for many Semites, there cannot be any eternal life in any real sense unless the body shares in the glorified existence of the person who inhabited the body.

Who opposes the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ? The first among these were the religious leaders of Judaism in Christ's own time. St. Matthew's gospel was written after 70 AD, some forty years after the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ, and he writes, "this story has circulated among the Jews to the present day" What story? The soldiers' story, "his disciples came by night and stole him while we were asleep" Matthew 28: 11 – 15. But they fail to explain how sleeping soldiers knew what happened or that it was actually the apostles who stole the body!

The chief priests, the elders, the Pharisees, contemporaries of Christ, could not and did not obviate the facts of His Resurrection and Ascension.

Who else opposes the Resurrection and Ascension? Sinners in every generation who fear what St. Paul speaks of, "...it is appointed that human beings die once, and after this the judgment" Hebrew 9: 27. Unrepentant sinners today, too, put their hands over their ears at these words of Christ prior to the Ascension, "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved; whoseever does not believe will be condemned" Mark 16: 16.



Looking For Life

WISDOM! BE ATTENTIVE

Not long ago, a member of the parish was given the unhappy news that cancerous or pre-cancerous tissue had gained a foothold in a vital area of his body. Surgery was performed to remove the threat. Chemical and radiation therapy was administered. After time had been allowed for this allegedly curative treatment to do its work, a second group of tests was given to determine if the treatment was successful.

After the second tests the wife called the physician to hear the report. He told her the news was not good. After the treatment her husband had the same condition which existed before treatment. The doctor announced the only hope now was for radical surgery. The wife not only heard the unhappy news, but it fell on her to inform her spouse of the evil tidings. Her husband, upon hearing the report, retreated into a state of depression.

A short time later the telephone rang once again. The wife did not really feel like speaking with anyone. She let it ring several times. But when it incessantly rang, she saw it must be answered. It was the family physician with whom she spoke earlier. With much apology he announced his nurse brought him the original report of the husband's condition prior to treatment. He had carelessly not looked carefully enough at the date until the conversation ended and he had hung up. Happily now he told her that the current update report indicated all the tissue was normal and her husband had every reason to expect a healthy life.

In that household profound sorrow turned to joy, despair was replaced by hope, depression made way for rejoicing and celebration. If you can understand the feelings of this family, you will understand the faith response described in the Resurrection story of Scripture. Three women, Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary, the mother of James, went to the grave of the Lord on that first morning of dark night and bright day. They were going there to complete the anointing which Jewish people practiced to prepare the body for burial.

This process had been left incomplete, because the Sabbath came immediately after Great and Holy Friday and no work was allowed on the feast. The preparing of a friend's body for burial is a task in which no one finds joy or pleasure. It is doing the best one can under the circumstances. The last memory of Jesus was that of seeing His body removed from the Cross and placed in the tomb.

The joyful message of the Resurrection was heard by the faithful women from the angel. And being freed from the ancestral curse, they boasted to the apostles: "Dead and despoiled is death; Christ our God is risen, giving great mercy to the world." Troparion, Sunday of the Samaritan Woman.

When the Samaritan woman came to the well with faith, she beheld You, O Water of Wisdom; You allowed her to drink abundantly, and glorified her eternally, for she inherited the eternal kingdom. Kontakion, Sunday of the Samaritan Woman.

When the Paschal feast is half-completed, quench my thirsty soul with the waters of devotion, for You, O Saviour, have announced to all: "Let him who is thirsty come to Me and drink." O Christ God, Source of our life, glory be to You! Troparion, Mid-Pentecost Feast.

O Christ God, Creator and Lord of all, when the Paschal feast was half-completed, You told those present: "Come and draw the water of immortality," Let us therefore adore You and cry out with faith: "Grant us Your goodness, for You are the Source of our life!" Kontakion, Mid-Pentecost Feast.

You fought the good fight with faith, O Martyr of Christ, George. You exposed the perversion of the persecutors and offered an acceptable sacrifice to God. Therefore, you also received a crown of victory and through your prayers, O holy one, obtained the forgiveness of sins for all. Troparion, Feast of St. George the Martyr.

Inspired by God, you sowed the seeds of piety, harvesting sheaves of virtue. You sowed in tears but reaped in joy; and having honorably fought and given your blood, you were received by Christ. Through your prayers, O holy one, obtain the forgiveness of sins for all. Kontakion, Feast of St. George the Martyr.