

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

St. Mary's (Dormition of the Mother of God)
Byzantine Catholic Church
131 South Morris Street
Saint Clair, PA 17970

Saints Peter & Paul Rectory: (570) 544-2074

Website: www.sspeterandpaulminersville.com

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Served by: Very Reverend Gregory J. Noga, Pastor

SS. Peter & Paul Cantor: Mr. Paul Konkus

St. Mary Cantor: Dr. Peter Yasenchak

CONFESSIONS: Sts. Peter & Paul: Saturday 2:45-3:30 PM

St. Mary's: Saturday 1:00 – 1:30 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

Explanation to the Emperor

There is nothing in the holy, inspired Scripture about the death of Mary, the holy Mother of God. But we know from ancient and wholly reliable tradition that at the time she so gloriously fell asleep, all the holy Apostles, who were traveling the world for the salvation of the peoples, were lifted up in a single instant of time and were gathered at Jerusalem; and as they stood by her, they saw a vision of angels, and heard the divine chanting of the higher powers ... Her body, which had been God's dwelling place, was brought for burial amidst the singing of the angels and the Apostles, and laid to rest in a coffin in Gethsemane; and the angelic dancing and singing continued without pause in that place for three days. But after three days, the song of the angels ceased; the Apostles were there, and since one of them, Thomas, had not been present (for her burial and came at the end of three days) and

wished to reverence that body which had housed God, they opened the coffin. And they could not find her body, which had been the object of such praise; all that they found were her burial wrappings. And being overcome by the ineffable fragrance that came out of the wrappings, they closed the coffin again. Amazed by this miraculous discovery, they could only draw a single conclusion: the one Who had deigned to become flesh in her own person, and to take His humanity from her, the one Who willed to be born in human flesh as God the Word, the Lord of glory, and Who had preserved her virginity intact even after childbirth, now chose, after her departure from this world, to honor her immaculate and pure body with the gift of incorruptibility, and with a change of state even before the common, universal resurrection.

St. Juvenal, Patriarch of Jerusalem

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS



Icon of the Dormition of the Theotokos

**Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost
Tone 2**

Welcome to the parish communities of SS. Peter and Paul and St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Churches of Minersville and Saint Clair, 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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**August 15 – August 21, 2021
All Divine Services are livestreamed where noted**

- Saturday Vigil Divine Liturgy (at SS Peter & Paul)
4:00 p.m. +**Metro Cremo, Sr.** req. by MM Emil Seginak
- Sunday
10:00 am **Health and Blessing of the Parishioners** (at SS. Peter & Paul)
Livestreamed
- Tuesday
8:00 a.m. +**Helen Hashin** req. by Michael & Cookie Hashin
- Wednesday
8:00 a.m. +**Margaret Kostishak** req. by Mike & Cookie Hashin
- Thursday
8:00 a.m. **No Divine Liturgy Today**
- Friday
8:00 a.m. +**James P. Hertz** req. by John & Maryann Ebling
12 Noon The church is open for private prayer until 3:00 p.m.
2:00 p.m. The Mystery of Forgiveness
6:00 p.m. The Mystery of Forgiveness
- Saturday **Vigil Divine Liturgy** (at SS. Peter & Paul)
4:00 p.m. +**Joseph Koslosky** req. by sister, Irene Schaeffer

Epistle Readers: 8/14 – Dolores Kramer; 8/15 – Gail Burgess; 8/21 – Angela Frank; 8/22 – Jennifer Keer; 8/28 – Marie Wanchick; 8/29 – Ellen Sinkovich.

If, you have not yet placed an order for the August 21st Steak & Shrimp cocktail Dinner accompanied with Baked Potato, Salad and Dessert, you have until Tuesday, August 17 to do so.

Sense of Humor

An atheist was making a pleasure walk through the woods, admiring all that the “accident of evolution” had produced. “What majestic trees! What a powerful river! What beautiful animals,” he said to himself. As he was meandering alongside the river, he heard a rustling in the bush behind him. As he turned to look, he saw a seven-foot grizzly charging down the embankment toward him. He ran as fast as he could up the path. He looked over his shoulder and saw the bear was closing in on him. He tried to run even faster, so scared did he become that tears were coming to his eyes. He looked over his shoulder once again, and the bear was terrifyingly closer. His heart was pumping frantically as he tried to increase his speed. But he tripped and was thrown quickly to the ground. He rolled over to pick himself up and saw the bear right on top of him, raising a huge paw to swipe him from this existence into the next. At that very instant, he cried out:

“Oh my God!”

Just then, time stopped. The bear froze. The forest was silent. The river even stopped moving. A bright light shone upon the man, and a voice from the sky said, “You deny my existence all these years, teach others I don’t exist, and even credit my creation to a ‘cosmic accident’ now you expect me to help you out of this predicament? Am I to count you as a believer?” the atheist, ever so proud, looked into the bright light and said, “It would be rather hypocritical to ask to be a Christian after all these self-serving years, but could you make the bear a Christian instead?” Anything, he thought to himself, just so he would not have to admit he was wrong. “Very well,” said the Voice.

As the light disappeared, the river once again began to run its course and the sounds of creation in the forest continued as before. The bear put its ferocious paw down, then brought both paws together, lowered its head piously and said,

“Lord, I thank you for this meal which I am about to receive.”

Did You Know That ...

...the Lord sometimes sharpens his saints on the devil's grindstone?

...there is no right way to do a wrong deed?

...a well read prayer book and Bible mean a well-fed soul?

...Jesus came into the world to talk to man for God the Father; now He is in heaven to talk to God the Father for man?

...there is no reward from God to those who seek it from man?

...Jesus who died to save us now lives to keep us his own?

...if you keep your light shining, our heavenly Father will put it where it will be seen?

...the man who looks down his nose at others usually has the wrong slant?

...the breaking of the outward man is God's way of blessing the inner man?

...those who sow seeds of wickedness inevitably reap a harvest of judgment?

...procrastination is the door of too late?

...the human spirit fails unless the Holy Spirit fills?

...many a child has been lead out of the darkness of sin by the light of a mother's example?

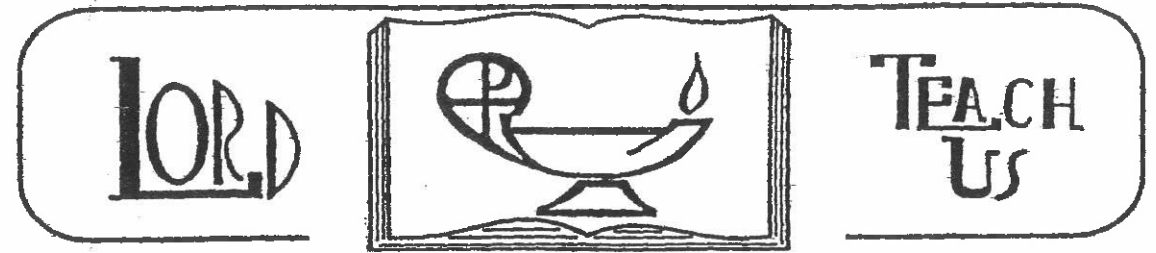
...true faith always weaves a pattern of good works?

...God entrusts us with a little to see what we will do with a lot?

...many a man lays down his life trying to lay down his money?

...there is no place where earth's sorrows are more deeply felt than in heaven?

...you may stop caring about God, but He never stops caring for you?



GOD'S PROMISES

It is he who gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers in roles of service for the faithful to build up the body of Christ, til we become one in faith and in the knowledge of God's Son, and form that perfect man who is Christ come to full stature. Ephesians 4: 11 - 13.

In him who is the source of my strength I have strength for everything Philippians 4: 13.

And this hope will not leave us disappointed, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. At the appointed time when we were still powerless, Christ died for us godless men Romans 5: 5, 6.

Like a sure and firm anchor, that hope extends beyond the veil though which Jesus our forerunner, has entered on our behalf, being made high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek Hebrews 6: 19.

...I undergo present hardships. But I am not ashamed, for I know him in whom I have believed, and I am confident that he is able to guard what has been entrusted to me until that Day 2 Timothy 1: 12.

The Lord will continue to rescue me from all attempts to do me harm and will bring me safe to his heavenly kingdom 2 Timothy 4: 18.

Therefore a Sabbath rest still remains for the people of God. And he who enters into God's rest, rests from his own work as God did from his. Let us strive to enter into that rest, so that no one may fall, in imitation of the example of Israel's unbelief Hebrews 4: 9 - 11.

the Byzantine Fathers have professed, "He became what we are that we might become what He is...God became man that man might become god." Because of Christ living and fulfilling within himself all the commandments of the Father in a perfect way, our salvation is assured. He has done for us what we cannot do for ourselves. He has raised us up. He has elevated us from our evil and sinful way and formed us into children of the eternal Father.

We belong, because of our baptism to him and to the eternal kingdom of heaven. St. Peter tells us, "His divine power was granted to us in all things that pertain to life and godliness...that you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become partakers of the divine nature" 2 Peter 1: 4.

In Christ we have been given God's love. When a person is "in" Christ, he can love with the love of God, with the certitude of our Creator. This is the new commandment that man, filled with the Holy Spirit should love with the love of God himself. In challenging us to follow and fulfill the commandments, our Lord is offering an opportunity to seek after and experience the love of God imparted to those who truly believe. Through the love of Christ man is to bear, to believe, to hope and to suffer all things. That is what Christ has done. This is what love does. The one who does this has fulfilled completely the new commandment of Jesus and abides in the love of the Father. The one who does this abides in God's embrace and already possesses eternal life as a member of his unending kingdom.

Job 38:1-7 (34-41)

Psalms 104:1-9, 24, 35c

Hebrews 5:1-10

Mark 10:35-45



God of Love:

*"Blessed are
those whose way
is blameless,
who walk in the
way of the
Lord!"*

(Psalm 119:1).

*Help us
live our lives
as if we truly
believe
this psalm.
Amen.*

The Creed expressed this transforming reality in its proclamation of who Christ is. It is essential "for our salvation." When we say this in the Creed, we do more than merely convey a fact; we profess our dependence on God for our very existence.

What does Christ do for us? The Creed explains, "He came down from heaven." "For us and our salvation" is the connecting phrase between his divinity and his humanity. St. John teaches, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that everyone who believes in him might not perish, but have eternal life" John 3: 16.

The Word of God was enfleshed and He was, if we might coin a word, "en-humanized" (Greek: *enanthropesanta*). This comes from the Greek word for "human being," which is *anthropoes*. That humanity, according to nature is meant here is without doubt. Our faith recalls what is written in the Book of Genesis, "God created man (Hebrew: *adam*; Greek, *anthropos*) in his image; in the divine image he created him, male and female he created them" Genesis 1: 27.

Though as an individual Jesus was a Jewish male, his coming into the world was solidarity with all humanity. In our faith in Christ, then, salvation is opened to all members of the human race, for "...there is neither Jew nor Greek (no exclusions because of ethnic race); there is neither slave nor free person (no exclusions because of social standing); there is not male and female (no exclusions because of sex); for you are all one in Christ Jesus" Galatians 3: 28.

This salvation does not remain abstract in the Creed, and we do not say simply that Christ came for the salvation of the human race, but specifically and personally for "us" and for "our" salvation.

This coming of Christ is a new creation for humanity. St. Paul steeped in the Jewish tradition, makes Christ the new Adam. He writes, "The first man, Adam, became a living being; the last Adam (Christ) a life-giving spirit...The first man was from the earth, earthly; the second man (Christ), from heaven" 1 Corinthians 15: 45, 47.

St. Paul was aware of the Hebrew word play in this story of creation. What we read in English is a proper name, "Adam," in Hebrew also meant "man." That Christ is the "last Adam" and the "second man", therefore, means the same thing. Adam, "the man" sinned in Eden, introducing death into human nature; but in Christ there is salvation, as St. Paul again teaches, "...for just as in Adam all die, so too in Christ shall all be brought to life" 1 Corinthians 15: 22.

Twelfth Sunday

There was a further word play, for the Hebrew word *adama* means "soil," so that the first-created "Adam" "was from the earth, earthly." Perhaps St. Paul's Jewish hearers understood this word play, but it does not translate into Greek, nor in later times, into Slavonic. English actually comes closest; but even for us, Adam has become a proper name and would not be associated with "man" except by further catechesis.

St. Paul carries this word play even further. The first man and woman were in the image and likeness of God so through the salvation of Christ we now are-re-created in the image of God. "Just as we have borne the image of the earthly one (Adam), we shall also bear the image of the heavenly one." 1 Corinthians 15: 49.

The Creed, then, acknowledges and professes our transformation. Because in Christ, God is "enfleshed" in human nature, so we, as human beings, and as individuals making up the human race, are divinized in Christ's humanity. When in the Creed we proclaim who Christ is, we also profess who we are slowly but inevitably becoming, as a result of our baptism, chrismation and eucharistic life.



Today our Lord speaks to us of the commandments. The commandment to love God and neighbor are found in the law of Moses. They are not commandments for God's people alone, but for everyone who breathes and obviously then no one is excepted or exempted from their mandatory embrace. They are the commandments "written on men's hearts and are given 'by nature' itself (Romans 2: 14, 15). They are the commandments granted us by the Creator in his words to man "from the beginning" 1 John 2: 7. In the New Covenant Church of Christ, however, there is a "new commandment" 1 John 2: 8 given us by Jesus himself for the benefit of those who believe in him. "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you; that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" John 13: 34.

The astoundingly new element in this new commandment is not the teaching and value of love, for this is already written in the law. The new element is that believers in Christ must love as Christ himself loves. The new commandment is to love "as I have loved you."

Christian love must be the perfect love of Christ himself which is wholly and totally divine and does not itself benefit from its love except as fulfillment in Christ. It is disinterested love which means it does not love to receive love in return. It simply loves for the sake of loving.

Christian love must be the perfect love of Christ; it must be divine love of God the Father, poured into the heart of man by the Holy Spirit of God. It must be that love which is absolutely faithful, perfect, eternal and divine. Of all the men who ever lived on earth, or who ever will live, only one has faithfully fulfilled the two great commandments of God; one only has lived absolutely and perfectly according to the prescription of God's law; only one has loved the Father with all his heart, mind, soul and strength and his neighbor as himself.

Of course, we know this to be Jesus Christ in the flesh, the child of the ever-virgin Mary. There is no one righteous before God's law but Jesus. Only he has lived according to the law and by the teachings of the prophets. He also is the only one who has "fulfilled the law and the prophets" Matthew 5: 17. He alone, of all men, loves with perfect sinless, dispassionate love.

"By his wounds you have been healed" 1 Peter 2: 24. Having no sin, Jesus took our sins on himself and became sin "for us men and for our salvation" Nicene Creed. Thus the radiant love of God the Father is perfected in a human being, that all humanity might share the love and glory of God. As all

For Our Salvation

The second part of the Nicene Creed speaks about Christ in two ways: as God and as man. This is a fundamental affirmation of our precious faith; He is truly one person (Greek: *hypostasis*) in two distinct natures (Greek: *physes*).

If nature is that which makes something to be what it is, then this is a unique reality, a mystery beyond our powers of comprehension. Yet it is essential “for our salvation.” What we profess in the Creed cannot remain abstract speculation, it must transform us, conveying us beyond the transition from non-being into being, which is creation, but also from only being to being in God, which is described as salvation.

This is extended in the Divine Liturgy, for, in each dismissal in which an event in our Lord’s life is commemorated, we add the words, “for our salvation.” Thus, our Lord was born in a cave in Bethlehem, “for our salvation.” These words form a transition from the first series of affirmation about Christ to the second. That He is God is “for our salvation,” but that He also became a human being is “for our salvation,” too.

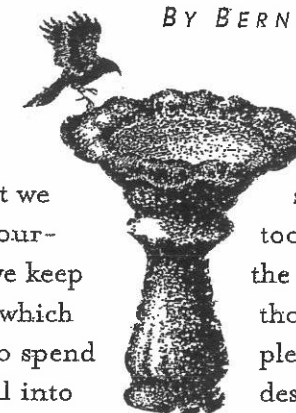
This is not simply self-centeredness. All being flows from God and the mystery of his inner being, that is, God in his own nature, is beyond our understanding and comprehension. What God reveals to us, therefore, is for us and for our salvation.

“Our salvation,” means our fulfillment as creatures. Since we are made in the image of God, our hearts and minds are restless until we rest in God, as the western saint, Augustine expressed it. Salvation means deification, to become “god-like.” That is why the Church has always undertaken the discernment of our Lord Jesus Christ with the highest priority. Only if we know who our Lord is, can we find the central meaning of God with us.

As St. John told us, “And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father’s only Son, full of grace and truth” John 1: 14. And St. Matthew shares with us, “Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means “God is with us”” Matthew 1: 23.

Spending and Saving

BY BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX



WE MUST NOT give to others what we have received for ourselves; nor must we keep for ourselves that which we have received to spend on others. You fall into the latter error, if you possess the gift of eloquence or wisdom, and yet — through fear or sloth or false humility — neglect to use the gift for others’ benefit. And, on the other hand, you dissipate and lose what is your own, if without right intention and from some wrong motive, you hasten to outpour yourself on others when your own soul is only half-filled.

If you are wise therefore you will show yourself a reservoir and not a canal. For a canal pours out as fast as it takes in; but a reservoir waits till it is full before it overflows, and so

communicates its surplus. . . . We have all too few such reservoirs in the Church at present, though we have canals in plenty . . . they (canals) desire to pour out when they themselves are not yet inpoured; they are readier to speak than to listen, eager to teach that which they do not know, and most anxious to exercise authority on others, although they have not learnt to rule themselves. . . . Let the reservoir of which we spoke just now take pattern from the spring; for the spring does not form a stream or spread into a lake until it is brimful. . . . Be filled thyself; then, but discreetly, mind, pour out thy fullness. . . .

Bernard on the Song of Songs