

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

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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

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**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)

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### *The Vineyard is the Kingdom*

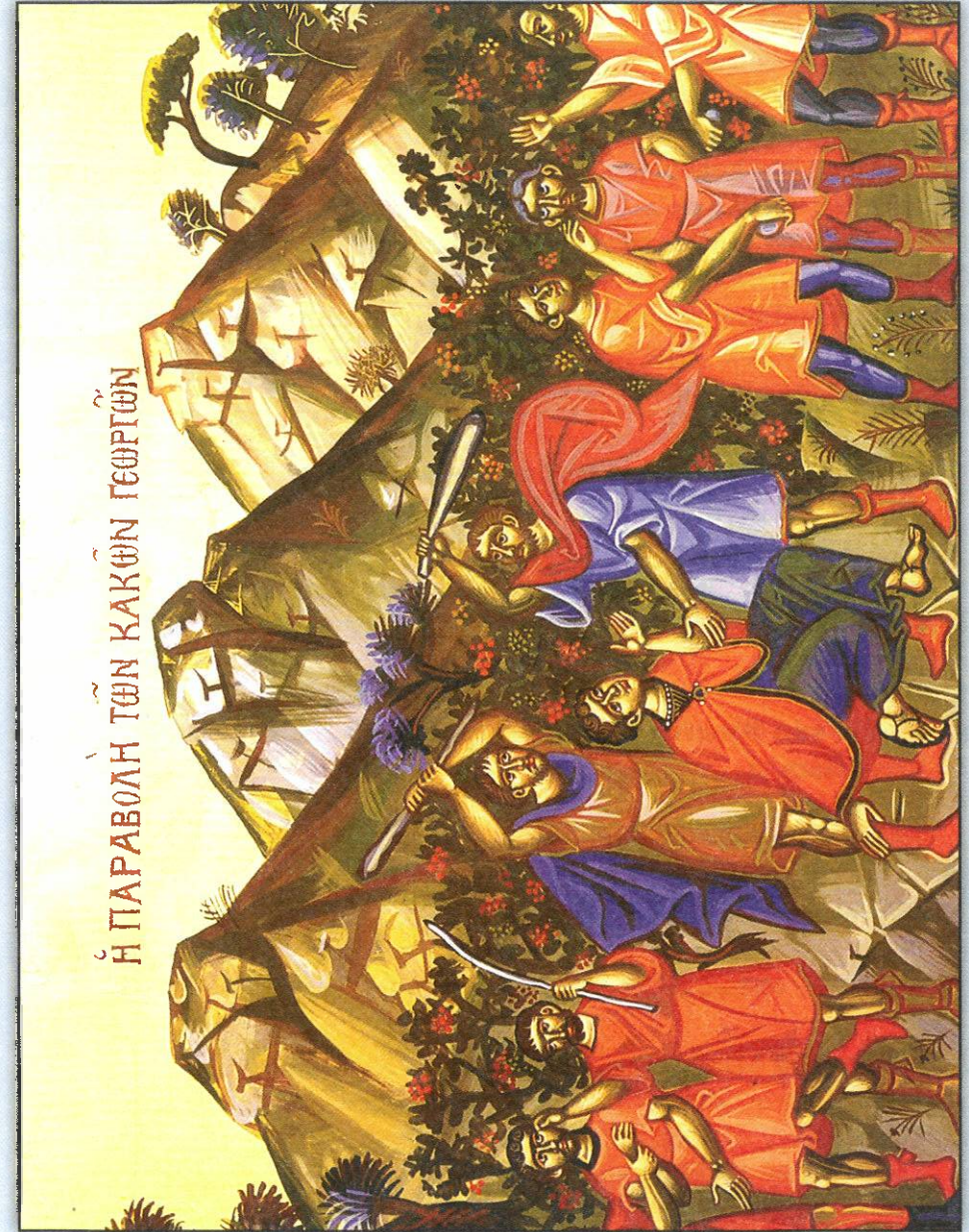
The kingdom of God upon earth is here compared to a vineyard, furnished with all things requisite to an advantageous management and improvement of it. He planted this vineyard. The church is the planting of the Lord, Isaiah 61:3. The forming of a church is a work by itself, like the planting of a vineyard, which requires a great deal of cost and care. It is the vineyard which his right hand has planted (Psalms 80:15), planted with the choicest vine (Isaiah 5:2), a noble vine, Jeremiah 2:21. The earth of itself produces thorns and briars; but vines must be planted. The being of a church is owing to God's distinguishing favour, and his manifesting himself to some, and not to others.

He hedged it round about. Note, God's church in the world is taken under his special protection. It is a hedge round about, like that about Job on every side (Job 1:10), a wall of fire,

Zechariah 2:5. Wherever God has a church, it is, and will always be, his peculiar care. The covenant of circumcision and the ceremonial law were a hedge or a wall of partition about the Jewish church, which is taken down by Christ; who yet has appointed a gospel order and discipline to be the hedge of his church. He will not have his vineyard to lie in common, that those who are without, may thrust in at pleasure; not to lie at large, that those who are within, may lash out at pleasure; but care is taken to set bounds about this holy mountain.

He dug a wine-press and built a tower. The altar of burnt-offerings was the wine-press, to which all the offerings were brought. God instituted ordinances in his church, for the due oversight of it, and for the promoting of its fruitfulness. What could have been done more to make it every way convenient?

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Ἡ ΠΑΡΑΒΟΛὴ τῶν ΚΑΚῶν ΓΕΩΡΓῶΝ

Icon of the Parable of the Evil Vineyard Workers (Matthew 21:33-43)

**13<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**  
**Tone 3**

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 22 – August 28, 2021**  
**All Divine Services are livestreamed where noted**

Saturday Vigil Divine Liturgy (at SS Peter & Paul)  
4:00 p.m. + **Joseph Koslosky** req. by sister, Irene Schaeffer

Sunday  
10:00 am **Health and Blessing of the Parishioners** (at SS. Peter & Paul)  
Livestreamed

Tuesday  
8:00 a.m. +**Joseph Lohin** req. by Elaine Lohin Kunze

Wednesday  
8:00 a.m. +**Veronica Sekellick** req. by Nicholas & Jennifer Stepenosky

Thursday  
8:00 a.m. +**Mary & +Michael Stasko** req. by Beverly Jean Kostishak

Friday  
8:00 a.m. +**Raymond Minder** req. by Ron & Delores Kramer  
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. +**Julia & +Anthony Vasura** req. by Yvonne Quandel

**Epistle Readers:** 8/21 – Angela Frank; 8/22 – Jennifer Keer; 8/28 – Marie Wanchick; 8/29 – Ellen Sinkovich.

**21:43-45 The Kingdom of God Will Be Taken from You**

**KILLING GOD TO SIN WITH IMPUNITY. INCOMPLETE WORK ON MATTHEW:** The man who commits a grave sin is likely to commit an even worse sin because he no longer hopes in God, as Solomon suggests: "When a wicked man enters the depths of evil, he becomes contemptuous."<sup>19</sup> The sick will abstain from potentially harmful foods until their fever moderates and they begin to have hope that a cure is imminent, but if they are convinced that their disease is incurable, they will eat whatever they like. Likewise, as long as a man sins only venially and retains some hope for salvation, he will abstain from evil as far as possible, but if he begins to despair as a result of committing serious sins, he will come to have no doubt that he has already been done in by the judgment of God. Pathetic is the man who does not realize that there is a gradation of punishments for the evil, each one receiving his punishment according to the measure of his evil, just as there is a gradation of glory for the good, each one receiving a reward according to the measure of his goodness. For God is as unlimited in his range of punishments for the evil as he is in his rewards for the good.

The priests of the old covenant who had already ceased to have any hope in God because they were filled with every evil raised their hands against God himself, inasmuch as they knew Christ to be the Son of God, because they had given up on abstaining from evil. Does this astonish you? Truly every evil man, insofar as his will is concerned, raises his hand against God and kills him, for whoever does not hesitate to provoke God's wrath, or despises his commandments, or treats his name with contempt, or utters blasphemies against him, or murmurs against him, or looks toward heaven with an angry countenance or raises his arrogant hand against God in anger, would certainly also kill him if it were possible, just in order to be able to sin with impunity. HOMILY 40.

**21:46 The Multitudes Considered Jesus a Prophet**

**THEY FEARED THE CROWD. JEROME:** Although [the chief priests and the Pharisees] were hard of heart and on account of their unbelief and wickedness blunted in their understanding against the Son of God, nevertheless they were unable to deny Jesus' straightforward statements and understood that all the judgments of the Lord were directed against themselves. So they determined indeed to kill him but feared "the crowd, for they considered Jesus to be a prophet." A crowd is always easily moved, not persisting with their will in their resolution. Additionally, they are like waves and opposite winds blown to and fro. The one they now honor and revere as a prophet they later shout against: "Crucify, crucify" such a man. COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW 3.21.46.

## Jesus and the Ballpark Bullies

By a Contemporary Mother

Sometimes things really have to wait until Dad comes home. This week when I picked my son up from the neighborhood ballgame in the park, he slid into the back seat, chin on his chest, his eyes filled with tears. I immediately asked what was wrong.

“Nothin’” he muttered.

I waited a few minutes and started driving off. “How was the game?” I asked.

“Bad,” he said.

I waited a few more minutes. This was so unlike my boy. He usually hops into the car with enough energy to make it bounce on its chassis. Today, he was sullen, dark, brooding.

“Son, please tell me what’s wrong.”

“I hate this town,” he said. “I hate the kids. I got picked last for baseball again. They call me ‘Sissy Boy’ and...” He proceeded to run through a long list of epithets so offensive I couldn’t believe any 11 year old boy would know what they meant.

I was enraged. Those kids had to know how much that would hurt, how deeply they could cut into his sensitive soul. We just moved here; the poor kid is practically standing on his head to get into the group. Not only are they making him feel unwelcome, but they’re going out of their way to be cruel to him.

So there we were-Dad was still at work, me trying to understand this “guy thing,” my son feeling so completely unloved, unwanted and unaccepted. And worse, I felt him starting to believe he was unworthy of love and acceptance. What to do?

When you’re a mother, and you are lent these incredible souls from heaven, it seems incomprehensible that anyone would fail to see in them what you see. When I look at my boy, I see him with the same rush of love I felt as they laid him in my arms moments after he was born. I see a smiling toddler with wilted dandelions in his hand, holding out so proudly in my direction, saying, “For you, Mom.” I see the first-grader, off to school that first day, so full of faith in his parents and in God and himself, now beaten down by a world that despises and ridicules faith.

“What can we do about this, son?” I asked him rather quietly.

“I dunno,” he sighed. “Maybe pray?”

O yes, pray! Momentarily, in my offense about what could happen to my child, I forgot there is this person, our God, Jesus Christ, Who beat this problem 2,000 years ago. This Jesus, Who is your friend when the last person has deserted you, this Jesus Who you can never disappoint so badly He’ll dump you, this Jesus Who loves you simply because you’re you.

“You are absolutely right. You have the answer. We should pray, we must pray, pray for those boys, and their parents and families as well.”

“But I tried that already, Mom,” he said. “I pray all the time that they’ll like me, but they only get meaner.”

“Let’s try praying a different way. Let’s just pray that God showers them with blessings and makes them happier than they dream possible. Maybe then they won’t feel good and superior trying to drag you down to their miserable deprived level.”

Why would we pray that he wanted to know. Why should God make them happy when they were making him so unhappy?

“And Mom,” my son moaned, “Jesus doesn’t play baseball.”

I thought for a moment. That’s true. Jesus didn’t play baseball or football or soccer. There’s absolutely nothing in the Bible that would lead us to believe Jesus was a star athlete. In fact, what was He good at? Did He paint or sing or dance? No. was He a whiz at science or math? Well, for sure He could multiply!

Jesus, I told my son, knows better than anybody what it’s like to love and not be loved in return. He wasn’t one of the “smart” kids or a “wise guy.” If there was anybody who had to bear foul nicknames, it was Jesus. Yes, Jesus was bullied in the worst and cruelest of ways. His response, as the mob finally finished its work of verbal savagery, was to pray for the crowd’s well-being.

“Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.” Luke 23:34

When my husband arrived home at long last, our son opened up. Dad, in response, developed a regular family rite for us to pray for all who are mean to us, and encouraged the whole family to root out hard and unacceptable feelings any of us has toward those who have harmed us. We should pray for these people, he said, and show genuine gratitude for them and the situation.

The real estate agent who seems to be dragging her feet on selling our house? Pray for her, give thanks for the house still being there for just the right person who will love and appreciate it.

The librarian who charged us a whopping \$8.00 for a late video? Pray for him and thank God for the cheap lesson in serious responsibility.

And, my wise husband said, we must pray for mean boys in the park. Pray for them that God heals whatever hurt or shortcoming makes them so mean. Give thanks for them, that their cruelty has opened for us more of a chance for prayer, an opportunity to get closer to our best friend, Jesus Christ. It provides us an opportunity to become more Christ-like ourselves and to spend more time with Him. It is imperfection in people that reminds us of the perfection of our Saviour. It is also a reminder to ourselves, that we look at our imperfections and shortcomings and accept the urgency to overcome them with God’s grace.

“It may change things, it may not,” my husband said. “But it’ll get you used to showing mercy. And for that you’ll be easier on yourself as well, and you will be shown mercy by our heavenly Father. It will teach you to be more sensitive and understanding of the need of others for mercy. It’s a Bible promise from the Lord. Finally, it’s the way the Lord would have us respond to these kinds of encounters in our lives.”

