

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

Email: tvrgjn@outlook.com

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

The Prophet and Forerunner

Now although the principle stands that “We all offend in many ways” (James 3:2), which of us dare to say that blessed John sinned in act or word or dress or food, when the gospel history praises the harshness of his clothing and the frugality of his meals; when everything he said either rendered testimony to the truth or refuted those who spoke against him; when even those who did not like him held in veneration his works of justice? What place could there have been in his inmost heart for sin, when the coming of the Holy Spirit consecrated him even before his birth, when not even in comparison with the ordinary way of human life could he be turned aside from the path of virtue, who from his boyhood on led an entirely solitary life?

And yet a man of this sort, one who

was so preeminent, reached the end of his earthly life by shedding his blood after a long period of affliction in chains. He who brought the good news of the freedom of heaven was thrust into chains by wicked people; he who “came to bear testimony to the light” (John 1:8), and who merited to be called “a burning and shining lamp” by the very light which is Christ (John 5:35), was shut up in the darkness of prison; he who was greater than all those born of women (Matt. 11:11; Luke 7:28) was punished by being beheaded at the request of the basest of women; and he to whom it was granted to baptize the world's Redeemer, to hear the Father's voice above him, and to see the grace of the Holy Spirit descending upon him, was baptized in his own blood.

Venerable Bede, *Homily II.23*

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST BEHEADING OF THE HOLY AND GLORIOUS PROPHET, FORERUNNER AND BAPTIST JOHN



Icon of the Beheading of John the Baptist

**14th Sunday after Pentecost
Beheading of John the Baptist
Tone 5**

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.

.....

August 29 – September 4, 2021

All Divine Services are livestreamed where noted

Saturday Vigil Divine Liturgy (at SS Peter & Paul)
4:00 p.m. + **Julia &+Anthony Vasura** req. by Yvonne Quandel

Sunday
8:00 a.m. +**Mildred Noga** req. by son, Fr. Gregory (at St. Mary)
10:00 am **Health and Blessing of the Parishioners** (at SS. Peter & Paul)
Livestreamed

Wednesday
8:00 a.m. +**Lawrence Burgess** req. by Judy Kostura

Thursday
8:00 a.m. +**John Kostura, Jr.** req. by Judy Kostura

Friday
8:00 a.m. +**Jeanette Lohin** req. by Mr. Bradey
12 Noon The church is open for private prayer until 3:00 p.m.
2:00 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: 8/28 – Marie Wanchick; 8/29 – Ellen Sinkovich; 9/4 – Dolores Kramer; 9/5 – Beverly Kostishak; 9/8 – Marie Wanchick; 9/11 – Angela Frank; 9/12 – Jennifer Keer; 9/14 – Angela Frank; 9/18 – Dolores Kramer; 9/19 – Anna Keer; 9/25 – Marie Wanchick; 9/26 – Ellen Sinkovich; 10/1 – Beverly Kostishak.

The Beheading of the Prophet, ForeRunner of the Lord, John the Baptist: The Evangelists Matthew (Mt 14:1-12) and Mark (Mk 6:14-29) provide accounts about the Martyr's end of John the Baptist in the year 32 after the Birth of Christ.

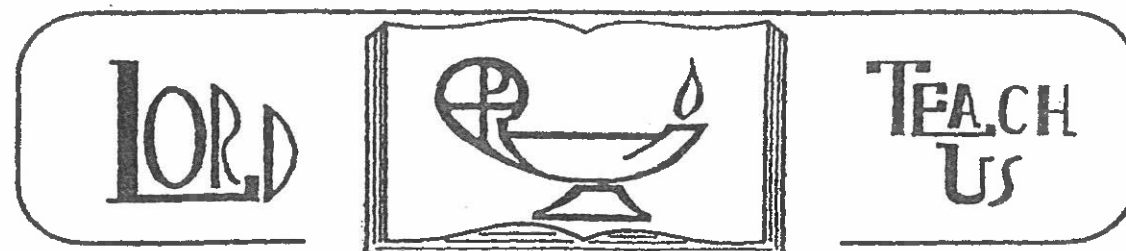
Following the Baptism of the Lord, Saint John the Baptist was locked up in prison by Herod Antipas, holding one-fourth the rule of the Holy Land as governor of Galilee. (After the death of king Herod the Great, the Romans divided the territory of Palestine into four parts, and into each part put a governor. Herod Antipas received from the emperor Augustus the rule of Galilee). The prophet of God John openly denounced Herod for having left his lawful wife -- the daughter of the Arabian king Aretas -- and then instead co-habiting with Herodias -- the wife of his brother Philip (Lk 3:19-20). On his birthday, Herod made a feast for dignitaries, the elders and a thousand chief citizens. The daughter of Herod, Salome, danced before the guests and charmed Herod. In gratitude to the girl he swore to give her anything, whatsoever she would ask, anything up to half his kingdom. The vile girl on the advice of her wicked mother Herodias asked, that she be given at once the head of John the Baptist on a plate. Herod became apprehensive, for he feared the wrath of God for the murder of a prophet, whom earlier he had heeded. He feared also the people, who loved the holy ForeRunner. But because of the guests and his careless oath, he gave orders to cut off the head of Saint John and to give it to Salome. By tradition, the mouth of the dead head of the preacher of repentance once more opened and proclaimed: "Herod, thou ought not to have the wife of Philip thy brother." Salome took the plate with the head of Saint John and gave it to her mother. The frenzied Herodias repeatedly stabbed the tongue of the prophet with a needle and buried his holy head in a unclean place. But the pious Joanna, wife of Herod's steward Chuza, buried the head of John the Baptist in an earthen vessel on the Mount of Olives, where Herod was possessor of a parcel of land. (The Uncovering of the Venerable Head is celebrated 24 February). The holy body of John the Baptist was taken that night by his disciples and buried at Sebasteia, there where the wicked deed had been done. After the murder of Saint John the Baptist, Herod continued to govern for a certain while. Pontius Pilate, governor of Judea, later sent to him the bound Jesus Christ, over Whom he made mockery (Lk 23:7-12).

The judgement of God came upon Herod, Herodias and Salome, even during their earthly life. Salome, crossing the River Sikoris in winter, fell through the ice. The ice gave way for her such that her body was in the water, but her head trapped beneath the ice. It was similar to how she once had danced with her feet upon the ground, but now flailing helplessly in the icy water. Thus she was trapped until that time when the sharp ice cut through her neck. The corpse was not found, but they brought the head to Herod and Herodias, as once they had brought them the head of Saint John the Baptist. The Arab king Aretas in revenge for the disrespect shown his daughter made war against Herod. Having suffered defeat, Herod suffered the wrath of the Roman emperor Caius Caligua (37-41) and was exiled with Herodias first to Gaul, and then to Spain. And there they were from view.

In memory of the Beheading of Saint John the Baptist, the feastday established by the Church is also a strict day of fast -- as an expression of the grief of Christians at the violent death of the saint. On this day the Church makes remembrance of soldiers, killed on the field of battle, as established in 1769 at the time of a war of Russia with the Turks and the Poles.

Did You Know That ...

- ...no one stands as tall as a believer on his knees?
- ...the best interpreter of Scripture is the believer who fully lives its revelation?
- ...every promise of God comes with his personal guarantee?
- ...humility is the moral virtue that keeps a person from getting beyond himself?
- ...the memory of saints commemorated each day inspires us to imitate their virtue?
- ...oftentimes God shows his love through us?
- ...the issue of our identity as Christians is a crucially vital one?
- ...the exercises we daily perform should be toward Godliness?
- ...hypocrisy is pretending to have virtues or moral qualities not actually possessed?
- ...we are all God's assistants in the work of healing?
- ...hope is the confident desire of obtaining a future good that is difficult to attain?
- ...the blessing of homes takes place to endow with every holy gift all the inhabitants of a particular home?
- ...to be truly human is to be truly God-like?
- ...humility is not only opposed to pride, but to self-abnegation as well?
- ...icons as images of God and his saints are always venerated and shown respect because of whom they depict?
- ...ideologies more than actual truths motivate contemporary American life?
- ...idolatry is placing something else before our God and entrusting it with more value and respect than God?



Attributes Of God

Every worthwhile gift, every genuine benefit comes from above, descending from the Father of heavenly lights, who cannot change and who is never shadowed over James 1: 17.

You shall not carve idols for yourselves in the shape of anything in the sky above or on the earth below or in the waters beneath the earth; you shall not bow down before them or worship them, for I, the Lord your God am a jealous God, inflicting punishment for their fathers' wickedness on the children of those who hate me, down to the third and fourth generations Exodus 20: 4 – 6.

The earth is the Lord's and its fullness, the world and those who dwell in it; for he founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers Psalms 24: 1, 2.

That you are my help, and in the shadow of your wings I shout for joy; my soul clings fast to you; your right hand upholds me Psalms 63: 8, 9.

You still the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves and tumult of people. And the dwellers at the earth's ends are in fear at your marvels; the farthest east and west you make resound with joy You have visited the land and watered it; greatly have you enriched it Psalms 65: 8 – 10.

When I call, answer me, O my just God, you who relieve me when I am in distress; have pity on me and hear my prayer Psalms 4: 1, 2.

Ships

*They took Jesus with them in the boat
Mark 4: 36.*

Pray to God but row for the shore.

**A boy playing on the deck of a ship in a night storm was asked
by a passenger if he was not afraid.
“No, I’m not afraid. My father is captain of the ship.”**

A ship is safe in the harbor, but that is not what ships are for.

**O Lord, how often I refuse to set sail on the shortest trip toward
you. Help me become a pilgrim at heart.
Amen.**



God Will Not Be Tricked

*Do not be deceived; God is not mocked
Galatians 6: 7.*

No one should hope to find in contemplation an escape from conflict, from anguish or from doubt because the contemplative experience often awakens a tragic anguish and opens many questions in the depth of the heart like wounds that cannot stop bleeding.

Techniques and spiritualities are proper and necessary in their own right, but we must not ask from them what we can only receive from our God.

Chanting OM with great enthusiasm and expectation for hours on end may well be an efficacious exercise in meditation, but it may also be a distinct sign of a weird person. Or, worse yet, it may be a way of tricking ourselves into believing that some contrivance of our own making can itself take us to God.

Progress in prayer or meditation is always a gift. God is always beyond our cleverest plans. He is not to be flushed out into the open by beating the bushes with well-wrought aphorisms. But in simple abandonment to his will, we will find ourselves associated in soul and deed with our Creator. But in simple abandonment to his will we find that, like our next breath, He is upon us, that He engulfs us and holds us fast.

May we always be aware and depend on his grace to realize when our prayers are becoming tricks and gimmicks that try and control our Creator, Father, God.

Only our Almighty God can unite us with himself!