

Saints Peter & Paul St. Mary's (Dormition of the Mother of God)
 Byzantine Catholic Church Byzantine Catholic Church
 107 South Fourth Street 131 South Morris Street
 Minersville, PA 17954 Saint Clair, PA 17970

Parish Office: (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: 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)

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Mark J. Mahal – Funeral Director

The Legendary Saint Nicholas

The absence of the “hard facts” of history is not necessarily an obstacle to the popularity of saints, as the devotion to St. Nicholas shows. Both the Eastern and Western Churches honor him, and it is claimed that, after the Theotokos, he is the saint most pictured by Christian artists. And yet, historically, we can pinpoint only the fact that Nicholas was the fourth-century bishop of Myra, a city in Lycia, a province of Asia Minor.

As with many of the saints, however, we are able to capture the relationship which Nicholas had with God through the admiration which Christians have had for him – an admiration expressed in the colorful stories which have been told and retold through the centuries.

Perhaps the best-known story about Nicholas concerns his charity toward a poor man who was

unable to provide dowries for his three daughters of marriageable age. Rather than see them forced into prostitution, Nicholas secretly tossed a bag of gold through the poor man's window on three separate occasions, thus enabling the daughters to be married. Over the centuries, this particular legend evolved into the custom of gift-giving on the saint's feast. In the English-speaking countries, St. Nicholas became, by a twist of the tongue, Santa Claus – further expanding the example of generosity portrayed by this holy bishop.

The critical eye of modern history makes us take a deeper look at the legends surrounding St. Nicholas. But perhaps we can utilize the lesson taught by his legendary charity, look deeper at our approach to material goods in the Christmas season and seek ways to extend our sharing to those in real need.

TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Icon of Saint Nicholas -- December 6th

27th 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 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.

December 3 – December 9, 2023

Vigil of Sunday (at St. Mary)

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| Saturday | 4:00 p.m. | + Joseph & +Julia Gera req. by Joseph & Cheryl Gera |
| Sunday | 9:00 a.m. | Health & Blessings of the Parishioners (livestreamed) |
| Monday | 9:00 a.m. | No Divine Liturgy Today |
| Tuesday | 9:00 a.m. | + Nicholas Babilya req. by Julia Studlack |
| Wednesday | 9:00 a.m.
6:00 p.m. | Holy Day of Saint Nicholas
+ Earl Kostura req. by Joseph Kostura (at St. Mary)
H&B of the Parishioners (at SS Peter & Paul) |
| Thursday | 6:00 p.m. | Vigil of the Maternity of St. Anna
+ Anna Rose Kostura req. by +Pauline Kostura (at SS P & P)
Maternity of Saint Anna |
| Friday | 9:00 a.m. | H&B of the Parishioners (at St. Mary) |

Vigil of Sunday (at St. Mary)

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| Saturday | 4:00 p.m. | + Michael Bailey req. by Holochuck Family |
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Epistle Readers: 12/3 – Judy Kostura; 12/6 – Marie Wanchick; 16/7 – Beverly Kostishak; 12/10 – Dolores Kramer; 12/17 – Judy Kostura; 12/24 – Ellen

Sinkovich; 12/24 – Gail Burgess; 12/26 – Beverly Kostishak; 12/27 – Marie Wanchick; 12/31 – Judy Kostura; 1/1 – Jennifer Keer.

Candle Offering:

Breakfast with Father: The Annual St. Nicholas Breakfast

Sunday, December 17, 2023 following the Divine Liturgy. All are welcome to attend.

Eastern Christian Formation Class: Following the Divine Liturgy.

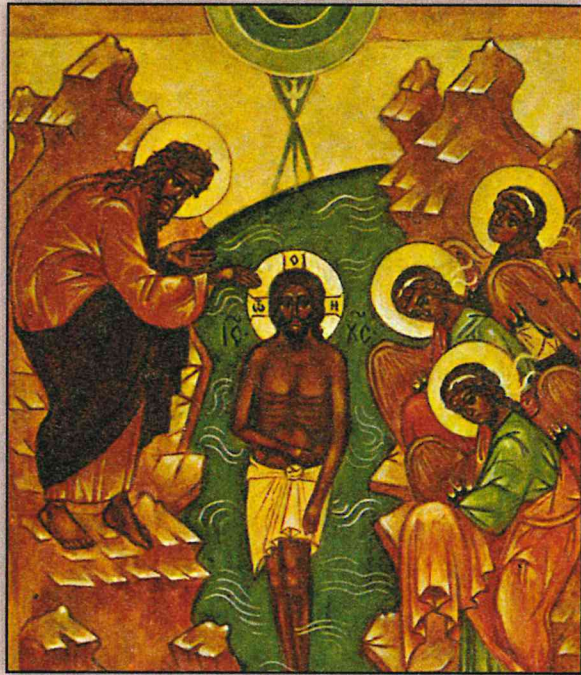
18:18-23 Jesus Responds to the Question

Flattery Mixed With Fraud and Deceit: Cyril of Alexandria: The Jewish crowds ... with their princes and teachers ... looked at Christ as being a mere man like one of us, and not as God who had become man. They approached him to test him and lay the nets of their cleverness for him.... He is called here a ruler. He fancied himself to have learned the law and supposed that he had been accurately taught it. He imagined that he could convict Christ of introducing laws of his own and of dishonoring the commandment spoken by most wise Moses. It was the Jews' goal to prove that Christ opposed and resisted the former commandments and established new laws by his own authority, in opposition to those previously existing. Their wicked conduct toward him had a false pretext. He comes near and makes a pretense of speaking kindly. He calls him "Teacher," designates him "good," and professes himself desirous of being a disciple. He says, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Observe how he mixes flattery with fraud and deceit, like one who mingles vinegar with honey. He supposed that he could deceive him in this way. *Commentary on Luke, Homily 122.*

The Joy of Charity. Augustine: The young man asked the Lord how to attain to eternal life and heard that he must sell all his goods and distribute them to the poor and have his treasure in heaven. Why else did he go away sad, except that he had, as the Gospel says, great riches? It is one thing not to wish to hoard up what one does not have. It is another thing to scatter what has been accumulated. The former is like refusing food; the latter, like cutting off a limb. letter 31.

Theophany of Our Lord in the Jordan
January 6th

O our Savior, the armies of angels trembled when they saw You baptized by your servant, and the Holy Spirit bearing witness and descending, and when they heard the voice of the Father speaking from heaven: This One upon whom the Forerunner lays his hands is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. O Christ our God, glory to You! O God and Lord, when you resolved to save those who had strayed from You, You condescended to take the form of a servant, for it was fitting that You assumed our human nature for us. And when You were baptized in the flesh, O our Redeemer, it made us worthy of your forgiveness. Therefore, we cry out to You: O Christ our God, our Benefactor, glory to You!

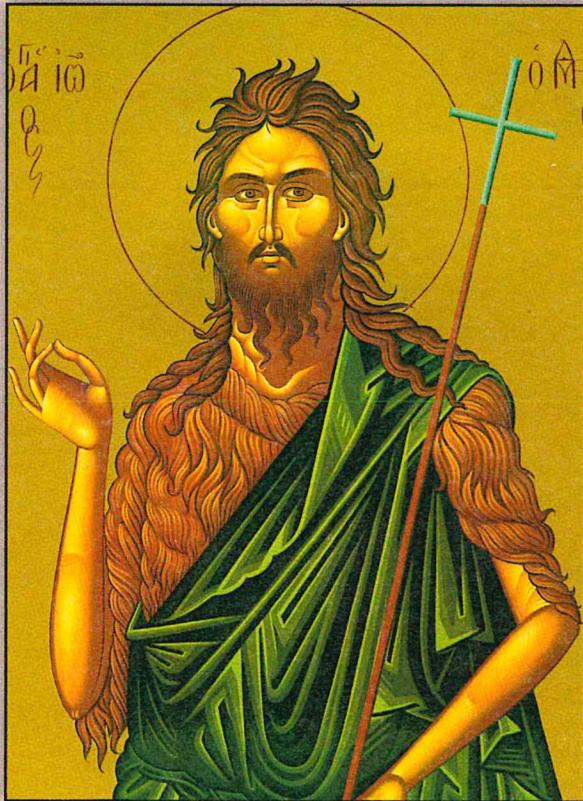


Synaxis of John the Baptist
January 7th

When the Jordan River received You, O Fountainhead, the Comforter descended in the form of a dove. Now behold the marvel: the One who bowed the heavens bows his head to the Forerunner, and the one made of clay cries out to his Maker: Why do You command me to perform what is beyond my power? It is I who need to be baptized by You. O Christ our God, O Sinless One, glory to You!

I manifest myself as completely human. I who am rich have willingly become poor, so that I may enrich with incorruption and deliverance all the poor. Come! Baptize the One who is not subject to corruption and who frees the world from decay.

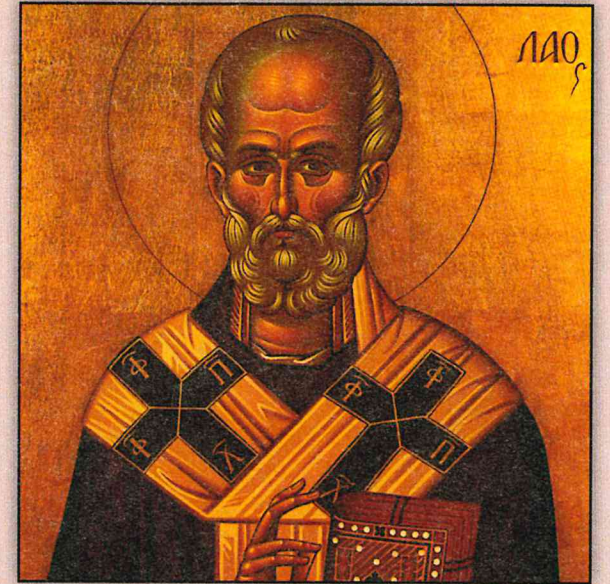
All text from Vesper Stichera, The Festal Menaion, Sisters of Saint Basil, Uniontown, PA



CHRISTMAS AND THEOPHANY
THE INCARNATION AND MANIFESTATION OF
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker
December 6th

We have gathered to celebrate and to praise with song the model of bishops and a glory to the fathers, a fountain of miracles and a great helper of believers. Let us sing to the saintly Nicholas: Rejoice, O Protector of Myra who was revered as its leader and strongest pillar. Rejoice, O Radiant Star whose light of miracles shines throughout the world. Rejoice, O Divine Joy to those in sorrow. Rejoice, O Defender of those who are oppressed; for even now, all-holy Nicholas, you still pray to God for us who celebrate your feast with faith and who honor you with zeal and joy.



Sunday of the Holy Forefathers, the Patriarchs

Today we commemorate the ancestors of Christ. Sing with fervor a hymn of praise to Christ the Savior who exalted them among all nations. He is the Lord who does wondrous deeds because He is powerful and mighty. From them He brought forth a royal scepter, the immaculate maiden of God and virgin Mary. From her, Christ our God came forth to give life and eternal salvation for all. O believers, let us give praise today to all the Fathers who lived before the Law: Abraham who was beloved by God, Isaac who was born according to the promise, Jacob and the twelve Patriarchs, the very meek David and the favored prophet Daniel. Let us also glorify with them the three youths who changed the fiery furnace into a place of refreshing dew. Let us beg forgiveness of our sins from Christ our God who is glorified in his saints.



Sunday of the Holy Fathers

He who is carried by the Cherubim has taken human nature in the abode of the immaculate womb. He has come to earth to be born of the tribe of Judah. The holy cave has been adorned like a splendid palace for the King of all; the manger, like a ruby throne. The Virgin will place the Child into it for the renewal of his boundless creation.

Having conceived in a manner beyond understanding, the Virgin places You into the manger of the dumb animals, O eternal Word of God, because You come to pardon the ignorance that I acquired through the envy of the serpent. You come to be wrapped in swaddling clothes in order to break the chains and fetters of my sins. O only-blessed One and Lover of Mankind, I most joyfully glorify, extol, and adore You and your coming in the flesh; for through You I have been freed.



*Nativity of Our Lord
December 25th*

Because the Lord Jesus was born of the holy Virgin, all creation is enlightened. Behold! The shepherds keep watch and the Magi are adoring; the angels are singing hymns of praise and Herod is trembling; for the Savior of our souls has revealed himself in the flesh.

O Christ, what shall we offer You for your coming on earth in our humanity for our sake? Every creature that has its being from You gives thanks to You: the angels offer hymns of praise, the heavens give a star; the Magi present their gifts and the shepherds, their wonder; the earth provides a cave and the desert, a manger. As for us, we offer a Virgin Mother. O God who are from all eternity, have mercy on us.

Synaxis of the Holy Mother of God December 26th

O Christ our God, your kingdom is eternal, and your reign is from generation to generation. You became incarnate of the Holy Spirit and became man from the ever-virgin Mary. Your coming, O Christ, has shed a great light upon us. You are the Light of Light and the radiance of the Father. You have illumined the whole creation. Therefore, everything that breathes sings a hymn of praise to You. You are the image of the Father's glory. You are the eternal God, existing before all ages, who shone forth from the Virgin. O Lord our God, have mercy on us.

Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth. Today Bethlehem receives the One who at all times sits with the Father. Today the angels sing the praises of the newborn infant. Glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace and good will to all.



*Saint Basil the Great
January 1st*

O venerable Father, you became a lover of wisdom, preferring life with God to all possessions of the world. Your contemplation of death made you forsake the wealth of the earth, and by your perseverance in fastings, you overcame the sting of passions. By study of the divine law you preserved the freedom within your soul.

By your generous practice of virtue you subjected the passions of the flesh to the spirit. You renounced the flesh, the world, and the princes of the earth; now you stand in the presence of Christ. Intercede with Him for great mercy upon our souls.

