

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
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Saint Clair, PA 17970

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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: SS. Peter & Paul: Sunday One half hour 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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The Twofold Coming of Christ

We do not preach only one coming of Christ, but a second as well, much more glorious than the first. The first coming was marked by patience; the second will bring the crown of a divine kingdom.

In general, whatever relates to our Lord Jesus Christ has two aspects. There is a birth from God before the ages, and a birth from a virgin at the fullness of time. There is a hidden coming, like that of rain on fleece, and a coming before all eyes, still in the future.

At the first coming He was wrapped in swaddling clothes in a manger. At His second coming He will be clothed in light as in a garment. In the first coming He endured

the cross, despising the shame; in the second coming He will be in glory, escorted by an army of angels.

We look then beyond the first coming and await the second. At the first coming we said: Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. At the second we shall say it again; we shall go out with the angels to meet the Lord and cry out in adoration: Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem

MEATFARE SUNDAY



Icon of the Last Judgment

Pastoral Note: The Annual Wedding Jubilarian Celebration has been scheduled for Sunday, October 26. This advanced notice is given for you to put on your calendar.

**Meatfare Sunday
Tone 7**

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.

MEATFARE:

From a catechetical instruction by Saint Cyril of Jerusalem

Acknowledge your sins at a time of God's favor

_ If there is any slave of sin here present, he should at once prepare himself through faith for the rebirth into freedom that makes us God's adopted children. He should lay aside the wretchedness of slavery to sin, and put on the joyful slavery of the Lord, so as to be counted worthy to inherit the kingdom of heaven. By acknowledging your sins strip away your former self, seduced as it is by destructive desires, and put on the new self, renewed in the likeness of its Creator. Through faith receive the pledge of the Holy Spirit, so that you may be welcomed into the everlasting dwelling places. Draw near, to be marked with the supernatural seal, so that you may be easily recognized by your master. Become a member of Christ's holy and spiritual flock, so that one day you may be set apart on his right hand, and so gain the life prepared as your inheritance. Those whose sins still cling to them like a goatskin will stand on his left hand because they did not approach Christ's fountain of rebirth to receive God's grace. By rebirth I mean, not rebirth of the body, but the spiritual rebirth of the soul. Our bodies are brought into being by parents who can be seen, but our souls are reborn through faith: the Spirit breathes where he wills. At the end, if you are made worthy, you may hear the words: Well done, good and faithful servant, when, that is, you are found with no stain of hypocrisy on your conscience. If anyone here present is thinking of putting God's grace to the test, he is deceiving himself, and he does not understand the nature of things. You are but a man; there is one who searches out men's thoughts and hearts. You must keep your soul innocent and free from deceit. The present is a time for the acknowledgment of sins. Acknowledge what you have done, in word or deed, by night or day. Acknowledge your sins at a time of God's favor, and on the day of salvation you will receive the treasures of heaven. Wash yourself clean, so that you may hold a richer store of grace. Sins are forgiven equally for all, but communion in the Holy Spirit is given in the measure of each one's faith. If you have done little work, you will receive little, if you have achieved a great deal, great will be your reward, The race you are running is for your own advantage; look after your own interests. If you have a grudge against anyone, forgive him. You are drawing near to receive forgiveness for your own sins; you must yourself forgive those who have sinned against you.

February 23 – March 1, AD2025

Vigil of Sunday

Saturday 4:00 p.m. + Catherine Bulino req. by Theresa Panchison *
Sunday 9:00 a.m. Health and Blessing of the Parishioners*
(Livestream)

Monday 9:00 a.m. No Divine Liturgy Today*
Tuesday 9:00 a.m. +Andrew & +Margaret Gerchak req. by Estate *
Wednesday 9:00 a.m. No Divine Liturgy Today*
Thursday 9:00 a.m. Special Intention at Annunciation Monastery *
Friday 9:00 a.m. No Divine Liturgy Today*

Vigil Liturgy

Saturday 4:00 p.m. +Joseph E. Leshko req. by Mary Ann Lubinsky*

*St. Mary
*SS Peter & Paul

Epistle Readers: 2/2 - Paulette Murphy; 2/9 – Jennifer Keer; 2/16 – Ellen Sinkovich; 2/23 – Dolores Kramer; 3/2 – Laura Mitchell.

Breakfast with Father: Sunday, March 2, 2025.

He who conceals his sins will not prosper

believer, in this life, here and now, ought to be the inexorable judge of his own cause; he should sound the depths of his own soul, bring his own inequities to light, acknowledge them for what they are, lament over them as they deserve, stirring profound repentance, practice charity and repentance, accusing himself before the Judge's earthly judge, the confessor priest of Christ whose vocation is solely to forgive, so that on that dreadful day, the Eternal Judge may say: "Come, you have my Father's blessing! Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world" Matthew 25: 34!

WISDOM! BE ATTENTIVE

When You will come to earth in glory, O God, and all creatures will tremble before You, the river of fire will flow before Your judgement seat, and the books will be opened and all hidden things revealed; deliver me from the unquenchable fire and make me worthy to stand at Your right hand, O righteous Judge. Kontakion, Meatfare Sunday.

When You shall come to render just judgement, O righteous Judge, You shall sit upon Your throne of glory. A river of fire shall flow before Your judgement seat; the powers of heaven will be there with You. Filled with fear, all humanity will be judged according to their deeds. At this hour, O Christ, spare us, and because of Your great love, grant that the faithful who pray to You, may be given a place with Your chosen ones. Vesper Hymn, Meatfare Sunday.

The books will be opened and the secrets laid bare before Your awesome judgement seat; and the whole valley of tears shall resound with a dreadful sigh, when it sees sinners sent to eternal punishment by Your just judgement, and hears them weeping hopelessly. Therefore, O God of mercy, we pray to You: Spare us who sing to You, O only Good One. Vesper Hymn, Meatfare Sunday.

The trumpets shall sound and the tombs shall be opened; humanity shall come forth trembling. Those who have done good shall rejoice, as they await the reward they shall receive. Those who have done evil shall shriek in terror, as they are sent to punishment and separated from the elect. In Your goodness, spare us, O Lord of glory, and grant that we may enjoy a place with those who love You. Vesper Hymn, Meatfare Sunday.

I weep and lament when I think of the outer darkness and eternal fire, together with Hades, the worm that consumes, and the gnashing of teeth, the unceasing grief that falls upon those who have sinned without measure, and who have provoked You to anger, O God, most good. Alas, among these sinners, I am the first. But in Your great mercy, O Judge, save me. Vesper Hymn, Meatfare Sunday.

Meatfare Sunday

In the Creed we recite and profess each time the Divine Liturgy is celebrated, the Fathers of the Church give vivid expression to the inspired faith of the Body of Christ when they incorporated in its seventh article, "And He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom shall have no end." That is, both those still living on the last day, and those already dead. The second coming of Christ for the purpose of exercising his office as supreme Judge of mankind was announced by two angels who appeared at the Ascension and assured the witnessing disciples and the Blessed Mother that, "...this Jesus who has been taken up from you will return, just as you saw him go up into the heavens" Acts of the Apostles 1: 11.

In theological literature and language, this second coming of Christ is known as the *paraousia*, from the Greek word meaning advent or coming. Immediately after the Resurrection of all the dead, the Last Judgment will take place. Christ teaches us, "The Son of Man is come with all his angels in the glory of the Father, and then he will render to everyone according to his deeds" Matthew 16: 27. Before He was condemned to death our Lord foretold in the Sanhedrin that all would see his "...coming upon the clouds of heaven..." Matthew 26: 64. When the prophet says that God will gather all nations of the world into the valley of Josaphat and there judge them, "I will gather all nations and bring them down to the valley of Josaphat; and I will execute judgment upon them there..." our merciful and loving heavenly Father is continuing, in his office as Judge of man's behavior from the beginning of time.

At the very start of salvation history, He gives evidence of his attribute of genuine caring and solicitude when He told Adam, "You are free to eat from any of the trees of the garden except the tree of knowledge of good and evil. From that tree you shall not eat; the moment you eat from it you are surely doomed to die" Genesis 2; 16, 17. Because He was not taken seriously by our forefather and mother, Adam and Eve, our heavenly Father once again was compelled by created man to exercise assessment and corrective judgment.

"Because you have done this, you shall be banned...I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers...I will intensify the pangs of your child-bearing; in pain shall you bring forth children...Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree which I had forbidden you to eat, cursed be the ground because of you! In toil shall you eat its yield all the days of your life...By the sweat of your face shall you get bread to eat until you return to the ground from which you were taken; for you are dirt and to dirt shall you return" The Lord God therefore banished him from the garden of Eden...When he

expelled man, he settled him east of the garden of Eden and he stationed the cherubim with fiery revolving sword to guard the way to the tree of life” Genesis 3: 14 – 17, 19, 23, 24.

It becomes plain that our God will gather all the people of the earth into one place which in his divine decree He has appointed as the most fitting for the Last and Final Judgment in contradistinction to the particular judgment which takes place immediately following death because at the Last and final Judgment all men who have ever lived will be examined and judged. Even those baptized children who have died before attaining to the age of reason will be present at this monumental spectacle, not to be judged, but simply to witness to the judge’s magnanimous unparalleled glory. It will take place on the last day of the world and will be the final time Christ examines and judges the generality of mankind which is an awesome event.

The last Judgment will take place in order that God’s wisdom and judgment may be made manifest to all the world and its inhabitants. Everyone will be able to examine at first hand the deeds of all others who have ever existed from the beginning of time. This judgment will redound to the greater glory of God, for as it unrolls, each one will clearly understand how wisely and how lovingly the Creator has personally and individually guided the destinies of mankind and of each individual person. Christ will judge all men in order that the honor of which He was deprived during his earthly incarnate life and since the beginning of time to the present day may be rendered to him before all creatures. St. Paul says, “The lives of all of us are to be revealed before the tribunal of Christ so that each may receive his recompense, good or bad according to his life in the body” 2 Corinthians 5: 10.

On the last and final day, Christ will act as Judge because during his earthly life and since then He has been dishonored by his enemies and throughout the centuries He has been scorned by godless and irreligious men. By an unjust sentence He was condemned by Pilate to die as a common criminal and thief, but in the end His justice shall prevail. The honor and glory of which He was deprived and which is his due must in justice be restored to him; it will be restored at the time of the last and final Judgment. For this reason Christ declares, “The Father himself judges no one, but has assigned all judgment to the Son, so that all men may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father” John 5: 22, 23. During his earthly life, our Lord never exercised his judicial power. For this very reason He was able to say, “You pass judgment according to appearances, but I pass judgment on no man” John 8: 15. Another reason why Christ will come to judge the living and the dead may be found in the fact that He became man to save all men, to raise them to his own dignity. Mankind risen from the dead and again visible in the flesh would be judged by a risen, glorious visible, powerful and triumphant Judge. Christ asserted, “The Father has given over to him power to pass judgment because he is the Son of Man” John 5: 27.

At the last and final Judgment, the existence of God becomes strikingly clear and plain. The doubts of the fool vanish. The soul that questioned God’s existence, that wondered if it were actually true, now understands that God wielded effective dominion over his free-will creatures and that He could never consent to impunity without being an unjust ruler. So we must make no mistake about it. Christ will appear at the conclusion of the world in his office as Supreme Judge and his judgments will be supremely righteous.

As lightening sounds and thunder roars, the sinner will recall the idle foolishness he uttered when he transgressed the laws of the bountiful Father: “And they say, ‘How does God know?’ And, ‘Is there knowledge in the most high?’” Psalms 73: 11. Totally wrong was he who reasoned thus. Horror will trace its finger upon the furrows of his brow and shadow the countenance of him who has embodied as his philosophy of life: ‘The Lord sees not; the God of Jacob perceives not’ Psalms 94: 7.

In studying Scripture, it is significant to note that Christ abandons all his countless gentle attributes as if to emphasize the seriousness of the office of Judge which He will then exercise for the benefit of mankind. His voice will reverberate and redound in the universe louder than the thunder of an abysmal storm.

“I am Jesus Christ, no longer the pitiful Crucified Christ whom people, including my intimates were free to discuss, to insult, to bandy about my name or disdainfully ignore like a god of straw or mere marble; no more am I the Jesus of the tabernacle, silent, reserved, hidden beneath the humble and meager appearances of bread and wine. Year after year you bandied me about, treating me with such discourtesy and irreverence and thoughtlessness such as no equal of yours would ever tolerate and referred to me with profanation and sacrilege. I am Jesus Christ, Supreme Judge, come to judge the intimacy of your life in the world. No longer am I the merciful and kindly Galilean who healed your sick, who cured the blind, who raised the dead. No longer will I speak and the lame walk, the paralytics rise. I am Jesus Christ, Son of the Eternal God, final Judge. Through my bishops and priests I pleaded, I asked, I entreated. Never did I complain, not a sob except over Jerusalem. Know that such forbearance and patience belongs to the past, for I have rent my sacramental vesture, wrenched the nails from my hands and feet. Look upon me now! The unassuming one, the good one, the generous one is become the exacting one, the righteous one, the demanding one. What did you do with all the talents you were endowed with? No longer do I offer forgiveness because I come among you to judge your entire life in all its finest detail!

The time to soften the magnanimous heart of the Eternal Judge is here and now! Presently does man have abundant opportunity to dispose Christ to mercifully relate to his soul. The