

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

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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: 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)

Bulletins are sponsored by
Mahal-Ritzel Funeral Home
 Minersville, PA 544-5111
 Mark J. Mahal – Funeral Director

Many Calls for the Chosen

The first call that shaped St. Andrew's life was the very timing and place of his birth. The second call that shaped Andrew's life came through John the Baptist. Andrew must have been an alert young man longing for the coming of the Messiah when he first heard the preaching of John. Andrew's third call came from Jesus himself. The fourth call that shaped Andrew's life was to follow Jesus, to be his disciple, a student in daily contact with Jesus, walking and talking with him, listening and learning from the Master, as from a Rabbi. The fifth call that changed Andrew's life was his selection by Jesus as one of the twelve apostles, to give witness, to preach, to bring others to Christ. Andrew, the student, was chosen to become a teacher sent by Christ. His sixth call came through pious Greeks at the Passover in Jerusalem. They wanted to see Jesus, to be introduced to him. The boy from Bethsaida began using his language skills, his un-

derstanding of Greek and Roman culture, to bring Gentiles to Jesus. St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. Jerome, and St. Paulinus tell us that after Pentecost Andrew became an apostle to people in the land of Greece, the bordering lands, and as tradition tells us, ultimately to Byzantium. The final call in Andrew's life was to martyrdom by crucifixion on an X shaped cross at Patras in Achaia.

Saint Andrew's vocation, and ours as well, wasn't given all at once, but gradually. Seven calls from the Lord built one upon the other throughout the course of his life. Andrew's response to each call gave new shape to his life and prepared him for the next gift of God. This courageous young man, by purity of heart and docile obedience to God's will became in St. Bede's words, "The Introducer to Christ." He introduced his brother to Jesus, and the Greeks and Scythians.

TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Icon of Saint Andrew -- November 30th

26th Sunday after Pentecost
Tone 1

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.

November 26 – December 2, 2023

Vigil of Sunday (at St. Mary)

Saturday 4:00 p.m. + **Charles Kostura, Sr.** req. by Kathryn Mary Malusky

Sunday 9:00 a.m. **Health & Blessings of the Parishioners** (livestreamed)

Monday 9:00 a.m. +**Anna Rose Kostura** req. by +Pauline Kostura

Tuesday 9:00 a.m. +**Joseph Gretskey** req. by Morley Family

Wednesday 9:00 a.m. +**Michael Popovich** req. by MM William Conshue

Thursday 9:00 a.m. +**Agnes Valosin** req. by Glen & Janet Campbell

Friday 9:00 a.m. +**Michael Cherrybon** req. by MM Emil Rezzi

Vigil of Sunday (at St. Mary)

Saturday 4:00 p.m. +**Joseph & +Julia Gera** req. by Joseph & Cheryl Gera

Epistle Readers: 11/4 – Jennifer Keer; 11/12 – Beverly Kostishak; 11/19 – Ellen Sinkovich; 11/21 – Marie Wanchick; 11/26 – Anna Keer; 12/3 – Judy Kostura.

Candle Offering: The Candles in front of the Icon of the Mother of God; in front of the Icon of Christ; on the Sacramental Table are offered for God's Blessing for **Anna Lashko** req. by the Leshko Family

Breakfast with Father: The Annual St. Nicholas Breakfast

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

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Eastern Christian Formation Class: Following the Divine Liturgy.

27th Sunday After Pentecost

13:10-17 Healing a Woman

Notice that verse 12 tells us that she didn't ask, it was He who saw her. Oftentimes, the Lord will set you free from an affliction or situation when you didn't even think to ask Him for deliverance!

But the synagogue official was so hardened in his heart, that he tells the people, "You want to be healed, fine, but do it on some other day of the week!" Isn't that amazing? This wise man, so educated in the Jewish law, had forsaken all moral and common sense in regards to his fellow man. This is what happens when men reject and harden their hearts toward God - they become foolish in their wisdom. The psalmist wrote that...

Ps. 14:1 The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God."

And Paul, writing to the Corinthians, said,

1Cor. 1:18-20 For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the cleverness of the clever I will set aside." Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? Man has become so wise in his own eyes that he has been made a fool. This synagogue official had been made foolish by his great wisdom - "Come get healed some other day - but not on Saturday." Ridiculous!

Hypocrites of Today

The world has not lost those who live by the letter of the law without giving thought to the spirit. Those who preach devotion to duty to others but in their own regard give no thought to duty but only to the material gain involved with it; those who hold their head high for they have fulfilled the arbitrary law of attendance at Mass on Sunday, even though this attendance was fulfilled without attention, without devotion, without thought of Christ and the mystery of His altar, without spirit, and yet condemn those who keep the Sabbath by another law filled with the spirit of that law, filled with devotion and love God; those who preach charity to others and have none themselves; those who demand order in the lives of others and have none in their own lives; those who expect both the letter and the spirit from others and themselves possess neither, those are the hypocrites of today and are just as strongly condemned as were the hypocrites of today's Gospel.

Desperately Needed

We are in desperate need of souls who wish to be saved; who want to follow the Saviour in a deep and faithful commitment and who sincerely wish to do all the Saviour taught. In our parish and outside, there are people who need transformation and changing.

Those in our parish have numerous opportunities for this to transpire. How ardently we pray that the hard-hearted in our midst will be visited by God's grace and return to the Lord as befits their baptismal dignity. How we pray that our God will lead, literally by the hand everyone registered here to church each and every Sunday, that He will overcome their making excuses for not being among us each time the Divine Liturgy is celebrated. It is our earnest desire that God will touch souls and inspire them with the true meaning of holy days that once again they be celebrated in our parish, even during the week. Our most earnest prayer is that souls in our midst recognize their sinfulness and the need they have for regular forgiveness from our God, that they utilize the grace of the sacramental Mystery of Reconciliation, that they confess their sins, that they make apologies to God for their offenses on a regular basis. How we pray that God be glorified by the lives and behavior of our faithful, that their offerings truly symbolize their love of God in a sacrificial heart and soul. We pray that our parents provide a good example of obedience to God's will in their lives, that they not be hypocrites in their relationships with their children, that children be just as obedient to their parents as parents are to God.

There are so many opportunities in our parish for this to transpire and become reality. Those outside the parish simply need an invitation so they may become part of our parish family. But what inspiration do they have in the indifference they witness in some among us. If we are truly changed by the Saviour, we can offer our own witness and example to others. But if we are the same as we have always been, what can we offer to others? If we are not believers, how can we offer the gift of faith to others? The world desperately needs our devotion and our commitment to Christ. We must offer it freely and lovingly. But we must take care we have been made new ourselves. We have to be serious with ourselves and with Christ. We cannot expect to offer salvation to anyone else if we don't value it ourselves. We are not going to arrive at the destination which should be ours unless we exert a sincere effort.

We are ready and eager to serve those who seriously want a better life which Holy Mother Church offers us. We want to transform lives shattered and broken by sin. But we must have people who want to be changed and transformed. Our Lord stands at the door and knocks. Our parish priest stands at the door and knocks. Both wish to be allowed to enter the inner recesses of our souls. But only you can let them in!



The Gifts of the Spirit

Wisdom

Counsel

Fortitude

Piety

Holy Fear

Knowledge

Understanding

Our Worship

The Divine Liturgy, as a precious ritual of worship has a social dimension. As public service, it is normally an activity celebrated with others. God manifests His presence to us through others, through us to others, for we are His instruments of divine grace. Most of us can recall times when we have been strengthened by our participation in worship with fellow believers. The harmony of prayerful voices in song signifies the unity that we have with one another, bound by our common relationship with Christ in our midst.

Divine worship, therefore, is the common action of the Body of Christ, the Church, and arises out of the church community and reflects back to strengthen the faith community.

We join the entire Church all over the world and for all time in praising God. We join our departed relatives and friends, our ancestors and descendants in faith because the Body of Christ, the Church manifest at the Divine Liturgy, is never broken by space or time. Most importantly, we join the heavenly hosts when we worship, for in it we share in that heavenly eternal liturgy toward which we journey as pilgrims and which never ends. Indeed, when we gather in worship we "represent the Cherubim" and with these

blessed powers proclaim God to be "holy, holy, holy" Isaiah 6: 3.

Just as the Holy Spirit spoke to the prophets and teachers in the Church at Antioch when they were "engaged in the liturgy of the Lord and were fasting" Acts of the Apostles 13: 2, so God speaks to us as well in our liturgical celebrations, for the Holy Spirit prays in and with the people of the Church. The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, "but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with signs too deep for words. The Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God" Romans 8: 26, 27, making us the "authentic worshippers" John 4: 23, who our Lord tells the Samaritan woman "will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth" John 4: 23. Thus, we see, at the Divine Liturgy, our God, interacts with believers, our God interacts with us His people.

By our participation in the liturgical life of the Church, we immerse ourselves in the living water which is the Holy Spirit. We are like jars of water that must be filled with the presence of the Holy Spirit. Whenever a jar of water is left out in the sun 'a long time, the water eventually evaporates.

Likewise if we allow ourselves to be in the world without regular and continuing worship at the Divine Liturgy, then we dry up and become spiritually empty, worse than desiccated prunes. Then we come to

understand the wisdom of our God Who placed in the Decalogue the loving commandment we worship Him each Sabbath day. However, a jar of water that is within the sea will never be empty of water, that is, within the Kingdom of heaven, is filled continually with blessings and grace. In the same manner, we must continue to surround ourselves with the presence of God so that we may always be filled with the praise of God through the Divine Liturgy.

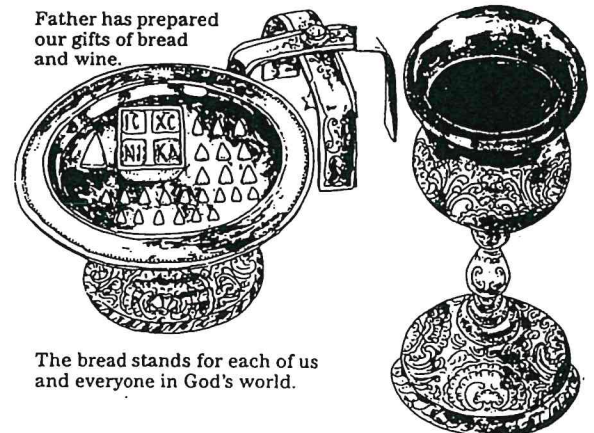
The Divine Liturgy is an expression of the faith community's awareness that God is working in us, leading us toward perfection. Those who absent themselves from its celebration are apparently not convinced it is God Who comes to us, creating a new world, called in the Gospels, the "kingdom of God" Matthew 6: 33. Apparently, they are satisfied remaining in this limited, physical sin-stained existence without God. Worship must be more than just a filler of time that we participate in, perhaps by rote, on Sunday mornings. Through the service of the Church we set aside time and space and our role within the created universe with new eyes.

As our understanding and perception changes, we are also transferred interiorly by the power of God. "If only you recognized God's gift, and who it is that is asking you...and he would have given you living water" John 4: 10, because "Whoever believes in the Son has life eternal. Whoever disobeys the Son will

not see life, but must endure the wrath of God" John 3: 36.

Again and again, we fall down before You, and beseech You, O gracious Lover of mankind, that You hear our prayer and cleanse our souls and bodies of every defilement of flesh and spirit. Grant that we may stand before Your holy altar without blame and condemnation. Bestow, O Lord our God, also upon those who pray with us, advancement in faith and life and spiritual understanding. Grant that they who serve you in fear and love, may partake of Your holy mysteries without blame and condemnation and be deemed worthy of Your heavenly kingdom. That, being ever protected by Your power, we may render glory to You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

Second Prayer of the faithful, Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.



Father has prepared our gifts of bread and wine.

The bread stands for each of us and everyone in God's world.