

PROTECTION OF THE THEOTOKOS AND EVER VIRGIN MARY
(Pokrov)

November 28th 2021

5 2nd Street
Herminie, PA 15637
<http://pokrov.iksnazul.com/>

Cantor
Joseph Luzanski

Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost
Tone 2

St. Stephen, "the Younger." Venerable Martyr suffered martyrdom with Three Hundred and Forty-Three other Christians, victims of the fury of the Iconoclast Emperor Constantine Copronymus A.D. 766.

St. Irenarchus, and Seven Women, Martyrs, who suffered

Liturgical Schedule
Divine Liturgy

Sunday: 9am
Holyday: 9am

Confessions

One half hour before
the divine liturgy or
by appointment

*As is our tradition, next Sunday we will
be decorating our church for the Christmas
holidays.*



Served By

We are waiting for a priest to be assigned to our parish.

December

Nativity Fast

6 St Nicholas the Wonderworker and
Archbishop of Myra in Lycia

9 (8) The Conception of the Most Holy Mother of
God by the Righteous Anna

12 Second Sunday Before Christmas (Holy
Forefathers)

19 Sunday Before Christmas (Holy Fathers)

24 *Christmas Eve*

25 *The Nativity of our Lord God and Savior, Jesus Christ*

26 Synaxis of the Most Holy Mother of God,
Sunday after Christmas: Commemoration of the
Holy Righteous David the King, Joseph the
Betrothed, and James the Brother of the Lord

27 First-Martyr and Archdeacon Stephen

Wisdom from the Church Fathers

"Prayer is the place of refuge for every worry, a
foundation for cheerfulness, a source of constant
happiness, a protection against sadness."

Saint John Chrysostom

Teachings of Christ

"If anyone would come after me, let him deny
himself and take up his cross and follow me.
For whoever would save his life will lose it, but
whoever loses his life for my sake and the
gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a
man to gain the whole world and forfeit his
soul? For what can a man give in return for his
soul?" (Mark 8:34-37 ESV)

Reminder:

There is a list for Divine Liturgy and Sanctuary
Lamp intentions in the vestibule of the church.

We are mindful of the issues caused by the
corona virus and we want to keep our
congregation and our visitors safe . The church is
wiped down after each service. There is also
plenty of space for social distancing.

The true story of Santa Claus begins with Nicholas, who was born during the third century in the village of Patara in Asia Minor. At the time the area was Greek and is now on the southern coast of Turkey. His wealthy parents, who raised him to be a devout Christian, died in an epidemic while Nicholas was still young. Obeying Jesus' words to "sell what you own and give the money to the poor," Nicholas used his whole inheritance to assist the needy, the sick, and the suffering. He dedicated his life to serving God and was made Bishop of Myra while still a young man. Bishop Nicholas became known throughout the land for his generosity to those in need, his love for children, and his concern for sailors and ships.

Under the Roman Emperor Diocletian, who ruthlessly persecuted Christians, Bishop Nicholas suffered for his faith, was exiled and imprisoned. The prisons were so full of bishops, priests, and deacons, there was no room for the real criminals—murderers, thieves and robbers. After his release, Nicholas attended the Council of Nicaea in AD 325. He died December 6, AD 343 in Myra and was buried in his cathedral church, where a unique relic, called manna, formed in his grave. This liquid substance, said to have healing powers, fostered the growth of devotion to Nicholas. The anniversary of his death became a day of celebration, St. Nicholas Day, December 6th (December 19 on the Julian Calendar).

Through the centuries many stories and legends have been told of St. Nicholas' life and deeds. These accounts help us understand his extraordinary character and why he is so beloved and revered as protector and helper of those in need.

To be continued...

The season of Christmas is heralded by forty days of prayer and fasting beginning the day after the feast of Saint Philip the Apostle, (November 14). This period is thus known as St. Philip's Fast (in Rusyn: Fylypovka) or the Nativity Fast.

THE MYSTERY OF GOD

God's inner life is unknowable, because it is beyond our capacity to understand. He is the Holy One: so unique and perfect that He cannot be compared with others. Using our own reasoning we can only assume that He is the most excellent perfection of everything we know to be holy, true, good and beautiful. But how he is we do not know, because He is beyond all our experience, even beyond existence as we know it. As the Divine Liturgy expresses it, He is "beyond our grasp or understanding, beyond sight or comprehension."

And so God the Unknowable has reached out to us in love, revealing Himself in the process as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Thus mankind's deepest experience God has shown us something of the Living Reality of God which we could never have discovered on our own. We see that God is One, and yet at the same time Three. He is one in essence and being, one in activity and power, but three in person. The Fathers of the Church described this mystery as the Holy Trinity, the sacred community calling us to share in the riches of God-life. They recognized that, by God revealing Himself in this way, we have been given a glance at the very nature of the Unknowable One, so that we might desire fellowship with Him.

No festivities are held during this time, which is reserved for spiritual preparation for the Birth of the Savior.

Rusyns reserve the day of Christmas Eve to prepare for the Holy Supper. The men of the house spend the day caring for the livestock; the women are busy baking, cooking and cleaning. Weeks before, the houses are whitewashed or painted inside and out; this day is to make sure everything - and everyone - is thoroughly cleansed inside and out.