

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

Cantor
Joseph Luzanski
E-mail: comments@pokrov.iksnazul.com

Liturgical Schedule

Divine Liturgy
Sunday: 8:30 am
Holyday: 9:00 am

Confessions

One half hour before
the divine liturgy or
by appointment

Served By

Father Vasyl Yakubych
Василь Якубич
Cell: 412-627-1678
E-mail: yakubichvasill2020@gmail.com

The Divine Liturgy intention is for the parish family

If you would like to schedule a Liturgy please talk to Father Vasyl or use the sign up sheet in the vestibule.

Reminder:

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

House Blessings will begin after Theophany (January 6th) It's not too soon to start thinking about what day would be best to invite Father Vasyl for this annual blessing.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Theophany isn't just a day for reflection; it's marked by a rich tapestry of sacred rituals that engage the faithful in a profound spiritual journey. Among these, the Great Blessing of the Waters stands out as a pivotal moment. This ceremony is performed twice: once on the eve and then on the day of Theophany itself. During this ritual, I watch as priests recite prayers and then proceed to sprinkle holy water, a sign of divine presence, on the congregation, symbolizing the washing away of sins.

In many Eastern Rite communities, there's a tradition of throwing a cross into a body of water. The bravest among the faithful dive in – regardless of the chilling temperatures – to retrieve it. This act of retrieving the cross signifies Christ's baptism and serves as a public declaration of faith.

I'm also intrigued by house blessings, a practice where the sanctified waters from Theophany are used to bless and protect the homes of parishioners. A priest typically visits homes with a container of Theophany water, sprinkling each room while reciting prayers. This custom underlines the belief that God's grace permeates every aspect of our lives.

Vigil of Theophany

Tone 8

Menologion

The Holy Martyrs Theopempt and Theona (c. 350).

Our Venerable Mother Syncletica (4th Century).
The Holy Prophet Micah.)

Propers

Pages 161, 309-312

Fasts & Feasts

JANUARY

- 6 Theophany of Our Lord, God, and Savior, Jesus Christ 9 am
- 30 The Three Holy Hierarchs: Basil The Great, Gregory The Theologian And John Chrysostom. 9 am

FEBRUARY

- 2 Encounter of Our Lord, God, and Savior, Jesus Christ with Simeon and Anna resentation of Our Lord Into the Temple)

Great Blessing of the Waters

Eve of Theophany and the day itself
Sprinkling of holy water on the congregation

Retrieval of the Cross

Symbolizes Christ's baptism
Acts as a declaration of faith

House Blessings

Theophany water blesses and protects homes
Priest sprinkles water and recites prayers

These rituals aren't simple ceremonies; they're acts that bind the community together. They root Eastern Rite Christians in their faith, allowing them to participate physically in the mysteries of Theophany. Each droplet of water becomes a symbol of the Holy Spirit's renewing power – connecting the earthly with the heavenly.

Clearly, Theophany's rich liturgy and communal practices go beyond mere remembrance. They're about engaging with faith at the deepest levels, where holy water isn't just a symbol – it's a living, breathing testament to belief, renewal, and the

enduring promise of sanctification.

The Feast of Theophany holds a profound place in Eastern Rite Christianity, not just as a historical commemoration but as a living, communal experience. Through the Great Blessing of the Waters and other cherished rituals, I'm reminded of the depth of our faith and the transformative power of God's presence. As the holy water touches our lives, we're renewed and united in the divine mystery. Theophany isn't simply an event to remember – it's an invitation to step into a renewed life, a moment where heaven touches earth and sanctifies our journey.

It always snows



for

Russian Christmas

On January 7th (the day of the big snow. It always snows for Russian Christmas). I will have a face-to-face visit with the surgeon who will operate on my spine and possibly my brain. This has been a particularly difficult journey, that began in August after I went into Forbes Hospital ER and then stayed a few days for tests.

The Surgeon has made this difficult in that appointments have been messed up and rescheduled. Unfortunately, I have some water on my brain and a spine that looks like the track after a train wreck. Walking has been difficult, and some cognitive failures have occurred, as you have probably noticed.

I am not sure when the surgery will be scheduled or how long I will be out of commission. To do this surgery, they go in from the front to get to the spine in the back. Sounds scary, doesn't it?

I have asked Zach if he would be interested in cantoring. He has told me he is willing to learn. Follow his lead. Give him some space and don't help him too much. I would hope that cantors from Saint Stephan's will be available.

At this time, we have a wonderful opportunity to do more good deeds for our neighbors, for people who now especially need our help. Last year our parish family and other caring people helped make Christmas joy for orphan children in Ukraine. The funds we collected were used to buy necessary things, such as clothes, shoes and food for the children who lost their parents due to the war. Thanks to our donations, we were able to make many orphans happy. I am very grateful for your generosity. But, unfortunately, the war in Ukraine continues. Every day war takes hundreds of human lives. Many children lost their parents. For us Christians, there should be no other people's grief, other people's suffering, and other people's trouble. Therefore, this year we want to help people suffering from war, especially children.

Donations to this cause would be greatly appreciated. It can be in cash or check. Checks can be written out to St. Mary's and in the memo: Ukraine orphans. We will send all collected funds to Ukraine for the needs of orphans. Our donation is not determined by the amount we donate, but by the desire of our heart.

May the joy of Christmas be felt by those who have lost their relatives and parents. God Bless you!

Keep Christmas joy alive in your home:

- a. Keep up the tree until the Feast of the Holy Encounter February 2nd if possible. For your family prayers, read part of the Christmas story from the Gospel from St. Matthew or St. Luke in front of your Christmas icon or Nativity set. Did you put up Christmas lights? Try to keep those up too.
- b. Everybody goes to see the infirm in nursing homes before Christmas, but after Christmas no one goes. Take children along – you'd be surprised what a difference it makes for the elderly infirm to have children around!
- c. Make phone calls or write notes to thank people who sent them presents for the holiday. Perhaps thank a special person in your life, just for being a gift of joy to them. Help them learn to appreciate others and what they do for them: teachers, neighbors, relatives, friends.
- d. Let us all make a point of thanking Jesus for coming into the world to save us from sin and death, and to open the gates of heaven to us once more.