

**Glory to Jesus Christ!**  
**Слава Иисусу Христу!**

**Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church**  
**4480 Route 981 Latrobe, PA 15650**

**Glory Forever!**  
**Слава на вики!**

**Pastor:** Father Paul-Alexander Shutt, O.S.B.  
**St. Mary's Email:** st.marytrauger@yahoo.com  
**Website:** www.stmarybyzantinecatholic.org

**Confessions:**  
**Saturday** 4 – 4:30 PM  
**Sunday** 9:30 – 10:00 AM  
or by appointment

**Tel: Rectory:** 724-423-3673  
**Fax:** 724-423-1808  
**Hall:** 724-423-8838

**23 December, 2012: Sunday before Christmas, of the Ancestors**  
*The Holy Ten Martyrs of Crete. Commemoration of the Dedication of the  
Great Church of Holy Wisdom in Constantinople.*

**LITURGICAL SCHEDULE**

Sat.	Dec.	22	<b>5:00 PM: Sunday Vigil:</b> <i>Health &amp; Well Being of Johnathan Osif requested by Martin, Dorothy, &amp; Tina</i>
Sun.	Dec.	23	<b>10:30 AM: Sunday before Christmas, of the Ancestors:</b> <i>pro populo</i>
Mon.	Dec.	24	<b>8:00 PM: Vigil Divine Liturgy of St. Basil:</b> w/ Mirovanije
Tues.	Dec.	25	<b>10:00 AM: Birth of Our Lord: Christmas:</b> w/ Mirovanije
Sat.	Dec.	29	<b>5:00 PM: Sunday Vigil:</b> <i>Health of Larry Pfrogner requested by Jim &amp; Mary Ann Kontir</i>
Sun.	Dec.	30	<b>10:30 AM: Sunday after Christmas:</b> <i>pro populo</i>

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**Acolytes**

**Readers**

**Ushers**

Sat.	Dec.	22	M. Mihalko	J. Kontir	J. Snitzer, D. Mihalko
Sun.	Dec.	23	D. Cianciotti	L. Cianciotti	B. & J. Knouse
Mon.	Dec.	24	All Present	Hess, Cianciotti, Chirdon, Hulyk	---Any 2 Present---
Tues.	Dec.	25	All Present	D. Cholock	---Any 2 Present---
Sat.	Dec.	29	M. Mihalko	D. Cholock	J. Kontir, R. Garber
Sun.	Dec.	30	R. & E. Hess	S. Vacha	D. Hess, C. Cianciotti

**Collection:** 12/16/12: Adult \$ 915; Candles \$ 55; Student \$ 6; Fuel \$ 40; Flowers \$ 30;  
Holy Day \$ 40; **Total: \$ 1086.00**



**The events in Newtown, Connecticut have horrified all of us.** As adults, the news is difficult to process, emotionally and intellectually. It's worse than the worst possible nightmare. How would we console one of those parents who has lost a child? What would we say? And if as adults we are having difficulties with finding the right words; imagine how difficult it is for our children to process these events. What's more, words at a time like this are most inadequate anyway. So we direct our words to Another.

Our Church has asked us to pray for the victims. Pray for them. Pray for those families who must somehow try to mend their lives after such an unthinkable day. All the age old questions come to

the fore: Why does God allow such things to happen? Where was God? There are no easy answers; philosophers have struggled with these questions for millennia. Where do we as Christians start to look for answers? We start with **“In the beginning, God created... and everything that He had made was good.”** The opening stories from Genesis help us to realize that the world’s current condition was not caused by God, but by humanity. God made a beautiful world. He asked us to be stewards of that beauty, but **we** messed it up and as a result the beauty of the world has been marred, defaced, disfigured; the world has become a place full of pain, violence, death. The real blame falls on **us**; we are not living as God wants us to live.

The question may not be why does God allow such horrific events to take place, but why do **we** allow them to occur? Why aren’t we more involved with the issues of our world, trying to restore it to a semblance of what God wanted from the beginning? Where was God at that 9:30 AM on 14 December? He was probably with the adults who put themselves in harm’s way and sacrificed themselves to protect the children in their care. He was with the teacher who, fearing they would soon die, tearfully told her students that she loved them so that those words would be the last thing that they would hear. He was in the policemen who could not fathom what they were dealing with and yet went about doing what they had been trained to do – their job. God was in all these moments and many more.

Many commentators these days have pointed to the prevalence of violence in our society, from “entertainment” to video games. Perhaps, this could result in you as a family and community making the following resolution between now and at least the Feast of Theophany January 6<sup>th</sup> or beyond. Turn off and put away the violent video games. If they are still wrapped in Christmas packages, return them and replace them with something else. Don’t watch television or movies with excessive, pointless, or gratuitous violence. Think of it as abstaining from certain forms of “entertainment,” just as we abstain from certain kinds of food for specified periods of time.



**Matthew 1:25**, the last verse of today’s gospel, has a couple of phrases that need some clarification. «...and [Joseph] did not know her **till** she had brought forth her **firstborn** Son...» **(1)** The use of “till” does not imply that Joseph had marital relations with Mary after the Savior’s birth. In the Bible, this word (sometimes translated ‘to’) is often used to express a situation that actually continues after the event mentioned [See Matt. 28:20; Gen. 8:7; Deut 34:6; 2Kg 6:23]. The witness of the entire Church throughout history is that Mary remained a virgin for life. **(2)** The term **firstborn** does not imply that Mary had additional children, but only that no child was born **BEFORE** Jesus. The firstborn son is traditionally the primary heir and recipient of blessings. Christ is the firstborn over all creation, and thus the firstborn of the dead.



*from the Orthodox Study Bible*

## ~ Announcements ~

- We will celebrate the Eve of the Nativity of Our Lord with the Vigil Divine Liturgy of St. Basil starting at 8:00 pm. Come at 7:45 to join in the singing of traditional Rusyn and English Christmas carols.
- **The list of Christmas Memory Poinsettias is on the table in the Narthex.** An entry that was unintentionally omitted: In memory of Elizabeth Shultz by Chuck & Lisa Cianciotti and Sons.
- **Eternal Memory!** Please remember in your prayers the soul of **Gabriel Simko, father of Daniel Simko**, who recently passed away. Eternal rest grant unto your servant Gabriel, O Lord, and remember him forever. Our prayers and condolences are extended to the entire Simko family. **Вичная память!**
- **PLEASE NOTE** that the south parish property line ends at the steps that lead down to Route 981. Anything beyond that is private property; it does not belong to the church. Our neighbors do not wish to be difficult but need that space open for them to be able to back out of their driveway.
- **Handicap Parking at St. Mary Parish:** Unfortunately the only solution to avoid steps at the present time is to park as close to the parish garage as possible, walk behind the rectory, cross the little “bridge”, and enter the church through the acolyte’s sacristy.

