



## SAINT STEPHEN BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

4141 Laurence Avenue, Allen Park, MI

November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020

313-382-5901

*website: saintstephenbyzantine.church*

Priest: Rev. John R.P. Russell, M.Div.  
cell phone: 412-378-0308  
email: frjrusell@parma.org

Deacon: Rev. Deacon Lawrence Hendricks

Cantor: Pani Mary Hendricks

Director of Evangelization: Carson Daniel Lauffer



### **Glory to Jesus Christ! Welcome to St. Stephen!**

You are welcome here. Join us in prayer and worship  
of almighty God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

#### **About the Parish**

St. Stephen Byzantine Catholic Church, led by the Holy Spirit, is called to evangelize – to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We commit ourselves to welcoming and caring for all of God's children.

We are a parish of the Byzantine Ruthenian Catholic Eparchy of Parma, Bishop Milan (Lach) of Parma is our bishop. Archbishop William (Skurla) of Pittsburgh is our Metropolitan. We are in communion with our holy father Francis, the Pope of Rome.

“We are Catholics with the common heritage of our Orthodox brothers but in unity with the Holy Father in Rome.” – Bishop Milan

# LITURGICAL SERVICE TIMES

Sunday & Saturday morning at 10:00am

Wednesday & Friday evening at 7:00pm

**Saturday, November 28, 2020**



⌘ Holy Venerable Martyr Stephen the Younger (767). Holy Martyr Irenarchus (4th C.).  
Galatians 3:8-12. Luke 10:19-21.

*9:45am Third Hour – Reader Service*

**10:00am Divine Liturgy**

*+Angela Ng, from Judith Ng*

**4:00pm Great Vespers** *for Sunday – followed by Confessions*

**Sunday, November 29, 2020**



TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST. Tone 1

The Holy Martyr Paramon (250). The Holy Martyr Philemon.

Our Venerable Father Acacius, mentioned in “The Ladder.”

*4th Resurrectional Matins Gospel: Luke 24:1-12.*

Ephesians 5:8b-19. Luke 13:10-17.

**8:00am Sunday Matins**

*9:45am Third Hour – Reader Service*

**10:00am Divine Liturgy** - *for the people of the parish*      Reader: Cecilia Hendricks  
*+Sidney, +Bennie, +Mary, & +John Thomas, from Mary Ann Osmond (11-25)*  
*+Lena Morandini, from the Dalbo Family (11-26)*  
*+Angela Ng, from Judith Ng (11-28)*  
*+Bernard Gutkowski, from Theresa Butella (12-9)*

**12:30pm Great Vespers** *for +Andrew*

**Monday, November 30, 2020**



✙ The Holy and Glorious Apostle Andrew the First-called.

*Vespers: 1 Peter 1:1-6 • 1 Peter 2:21-3:9 • 1 Peter 4:1-11.*

*Matins Gospel: Matthew 4:18-23.*


*for Andrew: 1 Corinthians 4:9-16. John 1:35-51.*

*(for the day: 1 Timothy 5:1-10. Luke 19:37-44).*

**8:00pm Seven Ages of the Kingdom: A Study of Salvation History**

<https://godwithusonline.org/events/seven-ages-of-the-kingdom/>

Tuesday, December 1, 2020

 *Day of Alleluia*


The Holy Prophet Nahum. Our Holy Father Philaret the Merciful.

1 Timothy 5:11-21. Luke 19:45-48.

**9:30am First & Third Hour** (*with prostrations*)

**7:00pm Vespers** (*with prostrations*)

Wednesday, December 2, 2020

 *Day of Alleluia*

The Holy Prophet Habakkuk.

1 Timothy 5:22-6:11a. Luke 20:1-8.


*6:00pm Confessions*

**6:40pm Ninth Hour** (*with prostrations*)

**7:00pm Vespers** (*with prostrations*) &

**Small Compline**

Thursday, December 3, 2020

 *Day of Alleluia*

The Holy Prophet Zephaniah.

1 Timothy 6:17-21. Luke 20:9-18.

Friday, December 4, 2020



⌄ The Holy Great Martyr Barbara (306). Our Venerable Father John of Damascus (749)

2 Timothy 1:1-2, 8-18. Luke 20:19-26.

**9:30 First & Third Hour**

**10:00am Divine Liturgy**

*intention of Br. Philip Blazkevych, from Melinda Dewitt*

*6:00pm Confessions*

**7:00pm Great Vespers** for ⌄ Sabbas

Saturday, December 5, 2020



✙ Our Venerable and God-bearing Father Sabbas the Sanctified (532).

*Vespers Paramia:* Wisdom 3:1-9 • Wisdom 5:15-6:3 • Wisdom 4:7-15.

*Matins Gospel:* Luke 6:17-23.

*for Sabbas:* Galatians 5:22-6:2. Matthew 11:27-30.

*(for the day: Galatians 5:22-6:2. Luke 12:32-40).*

9:45am Third Hour – Reader Service

**10:00am Divine Liturgy**

+Mary Strach, from Mike & Mary Camilleri

**4:00pm Great Vespers** for Sunday & St. Nicholas – followed by Confessions

Sunday, December 6, 2020



TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST. Tone 2

✙ HOLY FR. NICHOLAS THE WONDER-WORKER, ARCHBISHOP OF MYRA IN LYCIA (343).

*Vespers Paramia:* Proverbs 10:7, 6; 3:13-16; 8:6, 34-35, 4, 12, 14, 17, 5-9; 1:23

• Proverbs 10:31-11:12 • Wisdom 4: 7-15.

*5th Resurrectional Matins Gospel:* Luke 24:12-35.

Ephesians 6:10-17 & for Nicholas: Hebrews 13:17-21.

Luke 17:12-19 & for Nicholas: Luke 6:17-23a.

**8:00am Sunday Matins**

9:45am Third Hour – Reader Service

**10:00am Divine Liturgy** - for the people of the parish      Reader:

intention of Br. Philip Blazkevych, from Melinda Dewitt (12-4)

+Mary Strach, from Mike & Mary Camilleri (12-5)

**12:30pm Akathist**

Monday, December 7, 2020



*Day of Alleluia*


Our Holy Father Ambrose, Bishop of Milan (397).

2 Timothy 2:20-26. Luke 20:27-44.

**8:00pm Seven Ages of the Kingdom: A Study of Salvation History**

<https://godwithusonline.org/events/seven-ages-of-the-kingdom/>

Tuesday, December 8, 2020

 *Day of Alleluia*

Pre-festive Day of the Maternity of the Holy Anna. Our Venerable Father Patapius.

2 Timothy 3:16-4:4. Luke 21:12-19.

**9:30am First & Third Hour** *with prostrations*

**6:00pm Great Vespers &**

**7:00pm Divine Liturgy** *for the Maternity of the Holy Anna*

*+Irene Hendricks, from Rev. Dcn. Lawrence Hendricks*

Wednesday, December 9, 2020

⊕ THE MATERNITY OF THE HOLY ANNA. Holy Hannah, Mother of Prophet Samuel.

*Vespers Paramia:* Genesis 28: 10-17 • Ezekiel 43:27 - 44:4 • Proverbs 9: 1-11.

*Matins Gospel:* Luke 1:39-49, 56.

*for the Maternity:* Galatians 4:22-31. Luke 8:16-21.

*(for the day: 2 Timothy 4:9-22. Luke 21:5-7, 10-11, 20-24).*

*6:00pm Confessions*

**6:30pm Vespers**

**7:00pm Divine Liturgy**

*+Bernard Gutkowski, from Theresa Butella*

Thursday, December 10, 2020



The Holy Martyrs Menas, Hermogenes, and Eugegraphus (4th Century).

Titus 1:5-2:1. Luke 21:28-33.

#### LEGEND

- ⊕ Great Feast
- ⊕ Feast with an All-night Vigil
- ⊕ Feast with the Polyeleos at Matins
- ⊕ Feast with the Great Doxology at Matins
- ⊕ Feast with Six Stichera at Vespers



by tradition, a strict fast day (no meat, dairy, eggs, fish, wine, or oil)



by tradition, wine and oil are permitted (no meat, dairy, eggs, or fish)



by tradition, fish, wine, and oil are permitted (no meat, dairy, or eggs)



by tradition, dairy, eggs, fish, wine, and oil are permitted (no meat)

# Philip's Fast (*Filipovka*)

Nov. 15th – Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>

*from the website of the Metropolitan Cantor Institute\*:*

The Nativity Fast, in preparation for the feast of the Nativity on December 25, is one of the minor fasts of the Church. This fast of forty days was introduced in the 12th century. Counting back 40 days from the feast of the Nativity, the fast begins on the evening of November 14 - the feast of the holy apostle Phillip. As a result, it is traditionally called **Philip's Fast** or the **Philippian Fast** (in Slavonic, *Filipovka*)....

By abstaining from certain foods, we are opening up a "space" in our lives through asceticism and obedience, into which God may enter.

## Traditional rules of fasting

Customs vary, but in general the traditional Christmas fast calls for the faithful to observe strict abstinence (no meat, fish, dairy or other animal product, wine or oil) on Mon., Wed. and Fri., and a lesser abstinence (no meat, fish, dairy or animal products) on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Fish is allowed on Saturdays and Sundays, but no other animal products.

Several popular feasts fall during the first three weeks of the Christmas Fast: the Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple on November 21, the feast of Saint Nicholas on December 6, and the Maternity of Holy Anna (Conception of the Theotokos) on December 8 or 9. As a result, in many places the Christmas Fast either does not begin until December 10, or becomes stricter at that point.

In the Byzantine Catholic Church, this fast may be observed voluntarily, partially or in its entirety.

The final day of fasting before the feast of the Nativity is particularly strict. On this day - either December 24, or the preceding Friday if December 24 falls on a Saturday or Sunday - the Royal Hours are celebrated, and the faithful are encouraged to fast if possible until after Vespers, which may be combined with the Divine Liturgy. After this service, it is traditional in many places to hold a meal called the Holy Supper, which is meatless but festive.

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\* [https://mci.archpitt.org/liturgy/Christmas\\_Fast.html](https://mci.archpitt.org/liturgy/Christmas_Fast.html)

## Liturgical preparation for the Nativity

As the fast begins, there is no daily liturgical preparation for the feast of the Nativity. Instead, pre-festive prayers and hymns are added during the course of the fast.

### **The first announcement of the Nativity:**

Beginning on November 21 (the feast of the Entry of the Mother of God into the Temple), the Canon of the Nativity is sung at Matins as katavasia (that is, the irmosy or theme song of the Nativity is sung at the end of each ode of the canon). This is the first liturgical announcement of the Nativity: "Christ is born! Glorify Him!"

On the feast of the holy apostle Andrew (November 30), at Vespers, we hear the first pre-festive hymns:

Isaiah, dance for joy: receive the word of God! Prophecy to the Virgin Mary that the bush burning with fire shall not be consumed by the radiance of our God. Let Bethlehem be prepared! Let the gates of Eden be opened! Let the Magi come forth to see, wrapped in swaddling clothes, in a manger of beasts, the salvation which the star has pointed out from above the cave: the life-giving Lord, who saves us all!

These hymns become more urgent when we come to the feast of the holy archbishop Nicholas the Wonder-worker (December 6):

O cave, prepare yourself to receive the Mother who bears Christ within her womb. O manger, receive the Word who destroyed the sins of all. O shepherds, keep watch and then bear witness to the awesome wonder. O magi, from Persia now come, and bring your gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to the King. For the Lord has appeared from a Virgin Mother; yet she bowed to him as a servant and spoke to him in her bosom, saying: "How were you conceived in me? How did you grow in me, my God and Savior?"

## **The Prophets of the Old Testament**

During the month of December, we commemorate several of the Old Testament prophets: Nahum (December 1), Habbakuk (December 2), Zephaniah (December 3), and Haggai (December 16). All of these prophets preached repentance, and the coming of the Messiah in great glory.

Daniel, whom we remember on December 17, was also a prophet: an apocalyptic seer who foretold an everlasting Kingdom of God. With him, we commemorate the three young men, Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael, who were thrown into a fiery furnace on account of their faith in the one God of Israel, and were seen there walking about with a fourth man, "one like a son of God" (Daniel 3:92). The Fathers of the Church saw this fourth man as a prefigurement of Jesus himself, and the faith of Daniel and the three young men as a summation of the best of the saints of the Old Covenant. That is why hymns in honor of Daniel and the three youths are sung not only on their feast day (December 17), but on the two Sundays before Christmas as well.

## **The Sundays before Christmas**

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sun. before the Nativity (Dec. 11-17), the Sun. of the Forefathers, we recall the holy men & women who lived under the Old Covenant, & looked forward to the coming of the Messiah. At the same time, in the Gospel at the Divine Liturgy (Luke 14:16-24), we hear our Lord tell the parable of a feast to which those who were first invited, did not come - & how the master ordered the house to be filled with those who were not at first invited. Thus in the troparion we sing:

By faith, O Christ, you justified the forefathers. Through them, you betrothed yourself to a Church from all nations.

On the Sunday before the Nativity (December 18-24), the Sunday of the Ancestors, the genealogy of Jesus is read at the Divine Liturgy (Matthew 1:1-25); the Epistle, from the Letter to the Hebrews, praises the saints of the Old Testament for their faith, but says that in spite of that faith, they did not receive the promised Messiah. Instead, "God had made a better plan - a plan which included us" (Hebrews 11-40).

## **The Pre-festive Days of the Nativity**

Finally, on December 20, we begin the actual pre-festive days of Christmas:

Bethlehem, make ready, Eden has been opened for all. Ephrathah, prepare yourself, for the Tree of Life has blossomed from the Virgin in the cave. Her womb has become a spiritual paradise in which divinity was planted. If we partake of it, we shall live and not die like Adam. Christ is born to raise up the likeness that had fallen. (December 20)

On each day, we sing hymns of the journey of Mary and Joseph to the cave, as we await the celebration of the birth of the Son of God.



## The Royal Hours of Christmas

One final day of strict fasting awaits us. Normally, this is the Vigil (in Greek, *Paramony*) of the Nativity, December 24. But Saturday and Sunday are never days of strict fasting in the Byzantine Rite (with the single exception of Great and Holy Saturday). So when December 24 falls on Saturday or Sunday, the day of strict fast is anticipated on Friday.

On this day, a special service called the **Royal Hours** is celebrated. This service consists of the daytime services of the First Hour, Third Hour, Sixth Hour, Ninth Hour, and Typika, celebrated with special psalms and readings for the Nativity. (This service is called royal because, at one time, the Emperor himself always attended the service.) Each part of the service has an Old Testament prophecy, an Epistle reading, and a reading from the Holy Gospel.

## The Vigil of the Nativity

Finally, we have come to the very eve of the Nativity - the Paramony or Vigil of Christmas (December 24). If it is a weekday, it is a day of strict fasting, with the Royal Hours celebrated during the day, and Vespers and the Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil in the evening.

If December 24 is a Saturday or Sunday, the Divine Liturgy may be celebrated in the morning, and we sing the troparion of the Vigil:

At that time, Mary registered in Bethlehem with the elder Joseph, who was of the house of David. She had conceived without seed and was with child; and her time to give birth had come. They found no room in the inn, but the cave became a pleasant palace for the Queen. Christ is born to raise up the likeness that had fallen.

The fast is not *quite* over; if there is a meal or Holy Supper in the evening of December 24, after Vespers, it is a meatless one. But we have arrived at the feast of the Nativity of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ.

## Recommended Reading

- *The Traditional Byzantine Celebration of the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord*. Byzantine Leaflet Series, No. 5. (Pittsburgh: Byzantine Seminary Press, 1976).
- Father Thomas Hopko. *The Winter Pascha*. (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1984). An excellent account of the Christmas Fast, and the feasts of the Nativity and Theophany.



## Byzantine Book Club

The Byzantine Book Club will not be meeting until January, so as to allow people to participate in the Seven Ages of the Kingdom Study (*information below*).

The Book Club will next meet on **January 4<sup>th</sup> at 7pm** and continue discussing *The Holy Gospel: A Byzantine Perspective*, which looks at the Gospels from the perspective of the Greek Fathers and the liturgical usage of the Byzantine Churches with reference to contemporary scholarship. We

have books available for any who would like to participate.

Fr. Deacon Lawrence & Pani Mary host the Byzantine Book Club from their home. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, they have been hosting the meeting through Google Hangouts through the following link: <https://meet.google.com/eyn-qwkv-vrh?authuser=0>

## God With Us

✠ ONLINE ✠

FALL / WINTER EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS

EASTERN CATHOLIC.ORG



### SEVEN AGES OF THE KINGDOM

A Study of Salvation History

Rev. Daniel Dozier

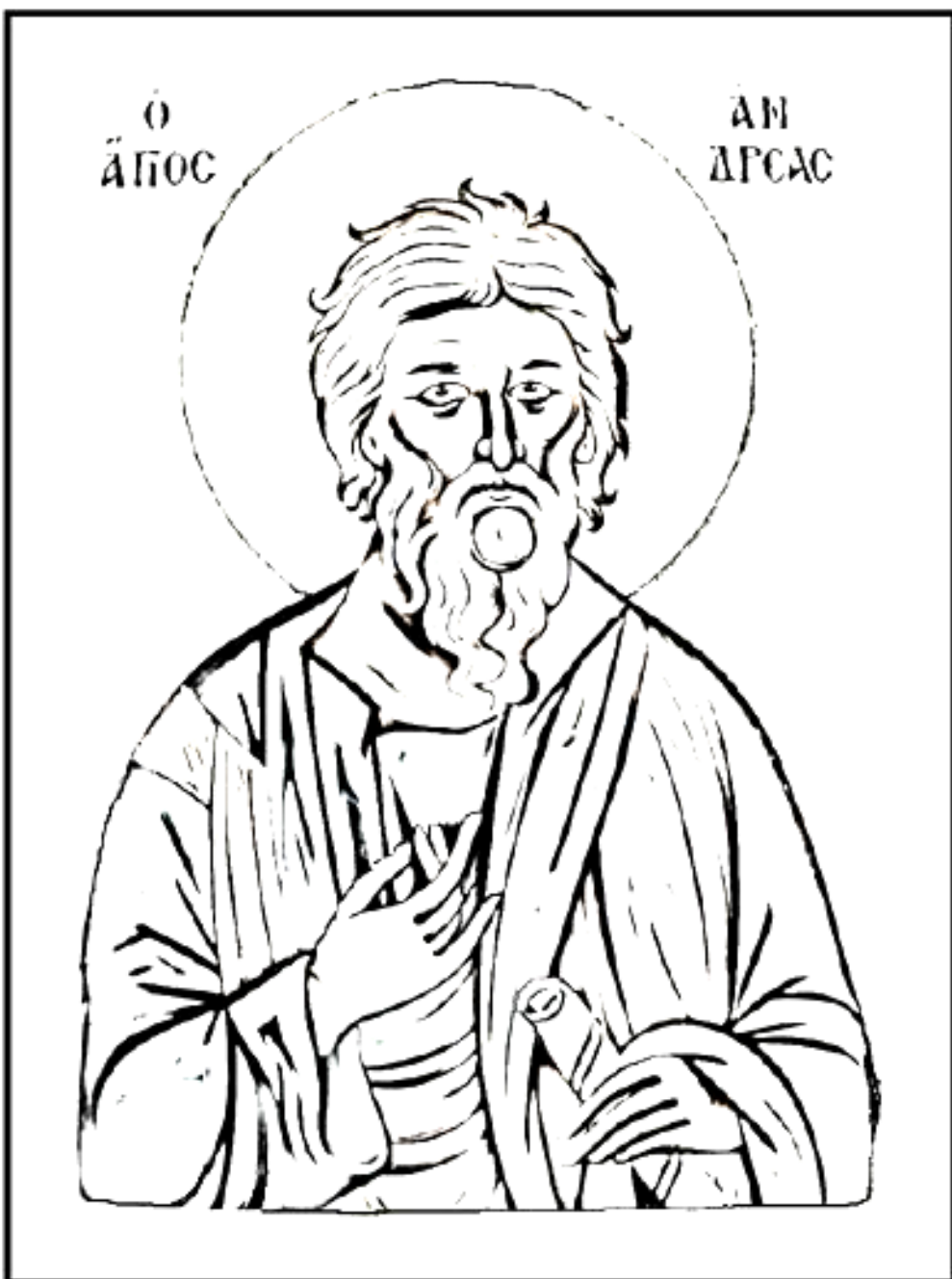
**Mondays, November 30, December 7 & 14 @ 8:00 - 9:00 p.m. ET**

The Church as God's Holy People is at the heart of His unfolding plan of salvation that is ultimately fulfilled in Christ. Join us as we explore how this plan for a universal covenant kingdom unfolds in Scripture through particular stages in the history of God's People.

All courses are offered as live webinars, free of charge. Live participation is highly encouraged for a full experience, including opportunities for discussion with fellow students and instructors.

For those unable to participate live, lectures are recorded and available on-demand, free of charge, in our event library, currently offering many hours of adult faith formation in the Eastern Christian tradition.

**Register at [EasternCatholic.org/Events](https://EasternCatholic.org/Events)**



November 30

Holy, Glorious and Illustrious Apostle Andrew the First-Called

## Church Cleaning

Please sign up to clean our church. Sign up for any week you're available to clean and clean the church on any day of that week. There is a sign up sheet in the back of the church. Thank you to Phyllis, Ceil & Char for cleaning this week. Fr. Dcn. Lawrence, Veronica, & Joseph have signed up to clean this week.



**The 2020/21 Annual Stewardship Appeal** continues. Visit [parma.org/2021appeal](https://parma.org/2021appeal) to make a one-time or monthly donation using our secure website.

In response to the faith we profess in the Nicene Creed, consider the ways that you can be more fully involved in the life of your parish and the Eparchy:

- Spend more time in prayer asking the Holy Spirit for guidance.
- Consider the gifts God has given to you and share those talents, skills, or knowledge with the parish.
- Contribute financially to the workings of the Eparchy and to our parish through the financial appeal.

St. Stephen's goal this year is \$7,000. As of , 13 contributors had donated \$1,320.50. We're almost 19% toward our goal.

## CHARITABLE GIVING

*from St. Stephen Parish*

*Since our last contributions,*

for the Church in Central & Eastern Europe, we have collected \$119

for the retirement of our religious sisters, we have collected \$322

for Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan, we have collected \$138

**ATTENDANCE** – *Thank you for praying with us.*

Attendance on November 22<sup>nd</sup> was **30**. Average Sunday attendance ≈ **39**

Devote yourselves “to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship,  
to the breaking of bread and the prayers” (Acts 2:42).

**COLLECTION** – *Thank you for supporting your parish.*

The collection for November 22<sup>nd</sup> was **\$1043.50**. Average Weekly Collection: **\$1379.46**

Sun.: \$631; Holy Day: \$115; Candles: \$16.50; Children: \$1; Online: \$280

“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion,  
for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Cor 9:7).



**Saint Stephen**

BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH