

SAINT STEPHEN BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

4141 Laurence Avenue, Allen Park, MI December 22nd, 2024

ststephen@parma.org 313-382-5901

website: <https://saintstephenbyzantine.church/>

- Priest: Rev. John R.P. Russell, M.Div.
412-378-0308
jrprussell@gmail.com
- Deacon: Rev. Deacon Lawrence Hendricks
- Cantors: Daniel Barillas, Guillermo Barillas, Cecilia
Hendricks, Pani Mary Hendricks, Lance Remisoski,
Pani Katie Russell, Mary Russell, David Woods,
Mary Woods
- Hall Manager: Blaise Northop
(313-637-4555 or 24crystalballroom@gmail.com)
- Hall Website: <https://www.thecrystalballroom.net/>

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 Robert (Pipta) is our Bishop. Archbishop William (Skurla) of Pittsburgh is our Metropolitan. We are in communion with our holy father Francis, the Pope of Rome.

“Eastern Catholics are in [comm]union with Rome. We share the same faith and the same mysteries, however, our way of expressing them follows the same tradition as the Orthodox Churches.”
– our former pastor Fr. Joseph Radvansky in *A Brief Explanation of the Eastern Catholic Churches*.



LITURGICAL SERVICE TIMES

Sunday & Saturday morning at 10:00am
Wednesday & Friday evening at 7:00pm

7:00pm Great Vespers for Sunday – followed by Confessions

Sunday, December 22, 2024



SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY. SUNDAY OF THE ANCESTORS. Tone 6
Pre-festive Day of the Nativity. The Holy Great Martyr Anastasia (304).

Vespers Paramia: Genesis 14:14-20 • Deuteronomy 1:8-11, 15-17 • Deut. 10:14-21.

9th Resurrectional Matins Gospel: John 20:19-31.

Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40. Matthew 1:1-25.

8:15am Matins for Sunday

9:30am First & Third Hour – Reader Service

Cantor: Mary H

Confessions – in the Sacristy

10:00am Divine Liturgy – for the people of the parish

Cantors: Mary H, Cecilia, Mary W
Reader: Rinju

for Malina & John Michael Patrick, from Sarah Marron (12-21)

+John & +Maria and +John & +Mary, from Maryalice Lukas (12-20)

After Liturgy: Fellowship & Potluck in the hall, No Classes – Christmas Break

5:00pm Bible Discussion – Galatians – via Zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84569257502?pwd=UVeGgiYPLjE5FsqNitcgE72LHB4bxP.1>

Meeting ID: 845 6925 7502 Passcode: 025083

7:00pm Vespers for Monday

Monday, December 23, 2024



Pre-festive Day of the Nativity. The Holy Ten Martyrs of Crete (250).

Commemoration of the Dedication of the Great Church of Holy Wisdom in Constantinople.

James 2:14-26. Mark 10:46-52.

7:00pm Byzantine Book Club - online: meet.google.com/xuc-eiuo-sia

or in person: 8461 Barrington Drive, Ypsilanti, MI 48198

Tuesday, December 24, 2024



Vigil of the Nativity. The Holy Great Martyr Eugenia (262).

First Hour: Micah 5:2-4a; Hebrews 1:1-12; Matthew 1:18-25.

Third Hour: Baruch 3:36-4:4; Galatians 3:23-4:5; Luke 2:1-20.

Sixth Hour: Isaiah 7:10-16; 8:1-4, 8-10; Hebrews 1:10-2:3; Matthew 2:1-12.

Ninth Hour: Isaiah 9:6-7; Hebrews 2:11-18; Matthew 2:13-23.

James 3:1-10. Mark 11:11-23.

10:00am Royal Hours for Christmas Eve

Cantor: Mary W

12:00 noon Decorate the Church for Christmas

4:00pm Vesperal Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great for Christmas

Cantors: Mary H, Cecilia

6:00pm Holy Supper with Koljady

9:00pm All-Night Vigil for Christmas (Great Compline & Matins)

Wednesday, December 25, 2024 Christmas – no fasting!

⊕ THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD, GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST.

Vespers Paramia: Genesis 1:1-13 • Numbers 24:2-3, 5-9, 17-18 • Micah 4:6-7; 5:2-4 •

Isaiah 11:1-10 • Bar. 3:35-4:4 • Dan. 2:31-36, 44-45 • Is. 9:6-7 • Is. 7:10-16a; 8:1-4, 8b-10

Hebrews 1:1-12. Luke 2:1-20.

Matins Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25. *for the Nativity:* Galatians 4:4-7. Matthew 2:1-12.

9:45am Koljady

Cantor: Mary R

10:00am Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom for Christmas

Reader: Lance

6:30pm Confessions

7:00pm Vespers for the Synaxis of the Theotokos

Thursday, December 26, 2024

⊗ The Synaxis of the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary.
The Holy Martyr Euthymius, Bishop of Sardis.

for the Synaxis: Hebrews 2:11-18. Matthew 2:13-23.

for the day (not read at Liturgy): James 4:7-5:9. Mark 11:27-33.

6:00pm Great Vespers &

Cantor: Mary W

7:00pm Divine Liturgy *for our Patron St. Stephen – with patronal procession*

+Stephen Kastura, from Kathleen Johnston

Friday, December 27, 2024 *no fasting*

⊗ THE HOLY APOSTLE, FIRST MARTYR AND ARCHDEACON STEPHEN.

Venerable Father and Confessor Theodore, Brother of Theophane the Hymnographer (845).

for Stephen: Acts 6:8-7:5, 47-60. Matthew 21:33-42.

for the day (not read at Liturgy): 1 Peter 1:1-2, 10-12, 2:6-10. Mark 12:1-12.

6:30pm Confessions

7:00pm Vespers *for the Saturday after Nativity*

Saturday, December 28, 2024

Saturday after the Nativity. The Holy Twenty thousand Martyrs of Nicomedia (302).

The Blessed Martyr Gregory Khomyshyn, Bishop of Stanislaviv (1945).

1 Timothy 6:11b-16. Matthew 12:15-21.

10:00am Divine Liturgy *for Saturday*

+Melvyn & +Josefa, from Sarah Marron

7:00pm Great Vespers *for Sunday – followed by Confessions*

Sunday, December 29, 2024

THE SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY. Tone 7

THE COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY AND JUST JOSEPH THE BETROTHED, DAVID THE KING, AND JAMES THE BROTHER OF GOD. The Holy Innocents killed by Herod in Bethlehem. Our Venerable Father Marcellus, Hegumen of the Akimetes (486).

10th Resurrectional Matins Gospel: John 21:1-14.

Galatians 1:11-19. Matthew 2:13-23.

8:15am Matins *for Sunday*

9:30am First & Third Hour – *Reader Service*

Cantor: Mary H

Confessions – *in the Sacristy*

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

Cantors: Mary H, Cecilia
Reader: Lance

+Stephen Kastura, from Kathleen Johnston (12-26)

+Melvyn & +Josefa, from Sarah Marron (12-28)

After Liturgy: Fellowship & Potluck in the hall, No Classes – Christmas Break

7:00pm Vespers *for Monday*

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)

Great Lakes Region

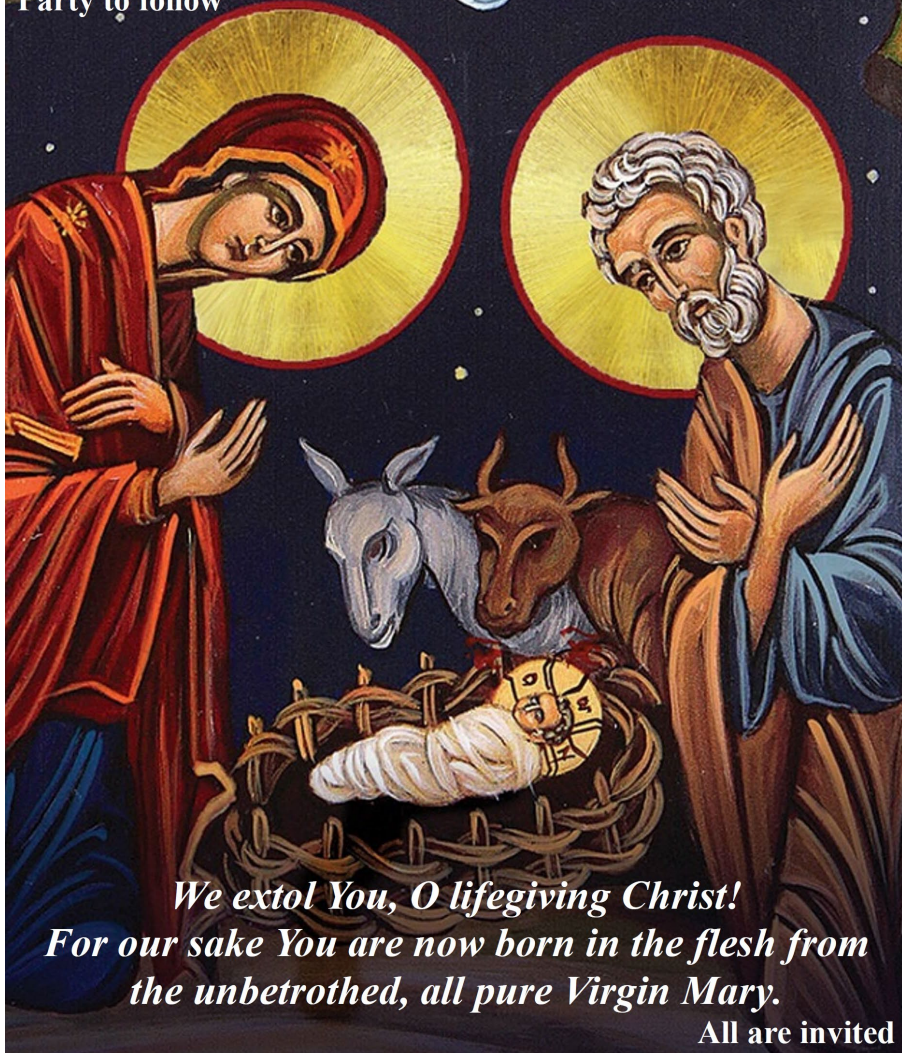
Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Parma

Christmas Party

St. Stephen Parish, Allen Park, MI

Saturday, January 4th, 2025

4pm-Great Vespers,
Party to follow



We extol You, O lifegiving Christ!

*For our sake You are now born in the flesh from
the unbetrothed, all pure Virgin Mary.*

All are invited

Bible Discussion Group – Galatians – Free in Christ

Deepen your faith in Christ by exploring St. Paul's letter to the Galatians! The parish Bible discussion group is reading and talking about this dynamite epistle **on Sundays at 5pm**. The biggest crisis in the early church came to a head in the Christian community in Galatia, and Paul confronted it in his letter to them--a letter that blazes with intensity and shines a bright light on the deepest level of life in Christ. Grasping Paul's message can be as life-changing today as it was in the first century.

No particular background in Scripture is needed to take part in the discussions, and everyone is able to make a positive contribution. The discussions take place online in Zoom on Sunday afternoons from five to six o'clock. Please join us!

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84569257502?pwd=UVeGgiYPLjE5FsqNitcgE72LHB4bxP.1>

Meeting ID: 845 6925 7502

Passcode: 025083

Byzantine Book Club

The Byzantine Book Club is reading *Theotokos - Mary, Mother of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ* by Archbishop Joseph Raya

Meeting **Mondays at 7pm**

online: meet.google.com/xuc-eiuo-sia

or in person: 8461 Barrington Drive, Ypsilanti, MI 48198

Contact Fr. Deacon Lawrence with any questions
at (734) 255-4099 or frdeaconlawrence@yahoo.com.

The Pre-festive Days of the Nativity

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.

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 on the Vigil (in Greek, Paramony) of the Nativity, December 24. 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 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: the Holy Supper on the evening of December 24, after Vespers, is a meatless one. But we have arrived at the feast of the Nativity of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ.

12th Annual Women's Retreat

March 7, 2025 - March 9, 2025

Location: [Our Lady of the Pines
Retreat Center - Fremont, OH](#)

Our Lord Jesus Christ -
The Path to the Father

Retreat Master: Fr. Jan Maturkanic



Contact Joan Washburn for further information 865-696-7809
or stmarybhdwomensretreat@gmail.com

4th Annual Men's Retreat



March 14, 2025 - March 16, 2025

Location: [Our Lady of the Pines Retreat Center - Fremont, OH](#)

The Beatitudes: The Way of Life
Retreat Master: Fr. Lukas Mitro

Contact Karl Busam for further information 419-626-6811
or karl.busam.77@gmail.com

St. Nicholas Apostolate

The St. Nicholas Apostolate is a means for members in our parish to practice Christian love through giving charitable donations and volunteering. The St. Nicholas Apostolate is facilitating donations from the parish for three funds modeled after the three purses of St. Nicholas. He was a wealthy man before he became a priest and bishop, and he chose to use his wealth to save three impoverished women from slavery by giving each of them a sack of gold coins for a dowry. St. Nicholas is often shown holding three purses or three coins. The three purses of the St. Nicholas Apostolate will be used to support the following:

- 1) charitable organizations
(such as the Image of God Pregnancy Center and Fish & Loaves)
- 2) fellow parishioners in need
- 3) neighbors and strangers who come to the parish seeking help.

One way that parishioners are encouraged to practice Christ's command to "give to the one who asks" (Matt 5:42) is through monetary donations. A donation box next to an icon of St. Nicholas has been placed in the narthex with envelopes for parishioners to donate to a purse of their choosing or simply to make an unrestricted gift. Donations for the first purse, charitable organizations, are given directly to the organizations. Donations for the second and third purses, our parishioners and our neighbors, are distributed by Fr. John Russell as he deems appropriate. All donations are tax deductible. We also hope to organize volunteer opportunities for the parish to participate in.

The St. Nicholas Apostolate is not a philanthropic club, but rather is a vehicle for the parish community to respond to God's commandment to love our neighbor, especially our neighbors in need.

"On the subject of mutual charity, you have no need for anyone to write you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another.... Nevertheless, we urge you... to progress even more." (1 Thessalonians 4:9-10).

Contact Fr Deacon Lawrence (frdeaconlawrence@yahoo.com) for more information.



BYZANTINE ASSEMBLY 2025

Come Let Us Worship & Bow Before Christ

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skurla and the Council of Hierarchs invite presentation proposals for the 3rd Assembly of the Byzantine Catholic Metropolitan Church of Pittsburgh, to be held July 16-20, 2025, at St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church in Whiting, Indiana.

Proposals should focus on the current state and future directions of worship and spirituality in the Church. Presenters will receive a stipend of \$250 and their Assembly registration will be covered.

IMPORTANT DATES

15 JANUARY	1 FEBRUARY	1 APRIL	1 MAY	16-20 JULY
Proposal Submission Deadline	Committee Reviews Submissions	Presenters Notified	Full Schedule Announced	Assembly Date

www.byzantineassembly.org

Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skurla and the Council of Hierarchs invite presentation proposals for the 3rd Assembly of the Byzantine Catholic Metropolitan Church of Pittsburgh, scheduled for July 16-20, 2025, at St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church in Whiting, Indiana. This assembly, continuing the synodal process begun in 2022, aims to deepen the appreciation of Byzantine Ruthenian worship and spirituality in North America. The event will feature two tracks: a clergy track from July 16-18 and a laity track from July 18-20, under the theme "Come let us worship and bow before Christ."

The assembly committee seeks proposals from clergy, religious, and lay individuals or teams, focusing on two main areas: the current state of worship and spirituality in the Church, and future directions for growth and evangelization. Presentations should combine personal experience and academic research. Interested individuals are asked to submit a short paragraph outlining their topic, a five-minute video presentation, and a brief bio to Fr. Cyril Farmer at byzantineassembly@gmail.com by January 15, 2025. Selected presenters will be notified by April 1, 2025. Presenters will receive a stipend of \$250.00 and their Assembly registration will be covered. For more information, visit: <https://byzantineassembly.org/callforpresentations>

Christmas Flowers offered in memory of

*Anthony & Irene Bonacor, John Bonacor,
Charles & Mary Burja, John & Bertha Grega,
Joseph Humenik, Stephanie Scalea,
Helen Yatcko, Andrew Yatcko*



A Special Thank you

A special thank you to all the men who came out on a recent Saturday for the workday. Many things were accomplished, and everyone's help was appreciated. There will be advance notice of the next workday, and everyone is invited to join in and give a hand.

Health & Worship

Fr. John and our fellow parishioners Drs. Michael & Jodie Kenes would like to remind us that no one is obligated to attend liturgical services while they are sick or may be contagious from an illness. In this case, you may remain at home and keep holy the Lord's Day with your prayers at home. This consideration for your fellow parishioners can also be a charitable act. Even if one's particular illness may be viewed as mild, we are blessed to have many parishioners at the extremes of age, some of whom are likely more susceptible to severe side effects of the same illness. If you do wish to come to church while you have symptoms or are contagious from illness, you are also welcome to properly wear a mask. These are not requirements; however, we ask you to prayerfully consider it throughout the year, and particularly during seasons of contagious illness.

Annual Stewardship Appeal

Giving is a way of opening ourselves to opportunity. When we choose to be God's opportunity of help and love for another person, we place ourselves in God's design for giving and receiving from one another. Let us stand in awe of the holiness of God today as we practice recognition of our Lord by giving back to him by supporting the Stewardship Appeal.

Visit us online at <https://parma.org/stewardship-appeal> to submit your one-time or monthly donation to the Stewardship Appeal.

Thank you for your generosity!

Special Collections

Mark your calendars and plan accordingly for the following Special Collections in 2025.

Please see <https://parma.org/specialcollections> for more information.

March 8-9, 2025 – The Church in Central & Eastern Europe

April 19-20, 2025 – The Holy Land & Our Christian Brethren

April 26-27, 2025 – The Catholic Home Missions

May 31-June 1, 2025 – Catholic Communication Campaign

June 28-29, 2025 – Peter's Pence

December 13-14, 2025 – Retirement Fund for Religious

Prayer List

*Pray for the repose of Joann Humenik, who fell asleep in the Lord on December 12th
and for Ann Marie Stein*

*Pray also for the healing of Anonymous, John Aral, Barb Barnes, Don & Theresa Butella,
Pat Carlson, Phyllis Croskey, Elizabeth Czupinski, Virginia Dalbo, Lawrence Thomas Dion,
Maria Frendo, Julia Frendo, Gregory Hendricks, Fr. Deacon Lawrence Hendricks,
Chris Lauffer, John Marron, Shirley Mead, Kathy Mykeloff, Michael Mykeloff, Judith Ng,
Ron Ostrowsky, Edith Santo, Rex Stein, Debra Warila, Helen Wood*

Rides to Church

If you need a ride or would like to offer a ride to others, please contact Victor Jiomkowski (313-930-0801 / v.jiomkowski1111@att.net) so he can help make the arrangements. We are still looking for a second person to help coordinate rides to church for people having trouble getting to services. If you are interested in helping with this, please contact Victor Jiomkowski or Father John.

Church Cleaning

Please sign up in the narthex to clean our church. Sign up for any week you're available to clean and clean the church on any day of that week. Thank you to all who clean!

CHARITABLE GIVING

from St. Stephen Parish

*Through our St. Nicholas Apostolate, we donate \$50 per month
to Fish & Loaves Community Food Pantry*

and to the Image of God Pregnancy Center (4151 Seminole St., Detroit)

Thank you to the GCU for donating \$500 to our St. Nicholas Apostolate!

Since our last contributions,

for the Church in Central & Eastern Europe, we have collected \$225.

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

For Catholic Home Missions, we have collected \$100.

Building Fund

Building Expenses Running Total 2024: \$53,398.27

Building Fund Running Total 2024: \$5,863.60

The Guild's Christmas Cookie Sale raised \$600!

ATTENDANCE – *Thank you for praying with us.*

Attendance at Divine Liturgy on December 15th was **71**. Average Sunday attendance ≈ **60**

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.*

Collection for December 15th was **\$4,534.17**. Average Weekly Collection: **\$2,220.63**

Sunday: \$1780; Christmas: \$110; Holy Day: \$60; Online: \$307.17; Building: \$2050; Candles: \$62;
Flowers: \$10; Fuel: \$155

“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