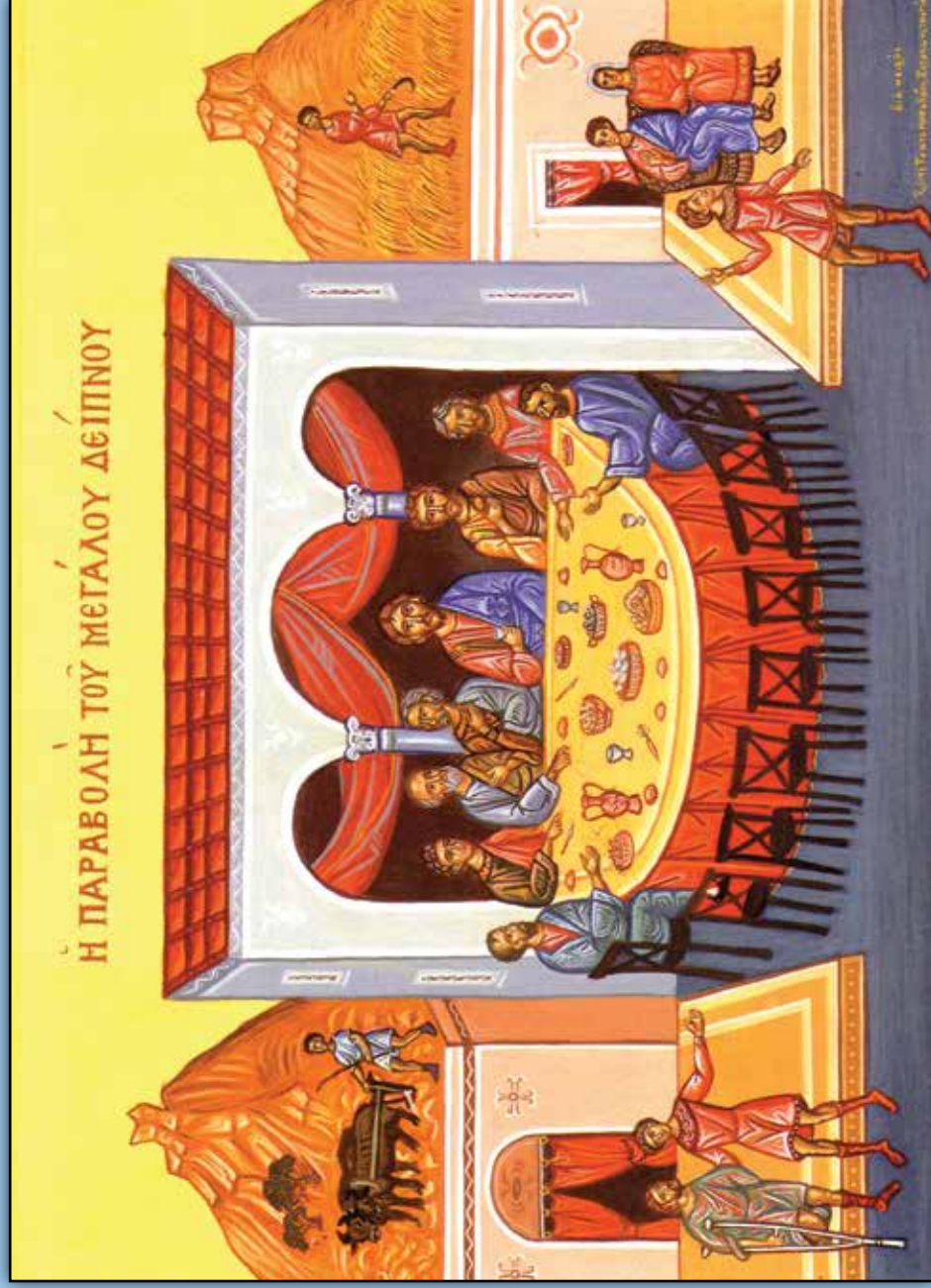


## SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS



*Icon of the Parable of the Great Feast*

<b>December 12, 2021: Sunday of the Forefathers</b>		
Epistle: Col. 3: 4-11		Gospel: Lk. 14: 16-24
<b>Mon., Dec. 13</b>	10:00	Funeral: + Jean Howarth
<b>Tues., Dec. 14</b>	10:00	Funeral: + Betty Ann Bondy
<b>Wed., Dec. 15</b>	9:00	+ Anthony Soltysiak (Family)
<b>Thurs., Dec. 16</b>	9:00	+ Mary Beggin (Family)
<b>Fri., Dec. 17</b>	9:00	+ Antoinetta Kohut (Family)
<b>Sat., Dec. 18</b>	<b>No Morning Divine Liturgy</b> 2:00 pm Confessions 4:00 pm + George Chowanec (Family)	
<b>Sun., Dec. 19</b>	10:00	For Our Parishioners

## **SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS**

It was the evening of December 24, 1944 -- and three American soldiers, one badly wounded, had become lost in a snow-covered Ardennes forest.

They had wandered for three days, unable to find their unit. If they didn't find shelter soon, the one injured soldier would surely die.

These three American soldiers eventually stumbled upon a small shack in the middle of the woods. They knocked on the door.

When Elisabeth Vincken and her 12 year old son Fritz heard the knock on the door, they were struck with

fear. Elisabeth cracked the door open, and was shocked to see three enemy soldiers on her doorstep.

But seeing the injured soldier, Frau Vincken had compassion on these three boys and welcomed them inside.

Frau Vincken didn't have much -- a single chicken was all the food she had left. But having compassion on the war weary soldiers she offered them all she had.

As the chicken was roasting in the oven, there was another unexpected knock on the door. Her son went to open the door, thinking there were

more American soldiers who were lost.

But this time, the four soldiers standing outside the cottage were not American -- they were German!

The punishment for harboring enemy soldiers was death.

Elisabeth, fearing for her life, pushed past Fritz and stepped outside.

The four German soldiers explained that they were lost and hungry, and asked if they could spend Christmas Eve in her home.

Elisabeth told them they were welcome to share what little food she had, but warned that she had other "guests." The German soldiers sternly asked if they were Americans.

Frau Vincken nodded. "*Es ist Heiligabend und hier wird nicht geschossen*," she said. "It is the Holy Night and there will be no shooting here."

She told the German soldiers to leave their weapons outside and then invited them into the cabin. The tension in the air was thick as the German and American soldiers stared at each other.

But what happened next is truly a Christmas miracle.

One of the German soldiers, a former medical student, noticed the badly

injured American soldier. The German had compassion on his enemy and offered to tend his wounds.

That simple act of kindness broke the tension. The American soldiers began to strike up a polite conversation using what little German they knew.

Frau Vincken finished preparing supper and motioned for everyone to sit around the table. As they said grace, the exhausted and forlorn soldiers forgot all about the war -- if only for a moment. Several of the soldiers -- both American and German -- had tears in their eyes as they ate their humble Christmas dinner.

That evening, these bitter enemies declared an informal truce as the spirit of Christmas filled Frau Vincken's tiny shack.

The next morning, the German soldiers provided directions to the American front lines -- and even gave the Americans a compass. They shook hands, thanked Frau Vincken for her hospitality, and went their separate ways.

With carnage all around them, the Spirit of Christmas proved to be a more powerful force than the hatred of war.

## SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT...

*The following was written by Ben Stein and recited by him on CBS Sunday Morning Commentary. The article is quite long but certainly is worth reading.*

I am a Jew, and every single one of my ancestors was Jewish. And it does not bother me even a little bit when people call those beautiful lit up, bejeweled tress, Christmas trees... I don't feel threatened... I don't feel discriminated against... That's what they are, Christmas trees.

It doesn't bother me a bit when people say, "Merry Christmas" to me. I don't think that they are slighting me or getting ready to put me in a ghetto. In fact, I kind of like it. It shows that we are all brothers and sisters celebrating this happy time of year. It doesn't bother me at all that there is a manger scene on display at a key intersection near my beach house in Malibu... If people want a crèche, it's just as fine with me as is the Menorah a few hundred yards away. I don't like getting pushed around for being a Jew, and I don't think Christians like getting pushed around for being Christians. I think people who believe in God are sick and tired of getting pushed around, period. I have no idea where

the concept came from, that America is an explicitly atheist country. I can't find it in the Constitution and I don't like it being shoved down my throat.

Or maybe I can put it another way: where did the idea come from that we should worship celebrities and we aren't allowed to worship God as we understand Him? I guess that's a sign that I'm getting old, too. But there are a lot of us who are wondering where these celebrities came from and where the America we knew went to.

In light of the many jokes we send to one another for a laugh, this is a little different: This is not intended to be a joke; it's not funny, it's intended to get you thinking.

Billy Graham's daughter was interviewed on the Early Show and Jane Clayson asked her: "How could God let something like this happen?" (regarding Hurricane Katrina). Anne Graham gave an extremely profound and insightful response. She said: "I believe God is deeply saddened by this, just as we are, but for years we've been telling God to get out of our schools, to get out of our government and to get out of our lives. And being the gentleman He is, I believe He has calmly backed out. How can we

expect God to give us His blessing and His protection if we demand He leave us alone?"

In light of recent events... terrorist attacks, school shootings, etc... I think that it started when Madeleine Murray O'Hare complained she didn't want prayer in our schools, and we said OK.

Then some of you better not read the Bible in school. The Bible says thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not steal, and love your neighbor as yourself. And we said OK.

Then Dr. Benjamin Spock said we shouldn't spank our children when they misbehave, because their little personalities would be warped and we might damage their self-esteem. (Dr. Spock's son committed suicide). We said an expert should know what he's talking about. And we said OK.

Now we're asking ourselves why

our children have no conscience, why they don't know right from wrong, and why it doesn't bother them to kill strangers, their classmates, and themselves. Probably, if we think about it long and hard enough, we can figure it out. I think it has a great deal to do with "WE REAP WHAT WE SOW."

Funny how simple it is for people to trash God and then wonder why the world's going to hell. Funny how we believe what the newspapers say, but question what the Bible says. Are you laughing yet? Funny how we can be more worried about what other people think of us than what God thinks of us.

But, if you discard this thought process, don't sit back and complain about what bad shape the world is in. My Best Regards, Honestly and respectfully.

## THE LEGEND OF THE CANDY CANE

Every year as Christmas nears, candy canes show up in stores and millions are sold and eaten. While the striped candy is delicious, it is more than just a pretty, tasty treat to enjoy around Christmas. The Legend of the Candy Cane was designed to be a reminder of what Christmas is all about.

A candy maker in Indiana wanted to make a candy that would help us remember who Christmas is really about. So he made a Christmas Candy Cane. He incorporated several symbols for the birth, ministry, and death of Jesus Christ. He began with a stick of pure white, hard candy. White to symbolize the virgin birth

and sinless nature of Jesus. Hard candy to symbolize the solid rock, the foundation of the Church, and firmness of the promises of God. The candy maker made the candy in the form of a “J” to represent the name of Jesus. It also represented the staff of the “good Shepherd”. The candy maker then included red stripes. He

used three small stripes and a large red stripe to represent the suffering Christ endured at the end of his life. The candy became known as a Candy Cane - a decoration seen at Christmas time. The meaning has faded, but still gives joy to children young and old, whom Jesus loves and treasures.

### **‘TIS THE SEASON TO SAY THANKS**

We wish to thank all the Parishioners who volunteered their time to decorate our Church for the Christmas Season. It was a task which took two days to

complete, because we were short of volunteers on Sunday. Our Church looks beautiful for this Holy Season. Thank you to all of our “Angels.”

### **2021 PARISH DUES**

With the end of 2021 quickly approaching, we offer this gentle reminder to make sure that your 2021 Parish Dues are paid. Also, we remind

our Parish Family Members that Parish Dues are now \$50.00 per adult per year. There is no increase planned for 2022.

### **CHRISTMAS BAKE SALE**

The third installment of our Parish’s Winter Fundraiser is the bake sale featuring goodies from Jerry’s For all Seasons. The order forms are available in the Church Vestibule. Orders must be received by Monday, December 13<sup>th</sup>. (Please consider the delays with the mail when sending in your order.) Orders may be made by phoning: Jule

at 570-357-6171 or Michaelene at 570-209-2026. For your convenience, pickup will be coordinated with the poinsettia pickup: Monday, December 20th from 4:00 to 6:00 at the Parish Hall on 207 River Street. Additional order forms are located at the back of the church. Please take some to share with friends, neighbors, etc.

## **ANDREW'S PENCE**

The Synod of Bishops of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC) has decided to hold a collection, called Andrew's Pence, to support faithful of the UGCC abroad where there is no permanent ecclesiastical structure.

More than 100 years ago Ukrainians started to leave their native land in search of a better life, material welfare, and freedom. Many

settled on another continent, where church buildings of the UGCC are not everywhere, so that the faithful could not attend services in their native Church. Wishing to provide all faithful of the UGCC with spiritual care, the bishops call upon all to support the faithful of the UGCC abroad in prayer and financially, collecting the so-called Andrew's Pence.

## **2022 CHURCH CALENDARS**

The 2022 Church Calendars are available in the Vestibule of the

Church. The Calendars are free, but any donations will be appreciated.

## **CHRISTMAS CAROL SING ALONG**

YOU ARE INVITED to join Saints Peter & Paul Ukrainian Greek Catholic Parish for their 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Carol Sing Along in the church on North River Street in Wilkes-Barre, today, December 12, 2021 starting at 2 p.m. Join in the singing of some very sacred, joyful and inspiring

Christmas Carols. Afterwards, please join us in the lower church hall for a Christmas Fellowship Social. Please bring a friend or family member, and share the joy of Christmas with them, as we all prepare to welcome the Newborn Son of God into our hearts and homes.

## **COLLECTION PROCESSING TEAM...**

The Collection Processing Team for the month of December 2021 is Team

#4: Ron Barkofsky and Joe Smagula.

**Sunday Collection for Dec. 4 & 5, 2021: \$**



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Rev. Nestor Iwasiw, Pastor

### ***The Great Feast***

This familiar parable is read in the Church each year just two Sundays before the feast of our Lord's Nativity. In it we are reminded of the great care with which God prepared the way of His incarnation. All of the Law and the Prophets look forward to this moment, the moment when the God-man Jesus Christ comes into the world. He is, in fact, the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets – the goal towards which they were all aiming. The whole world was prepared by them for this great event. As the parable tells us the King – that is God – has prepared a great feast for us and has invited us to come and enter into the joy that He has prepared for us.

Today we begin in earnest to move toward the

feast of the birth of our Incarnate Savior Jesus Christ. Today we are called to see the great preparation that has gone into this event, to marvel at the great love and care of God for us that He would labor so long and with such great care for us. Today we look back at the whole of the history of the people of God and see that it is the history of God's preparation all leading to the moment when He would take flesh, become incarnate and enter the world as a child. We have been given an invitation to come and join the feast, to abandon the world and enter the Kingdom of God, to leave our own life and receive instead the Life of Christ. We have been invited, chosen by God – will we then accept the invitation and choose Him?