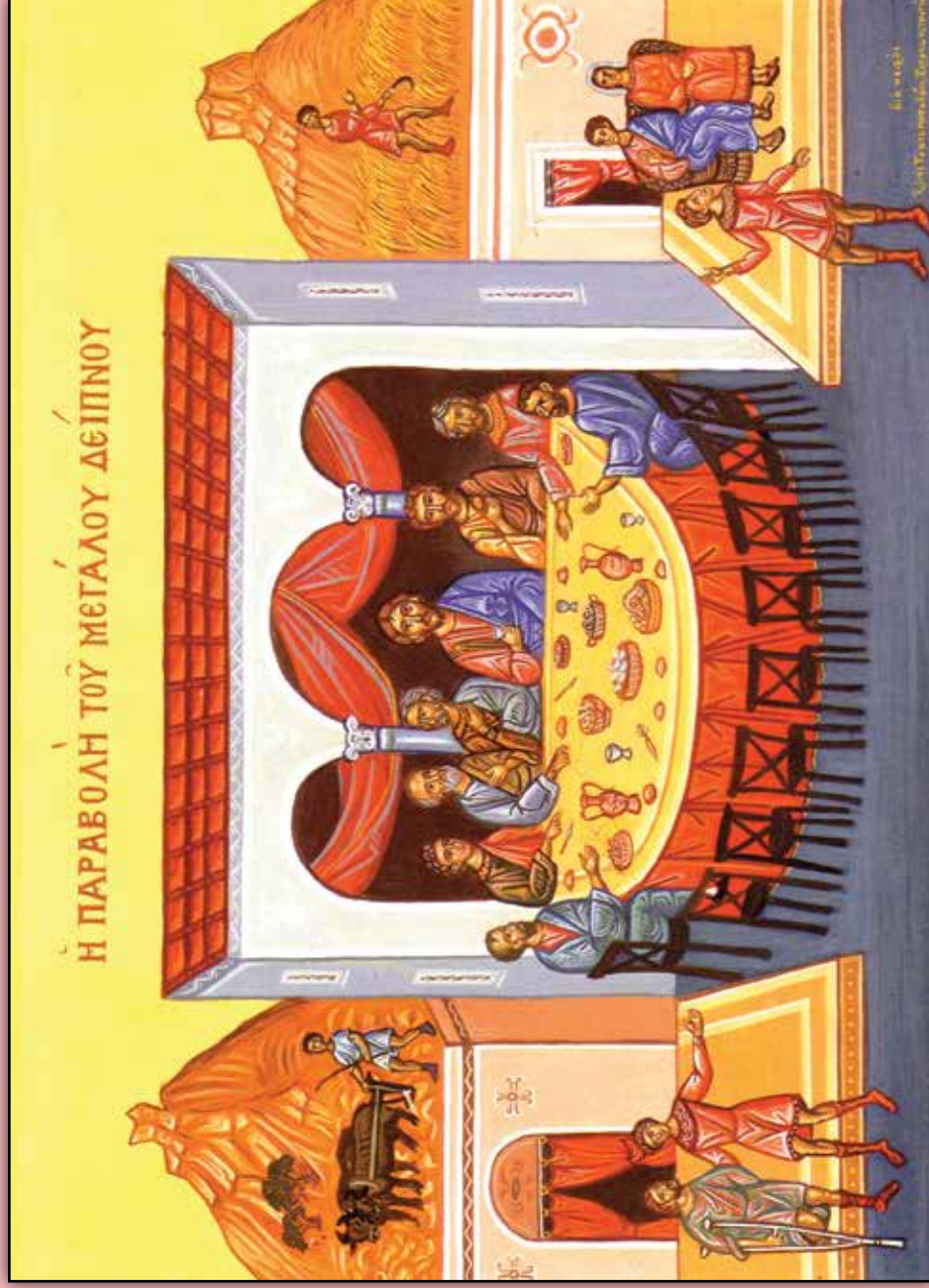


## SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS



*Icon of the Parable of the Great Feast*

<b>Dec. 17, 2023: Sunday of the Forefathers</b>		
Epistle: Col. 3: 4-11		Gospel: Lk. 14: 16-24
<b>This Weekend</b>	4:00	+ George Chowanec (Family)
	10:30	For Our Parishioners
<b>Mon., Dec. 18</b>	10:00	Funeral: + Lisa Marie Washinko
<b>Tues., Dec. 19</b>	10:00	Funeral: + Alice Trentely
<b>Wed., Dec. 20</b>	9:00	+ Deborah Altier (Family)
<b>Thurs., Dec. 21</b>	9:00	+ Nicholas Chaykosky (Sister, Shirley Romanovitch)
<b>Fri., Dec. 22</b>	9:00	+ Mary & Patrick Marcinko (Family)
<b>Sat., Dec. 23</b>	<b>No Morning Divine Liturgy</b>	
	2:00	<b>Confessions</b>
	4:00 pm	+ Roman Kushner (Margaret Lennon)
<b>Sun., Dec. 24</b>	<b>Christmas Eve</b>	
	10:30	For Sunday: For Our Parishioners
	10:00 pm	For Christmas: For Vocations
<b>Mon., Dec. 25</b>	<b>Nativity: Birth of Our Lord</b>	
	10:30	For Our Parishioners

## **P.U.S.H.**

A man was sleeping at night in his cabin when suddenly his room filled with light, and God appeared. The Lord told the man he had work for him to do, and showed him a large rock in front of his cabin. The Lord explained that the man was to push against the rock with all his might. So, this the man did, day after day.

For many years he toiled from

sun up to sun down, his shoulders set squarely against the cold, massive surface of the unmoving rock, pushing with all of his might. Each night the man returned to his cabin sore and worn out, feeling that his whole day had been spent in vain.

Since the man was showing discouragement, the Adversary (Satan) decided to enter the picture by placing

thoughts into the weary mind: “You have been pushing against that rock for a long time, and it hasn’t moved.” Thus, he gave the man the impression that the task was impossible and that he was a failure. These thoughts discouraged and disheartened the man. Satan said, “Why kill yourself over this? Just put in your time, giving just the minimum effort; and that will be good enough.” That’s what the weary man planned to do, but decided to make it a matter of prayer and to take his troubled thoughts to the Lord. “Lord,” he said, “I have labored long and hard in your service, putting all my strength to do that which you have asked. Yet, after all this time, I have not even budged that rock by half a millimeter. What is wrong? Why am I failing?”

The Lord responded compassionately, “My friend, when I asked you to serve Me and you accepted, I told you that your task was to push against the rock with all of your strength, which you have done. Never once did I mention to you that I expected you to move it. Your task was to push. And now you come to Me with your strength spent, thinking that you have failed. But, is that really so? Look at yourself. Your arms are strong and muscled, your back sinewy and brown; your hands

are callused from constant pressure, your legs have become massive and hard. Through opposition you have grown much, and your abilities now surpass that which you used to have. True, you haven’t moved the rock. But your calling was to be obedient and to push and to exercise your faith and trust in My wisdom. That you have done. Now, my friend, I will move the rock.”

At times, when we hear a word from God, we tend to use our own intellect to decipher what He wants, when actually what God wants is just a simple obedience and faith in Him. By all means, exercise the faith that moves mountains, but know that it is still God who moves mountains.

When everything seems to go wrong ... just P.U.S.H.!

When the job gets you down ... just P.U.S.H.!

When people don’t react the way you think they should ... just P.U.S.H.!

When your money is “gone” and the bills are due ... just P.U.S.H.!

When people just don’t understand you ... just P.U.S.H.!

**P=** Pray

**U=** Until

**S=** Something

**H=** Happens

## **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.

## **TREES AND POINSETTIAS**

The Christmas tree tradition was started in Germany in the late 1400s. At that time a popular theatrical performance, the Paradise Play, depicted the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise and was represented by a fir tree hung with apples. Soon the tree was placed in the homes of Christians, who interpreted it as a symbol of the coming Savior. The apples were replaced with small white

wafers representing the Holy Eucharist or Communion. Later the wafers were replaced by pieces of pastry cut into shapes of stars, angels, hearts, flowers and bells.

Pennsylvania Germans claim to have brought the Christmas tree custom to America. The first Christmas tree is recorded under the date December 20, 1821, in the diary of a Matthew Zahm of Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The first

known exhibition of a Christmas tree was held in York, Pennsylvania, in 1830. Early trees were decorated with fruits, nuts, popcorn, toys and candles. Today more than 80 percent of American families buy and decorate a tree at Christmas.

The tradition of poinsettias in churches and homes at Christmas traces back to a village in Mexico. according to the legend, it was a custom for villagers to place gifts before the Nativity scene at the church on Christmas Eve. A small boy, too poor to give anything, knelt to pray in the snow outside. On the ground where he knelt, the legend says, a beautiful

plant with scarlet leaves grew immediately.

The boy took it into the church and presented it as his gift to the Christ Child. Mexicans call the colorful plant

Flor de la Nocha Buena (Flower of the Holy Night), and it is thought to resemble the Star of Bethlehem. The poinsettia plant is named after Dr. Joel Roberts Poinsett, the first United States ambassador to Mexico and an accomplished amateur botanist. He discovered the beautiful plant there in 1828 and brought it to the United States, where it was named in his honor.

## A BIG THANK YOU

A BIG THANK YOU to all of our parishioners, family and friends who donated baskets for our recent basket raffle conducted during our Thanksgiving Bake Sale. The basket raffle was a significant contributor to the success of this event.

The basket winners are as follows:

#4 Rose Bielawski

#6 Shelly Mitchko

#15 Sue Onze

#21 Clara Cammerota - 3 baskets

#23 Patricia Mussari

#24 Stephen Krenitsky

#27 Sandy Kosakevitch

#30 Alice McDermott

#43 Melissa Hampton

#52 Cheryl & Lisa Matuszewski

#59 Kathy Radle

#68 Linda Grasso

#71 Janet Havran

## HELP NEEDED

As everyone knows, and as is the case for most parishes, our financial situation is not the best. Also, the interior of our church should be cleaned more frequently. We really cannot afford to hire someone to do this job.

***A possible solution: A group of volunteer parishioners who would be willing to donate some time and effort once a month.***

Men, women, teenagers, children, anyone who could dust, vacuum, etc. We would divide and assign the different tasks and locations, depending upon everyone's ability

and within a little time each month, get our church interior into a more presentable condition. We have vacuums but had held ones to do the cushions would be a good idea.

Saturday morning seems to be the best time to accomplish this. If enough parishioners are willing, we could schedule the first cleaning before Christmas on **Saturday, December 16<sup>th</sup>, starting at 10:30** and then once a month (the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday) to follow. If you are willing to help keep our church beautiful, please contact the rectory to sign up.

## SINGING IN CHURCH

There are many who would say "I don't have a good voice" or "I'm not a singer." To them I would say -- We are God's greatest creation -- and within each of us is the voice God gave us. It is the only musical instrument created by God for all

others are the invention of man. Who are we to judge, to decide that the voice inside each of us is good or bad? Remember, God also created the birds -- and each, including the crow, SINGS!

## NOTICE TO THE PARISH

Please pass this notice to those members of our parish who have not been regular in their church attendance and ask them to carefully

consider the message below.

I want you to know that our parish needs you, and that you also need to be here with us. We have

a responsibility to one another as members of the Body of Christ – the Church – and these responsibilities are growing daily, given the events

taking place in the world around us. Please make church attendance and prayer a regular part of your daily lives. Please.

### **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 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.

According to the Protocol of the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia, the "Andrew's Pence" collection is to be taken in all parishes each year in the month of December.

### **2024 CHURCH CALENDARS**

The 2024 Church Calendars are available in back of the Church.

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

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

The Collection Processing Team for the month of December 2023 is

Team #4: Ron Barkofsky, Steve & Jeannie Cucura.

**Sunday Collection for Dececember 9 & 10, 2023: \$**

## **Ss. Cyril & Methodius Ukrainian Catholic Church**

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Web Site: [stcyrils.weconnect.com](http://stcyrils.weconnect.com)

E-Mail: [sscyrilandmethodius@comcast.net](mailto:sscyrilandmethodius@comcast.net)

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?