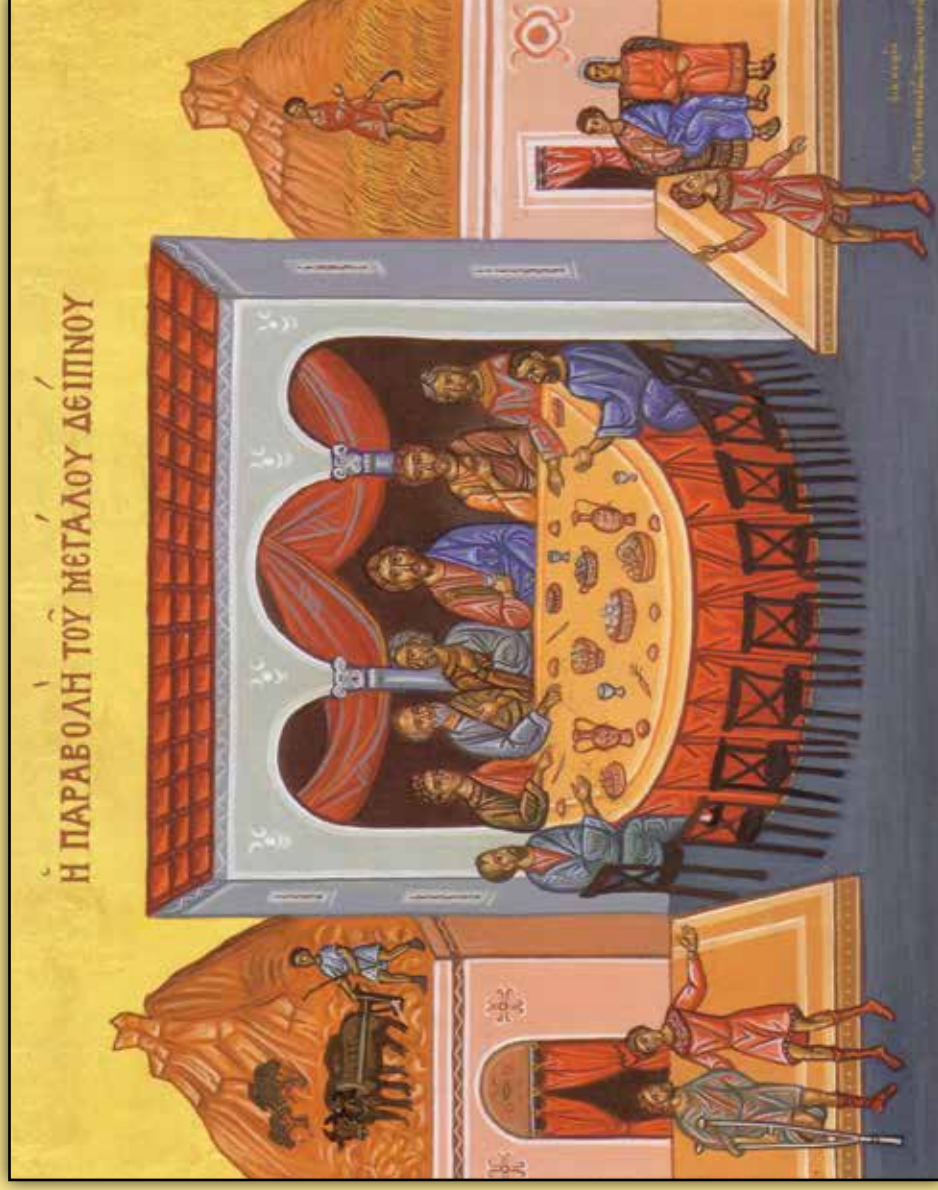


SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS



Icon of the Great Banquet (Luke 14:16-24)

December 14, 2025: Sunday of the Forefathers

Epistle: Col. 3: 4-11

Gospel: Lk. 14: 16-24

This Weekend 4:00 pm + Frank Cole (Carol)
10:30 For Our Parishioners

Mon., Dec. 15 9:00 + Bob Zelno (Eileen Kushner)

Tues., Dec. 16 9:00 + Dorothy Loden (Nieces & Nephew)

Wed., Dec. 17 9:00 + George Danylak (Marlene & Cheryl)

Thurs., Dec. 18 9:00

Fri., Dec. 19 9:00 + Christine Danylak (Leo Danylak)

Sat., Dec. 20 **No Morning Divine Liturgy**
2:00 pm Confessions.
4:00 pm + George Chowanec (Family)

Sun., Dec. 21 10:30 For Our Parishioners

THE HOLY PROPHET DANIEL

Commemorated on December 17th

The Holy Prophet Daniel is the fourth of the major prophets.

In the years following 600 B.C. Jerusalem was conquered by the Babylonians, the Temple built by Solomon was destroyed, and many of the Israelite people were led away into the Babylonian Captivity. Among the captives were also the illustrious youths Daniel, Ananias, Azarias and Misael.

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon ordered that they be instructed in the Chaldean language and wisdom, and

dressed them in finery. Handsome children of princely lineage were often chosen to serve as pages in the palace. For three years, they would be fed from food from the king's table. After this they would be allowed to stand before his throne. Daniel was renamed Balthasar, Ananias was called Shadrach, Misael was called Mishach, and Azarias was known as Abednego. But they, cleaving to their faith, disdained the extravagance of court, refusing to defile themselves by eating from the king's table and

drinking his wine. Instead, they lived on vegetables and water.

The Lord granted them wisdom, and to Saint Daniel the gift of insight and the interpretation of dreams. The holy Prophet Daniel preserved his faith in the one God and trusted in His almighty help. He surpassed all the Chaldean astrologers and sorcerers in his wisdom, and was made a confidant to King Nebuchadnezzar.

Once, Nebuchadnezzar had a strange dream which terrified him (Daniel 2:1-6). He summoned magicians, sorcerers, and Chaldeans before him to interpret the dream. When they asked him what he had dreamt, the king refused to tell them. He said, "If you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you shall be torn limb from limb, and your houses shall be laid in ruins." The Babylonian wise men protested that no magician or sorcerer could be expected to do this. Only the gods could reveal the dream and its meaning, they told him.

The king ordered all the wise men of Babylon to be executed. When they sought Daniel and his companions to put them to death, Daniel asked that the king's sentence not be carried out. He said that he could tell the king what

he dreamt, for it had been revealed to him in a vision. Daniel was brought before the king and was able to reveal not only the content of the dream, but also its prophetic significance. After this, the king elevated Daniel to be ruler of the whole province of Babylon, and the chief of all the wise men.

During these times King Nebuchadnezzar ordered a huge statue to be made in his likeness. It was decreed that when people heard the sound of trumpets and other instruments, they should fall down and worship the golden idol. Because they refused to do this, the three holy youths Ananias, Azarias and Misael were cast into a fiery furnace. The flames shot out over the furnace forty-nine cubits, felling the Chaldeans standing about, but the holy youths walked in the midst of the flames, offering prayer and psalmody to the Lord (Daniel 3:26-90).

The Angel of the Lord appeared in the furnace and cooled the flames, and the young men remained unharmed. This "Angel of Great Counsel," as he is called in iconography, is identified with the Son of God (Daniel 3:25, Isaiah 9:6). In the first Canon for the Nativity of the Lord (Ode 5), the Church sings: "Thou hast sent us Thine Angel of

Great Counsel.” The emperor, upon seeing this, commanded them to come out, and was converted to the true God.

Under King Balthasar, Saint Daniel interpreted a mysterious inscription (“Mane, Thekel, Phares”), which had appeared on the wall of the palace during a banquet (Daniel 5:1-31), foretelling the downfall of the Babylonian kingdom. Under the Persian emperor Darius, Saint Daniel was slandered by his enemies, and was thrown into a den with hungry lions, but they did not touch him, and he was not harmed. The emperor Darius then rejoiced over Daniel and ordered people throughout his realm to worship the God of Daniel, “since He is the living and eternal God, and His Kingdom shall not be destroyed, and His dominion is forever” (Daniel 6:26).

The holy Prophet Daniel grieved deeply for his people, who then were undergoing righteous chastisement for a multitude of sins and offenses, for transgressing the laws of God, resulting in the grievous Babylonian Captivity and the destruction of Jerusalem: “My God, incline Thine ear and hearken; open Thine eyes and look upon our desolation and that of Thy city, in which Thy Name is spoken; for we do not make our supplication before Thee

because of our own righteousness, but because of Thy great mercy” (Dan 9:18). Because of Daniel’s righteous life and his prayers for the people’s iniquity, the destiny of the nation of Israel and the fate of all the world was revealed to the holy prophet.

While interpreting the dream of King Nebuchadnezzar, the holy, glorious Prophet Daniel spoke of a great and final kingdom, the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ (Dan 2:44). The prophetic vision about the seventy weeks (Dan 9:24-27) speaks about the signs of the First and the Second Comings of the Lord Jesus Christ, and is connected with those events (Daniel 12:1-12).

Saint Daniel interceded for his people before King Cyrus, who esteemed him highly, and who decreed freedom for the Israelite people. Daniel himself and his fellows Ananias, Azarias and Misael, all survived into old age, but died in captivity. According to the testimony of Saint Cyril of Alexandria (June 9), Saints Ananias, Azarias and Misael were beheaded on orders of the Persian emperor Chambyses.

Saint Daniel and the three holy youths are also commemorated on the Sunday of the Holy Forefathers, and on the Sunday of the Holy Fathers (Sunday before the Nativity).

PROPERLY RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION

When approaching to receive Holy Communion, do not be afraid to approach the Priest. Father's arms are only so long and when you stand too far away, it is difficult to distribute Holy Communion.

We also remind everyone to tilt your head back and open your mouth WIDE. Please keep your tongue in your mouth. Please do not bite down on the communion spoon. There is no need to say anything since the priest says the prayer. There is no need to

say AMEN as is done in the Roman Catholic Church.

For those faithful who are a little unsteady on your feet, please feel free to use the first pew in front of the icon of the Mother of God. We don't want anybody to get hurt. Father will come up and give you Communion.

Now finally, a little about the red Communion Cloth. Simply lift it up to your chin. The purpose of the Communion Cloth is to help prevent accidents.

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.

FUNDRAISING UPDATE

We have one upcoming fundraiser scheduled. Please help our parish by participating to the best of your ability.

1. **BINGO AT THE MANOR ON MAIN:** Sunday, January 25, 2026. We're hoping that this will become one of our main annual fundraisers. To those generous parishioners who have pledged to sponsor

BINGO games, please submit your pledge as soon as possible. Checks payable to "St. Cyril's Church" can be dropped in the donation bin in an envelope marked "BINGO". Donations of gift baskets are welcomed. TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE. Call: Jule (570) 357-6171 or Michaelene (570) 209-2026.

CHRISTMAS PYROHY SALE IN SCRANTON

St. Vladimir's Ukrainian Catholic Church, 430 N. 7th Ave. in Scranton will be holding their Christmas Pyrohy Sale on Saturday, December 20th & Sunday, December 21st. Only \$10 per dozen. To order, call Leslie at 570-

342-3749, leave message on voice-mail. Pick up Saturday from 2:30 pm - 3:45 pm or after 4:00 pm Divine Liturgy. Pick up Sunday after 9:00 am Divine Liturgy.

THANK YOU TO OUR CHRISTMAS DECORATING VOLUNTEERS

Our sincerest thanks go out to all those angels who helped to decorate our Church for Christmas last week. Because of your time, talent, and joyful spirit, the Church truly looks magnificent and festive. The warmth and beauty you brought to our worship space will be felt by all who

enter during this special season.

We are grateful for each person who shared their creativity, energy, and care to make our parish shine. Your dedication brings joy to our community and helps us celebrate the birth of Christ in a truly welcoming environment. Thank you for making

this Christmas extra special!

2026 CHURCH CALENDARS

The 2026 Church Calendars are available in back of the Church. The Calendars are free, but any donations will be appreciated.

FESTIVAL OF CHRISTMAS CAROLS

The annual Festival of Ukrainian Christmas Carols will be held on Sunday, January 11, 2026 at 3:00 pm at our Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Philadelphia. All are invited to attend this annual celebration to praise our new-born King and our Lord Jesus Christ at this Christmas time.

SS. PETER AND PAUL UGCC 2026 - SIX MONTH LOTTERY CALENDAR

Each \$20 Calendar includes two numbers for the Pick 3 Evening Drawing of the Pennsylvania Lottery

Prizes include \$25 on weekdays, \$40 on Sundays, and Five \$100 prizes

Calendars purchased by check will be mailed to return address. Make checks payable to SS. Peter and Paul UGCC, and mail to:

P.O. Box 124, Carbondale, PA 18407

For more information contact Marge at 570-282-5680

COLLECTION PROCESSING TEAM

The Collection Processing Team for the month of December 2025 is Team #4: Ron Barkofsky, Steve & Jeannie Cucura.

Sunday Collection for Dec. 6 & 7, 2025: \$

Sincere thanks to all of you for your kindness and generosity.

Ss. Cyril & Methodius Ukrainian Catholic Church

135 River St., Olyphant, PA 18447-1435

Telephone: 570-291-4451

Web Site: stcyrils.weconnect.com

E-Mail: olyphant@ukrcatholic.org

Rev. Nestor Iwasiw, Pastor

Invited to the Banquet

It is written in the Gospel: The Master sent out his servants to call them who wish to come, inviting them: "My banquet is ready." But those who were called began to excuse themselves, one saying: "I bought some yoke of oxen." Another: "I have married" (Luke 14:16ff). You see, he was ready who called, but the invited refused. They themselves were alone responsible in the way they answered.

Thus, so great is the dignity of Christians. Consider, the Lord has prepared for them the Kingdom and has called them to enter, but they have refused.

Concerning the gift that Christians will receive by way of their inheritance, one could rightly say that if anyone, from the time of Adam's creation to the end of the world, should battle against Satan and put up with afflictions, it would be nothing in comparison to the glory which he is to obtain. For he will reign forever together with Christ. Glory to Him who so loved such a person that He gave himself and His grace and entrusted himself to Him. Glory to His greatness!

Pseudo-Macarius