



Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church

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—Schedule of Divine Services—

SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS: SUNDAY OF THE ANCESTORS—TONE 4

Saturday Dec. 19 4:30–5PM Mystery of Repentance*
5:30PM Vigil Divine Liturgy for +Bernebé Garcia by Antonia Reidy

Sunday Dec. 20 9–9:30AM Mystery of Repentance*
10:00AM Divine Liturgy for the faithful of Epiphany Parish (streamed)
Epistle: Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40 & Matthew 1:1-25

Tues. Dec. 22 7:30PM **Pre-Festive Day of Christmas and the Holy Great Martyr Anastasia**
Emmanuel Moleben for the Phillips Fast

CHRISTMAS/THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD, GOD, AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST (Holyday of Obligation)
Thurs. Dec. 24 9:00AM Royal Hours for the Feast of the Nativity (suggested Strict Fast) (streamed)
7:30PM Vespers with Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great for the healing of Riordan Catton (streamed)
Epistle: Hebrews 1:1-12 & Gospel: Luke 2:1-20
9:30PM Great Compline of the Nativity with Litija (streamed)

Fri. Dec. 25 10:00AM Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom for the faithful of Epiphany Parish (streamed)
Epistle: Galatians 4:4-7 & Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

Sat. Dec. 26 10:00AM **Synaxis of the Theotokos** (Solemn Holyday)
Divine Liturgy for Fr. Andre Mahanna by David & Sarah Malakauskas

SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS: MEMORY OF THE HOLY AND JUST JOSEPH HUSBAND OF MARY, THE HOLY PROPHET & KING DAVID, THE HOLY APOSTLE JAMES BROTHER OF THE LORD, AND THE HOLY APOSTLE AND FIRST MARTYR THE ARCHDEACON STEPHEN

Saturday Dec. 26 4:30–5PM Mystery of Repentance*
5:30PM Vigil Divine Liturgy for Fr. Milan Kasperek by David & Sarah Malakauskas

Sunday Dec. 27 9–9:30AM Mystery of Repentance*
10:00AM Divine Liturgy for the faithful of Epiphany Parish (streamed)
Epistle: Galatians 1:11-19 & Acts 6:8-7, 5:47-60
Matthew 2:13-23 & Matthew 21:33-42

*Mystery of Repentance also available by appointment or before and after weekday services

Welcome to our parish!

We are glad that you have chosen to participate in the Divine Liturgy with us today and we pray that it has been a spiritually nourishing experience. If you would like to register as a parishioner or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

The **Mysteries** (Sacraments) of the Church are available for all Bap-

tized Catholics in Good Standing. This means that a Catholic attends Divine Liturgy on Sundays and Holydays of Obligation, utilizes the Mystery of Repentance at least once a year, receives the Eucharist at least once a year, observes the church's penitential seasons and fasting regulations to include abstaining from meat or an equivalent penance on all Fridays except when mitigated, supports the Church in Her temporal needs through offering of time, talent, and treasure, and believes the Church's teachings on faith and morals.



Christ is Born! Glorify Him! Christos Raždajetsja! Slavite Jeho!



A PRAYER FROM THE EMMANUEL MOLEBEN:

O God and Father, the Almighty One, you created the human race in your image and likeness, and when we fell through disobedience, you promised to send a Savior. When the fullness of time had come, your favor rested on your only-begotten Son, and he was born of the Virgin Mary. Thus, what Isaiah the prophet foretold was fulfilled: "Behold, the Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel, which means 'God with us.'" His birth filled all creation with light; he gave us the baptism of repentance, and restored our ancient dignity. Now, most compassionate Lord, you bring us to these honored days of the Christmas Fast that we may do battle with the desires of the flesh and draw strength from the hope of resurrection. Receive us, then, as penitents and forgive our wrongdoing, those done knowingly and unknowingly, through malice and through weakness. And may our prayers, our fasting, and our works of mercy rise up before you as incense, as sweet spiritual fragrance, that in company with the Magi and the shepherds we too, with pure hearts, may be found worthy to bow down before the Nativity of Jesus Christ, your beloved Son. Through the Prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord, Jesus Christ Our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

LET US REMEMBER IN PRAYER:

Those who are ill or convalescing: Ed Sabula, Alexandria Odish, Riordan Catton, Joseph & Joanne Baranko, Clara Vranich, Daniel Cunningham, Patricia Rabayda, Catherine Garcia, Betty Yurchik, Frank Korkowski, Patricia Anne Reidy, and Jeff Lovall. *May our Lord Jesus Christ, the Physician and Healer of souls and bodies, grant them peace and good health for many blessed years.*

Also, our deployed military members: Lt. Commander William Bridges, and Sergeant Francis "Joseph" Fuchko. *May God's Divine Care and Mercy be given to them and may their Guardian Angels protect them from harm. —Please let Fr. Lewis know if anyone should be added or taken away from these lists.*

2020 ANNUAL BISHOP'S APPEAL: Our parish goal is the same as last year at \$10,800. However, if we reach or exceed our goal as we did last year, the parish will receive a rebate of 40% of that total after the campaign has concluded. **So far, 18 families have contributed \$5,450!** (as of Dec. 14) It is suggested that if each family contributes \$200, then we will meet our goal. Also, similar to last year, a parishioner would like to challenge us all by donating \$50 for a minimum donation of \$75! This will undoubtedly aid us in our goal!

THE PHILLIPS FAST & CHRISTMAS EVE DAY: As with any period of fasting, if we have forgotten or have been lax we may always take up more strict fasting closer to the Feast Day. Also, The Vigil of Christmas or Christmas Eve Day is traditionally a day of Strict Fast, meaning no meat or dairy is to be consumed. This, however, is not currently an aspect of our Particular Law of the Byzantine Catholic Metropolia of Pittsburgh, PA, but is suggested for the faithful to undertake this traditional practice.

Stewardship 12/06/2020	Chr. Flowers	\$250
Offertory	Christmas Collec.	\$620
Online Giving	Retired Religious	\$125
Capital Imp.	Thanksgiving	\$100
Chr. Flowers	Dec. Off. Total:	\$7,343.83
Christmas Collec.	Cap. Imp. Total:	\$1,083.90
Retired Religious	Christmas, Fl & Coll.	\$895
Stewardship 12/13/2020	Retired Religious	\$130
Offertory	Thanksgiving	\$100
Online Giving	Dec Operating Budget	\$10,868
Capital Imp.		\$725.00

During the month of December, the Altar Lamp burns before our Lord in the tabernacle for the repose of +Jacob & +Irene Sadler by William Sadler

ALTAR LAMP OFFERINGS NOW ACCEPTED FOR 2021: We are now accepting memorials or other intentions for the monthly Altar Lamp in 2021. Suggested offering is \$50.



PERK ARTISAN COFFEE FUNDRAISER: We have enrolled in a fundraising program for those who enjoy excellent freshly roasted coffee. For each bag sold, the parish will receive a \$4 donation!

The coffee is shipped to your home and may be whole bean or ground. Please visit our website for the link to Perk Artisan Coffee.

NOTE ON CHRISTMAS SERVICES: The Royal Hours are a combination of the Daily Hours (part of the Divine Office), but are made festive and specific for each of the 3 major Feasts: Nativity, Theophany, and Pascha. We will celebrate this service in the morning, which may take 2 hours. The Vespers with the Dine Liturgy of St. Basil is the appropriate service for Christmas Eve and is then followed by Great Compline. Last year, we celebrated these backwards, but fear not, this year we have them in the correct order. They are to be celebrated back to back and are considered as one long service (really 3-in-1), even though we have them scheduled at specific hours. If families choose, they may leave after the Divine Liturgy, but please note that Mirovanija (the reception of the blessed bread and anointing with the blessed oil) will not take place until it has been blessed at the Service of the Litija in the Great Compline. The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom will be celebrated Christmas Morning. Either the Evening Vigil Liturgy or the morning Christmas Liturgy fulfill the obligation.



FOR SALE!

Nut & Poppseed Rolls \$15 a roll

COVID-19 VACCINES: IMPORTANT TALKING POINTS

MINOR IMPACT: Vaccine manufacturers claim that Covid-19 vaccines are 95 percent “effective,” but the FDA is allowing companies to define effectiveness as “prevention of mild symptoms.” The studies are not designed to detect a reduction in outcomes such as severe illness, hospitalization or death.^{1,2} For individuals who develop severe symptoms, the vaccine is not a remedy. Instead, nutritional and oxidative support can help keep the illness from going into “overdrive.”³

EXPECT ADVERSE REACTIONS: Participants in every Covid-19 vaccine trial have reported adverse reactions including high fever, chills, muscle pains and headaches.⁴⁻⁶ Some have even reported severe reactions that required hospitalization and invasive treatment. According to the FDA, potential long-term effects may include Guillain-Barré syndrome, brain swelling, muscle weakness and paralysis, convulsions and seizures, stroke, narcolepsy, shock, heart attack, autoimmune disease, arthritis and joint pain, multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children, and death.⁷ Some UK health workers have experienced anaphylactic shock after receiving one dose of the approved vaccine.⁸

WON'T PREVENT COVID-19: An FDA Pfizer briefing paper published December 10, 2020 revealed 43 percent more suspected cases of Covid-19 in the vaccinated group than in the placebo group within seven days of vaccination.⁹

NO LIABILITY: Covid-19 vaccine manufacturers will be protected from all liability—if you are injured, you cannot sue.¹⁰ Manufacturers will have complete indemnity even though all previous attempts at creating coronavirus vaccines caused harm and never advanced to regulatory approval.¹¹

WILL NOT END RESTRICTIVE MEASURES: Dr. Anthony Fauci of the National Institutes of Health acknowledges that the vaccines may prevent symptoms but will not block spread of the virus, so vaccine recipients will still need to wear masks, practice social distancing and avoid crowds.^{12,13}

NOT NECESSARY: According to the CDC’s current best estimate, the “infection fatality rate” (IFR) for Covid-19 is less than 1 percent for people age 69 and younger, including a .003 percent IFR for children and adolescents.¹⁴

COULD MAKE YOU STERILE: Two prominent doctors, including the ex-head of Pfizer’s respiratory research, warn that Covid-19 vaccines contain a spike protein called syncytin-1, vital for the formation of the placenta.¹⁵ If the vaccine triggers an immune response to this protein, then female infertility, miscarriage or birth defects could result.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: www.westonaprice.org/coronavirus/

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2. Haseltine WA. Covid-19 vaccine protocols reveal that trials are designed to succeed. *Forbes*, September 23, 2020. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/williamhaseltine/2020/09/23/covid-19-vaccine-protocols-reveal-that-trials-are-designed-to-succeed/?sh=5da0663d5247>.
3. Brownstein D, Ng R, Rowen R et al. A novel approach to treating COVID-19 using nutritional and oxidative therapies. *Science, Public Health Policy, and the Law*. 2020;2:4-22. <https://ozonewithoutborders.ngo/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Novel-Approach-to-Covid-19.pdf>.
4. Jackson LA, Anderson EJ, Roupheal NG et al. An mRNA vaccine against SARS-CoV-2 – preliminary report. *New England Journal of Medicine*. 2020;383(20):1920-1931. <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa2022483>.
5. Allen A, Szabo L. NIH “very concerned” about serious side effect in coronavirus vaccine trial. *Scientific American*, September 15, 2020. <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/nih-very-concerned-about-serious-side-effect-in-coronavirus-vaccine-trial/>.
6. Mayer A. Leading COVID vaccine candidates plagued by safety concerns. *The Defender*, November 13, 2020. https://childrenshealthdefense.org/defender/covid-vaccine-candidates-safety-concerns/?itm_term=home.
7. U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee, October 22, 2020 Meeting Presentation, slide #16. <https://www.greenmedinfo.com/blog/covid-19-vaccine-bombshell-fda-documents-reveal-death-21-serious-conditions-poss1>.
8. Reals T. U.K. warns against giving Pfizer vaccine to people prone to severe allergic reactions. *CBS News*, December 9, 2020. <https://www.cbsnews.com/amp/news/covid-vaccine-pfizer-shot-uk-warning-people-with-history-of-significant-allergic-reactions/#app>.
9. <https://www.fda.gov/media/144245/download>, page 42.
10. Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act. COVID-19 PREP Act Declarations. <https://www.phe.gov/Preparedness/legal/prepact/Pages/default.aspx>.
11. Lyons-Weiler J. Pathogenic priming likely contributes to serious and critical illness and mortality in COVID-19 via autoimmunity. *Journal of Translational Autoimmunity*. 2020;3:100051. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7142689/>.
12. Khemlani A. Fauci: Early COVID-19 vaccines will only prevent symptoms, not block the virus. *Yahoo! Finance*, October 26, 2020. <https://finance.yahoo.com/news/fauci-vaccines-will-only-prevent-symptoms-not-block-the-virus-195051568.html>.
13. Scipioni J. Dr. Fauci says masks, social distancing will still be needed after a Covid-19 vaccine—here’s why. *CNBC*, November 16, 2020. <https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/16/fauci-why-still-need-masks-social-distancing-after-covid-19-vaccine.html>.
14. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. COVID-19 pandemic planning scenarios. Updated September 10, 2020. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/planning-scenarios.html>.
15. Petition/motion for administrative/regulatory action regarding confirmation of efficacy end points and use of data in connection with the following clinical trials. Dr. Wolfgang Wodarg and Dr. Michael Yeadon, petitioners. Filed with European Medicines Agency, December 1, 2020. https://healthimpactnews.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/12/Wodarg_Yeadon_EMA_Petition_Pfizer_Trial_FINAL_01DEC2020_EN_unsigned_with_Exhibits.pdf.

MORAL GUIDANCE REGARDING VACCINES AND COVID-19

23 Nov 2020—Prepared by Father Joseph Koopman, Moral Theologian—Saint Mary Seminary

With the prospect of the FDA approving one (or more) COVID-19 vaccines within the next few weeks, many questions have been raised regarding the ethical status of these vaccines (particularly questioning whether embryonic stem cells or tissue from aborted fetuses were used in their creation, and whether Catholics can morally receive such vaccines). The following is a brief moral analysis to help provide you some guidance when these questions arise. *Be mindful that this analysis is dependent on current information, and therefore could change once more information is released.* It has only been within the last few days that the findings of some of the vaccines have been submitted to the FDA for approval, so more information will be forthcoming in the upcoming weeks as the government and independent researchers have access to data.

At this point, it appears as if the vaccine created by **Pfizer/Biontech**, along with the vaccine created by **Moderna** *have not been created using material of illicit origin (i.e., embryonic stem cells and/or the tissue of aborted children.)* For Catholics, this is *great* news. Theologically speaking, there are no moral or religious grounds that would restrict the consciences of Catholics from receiving these vaccines.

There have been articles and press releases that affirm that, while these above vaccines were not *created* with material of illicit origin, there is good reason to believe that these vaccines may have been *tested* (post production) utilizing the tissue of aborted fetuses. These articles and statements, therefore, conclude that it is immoral to use them. This sweeping conclusion is *inconsistent with Catholic moral teaching*.

A critical question is: “Are Catholics always forbidden to perform an action if it touches upon evil, or cooperates, somehow, with the evil action of another?” The answer is ‘no’. There *certainly* are instances when Catholics *must* refrain from immoral cooperation. However, Catholic teaching on moral cooperation makes critical distinctions (mediate/immediate, proximate/remote, etc) to determine the *degree or level to which* one cooperates in evil. In some cases, some forms of cooperation, while unfortunate, can be allowed in certain circumstances.

Unfortunately, we live in a fallen world. Dig deep enough, and one finds that many of our actions somehow touch upon evil and the evil actions of others. While the Church draws a firm line in delineating certain acts of cooperation as immoral, it does not condemn *all* actions of cooperation as such. It challenges us to be aware of evil around us, to *always* choose the option that involves less evil (or no evil), and to speak and challenge others to desist from evil. It is for this reason that the Church, in the early months of vaccine development for COVID 19, boldly challenged (and continues to challenge) researchers and the medical industry to seek moral means of vaccine production (and to reject the use of material of illicit origin that involved the destruction of unborn life).

Regarding the previous statement regarding the immorality of taking the vaccine because of immoral post-production testing, or even statements from some bishops that have forbidden vaccines derived from material of illicit origin, the following paragraph from *Dignitas Personae*, issued from the CDF under Pope Benedict XVI, offers critical (and perhaps surprising) conclusions. In speaking of the use of embryonic stem cell lines or the tissue of aborted children, the document states in no. 35: “Grave reasons may be morally proportionate to justify the use of such ‘biological material’. Thus, for example, danger to the health of children could permit parents to use a vaccine which was developed using cell lines of illicit origin, while keeping in mind that everyone has the duty to make known their disagreement and to ask that their healthcare system make other types of vaccines available.” While the statement uses the example of the danger to the health of children, the dangers of COVID-19 particularly to our vulnerable elderly or those with compromised health could reasonably be presumed as grave reason for vaccination. While the Church unequivocally condemns researchers and the medical industry for the creation, production, and distribution of vaccines produced from embryonic stem cells and from the tissue of aborted children, the *receiving* of these vaccines is in another moral category.

In conclusion, at this point there appears to be no moral issues to prohibit a Catholic from receiving vaccines produced by Pfizer or Moderna. If other vaccines are released which do have recourse to material of illicit origin, Catholic moral teaching would direct Catholics to utilize the option that is least morally problematic (i.e., the vaccines that were *not* created via such immoral means). Providentially, these two listed vaccines satisfy that criteria.



As more vaccines are produced, we recommend that you visit the following website, which provides a fairly complete list of all vaccines, and how they were produced and tested.

<https://lozierinstitute.org/update-covid-19-vaccine-candidates-and-abortion-derived-cell-lines/>

NOTE FROM FR. LEWIS: As we have seen this year there are competing sets of information in which the faithful and citizens have been asked to disseminate for themselves. Supplied here are two options of information regarding possible vaccines for COVID-19. One is the moral issue from the Catholic standpoint, the other is a list of possible health issues if one takes the vaccine, which of course, may or may not be true. It has been provided to offer a balance of ideas on the subject.

It is possible we may all agree, regardless of our personal ideologies and beliefs, that these vaccines have been produced in record time with little information of how they may effect the individual long after the vaccine has been received. Bishop Kurt has reminded his clergy that we are not medical professionals, so we should allow for each person to choose for themselves what will be most helpful for their personal situation.