

Akathistos Saturday - March 21st -

The **Akathistos** is the most beautiful hymn by which the Byzantine Church celebrates the divine motherhood of the Blessed Virgin Mary, solemnly proclaimed at the Council of Ephesus in 431 A.D. It celebrates the Virgin 's role in the mystery of the Incarnation.

The hymn soon became a hymn of thanksgiving for Mary's heavenly intercession and help, and was celebrated throughout the liturgical year. Finally, it was assigned as the special feature to the fifth Saturday of Lent, thus called the **Akathistos Saturday**.

Since the hymn was chanted while the congregation remained standing, it was named the Akathistos, meaning in Greek a non-sitting service.

The original kontakion consisted of twenty to thirty stanzas or strophes, all metrically identical, so that each strophe might be chanted to the same melody. Usually, the soloist was chanting individual stanzas, while the people responded to each stanza with a certain refrain. The kontakion form of hymnody became popular at the turn of the fifth century and was chanted after the reading of the Gospel at the Matins (cf. Byzantine Leaflet Series 1984, No. 31) with the intention to inspire and instruct the congregation.

The only original kontakion poem preserved in its entirety and used as a special service today is the **Akathistos**, the greatest literary achievement of the Byzantine Church. It combines the kontakion form of a poetic sermon of twenty-four stanzas with a series of salutations addressed to the Blessed Mother of God.

It is believed that originally the Akathistos Hymn was composed for the feast of the Annunciation, celebrated on March 25. However, the celebration of Akathistos on that day can be traced only to the tenth century, mentioned for the first time in the Mount Sinai Kontakarion. At some later date the celebration of the Akathistos was assigned to the fifth Saturday of Lent, called from that time the Akathistos Saturday. Why and when this change was made, we just don't know.

Starting with the seventh century the original introductory stanza was replaced by the present one, "For you, O Mother of God," since the Akathistos was also celebrated as a " thanks offering" to the Blessed Mother for her heavenly intercession and help. As the Thanksgiving Hymn to the Blessed Mother, it was celebrated after the "miraculous" deliverance of Constantinople from a siege in 626 AD., then again in 673 A.D. and 718 AD., as described by the Synaxarion for the Akathistos Saturday.

Although the Akathistos is one of the most famous liturgical hymns of the Byzantine Rite, nevertheless neither the time of its composition nor the name of its author have been definitively established.

The Akathistos hymn celebrates the divine motherhood of Mary in the mystery of Christ and the Church. It is used both by the Catholic and Orthodox Churches of the Byzantine tradition, and is now known and used in many Western ecclesial communities. This is one of the most beautiful hymns with which the East honors and praises the ever Blessed Virgin Mary, the Most holy Mother of God.

Source: Excerpts from: *THE AKATHISTOS HYMN OF PRAISE of the MOST HOLY MOTHER OF GOD - Byzantine Leaflet Series 1983, No. 27*

Holy Spirit Byzantine Catholic Church

360 Clinton Street, Binghamton, NY 13905

Ss. Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church

106 North Rogers Avenue, Endicott, NY 13760

March 15, 2026

Third Sunday of the Great Fast

Administrator:

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Deacon:

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Confessions: (Holy Spirit)

Sundays from 8:00am – 8:30 (Before Divine Liturgy)

Parishes Website:

<https://www.southern-tier-byzantine-catholic.com>

Bulletin: churchbulletin0@gmail.com

On-Line Giving: Please use the link below for on-line donations for Ss. Peter & Paul **OR** for Holy Spirit Church:

<https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZA77/home>

You can also scan the QR code with your phone or you can visit the Parish website for a link !



Thank you for your support of your Churches!



Akathistos Saturday

- March 21st -

✠ Liturgies for the Week of 3/14 – 3/22 ✠

SAT	Mar 14	<i>Fourth All Souls Saturday</i>	
--- No Divine Services ---			
SUN	Mar 15	<i>Fourth Sunday of the Great Fast (St. John Climacus)</i>	
	9:00 am	Holy Spirit – † Mark Joseph Cushner, 40th Day by Family	Apostol: Heb 4: 14-5: 6 Gospel: Mk 8: 34-9: 1
(Tone 7)			
	11:00 am	Ss. Peter & Paul – <i>Living and Deceased Members of Holy Spirit and Ss. Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Churches</i>	
MON	Mar 16	<i>The Holy Martyrs Sabinus and Papas (287)</i>	
--- No Divine Services ---			
TUES	Mar 17	<i>Our Venerable Father Alexis, Man of God (411)</i>	
--- No Divine Services ---			
WED	Mar 18	<i>Our Holy Father Cyril, Archbishop of Jerusalem (386)</i>	
	6:30 pm	Ss. Peter & Paul – PreSanctified Divine Liturgy – † Deceased Clergy and Monastics of the Eparchy of Passaic and the Family & Friends of the Parishioners of Holy Spirit and Ss. Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Churches.	
			
THU	Mar 19	<i>The Holy Martyrs Chrysanthus and Daria (c. 253)</i>	
--- No Divine Services ---			
FRI	Mar 20	<i>Our Venerable Fathers of the Saint Sabbas Monastery, killed by Saracens (796)</i>	
--- No Divine Services ---			
			
SAT	Mar 21	<i>Akathistos Saturday</i>	
--- No Divine Services ---			
SUN	Mar 22	<i>Fifth Sunday of the Great Fast (St. Mary of Egypt)</i>	
	9:00 am	Holy Spirit – <i>Living and Deceased Members of Holy Spirit and Ss. Peter & Paul Byzantine Catholic Churches</i>	Apostol: Heb 9: 11-14 Gospel: Mk 10: 32-45
(Tone 8)			
	11:00 am	Ss. Peter & Paul – † John & † Helen Dahulich and † Julia (Dahulich) & † James Caciola by Mary Ann and Bob Swan	



Candle Intentions: Please see the sheet posted in the Church vestibule for the Candle Intentions and Sponsors for the Month of † **March**.



All Souls Saturdays: As in previous years, we will commemorate *All Souls* with a Divine Liturgy intention or Presanctified Divine Liturgy intention and celebrate a **Panachida for each of the Five All Soul Saturdays on the Sunday that follows it.**



The Fifth and final All Souls Saturday, is May 23rd, 2026. Please submit additional names by **May 17th** to be included in the **May 23rd Panachida.** **Thank You †**



Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts: During Lent, the **Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts** will be celebrated on **Wednesdays at 6:30 pm** alternating each week between **Ss. Peter & Paul Church** and **Holy Spirit Church.** All are HIGHLY encouraged to attend and take part in these beautiful and moving prayers & chant as often as possible this **Great Lent.** †



Stephen Dean, the cantor from Ss. Peter and Paul Church, is **hosting classes** to help anyone who is interested in learning more about singing the melodies of the Divine Liturgy in the Green Book, including the eight tones, Troparions, Kontikons, and even the Prokeimenon and Alleluias. Reading of music is not required and everyone is welcome!

The Classes are **every Thursday.** **The first class of the year** will be on **Thursday, April 16th,** from **4:00 pm to 5:30 pm** at Ss. Peter and Paul Church.



Can & Bottle Drive – Ss. Peter and Paul will be having a **Can & Bottle Drive** scheduled for **Saturday, April 11th.** Please begin saving your Cans & Bottles for them. You can drop off your bagged or boxed empties at the church parking lot between **11:00 am – 3:00 pm on April 11th.** No sorting is necessary.



Holy Spirit Church 50/50 Raffle: The **winner of February's 50/50 Raffle** is: **Rex Decker**  Congratulations Rex! The total entered for November was \$76.00 and Rex won \$38.00 !! Rex, please contact **Daria Shierly** at eagle27endwell@gmail.com or 607-760-1892 regarding your winnings. **Thank you to everyone for your support!**



2026 Financial Statements Financial “giving statements” are ready at Ss. Peter and Paul & Holy Spirit Churches. For Ss. Peter & Paul, please contact Cantor Steven Dean. For Holy Spirit, parishioners can email Fr. Steven at: stnybyzantine@gmail.com.

Thank You for your Generosity in 2025! †

