

Icons Show the Human Face of God

In recent months my Sunday reflections have frequently focused on our Christian brothers and sisters of the East. Wishing as it were to embrace their rich tradition of faith in a single glance, today I would like to refer once again to the sense of mystery which is apparent in their icons. The East and the West vie with each other to put their art at the service of the faith.

But from the East, where icons had to be defended with bloodshed in the iconoclast crisis of the eighth and ninth centuries, comes a particular call jealously to preserve the religious nature of this art. It is based on the mystery of the Incarnation, in which God chose to assume a human face. In the last analysis, sacred art seeks to transmit something of the mystery of that face.

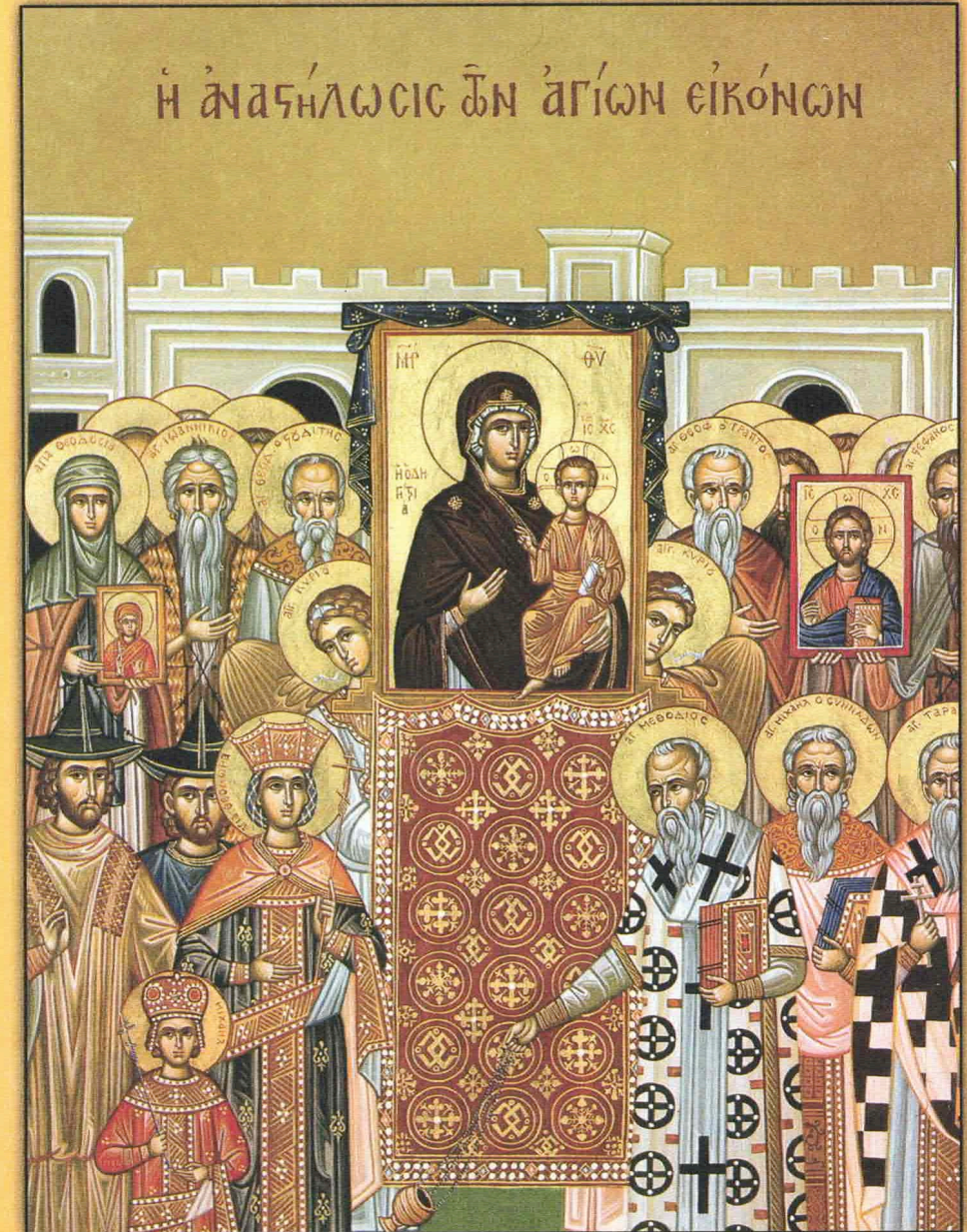
This is why the East firmly insists on the spiritual qualities which must characterize the artist, to whom Simeon of Thessalonica, the great defender of Tradition, addresses this important exhortation: "Teach with words, write with letters, paint with colors, in conformity with Tradition; the painting is true, as is the writing of books; and the grace of God is present in them, because what is represented there is holy."

By contemplating icons in the whole context of liturgical and ecclesial life, the Christian community is called to grow in its experience of God, and to become more and more a living icon of the communion of life between the Three Divine Persons.

Pope John Paul II

FIRST SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY

Ἡ ἀναθήλωσις τῶν ἁγίων εἰκόνων



Icon of the Holy Images



PATRONAGE OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH - BALTIMORE

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Divine Liturgy Schedule: Saturday, February 21st; at 4:00pm

PATRONAGE CHURCH SERVICES SCHEDULE

Date	Time	Service	Intention
1 st Sunday of the Great Fast/ Sunday of Orthodoxy 2.22.2026	9:00am	Divine Liturgy Blessing of Icons	For the Repose of the Soul of: +Dorothy Gaydos Offered by: Daniel Gaydos
Friday 2.27.2026	6:00pm	Presanctified Liturgy 2 nd All Souls Panachida	Reading of the Hramoty
2 nd Sunday of the Great Fast 3.1.2026	9:00am	Divine Liturgy	For the Repose of the Soul of: +Dorothy Gaydos Offered by: Ray, Suzy, Taylor & Neil Byers

Sunday of Cheese Fare

The Propers for today can be found on page 141, Tone 4, then page 220, in the Divine Liturgy book.

HOLY MYSTERY OF REPENTANCE: Confession is available beginning an hour before Divine Liturgy, and ending 15 minutes before the start of services.

HOLY EUCHARIST AND VISITATION OF THE SICK: Eucharist can be brought to a parishioner who is ill, in the hospital, or at home. You can request a visit by either sending our church an email, or contacting either Fr. Vasyl or Deacon Tony, personally.

Slava Isusu Christu! Slava na viki! Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever!

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER: The people of Ukraine, that peace may be soon be restored to their land, our parishioners, the founders of our parish, our benefactors, those who are sick, and those who cannot make it to church. Also, Fr. Vasyl Symyon, Charlie Toth, Larissa Toth, Tony Kotlar, Jr., Mary Hrinda, Michael Demyan, Michael Skovran, Mary Ann Ondrish, Betty Charlock, Elizabeth Hresko, John Hanyok, Ann Marie Elwell, James DeWolfe, Clara Valeika, Joe Belensky, Kay Dinko, Doris Ruszin, Veronica Ruszin, Anna Martin, Joseph Repasi, Mary Jo Kelly Wilhelm, Howard Guba, Melanie Copper, Julie Wiegand, Natalie, Edin, and +Walter Lourdes Najera Herder, Mark and Betsey Herder, our first responders, and all military service men and women throughout the world. Please help us keep our prayer list up to date. Let us know if we need to remove or add a name by sending an email to our church.

*May our Lord Jesus Christ, the Physician and Healer of souls and bodies,
grant them peace and good health for many blessed years!*

STEWARDSHIP: You honor God and our Church by continuing to tithe each week. An offertory basket is on the table in the back of our Temple for your weekly donation. You may also mail your donation to our church, or donate using Tithe.ly online at: <https://tithe.ly/give?c=2346733>. The link is also on the first page of our website. **“Remember then, it is the Lord, your God, who gives you the power to acquire wealth” (Dt. 8:18).**

1ST SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST/SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY: Children in ECF will be participating in the Procession of Icons prior to the beginning of Divine Liturgy today. Fr. Vasyl will also be blessing Icons.

ADULT ENRICHMENT: Our next session will be after Divine Liturgy today. Please join us!

PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY: Please join us during The Great Fast on Wednesday evenings at St. Gregory of Nyssa in Beltsville at 7:00pm, and Friday evenings at Patronage of the Mother of God at 6:00pm, for Presanctified Liturgy.

ECF LENTEN SERVICE PROJECT: ECF is collecting monetary donations to benefit Holy Annunciation Monastery (founded in 1977) located in Sugarloaf, PA, for this year’s Lenten service project. This monastery of Ruthenian Catholic Nuns is part of our Eparchy of Passaic. We are currently planning a visit to the monastery on **Saturday, April 25th**. More details to follow. If you would like to support our Lenten service project, please place your donation (cash or check made payable to: Patronage Church) in the marked white poor box in the back of our church. Donations will be accepted through Sunday, March 29th. Thank you for your generosity! Visit www.byzantinediscalcedcarmelites.com, for more information about Holy Annunciation Monastery.

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 will be spiritually nourishing experience. All Catholics may receive the Eucharist if you are in good standing and prepared. We receive the Body and Blood of Christ in our mouth by spoon. Please DO NOT stick out your tongue. **If you would like to become an active part of our parish community, be added to our email list, and register as a parishioner,** please complete a “Census” form. Forms are located on the bookrack in the Narthex, or on our website, and can either be mailed to our church, or placed in the offertory basket in the back of our Temple. On-line donation information can be found under “Stewardship” in this bulletin.

“My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples” (Isaiah 56:7).

Reflection from Mount St. Macrina, Uniontown, PA

By: Sister Barbara Jean Mihalchick, OSBM,
Sisters of St. Basil the Great

“Put on the heart, mind of Christ”

Glory to Jesus Christ!

We live in an age of images. I wonder how many images we see in the course of a day? Uncountable, perhaps.

This Sunday, we celebrate Holy Images – icons – because once upon a time there was a great discussion and feud over whether it is OK to paint the image, especially, of Jesus and, of course, the Holy Ones.

After many, many struggles about this it was realized that because Jesus came and lived in the flesh – lived among humanity and was seen as one of us – yes, it is proper to have icons.

Icons over many centuries serve the role of teaching the people the truth of the Faith and the Gospel. We even put on our icon screens the Holy Moments of the lives of the Mother of God and of Jesus Christ.

In our Sunday prayers, we read the Kontakion, which says it all so beautifully and succinctly: Consider how this prayer links to this moment. How can it help our Lenten experience?

O Mother of God, through you, in the incarnation, the indescribable Word of God became describable. For through the Divine Goodness, the Word spoken from eternity became an image. May we, who believe in salvation clothe ourselves in the same image both in word and in deed.

For me, that last line speaks to what we are about in this Holy Season. St. Paul wrote it as “put on the mind and heart of Christ.” This says “clothe ourselves in the same image (that is, of Christ) both in word and in deed.”

As we reflect during these Holy days, it’s good to ask ourselves concrete questions: Are my words reflecting the words of a Christ-believing person? Are my ways the kind that Jesus encourages of us; that Jesus modeled and showed us and invited us into?

For this, we have this special and spiritual season.

Let us pray for one another that in word and in deed we become more and more like the image of Jesus. Let Him show us everything about how to live. God bless you!

+++++

THE PRAYER OF ST. EPHREM

Lord and Master of my life, spare me from the spirit of indifference, despair, lust for power, and idle chatter.

Instead, bestow on me, your servant, the spirit of integrity, humility, patience, and love.

Yes, O Lord and King, let me see my own sins and not judge my brothers and sisters; for you are blessed forever and ever. Amen.

**Having Suffered the Passion for Us, Jesus Christ, Son of God,
Have Mercy, Have Mercy, Have Mercy on Us!
Preterp’ivyj Za Nas Strasti, Isuse Christe, Syne Bozij,
Pomiluj, Pomiluj, Pomiluj Nas!**

Children's Corner

1st Sunday of the Great Fast/Sunday of Orthodoxy

The significance which icons possess in the Byzantine Catholic Church are an important part of our faith and devotion. The inside of our church is covered with icons on its walls and Iconostasis. Icons were removed and not present in churches for over 150 years. Then in the year 843, the Christian Empress Theodora said that icons should be brought back into the churches because they showed holiness. There was a big procession where the icons were carried into the church by many people. We venerate icons, and we worship the persons they depict, as they are spiritual windows through which we see the Heavenly Saints. They tell us the story of what happened in the events they depict. As a picture of a loved one helps us to keep him or her close to our heart, so too do the icons help in our prayer to be in the presence of God, to feel close to Him, the Mother of God, and all the saints and angels. They help us to know that God, the Theotokos, and the saints and angels are always close to us. The Sunday of Orthodoxy commemorates the "restoration" of icons in the churches.



THE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC LITURGICAL PRACTICE OF OBSERVING "ALL SOULS" SATURDAYS: Please join us for our next "All Souls" service, with the reading of the "Hramoty," on **Friday, February 27th, at 6:00pm.**

PATRONAGE CHURCH'S SLAVIC FOOD FESTIVAL: Our festival is on **Saturday, March 28th,** from 10:00am – 2:00pm. This is one of our biggest fundraisers, and the proceeds help offset improvements/repair costs for both our church and rectory. Below is a list of things that will currently help benefit our festival:

1. We are looking for donations of the following: 30lbs/**walnuts**; 1-50lb/bag of **flour**; and 20lbs/**kluski noodles**. Please contact Mary Demyan (mdemya1@verizon.net), if you would like to donate any of these items. Please provide a receipt with your donation, and ensure your name is on it.
2. If you would like to make a monetary donation to help offset the cost of purchasing other supplies for our festival, please make your check payable to: Patronage Church, and note in the memo that it is for our festival. Cash will also be accepted. You can either mail your donation to the church or place it in the offertory basket.
3. The deadline for pre-orders is **Friday, March 20th**. If you need an order form, you can find them on the kitchen counter in our social hall. You can also visit the church's website (patronagechurch.com), and place an order online. Completed forms can either be mailed to our church, or placed in the offertory basket.
4. We will be making Kolachi on **Wednesday, March 25th,** beginning at 9:00am (lunch will be provided). Lots of volunteers are needed!

Any monetary or donated items made towards our festival will be included with your yearly church contributions. Your generosity is greatly appreciated!

2026 BYZANTINE CATHOLIC YOUNG ADULT CONVOCATION: This summer, encounter "*The Heart of the God-Bearer*," on July 31st to August 2nd, at St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church in Hillsborough, New Jersey. Young adults ages 18-35 will gather for fellowship, communal praying of the Liturgy of the Hours, and talks from speakers like Mother Natalia of *Christ the Bridegroom Monastery* and co-host of the *What God Is Not* podcast and Very Rev. Paul Varchola West, MFA, MDiv of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, Levittown, PA; host of the "*Building Athos in Our Hearts Podcast*;" and "*Spiritual Father of the Springs in the Desert ministry*." Join us for three days of faith, friendship, and transformation. For more information and regular updates, go to <https://www.heartofthegodbearer.org/>. Online registration is open from now until June 30th! Not a young adult? Contact us if you're interested in helping sponsor scholarships to help the young adults in our Church grow and share their faith!

PATRONAGE RECTORY: Thank you to those who cleaned the 1st and 2nd floors of our rectory on Tuesday. Your efforts were greatly appreciated!

in preparation for **The Great Fast 2026**
regulations for the season

The fasts of the liturgical year are to be kept in accordance with the
Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic.

simple abstinence

- The law of simple abstinence forbids the use of meat, but permits the use of eggs and dairy products.
 - All faithful of the Eparchy who receive the Eucharist are obliged to observe simple abstinence when prescribed.
- Abstinence is obligatory on all Wednesdays and Fridays of the Great Fast.

strict abstinence

- The law of strict abstinence (fasting) forbids the use and consumption of all meat, eggs and dairy products.
- All faithful of the Eparchy who receive the Eucharist are obliged to observe strict abstinence when prescribed.
- Strict abstinence (fasting) is to be observed in 2026 on Pure Monday, February 16th (the 1st day of the Great Fast), and on Great and Holy Friday, April 3rd.



Our Countdown to Great Lent Calendar 2026

Pre-Lenten Weeks of Preparation

Get ready! Here comes the Great Fast!

Start here!

23/30

It's not just about food! Prepare your prayer plan too! Will you attend Presanctified Liturgy? Say the Jesus Prayer? etc?

22/29

Don't fall out of your tree! Make sure your plan is practical and safe. Discuss it with your parents and/or your Spiritual Father first.

21/28

When you climb YOUR tree this lent, will others try to pull you down? Surround yourself with supportive friends.

20/27

Make a plan for fasting and discuss it with your family. Try to do one more thing than you did last year!

19/26

Zacchaeus worked hard to see Jesus. Pray for the grace to make a good effort this Lent!

January - 18/25

Zacchaeus Sunday:

Establish your plan and get ready to climb! Review your eparchy's rules for fasting and discuss what this will look like in your home.

Ask your parents what they expect from you this lent. Make a Zacchaeus Tree Cinnamon Roll! See the recipe and instructions at ByziMom.com!



24/31

Remember to make a plan to give alms to those who are less fortunate! How will your family do that this lent?

January 25/February 1:

Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee:

Work on humility and feast! Did you know that we are expected NOT to fast at all this week? Even on Friday! It's true! We need to practice humility by doing so, and also get rid of all the goodies in our pantries this week. Make Publican and Pharisee Cookies! See the recipe and instructions at ByziMom.com!



26/2

FEAST!

Begin to eat up the treats you have stored in your pantry and refrigerator so they won't tempt you.

27/3

FEAST!

Discuss with your family which foods are allowed and which are not during the fast, and why.

28/4

FEAST!

Which activities will you fast from and which will you begin to do during the fast?

29/5

FEAST!

Humility is also simplicity. Will you simplify your environment by taking down decorations in your house or your room for the fast?

30/6

FEAST!

The Pharisee boasted while the Publican humbled himself. Practice the Jesus Prayer today.

31/7

FEAST!

We all need to cultivate the virtue of humility, which means seeing ourselves as God does. Pray for this grace today.

February 1/8
Sunday of the Prodigal Son:

Work on mercy and forgive your neighbor. Remember, the son returned and fell prostrate before his father to beg forgiveness. We do this before our Heavenly Father too, when we make prostrations in prayer.



2/9

Do you know how to make prostrations like the Prodigal Son? You may want to practice them!

3/10

Is there someone who has made you angry? Show them forgiveness today to prepare for the fast.

4/11

The Prodigal son took his father for granted. Go to your parents today and tell them how much they mean to you.

5/12

The Prodigal Son was so hungry he longed to eat animal food. Make a plan to donate some food to those who are in need.

6/13

The Father rushed to greet his son when he repented. Be eager to forgive those when they ask you to do so.

7/14

Today is the first All Souls Saturday: Pray for the Departed!

Make a list of those departed of your family for whom you will pray this Lent



February 8/15

Sunday of Meatfare/Last Judgment:

What can you do for the least of your brethren? Listen carefully to this Gospel reading because it contains the answers to the very final, Final Exam of life! This is how we will be judged before God and it's important that we get it right. Make Lamb Cupcakes! See the recipe and instructions at ByziMom.com!

12/19

Bad habits imprison those who cultivate them. Do you have any bad habits that you want to be free from? Make a plan to work on those during the fast.

13/20

Make a card or say a prayer for those you know who are ill. Sometimes just knowing someone cares can help them heal and feel better.

14/21

Whatever you do for the least of your friends, you do for Jesus! Do a good deed for someone today.

February 15/22
Cheesefare/Forgiveness Sunday
The Great Fast begins tomorrow!

Ask forgiveness of everyone in your household so that you may begin the fast tomorrow with a clean and humble heart!

11/18

People who are ashamed often can't forgive themselves. Be quick to forget the shame of others and never bring it to anyone's attention.

10/17

Can you welcome any strangers in your church, school, group, or neighborhood?

9/16

People hunger and thirst for all sorts of things like love, patience, or understanding. How can you satisfy them?

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PATRONAGE OF THE MOTHER OF GOD BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

1260 Stevens Avenue, Baltimore (Arbutus), Maryland 21227

Parish Census: 2026

please print legibly

FAMILY LAST NAME: _____ Married: ___ Single: ___ Widowed: ___ Separated: ___ Divorced: ___

Street Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: _____

HUSBAND'S or SINGLE MALE'S GIVEN NAME: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____ Occupation: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Place of Birth: _____

Church of Baptism/Chrismation: _____ City: _____ State: _____

STATUS: ***Eastern Rite Tradition***

_____ Byzantine Ruthenian

(please check One) _____ Byzantine Ukrainian

_____ Byzantine Melkite

_____ Other Eastern Catholic
Please specify: _____

_____ Eastern Orthodox
Please specify: _____

Western Rite Tradition:

_____ Roman Catholic

_____ Protestant
Please specify: _____

_____ Other
Please specify: _____

Transfer of Rite Date: _____

Transfer of Rite Church: _____

WIFE'S or SINGLE FEMALE'S GIVEN NAME: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____ Occupation: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Place of Birth: _____

Church of Baptism/Chrismation: _____ City: _____ State: _____

STATUS: ***Eastern Rite Tradition***

_____ Byzantine Ruthenian

(please check One) _____ Byzantine Ukrainian

_____ Byzantine Melkite

_____ Other Eastern Catholic
Please specify: _____

_____ Eastern Orthodox
Please specify: _____

Western Rite Tradition:

_____ Roman Catholic

_____ Protestant
Please specify: _____

_____ Other
Please specify: _____

Transfer of Rite Date: _____

Transfer of Rite Church: _____

MARRIAGE: Date: _____ Church Name: _____ City: _____ State: _____

If widowed, give date of death of spouse: _____

If separated, give date of separation: _____

If divorced, give date of divorce: _____ Previously Married to: _____

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CHILDREN LIVING AT HOME (please attach another sheet of paper, with the following information, if you need to add additional names):

(1) NAME: _____ Date of Birth: _____ City: _____ State: _____

Church/Date of Baptism: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Date of Chrismation: _____ Date of First Communion: _____ Year in School: _____

(2) NAME: _____ Date of Birth: _____ City: _____ State: _____

Church/Date of Baptism: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Date of Chrismation: _____ Date of First Communion: _____ Year in School: _____

(3) NAME: _____ Date of Birth: _____ City: _____ State: _____

Church/Date of Baptism: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Date of Chrismation: _____ Date of First Communion: _____ Year in School: _____

(4) NAME: _____ Date of Birth: _____ City: _____ State: _____

Church/Date of Baptism: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Date of Chrismation: _____ Date of First Communion: _____ Year in School: _____

CHILDREN NOT LIVING AT HOME (please attach another sheet of paper, with the following information, if you need to add additional names):

(1) NAME: _____ Date of Birth: _____ City: _____ State: _____

Street Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Church/Date of Baptism: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Marriage Date: _____ Name of Spouse: _____ Location: _____

(2) NAME: _____ Date of Birth: _____ City: _____ State: _____

Street Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Church/Date of Baptism: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Marriage Date: _____ Name of Spouse: _____ Location: _____

(3) NAME: _____ Date of Birth: _____ City: _____ State: _____

Street Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Church/Date of Baptism: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Marriage Date: _____ Name of Spouse: _____ Location: _____

DEMOGRAPHICS:

Do you want to receive the Eastern Catholic Life (ECL) \$20/year (Y or N): _____ Do you want to receive Offertory Envelopes (Y or N): _____

Do you use Tithe.ly (Y or N): _____ Do you prefer to donate by Check/Cash Donation (Y or N): _____

Current involvement of Patronage Church organizations (list): _____

Areas of interest for involvement at Patronage Church: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____