

Our Community

St. Mary's Parish provides for the spiritual needs of Eastern Christians in the Manassas area. All are welcome to worship with us without regard to ethnic heritage or ecclesial ascription. As members of the same parish, not only do we worship God together, but we strive to help one another in other ways, both spiritually and practically.

The Byzantine Rite

✙ The Byzantine Rite, a tradition of prayer, liturgy, and devotion is used by the Ukrainian Catholic Church. Some marks of this tradition are the three-bar cross, like the one atop our church; frequent bowing and signs of the cross during liturgy; and icons throughout the church and in the home.

Sign of the Cross

Byzantine Catholics cross themselves from right-to-left with the thumb, index, and middle fingers touching (representing the Holy Trinity) and the ring and little fingers touching the palm (representing Christ's human and divine natures). The sign of the cross is used often during the liturgy (each time the Holy Trinity is named) and prayer.



The Divine Liturgy

The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom is used during most of the year (during the Great Fast (Lent) and Feast of St. Basil, the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great is celebrated). The entire liturgy is chanted/sung.

The text of the liturgy can be found in the small, black books in the pews. During the liturgy, hymns called the Troparion and Kontakion are sung, as are other responses that may change with the feast day celebrated. These can be found on printed handouts at the entrance.

The Eucharist

The Eucharist is given under both the consecrated bread (leavened) and wine. When approaching:

- Tell Father your name
- Tilt your head back and opening your mouth wide
- Father will use the Communion Spoon to place the precious Body and Blood of Jesus in your mouth
- Please do not touch the spoon with your lips or tongue
- There is no spoken response after receiving communion

You may notice that small children and infants also receive communion. This is permitted in the Ukrainian Catholic Church when the child has been baptized and received Chrismation (Confirmation), which occur together for infants.

Parish History

In 1918, Catholic immigrants of Byzantine and Latin rites built a church to worship together in Minnieville.

- 1925 St. Mary's parish is founded.
- 1929 St. Mary's Church is built.
- 1949-1955 Confessional and sacristy built.
- 1950 Church property deeded to the Philadelphia Exarchate.
- 1953 Cemetery cross dedicated.
- 1955-1968 Iconostas built and altar donated.
- 1968-1971 Brick exterior is applied; choir loft and interior entrance renovated.
- 2017-2018 New steeple cross raised and sacristy renewed.

Throughout St. Mary's history, the faith, love, and care of the faithful have built and sustained this parish. We are grateful for the dedication of the clergy, who have travelled, and continue to, across Virginia and Maryland to minister to those who worship here.

The Iconostas



The iconostas is a screen that separates the sanctuary from the nave of the church. There are three doors: the Royal Doors, in the middle (which only the priest may use), and the two deacon doors. There is much meaning in the iconostas, both in the icons and the use of the doors. On the iconostas, there are four large icons (from left to right):

- St. Nicholas
- The Theotokos (Mary, Mother of God) with Christ
- Christ Pantocrator (Ruler of All)
- Patron Icon (Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary)

There are 12 icons along the top of the iconostas, which depict the Twelve Great Feasts. On the Royal Doors, there are four small icons of the Evangelists.

The Tetrapod

In front of the Royal Doors is a small table called a 'tetrapod,' upon which are candles, a crucifix, and an icon of the Annunciation (or the major feast being celebrated). Parishioners, upon entering and leaving the church, may reverence the icon and crucifix by crossing themselves, bowing, and kissing them.