

December 27, 2020  
Sunday after the Nativity

Memory of David, Joseph & James - Protomartyr, Archdeacon Stephen



SAINT GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

*Fighting the Good Fight with Faith*

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

Divine Services for the Week:

SUN., DEC. 27      SUNDAY after CHRISTMAS, Memory of David, Joseph & James  
PROTOMARTYR, ARCHDEACON STEPHEN  
8:30 A.M.      DIVINE LITURGY, *Panachida*, (40<sup>th</sup> day of passing of Alice Haber and Rose Valiga)  
+ Alice Haber, requested by Darlene and John Simunick

*(At St. Mary: Thursday, Dec, 31, 6:00 PM, Vespers Divine Liturgy for Circumcision/St. Basil)*

SUN., JAN. 3      SUNDAY before THEOPHANY  
8:30 A.M.      DIVINE LITURGY  
+ Loretta Mudron, requested by Richard Mudron

Fugitives with Christ

Even as He came in swaddling clothes we see a tyrant raging, a flight ensuing and a departure beyond the border. For it was because of no crime that his family was exiled into the land of Egypt. So do not be troubled if you are suffering countless dangers. Do not expect to be celebrated or crowned promptly for your troubles. Instead you may keep in mind the long-suffering example of the mother of the Child, bearing all things nobly, knowing that such a fugitive life is consistent with the ordering of spiritual things. You are sharing the kind of labor Mary herself shared. So did the Magi. They both were willing to retire secretly in the humiliating role of fugitive.  
*(St. John Chrysostom)*

Happy Birthday Greetings This Week:

December 27: Phyllis Ozimok, December 29: Louisa Hersh, January 2: Sandra Stewart

Wedding Anniversaries this Week:

None for the week

Please Pray For Our Sick and Shut-ins

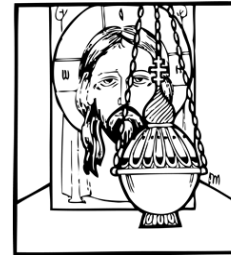
HOME – Eileen Batcha, Rebecca Dickun, Marianne Dove, Jean Herdt, Rebecca Hutcheon, Kevin Joray, Mary Ann Jugan, Neil Jugan, Josephine Maruhnich, Mary Salamon, John Simunick, Bonnie Taylor

Hunter's Care Home (1916 Main St, Aliquippa, PA 15001) – Mary Poiarkoff

Epistle Readers - Dec. 27: JoAnn Hersh – Jan. 3: Reaghan Cody

Ushers– Stand in as needed

Troica Holders – Dec. 27: Francis Hersh– Jan. 3: R. Mudron



THIS WEEK'S SANCTUARY LAMP  
December 27, 2020 – January 2, 2021  
*Burns before the real presence of our Lord for:*  
+ Bob Fedell  
*(In loving memory)*  
Offered By:  
Wife, Eleanor

*Your regular attendance and sacrificial offerings benefit the overall welfare of our Parish*



**Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel:** Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the malice and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly host, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan and all evil spirits who wander through the world for the ruin of souls. Amen.

*Christ is Born! ~ Glorify Him!*

Christ is Born! ~ Glorify Him!

During the celebration of Christmas, it is our custom to greet one another with the joyous exclamation, “Christ is born!” to which the one greeted responds, “Glorify Him!

**Fast and Privileged Week** - According to our Church tradition the week following the Nativity of Christ (December 25 - January 4) in our Church calendar is dedicated to this Feast Day, therefore we enjoy the “privileged week” during which the laws of abstinence from meat on Friday do not oblige.

E	D	E	E	G	A	M	O	H	T	
C	H	L	K	I	D	E	T	S	E	
H	T	I	I	N	I	H	A	A	G	
I	N	H	N	H	H	E	S	T	E	
T	A	R	G	F	C	L	O	R	A	
A	F	R	O	I	E	H	A	A	M	
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E	I	M	D	R	S	E	R	R	H	
S	K	E	T	A	D	B	D	Y	I	
A	R	B	E	T	L	E	M	E	M	

BETHLEHEM

EAST

INFANT

KING

STAR

HOMAGE

LEADER

DATE

CHILD

DELIGHT

GOLD

MYRRH

**He became man** – Jesus is said to have progressed in wisdom and age and grace, because He did increase in age and by this increase in age brought more into evidence the wisdom inherent in Him. By making what is ours altogether his own, He made His own the progress of people in wisdom and grace, as well as the fulfillment of the Father’s will, which is to say, man’s knowledge of God and his salvation. (St. John of Damascus in "On the Orthodox Faith")

**A Note from Father Geoff**

Dear Brothers and Sisters,  
Christ is born! Glorify him!

I hope that your Christmas Day celebrations were full of the joy and peace of the Lord! As we continue to celebrate the great mystery of the Incarnation of our Lord, we also are coming upon the civic New Year celebration. It’s a time when many people will be reflecting on the past twelve months and making plans and resolutions for the coming year.

This past year brought us a lot that we could not have foreseen. A pandemic that has affected millions of lives in our country and around the world. Racial unrest the streets of many of our cities. And an election that has disclosed just how divided our country remains on many ethical, economic, and social questions. Some of us lost loved ones this year. Some lost jobs. Many are alone. Many have had to figure out how to work from home, while at the same time overseeing the education of their children who cannot be in school. Many of the aspects of our lives that we took for granted have been altered.

Some of us may be happy to say “goodbye” to 2020. But the Lord has been present to us even throughout the struggles and frustrations of the year. There is an old adage: **Bidden or not bidden, God is present.** He is always present to creation and most especially to those of us who are called by his Name. While we are not without our wounds and brokenness, he has brought us to this day and that, in itself, is proof of his grace.

As we look forward to 2021, some may be excited and hopeful. Others look forward to the new year with trepidation and anxiety: What new challenges will it bring? But if Christmas tells us anything, it tells us that God does not leave us alone, even in our lowest times. The Christmas story is a story of God becoming truly human, truly one of us. And in doing so, he has united the earthly and the heavenly, the human and the divine. In becoming matter, he glorified matter. He raised up the “stuff” of this earth and made it possible for us to have mystic, sweet communion with God and with one another.

We are members of the Church, the Body of Christ. This mystical fellowship transcends all our other allegiances and memberships. It is a haven of refuge for us when we are tossed about by anxieties or fears. And it is a sign – a *sacrament* – of the Kingdom of God which is to come in its fullness.

So, as we look forward to 2021, we can look forward with confidence, knowing that our God, “who loves us all,” is very near. He has promised not to leave us without a Comforter, the Holy Spirit (John 14.15-16). And that Spirit will lead us into all truth (John 16:13). Jesus told us that, though we will have trouble in this world, “Be not afraid! I have overcome the world!” (John 16:33)

Sisters and brothers, let us “lift up our hearts” during this holy season, and give thanks to the Lord for the innumerable blessings he has given us. And in confidence, let us face the year to come: *Anno Domini* 2021, the Year of our Lord.

In sure and certain hope in Jesus,  
*Fr. Geoff*

## ***Sunday after the Nativity of Christ***

*When the wise men departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him."*

On this Sunday our Holy Church commemorates three people who were close to Our Lord Jesus Christ. First of all, His ancestor, the holy King and Prophet David, who foresaw the coming of Christ in his Psalms.

Secondly, we recall the Righteous Joseph the Betrothed, who protected the Mother of God and her Child before, during, and after His birth.

Thirdly, we remember the son of Joseph, James, who accompanied the Mother of God, Christ and Joseph on the flight into Egypt, and later became one of the Apostles and indeed was martyred as James the Righteous, the first Bishop of Jerusalem.

It is interesting to recall to non-believers the words of the Gospel regarding this Flight into Egypt, and how Joseph was commanded to “take the young child and his mother into Egypt”. We note how the Scriptures clearly does not call Christ, “Joseph’s son”, or his mother, “your wife”. Again the Scriptures say that all this was to fulfill the words of the Scriptures: “Out of Egypt have I called my son”, and not, “out of Egypt have I called Joseph’s son”.

As we see in Holy Scripture, Joseph is bewildered both by the message of the Angel and by what is happening; bewildered - at time in wonder, and at time in doubt. Isn’t this an image of many of us? But how did he face his doubt and still remain in wonder? Because he believed; because he accepted the fact that there are many things which cannot be understood with the intellect, but can be perceived, which can be experienced. And he did, indeed, experienced what was going on. He saw the Virgin birth, he saw the presence of the God Who had become man. And what is our way, how can we find our way towards God? On this Sunday let us think of Righteous Joseph between wonder and doubt; and when we are in the same position, let us not only concentrate on our doubt, but look with wonder at the impossible, unthinkable that is God’s way in our midst. Amen.



## **Circumcision of our Lord, January 1**



On the eighth day of the feast of the Nativity, which also happens to be the first day of the civil New Year, the Church celebrates the Lord's circumcision and His receiving the name Jesus, which means savior.

And at the end of eight days, when He was circumcised, He was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. (Lk 2:21)

This day is also the anniversary of the death of St. Basil the Great, whose memory is part of the liturgical feast.

*The Lord of all accepts to be circumcised; Thus in His mercy He circumcises the sins of mortal men. Today He grants the world salvation, While Basil, high priest of God our creator, Rejoices in Heaven as the radiant star of the Church.*

According to the Church's liturgy, the Lord underwent circumcision in order to fulfill the Law of Moses, which no one had been able to fulfill before. In performing "everything according to the law" (Lk 2:39), the Messiah finds it fitting "to fulfill all righteousness" (Mt 3:15). In this sense He is the fulfillment of the law and the prophets; not only by doing what was written of Him, but also by doing all things that everyone should do if they truly fulfilled the Word of God.

*From The Winter Pascha, by Fr. Thomas Hopko*

## ***Happy New Year!***

*Bless us, O Lord, and bless the time and seasons yet to come. Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain wisdom of heart. And fill this New Year with Your kindness that we may be glad and rejoice all the days of our life.*

## **Excerpt from Christ Our Pascha: The Promise of the Messiah’s Coming**

**“God Became Human that Humans Might Become God”:** Saint Gregory of Nyssa teaches that God’s “descent to the humility of the human race [i.e., kenosis] is a kind of superabundant exercise of power, which thus finds no check even in directions which contravene nature.”<sup>142</sup> In the kenosis of God, “the Word became flesh and ‘shared in flesh and blood just like us.’”<sup>143</sup> In the Jordan, the sinless Son of God accepted baptism—as a sinner; under Pontius Pilate he was sentenced with criminals; by crucifixion he descended into the abyss of human suffering and death, to find the first Adam (human being) in Hades, the land of the dead. (#180)

***Christos Raždajetsja! ~ Slavite Jeho!***



SAINT GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH



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**Cantors: Jo Ann Hersh, David Klacik,  
Louisa Hersh**

**E.C.F. coordinator: Jo Ann Hersh  
Facilities Supervisor: John Poiarkoff**

- Holy Mystery of Reconciliation ..... Before and after Liturgies
- Holy Mysteries of Initiation ..... Contact the church office
- Holy Mystery of Anointing ..... Ask prior to surgery or serious illness
- Holy Mystery of Marriage ..... Contact the church office eight months prior to wedding
- Religious Education Classes ..... September through May, following Sunday Divine Liturgy
- St. George Ladies' Guild & Men's Club ..... Everyone welcome to participate



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*Christ is Born! Glorify Him!*