

December 26, 2021

Sunday after the Nativity, Synaxis of the Theotokos,
Feast of the Relatives of the Lord: Joseph, James, and King David



SAINT GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Fighting the Good Fight with Faith

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

Propers for this Sunday: Resurrectional Tone 6: pg. 152 & For the Nativity: pp. 302 - 305

Divine Services for the Week:

SUN., DEC. 26 **SUNDAY after THE NATIVITY, Synaxis of the Theotokos**
8:30 A.M. **DIVINE LITURGY**
+ Sr. Rose Elizabeth, offered by Sr. Mary Virginia

(At St. Mary: Monday, Dec. 27, 9:00 AM, Divine Liturgy for St. Stephen Holy Day)

FRI., DEC. 31 **CIRCUMCISION of our LORD, ST. BASIL, Anticipated**
6:00 PM **VESPERAL DIVINE LITURGY**
+ Philomena Rossi, offered by Yolanda Barbuto

SUN., JAN. 2 **SUNDAY before the THEOPHANY**
8:30 A.M. **DIVINE LITURGY**
+ Margaret Raychevich, offered by Francis & Connie Hersh

Heaven and earth are united today, for Christ is born! Today God has come upon earth, and man has gone up to heaven. Today, for the sake of man the invisible one is seen in the flesh. Let us glorify Him and cry aloud: "Glory to God in the highest! The peace of His Birth to the entire earth! O Savior, glory to You!"

St. John the Monk

Happy Birthday Greetings This Week:

December 27: Phyllis Ozimok, December 29: Louisa Hersh

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, Mary Salamon, John Simunick

Ann Trombulak – **Rochester Manor:** (174 Virginia Ave., Rochester, PA 15074)

Josephine Maruhnich – **Beaver Elder Care** (616 Golf Course Road, Aliquippa, PA 15001)

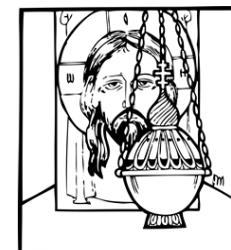
Betty Polas – **Apple Blossom Senior Living** (125 Apple Blossom Wy, #307, Moon Twp., PA 15108)

Carol Huchko – **Concordia at Villa St. Joseph** (1040 State St, Baden, PA 15005)

Epistle Readers – Dec. 26: JoAnn Hersh – Jan. 2: Louisa Hersh

Ushers – Stand in as needed

Troica Holders – Dec. 26: F. Hersh – Jan. 2: M. Bobanic



THIS WEEK'S SANCTUARY LAMP

December 26 – January 1, 2021

Burns before the real presence of our Lord for:

Maggie Tkatch

(Health & God's Blessings)

Offered By:

Kathy Kapaldo



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

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.

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)

Synaxis of the Mother of God On the second day of Christmas, the Christian East gives glory and thanksgiving to the Most Holy Theotokos, who gave birth in the flesh to our Lord, God and Savior, Jesus Christ. On this day the Church points to Mary as the one through whom the Incarnation was made possible. His humanity is the humanity He received from Mary. His body is, first of all, her body. His life is her life. This feast is probably the most ancient feast of Mary, the very beginning of her veneration by the Church.



E	D	E	E	G	A	M	O	H	T	BETHLEHEM
C	H	L	K	I	D	E	T	S	E	EAST
H	T	I	I	N	I	H	A	A	G	INFANT
I	N	H	N	H	H	E	S	T	E	KING
T	A	R	G	F	C	L	O	R	A	STAR
A	F	R	O	I	E	H	A	A	M	HOMAGE
D	N	Y	L	A	L	T	A	S	O	LEADER
E	I	M	D	R	S	E	R	R	H	DATE
S	K	E	T	A	D	B	D	Y	I	CHILD
A	R	B	E	T	L	E	M	E	M	DELIGHT
										GOLD
										MYRRH

A Note from Father Geoff

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The celebration of the civic New Year is often a time for people to reflect on the past and make plans or resolutions for the year ahead. In these past few years, so much has changed in our society - politically, socially, economically - that it's become almost impossible to try to try to guess what the future holds.

And it's not just the last few years that have seen such drastic changes. I lived my childhood and youth in a pre-9/11 world and a world before cell phones. I remember when few people had access to computers. Some of you remember a time before television. And my grandfather was born before automobiles were common. Now, with the touch of my cell-phone screen, I can video-chat with my godson on the West Coast or friends in the Middle East. I can deposit a check into my bank account from my sofa. And I can order a book and have it delivered in 24 hours. If news happens on the other side of the globe, we hear about it immediately.

Our world today changes so rapidly - for good and for ill. New technologies have saved countless lives and improved the lives of many more. On the other hand, there is still so much violence, degradation, poverty, and cruelty in the world. Our communication has never been more efficient ... *or* more divisive.

As we stand on the brink of 2022, if you're anything like me, you may have mixed feelings of both hope and fear, excitement and concern. There are few guarantees in this life. But one thing *has* been guaranteed, and it's the best news that we could be given: **"I will never leave you or forsake you,"** our Lord has promised (Hebrews 13.5)

We have not been promised that we would be spared from danger, sorrow, sickness, or trouble. Quite the opposite, actually. Jesus said, "In this world, you will have trouble." But he follows that up immediately with: **"But take heart! I have overcome the world."** (John 16.33) He promised his disciples, **"Remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age"** (Mt. 28.20).

There's an old gospel hymn I remember from my childhood, the last stanza of which goes,

*I don't know about tomorrow, it may bring me poverty;
but the One who feeds the sparrow is the One who stands by me.
And the path that be my portion may be through the flame or flood,
but His presence goes before me, and I'm covered with His Blood.
Many things about tomorrow I don't seem to understand;
but I know who holds tomorrow and I know who holds my hand.
(Ira F. Stanphill)*

Friends, the future may be unknown. But we have truly Good News! We can enter into the future with confidence; not because we have guarantees of success, comfort, or security, but because we have a loving and merciful Lord who has promised to always be with us.

May this coming year bring for each of us an increased sense of our Lord's compassionate presence. For he has not left us to ever face the world alone.

Christ is born!
Glorify him!

Sincerely,
Fr. Geoff

Sunday after the Nativity of Christ

LET US FOLLOW THE MAGI

In the nativity narrative of St. Matthew, we are introduced to the shadowy and mysterious figures known as the Magi, or Wise Men, "who studied the stars and came from the East to Jerusalem." (2:1). If we are willing to reflect for a moment, I think that we can catch glimpses of ourselves in the journey of these men. In a deep sense, they reflect the many dimensions of our own individual journeys of faith.

It is not difficult to imagine the many real dangers of their long journey. The resistance of their families, the efforts of colleagues to discourage them, the unbearable heat and freezing nights of the deserts they crossed, the danger of marauding thieves. And yet, they felt impelled to answer the call of the beckoning Star of Bethlehem, to worship the new-born King and lay their gifts at his feet. In this act of faith and obedience, "how happy they were, what joy was theirs!" (2:9). Finding the child "they knelt down and worshipped him. They brought out their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, and presented them to him." (2:11).

In this same way, that Star calls each of us to begin a life long journey to meet Jesus Christ, to acknowledge Him and make Him a part of our lives. In doing so, however, we need to acknowledge with honesty and forthrightness the difficulty of following Christ. But as with the Magi, we must undertake the journey knowing of its difficulty.

In the Christian life, discouragement comes in many forms. There is discouragement when it seems our prayers are not answered; when we work with honesty and integrity, but see others, who cut corners, prosper and advance; when we endure personal separation and loss, and when we need compassion and affirmation, and they are not to be found.

But through the mystery of faithful obedience, the Magi offered themselves and their gifts to Christ, transcending at that moment the difficulties and discouragements of their journey. And having met Christ they were changed men, and went home by another route, symbolizing their confidence and trust in the new direction their lives had taken. And to the wise men and women of every age, this same opportunity is given each Christmas when the star returns again, to shine anew in the heart of each of us.

- Rev. Andrew Demotses



Christos Raždajetsja! ~ Slavite Jeho!

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!



How shall we approach this great mystery, our Savior born in time, a Virgin giving birth, God born as man? We might ask a thousand questions, searching for details and explanations and clarifications. It is a reasonable question after all; "How can this be?"

Recall a child's wonder in this season of giving. He might inquire how Santa knew that he really needed a bicycle, and however did he manage to carry it in a sleigh? But a child knows that love made it possible.

As children of a heavenly Father, all our answers come with a simple reply. "It is by the power of the Holy Spirit." What do you wish to know about the Christmas feast? What question will you ask your angel? The answer is found in accepting that this feast is a celebration of the power of the Holy Spirit, who has accomplished such a wonderful miracle. The Spirit of Love, the Lord of Life, the Spirit of Power has overshadowed our world, and the Virgin conceived, the cave is illumined, and a world transformed. The questions may be many, but the answer is One. "It is by the power of the Holy Spirit!" A profound confidence in the Spirit of God will calm our restless mind, our searching reason, our yearning soul. Glory be to the life-giving Spirit, our answer and our hope.

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

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Cantors: Jo Ann Hersh, Louisa Hersh, David Klacik 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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