



St. Michael the Archangel Orthodox Church

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America

2300 W. Huntington Drive, Wilmington, Delaware 19808 • (302) 995-6775

Sunday December 17, 2017 28th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 3. Sunday of the Forefathers. Holy Prophet Daniel and the Three Holy Youths: Ananias, Azarias and Misael (600 B.C.). Ven. Daniel the Confessor, in schema Stephen, of Spain and Egypt (10th c.).

This Week's Schedule

Wednesday 12/20 Small Paraklesis 6:30 p.m.

Friday 12/22 Royal Hours for the Nativity 9:00 am

Saturday 12/23 Forefeast of Nativity Great Vespers 5:00 p.m.

Sunday 12/24 **Eve of Nativity** Divine Liturgy 9:00 a.m.

Parish Holy Supper 5:00 p.m.

Nativity of our Lord Vigil 6:30 p.m.

Monday 12/ 25 **The Nativity of our Lord**

Divine Liturgy 9:00 a.m.

Reader Schedule

<u>DATE</u>	<u>3RD HOUR</u>	<u>6TH HOUR</u>	<u>EPISTLE</u>
Dec 17	WALES	WALES	WALES
Dec 24	RILEY	RILEY	RILEY
Dec 25	NATIVITY OF CHRIST		
Dec 31	SOUDER	SULPIZI	BRASOWSKI

Hymns and Prayers

Tone 3 Troparion *(Resurrection)*

Let the heavens rejoice!
Let the earth be glad!
For the Lord has shown strength with His arm.
He has trampled down death by death.
He has become the first born of the dead.
He has delivered us from the depths of hell,
and has granted to the world//
great mercy.

Tone 2 Troparion *(Forefathers)*

Through faith You justified the Forefathers,
betrothing through them the Church of the gentiles.
These saints exult in glory,
for from their seed came forth a glorious fruit:
she who bore You without seed.//
So by their prayers, O Christ God, have mercy on us!

Tone 6* **Kontakion** *(Forefathers)*

You did not worship the graven image,
O thrice-blessed ones,
but armed with the immaterial Essence of God,
you were glorified in a trial by fire.
From the midst of unbearable flames you called on God, crying:
“Hasten, O compassionate One!
Speedily come to our aid,//
for You are merciful and able to do as You will!”

Tone 4 Prokeimenon *(Song of the Fathers)*

Blessed are You, O Lord God of our Fathers, and praised and glorified is
Your Name forever! *(Song of the three Holy Children, v. 3)*

v: For You are just in all that You have done for us! (v. 4)

Epistle Colossians 3:4-11 (*Forefathers*)

When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth.

Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

Tone 4

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

v: Moses and Aaron were among His priests; Samuel also was among those who called on His Name. (Ps 99/100:6)

v: They called to the Lord and He answered them. (Ps 99/100:6)

Gospel Luke 14:16-24 (*Forefathers*)

Then He said to him, "A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.'

But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.'

And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.'

Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.'

And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.'

Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.

'For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.'"

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens! Praise Him in the highest! (*Ps 148:1*)
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

This Week's Announcement

Nativity Parish Holy Supper Holy Supper is a pious tradition from the Christian faithful of various Eastern European regions. The supper is observed on the eves of our Lord's Nativity in the flesh and His baptism by Saint John in the Jordan River. The meal is a fasting meal with 12 courses representing Christ's twelve apostles. We will once again have a Parish Holy Supper on the Eve of Nativity. We will begin at 5:00 p.m. followed by Nativity Vigil at 6:30 p.m. All are welcome to join us.

Service Schedule for Nativity The schedule for the feast of the Nativity of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ will be as follows: Friday December 22nd Royal Hours for the Forefeast of Nativity at 9:00 a.m. Sunday December 24th, Parish Holy Supper at 5:00 p.m. followed by the Vigil for the Nativity of our Lord at 6:30 p.m. Then on Christmas morning Monday December 25th at 9:00 am Divine Liturgy for the Nativity followed by coffee for those who wish to stay. Please be sure to make plans now to be with us for this blessed feast of our Lord.

Winter Coat Collection Please consider offering any new or used, coats, gloves, hats, or hand warmers to those in need this winter. Please see Rashid Elia if you would like to donate.

Paraklesis this Week Small Paraklesis will continue this Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. Please consider making a commitment to be a reader or to learn and help offer the responses. Come be a part of the mid-week service of supplication.

Family Promise Please help cook, serve a meal and eat with homeless families Mon. Jan.8, Tues. Jan. 9, and Thurs. Jan. 11, at St. Philips Lutheran church 5320 Limestone Road, Wilmington, DE 19808. Family Promise helps homeless families find jobs, training and homes and has a 83% success rate of keeping them in homes after more than one year. We need to share our hope, compassion, smiles and encouragement with them and especially their children. Please sign up on board in narthex. see Ellen Gundersen 610.388.0695 or puffins1000@gmail.com.

St. Michael's and Amazon At this time of year, we begin buying gifts for our friends and family. This is just a reminder that if you purchase items from Amazon.Com, St. Michael's could benefit from your purchases. Amazon Smile will give St. Michael's a small rebate for every purchase you make if you use the address below. This address is specific to St. Michael's so it is easy to use. So far this year, we have received over \$130. Just type the address into your web browser.
<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/05-0545881>

Bookstore Nativity Gifts Our Parish Bookstore will be having a sale over the next few weeks. Stop by to purchase gifts for those on your Christmas list.

81st Novogodny Ball The Novogodny (New Year's) Ball will take place on Sunday 1/14/18. The Ball is a benefit for Orthodox Christian & other deserving charities. For info & reservations email novogodnyball@gmail.com or call Andre Cox at 215-290-4542.

2018 DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY The 2018 Diocesan Assembly will be held January 25-26, 2018 sponsored by St. Michael the Archangel Church. We will need help with the preparations, the food, hospitality, and cleanup. We will also need help with the singing of the responses for the divine services. Please Jeff Kendall if you are able to help.

Study Group this Week Our study group continued this past Thursday with the book "Courage to Pray," by Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh. The study group will meet this Thursday morning Dec. 21st from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Our weekly study group will take its annual Christmas / Theophany break (Dec28 and Jan 4)so that we can all spend some time with family and friends. All are encouraged to come for continued Adult Education.

Itching Ears

Saint Paul expresses his concern about people being led away from the true faith in 2 Timothy 3:16-4:4. This passage is one of the readings for December 12.

The seriousness of Paul's concern is evident in the way he tells Timothy to "preach the word, be urgent in and out of season, convince, rebuke and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching." Knowing that he himself is destined in the near future to face death for the faith, Paul places this big responsibility on the much younger man.

In the next verses, Paul reveals the reasons for his worry. He warns Timothy that a time is coming when people "will not endure sound teaching." Paul knows that some people will find the challenge of living by Christian teachings too difficult, which is why they will not or cannot endure those teachings. Some Bible translations use the words "put up with" or "tolerate" in place of "endure," but the meaning is the same. It is these people who are described by Paul as having "itching ears." They want to hear something novel, and will seek teachers who "suit their own likings." These teachers will let them "turn away from listening to the truth and wander into myths."

In the verse that follows this day's reading, Paul tells Timothy to "be steady" and "endure suffering." If a person stays steadily on the course of Christian truth, Paul is saying, suffering will inevitably follow. There are many with "itching ears" who reject, ridicule and persecute both the truth and the teachers who profess it.

On December 21 we read the final verses of this second letter to Timothy (4: 9-22). Here Paul describes a person who gave in to the temptation of "itching ears." He writes about Demas, who had been his companion and fellow worker. Now Paul must sadly admit that "Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica." Though we don't know the details of Demas' work with Paul, he must have been a valued helper who had once been attracted by the Gospel. But its requirements were too much for him, and he listened to other voices that promised an easier, less demanding path. He was willing to abandon the way of life that he had shared with Paul and those who worked with him. The end of the letter shows how much Paul valued companionship, and how painful a desertion like that of Demas must have been. He asks Timothy twice to join him, and to make sure he arrives before winter. He affectionately names faithful believers who have supported him. To hearten Timothy, he includes greetings from specific people and from "all the brethren."

Paul is well aware that these brethren, like Demas, could be tempted by "itching ears" to listen to false teachers promising a pleasant life. So he

places all his friends in God's care with his final words: "The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you."

This weekly bulletin insert complements the curriculum published by the Department of Christian Education of the Orthodox Church in America. This and many other Christian Education resources are available at <http://dce.oca.org>.

Wisdom from the Holy Fathers

"Elder, I am in a very difficult situation. I have carnal thoughts and they cause me sorrow. I am afraid that I shall never escape this predicament."

"Have courage, my good child, and Christ will win in the end. Just chant 'From my youth has the enemy tempted me; he scorches me with pleasures, but with my trust in You, Lord, I drive him away'... In essence, it is not the poor flesh that is to blame, but pride. It is true that you have many capabilities - which of course were given to you by God - but, because you have been a little negligent and are not careful, the enemy grabs the opportunity, he exploits them and thus casts you into pride. And instead of bathing your countenance with tears of joy and gratitude towards God, you bathe it with the bitter tears of pain and worry. We thus extract the following conclusion: If we do not humble ourselves voluntarily, we shall be humbled involuntarily because the Good Lord loves us. So, take courage my child, and Christ will be the victor. 'Even if you prevail, you will again be defeated, for God is with us.' This is just a storm and it will pass and will bring much good. You will get to know yourself much better, you will be humbled necessarily and, according to spiritual laws, the Grace of God will also come to you - which was previously hindered on account of pride.

We have not tried to learn about ourself. If we get to know it, our soul will rejoice and will humbly ask for God's mercy. Knowing ourselves will beget humility. Because the more a person gets to know himself, the more the eyes of his soul will open and he will see his vast weakness all the more clearly. He becomes aware of his own wretchedness and ingratitude, as well as God's infinite nobility and compassion, and he is crushed internally; he is humbled exceedingly, and he eventually comes to love the Lord even more.

-Saint Paisios

Prayers for the Departed: Archpriest Stephen Mack, Archpriest Wsevolod Drobot, Protodeacon Keith Russin, Matushka Martha Ermikov, Matushka Marie (Gambal) Kreta

Prayers for the Sick and Those in Need: Fr. Joseph Chupeck, Fr. Josef Petranin, Fr. John Nightingale, Fr. Deacon James Carpenter, Mat Julia Petranin, Mat. Ellen Chupeck, Mat. Jennifer Franchak, Mat. Lisa Weremedic, Matushka Myra Kovalak, Lemlem Resat, Peter Melnik, Olga Riley, Marie Holowatch, Marie Karawulan, Barbara Hicks, JamesHicks, Anna Herko, Zack Bajuyo, Luke & Anna Wales, Nona Carey, Mona Elia, Lydia Kendall, Maria and Doug Dozier, Mary Anne Farrell, Catalina(Mary) & Jeremy (John) Finck, John Griffith, Cynthia Griffith, Benjamin, Charles, Patrica, Lubov, Marilyn Coyle, Alfred Mokhiber,

Prayers for Women and the Child to be born: Mary (Misty) Robinson, Elizabeth Brasowski, Laura Cristina Najemy, Maria Peck, Rachel Facaros, Leah Reed

Prayers for Catechumens: Stephanie Smiertka Riley

Date	<u>Coffee Hour</u>	<u>Service Duty</u>	<u>Church Cleaner</u>	<u>Library</u>
17-Dec	Gerassimakis /Bunitsky	Bunitsky/Lewis	Baldychev/Shatley/Syavri	Syavri
24-Dec	Eve of Nativity	Elia/Morjana	Suplizi	Skomorucha
31-Dec	Whalen /Clause//Bisrat	Riley	Riley	Maloney

Church School Reminder

Dec 17 Class/Church Decorating	ALTAR SERVER SCHEDULE	
Dec 24 No Class Nativity Eve	Dec-17	Andrew
Dec 31 No Class Nativity/ Theophany Break	Dec-24	Rafael
Jan. 7 No Class Nativity/ Theophany Break	Dec-25	NATIVITY All servers
	Dec-31	Roel