
St. Michael the Archangel Orthodox Church

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Sunday December 22, 2019 27th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 2. Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ. Sunday before the Nativity. Great Martyr Anastasia, “Deliverer from Bonds”, and her teacher, Martyr Chrysogonus, and with them Martyrs Theodota, Evodias, Eutychianus, and others, who suffered under Diocletian (ca. 304).

This Week's Schedule

Tuesday 12/24 Eve of Nativity Royal Hours 9:00 a.m.

Parish Holy Supper 5:30 p.m.

Nativity Vigil 7: 00 p.m.

Wednesday 12/25 The Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ

Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.

Saturday 12/28 Great Vespers 5: 00 p.m.

Sunday 12/29 Hours 8:40 a.m.

Divine Liturgy 9:00 a.m.

followed by Coffee Hour

Reader Schedule

<u>DATE</u>	<u>3RD HOUR</u>	<u>6TH HOUR</u>	<u>EPISTLE</u>
Dec 22	DORAZIO	BUNITSKY	LEWIS
Dec 25	NATIVITY OF CHRIST		
Dec 29	RILEY	RILEY	RILEY

Hymns and Prayers

Tone 2 Troparion *(Resurrection)*

When You descended to death, O Life Immortal,
You destroyed hell with the splendor of Your Godhead.
And when from the depths You raised the dead,
all the powers of heaven cried out://
“O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to You!”

Tone 2 Troparion *(Fathers)*

Great are the accomplishments of faith,
for the three Holy Youths rejoice in the fountain of flames as though in
the waters of rest;
and the Prophet Daniel appeared
a shepherd to the lions as though they were sheep.//
So by their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls!

Tone 4 Troparion of the Forefeast

Prepare, O Bethlehem, for Eden has been opened to all!
Adorn yourself, O Ephratha, for the Tree of Life blossoms forth from the
Virgin in the cave!
Her womb is a spiritual paradise planted with the Divine Fruit;
if we eat of it, we shall live forever and not die like Adam.//
Christ comes to restore the image which He made in the beginning.

Tone 1 Kontakion *(Fathers)*

Rejoice, O Bethlehem! Prepare yourself, O Ephratha!
The Lamb is on her way to give birth to the Chief Shepherd she carries in
her womb.
The God-bearing Forefathers will rejoice, beholding Him,
and with the shepherds, they will glorify the Virgin nursing Him.

Tone 3 Kontakion *(Forefeast)*

Today the Virgin comes to the cave
to give birth to the Eternal Word.
Hear the glad tidings and rejoice, O universe!
Glorify with the Angels and the shepherds

the Eternal God, Who is willing to appear as a little child!

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 Youths*, v. 2)

v: *For You are just in all that You have done to us.* (v. 3)

Epistle Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40

(Sunday before Nativity)

By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.

By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff.

By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones.

By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command.

And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment.

They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being

destitute, afflicted, tormented – of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

Tone 4

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

v: We have heard with our ears, O God, for our fathers have told us. (Ps 43/44:1)

v: For You have saved us from them that oppose us, and have put to shame them that hate us. (Ps 43/44:7)

Gospel Matthew 1:1-25 (Sunday before the Nativity)

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham: Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brothers.

Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Ram. Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon.

Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David the king. David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah.

Solomon begot Rehoboam, Rehoboam begot Abijah, and Abijah begot Asa.

Asa begot Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat begot Joram, and Joram begot Uzziah. Uzziah begot Jotham, Jotham begot Ahaz, and Ahaz begot Hezekiah.

Hezekiah begot Manasseh, Manasseh begot Amon, and Amon begot Josiah. Josiah begot Jeconiah and his brothers about the time they were carried away to Babylon.

And after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, and Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel.

Zerubbabel begot Abiud, Abiud begot Eliakim, and Eliakim begot Azor. Azor begot Zadok, Zadok begot Achim, and Achim begot Eliud.

Eliud begot Eleazar, Eleazar begot Matthan, and Matthan begot Jacob. And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ.

So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, from David until the captivity in Babylon are fourteen generations, and from the captivity in Babylon until the Christ are fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.

Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly.

But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins."

So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying:

"Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which is translated, 'God with us.'"

Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens! Praise Him in the highest! (*Ps 148:1*)
Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous; praise befits the just! (*Ps 32/33:1*)
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

This Week's Announcements

Service Schedule for Nativity The feast of the Nativity of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ will be Tuesday December 24th Royal Hours for the Nativity at 9:00 a.m., Parish Holy Supper at 5:30 p.m. followed by the Vigil for the Nativity of our Lord at 7:00 p.m. Then on Christmas morning Wednesday December 25th at 9:30 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.

Nativity Parish Holy Supper Holy Supper on Nativity eve 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 5:30 p.m. followed by Nativity Vigil at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome to join us. Please see Juliana Peck or Matushka Daria to help

Study Group Nativity Break Our study group continued this past week with four of us finishing chapter 8 in the Gospel of St. Matthew. Our Study group will take a break for the feasts of Nativity and Theophany. We will resume Thursday Jan. 9th at 10 :00 a.m.

Parish Directory We are currently updating the church directory in preparation for 2020. We are asking parishioners to review the directory in the Vestibule and to make any necessary changes. For new members, or members not currently listed and would like to be included, please add your information--name(s), address, telephone number(s), email address and also birth date(s) for the Birthday List.

**ARCHPASTORAL MESSAGE OF HIS BEATITUDE METROPOLITAN
TIKHON NATIVITY OF OUR LORD 2019**

*To the Honorable Clergy, Venerable Monastics, and Pious Faithful of the
Orthodox Church in America,*

*My Beloved Brethren and Blessed Children in the Lord,
Christ is born! Glorify Him!*

As we celebrate the Birth of Jesus Christ in the flesh, and His baptism in the River Jordan, we call to mind the important roles that his mother, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, and his Forerunner, John the Baptist, had in bringing about these events that manifested Christ to the world. For the Theotokos and the Baptist are indeed excellent examples for us, as we share their same calling to make Christ present in the world.

When Mary received the glad tidings that she was to become the Birth-giver of God, she humbly responded: "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to thy word." She then visited her relative Elizabeth, who was six months pregnant, and when she greeted Elizabeth, the babe in Elizabeth's womb leaped for joy. This babe, as we well know, was Saint John the Baptist, the Forerunner of Christ.

The importance of John the Baptist in the Gospels cannot be overemphasized. As the Forerunner of Christ, he not only proclaimed that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, but also died a martyr's death for speaking the truth, foreshadowing that Christ, the Truth, would die for the Salvation of the world. In dying for the truth, John is not only the Forerunner to Christ, but also the Forerunner to all those who have died for Christ throughout the centuries, the countless martyrs

who have struggled and been slain for Christ for more than two thousand years. Some Christians are still called to this level of witness, to this level of dying in martyrdom for the sake of Christ. The twentieth century saw more Christian martyrs than any century beforehand, in places such as Russia, Romania, and Turkey. The twenty-first in turn is seeing many Christian martyrs in places like Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Syria. We pray for strength and steadfastness for all Christians suffering persecution for the sake of Christ, and in turn we ask for the intercessions of those who have died martyr's deaths in witness of Christ. Yet certainly, not all Christians are called to be slain for Christ, to be beheaded like John the Baptist or many of the later martyrs. Neither are all called to be like the Baptist as public preachers or wandering ascetics. For those who do not have the Baptist's calling, another route is provided: the calling to live like the Virgin Mary. For while John made Christ known to the world, it was through the Virgin Mary that Christ came to be born in the flesh. She is the Theotokos, the bearer of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the same way, Christians can "bear Christ" and make Him present. Instead of preaching God's works across hills and dales, we can keep them close and ponder them in our hearts (see Luke 2:19). By thus meditating on God's works, we will become authentically humble, gentle, and kind like Mary. And in this process of contemplating what Christ has done for us, we will gain boldness before Him in our private conversations with Him. Forging a personal relationship with Christ, we will have boldness to ask Him and His servants for what is needed, just as Mary His Mother did at the wedding in Cana.

These two great figures, John the Baptist and Mary the Theotokos, thus help us grapple with a perennial problem of Christians: how do we keep the winter feasts of the Nativity and Theophany meaningful throughout the year? The Church's calendar points us to the solution: the day after the Nativity of the Lord, December 26, is dedicated to the Lord's Mother, and January 7, the day after the Theophany of the Lord, is dedicated to the Lord's Forerunner. Hence the Church tells us that imitation of the Forerunner and the Theotokos are the keys to making Christ's winter feasts more than just a few days of celebration. The Baptist shows us the way of outward witness, of forceful and defiant objection to the falsehood propagated in the world, while the Theotokos shows us the way of inner stillness, of contemplation of the mystery of Christ. And Christians can imitate the lifestyle of either one, because ultimately both John and the Theotokos are doing the same thing: both are witnesses to Christ, and steadfastly remain eternal witnesses to His death and resurrection.

So, give glory to Christ on the feasts of His Nativity and Theophany, while honoring and magnifying in song the Theotokos and Mother of the Light, and praising the Baptist as is his due. For they reveal to us the different ways in which Christians can witness to Christ, and are our primary examples of how to live a Christian life, not only at this festal season of Nativity and Theophany, but throughout the entire year.

Christ is born! Glorify Him!

With love in the New-Born Christ,

+ Tikhon Archbishop of Washington Metropolitan of All America and Canada

Prayers for the Departed: Peter Melnik, Michael Sinovich, Marie Karawulan, David Rex

Prayers for the Sick and Those in Need: Fr. John Zabinko, Fr. Joseph Chupeck, Fr. Josef Petranin, Fr. John Nightingale, Fr. Deacon James Carpenter, Mat. Ellen Chupeck, Lemlem Resat, Olga Riley, Barbara Hicks, James Hicks, Anna Herko, Luke & Anna Wales, Nona Carey, Maria & Doug Dozier, Mona Elia, Mary Anne Farrell, John Griffith, Cynthia Griffith, Lubov Baldychev, Stephanie Hojnicky, Laura Cristina Najemy, Harry Kutch, Dimitrios Jim Petrides, Albert Shock, Elizabeth Melnik, Alexandra Grishin, Sam Sylvest

Prayers for Catechmens Kristin Mackenzie, Edward Jones

Date	<u>Coffee Hour</u>	<u>Service Duty</u>	<u>Church Cleaner</u>
22-Dec	Bacuta/Fravel	Riley/Riley	Clause/Whalen
29-Dec	Shatley/Hines	Sulpizi/Finck	Skomorucha/Lewis/M Kiflemarian
5-Jan	Bacuta/Fravel/Riley	Hojnicky/Najemy	S. Peck
12-Jan	Stephanie P/Grishin/Afoworkis	Telep/Baldychev	N. Carey
19-Jan	Hojnicky/Flynn/Roberts	Bunitsky/Morjana	Baldychev/Shatley/Sylvest

Upcoming Dates to Keep in Mind

Theophany Jan. 6th

Entrance of our Lord into the Temple Feb. 2nd

Important Dates for 2020

Great Fast Begins.....March 2

Holy Pascha..... April 19

Ascension.....May 28

Pentecost.....June 7