



# ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH



*A Parish of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese, Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople*

Father Dave Urban, *Pastor*

Very Reverend Father John Brancho, *Pastor Emeritus*

Subdeacon Ryan Ferko

Timothy Martin, *Reader*

Matthew Peifer, Stephen Brancho, & John Radick, *Cantors*

Lawrence Martin, *Parish Council President*

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January 7, 2022

Volume VII

## The Feast of the Nativity, according to the Flesh of Our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ

**Christ Is Born!** (respond with: *Glorify Him!*)

**Christos Raždajetsja!** (*Slavite Jeho!*)

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**NATIVITY COMMEMORATIONS** (remembered at Proskomedia [The Preparation Prayers])

**Incense For Censer (Kadilo)** For The Health Of The Pavilonis, Huron, Neimer, And Knoll Families

**Charcoal For Censer & Vespert Loaves** In Memory Of +Anthony & +Dorothy Horbal

And +Joseph & +Anna Shuster

**Festive Oil** For The Health Of The Horbal Family

**Prosporan (Eucharistic Bread)** For The Health Of The Martin Family

**Sacramental Wine** In Memory Of The Departed From The Martin Family

**6 Candles In Candelabras** In Memory Of +Nicholas & +Anna Buhonick

**6 Decorated Candles On Altar** In Memory Of The Departed From The Sanger Family & Friends

**2 Candles On The Altar** For The Health Of Our Parish Family & Friends

**2 Candles On Preparation Table** For The Health Of The Hudak Family

**Altar Server Candles & 4 Iconostasis Candles** For The Health Of The Shuster Family

**2 Decorated Candles On Tetrapod** In Memory Of +Olga Radick

### SERVICES FOR THE WEEK

**PLEASE WEAR A MASK FOR ALL SERVICES**

\*\*\* **FRIDAY, JANUARY 7**

*FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD*

The Adoration of the Magi:

Melchior, Caspar, and Balthasar

9:15 am - Nativity Canon & Carols (*Kol'ady*)

9:30am Divine Liturgy and Parish Family Photo

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\*\*\* = **FAST FREE** (*Sviatki* – “*Holy Days*”)   
until the eve of *Theophany*

\*\*\* **SATURDAY, JAN. 8** – 2<sup>ND</sup> *DAY OF CHRISTMAS*

Afterfeast of the Nativity

Synaxis of the Theotokos

9:30am Divine Liturgy

Panachida for +Daniel Gavulich (1-year),

+John Gido, the Priest (40-day), Pani +Eleanor

Polanichka (40-day)

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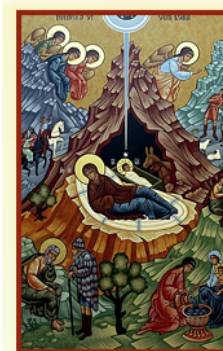
\*\*\* **SUNDAY, JANUARY 9** – 3<sup>RD</sup> *DAY OF CHRISTMAS*

29<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

Afterfeast of the Nativity

Sunday of the Holy Ancestors

Holy Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen



## The Great Feast of the Nativity of Christ

**“A mystery I behold which is strange and wondrous: the cave  
is Heaven and Virgin is the throne of the Cherubim; in the  
confines of the manger is laid the Infinite, Christ our God...”**

**A WARM WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS!**

**Christ is Born!**

(responded with: *Glorify Him!*)

**Christos Raždajetsja!** (*Slavite Jeho!*)

**We are happy** that you have joined us today! It is our  
pleasure to have you in our presence this morning and we  
wish God's Blessings to all who visit with us today and hope  
you stop again soon! **If you have any questions** in regards  
to our worship or Orthodoxy, please see Fr. Dave.

**BULLETIN IS OFFERED:**

In memory of

+Daniel Gavulich

(1-year anniversary)

May he be remembered in  
God's memory forever!

**Dear Family of St. John's,**

**Christ Is Born!** (*Glorify Him!*) **Christos Raždajetsja!** (*Slavite Jeho!*)

May the joy of this season strengthen us! We have completed the Nativity Fast and so let us celebrate in these  
“Holy Days” (*Sviatki*). As the calendar year 2021 fades away, and the year 2022 has dawned, may the Light of  
the Nativity of our Lord shine brightly in your soul and strengthen your faith. Let us beseech God to bless each of  
us in the coming year with every good thing - this year and always!

*With Love in Christ,*

*Maria, Sophia, Paňi Alexandra, and Father Dave (and Snoopy)*

9:15 am - Nativity Canon & Carols (*Kol'ady*)

9:30 am - Divine Liturgy

Epistle: Galatians 1:11-19

Gospel: Matthew 2:13-23

Tone 4; Liturgical Color: **Gold**

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\*\*\* **THURSDAY, JAN. 13**

Leavetaking (*Apodosi*) of the Nativity of Christ

St. Peter Mogila, Metropolitan of Kiev (1646)

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\*\*\* **FRIDAY, JANUARY 14**

*FEAST OF THE CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD*

St. Basil the Great (379)

9:30am Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

Panachida Paňi +Emily Molchany (25-year)

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\*\*\* **SUNDAY, JANUARY 16, 2022**

30<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday before the Baptism of our Lord

Forefeast of the Theophany

Prophet Malachias (400 B.C.)

“Sanctity of Life Sunday”

9:20 am Theophany Canon; 9:30 am Divine Liturgy

Epistle: 2 Timothy 4:5-8

Gospel: Mark 1:1-8

Tone 5; Liturgical Color: **Gold**

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**Live-Broadcast** – If you are unable to attend church on Sunday morning, please pray along with our Cathedral’s services online at **9:00 am.**  
[www.acrod.org/organizations/cathedral/live/](http://www.acrod.org/organizations/cathedral/live/)

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**Future Services** are listed on our online “Parish Calendar” which is continually updated at:  
[www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar](http://www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar)  
(Please ask Fr. Dave if you want a printed copy)

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**BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS**

(Please have submissions to Fr. Dave by Wed.)  
**Seasonal Christian Greeting** - The greeting used in church for the period from the Nativity until Theophany is “Christ is born!” with the response “Glorify Him!”.

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**2022 Envelopes** – Due to a delay at the printer (too many churches requested their envelopes during the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2021), our 2022 envelopes have not arrived yet. They should be here by Theophany.

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**Additional Church Curators Needed** – A synonym for *curator* is *steward*. Our curator list needs expanded! If anyone is interested in being a *steward of their time* and be “on-the-door”, please see Larry Martin or Theresa Sharpless.

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**Greeting Cards** – Please repurpose your [greeting cards](#) and [prior church calendar icon tops](#) after the season concludes. The collection box is in the vestibule for the *Holy Transfiguration Monastery*. Thank you for giving back!

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**Prayer requests** – During the Great Entrance of the Divine Liturgy, prayers are said for the sick and those celebrating special occasions listed in the bulletin. If silent prayers are requested, they will be offered quietly at the altar at all services. All those listed in the “Prayer Corner” are prayed for during the Proskomedia (*Preparation of the Bread and Wine for Communion*). Prayer requests will remain for (about)

40 days unless requested otherwise. Please let Fr. Dave know if you wish to make additions or subtractions (in the case of answered prayers) to our parish prayer list.

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**Bulletin Sponsor opportunities** – The sign-up sheet is in the vestibule to sponsor a bulletin in 2021. If you are not back in church yet, but would still like to sponsor, please notify Fr. Dave. If you wish to sponsor a bulletin In Honor of (anniversary, birthday, etc.) or In Memory of someone, please do so by signing up on the sheet in the church hall or by contacting Fr. Dave (email, text, or call). An additional stewardship offering to the Church is requested. *Remember, sponsoring a bulletin in memory of someone does not replace having a Panachida (a short Memorial Service) for them.*

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**Speaking With Your Priest** - Please know you can call me anytime if there is something troubling you. It is not a sign of weakness to share something that may be heavy on your heart or mind. As a priest and Father to our parish, I am here for you. Please call if you need someone to listen or to pray with you. Every heart has a cross and you do not need to carry it alone. Please also call if you have an idea for the growth of our parish. I am praying for you and am grateful for your prayers. With love in Christ, Fr. Dave

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**Congratulations!** to Meredith and Ryan Blobner and their families on the birth of **Molly Rose Blobner** born on 12/27 at 8:27 am (9 lb 14 oz and 22 in). Welcome to our Parish Family!

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**Protecting Veil of the Theotokos of Pittsburgh Icons** – *In the generosity of St. Nicholas, thank you to the anonymous donor of additional icons of the Protecting Veil of the Theotokos of Pittsburgh for every household of the parish! If you did not get an icon last year, please see Fr. Dave or Larry to take yours home today. May God bless all of the homes where the icons are going!*

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**1-year of On-Line Giving** – *We have had the option of on-line giving from our parish website now for a year! The best option is to come to church and give*

*your offering to God in His Temple. But you can also donate from your home and set up a recurring donation.*

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**Looking FURTHER Ahead...**  
**Some 2022 dates of interest:**  
➤ Jan. 18 - *A Day of Strict Fasting*  
➤ Jan. 19 - 9:30am Divine Liturgy with the Great Blessing of Water on the Feast of the Theophany of our Lord  
➤ Jan. 20 - 9:30am Divine Liturgy on the Feast of the Synaxis of St. John  
➤ Jan. 27 - 9:30am Parastas on International Holocaust Remembrance Day  
➤ **Feb. 6** – Zacchaeus Sunday  
➤ Feb. 12 – Feast of Three Holy Hierarchs  
➤ Feb. 15 – Feast of the Meeting of Our Lord  
➤ **Feb. 26** – 1<sup>st</sup> All Soul’s Saturday  
➤ **Mar. 7** – The Great Fast Begins (*Services for Great Lent are on the Parish Calendar Online*)  
➤ Mar. 9 – 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Findings of the Head of St. John the Baptist  
➤ **Mar. 9 – Apr. 13** – 6:00 pm Wednesday Night Presanctified Liturgies  
➤ **Mar. 13** – Sunday of Orthodoxy  
➤ **Mar. 19** – 2<sup>nd</sup> All Soul’s Saturday  
➤ **Mar. 26** – 3<sup>rd</sup> All Soul’s Saturday  
➤ **Apr. 2** – 4<sup>th</sup> All Soul’s Saturday  
➤ Apr. 7 – Feast of the Annunciation  
➤ **Apr. 9** – Church Spring Maintenance Morning  
➤ **Apr. 16** – Lazarus Saturday /  
The beginning of Holy Week  
➤ **Apr. 17** – Feast of Palm Sunday  
➤ **Apr. 24** – Pascha, the Feast of Feasts  
➤ **May 1** – Cemetery Grave Blessings  
➤ **May 18** – Feast of Mid-Pentecost  
➤ **Jun. 2** – Feast of the Ascension of Our Lord  
➤ Jun. 7 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Finding of the Head of St. John  
➤ **Jun. 11** – 5<sup>th</sup> All Souls Saturday  
➤ **Jun. 12** – Feast of Pentecost  
➤ **Jun. 20** – Apostles’ Fast begins  
➤ Jul. 7 – Feast of the Nativity of St John  
➤ Jul. 12 – Feast of Saints Peter and Paul  
➤ ? Jul. 17 ? – Divine Liturgy and our Church Picnic at “The Cabin” in North Park (date not confirmed)  
**Please, Save the Dates!**

OUR STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO GOD	
Stewardship Offerings:	\$ 389
Candles/Eternal Lamp Stewardship:	\$ 170
Community Outreach:	\$ 5
<b>Total Collections:</b>	<b>\$ 564</b>
<b>Relocation Fund:</b>	<b>\$ 100</b>
<i>In faith that God provides:</i> “And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work. As it is written, ‘He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures for ever.’” – 2 Cor. 9:8-9	

December Financial Report:	
<b>General Stewardship = \$ 15,695.15</b>	
<i>(includes \$ 227.08 from online stewardship)</i>	
<b>*Expenses = \$ 6309.39</b>	
<b>Net Profit = \$ 9385.76</b>	
<i>*details listed on the church hall bulletin board</i>	
Average at Sunday Divine Liturgies: <b>31</b>	

Fiscal Year-to-Date Financial Report:	
<i>(September through last month)</i>	
<b>General Stewardship = \$ 29,902</b>	
<b>*Expenses = \$ 21,095</b>	
<b>Net Profit = \$ 8,807</b>	
<i>*details listed on the church hall bulletin board</i>	
Average at Sunday Divine Liturgies: <b>30</b>	

**Weekly Candle Intentions / Memorials** were offered last week by Nelson Family; Kathy Schrmack; Tim Martin; Lawrence Martin; Melanie Shuster; Mike Puhac; Mary Jane Hudak; Mirilovich Family; Patty Watson; Cindy Pavilonis  
**The Eternal Lamp** was offered last week by Matthew Peifer in memory of parents, +Jack and +Viola Peifer. May Their Memory Be Eternal! Vičnaya Pamyat!  
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**Anonymous \$10,000 Donation** – Thanks be to God, we received an anonymous \$10,000 donation for our parish! Their generosity is a blessing. May God bless them with good health and a long life! Many years!

**Weekly Offerings to God** – During this time, if you are not yet coming to the church, we request that weekly donations be mailed to Tim Martin (2225 McAleer Rd., Sewickley, PA 15143)



**On-Line Giving** is now available from our parish website! The best option is to come to church and give your offering to God in His Temple (2<sup>nd</sup> best is to mail it in). Now you can also donate from your home and set up a recurring donation to the:

*General Stewardship Fund, Capital Improvement Fund, and/or Relocation Fund.*  
If you miss coming to church for a week, this allows you another option to “catch up” on your weekly stewardship. For our parish to continue its ministries, outreach, and general bill paying, we need your generosity to continue.

**ORTHODOXY AROUND THE  
‘BURGH AND OUR DIOCESE**

**IOCC Soup Tasting & Emergency Kit Project** – will be on February 5 at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church. More details will be coming. (Also, the Cigar and Bourbon Tasting has been postponed)

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**Shopping on-line** – The on-line shopping store, Amazon.com, will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to our diocese! Simply go to the home page of our Diocesan website, [www.acrod.org](http://www.acrod.org), and click on the AmazonSmiles button in the far left column and then shop as usual (Same products; same prices; same service). *Would someone be willing to research how we can set this up for our parish?*

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**Cantor and Choir Director Positions** – St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, Homestead, PA is in need of a fulltime cantor and choir director (filled by one person or two.) Please email Tom Pingor, Parish Council President, at [tpingor@verizon.net](mailto:tpingor@verizon.net) for more information.

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**VISIT OUR DIOCESE ON-LINE**  
Diocesan Website: [www.acrod.org](http://www.acrod.org)  
Camp Nazareth: [www.campnazareth.org](http://www.campnazareth.org)  
FB: [www.facebook.com/acroddioocese](https://www.facebook.com/acroddioocese)  
Twitter: [twitter.com/acrodnews](https://twitter.com/acrodnews)  
YouTube: [youtube.com/acroddioocese](https://youtube.com/acroddioocese)

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH**



This month, through the efforts of our Sr. ACRY, we will be collecting donations for the **Orthodox Christian Network**. *(This is the site that Father uses to get the “Children’s Word” that is distributed each week.)* The Orthodox Christian Network (OCN) is an official agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America. **MyOCN is YourOCN!** Visit [www.myocn.net](http://www.myocn.net) to see the variety of materials they provide online! *Thank you in advance for your prayers and offerings this month!*

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**SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**Nativity Epistle: Galatians 4:4-7**  
<sup>4</sup>But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup>to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. <sup>6</sup>And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” <sup>7</sup>So through God you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then an heir.  
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**Nativity Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12:**  
**The Visit of the Wise Men**  
**2** Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, <sup>2</sup>“Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him.” <sup>3</sup>When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup>and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to

be born. <sup>5</sup>They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it is written by the prophet:  
<sup>6</sup>‘And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will govern my people Israel.’”  
<sup>7</sup>Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star appeared; <sup>8</sup>and he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.” <sup>9</sup>When they had heard the king they went their way; and lo, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup>When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy; <sup>11</sup>and going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. <sup>12</sup>And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

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**Sunday’s Epistle: Galatians 1:11-19**  
**Paul’s Vindication of His Apostleship**

<sup>11</sup>For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not man’s gospel. <sup>12</sup>For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. <sup>13</sup>For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it; <sup>14</sup>and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. <sup>15</sup>But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, <sup>16</sup>was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, <sup>17</sup>nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus.  
<sup>18</sup>Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. <sup>19</sup>But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord’s brother.

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**Sunday’s Gospel: Matthew 2:13-23**  
**The Escape to Egypt**  
<sup>13</sup>Now when they had 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.” <sup>14</sup>And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, <sup>15</sup>and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt have I called my son.”

**The Massacre of the Infants**  
<sup>16</sup>Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the wise men. <sup>17</sup>Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:  
<sup>18</sup>“A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they were no more.”

**The Return from Egypt**  
<sup>19</sup>But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, <sup>20</sup>“Rise, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child’s life are dead.” <sup>21</sup>And he rose and took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. <sup>22</sup>But when he heard that Archela’us reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. <sup>23</sup>And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, “He shall be called a Nazarene.”

**LIVES OF THE SAINTS**

**The Holy Disciple (From The Seventy) First-Martyr And Archdeacon Stephen**  
*Commemorated on Jan 9 / Dec 27*  
The Holy Disciple (from the Seventy) First-Martyr and ArchDeacon Stephen was the eldest among the Seven Deacons, established by the

Apostles themselves, and therefore he is called "archdeacon". He was the Christian First-Martyr, and he suffered for Christ at about age 30. In the words of Asterias, he was "the starting-point of the martyrs, the instructor of suffering for Christ, the foundation of righteous confession, in that Stephen was first to shed his blood for the Gospel".

Being filled of the Holy Spirit, Saint Stephen with daring persuasively preached the Christian teaching and defeated Jewish teachers of the Law in disputation. For this the Jews maligned Saint Stephen, saying that he had uttered blasphemy against God and against Moses. Under such charges, Saint Stephen came before the Sanhedrin and the high-priest. He spoke a fiery speech, in which he expounded the history of the Jewish nation, and he boldly denounced the Jews for persecuting the prophets and also the execution by them of the awaited Messiah, Jesus Christ. During the time of his speaking, Saint Stephen suddenly saw the heavens opened and Jesus Christ in glory, standing at the right side of God. He exclaimed loudly about this. Then the Jews, covering over their ears, rushed upon him, dragged him out of the city and stoned him, but the holy martyr prayed for his murderers. Afar off on the heights stood the Mother of God with the holy Apostle John the Theologian, and She prayed fervently for the martyr. Before death Saint Stephen uttered: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit, wherein O Lord, impute this not to them in sin", – and then with joy he gave up his pure soul to Christ. The body of the holy First-Martyr Stephen, left for devouring by beasts, was secretly taken up by the illustrious Jewish teacher Gamaliel and his son Habib, and given burial on his estate. And afterwards these both believed in Christ and accepted holy Baptism.

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LIVING ORTHODOXY

TODAY THE VIRGIN GIVES BIRTH

By Sister Vassa

“O Christ what shall we offer You;  
for our sake You appeared on earth as man?  
Every creature made by You offers thanks to You.  
The angels offer You a hymn; the heavens, a star;  
the Magi, gifts; the shepherds, their wonder;  
the earth, its cave; the wilderness, the manger:

and we offer You a Virgin Mother.

O pre-eternal God, have mercy on us.”

*(from Great Vespers, Nativity in the Flesh of Our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ)*

Finally, those of us on the Older Calendar are entering into the great feast of the birth, according to the flesh, (not the pre-eternal birth, of the Father), of our Saviour in Bethlehem. What do “we” offer Him on this occasion? We offer Him one of us, – a human, Virgin Mother, who gives birth to Him in the flesh. In Her we offer Christ ourselves, as human birth-givers to the Word in this world. Because the Most Holy Theotokos is one of us, to whom the Lord “appeared on earth as man,” we participate in Her vocation, each of us in our own way.

Let me offer myself up today to receive Christ, Who “for our sake appeared on earth as man.” May He be born and shine through, rather than be obscured, in my life, my relationships, and my various responsibilities. “Today the Virgin gives birth to the Transcendent One.“ And indeed, today the Church gives birth to the Transcendent One. Christ is Born!

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ORTHODOX “WORD” OF THE WEEK

God Sent Forth His Son

*By Fr. Basil Aden on December 25, 2021*

The word of the day is “**sent.**” On this glorious day, we hear Paul’s concise summary of the gospel in our reading of Galatians 4:4-7. He writes, “But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive adoption as sons” (vs. 4-5).

How long did it take for the time to be filled up with hours, days, years, and decades (Strong’s #4136, 204)? How much suffering did the Chosen People endure as the centuries heaped up one on top of the others? How much perseverance did it take for God’s People to maintain their hope in His promise?

God So Loved That He Sent His Son

But now we rejoice in the Gospel. History has no more room. The time is fulfilled. The years that God has allocated before He would act has expired. Now we hear the wonderous news that the Almighty God loved the world so much that He “sent forth” His Son (vs. 4).

Note that in this message, the two persons of the Holy Trinity are distinct. The Father “sent” the Son, and the Son “was sent” by God, the Father. Together with the Holy Spirit, the Son is one in essence with the Father. Yet each person of the Holy Trinity has His own identity.

Moreover, the Greek word that Paul uses adds the understanding of the reason that the Father sentforth His Son. The Lord Jesus came to earth as an infant child to achieve the intention of the Father. And He was totally committed to carrying out the tasks for which He came to earth. He said, “But I have a greater witness than John’s; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness of Me that the Father has sent me (vs. John 5:36).

The Lord is one in being (“consubstantial”) with the Father and the Holy Spirit in his divine nature. Therefore, in both His divine and human natures He is one in will and purpose to the Father. Thus, the Lord said, “I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent me (John 5:30).

The Son of God Put Himself Under the Law

Paul says that the Lord Jesus Christ was “born of a woman, born under the law” (vs. 4). Accordingly, He was duty bound to keep the law. From his circumcision (Luke 2:21), dedication in the temple (Luke 2:22-24), obedience to his parents (Luke 2:51), to His baptism, indeed throughout his earthly life, He willingly “fulfilled all righteousness” (Matthew 3:15) of the law. In summary, “though He was a Son, He learned obedience by the things which He suffered” (Hebrews 5:8).

But what was that law that the Lord perfectly obeyed? It was more than the law of Moses and the obligations of the Chosen People. It was the law that God has written on the heart of every human being who has ever lived. It is the law of conscience. The Orthodox Study Bible calls it the “natural law” (Romans 2:15) (OSB “The Basis of God’s Judgement,”15250). By the law that is explicit in the law of Moses and implicit in the law of conscience, the Almighty God will judge each one of the human race.

Christ Fulfilled the Law for Us

It was this law in both its “Mosaic” and “natural” forms that Christ came to fulfill for us. God created

human beings to live forever in complete harmony with Him and in perfect obedience to His will. But by the sin of Adam and Eve, the whole human race became subject to death and disobedience. In this state of corruption, all humans were helpless to keep the law. But the Son of God was born to undo what Adam and Eve did. Paul writes, “For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh (OSB Romans 8:3).

Therefore, by being “born of a woman,” Christ came to free us from our bondage to the law and the judgment of God according to the law. We were created to be God’s children. But because of the disobedience of sin, we were no more than slaves (4:1). But now that Christ has come to obey the law for us, we have been adopted as children of God once again (Galatians 4:7).

In summary, God **sent** His Son into the world to meet the requirements of the law for us. Therefore, since the law has been fulfilled, we are no longer under the bondage to it. Our human nature is now restored to its freedom. In the Greek text, the word translated “freedom” means “exemption from liability (Strong’s #1659, 85). Released from God’s judgment by the perfect obedience of Christ, we are free to worship and serve Him with the love which children have for their parents.

For Reflection

We have every reason to be joyful today. In God’s mercy, He has “sent forth” His Son to us. In Him, heaven and earth are joined, and our human nature is now restored to the image of God. However, the blessing of His presence among us is only the beginning of the grace that He has come to bring. Thus, today in our study of Galatians 4, we not only hear who the Christ child is but why He came from heaven to earth. Our reading encourages us to consider what He has accomplished for us in His obedience to God the Father.

May your meditation on His coming lead you into further insights into the meaning of His birth. And may He fill your heart with the joy and peace of His presence.

Christ is born. Glorify Him!

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SPIRITUAL CONSIDERATIONS

Father is available to meet Monday thru Friday from 8:30am to 3:00pm or by appointment.

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**Online Community:** Please email Fr. Dave to receive the weekly bulletin via email.

**Parish Phone Tree** - Please call Fr. Dave to be added.

**Emergency Sick Calls** – Please notify Fr Dave when you or a family member are going into the hospital or having a procedure. He will pray with you and you will receive the Mystery of Holy Anointing (Unction) to be fully prepared.

**Mystery of Confession** – Opportunities are available after every service, most Saturdays during fasting periods from 11am to 1pm, OR by appointment.

**Holy Communion/Eucharist** – The reception of the Holy Eucharist is encouraged for all Orthodox Christians who have properly prepared themselves, with fasting from midnight on, regular Confession, and forgiveness for all people. Those who are not Orthodox may receive a blessing from the chalice.

**Lapsed Members** – You are always welcome home and we want you back! Generally speaking, sincere participation in the Mysteries of Confession, Communion, and regular attendance at the divine services are all that is required to begin parish life anew! See Fr. Dave for specific details.

**Baptisms** – Two God-parents are required, at least one of whom must be Orthodox by faith (and the other a practicing Christian). In the case of infants, the newly-baptized must have one name that is Christian in origin. Parents/grandparents/guardians must also promise to bring the child up in an Orthodox Christian way of life. Please consult Fr. Dave for more details.

**Adult Chrismation** – New parishioners are always welcome! In the case of adults seeking entrance into the Church, a period of prescribed catechism will be established with Fr. Dave before administration of the Mysteries. An Orthodox Christian sponsor is also required.

**Marriages** – are only solemnized on Saturdays or Sundays. They are not performed during fasting periods and certain Feast Days. Please consult Fr. Dave ASAP for more details (*before* arrangements are made for the hall).

**Church Funerals** – are provided for practicing Orthodox Christians who are current in their spiritual responsibilities and their stewardship. Otherwise, burial is from the funeral home. The Church does not permit cremation.

PRAYER CORNER

Our Parish Prayer List for  
Special Intentions and Other Needs\*

A Prayer For The Sick:

O Christ, You alone are prompt to defend us; quickly visit Your suffering servant *name(s)*. Through the prayers of the Theotokos, deliver *him/her/them* from sickness and bitter pain. Heal *him/her/them* so that *he/she/they* may sing to You and always praise You for You alone love us. Amen.

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**For the Health of...** Lauren, Richard, Andrea, Paul, Kathleen, Alexandra, Kasamanda, Robert, Douglas, John, Joanne, Barbara, Brian, Kristina, Sean, Julia, Susan, John, Juliana, Fredrick, Kenneth, Michael, and Roberta  
...through the prayers of St. Nectarios the Wonderworker;  
St. Luke, the Surgeon; and St. Panteleimon, the Healer.

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**For the Special Intentions of...** His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew, Metropolitan Gregory, Fr. Photios, Fr. Theodore, Deacon Charles, Laura & family, Carlene, Georgia, Eleanor, Mark, Michaleana, Dorell, Donald, Susan, Stephen, David, Anastasia, Nicholas, Cassandra, Alexander, Nancy, Andrea, Jason, Tyrone, Sarah, Amee, Joshua, John, Kathryn, Rose, Charles, Justin *our diocesan seminarians:* Nicholas, Dylan, Tom, Samuel, Timothy, Nicholas, Aydin, Subdeacon Seamus, and *our Church Council, Curators, and Relocation Committee:* Lawrence, Matthew, Timothy, Theresa, Rich, Gina, Robert, Jane, Mary Jane, Katherine, Kenneth, John, Wendy, Margaret, John, Patricia, John, Todd *and for those who labor towards our Community Outreaches* ...through the prayers of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker; St. John the Baptist; the Archangels Michael & Gabriel; and the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary.

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**Patronal Feast Days (Name's Day):** Stephen Brancho - Holy Protomartyr & Archdeacon Stephen (1/9), Melanie Shuster - Venerable Melania the Younger (1/13) (*contact Fr. Dave with your Patron Saint*)

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**Birthday Prayers for...** Steven Buhonick (1/7), Jason Shelpman (1/9), Pañi Kathy Fester (1/13), Brenda Labas (1/15) ...*May God allow them to grow in peace and love all the days of their lives and may He grant them many and blessed years!*

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**For our Catechumens & Inquirers...** Susan, Marilynn, John ...*through the prayers of St. Paul the Apostle, St. Mary Magdalene, & St. John Maximovitch.*

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**For those preparing for Marriage...** Nicole & Dustin ...*through the prayers of Sts. Adrian & Natalia and all Holy Martyrs.*

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**For Pregnant Mothers...** Allison (*due in May*) ...*through the prayers of St. Anna, the mother of the Virgin Mary, and St. Irene Chrysovalantou.*

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**For those serving in the Armed Forces & Civil Authorities...** Thomas R. Dzadovsky and Trevor Meegan ...*through the prayers of St George, the Great-Martyr & Wonderworker.*

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**For the souls of the newly departed...** Michael Slovesko, the priest (1/4), +Margaret Ferencz (12/21), +Michael Polanichka, the Priest (12/20), +Michael Macura, the Priest (12/18), +Igor Soroka, the Priest (12/18), +Joanne Mondin (12/15), +Elizabeth (12/12), +John Gido, the Priest (11/25), Pani +Eleanor Polanichka (11/21) ...*May the Lord God grant them blessed repose where there is no pain sorrow or mourning. May they be Eternal in God's Memory.*

\* This is to be used for the special intentions of our brothers and sisters in Christ and can be inserted as a prayer itself into our daily prayers. Please let Fr. Dave know if you wish to make additions or subtractions (*in the case of answered prayers*) to our Parish List. The words of the Gospel are true: **it is good to pray for one another.** Let this be a place where we lay out our concerns and beg the help of our brothers & sisters in Christ. *This prayer list is NOT limited to only Orthodox Christians.*

DEVOTIONAL PRAYER OF THE WEEK

THE CANON OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST

**Ode 1:** Christ is born, glorify him! Christ comes from heaven, meet Him! Christ is an earth, be exalted! O all the earth, sing to the Lord, and sing praises in gladness, all people, for He has been glorified.

**Ode 3:** To the Son Who was begotten of the Father without change before all ages, and in the last times was without seed made flesh of the Virgin, to Christ our God, let us cry aloud: You have raised up our horn, holy are You, O Lord!

**Ode 4:** Rod of the root of Jesse, and flower that blossomed from his stem, O Christ, You have sprung forth from the Virgin. From the mountain overshadowed by the forest You came, made flesh for her that knew not wedlock, O God not formed from matter. Glory to Your power O Lord!

**Ode 5:** As You are God of Peace and Father of mercies, You have sent to us Your Angel of Great Counsel, granting unto us peace. So are we guided towards the light of the knowledge of God. And watching by night, we glorify You, O Lover of mankind.

**Ode 6:** The sea monster spat forth Jonah as it had received him, like a babe from the womb: while the Word, having dwelt in the Virgin and taken flesh: came forth from her yet kept her undefiled. For being Himself not subject to decay. He preserved His Mother free from harm.

**Ode 7:** Scorning the impious decree, the three children brought up together in godliness feared not the threat of fire: but standing in the midst of the flame they sang: "O God of our fathers, blessed are You!"

**Ode 8:** The furnace moist with dew was the image of a wonder past nature. For it burned not the children whom it had received, even as the fire of the Godhead consumed not the Virgin's womb into which It had descended. Therefore in praise, let us sing: let the whole creation bless the Lord, and exalt Him above all forever.

**Ode 9:** I behold a strange and wonderful mystery. The cave has become heaven, the throne of the Cherubim, the Virgin. The manger a noble place where lies Christ our God Who cannot be contained. Let us praise Him in song and magnify You!

**A prayer for our Neighborhoods**

*by Archbishop Demetrios of America*

I pray to you, God, for the families of my neighborhood. Visit them. Throw their troubles out of them and bring hope. Make the daily cares that devour the heart disappear. Present solutions to life’s problems. Settle the disturbed relationships among members of different families whom I know or do not know. O Lord, remind the people of our area that You exist, that You are a strong and loving Protector. Keep away, Lord, anything that causes the disappearance of peace from souls, and the escape of sleep from our eyes. Stay a little while more tonight in our neighborhood. Spread peace along with the night. Let the harshness of the day and its struggles not spread over the night. Amen.

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**A Prayer for our Diocesan Clergy**

O Lord Jesus Christ, Good Shepherd of Your sheep, light the fire of ardent love in the hearts of all Your priests, that they may ever and in all things seek only Your glory. Remember especially, Lord, our Bishop *(name)*, and our spiritual father *(name)*, and all our diocesan clergy, who are laboring in Your vineyard for the salvation of all those whom You have entrusted to them. Make their lives as holy as the word they preach. Keep them from being discouraged. Hear their prayers for our salvation. Give them wisdom and courage to proclaim Your truth. Make them priests after Your own heart. For You are a merciful God Who loves us and to You we give glory, together with Your eternal Father and Your all-holy, good and life-giving- Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.



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As church attendance numbers fade across the nation and online services become very convenient it's important to remember why church attendance for you and your family matters so much.

You can't serve from your sofa. You can't have community of faith on your sofa. You can't experience the power of a room full of believers worshipping together on your sofa.

Christians aren't consumers. We are contributors. We don't watch. We engage. We give. We sacrifice. We encourage. We pray by laying hands on the hurting. We do life together.

The church needs you.  
And you need the church. 🏡❤️🙏

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