

Assumption of the Holy Virgin Orthodox Church

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Mailing Address: PO Box 20083 * Point Breeze Station | Philadelphia PA 19145-0383

Sunday, December 23, 2018 | 30th Sunday After Pentecost

Tone 5 – Sunday before the Nativity of Christ

Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ

The Holy Fathers | The Holy Ten Martyrs of Crete

V. Rev. Mark W Koczak, Rector

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Parish President - Matthew Andrews

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Weekly Schedule

Monday: Eve of the Nativity of Christ! Great Complines and Matins (Condensed Version)! Time: **3:00PM!**

Tuesday: The Nativity According to the Flesh of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ (Christmas)!
Reading of Hours – 9:30am
Divine Liturgy – 10:00am

From Christmas Day until January 4, inclusive, there is a general dispensation from all fasting!

Saturday: December 29 – Great Vespers at **5:00PM!**

Sunday: December 30 – Sunday After the Nativity of Christ
Reading of Hours – 9:30am
Divine Liturgy – 10:00am
Fellowship & coffee hour to follow the Divine Liturgy

Sunday: December 30 - Church Life Discussion Class after Divine Liturgy.
The Topic: Don't Be Tone Deaf! Understanding the Arrangements and Beauty of the Eight Tones during all Liturgical Services.

Texts for the Liturgical Service

Troparion (Tone 5)

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, / co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, / born for our salvation from the Virgin; / for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, / to endure death, / and to raise the dead // by His glorious Resurrection.

Troparion (Tone 2 – 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!

Troparion (Tone 4 – Forefeast)

O Prepare, O Bethlehem, for Eden has been opened to all! / Adorn thyself, 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.

Kontakion (Tone 5)

Thou didst descend into hell, O my Savior,/shattering its gates as Almighty, / resurrecting the dead as Creator, / and destroying the sting of death. / Thou hast delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of man, // and we cry to Thee: “O Lord, save us!”

Kontakion (Tone 1 – Fathers)

Rejoice, O Bethlehem! Prepare thyself, 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.

Kontakion (Tone 3 – 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!

Prokeimenon (Tone 4 – Song of our Fathers)

Blessed are Thou, O Lord God of our Fathers, / and praised and glorified is Thy name forever!
v. For Thou are just in all that Thou hast done for us!

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

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.

[...continue Epistle reading on the back of page 8...]

- v. We have heard with our ears, O God, for our fathers have told us. Alleluia (3x's)
- v. For Thou hast saved us from them that oppose us, and hast put to shame them that hate us. Alleluia (3x's)

Gospel Reading: Matthew 1:1-25

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!
Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous! Praise befits the upright! Alleluia (3x's)

Announcements

A Warm Welcome to all of our visitors & guests who worshiped with us today and who have joined us in celebrating the Divine Liturgy. Please join us in the church basement for our Fellowship and Coffee Hour.

Announcements

LUKE PARSELLS' BAPTISM

Peter and Heather Parsells cordially invite everyone to their son Luke's Baptism on **Saturday, December 29, 2018 at 10AM**. The baptism will take place at:

Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church
605 Washington Avenue
Manville, NJ 08835

Peter and Heather kindly request that you notify them by **Tuesday, December 25** if you plan on attending so they can coordinate with the meal preparations.

Advent Season Tutelage - 2018

We are once again providing an Advent tutelage for those who are unable to attend or view either the Bible Study or Church Life Discussion Classes during the Advent Season but wish to still remain closer to God as we prepare for the Holy Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

This season we will provide information on the Life of another North American Saint. Last year we provided information on the life of Saint Alexis Toth. This year we will offer information on the life of Saint Juvenal of Alaska. So let's continue...

The natives told Saint Innocent that after they had killed Saint Juvenal, he got up and followed them, urging them to repent. They fell upon him again and gave him a savage beating. Once more, he got to his feet and called them to repentance. This happened several times, then finally the natives hacked him to pieces. Thus, the zealous Hieromonk Juvenal became the first Orthodox Christian in America to receive the crown of martyrdom. His unnamed guide, possibly a Tanaina Indian convert, was also martyred at the same time.

It is said that a local shaman removed Saint Juvenal's brass pectoral cross from his body and attempted to cast a spell. Unexpectedly, the shaman was lifted up off the ground. He made three more tries with the same result, then concluded that there was a greater power than his own at work here. Years later, a man showed up at the Nushagak Trading Post wearing a brass pectoral cross exactly like the one worn by Saint Juvenal.

A column of light arose from his holy relics and reached up to Heaven. It is not known how long this phenomenon continued.

Saint Juvenal, in his tireless evangelization of the native peoples of Alaska, served the Church more than all the other missionaries combined.

This concludes Saint Juvenal's Life story. We hope you enjoyed reading about it.

Announcements (cont.)

Candles and Prayers for the Faithful and Departed

Health for the Living:

Irene Torpey offered by Nina Patterson
Margaret Pellack offered by Pellack Family
Ken Walker offered by Pellack Family
Family and Friends offered by Nancy Brasko Rabik
Joseph Herbert, Mildred O'Shura, John Herbert offered by M/M Herbert

May God Grant Them Many Blessed Years!

Memory for the Departed:

Anna Herbert, Sophie Herbert offered by M/M Herbert
Michael Spack, Benjamin Macalush, John O'Shura offered by M/M Herbert

May Their Memories Be Eternal

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Please remember in your prayers:

Grace Corba; Ronald Kavalkovich (on his continuous recovery); Dr. Jane Kelly; Luke Emmanuel Parsells (**newly born – Nov 1**) Heather Parsells; Peter Parsells; David Pellack; Margaret Pellack; Helen Wanenchak; Father John Bohush (retired); and all those who are serving in our Armed Forces!

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A final **THANK YOU** to everyone who supported the Veterans Homeless Project this Advent Season! Thank you to all for your generous financial contributions towards the toiletry kits and sheets! Thank you to all for those who crocheted all of the homemade hats for the Vets. Thank you to all who donated food, clothing items, and other articles of need for the Vets. Thank you to all who donated the bags used to deliver the above items to the Vets. Thank you to all who put in the hard work coordinating and organizing this project from cradle to grave.

God Bless our Veterans who have protected and will continue to protect this country and its citizens from enemies foreign and domestic!!!

Please ensure that your Mobile Phone is set to Silent (or at least set on vibrate) during the Divine Liturgy! Thank You!!!

Announcements (cont.)

Coffee Hour / Cleaning and Epistle / Hours Reading Schedule.

We now have an established full rotating schedule for the Coffee Hour & Cleaning, and the Hours & Epistle Readings. The Reading schedule sheets will be posted quarterly on the bulletin board in the church basement. The Coffee Hour/Cleaning schedule is in a binder located on the display case.

Special weekly collections taken after Gospel or Sermon.

In addition to our general collection, the parish takes a special collection each week to fund certain parish projects. Please be generous with your offering. Every little bit counts. The special collections are as follows:

- First Sunday of every month – Kitchen Fund Project
- Second Sunday of every month – Youth Fund (*reactivated July 2018*)
- Third Sunday of every month - Restoration/Maintenance Fund
- Fourth Sunday of every month – Charity Giving

Note: if there is a Fifth Sunday during a month, the special collection is earmarked for the Kitchen Fund Project, unless otherwise noted and stated by the Parish Council.

Cash Flow Activity (December)

	<u>Week of December 10 to December 16</u>	<u>December Month-to-date</u>
Attendance:	31	40 (average)
Funds In:	\$ 2,303.00	\$ 6,905.00
Funds Out:	\$ 3,870.00	\$ 7,963.83
Net Surplus/(Deficit):	(\$ 1,567.00)	(\$ 1,058.83)

Thank you all *for your continuous offerings to maintain the parish!*

Shop Rite Gift Cards: If you need to purchase Shop Rite Gift Cards, please see David Pellack to secure them. Your purchase of a Shop Rite Gift Card is an additional fundraising project that helps support the church at no additional expense to the purchaser.

Calendar of Events

1st Sunday of each month – Monthly Panikhida immediately after Divine Liturgy.
2nd Tuesday of each month – Bible Study at 6:30pm in church basement.
2nd Sunday of each month – Property Committee Meeting after Divine Liturgy.
3rd Sunday of each month – Currently no permanent event is scheduled.
4th Sunday of each month – Church Life Discussion Class after Divine Liturgy.

Today - Parish Christmas Decorating and Trimming of the Christmas Tree After Divine Liturgy. Please see either Debbie Kavalkovich or Matthew Andrews today regarding what needs to be done regarding the decorating of the church and Christmas tree.

Christmas Eve Services (Great Complines and Matins (modified))

Monday, December 24th – Time: 3:00PM!

The start time of this service should give parishioners the option to decide whether to have Holy Supper either before or after the service. Also, the time allows the service to start during daylight and to be completed right around sunset.

Sunday, December 30 - Church Life Discussion class (The 4th 5th Sunday of the month) The Topic: Don't Be Tone Deaf! Understanding the Arrangements and Beauty of the Eight Tones during all Liturgical Services.

Please note the class will be held on the 5th Sunday of the month as a result of preparations for the Christmas Eve and Nativity services that will occur on the Monday and Tuesday after the 4th Sunday of December this calendar year.

Choir Rehearsal Schedule for The Feast of the Nativity services:

Please speak with Choir Director Nina Patterson regarding choir rehearsal for either today and/or tomorrow.

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on a Sunday in late January 2019 after Divine Liturgy in the church basement.

An exact date is still To Be Determined, however, tentative dates scheduled are either Sunday, January 20 or Sunday, January 27. Confirmation on the definite Sunday will be decided within the next week or two. The Spiritual Advisor's report, the Treasurer's report, the voting on the 2019 budget, will take place during the meeting along with any other business that needs to be discussed. The election of parish officers already took place during the Fall meeting.

Cleaning Teams: Today (Dec 23): Saint Elizabeth the New Martyr (Sandra Hourahan, Matushka Jan, and David Pellack).
Next Week (Dec 30): Saint John Kochurov (Rick LeRoy, Daria LeRoy, and Michael Wanenchak).



Sunday before the Nativity [December 23rd]

The Sunday before the Nativity of the Lord (December 18-24) is known as the Sunday of the Holy Fathers. On this day the Church commemorates all those who were well-pleasing to God from all ages, from Adam to Saint Joseph the Betrothed of the Most Holy Theotokos, those who are mentioned in the genealogy of Luke 3:23-38. The holy prophets and prophetesses are also remembered today, especially the Prophet Daniel and the three holy youths (December 17).

The Troparion to the Prophet Daniel and the three holy youths (“Great are the accomplishments of faith...”) is quite similar to the Troparion for Saint Theodore the Recruit (February 17, and the first Saturday of Great Lent). The Kontakion to Saint Theodore, who suffered martyrdom by fire, reminds us that he also had faith as his breastplate (see I Thessalonians 5:8).

[...Epistle Reading continued from page 2...]

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.

Alleluia (3x’s) (Tone 4)