



The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

Saturday & Sunday, December 25/26th, 2021 - The Nativity of Our Lord & The Holy Righteous Ones



Hymns for the Weekend of Feast of Nativity

SUN: When Thou didst descend to death, O Life immortal, Thou didst slay hell with the splendor of Thy Godhead. And when from the depths Thou didst raise the dead, all the powers of heaven cried out: "O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to Thee!"

FEAST: Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone to the world the light of wisdom! For by it, those who worshiped the stars, were taught by a star to adore Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know Thee, the Orient from on high. O Lord, glory to Thee!

SUN: Proclaim the wonder, O Joseph, to David, the ancestor of God; thou hast seen a Virgin great with child; and thou didst give glory with the shepherds; thou didst worship with the Magi, and didst receive the news from the Angel. Pray to Christ God to save our souls!

SUN: Today godly David is filled with joy; Joseph and James offer praise. The glorious crown of their kinship with Christ fills them with great joy. They sing praises to the One ineffably born on earth, and they cry out: "O Compassionate One, save those who honor Thee!"

FEAST: Today the Virgin gives birth to the Transcendent One, and the earth offers a cave to the Unapproachable One. Angels with shepherds glorify Him; The wise men journey with the star, since for our sake the eternal God was born as a little Child.

Readings for The Feast of the Nativity

Epistle (Nativity) - Galatians 4:4-7

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 the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

Gospel (Nativity) - Matthew 2:1-12

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "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." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. So they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall

DEAR GUESTS AND FRIENDS: *A most sincere and heartfelt welcome to you from our community. According to the ancient traditions of the Orthodox Church, the Sacrament of Holy Communion is to be administered only to Orthodox Christians who have prepared to receive the Holy Sacrament through prayer and fasting. If you have questions please let us know!*

come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.” Then Herod, when he had secretly called the wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also.” When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way.

Readings for Sunday - Holy Righteous Ones

Galatians 1:11-19 (Sun, After Nativity)

But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it. And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb and called me through His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord’s brother.

Matthew 2:13-23 (Sun, After Nativity)

Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, “Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him.” When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for

Egypt, and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, “Out of Egypt I called My Son.” Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying: “A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.” Now when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, “Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the young Child’s life are dead.” Then he arose, took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of Galilee. And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, “He shall be called a Nazarene.”

This Week’s Schedule

THIS WEEKEND

The Great Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord

FRI, Dec 24th: Royal Hours for Nativity @ 8 AM

FRI, Dec 24th: Compline & Matins w/ Litya @ 6:30 PM
SAT, Dec 25th: Hours @ 8:40 AM, Divine Liturgy for the
Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord @ 9 AM

SUN, Dec 26th: Hours @ 8:40 AM, Divine Liturgy of the
Synaxis of the Theotokos @ 9 AM, Coffee Hour

THIS WEEK

Christ is Born! Fast Free Week!

WED, Dec 29th: Private Prayer 11:00 AM–1:30 PM

FRI, Dec 31st: Vespers Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the
Circumcision of Our Lord & St. Basil the Great @ 4 PM

*NOTE: Remember to Fast at least 4 hours before receiving Holy
Communion at the Vespers Liturgy.*

NEXT WEEKEND – HAPPY NEW YEAR

SAT, Jan 1st: Great Vespers @ 5 PM, Confessions

SUN, Jan 2nd: Hours @ 8:40 AM, Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM,
Coffee Hour, Community Outreach Meeting

**Upcoming Parish Events
& Announcements**

SUN, JAN 2 – COMMUNITY OUTREACH MEETING
to discuss our continued efforts in reaching out to the poor and homeless in our community.

SAT, JAN 8 – PARLOR CLEANUP – Help is needed in our continued restoration of the downstairs parlor AND in preparation for the Diocesan Assembly. Anyone who can offer a few hours to help in this important effort is encouraged to come. Cleanup begins at 8:30 AM. More details to come.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

December Birthdays: David Clark (12/1), Helen Gudaitis (12/5), Stephen Dutko (12/8), Nina Grymko (12/10), Andrew Kondratick (12/11), Lydia Dutko (12/12), Andrew Conklin (12/13), Joan Austin (12/18), Christa Talpash (12/19), Dcn Lawrence Worlinsky (12/19), Patrick Tutella (12/19), Susan Goobic Howell (12/19), Jeri Basarab (12/21), Mary Ann Kudey (12/21) Dolores Rilko (12/21), Kellie Ann DiBattista (12/27), Anessa Cardoni (12/28), Peter Holoviak (12/30), Daniel Bisset Jr. (12/31)

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PARISH PRAYER LIST Living: Cynthia Dulsky, Theodore & Elenor Sovryda, Nadine Breisch, Sonja & Leanne Kay, Josie Bissett, Lisa & Scott Harvey, Daniel & Shannon Bissett, Delores Karas, Archpriest Daniel & Matushka Myra Kovalak, Violet Filipi, Catherine, Danny Gobish, Lorraine Pace, Camden Thomas, Peter Holoviak & Family, Rose Marie, George Scott, Evelyn Kosmiski, Joe Sloan, Betty Serafin, Matushka Elizabeth, Karen Maier, John Metz, Tim, Jeri Basarab, Fr. Theodore Orzolek, Bernie Elko, Delores Voda, Mary Ann Lepa, Melanie Bishop, Eric, Lynn Bankos, Mat. Delores Donlick,

Archpriest Michael Lepa, Archpriest Vladimir Fetchko
Departed: Mat. Anna Pawlush, Rosalie Bagenski, Helen Gudaitis

UPCOMING FEAST DAYS SERVICE SCHEDULE



Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ

FRI, Dec 24: 8 AM Royal Hours

FRI, Dec 24: 6:30 PM Compline & Matins w/ Litya

SAT, Dec 25: 8:40 AM Hours, 9 AM Divine Liturgy

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Synaxis of the Most Holy Mother of God

SUN, Dec 26: 8:40 AM Hours, 9 AM Divine Liturgy

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St. Basil the Great / Circumcision of Our Lord

FRI, Dec 31: 4 PM Vespers Divine Liturgy

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Theophany of Our Lord Jesus Christ

WED, Jan 5: 6:30 PM Great Vespers w/ Litya

THURS, Jan 6: 8:40 AM Hours, 9 AM Divine Liturgy

*This Nativity night bestowed peace on
the whole world;
So let no one threaten;
This is the night of the Most Gentle One
– Let no one be cruel;
This is the night of the Humble One –
Let no one be proud.*

— St. Isaac Syrian, Nativity Sermon

Nativity Sermon – Met. Anthony Bloom



In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

Helpless love is both salvation and judgement; helplessness and love that abandons itself into the hands of men is the only thing that finally can call out of hardened hearts, of rough souls of sinful personalities the last possible spark of response. If we are incapable of responding to love that makes itself helpless, that accepts to be vulnerable, that abandons itself into our hands, then we are not capable of responding to anything, then something tragic must happen to us, to our life in order to make us capable of answering the call of love. And in that respect helpless love which is salvation is also a test, a critical moment in our life — and the Greek word ‘crisis’ means judgement.

The coming of Christ into the world is our salvation, the coming of Christ into the world is the Last Judgement

already begun; it is our salvation because Divine Love makes itself present, tangible, visible in the world, because it makes itself defenseless and vulnerable, because it calls to us for mercy, because Divine Love made flesh is either received or rejected. But it is also our judgement because if we are incapable of answering to defenselessness with mercy, if we are incapable of [taking] the One Who refuses power which is His to defend Himself against us, then we are judged and we stand condemned.

This is the way in which the message of the Incarnation comes to us; it is stern and at the same time it is so infinitely tender, and warm, and loving. Let us discard the [sternness] of the message not by overlooking it, but by realising how tragic and critical it sounds and by responding with all the sensitiveness, all the perceptiveness there is in our heart, and then salvation truly will be ours.

But the salvation which Christ offers us in that way is not simply the acceptance of the new-born child, of His defenselessness with charity and love and tenderness, it is also something that involves us more profoundly and perhaps more sternly because He says, ‘I have set you an example that you should follow it’. If we are Christ’s, we must learn to become bearers of defenseless love that disarms, of defenseless love that is prepared to make itself wounded, of the defenseless love which brings itself a living sacrifice for the salvation of those who can receive it and unto the propitiation of the sins of those who reject it because they do not know what they are doing.

These are the thoughts which I wish to leave with you on this Christmas day and in this time of preparation, because all our life and all the history of the world is a time of preparation, it is Advent, because Christ who once came into the world is coming into the world. The first Advent was in humility, defenselessness unto salvation, the other one will be in glory and in power, but also unto salvation, if we only can take the whole of our life and the whole history as Advent, the time of the coming Christ, and if sincerely one day we can long for this day of the Lord, and say together with the Church and with the Spirit, ‘Come, Lord Jesus!’ Amen.
