

Assumption of the Holy Virgin Orthodox Church

2101 South 28th St. (corner of 28th St. & Snyder Ave.)
Philadelphia, PA 19145 * Church Phone: (215) 468-3535
Website: <http://www.holyassumptionphilly.org>

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

Sunday, December 20, 2015 | 29th Sunday After Pentecost

Tone 4 – Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ.

Sunday Before the Nativity of Christ

V. Rev. Mark W Koczak, Acting Rector

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Parish President – Matthew Andrews

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Weekly Schedule

Thursday: December 24 – Eve of the Nativity of Christ!

Great Complines and Matins (Condensed Version) Time: **2:30PM!!!**
[Note the Change in Time!]

Friday: December 25 – The Nativity According to the Flesh of Our Lord God
and Savior Jesus Christ (Christmas)!

Reading of Hours – 9:40am

Divine Liturgy – 10:00am

Saturday: December 26 - Great Vespers at 5:00PM!

Sunday: December 27 – Third Day of the Feast of the Nativity.
Sunday after the Nativity of Christ.

Reading of Hours – 9:40am

Divine Liturgy – 10:00am

Fellowship & coffee hour to follow the Divine Liturgy

Texts for the Liturgical Service

Troparion (Tone 4)

When the women disciples of the Lord / learned from the angel the joyous message of Thy Resurrection, / they cast away the ancestral curse / and elatedly told the apostles: / “Death is overthrown! / Christ God is risen, // granting the world great mercy!”

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 4)

My Savior and Redeemer / as God rose from the tomb and delivered the earth-born from their chains. / He has shattered the gates of hell, / and as Master, // He has risen on the third day!

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 – Songs 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.

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)

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)

[NOTE - Gospel Reading According to St Matthew and the Communion Hymns are printed on the back (last) page.]

Announcements

Biography of the Very Reverend Mark W Koczak. The resume and biography of our parish priest, Archpriest Mark, are posted on the bulletin boards in the back of the church and in the church basement. This same information is also posted on the parish website under the section "About Us", then scroll down to the "Administration" area. Please take a moment and read about Father Mark's experiences and accomplishments.

Thank You ALL!!! The parish wishes to "Thank" all of those who spent some of their time Wednesday decorating the Church for Christmas and trimming the Christmas tree! May God Grant You All Many Blessed Years!!!

Announcements (cont.)

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

40 Days For Life – Philadelphia Campaign – Nativity Lent Season:

FINAL WEEK!!! The 40 Days for Life continues during the 40 days of Lent (Nativity). Meanwhile the killing continues at Planned Parenthood. Thank you so much in advance for signing up for this list and being willing to continue standing up for those that can't speak for themselves.

Information:

- * Contacts: Monique Ruberu or Pat Stanton at 469.231.9084
- * Email: roobearoo@hotmail.com
- * Website: <https://40daysforlife.com/local-campaigns/philadelphia/>

- * Prayer vigil located at 12th & Locust St, Philadelphia – Planned Parenthood
- * Vigils open Monday-Saturday from 8am-5pm.
- * Try to have at least one person there to cover the hour.
- * It's the belly of the beast! There are more abortions performed there than at any other Planned Parenthood in Pennsylvania!

The 40 Days For Life is not a political organization or a protest group. They stand and pray as a physical presence and witness for the lives of the unborn, who cannot speak for themselves. They offer support to mothers and fathers who would like an alternative to abortion but do not know where to turn. They encourage healing for families who have chosen abortion and have a deep feeling of sadness and regret. Their message is one of compassion and love for all people as well as hope for an end to this "culture of death" which we have embraced in our world.

Poinsettias/Christmas Flowers! We are continuing to collect for Christmas flowers throughout the month of December. There are special envelopes available to use for your offering for Christmas flower donations. Please give the envelopes to Debbie Kavalkovich or to a member of the parish council for your offering. Thank you for your support!

Holiday Basket Brigade! The parish has finished accepting donations for the Holiday Basket Brigade for Christmas items. The parish will provide one (1) basket to a family in the community. We have a list available of those items to be donated and the list is attached to the care box. The Christmas Basket will be delivered TODAY Sunday, December 20th after Divine Liturgy!

Announcements (cont.)

Candles and Prayers for the Faithful and Departed

Health for the Living:

Melanie Albrecht, Claire Remington, Nina Patterson, Joseph Herbert, Brendan Herbert, Brianna Herbert offered by M/M Herbert
Family and Parishioners offered by Nina Patterson
Witiak Family offered by M/M P Witiak
Father John Udics offered by M/M P Witiak
Father John Udics offered by Pellack Family

May God Grant Them Many Blessed Years!

Memory for the Departed:

Julia Mohnach, Michael Spack Sr., Pauline Cardow, Helen Wallace, Father Sergius Willis, Anna Sabata offered by M/M Herbert
John Rabik Sr. offered by children Joseph Rabik and Mary McKinney
Hilda Berezniak offered by Barbara Andrews

May Their Memories Be Eternal

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Please remember in your prayers: Cantrell Family; Grace Corba; Robert Corba; Albert Kavalkovich, Anastasia Kavalkovich; Julia Makara; Helen Riley; Helen Wanenchak; Robert Wanenchak; Annamae Witiak; Father John Udics; Father Vincent Saverino; Father John Bohush and the parishioners of Saint Nicholas Eastern Orthodox Church in Philadelphia; and all those who are serving in our Armed Forces!

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BULLETIN INFO:

If you did not pick up a bulletin because there was none left on the Tetrapod, don't worry...a copy can be made. Please inform Dan Herbert or one of the parish council members that you would like that week's bulletin and a copy will be made for you. We also keep any extra bulletins back in the vestibule from the past three (3) months. They are located on the shelf where the prosfora is placed.

Also, for those who have access to the Internet, bulletins since June 2009 are posted on the parish website for your convenience. Thank you!

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

Announcements (cont.)

Sign up sheets for Coffee Hour, Cleaning and Epistle & Hours Reading. Sign up sheets for the above items are posted on the bulletin board in the church basement. The sheets have been pretty bare over the past few weeks. Please be considerate and volunteer to assist with some of the parish responsibilities. Your time is very much appreciated!

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
- 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 Dec 7 to Dec 13</u>	<u>December Month-to-Date</u>
Attendance:	33	35 (average)
Funds In:	\$1,078.00	\$2,904.00
Funds Out:	\$ 950.00	\$5,350.04
Net Surplus/(Deficit):	\$ 128.00	(\$2,446.04)

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.

"We must remember that we are warriors of Christ, that the Church is not to serve us, but that we are servants of the Church and that, by the grace and mercy of God, we are called to be coworkers of the Lord Himself." ~Beatitude Metropolitan Ireney

Calendar of Events

The Nativity of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ Services:

Thursday, December 24th - Christmas Eve Services:

Great Complines and Matins (condensed version)

Time: ~~3:00PM~~ **2:30PM** – [Please not the change in time for this service!!!]

Please make every effort to attend this service on the eve of Christ's Birth!

Friday, December 25th - Christmas Day Services:

Reading of Hours – 9:40AM

Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom – 10:00AM

CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!

The 2015 Winter Solstice is Tuesday December 22. Those that view the glass half empty will state it is the shortest (darkest) day of the year with the sun reaching its most southern point in the sky around the noon time hour. Those that view the glass half full will state that each day thereafter, those days themselves and the amount of sunlight available, will become longer. So how will you view the glass and the sunshine this week?



Forefeast of the Nativity of our Lord [December 20th]

The Forefeast of the Nativity of the Lord begins on December 20. From now on, most of the liturgical hymns will be concerned with the birth of the Savior. Many of the Church's hymns of this period are slightly modified versions of the hymns of Holy Week.

From the 20th to the 23rd we sing the Troparion (Tone 4) "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 fruit divine; if we eat of it we shall live forever and not die like Adam. Christ is coming to restore the image which He made in the beginning."

We also sing the Kontakion (Tone 3) "Today the Virgin comes to the cave where she will give birth past understanding to the Word from all eternity. Rejoice, O universe, when the tidings are proclaimed. Glorify, with the angels and shepherds, the one Who chose to be manifest as a newborn Child, while remaining the eternal God."

At Vespers on this first day of the prefeast we sing, "Let us celebrate, O people, the prefeast of Christ's Nativity; let us raise our minds on high, in spirit going up to Bethlehem...."

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)