

## Assumption of the Holy Virgin Orthodox Church

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

Website: <http://www.holyassumptionphilly.org>



<http://www.facebook.com/holyassumptionphilly>

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

### Sunday, December 18, 2016 | 26<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost

Tone 1 – Sunday before the Nativity of Jesus Christ

Martyr Sebastian at Rome and those with him

#### V. Rev. Mark W Koczak, Acting Rector

615 West 11<sup>th</sup> Street | New Castle, DE 19720-6020

Phone: Home: 302-322-0943 | Mobile: 302-547-4952

Email: [mwkoczak@gmail.com](mailto:mwkoczak@gmail.com) or [mkoczak05@aol.com](mailto:mkoczak05@aol.com)

Parish President – Matthew Andrews

Phone: 856-217-8075

### Weekly Schedule

Today: Church Life Discussion Class after Divine Liturgy and after Choir Rehearsal up in the church.

Topic: History of the Divine Liturgy

Saturday: December 24 – Eve of the Nativity of Christ!  
Great Complines and Matins (Condensed Version)

Time: **5:00PM!!!**

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

Reading of Hours – 9:30am

Divine Liturgy – 10:00am

Fellowship & coffee hour to follow the Divine Liturgy

## Texts for the Liturgical Service

### **Troparion (Tone 1)**

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, / while the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, / Thou didst rise on the third day, O Savior, / granting life to the world. / The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O Giver of Life: “Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ! / Glory to Thy Kingdom! // Glory to Thy dispensation, O thou who lovest of mankind!”

### **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!

### **Kontakion (Tone 1 – Fathers [12/20-24])**

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 6 – Fathers [12/18-19])**

Thou did not worship the graven image, / O thrice-blessed ones, / but armed with the immaterial Essence of God, / thou were glorified in a trial by fire. / From the midst of unbearable flames thou called on God, crying: / Hasten, O compassionate One! / Speedily come to thy aid, / for Thou are merciful and able to do as Thou will.

### **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 has 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)

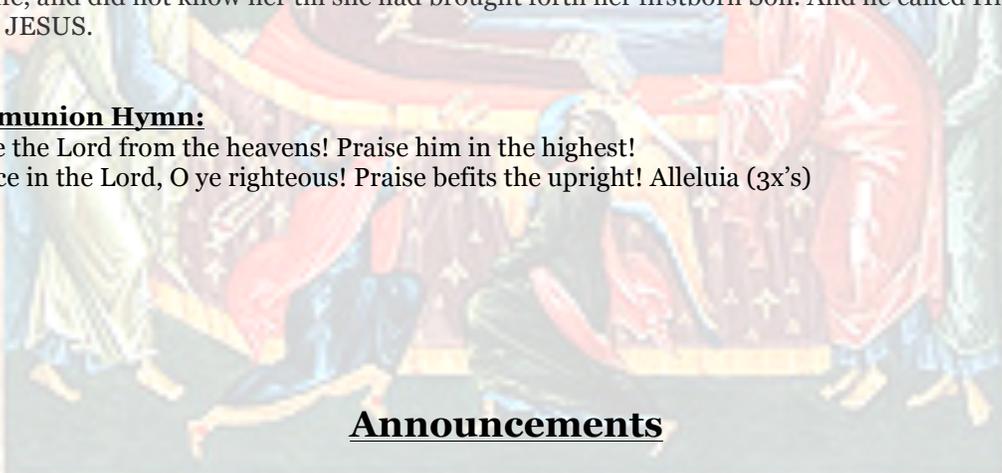
- v. We have heard with our ears, O God, for our fathers have told us.  
Alleluia (3x's)
- v. For Thou hast saved us from them that oppose us, and hast put to shame  
them that hate us. Alleluia (3x's)

**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 & guest** 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** (cont.)

### **Advent Season Tutelage - 2016**

With this being the last Sunday before the Feast of the Nativity, we will conclude this tutelage with information on the Holy Archangel Michael: Over all the Nine Ranks, the Lord appointed the Holy Archangel Michael (his name in Hebrew means “who is like unto God”), the faithful servitor of God, as Chief Commander. He cast down from Heaven the arrogantly proud Lucifer and the other fallen spirits when they rebelled against God. Michael summoned the ranks of angels and cried out, “Let us attend! Let us stand aright before our Creator and do not consider doing what is displeasing unto God!”

According to Church Tradition, and in the church services to the Archangel Michael, he participated in many other Old Testament events:

*During the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt he went before them in the form of a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Through him the power of the Lord was made manifest, annihilating the Egyptians and Pharaoh who were in pursuit of the Israelites. The Archangel Michael defended Israel in all its misfortunes.*

*He appeared to Joshua Son of Navi and revealed the will of the Lord at the taking of Jericho (Josh 5:13-16). The power of the great Chief Commander of God was manifest in the annihilation of the 185 thousand soldiers of the Assyrian emperor Sennacherib (4/2 Kings 19:35); also in the smiting of the impious leader Heliodorus (2 Macc. 3: 24-26); and in the protection of the Three Holy Youths: Ananias, Azarias and Misail, thrown into the fiery furnace for their refusal to worship an idol (Dan 3:22-25).*

*Through the will of God, the Chief Commander Michael transported the Prophet Habbakuk (December 2) from Judea to Babylon, to give food to Daniel in the lions’ den (Dan. 14:33-37).*

*The Archangel Michael disputed with the devil over the body of holy Prophet Moses (Jude 1:9).*

*Intercession for Russian cities by the Most Holy Queen of Heaven always involved Her appearances with the Heavenly Hosts, under the leadership of the Archangel Michael. Grateful Rus acclaimed the Most Pure Mother of God and the Archangel Michael in church hymns. Many monasteries, cathedrals, court and merchant churches are dedicated to the Chief Commander Michael.*

*In old Kiev at the time of the accepting of Christianity, a cathedral of the Archangel was built, and a monastery also was named for him. Archangel cathedrals are found at Smolensk, Nizhni Novgorod, Staritsa, at Great Ustiug (beginning of the thirteenth century), and a cathedral at Sviyazhsk. In Rus there was not a city, where there was not a church or chapel dedicated to the Archangel Michael.*

*One of the chief temples of the city of Moscow, the burial church in the Kremlin, is dedicated to him. Numerous and beautiful icons of the Chief Commander of the Heavenly Hosts are also in his Cathedral. One of these, the Icon “Blessed Soldier,” was painted in the Dormition Cathedral of the Moscow Kremlin. The saintly soldiers, Russian princes, are depicted under the leadership of the Archangel Michael.*

*We invoke Saint Michael for protection from invasion by enemies and from civil war, and for the defeat of adversaries on the field of battle. He conquers all spiritual enemies.*

On the icon, holy Archangel Michael is depicted as he tramples the devil underfoot, and in his left hand holds a green date-tree branch, and in his right hand a spear with a white banner (or sometimes a fiery sword), on which is outlined a scarlet cross.

**Announcements** (cont.)

**Candles and Prayers for the Faithful and Departed**

**Health for the Living:**

Zara Albrecht offered by Nina Patterson  
David Albrecht offered by Albrecht Family  
Milton and Lin Wollman offered by Emelie Albrecht  
Anastasia, Alexander, Marc, Catherine, Albert, William, Debra, Patricia, Margaret, Simone, M/M  
Herbert, David Albrect Sr, Emily, Catherine, Grace Barbara, Robert, David, Sharon, Helen offered  
by M/M Ken Kavalkovich

**May God Grant Them Many Blessed Years!**

**Memory for the Departed:**

Helen, Anne, William, John, Vito, Bridget, Denise, Margaret, Thomas, Sharbel, Anthony, James  
offered by M/M Ken Kavalkovich

**May Their Memories Be Eternal**

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**Please remember in your prayers:** Cantrell Family; Grace Corba; Robert Corba; + Dolores  
Helms (newly departed and Fr. Mark's Mother); Ronald Kavalkovich (on his recovery from  
surgery); Mat. Jan Koczak; Rick LeRoy, Julia Makara; Margaret Pellack; Helen Riley; Helen  
Wanenchak; 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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Also, please remember in your prayers those who perished and the injured in the senseless and  
brutal attack that occurred last Sunday (December 11) in Cairo, Egypt at Saint Peter's Coptic  
Orthodox Church, which is adjacent to the city's Orthodox Coptic Cathedral of Saint Mark. Most  
of the victims and injured in the bomb blast were women and children.

**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. 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 – Icon Fund (2016)
- 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 5 to Dec 11</u>	<u>December Month-to-Date</u>
Attendance:	30	32 (average)
<i>St Herman Lecture (12/11)</i>	8	
Funds In:	\$ 1,974.00	\$ 3,685.00
Funds Out:	\$ 515.00	\$ 3,863.00
Net Surplus/(Deficit):	\$ 1,459.00	(\$ 310.21)

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

**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month** – Monthly Panikhida immediately after Liturgy.  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month** – Bible Study at 6:30pm in church basement.  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month** – Property Committee Meeting after Liturgy.  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month** – Property Committee Meeting after Liturgy. *(if needed)*  
**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of each month** – Church Life Discussion Class after Liturgy. *see below*

**FYI – The December Church Life Discussion will be held TODAY [December 18<sup>th</sup>] as a result of Christmas occurring on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of December this calendar year.**

**Poinsettias/Christmas Flowers!** Next Sunday (Dec 25) will be the last time to donate for Christmas flowers! There will be special envelopes available to be used for your offering for flower donations. Please give the envelopes to Debbie Kavalkovich or a member of the parish council. Thank you for your support!

**Parish Christmas Decorating and Trimming of the Christmas Tree will take place TODAY after Church Life Discussion.** Please see either Debbie Kavalkovich or Matthew Andrews today regarding the detail schedule of decorating the church and Christmas tree.

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

#### **Saturday, December 24<sup>th</sup> - Christmas Eve Services:**

Great Complines and Matins (condensed version)

Time: **5:00PM**

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

#### **Sunday, December 25<sup>th</sup> - Christmas Day Services:**

Reading of Hours – 9:30AM

Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom – 10:00AM

**CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!**

**THANK YOU!!!** A special “Thank You” to all of those who braved the weather elements yesterday and arrived at the church to clean before the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ next weekend. The parish looks absolutely beautiful. May God Grant You Many Happy & Healthy Years!!!



## Sunday before the Nativity

[Dec 18<sup>th</sup>]

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).

