

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 17, 2017 | 28th Sunday After Pentecost

Tone 3 – Sunday of the Forefathers

Holy Prophet Daniel and the Three Holy Youths (ca. 600 B.C.)

Venerable Daniel the Confessor of Spain and Egypt (10th c.)

V. Rev. Mark W Koczak, Rector

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Weekly Schedule

Today: Emergency Property Committee Meeting scheduled after Divine Liturgy in the church school room.

Today: Special Parish Meeting after Divine Liturgy (regarding the topic: By-Laws)

Saturday: December 23 – Great Vespers at 5:00PM!

Sunday: December 24 – Sunday Before the Nativity of Christ

Reading of Hours – 9:30am

Divine Liturgy – 10:00am

Fellowship coffee hour to follow the Divine Liturgy

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

Great Complines and Matins (Condensed Version)

Time: **12:30pm!**

Monday: December 25 – Nativity of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Christmas)!

Reading of Hours – 9:30am

Divine Liturgy – 10:00am

Texts for the Liturgical Service

Troparion (Tone 3)

Let the heavens rejoice! / Let the earth be glad! / For the Lord has shown strength with His arm. / He has trampled down death by death. / He has become the first born of the dead. / He has delivered us from the depths of hell, / and has granted to the world // great mercy.

Troparion (Tone 2 – Forefathers)

Through faith Thou didst justify the Forefathers, / betrothing through them the Church of the gentiles. / These saints exult in glory, / for from their seed came forth a glorious fruit: / she who bore Thee without seed. // So by their prayers, O Christ God, have mercy on us!

Kontakion (Tone 6 – Forefathers)

Ye did not worship the graven image, / O thrice-blessed ones, / but armed with the immaterial Essence of God, / ye were glorified in a trial by fire. / From the midst of unbearable flames ye called on God, crying: / “Hasten, O compassionate One! / Speedily come to our aid, // for Thou art merciful and able to do as Thou dost 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: Colossians 3:4-11

When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them. But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

Alleluia (3x's) (Tone 4)

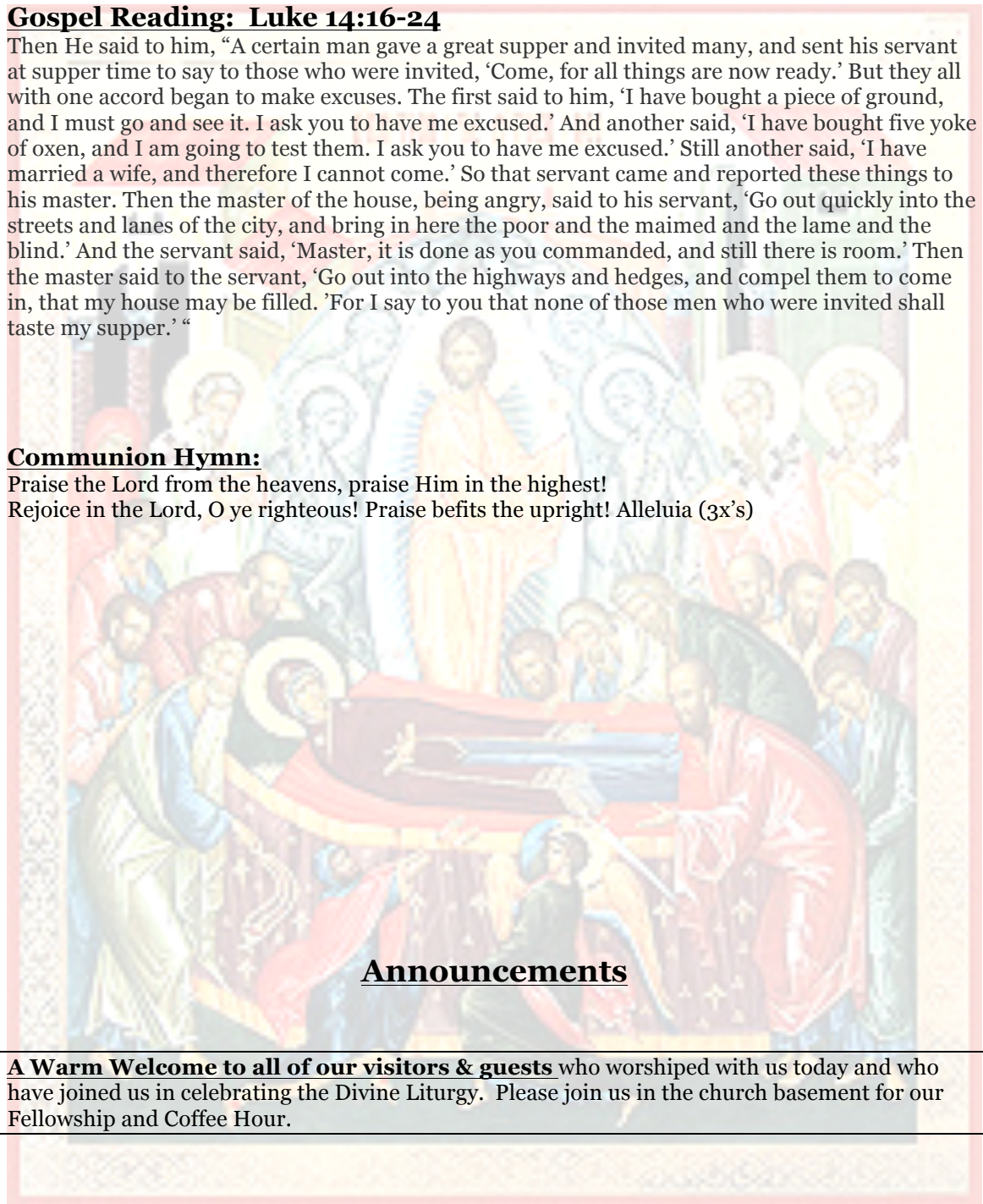
- v. Moses and Aaron were among His priests; Samuel also was among those who called on His Name. Alleluia (3x's)
- v. They called to the Lord and He answered them. Alleluia (3x's)

Gospel Reading: Luke 14:16-24

Then He said to him, "A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.' But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.' Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.' And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.' Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. 'For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.' "

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

Advent Season Tutelage - 2017

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 one of the North American Saints: Saint Alexis Toth. So let's continue...

In reality he did not receive any financial support for a long time, for his parish was very poor. Until his priestly salary began to arrive from Russia, the righteous one was obliged to work in a bakery in order to support himself. Even though his funds were meager, he did not neglect to give alms to the poor and needy. He shared his money with other clergy worse off than himself, and contributed to the building of churches and to the education of seminarians in Minneapolis. He was not anxious about his life (Mt.6:25), what he would eat or drink or wear. Trusting in God to take care of him, Saint Alexis followed the admonition of Our Savior to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Mt.6:33). So he bore the tribulation, slander, and physical attacks with patience and spiritual joy, reminding us that "godliness is stronger than all" (Wisdom of Solomon 10:12).

Bishops Vladimir, Nicholas, Saint Tikhon, and Platon recognized the special gifts of Father Toth, so they often sent him forth to preach and teach wherever there were people of Slavic background. Even though he was aware of his shortcomings and inadequacies, yet he was obedient to the instructions of the bishops. He did not hesitate or make excuses, but went immediately to fulfill his mission. Saint Alexis visited many Uniate parishes, explaining the differences between Orthodoxy, Protestantism, Roman Catholicism and Uniatism, stressing that the true way to salvation is in Orthodoxy.

Like Josiah, "he behaved himself uprightly in the conversion of his people" (Sir 49:2). He was instrumental in the formation or return of seventeen parishes, planting a vineyard of Christ in America, and increasing its fruitful yield many times over. By 1909, the time of his blessed repose, many thousands of Carpatho-Russian and Galician Uniates had returned to Orthodoxy. This was a major event in the history of the North American Mission, which would continue to shape the future of Orthodoxy in this country for many generations to come. Any future growth or success may truly be regarded as the result of Father Toth's apostolic labors.

Who can tell of the saint's spiritual struggles? Who can speak of the prayers which his pious soul poured forth unto God? He did not make a public display of his piety, but prayed to God in secret with all modesty, with contrition and inward tears. God, Who sees everything done in secret, openly rewarded the saint (Mt.6:6). It is inconceivable that Saint Alexis could have accomplished his apostolic labors unless God had blessed and strengthened him for such work. Today the Church continues to reap the fruits of his teaching and preaching.

The conclusion of Saint Alexis Toth's Life to be in next week's bulletin.

Announcements (cont.)

Candles and Prayers for the Faithful and Departed

Health for the Living:

Family offered by Nina Patterson
Debra Kavalkovich offered by Anastasia Kavalkovich
Marc, William, Anastasia, Alexander, Catherine, Albert, Ronald, Patricia, Susan, Katherine, Hanna, Cyndi, Family and Friends offered by M/M Ken Kavalkovich and Family

May God Grant Them Many Blessed Years!

Memory for the Departed:

May Their Memories Be Eternal

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Please remember in your prayers:

Emelie Albrecht; Cantrell Family; Grace Corba; Robert Corba; Ronald Kavalkovich (on his continuous recovery); Margaret Pellack; Helen Wanenchak; Father Vincent Saverino (retired); Father John Bohush (retired); and all those who are serving in our Armed Forces!

Additionally, remember the three injured from the senseless tragedy inside the New York City subway passageway and the fire victims in California including the joyous safe return of Mother Victoria and the nuns of Saint Barbara Monastery in Santa Paula, CA.

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The minutes from the Fall General Parish Meeting have been posted on the bulletin board (where the sign up sheets are located). Please review them between now and the Annual Parish Meeting in January so we won't need to spend time discussing them at said meeting.

Also, the current year-to-date financial statement report is posted on the bulletin board in its normal location. Please familiarize yourself with the current financial activity of the parish to be informed of the parish financial status when it is discussed at the Annual Parish Meeting.

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 (2016-17)
- 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 4 to Dec 10</u>	<u>December Month-to-date</u>
Attendance:	33	35 (average)
Funds In:	\$ 1,275.00	\$ 3,068.00
Funds Out:	\$ 80.27	\$ 3,632.47
Net Surplus/(Deficit):	\$ 1,194.73	(\$ 564.47)

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.

Poinsettias/Christmas Flowers! Today is the final day we are collecting for Christmas flowers. There are 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!

TODAY – Emergency Property Committee Meeting after Divine Liturgy in the Church School Room! All property committee members are asked to attend this important meeting as a result of events that occurred earlier this week regarding one of the Parish properties.

TODAY - Special Parish BY-LAWS Meeting after Divine Liturgy in the Church basement. According to Article 10, Section 2 of the Parish By-Laws, notice of all Special Parish Meetings shall be announced in the Parish Bulletin and read by the Parish Rector from the Amvon at least one Sunday preceding the date of the meeting. This special meeting is being held for the specific purpose only of discussing the Parish By-Laws and its compliance with the OCA Statues by December 31, 2017.

Christmas Eve Services (Great Complines and Matins (modified)) – Sunday, December 24th – Time: approximately 12:30PM.
As previous discussed, Christmas Eve services of Great Complines and a condensed version of Matins is scheduled for 12:30PM (About an hour after Divine Liturgy). This should give enough time for parishioners to relax and grab a quick bite (Lenten) during Fellowship Coffee Hour. Please make every effort to stay after Divine Liturgy and attend this service on the eve of Christ's Birth!

The Nativity of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ Service Monday, December 25th – Hours: 9:30am and Liturgy: 10:00am!

December 31 - Church Life Discussion class after Divine Liturgy and Fellowship Hour. (The 4th Sunday of the month)
The Topic – Icons, Iconography, and Iconostas. It's history and the stories displayed on them. Please note the class will be held on the 5th Sunday of the month as a result of Christmas Eve occurring on the 4th Sunday of December this calendar year.



Sunday of the Forefathers

[Dec 17th]

The Sunday that falls between December 11-17 is known as the Sunday of the Holy Forefathers. These are the ancestors of Christ according to the flesh, who lived before the Law and under the Law, especially the Patriarch Abraham, to whom God said, “In thy seed shall all of the nations of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 12:3, 22:18).

Righteous Priest Aaron [Dec.17th] (abridged)

The Righteous Aaron was the son of Amram and Jochebed, and the elder brother of the Prophet Moses the God-seer, and also of Miriam. He was a direct descendent of Levi by both parents. God called him “the Levite” in Exodus 4:14, when He appointed Aaron to be the spokesman for Moses, who was “slow of speech,” before the people. Later, he would also speak on behalf of Moses before Pharaoh in Egypt (Ex. 4:30; 7:2). Aaron was married to Elisheba, the daughter of the Prince of Judah (Ex. 6:23), who bore him four sons.

Aaron and his sons were anointed and sanctified to serve God as priests (Exodus chapter 29). In chapter 32, Aaron fell into temptation when Moses went up on Mount Sinai to receive the Commandments. Since Moses was taking a long time, the people grew restless and asked Aaron to make them a golden idol in the form of a calf so that they could offer sacrifices. He gave into them, and Moses was angry when he returned and saw them dancing and singing before the calf. He threw down the tablets on which God had written the Ten Commandments, and then he burned the golden calf and ground it to powder. He scattered the powder on the water, and he made the people drink it. When Moses asked those who were on the Lord’s side to gather around him, the Levites came to him. He ordered them to take their swords and slay their sons, companions, and neighbors. About three thousand people were killed that day.

Later, Aaron and Miriam criticized Moses for marrying a Cushite woman (Num. 12:1). God was angry with them, so He punished Miriam with leprosy. She was healed by God seven days after Moses interceded for her.

In chapter 17 of Numbers, the people murmured against Moses and Aaron, so God commanded that the leaders of the twelve tribes should have their names inscribed on their rods and placed in the tent of testimony. One would be chosen to make the people cease their grumbling against Moses and his brother. Aaron’s rod bloomed miraculously in the tent of the testimony, to show that he had been chosen for this purpose.

Aaron reposed atop Mount Hor when he was one hundred and twenty-three years old. One of his descendants was St. Elizabeth, the mother of St. John the Baptist (Luke 1:5).