

## **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 24, 2017 | 29<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost**

Tone 4 – Sunday Before the Nativity of Christ

Eve of the Nativity of Christ

Nun Martyr Eugenia of Rome and with her Martyr Phillip, her father

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

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### **Weekly Schedule**

Today: Eve of the Nativity of Christ! Great Complines and Matins  
(Condensed Version). Time: **12:30pm!**

Monday: 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

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

Saturday: December 30 – Great Vespers at **5:00PM!**

Sunday: December 31 – 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 31 – Church Life Discussion Class after Divine Liturgy.  
The Topic: Icons, Iconography, and Iconostas. Its history and the stories displayed on them.

## **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)**

Mary was of David’s seed, / so she went with Joseph to register in Bethlehem. / She bore in her womb the Fruit not sown by man. / The time for the birth was at hand. / Since there was no room at the inn, / the cave became a beautiful palace for the Queen. // Christ is born, raising up the image that fell of old.

### **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 art 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,

**[...continue Epistle Reading on 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

### **Advent Season Tutelage - 2017**

With this being the last Sunday before the Feast of the Nativity, we will conclude this Advent tutelage with the remaining information on the Life of the North American Saint: Saint Alexis Toth...

Father Toth's efforts did not go unrecognized in his own lifetime. He received a jeweled miter from the Holy Synod, as well as the Order of Saint Vladimir and the Order of Saint Anna from Czar Nicholas II for distinguished service and devotion to God and country. In 1907, he was considered as a candidate for the episcopal office. He declined this honor, however, humbly pointing out that this responsibility should be given to a younger, healthier man.

At the end of 1908, Saint Alexis' health began to decline due to a complication of illnesses. He went to the seashore in southern New Jersey in an attempt to regain his health, but soon returned to Wilkes-Barre, where he was confined to bed for two months. The righteous one reposed on Friday, May 7, 1909 (April 24 on the Old Calendar), the feast of Saints Sava and Alexius the Hermit of the Kiev Caves. Saint Alexis' love and concern for his spiritual children did not cease with his death. Before closing the account of his life, it would be most appropriate to reveal but one example of his heavenly intercession:

In January, 1993 a certain man prayed to Saint Alexis to help him obtain information about his son from whom he had been separated for twenty-eight years. Placing his confidence in the saint's boldness before God, he awaited an answer to his prayer. The very next day the man's son telephoned him. It seems the young man was in church when he was suddenly filled with an overwhelming desire to contact his father. He had been taken to another state by his mother, and she changed his name when he was a child. This is why his father was unable to locate him. Having learned from his mother that his father was an Orthodox Christian, he was able with the help of an Orthodox priest to obtain his father's phone number in a distant city. As a result of that telephone call, the young man later visited his father, who rejoiced to see what sort of man his son had become. The father gave thanks to God and to Saint Alexis for reuniting him with his son.

Saint Alexis was a true man of God who guided many Carpatho-Russian and Galician immigrants through the dark confusion of religious challenges in the New World and back to the unity of the Orthodox Church through his grace-filled words and by his holy example. In his last will and testament Saint Alexis commended his soul to God's mercy, asking forgiveness from everyone and forgiving everybody. His holy relics now rest at Saint Tikhon Monastery in South Canaan, Pennsylvania where the faithful may come to venerate them and to entreat Saint Alexis' intercessions on their behalf.

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

## Announcements (cont.)

## Candles and Prayers for the Faithful and Departed

## Health for the Living:

## Family and Parishioners offered by Nina Patterson

Marc, William, Ronald, John, Kathy, Sue, Ken, Debbie, Ana, Alex, Catherine, Albert, Heather, Peter, Sharon, Matt, Christina, Chris, Alli, David, Alli, David, James, Edward offered by M/M Ken Kavalkovich and Family

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

## **Memory for the Departed:**

## **May Their Memories Be Eternal**

## **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!

**THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!**

For all who donated towards the poinsettias & Christmas flowers that decorate the Parish during the Nativity season. A special Thank You goes out to Anastasia Kavalkovich and Debbie Kavalkovich who spent the time purchasing and then decorating the Parish with the flowers.

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 11 to Dec 17</u>	<u>December Month-to-date</u>
Attendance: 27	32 (average)
Vespers (Sat 12/23) 12	
Funds In: \$ 3,632.00	\$ 6,700.00
Funds Out: \$ 1,855.38	\$ 5,487.85
Net Surplus/(Deficit): \$ 1,776.62	\$ 1,212.15

**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 Divine 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 Divine Liturgy.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month** – Currently no permanent event is scheduled.

**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of each month** – Church Life Discussion Class after Divine Liturgy.

### **Sunday, December 31 - Church Life Discussion class after Divine Liturgy and Fellowship Hour. (The 4<sup>th</sup> 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 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month as a result of Christmas Eve occurring on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of December this calendar year.

### **Friday & Saturday, January 5 & 6<sup>th</sup> - Eve of and The Holy Theophany of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ Services:**

Vespers | Great Complines | Matins (condensed version) | Divine Liturgy

Time: **To Be Determined by Father Mark**

Once the date, time, and service schedule is confirmed, it will be noted in the bulletin. Please make every effort to attend these services on the Baptism of Christ!

### **Bible Study – Tuesday, January 9 at 6:30pm in the church basement.**

The Bible Study Group will gather together at this time and continue reading and discussing the next section of the bible which is the Book of Numbers.

### **Sunday, January 14 – Property Committee Meeting after Divine Liturgy in the Church School Room! (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month)**

All property committee members are asked to attend the meeting. Discussions will include any follow-up from the previous meeting, status of the meeting with the tenant of the parish house, and any additional action(s) that need to be taken.

### **81<sup>st</sup> Annual Novogodny Ball – Sunday, January 14, 2018.**

Flyer information and Reservation Forms are posted on the church bulletin boards both in the back of the church upstairs and in the basement.

### **The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on a Sunday in late January 2018 after Divine Liturgy in the church basement.**

An exact date is still To Be Determined, however, tentative dates scheduled are either Sunday, January 21 or Sunday, January 28. 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 2018 budget, and the election of officers will take place during the meeting along with any other business that needs to be discussed.



## Eve of the Nativity of our Lord

[Dec 24<sup>th</sup>]

In Slavic practice, on the eve of the Nativity of the Lord, the liturgical services consist of the Royal Hours with the Typika, Vespers, and the Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great. At Vigil in the evening, Great Compline is followed by Matins.

If the Nativity falls on Sunday, however, the Royal Hours with the Typika are read on the preceding Friday. On Friday evening, the office of the Forefeast, December 24. The Liturgy of Saint John

Chrysostom is served on Saturday morning. At Vigil in the evening, Great Compline is followed by Matins. On Sunday morning, the Liturgy of Saint Basil is celebrated.

If the Nativity falls on a Monday, Royal Hours with the Typika are read on Friday December 22. On Saturday evening and Sunday morning we follow the order for the Sunday before the Nativity with the office of the Forefeast for December 24. On Sunday morning the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom is served. Vigil on Sunday evening consists of Great Compline is followed by Matins. On Monday morning the Liturgy of Saint Basil is celebrated.

On the eve of the Nativity, instead of three readings from the Old Testament at Vespers, there are eight readings (from Genesis, Numbers, Micah, Isaiah, Baruch, Daniel, and two more readings from Isaiah). The entrance is made with the Gospel.

At the end of Liturgy the priest places a lighted candle in a candlestick in the center of the church. Then the troparion and kontakion of the Feast are sung. At Vigil on the evening of the twenty-fourth, Great Compline is followed by Matins.

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

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)