

Assumption of the Holy Virgin Orthodox Church

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Sunday, December 31, 2017 | 30th Sunday After Pentecost

Tone 5 – Sunday After the Nativity of Christ

Holy Righteous Ones: Joseph the Betrothed, David the King, and
James, the Brother of the Lord. Leavetaking of the Nativity.

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Weekly Schedule

Happy Civil New Year!

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

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

Friday: January 5 - Eve of Theophany at **6:30PM!**
Great Complines | Matins (Modified) | Blessing of Water
[Strict Fast Day!]

Saturday: January 6 – Feast of Holy Theophany at **10:00AM!**
Reading of Hours – 9:30am
Divine Liturgy – 10:00am

Saturday: January 6 – Great Vespers at **5:00PM!**

Sunday: January 7 – Sunday After the Theophany
Reading of Hours – 9:30am
Divine Liturgy – 10:00am

Fellowship coffee hour to follow the Divine Liturgy

Texts for the Liturgical Service

Troparion (Tone 5)

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, / co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, / born for our salvation from the Virgin; / for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, / to endure death, / and to raise the dead // by His glorious Resurrection.

Troparion (Tone 4 – Nativity)

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, / has shown to the world the light of wisdom! / For by it, those who worshipped 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!

Troparion (Tone 2 – Righteous Ones)

Proclaim the wonder, O Joseph, / to David, the ancestor of God; / thou hast seen a Virgin great with child; / and thou gavest 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!

Kontakion (Tone 3 – Righteous Ones)

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!”

Kontakion (Tone 3 – Nativity)

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!

Prokeimenon (Tone 5)

Thou, O Lord, shall protect us / and preserve us from this generation forever!
v. Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any that is godly.

Epistle Reading: Galatians 1:11-19 (Sunday After)

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.

Alleluia (3x's) (Tone 5)

- v. I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Thy truth from generation to generation. Alleluia (3x's)
- v. For Thou hast said: Mercy will be established forever; Thy truth will be prepared in the heavens. Alleluia (3x's)

Gospel Reading: Matthew 2:13-23 (Sunday After)

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 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."

[Instead of "It is truly meet.." we sing the Hymn to the Theotokos]

Magnify, O my soul, the most-pure Virgin Theotokos,
more honorable and more glorious than the heavenly hosts!
I behold a strange, most glorious mystery:
Heaven—the cave!
The cherubic throne—the Virgin!
The manger—the place where Christ lay,
the uncontainable God, Whom we magnify in song!

Communion Hymn:

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest!
The Lord hath sent redemption to His people. 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

Father Mark & Matushka Jan Koczak wish to thank you for all of your cards, gifts, and well-wishes that they received this Christmas Season and for Matushka Jan's birthday cards and gifts. CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!

2018 House Blessing

If you wish to have your home blessed, please speak with Father Mark for date availability to schedule a house blessing. The blessing of houses will begin after Theophany which is Saturday, January 6. Items of importance when having your home blessed: 1) have a candle available to be burned during the house blessing, 2) a bowl of blessed holy water, 3) an icon (preferably the icon of Christ being baptized in the Jordan River), and 4) please make enough space for Father Mark to maneuver in the rooms you wish him to bless.

2018 January & February Calendar Dates:

January 5 – Eve of Holy Theophany – Complines and Matins begin 6:30pm

January 6 – Holy Theophany – Liturgy at 10am

January 9 – Bible Study at 6:30pm

January 13 or 20 – Saturday Sunday School (pending schedule availability)

January 14 - Property Committee Meeting

January 21 – Zachaeus Sunday (Yes, already getting ready for Lent!)

January 21 – Great Blessing of the Water on the Schuylkill River

January 21 – Church Life Discussion Class on the Icons

January 25 and 26 – 54th Diocesan Assembly in Wilmington, DE

January 28 – Annual Parish Meeting after Liturgy

January 30 – Three Hierarchs (NO SERVICES!)

February 1 and 2 – Meeting of our Lord in the Temple (Services TBD)

February 4 – Soup N' Bowl III after Liturgy

February 11 – Meatfare Sunday with Annual Roast Beef/Pork Luncheon

February 11 – Property Committee Meeting

February 13 – Bible Study at 6:30pm

February 18 – Cheesefare and Forgiveness Sunday. Vespers after Liturgy

February 19 – GREAT LENT BEGINS

March 25 (Sunday) – Annunciation of our Most Holy Lady the Theotokos

April 1 – Palm Sunday

April 8 – PASCHA!

FYI...the parish is also scheduled on hosting one of the Mission Services during the Lenten Season this year. More information to follow once date becomes available.

Announcements (cont.)

Candles and Prayers for the Faithful and Departed

Health for the Living:

Emelie Albrecht, Joseph Herbert offered by M/M Herbert
Family and Parishioners offered by Nina Patterson
Emelie Albrecht, Dave Albrecht offered by Melanie Albrecht
Marc, William, Catherine, Albert, Patricia, Kenneth, Anastasia, Alexander, Salena, Family and
Friends, Emily, David, Sharon offered by M/M Ken Kavalkovich and Family
Herbert Family offered by M/M Herbert (Dec 25)
Michael Spack, Emelie Albrecht offered by M/M Herbert (Dec 25)
Family members offered by Mr. Jack Drimak (Dec 25)
Family & Friends, Daria, Marc, William, Susan, Katherine, Katherine, Jane, Charles, Emelie,
Mary offered by M/M Ken Kavalkovich & Family (Dec 25)

May God Grant Them Many Blessed Years!

Memory for the Departed:

Anna Herbert, Sophie Herbert offered by M/M Herbert
Anna and Maxim Herbert, Sophie Herbert, Helen Herbert, Mary Herbert, Dmitri Herbert, Olga
Herbert offered by M/M Herbert (Dec 25)
Parents John and Anna Rabik offered by their son Joseph Rabik (Dec 25)
Father John Udics offered by Nina Patterson (Dec 25)
Father Sergius Willis offered by Nina Patterson (Dec 25)
Parents Paul and Irene Kavcsak offered by M/M Rick LeRoy (Dec 25)

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; Nancy Brasko Rabik; Michael Spack; Helen Wanenchak;
Father Vincent Saverino (retired); Father John Bohush (retired); and all those who are serving in
our Armed Forces!

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**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 18 to Dec 24</u>	<u>December Month-to-date</u>
Attendance:	27	34 (average)
<i>Christmas Eve Services</i>	23	<i>(includes Christmas Day)</i>
<i>Christmas Day Liturgy</i>	48	
Funds In:	\$ 686.00	\$ 7,387.00
Funds Out:	\$ 1,530.00	\$ 7,017.85
Net Surplus/(Deficit):	(\$ 844.00)	\$ 369.15

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

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.

Today - 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.

Friday, January 5th - Eve of the Holy Theophany:

Vespers | Great Complines | Matins (condensed version) and the Blessing of the Water beginning at **6:30PM!**

Saturday, January 6th - Holy Theophany Liturgy:

Divine Liturgy at **10:00AM**

Please make every effort to attend these services on the Baptism of Christ!

CHRIST IS BAPTIZED! IN THE RIVER JORDAN!

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! (2nd 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.

81st 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, January 28, 2018 after Divine Liturgy in the church basement.

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.



Holy Righteous Joseph the Betrothed [December 31st]

Saint Joseph the Betrothed was of the lineage of King David. In his first marriage, he had four sons and two daughters. After he became a widower, St Joseph led a life of strict temperance. He was chosen to be the husband and guardian of the Most Holy Theotokos, who had taken a vow of virginity.

An angel told him of the Incarnation of the Son of God through her. St Joseph was present when the shepherds and the Magi worshiped the new-born divine Infant. On the orders of the angel, he fled into Egypt with the Mother of God

and the Infant Jesus, saving them from the wrath of King Herod. He lived in Egypt with the Virgin Mary and the divine Child, working as a carpenter. St Joseph reputedly died at the age of one hundred.

St Joseph is commemorated on the Sunday after the Nativity. If there is no Sunday between December 25 and January 1, his Feast is moved to December 26. The Righteous Joseph is also commemorated on the Sunday of the Holy Forefathers.



Holy Righteous James the Brother of the Lord [December 31th]

The Holy Apostle James, Brother of the Lord, was the eldest son of Joseph the Betrothed from his first marriage with Solomonia. The Apostle James is remembered after the Feast of the Nativity of Christ together with his father Joseph and the Prophet-King David, since he accompanied his family on the Flight into Egypt and lived there with the Infant Jesus, the Mother of God and Joseph. Later, he returned to Israel with them.

After the Ascension of the Lord, St James was the first Bishop of Jerusalem, gaining the great esteem not only of Christians, but also of Jews. He was thrown from the roof of the Jerusalem Temple because he had publicly preached to the people about the God-manhood of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Apostle James is also commemorated on October 23.

10 Spiritual New Year's Resolutions for Orthodox Christians

1) Arrive for Church Services on time! We take for granted the Divine Liturgy at the best of times. Often we believe that as long as we are there for the Gospel, Sermon and Communion we have had “a good enough dose of God for the week.” Partaking of the Matins or Orthros service and the full Divine Liturgy will prepare you fully for stepping up to the precious and life giving Chalice of Christ. This will in turn fortify your spiritual journey into the world for the coming week. Our responsibility to Our Lord is to respect the schedule laid out for us, at least once a week.

2) Ask for forgiveness from our family, friends and Christian brothers and sisters in our parish. Forgiveness is a difficult virtue to put into practice and even more difficult to use regularly. Let us therefore use the virtue of forgiveness as a basis for our continued commitment to theosis and by regarding our earthly relationships with one another as truly important. Let us practice forgiveness, as it is the first step in preparing for Holy Confession and Holy Communion each and every Sunday.

3) Learn about praying and prayers. We tend to use the prayers we were taught as children. There are many prayers available for parishioners to use: check the prayer book and ask your Priest, he can assist by providing prayers that pertain to your specific situation(s). Pray often, more than once a day. If you do not have a prayer corner set up in your home, ask your Parish Priest to assist you in setting one up.

4) Become a steward in your parish and community. Become an active, involved, caring Orthodox Christian. Donate to your Parish, become, if not already, involved in keeping our environment clean (God placed us on this earth to care for His creations!!!), donate to food banks, school lunch programs, etc. Create an organized community outreach for the less fortunate residents of your area. As stewards of humanity, it is incumbent upon us, as Orthodox Christians to lead by example.

5) Attend more than one (1) Church Service per Month. Don't be a “C” & “E” (Christmas & Easter) Parishioner. Place prayer, worship and Church Services on your list of priorities, above all other recreational activities. The benefit of a fulfilling spiritual life will lead you to many rewards in the future.

6) Put your God-given Talents to use. We all have hidden talents, or talents not used to their full potential. Recognize them, ask for guidance from Our Lord and put them to use for the benefit of God's Holy Church.

7) Invite your children, grandchildren, siblings and friends to Church Services. Become a host to your own family. Guide them and explain to them that the One Holy Universal and Apostolic Church is the One True Church. Explain that Orthodoxy offers all to its faithful. Bring one guest to Church per year at least and allow God to do His work.

8) Contact your family members that have stepped away from your family; or if you have stepped away, call your family. Practice patience, understanding and forgiveness. We are on this earth but once. We have one opportunity to practice forgiveness and ask for it as well. It is never wrong to come back home, even after a lengthy absence. We should never be embarrassed to admit our faults to our families and our desire to renew our relationships. We must remember, we are not perfect, we all have faults and we never know when we may be called by God to return home.

9) Experience the life of the Church and her many gifts to heal you. Attend Church services; come to Confession and Communion on a regular basis. We were born unto this earth dependent upon our Lord. Use Confession to unburden your sins and Communion to heal you. Rely on your Parish Priest to be your Father Confessor and Spiritual Guide.

10) Recognize that we are tested by Our Lord and tempted by the devil himself, daily. We are put to the test daily, as in school, so in life. Pray frequently, ask for guidance, see beyond the test, look for the good only in all situations. Avoid temptations that are “too good to be true.” Recognize that we are accountable for all of our thoughts, actions and deeds.

- By Father Stephen Lourie