

## Assumption of the Holy Virgin Orthodox Church

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### Sunday, January 14, 2018 | 32<sup>nd</sup> Sunday After Pentecost

Tone 7 – Leavetaking of the Theophany  
Saint Nina (Nino), Enlightener of the Georgians (355)  
The Holy Fathers slain at Sinai and Raithu

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

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### Weekly Schedule

- Today: Property Committee Meeting is scheduled after Divine Liturgy in the church school room.
- Tonight: 81<sup>st</sup> Annual Novogodny Ball – Trevoze, PA
- Friday: 45<sup>th</sup> March for Life – Washington, D.C. begins at noon.
- Saturday: January 20 – Great Vespers at 5:00PM!
- Sunday: January 21 – Sunday of Zacchaeus  
Reading of Hours – 9:30am  
Divine Liturgy – 10:00am  
Fellowship coffee hour to follow the Divine Liturgy
- Sunday: January 21 – Church Life Discussion Class after Divine Liturgy.  
Topic: Icons, Iconography, and Iconostas!
- Sunday: January 21 – Great Blessing of Water begins at 3:00PM along the Schuylkill River at 2 Boathouse Row and Kelly Drive.

## Texts for the Liturgical Service

### **Troparion (Tone 7)**

By Thy Cross Thou destroy death. / To the thief Thou didst open Paradise. / For the Myrrhbearers Thou didst chang weeping into joy. / And Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God, / to proclaim that Thou are risen, // granting the world great mercy.

### **Troparion (Tone 1 – Feast of Theophany)**

When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan, / the worship of the Trinity was made manifest. / For the voice of the Father bore witness to Thee, / and called Thee His beloved Son; / and the Spirit in the form of a dove / confirmed the truthfulness of His word. / O Christ our God, Who hast revealed Thyself // and hast enlightened the world, glory to Thee.

### **Kontakion (Tone 7)**

The dominion of death can no longer hold men captive, / for Christ descended, shattering and destroying its powers. / Hell is bound, while the Prophets rejoice and cry: / “The Savior has come to those in faith; // enter, thou faithful, into the Resurrection!”

### **Kontakion (Tone 4 – Feast of Theophany)**

Today Thou hast shone forth to the world, O Lord, / and the light of Thy countenance has been marked on us. / Knowing Thee, we sing Thy praises: / Thou hast come and revealed Thyself, // O unapproachable Light.

### **Prokeimenon (Tone 7)**

The Lord shall give strength to His people! / The Lord shall bless His people with peace!  
v. Offer to the Lord, O ye sons of God! Offer young rams to the Lord!

### **Prokeimenon (Tone 4)**

Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord. God is the Lord and has revealed Himself to us.

### **Epistle Reading: 1 Timothy 1:15-17**

This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life. Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Alleluia (3x's) (Tone 4)



v. Bring to the Lord, O ye sons of God, bring to the Lord young rams. Alleluia (3x's)  
v. The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of glory thunders, the Lord upon many waters. Alleluia (3x's)

v. (Tone 7) It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to Thy Name, O Most High. Alleluia (3x's)

### **Gospel Reading: Luke 18:35-43**

Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging. And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it meant. So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. And he cried out, saying, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked him, saying, "What do you want Me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, that I may receive my sight." Then Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

### **[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!  
No tongue is capable of praising you worthily;  
The angelic mind is overawed in exalting you, O Theotokos!  
But since thou art good, accept our faith,  
Since you are gracious and knowest our divine love,  
Thou art the defender of Christians, and we magnify thee!

### **Communion Hymn:**

The grace of God hath appeared for the salvation of all men.  
Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! 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

### **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 was on 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.

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As a result of our church holding its Annual Parish Meeting in two weeks (Sunday, January 28), the next Church Life Discussion Lecture on Icons, Iconography, and Iconostas will be held next week on **Sunday, January 21, 2018** after Divine Liturgy up in the Church.

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The **54<sup>th</sup> Diocesan Assembly** will be held in two weeks (Thursday, January 25 and Friday, January 26) at St. Michaels Orthodox Church in Wilmington, DE. Father Mark will be attending the Assembly both days and the parish has scheduled one of our parishioners to attend the Friday sessions as our parish delegate. Also, our parish will have a parishioner attend the Assembly as an observer only. Any pertinent information or action taken during the Assembly will be reported by the parish representatives during our Annual Parish Meeting in two weeks (Sunday, January 28) after Divine Liturgy.

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**There will be no services held for the Feast of the Three Hierarchs at our parish on either the eve (Monday, January 29) or on the Feast Day itself (Tuesday, January 30).**

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**Soup N' Bowl III Challenge – Sunday February 4, 2018 after Divine Liturgy (including Stews & Chili)!** We are looking for participants to prepare their best soup, stew, or chili and faceoff against each other once again. The parishioners & guest will indulge in each dish & cast a ballot for which one they enjoy the most. Additional details to follow!



**Announcements** (cont.)

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

**Health for the Living:**

Anastasia (as she heads off to college), Alexander, Selena, Colin (returning to school), Catherine, Albert, Patricia, Marc, Kenneth, and Ronald offered by M/M Ken Kavalkovich & Family.  
Kenneth, Alexander, Anastasia, Marc, Ronald, Steven, David, Margaret, Emily, Daria, Edward, Stephanie offered by Debbie Kavalkovich.

**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:**

For the newly baptized infant Natasha Gerty (Jan 13) and her parents Katherine and Michael Gerty; Emelie Albrecht; Cantrell Family; Grace Corba; Robert Corba; Ronald Kavalkovich (on his continuous recovery); Anastasia Kavalkovich (as she heads off to college); 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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**2018 St Tikhon's Lectionary Church Wall Calendars!**

We no longer have any 2018 calendars for sale. We still a family who ordered a calendar who still needs to pick theirs up. Also, if you still owe for your calendar (\$5), please settle up your balance with a member of the parish council or someone at the candle desk. Thank You!

**Parish Council Office Notification!!!**

The Parish Secretary has informed the Parish Council that she will not be running for re-election for said position. Therefore, the Office of the Parish Secretary is open and the parish will be looking for a candidate to fill this vacancy during the election of parish officers 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/January)**

	<u>Week of Jan 1 to Jan 7</u>	<u>December Month (Unaudited)</u>
Attendance:	32	34 (average) <i>(includes Christmas Day)</i>
Funds In:	\$ 2,645.00	\$ 11,427.15
Funds Out:	\$ 3,436.08	\$ 6,751.37
Net Surplus/(Deficit):	(\$ 791.08)	\$ 4,675.78

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.

**Today – 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.

**Tonight – the 81<sup>st</sup> Annual Novogodny Ball – Trevoze , PA.**

Flyer information is posted on the church bulletin boards both in the back of the church upstairs and in the basement. The deadline for both reservations for tickets to attend the event and for room accommodations has already passed. Tickets for the dinner and/or the dance will not be sold at the door.

**45<sup>th</sup> Annual March for Life – Friday, January 19, 2018 – Love Saves Lives.**

For those attending the March will begin at noon at Twelfth Street on the National Mall, between Madison and Jefferson Drives. Immediately following Metropolitan Tikhon's opening prayer, Orthodox Christians marchers will gather at the "Orthodox Christians for Life" banner, which will be prominently displayed to the left of the stage at Constitution Avenue and Twelfth Street NW.

**Great Blessing of the Waters – Sunday, January 21, 2018 – 3PM!**

The Pan-Orthodox Christian Brotherhood of Greater Philadelphia announces a joint Orthodox Christian Celebration of Epiphany on January 21, 2018 at 3pm along the Schuylkill River at the Fairmont Boat House, located at 2 Boathouse Row and Kelly Drive, Philadelphia, PA. This traditional service known as "The Greater Blessing of the Waters" will commemorate the Baptism of Jesus Christ in the River Jordan by St. John the Baptist. For more information please speak with Father Mark Kozak about this event.

**Annual Parish Meeting - Sunday, January 28, 2018 after Divine Liturgy in the church**

**basement. This is Notice #2 of 3.** According to Article IV, Section 2, Subsection A. of the Parish By-Laws, notice of all Annual and General Parish Meetings shall be announced in the Parish Bulletin and read by the Parish Rector from the amvon on three consecutive Sundays preceding the date of the Meeting. 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.



## **St Nino (Nina), Equal of the Apostles and Enlightener of Georgia [January 14<sup>th</sup>]**

The virgin Nino of Cappadocia was a relative of Great-martyr George and the only daughter of a widely respected and honorable couple. Her father was a Roman army chief by the name of Zabulon, and her mother, Sosana, was the sister of Patriarch Juvenal of Jerusalem. When Nino reached the age of twelve, her parents sold all their possessions and moved to Jerusalem. Soon after, Nino's father was tonsured a monk. He bid farewell to his family and went to labor in the wilderness of the Jordan.

After Sosana had been separated from her husband, Patriarch Juvenal ordained her a deaconess. She left her daughter Nino in the care of an old woman, Sara Niaphor, who raised her in the Christian Faith and related to her the stories of Christ's life and His suffering on earth. It was from Sara that Nino learned how Christ's Robe had arrived in Georgia, a country of pagans.

Soon Nino began to pray fervently to the Theotokos, asking for her blessing to travel to Georgia and be made worthy to venerate the Sacred Robe that she had woven for her beloved Son. The Most Holy Virgin heard her prayers and appeared to Nino in a dream, saying, "Go to the country that was assigned to me by lot and preach the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will send down His grace upon you and I will be your protector."

But the blessed Nino was overwhelmed at the thought of such a great responsibility and answered, "How can I, a fragile woman, perform such a momentous task, and how can I believe that this vision is real?" In response, the Most Holy Theotokos presented her with a cross of grapevines and proclaimed, "Receive this cross as a shield against visible and invisible enemies!"

When she awoke, Nino was holding the cross in her hands. She dampened it with tears of rejoicing and tied it securely with strands of her own hair. (According to another source, the Theotokos bound the grapevine cross with strands of her own hair.)

Nino related the vision to her uncle, Patriarch Juvenal, and revealed to him her desire to preach the Gospel in Georgia. Juvenal led her in front of the Royal Doors, laid his hands on her, and prayed, "O Lord, God of Eternity, I beseech Thee on behalf of my orphaned niece: Grant that, according to Thy will, she may go to preach and proclaim Thy Holy Resurrection. O Christ God, be Thou to her a guide, a refuge, and a spiritual father. And as Thou didst enlighten the Apostles and all those who feared Thy name, do Thou also enlighten her with the wisdom to proclaim Thy glad tidings."

When Nino arrived in Rome, she met and baptized the princess Rhipsimia and her nurse, Gaiana. At that time the Roman emperor was Diocletian, a ruler infamous for persecuting Christians. Diocletian (284-305) fell in love with Rhipsimia and resolved to marry her, but St. Nino, Rhipsimia, Gaiana, and fifty other virgins escaped to Armenia. The furious Diocletian ordered his soldiers to follow them and sent a messenger to Tiridates, the Armenian king (286-344), to put him on guard.



King Tiridates located the women and, following Diocletian's example, was charmed by Rhipsimia's beauty and resolved to marry her. But St. Rhipsimia would not consent to wed him, and in his rage the king had her tortured to death with Gaiana and the fifty other virgins. St. Nino, however, was being prepared for a different, greater task, and she succeeded in escaping King Tiridates' persecutions by hiding among some rose bushes.

When she finally arrived in Georgia, St. Nino was greeted by a group of Mtskheta shepherds near Lake Paravani, and she received a blessing from God to preach to the pagans of this region.

With the help of her acquaintances St. Nino soon reached the city of Urbnisi. She remained there a month, then traveled to Mtskheta with a group of Georgians who were making a pilgrimage to venerate the pagan idol Armazi. There she watched with great sadness as the Georgian people trembled before the idols. She was exceedingly sorrowful and prayed to the Lord, "O Lord, send down Thy mercy upon this nation...that all nations may glorify Thee alone, the One True God, through Thy Son, Jesus Christ."

Suddenly a violent wind began to blow and hail fell from the sky, shattering the pagan statues. The terrified worshipers fled, scattering across the city.

St. Nino made her home beneath a bramble bush in the garden of the king, with the family of the royal gardener. The gardener and his wife were childless, but through St. Nino's prayers God granted them a child. The couple rejoiced exceedingly, declared Christ to be the True God, and became disciples of St. Nino. Wherever St. Nino went, those who heard her preach converted to the Christian Faith in great numbers. St. Nino even healed the terminally ill Queen Nana after she declared Christ to be the True God.

King Mirian, a pagan, was not at all pleased with the great impression St. Nino's preaching had made on the Georgian nation. One day while he was out hunting, he resolved to kill all those who followed Christ.

According to his wicked scheme, even his wife, Queen Nana, would face death for failing to renounce the Christian Faith. But in the midst of the hunt, it suddenly became very dark. All alone, King Mirian became greatly afraid and prayed in vain for the help of the pagan gods. When his prayers went unanswered, he finally lost hope and, miraculously, he turned to Christ: "God of Nino, illumine this night for me and guide my footsteps, and I will declare Thy Holy Name. I will erect a cross and venerate it and I will construct for Thee a temple. I vow to be obedient to Nino and to the Faith of the Roman people!"

Suddenly the night was transfigured, the sun shone radiantly, and King Mirian gave great thanks to the Creator. When he returned to the city, he immediately informed St. Nino of his decision. As a result of the unceasing labors of Equal-to-the-Apostles Nino, Georgia was established as a nation solidly rooted in the Christian Faith.

St. Nino reposed in the village of Bodbe in eastern Georgia and, according to her will, she was buried in the place where she took her last breath. King Mirian later erected a church in honor of St. George over her grave.