

# CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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## BULLETIN OF NOVEMBER 19, 2006

### SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19<sup>TH</sup>

#### 23<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY OF PENTECOST

8:40a.m. Hours

9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy  
Coffee Hour

### MONDAY, NOVEMBER 20<sup>TH</sup>

7:00p.m. Vespers; Confessions

### TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 21<sup>ST</sup>

#### ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS

*One of the Twelve Great Feasts*

*Divine Liturgy Canceled*

### SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25<sup>TH</sup>

6:00p.m. Vespers; Confessions

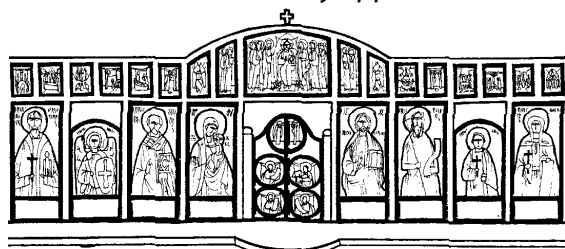
### SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26<sup>TH</sup>

#### 24<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF PENTECOST

8:40a.m. Hours

9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy  
Coffee Hour

*Confessions also heard by appointment.*



### The Nativity Fast

began November 15<sup>th</sup> and ends December 25<sup>th</sup> with the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. As a reminder every Orthodox Christian who wishes to partake of Holy Communion on the feast of Christmas and thereafter must avail themselves of the Sacrament of Confession during the Nativity Fast. Confessions can be heard following any service or by appointment. In addition to a thorough examination of our conscience and a good, frank, and open confession of sins, we should strive to prepare ourselves to celebrate Christmas by keeping the fast, increasing our prayer life, reading a spiritual book, and becoming more generous in our almsgiving.

### Next Parish Council Meeting

Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, following the Divine Liturgy.

### The Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple

is one of the Twelve Great Feasts and will be celebrated with the Vespers service on Monday evening. Every Orthodox Christian, without exception, should make it a priority to celebrate this and every Twelve Great Feast.

### The Postfeast of the Entrance of the Theotokos

is celebrated from November 21<sup>st</sup> through November 25<sup>th</sup>, the "leave-taking" of the feast. Throughout this time the troparion and kontakion for the feast are sung or said with our morning and evening prayers, and at meal times; the troparion before the meal and the kontakion after.

### Troparion (Tone 4)

Today is the prelude of the good will of God, of the preaching of the salvation of mankind. The Virgin appears in the temple of God, in anticipation proclaiming Christ to all. Let us rejoice and sing to her: Rejoice, O Fulfillment of the Creator's dispensation!

### Kontakion (Tone 4)

The most pure Temple of the Savior; the precious Chamber and Virgin; the sacred Treasure of the glory of God, is presented today to the house of the Lord. She brings with her the grace of the Holy Spirit, which the angels of God do praise. Truly this woman is the Abode of Heaven!



## ASK FATHER: 3 QUESTIONS / 3 ANSWERS

### Q. Is it better not to show up if I know I'm going to be late to church?

A. It's always better to show up late to church rather than not at all. That being said though, it is always better to be not just on time for church, but even a little early. We should try to be a little early so that we can gather our thoughts from the cares of the world and redirect them to God. By doing this before the service begins we will be ready to receive Christ who tells us that when two or three are gathered together in His Name, He is in their midst. (Matt. 18:20)



Even in the secular world, if we are expecting the visit of person of honor, we make sure that we not only arrive before he does but we also make sure that we are ready to receive him properly. This is why we should arrive in church early and then instead of conversing with our neighbor (which there is time to do after the service), we should set about our primary task, which is to turn our minds to God and warm our hearts in prayer.

### Q. Please forgive me for this question, is it safe to share one spoon when receiving the Holy Communion?

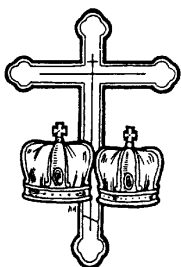
A. In a word, Yes, it is safe to receive Holy Communion from the same spoon. The reason why it is safe is because of what is being received – the Body and Blood of Christ. In the nearly two thousand year history of the Church there has never been a case where a person became sick or contracted a disease from receiving Holy Communion. The only time people have become sick through partaking of Holy Communion is when they partake without proper preparation. This is why the Apostle Paul warns: "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For he who eats and drinks unworthily eats and drinks condemnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged." (1 Cor. 11:28-31)



On a practical note, the safest way to receive Holy Communion, that is so that an accident does not take place, is to open one's mouth wide, and then close one's mouth on the spoon in the normal fashion.

### Q. Father, I've heard that marriages in the Orthodox Church are not performed on certain days. What days are these, and why is this?

A. In the Orthodox Church marriages are not performed:



1. On the Eves of Wednesdays and Fridays throughout the year.
2. On the Eves of Sundays, Twelve Great Feasts, the feast of the parish, and some other great feasts.
3. During the Great Lent, Apostle's Fast, Dormition Fast, and Nativity Fast.
4. From Christmas (Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>) through the Synaxis of the Baptist (Jan. 7<sup>th</sup>).
5. During Cheesefare Week and Bright Week.
6. On the Day and Eve of the Beheading of the Baptist (Aug. 29<sup>th</sup>) and the Elevation of the Cross (Sept. 14<sup>th</sup>).

Marriages are not performed on these days so that the wedding celebrations do not compete with the festivities of holy days, nor conflict with the solemn character of our fasts. Before setting a day for your wedding be sure to speak with your priest.





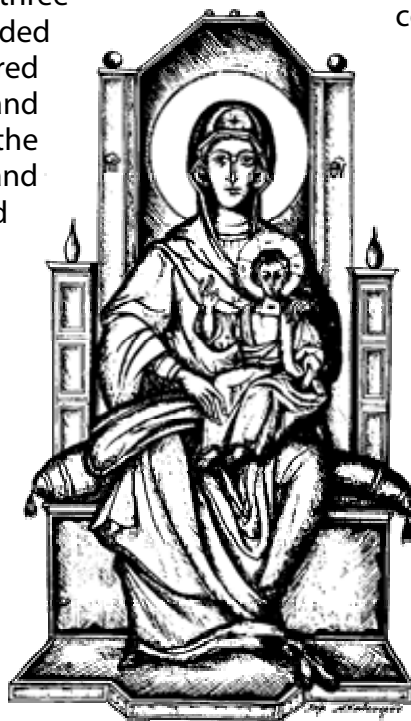
**Entry into the Temple of our Most Holy Lady Mother of God and Ever Virgin Mary**  
**Celebrated on the 21<sup>st</sup> Day of the Month November**

The Entry into the Temple of the Most Holy Mother of God happened, according to the preserved accounts of Holy Tradition, in the following manner. The parents of the Virgin Mary, Righteous Joakim and Anna, in praying for a solution to their childlessness, gave a vow that if a child were born to them, they would dedicate it to the service of God.

When the Most Holy Virgin reached three years of age, the holy parents decided to fulfill their vow. Having gathered together their kinsfolk and acquaintances, and having dressed the All-Pure Mary in Her finest clothes, and with the singing of sacred songs and with lighted candles in their hands they carried Her to the Jerusalem Temple. There the high-priest with a throng of priests met the maiden of God. In the Temple, the stairway led up fifteen high steps. The Child Mary, so it seemed, could not herself make it up this stairway. But just as they placed Her on the first step, strengthened by the power of God, She quickly made it up over the remaining steps and ascended to the highest. Then the high-priest, through an inspiration from above, led the Most Holy Virgin into the Holy of Holies, and herein of all people it was only the high-priest that entered one time a year with a purifying sacrifice of blood. Therefore all those present in the Temple were astonished at this most unusual occurrence.

Righteous Joakim and Anna, having entrusted their Child to the will of the Heavenly Father, returned home. The Most Blessed Mary remained in the domicile for girls, situated near the Temple. Round about the Temple, through the testimony of Holy Scripture (Exodus 38; 1 Kings 1: 28; Lk. 2: 37), and also the historian Josephus Flavius, there were many living quarters, in which dwelt those dedicated to the service of God.

The earthly life of the Most Holy Mother of God from the time of Her infancy to the time of Her ascent to Heaven is shrouded in deep mystery. Her life at the Jerusalem Temple was also a secret. "If anyone were to ask me, -- said Blessed Jerome, -- how the Most Holy Virgin spent the time of Her youth, -- I would answer: that is known to God Himself and the Archangel Gabriel, Her constant guardian".



But in the Church tradition there were preserved accounts, that during the time of the stay of the All-Pure Virgin at the Jerusalem Temple, She grew up in a community of pious virgins, read diligently the Holy Scripture, occupied Herself with handcrafts, prayed constantly and grew in love for God. In remembrance of the Entry of the Most Holy Mother of God into the Jerusalem Temple, Holy Church from ancient times established a solemn feastday. The decretals for the making of the feast in the first centuries of Christianity are found in the traditions of the Palestinian Christians, where mention is

made that the holy Empress Helen built a church in honor of the Entry into the Temple of the Most Holy Mother of God.

In the IV Century there is mention of this feast by Sainted Gregory of Nyssa. In the VIII Century Saints Germanos and Tarasios, Constantinople Patriarchs, delivered sermons on the feastday of the Entry.

The feast of the Entry into the Temple of the Most Holy Mother of God -- foretells the blessing of God for the human race, the preaching of salvation, the promise of the coming of Christ.

*Translation by Fr. Stephen Janos from the Moscow Patriarchate texts, the "Reference Book for Clergy-Servers"*

## HOW DOES THE DEVIL CONFIRM SINNERS IN THEIR SLAVERY TO SIN?

*From Unseen Warfare*

When the devil keeps a man in slavery to sin, he takes special care to darken him more and more by spiritual blindness, banishing from him every good thought, which could bring him to realize the perniciousness of his life. Not only does he banish thoughts, which could lead to repentance and turn the man to the path of virtue, but instead of them he implants evil and depraved thoughts, at the same time presenting opportunities for committing the sin, which is most habitual to him, and enticing him to fall into it or into other more grievous sins as often as possible. Thus the poor sinner becomes more and more blind and darkened. This blindness strengthens in him the habit and constant impulse to go on every sinning and sinning.



Led from sinful action to greater blindness, and from blindness to greater sins, the unhappy man whirls in this vortex and will do so right up to death itself, unless special Divine grace is sent to save him.

If a man find himself in this perilous state and wishes to be freed from it, then, as soon as a good thought, or

rather, a suggestion comes to him, calling him from darkness to light and from sin to virtue, he should immediately and without delay accept it with his whole attention and desire, and put it at once into practice with all diligence, calling from the bottom of his heart to the generous Giver of all blessings: "Help me, O Lord God, help me quickly, and let me no more linger in this sinful darkness." Let him never weary in appealing to God in these or similar

similar words. At the same time let him also seek help on earth, by turning to those who know for advice and guidance as to how better to free himself from the bonds of sinful slavery that hold him. If he cannot do it immediately, he should do so as soon as the chance presents itself, at the same time never ceasing to appeal to the Lord Jesus, crucified for us, and to His Holy Mother, the Immaculate Virgin, imploring them to have mercy on him and not to deprive him of their speedy help. He should know that victory and triumph over the enemy lie in not delaying and in quick readiness to follow a right prompting.

## CHRISTIAN SYMBOLS

The **shamrock** was used by St. Patrick of Ireland to teach the Holy Trinity. The leaves are one, yet three, and distinct, equal, and of the same substance.



The **seven lamps** represent the seven branch candlestick before the Throne of God which symbolize the gifts of the Holy Spirit. (Is 11:2-3; Rev. 5:12)

The **candle** symbolizes the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is "the Light of the World" (John 8:12).



The **ensor** is symbolic of prayer, for as the smoke of incense soars upward, so too does prayer ascend to God (Rev. 8:4).



## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF CHRIST'S ADVENT IN THE FLESH?

*Saint Symeon Metaphrastis*

It is the restoration of human nature in Him, for He restored to human nature the dignity of Adam, and, in addition, bestowed on it the unutterable grace of the heavenly inheritance of the Holy Spirit. Leading it out of the prison of darkness, He showed it the way and the door to life. By going this way and knocking on this door, we can enter the Kingdom of Heaven. As He said, "Ask and it will be given to you... knock and it will be opened to you" (Matt. 7:7). By passing through this door, it is possible for everyone to attain the freedom of his soul, to cut off his evil thoughts, and to become Christ's bride and consort through the communion of the Holy Spirit. Such is the inexpressible love of the Lord towards man, whom He created in His own image.