



*Holy Forefathers of Christ*

# CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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## BULLETIN OF DECEMBER 13, 2009

### Please Remember in Prayer

Bill Parrish, Carole Boris (newly-departed), Archpriest Michael, Monk Christian, Nadia, Kathy Parrish, Marie, Thomas, Judith Kocinski, Jane Koshutko, Robert Evanusa, Nicholas & Linda, Nicholas, Anna, Steven, Yvonne, Katherine, Michael, Gregory, Todd & Olga Leisure, Nina Gordon, Constantina & Christos, Mirela & Chris, Jaroslav, Troy Paul Duker, Frank & Mary Miranda, Kathy T. Requests? Let Fr. John know.

### Bible Study – December 14<sup>th</sup>

On Monday night at 7pm we will have our second Bible Study on the Nativity of Christ. We will cover: the Wise-men, the Star, King Herod, the Angels & Shepherds, and of course, the birth of the God-man, Jesus Christ. All invited!



### Choir Practice

will be held this Sunday, the 13<sup>th</sup>, and next Sunday, 20<sup>th</sup>. These practices will be short, no more than 15 minutes, and offered during the coffee hour. We will go over hymns in preparation for Christmas.

### The Finance Committee

will meet today following the coffee hour. Only committee members are asked to please stay for the meeting.

### Orthodoxy 101 and Great Vespers Scheduling Change

On Saturday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, the Great Vespers service will be held at 5:00pm to more easily accommodate a trip to see the Live Nativity scene in Angola DE. Orthodoxy 101 will not be held on this day.

### Living Nativity in Angola

On Saturday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, following the Great Vespers, there will be a caravan from our church to the Live Nativity scene in Angola, DE. The pageant will include 75 actors portraying angels, the innkeeper, the wise men, shepherds, townspeople and even Roman soldiers complete with chariot. More info on page 3. Don't miss it!



### About Confession and Holy Communion

As a reminder, confession can be heard before or after any service or class, or at any other time by appointment. Frequent communicants should make a good confession during the Nativity Fast. Those who do not approach the Chalice regularly should seek to avail themselves of Confession and Holy Communion during the Nativity season. If you made your confession in the presence of another Orthodox priest, please just let Fr. John know so he will not worry.



### Are You Interested?

in becoming an official member of Christ the Savior? Are you curious if you are already listed as a member of the parish? Do you have questions about becoming an Orthodox Christian or joining our parish? If so, please speak with Fr. John about it. All are welcome here at Christ the Savior Orthodox Church!

A soldier asked Abba Mius if God accepted repentance. He said, 'Tell me, my dear, if your cloak is torn, do you throw it away?' He replied, 'No, I mend it and use it again.' The old man said to him, 'If you are so careful about your cloak, will not God be equally careful about His creature?'

Abba Mius

### READER SCHEDULE

**Sunday, Dec. 20<sup>th</sup>**

Kathy Parrish

**Sunday, Dec. 27<sup>th</sup>**

Jodi McElwee



# WHAT DOES ORTHODOX MEAN?: THE DOCTRINE, WORSHIP AND VALUES OF THE CHURCH

By Frederica Mathewes-Green

The word "Orthodox" means "aright belief" or "aright praise". The "Orthodox Church" is also known as the "Eastern Orthodox Church."

## Orthodox Doctrine

In the years after Jesus' Resurrection, apostles and missionaries traveled throughout the known world spreading the Gospel. Soon five major locations were established as centers for the faith: Jerusalem, Antioch, Rome, Alexandria, and Constantinople. In the year 1054 the Roman church broke from this united Church, and five hundred years later Protestant churches began breaking away from Rome. But the original Church has remained united in the Apostolic Faith since the first century. This is Orthodoxy.

One of the tasks of the early Church was defining, and defending, orthodox theology against the battering waves of heresies. These heresies often appeared in disputes over the nature of the Trinity, or how Jesus could be both God and Man. Church Councils were called to search the Scriptures and put into words the common faith, forming a bedrock of certainty that could stand for all ages. From this time, the Church has been called "Orthodox," which means "aright belief" or "aright praise." The Nicene Creed originated at the Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325, and is the central Orthodox statement of faith, a preeminent example of the work of the Councils. Built on the foundation of Christ and His Apostles, nothing has been added to our faith, and nothing can be added. It is complete.

## Orthodox Worship

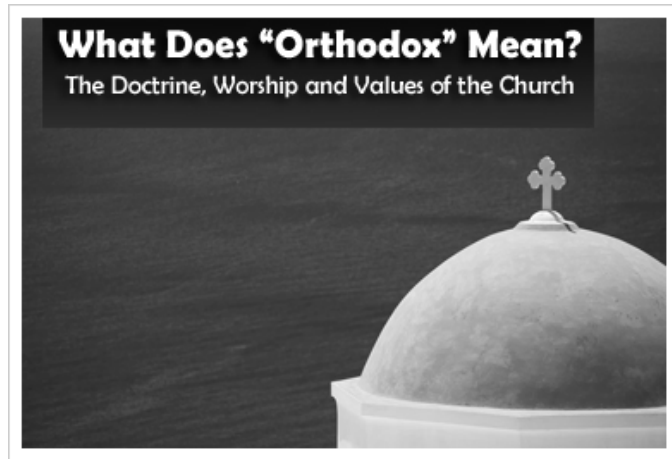
Orthodox churches still use forms of worship that were practiced in the first centuries. Our worship is based to a great extent on passages from Scripture. We sing most of the service, joining our voices in simple harmony to ancient melodies.

Our worship is focused on God, not on our own enjoyment, fulfillment, or fellowship. We come into the presence of God with awe, aware of our fallenness and His great mercy. We seek forgiveness and rejoice in the great gift of salvation so

freely given. Orthodox worship is filled with repentance, gratitude, and unending praise.

We try, as best we can, to make our worship beautiful. The example of Scripture shows us that God's design for tabernacle worship (Exodus 25, 26) included gold, silver, precious stones, blue and purple cloth, embroidery, incense, bells, and anointing oil. Likewise, in Saint John's vision of heavenly worship (Revelation 4) there are precious stones, gold, thrones, crowns, white robes, crystal, and incense. From the beginning to the end of Scripture, worship is offered with as much beauty as possible. While a new mission's finances may call for simple appointments, our hearts come to worship seeking to pour out at the feet of Christ all the precious ointment we possess.

A common misconception is that awe-filled, beautiful worship must be rigid, formal, and cold. Orthodox worship shatters that stereotype. The liturgy is not a performance, but an opportunity to come together as a family of faith before our beloved Father. True Orthodox worship is comfortable, warm, and joyful. It could be nothing less in His heavenly presence.



## Orthodox Values

Values that are usually termed "Judeo-Christian" have never left Orthodoxy. We believe that sexual expression is a treasured gift, one to be exercised only within marriage. Persons with homosexual or other extramarital sexual impulses are welcomed as fellow servants of God, receiving loving support as they make an offering to God of their chastity. Marriage is a commitment for life. Divorce is a very grave action, and remarriage after divorce a concession to human weakness, undertaken with repentance.

Orthodoxy has stood against abortion since the earliest days of the church. The Didache (circa A.D. 110) states, "do not murder a child by abortion or kill a newborn infant." In the midst of a culture which freely practiced abortion, infanticide, and the exposure of infants, early Christians were a consistent voice against violence, as the Orthodox Church continues to be today.

**“Orthodox”** continued from page 2...

Caring for the poor and disadvantaged has always been a concern for the Orthodox. The strong sermons of Saint John Chrysostom, written in the fourth century, bear witness to the importance of this Christian responsibility. The Church continues to see its mission in light of the whole person, body and soul.

Orthodox believers are right, left, and center on many issues. But where Scripture and the witness

of the early Church guide us, there is no controversy. We uphold and obey God’s will.

*This article is available as a printed booklet from Conciliar Media, a department of the Antiochian Archdiocese, as part of their popular series of attractive and informative booklets and brochures about the basic teachings of the ancient Orthodox Christian faith. To learn more, visit Conciliar’s online booklet catalog. This essay is copyrighted by Conciliar Press.*

### **LIVING NATIVITY SCENE IN ANGOLA, DELAWARE**

*From SussexCountian.com*

Conley’s United Methodist Church in Angola, Delaware, will present its Living Nativity on Friday and Saturday, December 18-19.

2009 is the ninth year for the event which has become a local Christmas tradition. It will take place off Camp Arrowhead Road in Angola from 6:30-8:30 p. m. Admission is free, and there will be ample free parking. Golf carts to help the handicapped will be available each night. All donations of cash and canned goods go to local charities.

The Living Nativity pageant will include 75 actors portraying angels, the innkeeper, the wise men, shepherds, townspeople and even Roman soldiers complete with chariot.

Last year more than 1,000 visited the Living Nativity, according to Conley’s officials. The money and food donated helped area charities and needy families. These organizations included the Crisis House, the Home of the Brave, the Henlopen Food Pantry and local shelters. The church makes no money on this event. The scenery, costumes and children’s gifts are created or donated entirely by members of Conley’s UMC.

The Living Nativity is located at 33104 Jolyns Way, off Camp Arrowhead Road. This is a half-mile from Peddler’s Village shopping center on Route 24. Signs will direct you to the parking area.



### **THOUGHTS ON CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP**

*From Parish Publishing, LLC*



Let the theme of this Christmas be giving and receiving. Receiving first, the amazing grace of God in Christ Jesus. Then to give. A gift for someone in need. A thank-offering of money for the Lord’s work at your church. The gift of ourselves: our souls and bodies, our time and talents. What do we have that we did not receive?

Love is faith in action. Two of the most important questions we ask ourselves are: “Whom do I love?” and “Who loves me?” As Christians we put faith into action by extending our concern for people beyond ourselves. We show our concern for others in our actions and relationships. Is our concern for others Christ-like? Do we reach out to help people in need?

The meaning of stewardship has to do with 100%, rather than 2, 3, or even 10%. All people are stewards. The only uncertainty is what kind. We are stewards of God’s gifts to us: our time on this earth, our material resources, our talents, our very life itself. It is the Lord’s world in which we live, and it is to God that we are responsible.

## **SENSE OF HUMOR NEEDED: HOW TO STAY SAFE IN THE WORLD TODAY!**

*From an Anonymous Source*

Where is the Safest Place?

1. Avoid riding in automobiles because they are responsible for 20% of all fatal accidents.
2. Do not stay home because 17% of all accidents occur in the home.
3. Avoid walking on streets or sidewalks because 14% of all accidents occur to pedestrians.
4. Avoid traveling by air, rail, or water because 16% of all accidents involve these forms of transportation.
5. Of the remaining 33%, 32% of all deaths occur in Hospitals. So, above all else, avoid hospitals.



But . . . You will be pleased to learn that only .001% of all deaths occur in worship services in church, and these are usually related to previous physical disorders. Therefore, logic tells us that the safest place for you to be at any given point in time is at church!

And . . . Bible study is safe too! The percentage of deaths during Bible study is even less.

So, attend church, and read your Bible. IT WILL SAVE YOUR LIFE!

## **CHRISTMAS TREE TRADITIONS**

*From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*

Traditionally, Christmas trees were not brought in and decorated until Christmas Eve (24 December), and then removed the day after twelfth night (i.e., 6 January); to have a tree up before or after these dates was even considered bad luck. Modern commercialization of Christmas has resulted in trees being put up much earlier; in shops often as early as late October (in the UK, Selfridge's Christmas department is up by early September, complete with Christmas trees). A common tradition in U.S. homes is to put the tree up right after Thanksgiving (the fourth Thursday in November) and to take it down right after the New Year. Some households in the U.S. do not put up the



tree until the second week of December, and leave it up until the 6th of January (Epiphany). In Germany, traditionally the tree is put up 24th of December and taken down 7th of January, though many start one or two weeks earlier. In Australia, the Christmas tree is usually put up on the 1st of December, which occurs about a week before the school summer holidays; except for South Australia, where most people put up their tree after the Adelaide Credit Union Christmas Pageant, which is in early November. Some traditions suggest that Christmas trees may be kept up until no later than the 2nd of February, the feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple (Candlemas), when the Christmas season effectively closes. Superstitions warn of negative consequences if Christmas greenery is not removed by Candlemas Eve.

## **A PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AFTER COMMUNION**

O Lord Jesus Christ our God: let Thy holy Body be my eternal life; Thy precious Blood, my remission of sins. Let this Eucharist be my joy, health, and gladness. Make me, a sinner, worthy to stand on the right hand of Thy glory at Thine awesome second Coming, through the prayers of Thy most pure Mother and of all the saints. Amen.

*Thanksgiving Prayers such as the above are found in Orthodox Prayer books as well as in the back of the Divine Liturgy book. Likewise, there are prayers which the Church gives us in preparation for Holy Communion. These prayers are a great gift as they help us more intimately commune with God, the goal of the Christian life. Need help finding them? Questions? Please see Fr. John*

