



CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF DECEMBER 23, 2012

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23RD

Sunday Before the Nativity

8:40a.m. Hours
 9:00a.m. Div. Liturgy; Coffee Hr.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 24TH

Eve of the Nativity

9:00a.m. Vespers & Liturgy

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 25TH

The Nativity of the Lord

12:00a.m. Matins & Divine Liturgy
 Festal Meal
 12:00p.m. Great Vespers

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 26TH

Synaxis of the Virgin Mary

9:00a.m. Akathist

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29TH

4:30p.m. Greeting of Met. Tikhon
 6:00p.m. Great Vespers

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30TH

Sunday After the Nativity

9:00a.m. Hierarchical Div. Liturgy
 Festive Luncheon

Archpastoral Visit of Metropolitan Tikhon – December 29-30

We are very pleased to welcome His Beatitude, Met. Tikhon, for his first visit to our mission on Saturday and Sunday, December 29th and 30th. There will be a meeting of the parish council following the coffee hour this Sunday to discuss the preparations. Choir practice will also be held today. A sign-up sheet is in the back of the church for our festive meal. Please help as you can to prepare for the festivities.

Clean-Up Today – Help Needed!

Please consider staying after coffee hour to help clean the chapel and facilities for Christmas and next weekend's visit of Metropolitan Tikhon. Many thanks for your help!

Helping a Needy Family

Today is the last Sunday you are invited to make a donation to help buy Christmas presents for the family we have adopted this year. If you would like to make a donation, please do so via the special collection envelopes in the back of the church or earmarking your check "Gifts for Family".



Christ is born! Glorify Him!

During the celebration of Christmas, it is the custom of Orthodox Christians to greet one another with the joyous exclamation, "Christ is born!", to which the one greeted responds, "Glorify Him!"

Suggestions for Celebrating Christmas

- 1) Give thanks to God by attending Church.
- 2) Seek peace with those we may be at odds with.
- 3) Give an anonymous gift to a stranger in need.



Additional Christmas Service

We have added an additional service to the Christmas schedule for those who are unable to attend the Midnight service. There will be a festive Vespers on Christmas day at 12:00 noon. This service has been added so that everyone who wants to worship God on Christmas will have the opportunity to do so.

Twelve Days of Christmas – Fast Free Period

During the twelve days of Christmas, Dec. 25th, through Theophany, Jan. 6th, we do not fast, even on Wednesday and Fridays. A one day strict fast is observed on January 5th, the Eve of Theophany.

READER SCHEDULE

Sunday, Dec. 30th

Kathy Parrish

Sunday, Jan. 6th

Jodi McElwee

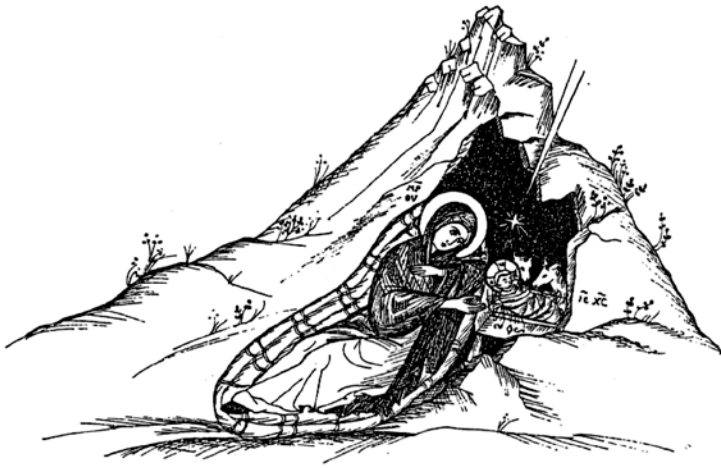


Living: Fr. Alexander Atty, Fr. Christian, Mat. Dunia, Hayley, Tyler Pelesh, Wallace & Michelle, John Trax, Maleah Morsey, Victoria Kokkinos, Karen Nichols, Denise Royal, Jane Koshutko, Nina Gordon, Mirela & Chris, Bruce Eckerd, Stella, Ari, Nedelina, Liliana, Nada and child, Jess and child, Irene Clenney, **Departed:** Fr. Michael Mihalick, Kathryn, Avramia.

CASH FLOWS									FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT		
OPERATING THRU 11/30			RENOVATION THRU 11/30			DECEMBER OPERATING			ASSETS & LIABILITIES – 12/23/12		
Income	Expense	Net	Income	Expense	Net	Income	Goal	Difference	Checking	Overdue	Due 2/2014
59,001	46,421	+12,580	68,496	89,502	-21,006	6,522	4,858	+1,664	+101	-2,933	-29,820

ON THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

By Metropolitan Hierotheos Vlachos



The Birth of Christ is a historical event, because it took place at a specific moment in history, when Caesar Augustus was Emperor in Rome and Herod was ruler of Judea. The Evangelists insist on emphasizing the historicity of the event, because they want to say that Christ is a historical person. This means that Christ assumed real human flesh, and the Incarnation was not merely seeming or imagined.

In spite of its historicity, this event remains a mystery. We know that the Godman, perfect

God and perfect man, exists, but it remains a mystery how the divine nature united with human nature in the person of the Logos. Moreover, what happened to the person of Christ, that the divine nature was united hypostatically with human nature, happened just once. Therefore St. John of Damascus said that Christ is "the only new thing under the sun." This means that since the creation of the world and man, nothing new has happened in the world. Everything is repeated [according to the natural order and rules which govern the universe]. The [successive] birth of human beings is a consequence and result of God's words: "Let us make man in our image and likeness", and "Be fruitful and multiple; fill the earth and subdue it" (Gen. 1:26-28). The only new thing is the Godman Christ.

Thus the fact that the event is historical does not remove the mystery, but also the mystery does not do away with the historicity. At Christmas we celebrate the birth of Christ, but at the same time we experience mysteriously in our hearts all the events connected with it, for when we are alive in the Church, we are participating in and experiencing all the stages of the divine Incarnation.



Troparion (Tone 4)

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone 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!

Kontakion (Tone 3)

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 a star! Since for our sake the Eternal God was born as a Little Child!

A MEDITATION: YEAR OF THE LORD, VOLUME 2

During the Christmas season God's love and His message of new hope comes to us through the beauty and peace of the incarnate Christ. Yet the Good News of God's love may be entirely missed, and Christmas may be an unfulfilled dream, amidst the hectic bustle of cleaning, shopping, writing, calling, decorating, banking and visiting. The basic reason for an unfulfilled Christmas is that we focus on ourselves, how to please each other, how to feel good and how to secure happiness with all the things we regard necessary. Yet only Christ can give us a true Christmas. Only His presence in our hearts can bring happiness, peace, joy, warmth and security. Cling to Christ ever more closely during the Christmas season. Take time to pray and to establish your spiritual and practical priorities. Let Christ come with you from home to school, from kitchen to shopping center, from Church to business office.





NEW PATRIARCH OF ANTIOCH ELECTED

From Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of NA

His Eminence, the Metropolitan Archbishop of Western and Central Europe, has been elected Patriarch of the Great City-of-God Antioch and all the East.

The Patriarch-elect Youhanna X [Yaziji] was elected by the members of the Holy Synod earlier today, December 17, 2012, during a special session held at the Balamand Patriarchal Monastery of the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos.

METROPOLITAN TIKHON CALLS FOR PRAYERS IN WAKE OF CONNECTICUT SCHOOL SHOOTING

From OCA.org

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

All of us have been shaken by the news of the tragic death of twenty young children and six adults at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. All of a sudden, the image of Rachel, who was 'weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more' [Jeremiah 31:15], becomes more than simply a passage from scripture. Rather, it becomes an unfortunate reality in the lives of those affected by the senseless incident and in our own hearts, as we share in their lamentation and sorrow.

None of us can truly understand the personal distress that so many are facing today. Yet every one of us knows the reality of such tragedy and experience it in the depths of our hearts. Our very being is shaken and we feel powerless to do anything. Nevertheless, we make an effort to direct our prayers towards the families of those who have lost their most dear ones, most of whom are innocent and pure children.

Concerning those who have fallen asleep, Saint Paul exhorts us not to "grieve even as others who have no hope" [1 Thessalonians 4:13]. And yet, herein he does not forbid us from grieving. Now is the time for us to weep, but we must weep with the firm hope that comes from our faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. "Shed tears, but remain calm; weep modestly, and with fear of God," writes Saint John Chrysostom. And following this example, each of us must strive to transform our sorrow into prayer.

I therefore call on the clergy and the faithful of the Orthodox Church in America to offer fervent prayers for the souls of those whose lives have been so brutally cut short and for the consolation of all those whose existence has been shattered by this unfathomable event. I also ask that those who are physically able to offer their services to the grieving and the broken-hearted, both in the Newtown community and throughout this land.

It is at times like this that we must put our faith into action and offer our Christian support and love, to make our prayers concrete through action. Many have been affected, and many more will be overcome by grief, despair and isolation. We must ensure that we do all we can to provide a sense of true community to all those in need and to bear their burdens as the Lord asks us to.

Together with my brother bishops on the Holy Synod, I offer my condolences to all the grieving families, and I pray that they will find hope in the abundant grace of God. May they be given strength at this most painful moment and find comfort along the difficult path that lies ahead. Let no one among us have any fear, but let us remember that our Lord Jesus Christ has overcome fear, has trampled down death, and has granted us eternal life and great mercy."





MARS SOUNDS GOOD

By VRev. Daniel Kovalak

It's awesome to consider that we mere human beings are capable of concocting, designing, funding, and engineering a complex machine that can be propelled 350 million miles into space, land on Mars, and send back photos!

Unfortunately, the photos aren't that exciting. They basically show rocks, sand, dust, and now tire tracks – things that are readily found on our own little planet. In 1969, my grandmother said that the whole "moon landing thing" was a production by Hollywood. Now, we've got something on Mars!

This is, however, truly promising! It's good to know that, once we succeed in destroying each other on this planet, the survivors could have another planet to go to – to "try again."

Do you think this is what God has in mind?

Consider "where we are." The world seems to be going insane because man – human nature being what it is – is doing anything and everything he wants to do to his fellow man. When human life is intellectually and spiritually separated from its divine Source, anything goes. People can slaughter each other, kill babies in their mothers' wombs, and fly airplanes into skyscrapers with little, if any, remorse.

Nor does man seem to care a whit about what, if anything, God has in mind, primarily because there is no consensus anymore about Who God is and what He/She/It really teaches. Such confusion makes it much easier to justify, rationalize and become worshippers of any opinion.

In the Gospel of Saint Matthew, we're told that a certain man approached Jesus Christ and asked Him, "Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?"

In this day and age, we don't ask such deep, penetrating and probing questions to just anybody. No! We go straight to google.com! Try it. I did – and got 437 million results! Can you say "overload?"

Psychologists, scholars, social scientists and "experts" are telling us we're all in desperate need of "tech breaks" these days – that, without our even realizing it, technology is virtually killing two of our most precious "commodities" – our time and our patience.

It's killing our time because whether it's a game, app, or search-for-whatever, one leads to another, and another, and another – and, before one knows it, it's 3:00 a.m., or supper's overcooked, or an appointment has been missed. We're like little children when it comes to this: "C'mon dad, just one more text, five more minutes of searching?!"

And technology's killing our patience because we can book a two-week European vacation or execute complex business transactions in an average of 20 seconds, and then suffer road rage when it takes an elderly pedestrian 21 seconds to cross a street in front of us!

If we agree that this is true, yet continue to pursue the very things that separate us, cause enmity between us, foster hate and hostility among us, and which may ultimately lead us – individually and collectively – to our demise (perhaps eternally!), we need to ask why?

The question put to Jesus was, "what good deed must I do to have eternal life?" His answer was simple: "Keep the commandments."

Only attentive ears, attuned to the voice of the Almighty rather than the noise of the world, will hear the correct answer – and abide by it. Others may eventually try to board a flight to Mars!