



# CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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## BULLETIN OF DECEMBER 17, 2017

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17<sup>TH</sup>

#### **28<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost**

8:40a.m. Hours  
 9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy  
 Church School  
 Coffee Hr  
 Choir Practice

### TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19<sup>TH</sup>

7:00p.m. Great Vespers

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23<sup>RD</sup>

5:00p.m. Bible Study  
 6:00p.m. Great Vespers

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24<sup>TH</sup>

#### **Eve of the Nativity**

8:40a.m. Hours  
 9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy  
 Coffee Hr  
 Clean-up / Decorating  
 7:00p.m. Matins w/ Litiya

### MONDAY, DECEMBER 25<sup>TH</sup>

#### **Nativity of Our Lord**

#### One of the Twelve Great Feasts

8:40a.m. Hours  
 9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy  
 7:00p.m. Great Vespers

### TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26<sup>TH</sup>

#### **Synaxis of the Theotokos**

9:00a.m. Akathist

### A Warm Welcome!

We warmly welcome all our visitors. It's good to have you with us!



### Helping a Needy Family – Last Chance

This month you are invited to donate to help buy Christmas presents for the family we will adopt this year. If you would like to donate, please do so by using the earmark "Christmas Family".

### Reminder: Matching Donation

In 2017, we have a matching donation program to build up our operating account. For every dollar we finish the year in the black (the positive), one dollar will be matched by the donor – up to \$12,000. What an opportunity!



### Choir Practice – December 17<sup>th</sup>

Today, following coffee hour, there will be a choir practice.

### Chapel and Hall Clean-up / Decoration – December 24<sup>th</sup>

Next Sunday, after coffee hour, will be a chapel and hall clean-up.

### Scheduling Confession

Fr. John is available at about any time to hear confessions: before or after services or at any other time by appointment.

### About Christmas

With all the hustle and bustle that revolves around Christmas and with all the temptations to spend the day "doing our own thing", let's not forget that Christmas is a Holy Day and belongs to the Lord Jesus; family, work, travel, entertaining, cooking, presents, etc., all come second to God. Bad habits? Break them and start new ones.

### St. Basil's Bread

This ancient tradition will be kept on Sunday, December 31<sup>st</sup>.

### 2017 Annual Parish Meeting - Save the Date

Sunday, Jan. 28<sup>th</sup>, following the coffee hour. All asked to attend.

### Our Directory of Parishioners and Friends

is currently being updated. If you attend Christ the Savior Mission even infrequently and are not yet listed in our directory, please fill out a directory form in the back of the church. An updated directory will be made available at the candle stand in early 2018. Questions, please see Nissa Nancy. Thank you!



### READER SCHEDULE



#### **Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup>**

Megan Borodulia

#### **Sunday, December 31<sup>st</sup>**

Rdr. George Kaloroumakis

CASH FLOWS THROUGH 11/30/17					CASH FLOWS IN NOVEMBER 2017					FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT		
OPERATING		OTHER		ALL	OPERATING		OTHER		ALL	AS OF: 12/17		
Income	Expense	Income	Expense	Net	Income	Expense	Income	Expense	Net	Available	Restricted	Savings
82,565	79,050	33,728	31,142	+7,100	3,315	8,222	0	0	-4,907	5,226	5,139	0

## ASK FATHER: 1 QUESTIONS / 1 ANSWERS

### Q. Why is the Nativity of Christ celebrated on December 25<sup>th</sup>?

A. There are two main explanations as to why the Church chose to celebrate the Nativity of Christ on December 25<sup>th</sup>.

The first says that the day was chosen to oppose the great pagan feast of the sun god, which was celebrated near December 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Winter Solstice, the time of year when the days started to get longer again (at least in the northern hemisphere). It is believed that the Church chose December 25<sup>th</sup>, because it ensured that Christians would be fasting during the pagan celebration and would therefore not easily be tempted to participate. And also because it would help the pagan peoples to leave off worshiping the false sun god and instead celebrate the coming of the True God, "the Sun of Righteousness".

The second explanation says that the day was chosen in relation to the feast of the Annunciation, which was celebrated on March 25<sup>th</sup> commemorating the supernatural conception of the Lord in the womb of the Virgin Mary. The Annunciation was celebrated on this day because of the belief in the ancient world that great men died on the same day as they were conceived. Since the Lord was believed to have been crucified on March 25<sup>th</sup>, it also came to be believed that He was likewise conceived on this day. And since it followed that the Lord's birth would be nine months after His conception, the feast of His Nativity was set on December 25<sup>th</sup>.



## 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.

## ON ISAIAH'S PROPHECY OF THE VIRGIN BIRTH

**"Behold, the Virgin shall be with child." -- Isaiah 7:14**

The Jews say that the prophecy in Hebrew does not say "virgin" but "young woman". However, in Hebrew the word for "young woman" and "virgin" is one and the same; it being understood that young women are to be virgins. Yet, what would be the significance of any young woman giving birth, for this happens all the time. The sign was that a Virgin, one who knew not man, would give birth. This has happened only once, with the birth of Jesus, the Savior, "God with us".



## FOR CONSIDERATION

*From the Prologue of Ochrid – December 16<sup>th</sup>*

The saints exerted great effort to subdue pride and selfishness in themselves and to accustom themselves to complete obedience and devotion, be it to their superiors when they had them, or to God Himself. The Monastery of St. Sava the Sanctified was distinguished by exceptional discipline, order and uncomplaining obedience. When St. John Damascene entered this monastery, not one of the eminent spiritual fathers would venture to take such a famous nobleman and writer as his novice. Then the abbot handed him over to a simple but strict elder. The elder ordered John not to do anything without his knowledge or approval. In the meantime it happened that a monk died who had a brother in this same monastery. The monk was in unspeakable grief over the death of his brother. For the sake of comforting the inconsolable brother, John wrote stichera for the departed monk-famous hymns that the Church uses even today at the funeral service. After composing them, John began to chant the hymns. When the elder heard the chanting, he became enraged and drove John away. Some of the brethren, hearing of John's banishment, dared to go to the elder to beg him to forgive John and receive him back, but the elder remained unwavering. John wept bitterly and lamented because he had transgressed his elder's command. Once again the brethren, on John's behalf, begged the elder to impose a penance on him and after that forgive him. The elder then imposed the following penance upon his disciple: to clean and wash all the lavatories of every cell in the monastery with his own hands if he desired forgiveness. The sorrowful brethren reported this to John, thinking that he would leave the monastery rather than do this. But when John heard the elder's message, he rejoiced greatly and with much joy carried out the elder's command. Upon seeing this, the elder wept, embraced John and said through his tears: "Oh, what a sufferer for Christ have I given birth to! Oh, what a true son of holy obedience this man is!"



## HOMILY ON THE PROPHET MOSES BY ST. NIKOLAI VELIMIROVICH

*Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth (Numbers 12:3).*

A chosen man, a great wonderworker, a type of the Lord Jesus Christ in his miracles, a victor in Egypt, a victor in the wilderness, the leader of a people-how could he not be proud? But if he had become proud, Moses would not have been all that he was. They become proud who think that they do their own works and not God's in this world, and who think that they work by their own power and not by God's power. But the great Moses knew that he was the doer of God's works, and that the power with which He did them was God's power and not his. That is why he did not become proud because of the awesome miracles he performed, or the great victories he obtained, or the wise laws that he gave to the people. The Lord is my strength and my song (Exodus 15:2), said Moses. Of the entire assembly of the Israelites in the wilderness, no one felt his own particular weakness as much as he, the greatest one of that assembly. In every task, in every place and in every moment, he expected help only from God. "What shall I do?" he cried to God, and he ceaselessly listened for God's reply and sought God's power. "Meek above all men on earth." For all the others considered themselves as being something, trusted themselves as being something, but he-nothing. He was completely absorbed in God, completely humbled before God. If the people needed to be fed and given drink, he turned to God; if it was necessary to do battle with his enemies, he raised his hands to heaven; if it was necessary to calm an uprising among the people, he cried to God. The meek, the all-meek Moses! And God rewarded his faithful servant with great glory and made him worthy to appear on Mount Tabor with Elias alongside the Lord Savior.

O Lord, the God of the meek, the Good Shepherd, make us also meek like Moses and the apostles. To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.



## QUOTES FROM ST. JOHN OF KRONSTADT

*Commemorated on December 20<sup>th</sup>*

"When you are praying alone, and your spirit is dejected, and you are wearied and oppressed by your loneliness, remember then, as always, that God the Trinity looks upon you with eyes brighter than the sun; also all the angels, your own Guardian Angel, and all the Saints of God. Truly they do; for they are all one in God, and where God is, there are they also. Where the sun is, thither also are directed all its rays. Try to understand what this means."

"There is nothing impossible unto those who believe; lively and unshaken faith can accomplish great miracles in the twinkling of an eye. Besides, even without our sincere and firm faith, miracles are accomplished, such as the miracles of the sacraments; for God's Mystery is always accomplished, even though we were incredulous or unbelieving at the time of its celebration. "Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?" (Rom. 3:3). Our wickedness shall not overpower the unspeakable goodness and mercy of God; our dullness shall not overpower God's wisdom, nor our infirmity God's omnipotence."

"Oh, what great happiness and bliss, what exaltation it is to address oneself to the Eternal Father. Always, without fail, value this joy which has been accorded to you by God's infinite grace and do not forget it during your prayers; God, the angels and God's holy men listen to you."

"The enemy of our salvation especially strives to draw our heart and mind away from God when we are about to serve Him, and endeavors to adulterously attach our heart to something irrelevant. Be always, every moment, with God, especially when you pray to Him. If you are inconstant, you will fall away from life, and will cast yourself into sorrow."

"Do not be despondent when fighting against the invisible enemy, but even in the midst of your afflictions and oppression praise the Lord, Who has found you worthy to suffer for Him, by struggling against the subtlety of the serpent, and to be wounded for Him at every hour; for had you not lived piously, and endeavored to become united to God, the enemy would not have attacked and tormented you."

"Do not fear the conflict, and do not flee from it; where there is no struggle, there is no virtue. Our faith, trust, and love are proved and revealed in adversities, that is, in difficult and grievous outward and inward circumstances, during sickness, sorrow, and privations."

"Prayer for others is very beneficial to the man himself who prays; it purifies the heart, strengthens faith and hope in God, and arouses love for God and our neighbor."

### **About St. John of Kronstadt**

*Saint John of Kronstadt was a Russian Orthodox archpriest. He was a striking and somewhat unconventional figure in his personality but was deeply pious and immensely energetic. He was one of the most internationally famous and beloved Orthodox Christian clerics of his time.*

*He was born as Ivan Ilyich Sergiyev (Russian: Иван Ильич Сергиев) in 1829. From 1855, he worked as a priest in Saint Andrew's Cathedral in Kronstadt. Here, he greatly committed himself to charity, especially for those who were outside the church, and travelled extensively throughout the Russian empire. In the early 1990s Father John became well known, and people from all over Russia came to him every day in thousands. Even bishops treated him with high respect. He was already greatly venerated at the time he died. He was canonized by the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia in 1964 and by the Russian Orthodox Church in 1990.*

