



CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

30838 Vines Creek Rd.; Dagsboro, DE 19939
302-537-6055 (church) / 302-988-1138 (rectory)
orthodoxdelmarva.org / frjohn@orthodoxdelmarva.org

BULLETIN OF DECEMBER 30, 2007

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30TH SUNDAY BEFORE THEOPHANY

8:40a.m. Hours
9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour

SATURDAY, JANUARY 5TH 6:00p.m. Great Blessing of Water

SUNDAY, JANUARY 6TH HOLY THEOPHANY *One of the Twelve Great Feasts*

8:40a.m. Hours
9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour



Christ is Born!
Glorify Him!

READER SCHEDULE

Sunday, Jan. 6th

Hours: Jen Alexion
Epistle: Jen Alexion

Sunday, Jan. 13th

Hours: Kathy Parrish
Epistle: Kathy Parrish



Welcome to Vines Creek!

Today, after months of searching, planning, and work, our Mission finally enters into our new worship space. There is still much to be completed as the work is not yet done but things are starting to take shape. Should you have any questions about our new church, please feel free to speak with Fr. John or one of the Parish Council members.



Many Thanks!

to all those who helped with our move to Vines Creek. Without your sacrifice of time, talent, and treasure, this move would not have been possible. May the Lord bless each of you according to your labors and your dedicated service to His Holy Church!

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!"

Fast Free Period

During the twelve days of Christmas (December 25th through January 4th) we do not fast, even on Wednesday and Fridays. A one day fast is observed on January 5th, the Eve of Theophany.

The New Orthodox Study Bible

which includes both Old and New Testaments will be available this February. If you would like to preorder a copy please sign the list in the back of the church. The cost of the new Study Bible will be about \$35.00.

Parish Council Meeting

Sunday, January 13th, following the Divine Liturgy. This meeting will focus on preparation for the Annual Meeting.

House Blessings

It is the custom among many Orthodox Christians to have their homes blessed with the holy water sanctified on Theophany (the feast which commemorates the Baptism of the Lord in the Jordan River). If you would like your home blessed, please put your name on the sign-up sheet in the back of the church. If you have any questions please ask Fr. John.



CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!
ARCHPASTORAL MESSAGE OF HIS BEATITUDE, METROPOLITAN HERMAN
FOR THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD 2007

Brother Hierarchs, Esteemed Clergy, Venerable Monastics and Beloved Faithful:

Christ is Born! – Glorify Him!

In celebrating the Nativity of our Lord once again this year, we Orthodox Christians find ourselves with an approach to the Feast that is very different from that of the rest of the world.

Tragically for many in this world, their life is one without God – whether in personal belief, in practice, or both. For others, their “faith” is in a God that is hardly involved in human history or in their lives – as the popular song of a few years ago put it, “God is watching us ... from a distance.” But for us Orthodox Christians, the pronouncement of the Scripture regarding the Incarnation rings out clearly: “Behold, the Virgin shall be with Child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which is translated, ‘God with us’” (Matthew 1:23). And the hymnography for the Feast echoes this proclamation: “God is

with us! Understand ye nations, and submit yourselves, for God is with us!” Not “watching from a distance” but “with us” – around us, beside us, and to the degree we desire His presence, within us, as close as the breath in our lungs or the beat of our hearts.



For most people, today is the celebration of the birth of a beautiful, innocent and “cuddly” baby boy, one who would grow up and do more good than any other man – make the blind see, the deaf hear, the crippled walk, and the dead rise. For some, he even offers his life on the cross in exchange for men’s sins and for their salvation. But for us, this Feast marks the coming in the flesh of none other than God Himself. Jesus Christ is no mere man; He is the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, God the Son, God the Word: “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).

Almost everyone who celebrates this day marks it with the exchange of gifts, and all too often people focus on their “wish lists” of presents that they want to receive from Santa and his elves. But the focus for us Orthodox Christians is the question that is asked in one of the hymns of Vespers of the Nativity:

What shall we offer Thee, O Christ, Who for our sakes has appeared on earth as man? Every creature made by Thee offers Thee thanks. The angels offer Thee a hymn; the heavens, a star; the Magi, gifts, the shepherds, their wonder; the earth, its cave; the wilderness, the manger; and we offer Thee a Virgin Mother. O Pre-Eternal God, have mercy upon us.

Our Orthodox Church calls upon us to offer our gifts to Christ, rather than to seek gifts from others. We are reminded of the gifts of the wise men, on behalf of the entire human race: gold, as they acknowledged the sovereignty of the only true King; frankincense, as they knelt in worship of the only true God; and myrrh, because Christ, the bearer of the Resurrection, would abolish death and there would no longer be need of the ointment that was used in burial.

We are called to offer the Incarnate God the gifts of our faith, our hope, our love; He seeks our repentance, our confession, and our return to the narrow path that leads to His Kingdom; He desires our whole life, our membership in His Body, our commitment to the building up of His Holy Church. In return for this total offering, we will receive what Adam lost in Paradise – communion with Him! In return He offers us His Body and Blood as a pledge of eternal life with Him in His heavenly Kingdom.

Indeed, we live in an affluent society, filled with the good things of this world that beckon to us. But Christ beckons us to recall the example of King Solomon, who was gifted with unfathomable riches,

fame, power, and wisdom, but was tormented because he could not satisfy the desire of his heart. He was so wealthy that all the furnishings of his palace were covered with gold; so wise, that all the rulers of the nations sought his counsel; so mighty, that all the kings of the world feared him. Yet he was utterly discontent, because he knew that even though he could obtain any earthly thing that he desired, possessions and power were just vain and empty – waterless wells unable to quench his thirst for the divine. He could not satisfy the one true desire of his heart because he could not restore the communion with God that Adam lost.

Let us heed the wisdom of Solomon and acknowledge all earthly things as unable to quench the desire of the human heart. And with the Magi, let us seek the One who has come into the world to restore the communion with God that man had lost. Offering ourselves to Him and His Church, in the form of gifts of time and talent and treasure, let us renew our faith and hope and love in the Christ Who, through His divine Incarnation, has given the gift of eternal life to each of us and to the entire human race.

Asking our Lord to favor you with every joy this Nativity Season and in the coming new year, and with the bestowal of my archpastoral blessing, I remain

With love in the Infant Messiah,

+ HERMAN

Archbishop of Washington and New York
Metropolitan of All America and Canada



SAINT JOHN OF SAN FRANCISCO ON MATTHEW 1:25

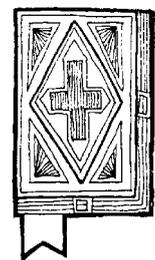
And [Joseph] knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called His name JESUS.



The word "until" does not signify that Mary remained a virgin only until a certain time. In the Bible, the word "until" and words similar to it often signify eternity. It is said of Christ: "In His days shall shine forth righteousness and an abundance of peace, *until* the moon be taken away" (Psalm 71:7), but this does not mean that when there shall no longer be a moon at the end of the world, God's righteousness shall no longer be; precisely then, rather, will it triumph. And what does it mean when it says: "For He must reign, *until* He hath put all enemies under His feet?" (1 Cor. 15:25). Is the Lord to reign only for a time until His enemies shall be put under His feet?! The Savior in the Gospel says to the Apostles (Matt: 28:20): "Lo, I am with you always, even *until* the end of the world." Are we to believe that the Lord will no longer be with the disciples in the age to come? While there are plenty more such examples of the use of the word "until", the above are sufficient to prove that Matt 1:25 does not argue against the life-long virginity of the Mother of God.

BLESSED THEOPHYLACT ON MATTHEW 1:19

Then Joseph her husband, being a righteous man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to divorce her secretly.



The law decreed that the adulteress be exposed and punished publicly. How, then, was Joseph righteous since he intended to cover up her sin and thus transgress the law? The answer is, first, that he was righteous for intending to do this very thing. He did not wish to be harsh, but in his great goodness took compassion on her, showing himself to be above the law, and already living in a manner superior to the decrees of the law. Secondly, since he himself knew that she had conceived not by adultery but of the Holy Spirit. Behold what the evangelist says: "She was found to be with child." Found by whom? By Joseph; that is, he discerned that she had conceived of the Holy Spirit. Therefore he "was minded to divorce her secretly," for he no longer dared to take as a wife her who had been deemed worthy of such grace.