

CHRIST IS BORN!



GLORIFY HIM!

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27TH SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY

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

SATURDAY, JANUARY 2ND
5:00p.m. Orthodoxy 101
6:00p.m. Great Vespers

SUNDAY, JANUARY 3RD
SUNDAY BEFORE THEOPHANY
8:40a.m. Hours
9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy
St. Basil's Bread
Coffee Hour



How to Learn God's Will

"In the measure that we pay attention and take care to carry out the commandments we hear, God will always enlighten us and make us understand His will."

St. Dorotheos of Gaza

READER SCHEDULE

Sunday, Jan. 3rd
Gabriela Vlahovici-Jones
Sunday, Jan. 10th
Kathy Parrish



CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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302-537-6055 (church) / 302-933-8090 (rectory)
orthodoxdelmarva.org / frjohn@orthodoxdelmarva.org

BULLETIN OF DECEMBER 27, 2009

Please Remember in Prayer

Nina Gordon and Frank Pappas (both recovering from surgery), 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, Constantina & Christos, Mirela & Chris, Jaroslav, Troy Paul Duker, Frank & Mary Miranda, Kathy T. Requests? Let Fr. John know.

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

Gifts For Sale

For a limited time, there are small yet very elegant artistic items for sale in the back of the church. These gifts are handmade. Proceeds will go to our building fund. Many thanks to the donor, the artist in whose memory the gifts are offered, and those of you who will purchase these items!



The 2010 Calendars and Pocket Planners

from St. Tikhon's are in. Calendars are \$3.50 a piece and pocket-planners are \$2.50. We have ordered extras so you may purchase them even if you didn't order any.

Commemoration Lists

All parishioners are asked to update the list of names, both living and departed, they have submitted for commemoration at the Divine Liturgy. The lists can be found at the ushers' stand. Questions? Please ask Fr. John.



Annual Meeting of the Parish

will be on Sunday, January 17th, following the coffee hour. Everyone is asked to set aside this day, making a special effort to be in attendance. While all are welcome and encouraged to attend, voting privileges are reserved for those who are official members of the parish.

Christmas Carols

During the coffee hour, those who can stay to sing and/or listen to Christmas Carols are encouraged to do so. Get some food and enjoy the singing!



A Cookie-Dough Fundraiser

is currently underway. Please pick up a handout in the back of the church or see Alice Peters for more information. For a sample of the cookies, please stay for coffee hour! :)

The 2010 Parish Calendar

is available for viewing on our parish website. Just go to our website and click "Service Schedule", then select the month you would like to see. The entire 2010 calendar year is available. Be sure to check the Sunday bulletin for changes to the schedule. Questions, please see Fr. John.



Suggestions for 2010

If you have any suggestions or requests for 2010, please don't hesitate to let Fr. John or one of the Council members know. We are always looking for ways to improve our Church life.

Development of Lay Ministries

One of our focuses for 2010 will be the further development of lay ministries. Currently, lay people in our parish serve in many capacities, including but not limited to: altar servers, choir members, readers, ushers, parish council and finance committee members, auditors, donors / financial stewards, facility cleaners, seamstresses, transportation providers, fundraiser initiators, photographers, coffee hour providers, church school teachers and press coordinators. This list is by no means exhaustive, and it does not include the more intangible things like prayerful intercession, contacting those who haven't been around for a while, etc.. If you have interest in offering your time, talent, or treasure to the Church, please see Fr. John. Each of us have unique gifts from God. Let us use them to His glory!



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!

THROUGH THE EYES OF CHILDREN LETTERS TO GOD



Dear God, I would like to live 900 years like the guy in the Bible. Love, Chris

Dear God, I went to this wedding and they kissed right in church. Is this ok? Neil

Dear God, Please put another holiday between Christmas and Easter. There is nothing good in there now. Ginny

Dear God, I am an American. What are you? Robert

Dear God, thank you for the baby brother but what I prayed for was a puppy. Joyce

Dear God, I bet it is very hard to love all of everybody in the whole world. There are only 4 people in our family and I can never do it. Nan

Dear God, in the Bible times did they really talk that fancy? Jennifer

Dear God, instead of letting people die and having to make new ones why don't you just keep the ones you got now? Jane

Dear God, I think about you sometimes even when I'm not praying. Elliott



ARCHPASTORAL MESSAGE OF HIS BEATITUDE, METROPOLITAN JONAH FOR THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST 2009

To the Very Reverend and Reverend Clergy, Monastics, and Faithful of The Orthodox Church in America

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

We rejoice in the coming of the Savior, the Advent of the Son of God into this broken world. His Nativity anticipates and prefigures His Second and Glorious Coming again in the flesh, not clothed in the swaddling bands of humility, for but a few years; but in the radiant vesture of the Kingdom to reign forever.

For us Orthodox Christians, the Nativity of Christ is the Winter Pascha, and our celebration is rooted in the liturgical life of the Church; the world's "Xmas" hymns go on and on, oblivious, rather intentionally, to the point of the celebration. While we enjoy the worldly celebration, the family time, the gifts and giving, these are empty if we miss the central celebration itself: the services of the Nativity, culminating in receiving the Holy Mysteries. We can have Christmas without the Nativity, as does the world; but for Christians the Feast of the Nativity is Christmas!

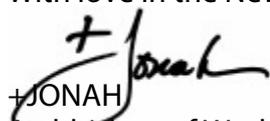
We pray and fast to prepare ourselves for forty days before Christmas not only to be obedient to the Church, but to prepare ourselves to receive the Mystery of Communion. Will this Christmas be unto salvation, discerning and receiving His Body--that same Body born of Mary and laid in the Manger, the Son of God who has taken flesh and likened himself to us, so that He might liken us to Himself? Or do we judge ourselves, unaware or oblivious to the Mystery of Christ's assumption of our nature. We pray and fast to open our spiritual eyes, so that we can see Christ, discern Christ, know Christ--not just as a historical figure who taught nice things, but as God who has come and will come again.

The traditional Christmas carols talk about Baby Jesus lying in the manger. Let us contemplate this mystery during this season, a mystery that at that time only His Mother really understood: that this little infant, no different than any other, would become the Savior of the world, and redeem mankind, indeed all of creation, from death. What infinite potential, the potential of a man fulfilling the Divine Likeness, and manifesting God in His flesh, was invested in that little child. Who would have thought that a child born in the most destitute poverty and anonymity would become the criterion of judgment for the whole world?

We can also contemplate this same mystery in the life of every child. Who knows what the destiny of that child will be? Who can tell if he or she will become a point of hope for the whole world? That same infinite potential, the potential for deification, the potential for a life transfigured by God, the potential for a life that will bring joy and peace, or beget such a child?

The Feast of the Nativity is not only the contemplation of God taking human flesh. It is also the great celebration of humanity, that God so loved as to become one of us, that through that One, joy and peace and salvation may be given to the whole world. Let us treasure the life of every child, who is the image of Christ born of the Virgin, and remember the great calling which he or she, and each of us, has in God. Let us also remember that the ultimate fulfillment of that calling is found in the transformation of our very flesh, in which God became incarnate, that having become man for our sake, He enables us to partake of His Divinity on that glorious day of His coming again in the flesh.

With love in the Newborn Lord,



+JONAH
Archbishop of Washington
Metropolitan of All America and Canada



STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE DISCUSSES "THE GOALS OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA -- THE NEXT TWENTY YEARS"

SYOSSET, NY [OCA Communications / December 14, 2009] -- The Strategic Planning Committee of the Orthodox Church in America met earlier this month at the OCA Chancery under the chairmanship of the Very Rev. Robert Arida. Also present for the meeting was His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah.

According to a statement issued after the meeting, the committee described its work in the following manner.

"God is Love. In God, this Love is manifest as the perfect Council of Three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And yet, within this perfect Divine Love there is something that often seems strange to fallen human reasoning -- among these three perfectly equal Persons, among Whom there is no subordination, there is at the same time, primacy and hierarchy -- the Son accomplishes the Father's will, the Spirit proceeds from the Father, the Son is begotten of the Father. The Church must manifest in and to the world this perfect Love and Life of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. To image God's life her own life must mirror this mystery of hierarchy and conciliarity in love. She has no 'agenda' separate from this mission.

"One third of the Metropolitan Council, a group of about 10 people, has been commissioned to act as facilitator to propose, for the Fall 2011 gathering of the OCA at the 16th All-American Council, a vision for the Church and aspects of its implementation. This work will require the Church to describe her mission and how it can be implemented in the present time in America including, as necessary, a reexamination of administrative structures and governing Statutes.

"To that end this group, called the Strategic Planning Committee, will begin with certain elements of a vision that have so far been articulated by Metropolitan Jonah and the Holy Synod, and will ensure development of this vision through a conciliar process that is intended to engage virtually all members of the Church. This means that very soon all the faithful of dioceses and parishes will be encouraged to know what concerns the bishops and teachers of the Church have expressed; to

respond to these concerns; and to expand upon these concerns and ideas in order to refine and advance the Church's mission.

"Concretely, among the specific areas that have been discussed, there is to date a unanimous desire to continue the struggle towards Orthodox unity, to cultivate the spiritual life of the faithful, and to more deeply understand the work of mission and manifestation of the Gospel life.

"The Planning Committee believes that advancement of this work has been stifled by a confusion of terms and goals among Orthodox themselves, and by an unfortunate and un-

necessary conflict of two essential terms, which are of the essence of the life of the Holy Trinity, and therefore of the Church: the terms hierarchy and conciliarity. Through a concerted, intentional engagement of the whole Church, we hope to overcome such confusion and to render ourselves open to receiving God's word for the Church's life and work for our time."

Members of the Strategic Planning Committee will be meeting again on December 17 and 18 to continue their discussion.

For more information, please see OCA.org.

