

CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25TH

NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

One of the Twelve Great Feasts

12:00a.m. Divine Liturgy

12:00p.m. Great Vespers

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31ST

5:00pm Bible Study

6:00pm Great Vespers

SUNDAY, JANUARY 1ST

Circumcision of Our Lord

St. Basil the Great

8:40a.m. Hours

9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy
St. Basil's Bread
Coffee Hour

Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which is translated, "God with us."

Isaiah 7:14

READER SCHEDULE

Sunday, Jan. 1st

Jodi McElwee

Sunday, Jan. 8th

Bruce Eckerd



CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF DECEMBER 25, 2011

Welcome Visitors

We warmly welcome all those who are visiting us today. It is good to have you all with us!

Helping a Needy Family

Many thanks to those who offered donations for the family we supported this Christmas. We were able to offer \$250.

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.



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.

Two New Matching Donations Update

The \$5K *Friends of the Mission* matching donation has brought in some \$13,395, for a total of \$18,395! We sincerely thank those who have generously donated for this cause! May the Lord bless you!

The \$5K *Members of the Mission* matching donation has brought in \$1496, and will be extended to the end of the calendar year. Let us do our best, inspired by our friends from afar and the grace of God, to respond to this opportunity before us!

Blessing of the Atlantic Ocean – Saturday, Jan. 14th

On Saturday, January 14th, we will join St. George's Greek Orthodox Church for their annual Blessing of Waters, served at the Atlantic Ocean. The divine services will be led by Met. Evangelos of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese. Matins and Divine Liturgy will begin at 8:30am. The Blessing of Waters will take place at 12:30pm. All invited! For more information, please see Fr. John.

2012 Annual Meeting – Sunday, Jan. 29th

Everyone is encouraged to please save the date for this meeting!

Prayer List: Fr. Michael Mihalick, Fr. Alexander Atty, Fr. Christian, Mat. Dunia, Kelly Elizabeth & child, Bill Parrish, Fazealle, Hayley, Tyler Pelesh, Jerrie Rife, Wallace & Michelle, Ryan & Kayla, Maleah Morsey, Victoria Kokkinos, Ed Tucker, Karen Nichols, Denise Royal, Simeon, Scott & Maryann, Roman Szwec, Garrett Cuppels, Jane Koshutko, Nicholas & Linda, Nina Gordon, Mirela & Chris, Troy Duker, Mary Miranda, Bruce, Stella, Lilly Barnett, Amy F., Nedelina, Henrietta Stack, & John Nakajima (departed)

OPERATING THRU 11/30/11			DECEMBER OPERATING			BUILDING FUND MATCHING DONATIONS		
Income	Expense	Net	Income	Expense	Difference	20K (Everyone)	5K (Parish)	5K (Friends)
46,671	58,414	-11,743	2,326	5,900	-3,574	20,000!	1,496	13,395!



ARCHPASTORAL MESSAGE OF HIS BEATITUDE, METROPOLITAN JONAH

To the Very Reverend and Reverend Clergy, Monastics, and Faithful of The Orthodox Church in America
Dearly beloved in the Lord,
Christ is Born!

I greet you with the love, joy and hope that is so graciously granted to us with the Incarnation of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Today, we celebrate the "Winter Pascha," proclaiming that God is indeed with us! Today, the only-begotten Son of God takes on our human nature, enabling us to become partakers of His divine nature. Today, the Law and the Prophets are fulfilled as, in the "fullness of time," the long-awaited Messiah ushers in that peace which is beyond all understanding!

And today, we celebrate that for which we have prepared during the Nativity Fast. Our fasting, intensified prayer, and almsgiving find their meaning and fulfillment in the Mystery of the Incarnation: All that we have is a gift from God, given to us as faithful stewards, that we might proclaim God's very presence in our midst. Our calling is to "incarnate" the Incarnate Word into our lives, our actions, our very being, at all times, and in everything we do. This, to be sure, is not easy. The world will challenge those who embrace "The Way" at every turn. Yet, it is the world that, in its self-proclaimed emptiness, precisely reveals its thirst for "something more," a "sign" or "reality" that gives meaning to life beyond the superficial trappings of the "holiday season."

In rendering thanks to God for His manifest love for His People, and in strengthening ourselves to proclaim the Incarnation in our lives, it is crucial for every member of the Church to discern his or her gifts and to employ them for the building up of the Body of Christ. How? One of the Nativity hymns gives us a clue.

What shall we offer Thee, O Christ, Who for our sake has appeared on earth as man?

Every creature which Thou hast made offers thanks.

The angels offer Thee a song. The heavens, their star. The wise men, their gifts. The shepherds, their wonder.

The earth, its cave. The wilderness, the manger.

And we offer Thee a Virgin Mother!

It is the Mother of God, the Theotokos, who is the very model of stewardship, of discernment, of embracing all that the heavenly Father called her to do. Where the first Eve said "no" to God, she responded positively. And in so doing, she embraced all that her Son accomplished by His birth in time and space, becoming an example for us.

As we continue our celebration, let not our faith be "shelved" with our ornaments and seasonal decorations. Let not the flame of our commitment wax cold. Let not our devotion to serving the Incarnate Word, even as His Mother served Him. May the grace and peace from above, so abundantly given by our all-merciful Savior, remain with us throughout this most glorious feast, and be strengthened within us in the days, weeks and months beyond!

Let us glorify Him!

Faithfully yours in Christ,

+JONAH

Archbishop of Washington

Metropolitan of All America and Canada

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!



ST. BASIL'S BREAD



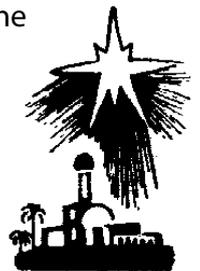
The tradition of Saint Basil's Bread dates to the fourth century, when St. Basil the Great, the father of philanthropy, wanted to distribute money to the poor in his diocese. He commissioned some women to bake sweetened bread, in which he placed gold coins. Thus the poor families in cutting the bread to nourish themselves were pleasantly surprised to find the coins. This custom is kept to this day among Orthodox Christians, who on Saint Basil's Day, January 1st, place gold coins inside a loaf of sweetened bread in honor of the Saint's care for the poor. The one who finds the coin in his or her piece is considered commissioned by St. Basil to carry on his work for the poor, and in exchange he will ask the Lord for whatever is needful for the New Year.

We will keep this beautiful custom on Sunday, January 1, 2012.

REFLECTION ON THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

From the Prologue of Ochrid by St. Nikolai Velimirovich

The Lord Jesus, born in Bethlehem, was first worshiped by shepherds and wise men (astrologers) from the east—the simplest and the wisest of this world. Even today, those who most sincerely worship the Lord Jesus as God and Savior are the simplest and the wisest of this world. Perverted simplicity and half-learned wisdom were always the enemies of Christ's divinity and His Gospel. But who were these wise men from the east? This question was especially studied by St. Dimitri of Rostov. He claims that they were kings of certain smaller regions or individual towns in Persia, Arabia and Egypt. At the same time, they were erudite in the knowledge of astronomy. This wondrous star appeared to them, which announced the birth of the New King. According to St. Dimitri, this star appeared to them nine months before the birth of the Lord Jesus, i.e., at the time of His conception by the Most-holy Theotokos. They spent nine months in studying this star, in preparing for the journey and in traveling. They arrived in Bethlehem shortly after the birth of the Savior of the world. One of them was called Melchior. He was old, with long white hair and beard. He offered the Lord the gift of gold. The second was called Caspar, of ruddy face, young and beardless. He offered the Lord the gift of frankincense. The third was called Balthasar, of dark complexion and a very heavy beard. He offered the Lord the gift of myrrh. After their deaths, their bodies were taken to Constantinople, from Constantinople to Milan, and from Milan to Cologne. It can be added that these three wise men were representatives of the three main races of men that descended from Noah's three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth. The Persian represented the Japhethites, the Arabian represented the Semites, and the Egyptian represented the Hamites. Thus it can be said that, through these three, the whole human race worshiped the Incarnate Lord and God.



AGAIN AND AGAIN IN PEACE

By VRev. Vladimir Berzonsky

"Again and again in peace, let us pray to the Lord"
(Little Litany)

Again I was asked, "Why is there so much repetition in our prayers?" And again I responded the way I always had before - our worship includes certain themes and terms that bear repeating, because they remind us to pay attention to something significant on the way, or else to waft us upwards into the rarefied spiritual atmosphere of the Kingdom, lest we drift back down to the temporal and mundane area where we more normally spend our mental time.

Peace is among the most prominent; wisdom, another; and mercy, a third.

Peace is the spiritual state that liberates us from the environment of distractions at minimum, angst, depression, hostility and self-destruction at worst. More than thirty times one hears the term "peace" throughout the Divine Liturgy, and at each hearing one should revive within oneself the aura of serenity. Think of it as an intake of mystical oxygen that clears the head and heart from lethargy and heaviness. Let it remind you of Who it is that is blessing you with peace, the price He paid

to present it to you, and the moment par excellence when by the glorious mystical contact you have with the Apostles, you are there with them in the Upper Room of the dwelling of St. Mark's gracious mother that traumatic evening when He appeared. He greeted you also with peace. You remember that He said: "My peace I give to you; My peace I leave with you - not as the world gives, do I give to you." (Jn 14:27)

"Wisdom!" is another power-packed word you hear "again and again." Snap out of your daydreams, it insists. This is not the time for reveries - mooning over something disturbing or planning your afternoon. You are here and now. Make the most of it. Something ponderous, wise and precious for your soul is about to be set forth. "Attend!" Pay attention. Focus your wandering thoughts and listen attentively. You may have heard it before, you may

even know it by heart; nevertheless, even if the words of the gospel or prayer haven't changed, you have. You are not the same person who listened in previous times of worship. Maybe then the phrases or parables didn't mean much because it did not relate to your perceived needs at the time. Today you are another person from that stage of life. See now what you can make of it and apply it to your present situation.

The Divine Liturgy is in a sense much like classical music, an opera perhaps, a symphony - or better yet, a concert where one human "instrument," the priest, is played against the response, the choir or congregation.

It has modulated into its present form. A classic treatise on that development is called "The Shape of the Liturgy," by Dom Gregory Dix. It has indeed taken shape from a time when the people of Christ gathered, the bishop entered and said, "Peace be with you," and all responded, "And also with you." They all sat or stood, heard and discussed the sacred scriptures, then continued with Eucharist. That basic outline has been enhanced through the centuries into its present form. Indeed, it is

challenging to absorb and assimilate its divine beauty, then to apply it to oneself. More formidable a venture when offered in a foreign tongue, but even in English it remains a study in constant progress. One must first love it to be comfortable in prayer. It goes without saying, of course, one must first love God with all one's heart, soul and mind even to make the effort to immerse one's self into the Liturgy. Granted, it's not a simple matter to develop an appreciation for the way we pray. We live at a time when people lack the ability to focus or concentrate. They expect instant gratification, entertainment, and quick responses to their felt "needs." Orthodox Christianity challenges its children to grow in grace, develop a mind and soul able to comprehend the value of the treasures offered to us and expressed in our sacred worship, and to return our affection to the Holy Trinity "again and again."

