



# The Trophy Bearer

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## St. George Orthodox Church

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This newsletter is published monthly in the interest of the parishioners and friends of St. George Orthodox Church in Buffalo, a parish of the Diocese of New York and New Jersey and The Orthodox Church in America.

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## The Celebration of the Nativity of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ in the Flesh

The celebration of the feast of the **Nativity of Christ** in the Orthodox Church is patterned after the celebration of the feast of the Lord's Resurrection. A fast of forty days precedes the feast, with special preparatory days announcing the approaching birth of the Saviour. Thus, on St Andrew's Day (November 30) and St Nicholas Day (December 6) songs are sung to announce the coming birthday of the Lord:

*Adorn yourself, O Cavern. Make ready, O Manger. O Shepherds and wisemen, bring your gifts and bear witness. For the Virgin is coming bearing Christ in her womb (Vesperal Hymn of St Nicholas Day)*

On the eve of Christmas, the **Royal Hours** are read and the **Divine Liturgy of St. Basil** is served with **Vespers**. At these services the Old Testament prophecies of Christ's birth are chanted, emphasizing the prophecy of **Micah** which foretells Bethlehem as the birthplace of the Saviour, and the prophecies of **Isaiah** about the appearance and character of the Messiah:

*The Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel, which translated is, God with us (Is 7:14-15).*

*God is with us, understand all ye nations, and submit yourselves, for God is with us (Is 8:9).*

*For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end (Is 9:6-7).*

The **Vigil of Christmas** begins with **Great Compline**, highlighted once again by the solemn chanting of *God is with us* and the words of the prophecy of Isaiah. At Compline there is also the singing of the Troparion and Kontakion of the feast along with the special hymns glorifying the Saviour's birth. There are also the special long litanies of intercession and the solemn blessing of the **five loaves** of bread together with the **wheat** and the **wine** of which the faithful partake and the **oil** with which they are anointed. This part of the festal vigil, which is done on all great feasts, is called the **litya** (in Greek, the *artoklasia* or the **breaking of the bread**)

At the beginning of the **Christmas Matins**, which together with Compline form the Christmas Vigil, the six matinal psalms begin as usual with the words; Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will among men (*Lk 2:14*).

At the Christmas services these words of the angelic song are normally sung with great solemnity rather than being chanted as at the daily service. The Christmas Matins proceed as usual. The gospel reading from Matthew (*1:18-25*) tells of the birth of Christ, and all of the hymns and verses glorify his appearance on earth:

*Christ is born, glorify him. Christ is from heaven, go to meet him. Christ is an earth, be ye lifted up. Sing to the Lord, all the earth. Sing out with gladness, all ye people. For he is glorified. (First Ode of the Christmas Canon)*

The **Christmas Liturgy** begins with psalms of glorification and praise. The troparion and kontakion mark the entrance with the Book of the Gospels. The baptismal line from **Galatians 3:27** once again replaces the Thrice-Holy. The Epistle reading is from **Galatians**:

*But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So through God, you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then an heir (Gal 4:4-7).*

The Gospel reading is the familiar Christmas story from **Matthew (2:1-12)**, and the liturgy continues in the normal fashion. A specific two-day celebration follows, dedicated to **Mary the Theotokos** and **St Stephen, the First Martyr**. The period of Christmas rejoicing extends to Epiphany during which time the Christmas songs are sung and fasting and kneeling in prayer are not called for by the Church.

The feast of Christmas is formally entitled the **Nativity in the Flesh of our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ**. At Christmas we celebrate the birth as a man of the Son of God, the one who together with the Father and the Holy Spirit is truly God from all eternity. Thus, we sing in the Church.

*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 the star! Since for our sake the Eternal God is born as a little child (Kontakion).*

The feast of Christmas was not a separate Church feast for the first four centuries of Christian history. It was celebrated with **Epiphany** in the one great feast of God's appearance on earth in the form of the human Messiah of Israel. The Nativity began to be celebrated as such on the twenty-fifth of December in order to offset the pagan festival of the Invincible Sun which occurred on that day. It was established by the Church quite consciously as an attempt to defeat the false religion of the heathens. Thus, we discover the troparion of the feast making a polemic against the worship of

the sun and the stars and calling for the adoration of Christ, the **True Sun of Righteousness** (*Mal 4:2*), who is himself worshiped by all of the elements of nature.

*Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone to the world the light of wisdom! For by it, those who worshiped the stars were taught by a star to adore Thee, the Sun of Righteousness and to know Thee, the Orient from on high (Lk 1:78, translated as Dawn or Day spring). O Lord, glory to Thee! (Troparion).*

Thus, the feast of Christmas is the celebration of the world's salvation through the Son of God who became man for our sake that, through him, we might ourselves become divine, sons of God the Father by the indwelling of his Holy Spirit in us.

## The Story of the Life of St. Nicholas - December 6

Saint Nicholas, the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia is famed as a great saint pleasing unto God. He was born in the city of Patara in the region of Lycia (on the south coast of the Asia Minor peninsula), and was the only son of pious parents Theophanes and Nonna, who had vowed to dedicate him to God.

As the fruit of the prayer of his childless parents, the infant Nicholas from the very day of his birth revealed to people the light of his future glory as a wonderworker. His mother, Nonna, after giving birth was immediately healed from illness. The newborn infant, while still in the baptismal font, stood on his feet three hours, without support from anyone, thereby honoring the Most Holy Trinity. St Nicholas from his infancy began a life of fasting, and on Wednesdays and Fridays he would not accept milk from his mother until after his parents had finished their evening prayers.

From his childhood Nicholas thrived on the study of Divine Scripture; by day he would not leave church, and by night he prayed and read books, making himself a worthy dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. Bishop Nicholas of Patara rejoiced at the spiritual success and deep piety of his nephew. He ordained him a reader, and then elevated Nicholas to the priesthood, making him his assistant and entrusting him to instruct the flock.

In serving the Lord the youth was fervent of spirit, and in his proficiency with questions of faith he was like an Elder, who aroused the wonder and deep respect of believers. Constantly at work and vivacious, in unceasing prayer, the priest Nicholas displayed great kind-heartedness towards the flock, and towards the afflicted who came to him for help, and he distributed all his inheritance to the poor.

There was a certain formerly rich inhabitant of Patara, whom St Nicholas saved from great sin. The man had three grown daughters, and in desperation he planned to sell their bodies so they would have money for food. The saint, learning of the man's poverty and of his wicked intention, secretly visited him one night and threw a sack of gold through the window. With the money the man arranged an honorable marriage for his daughter. St Nicholas also provided gold for the other daughters, thereby saving the family from falling into spiritual destruction. In bestowing charity, St Nicholas always strove to do this secretly and to conceal his good deeds.

The Bishop of Patara decided to go on pilgrimage to the holy places at Jerusalem, and entrusted the guidance of his flock to St Nicholas, who fulfilled this obedience carefully and with love. When the bishop returned, Nicholas asked his blessing for a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Along the way the saint predicted a storm would arise and threaten the ship. St Nicholas saw the devil get on the ship, intending to sink it and kill

all the passengers. At the entreaty of the despairing pilgrims, he calmed the waves of the sea by his prayers. Through his prayer a certain sailor of the ship, who had fallen from the mast and was mortally injured was also restored to health.

When he reached the ancient city of Jerusalem and came to Golgotha, St Nicholas gave thanks to the Savior. He went to all the holy places, worshiping at each one. One night on Mount Sion, the closed doors of the church opened by themselves for the great pilgrim. Going round the holy places connected with the earthly service of the Son of God, St Nicholas decided to withdraw into the desert, but he was stopped by a divine voice urging him to return to his native country. He returned to Lycia, and yearning for a life of quietude, the saint entered into the brotherhood of a monastery named Holy Sion, which had been founded by his uncle. But the Lord again indicated another path for him, "Nicholas, this is not the vineyard where you shall bear fruit for Me. Return to the world, and glorify My Name there." So he left Patara and went to Myra in Lycia.

Upon the death of Archbishop John, Nicholas was chosen as Bishop of Myra after one of the bishops of the Council said that a new archbishop should be revealed by God, not chosen by men. One of the elder bishops had a vision of a radiant Man, Who told him that the one who came to the church that night and was first to enter should be made archbishop. He would be named Nicholas. The bishop went to the church at night to await Nicholas. The saint, always the first to arrive at church, was stopped by the bishop. "What is your name, child?" he asked. God's chosen one replied, "My name is Nicholas, Master, and I am your servant."

After his consecration as archbishop, St Nicholas remained a great ascetic, appearing to his flock as an image of gentleness, kindness and love for people. This was particularly precious for the Lycian Church during the persecution of Christians under the emperor Diocletian (284-305). Bishop Nicholas, locked up in prison together with other Christians for refusing to worship idols, sustained them and exhorted them to endure the fetters, punishment and torture. The Lord preserved him unharmed. Upon the accession of St Constantine (May 21) as emperor, St Nicholas was restored to his flock, which joyfully received their guide and intercessor.

Despite his great gentleness of spirit and purity of heart, St Nicholas was a zealous and ardent warrior of the Church of Christ. Fighting evil spirits, the saint made the rounds of the pagan temples and shrines in the city of Myra and its surroundings, shattering the idols and turning the temples to dust.

In the year 325 St Nicholas was a participant in the First Ecumenical Council. This Council proclaimed the Nicean Symbol of Faith, and he stood up against the heretic Arius with the likes of Sts Sylvester the Bishop of Rome (January 2), Alexander of Alexandria (May 29), Spyridon of Trimythontos (December 12) and other Fathers of the Council.

St Nicholas, fired with zeal for the Lord, assailed the heretic Arius with his words, and also struck him upon the face. For this reason, he was deprived of the emblems of his episcopal rank and placed under guard. But several of the holy Fathers had the same vision, seeing the Lord Himself and the Mother of God returning to him the Gospel and omophorion. The Fathers of the Council agreed that the audacity of the saint was pleasing to God, and restored the saint to the office of bishop.

Having returned to his own diocese, the saint brought it peace and blessings, sowing the word of Truth, uprooting heresy, nourishing his flock with sound doctrine, and also providing food for their bodies.

Even during his life the saint worked many miracles. One of the greatest was the deliverance from death of three men unjustly condemned by the Governor, who had been bribed. The saint boldly went up to the executioner and took his sword, already suspended over the heads of the condemned. The Governor, denounced by St Nicholas for his wrong doing, repented and begged for forgiveness.

Witnessing this remarkable event were three military officers, who were sent to Phrygia by the emperor Constantine to put down a rebellion. They did not suspect that soon they would also be compelled to seek the intercession of St Nicholas. Evil men slandered them before the emperor, and the officers were sentenced to death. Appearing to St Constantine in a dream, St Nicholas called on him to overturn the unjust sentence of the military officers.

He worked many other miracles, and struggled many long years at his labor. Through the prayers of the saint, the city of Myra was rescued from a terrible famine. He appeared to a certain Italian merchant and left him three gold pieces as a pledge of payment. He requested him to sail to Myra and deliver grain there. More than once, the saint saved those drowning in the sea, and provided release from captivity and imprisonment.

Having reached old age, St Nicholas peacefully fell asleep in the Lord. His venerable relics were preserved incorrupt in the local cathedral church and flowed with curative myrrh, from which many received healing. In the year 1087, his relics were transferred to the Italian city of Bari, where they rest even now..

## The Repose of St. Herman of Alaska - December 13

SAINT HERMAN OF ALASKA is often referred to as the first American saint. Born in Russia, he entered the monastic life when he was only sixteen. He would eventually take up abode in the Valaam Monastery on Lake Ladoga. When a mission of monks was organized in 1793 to travel to North America, St. Herman was part of that effort. Russian merchants had discovered the Aleutian Islands and, in addition to their trading endeavors they found a great need to bring the Gospel of Christ to the native inhabitants. St. Herman would settle on Spruce Island, calling his home "New Valaam." The rugged island was heavily forested, but the pious monk enjoyed the solitude it brought him. Earthly pleasures meant nothing to him. He dug a cave with his own hands where he lived for more than 40 years. He humbly wore the same clothing every day; he used two bricks for a pillow and he covered himself at night with a board rather than a blanket.

Although only a simple monk and not an ordained priest, St. Herman soon gained a reputation for being a great spiritual teacher. He established a school and enjoyed teaching the native children about Christ. He particularly loved to teach them the prayers and hymns of the Church. Young and old alike would listen spell-bound for hours to his sermons.

St. Herman also became known for his wondrous works and miracles as well. A great flood once threatened Spruce Island, and the inhabitants came to their blessed Elder in great fear. He took an icon of the Theotokos, placed it on a sandy bank and began to pray. Amazingly, the progress of the waters was impeded immediately! A forest fire broke out once on Spruce Island. St. Herman dug a simple trench and proclaimed: "The fire will not pass this line." It did not!

St. Herman of Alaska died in the same cave in which he had lived for all those years on Spruce Island. His final words were a statement of his entire philosophy of life: "GLORY TO THEE, O LORD."

# A Message From Fr. Jason

## THE GREAT FEAST OF

### THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD GOD and SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO THE FLESH

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!

*Make glad, O righteous! Greatly rejoice, O heavens! O mountains, dance for joy! Christ is born, and like the cherubim the Virgin makes a throne, carrying at her bosom the Word made flesh! Shepherds glorify the newborn Child! Magi offer the Master gifts! Angels sing praises, saying: "O Lord, beyond all understanding, glory to Thee!"*

– Nativity Matins –

As we celebrate this Great Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord, I greet all of you with these words of praise from the Festal Matins on the Eve of the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord.

The beautiful liturgical hymns we sing in celebration of the Nativity of Our Savior resound with a single theme: **joy**. They proclaim the joy all creation shares as its Creator takes on the human flesh. They invite us to rejoice with the angelic hosts in praising the Word made flesh, dwelling amongst us. And they challenge us to look beyond the cares and concerns of this world in anticipation of the new life the Savior offers us – a life that, while beyond all understanding, is already revealed to us and experienced by us in the life of His Body, the Church.

Indeed, the birth of Our Savior is filled with great mystery. The virgin gives birth, yet she remains a virgin. God takes on our human nature, yet He remains that which He is from all eternity. The King of All reigns from a cave, rather than a sumptuous palace. The manger becomes His throne; simple shepherds, His court. The angels serve as His messengers; the powerful of the world, His enemies. The Messiah comes unto His own; despite centuries of anticipation, they fail to recognize Him as the Living Word the written word joyously reveals.

The choir of angels joyously proclaim this great mystery by proclaiming "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will among men" (Luke 2:14). Today we draw near and adore the One who is our Peace.

Entering into the Feast of our Lord's Nativity, let us be generous in extending the joyous news of eternal life to all people. Celebrating God's descent to earth and our ascent to heaven, let us also remain vigilant. For through watchfulness the gift of the incarnation - the gift of Christ's birth, death, and resurrection - will never cease to be embraced as life-giving and life-transfiguring. Indeed these are challenging times and difficult times for all of us. We continue to face the pandemic that has affected our lives in many ways. We continue to face the unrest within our nation. In the joy, spirit, and glory of Our Lord's Holy and Glorious Nativity, may we find peace! May we find consolation! May we find hope! May we find healing! May we find forgiveness! May we find love!

So, let us join together as a family, as brothers and sisters in Christ in making a commitment to bring Christ to the World! Let us come to together and proclaim the joyous message of our Lord's Glorious Nativity by proclaiming the words of praise: "Christ is Born! Glorify Him!"

In the spirit of this Holy and Joyous Nativity Season, please take a moment to reflect upon what God has given you, and to discern how you might be able to return to God a portion of the blessings you have received.

My dear brothers and sisters, let us embrace each other with love. Let us embrace each other with joy. Let us come together to proclaim and live this Joyous Message to all.

Please be assured of my continued love and prayers for you and your families, and our entire parish family. May you and your families and our entire parish family have a blessed and Glorious Feast of The Nativity of Our Lord, a Blessed Nativity Season and a blessed and Joyous New Year.

May GOD continue to bless and guide you, your families, and our entire parish family!

God Bless You!

With Love in the New-Born Christ,

Fr. Jason

## Live Stream of Divine Services

As a friendly reminder, ALL DIVINE SERVICES WILL CONTINUE TO LIVE-STREAMED from Fr. Jason's Facebook page and our Parish Youtube Page so that we can still be together and pray together. So please, continue to join us in prayer!! There are three ways we can join together in prayer via Live-Stream even if we do not have a FaceBook account:

- 1) Go directly to our Parish Website ([www.stgeorgebuffalo.com](http://www.stgeorgebuffalo.com)) and on our homepage you will see a box that says 'Restream: Stream currently offline". When 'live-stream' is active, the live video will automatically appear.
- 2) Go directly to Fr. Jason's Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/jason.vansuch> and there you will see the Live-stream video.
- 3) Go directly to our Parish Youtube Page <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCft4AWAX2COrLZExfMJc5KQ> and there you will see the Live-stream video.

## Attending the Sunday Divine Liturgies In Person

If any **single parish members or parish member households** - UP TO 25 PEOPLE IN CHURCH AT EACH DIVINE LITURGY - would like to attend the Divine Liturgy on a Sunday please refer to the following signup link <https://signup.com/go/AqSQSmX>. We have updated the signup application for our parish to ensure that everyone will have an opportunity to come to the Church OR Parish Fellowship Hall for Divine Liturgy on Sundays (slots 1-25 for the Church). All of the information pertaining to signing up is contained within the signup invitation/application.

The signup links will also appear on the front page of our parish website as well to make it easier for everyone to sign. **PLEASE SIGN-UP BY 6:00 PM ON SATURDAY NIGHT!!**

The live stream will be available in the Parish Fellowship Hall and Fr. Jason, Fr. Andreja, or Fr. Peter will come into the Hall to distribute Holy Communion to those present. Please keep in mind that if the church is "full" we can not travel between the Parish Fellowship Hall and the Church

Prior to coming to Church for Divine Liturgy during one of the attendance time slots, please review and adhere to the Diocesan Guidelines that are also posted at the front entrance to our church.

**\*\*MY DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST PLEASE MAKE SURE WE READ THESE DIOCESAN GUIDELINES AS WE MUST ADHERE TO THEM AND AND FOLLOW THEM!\*\***

## **\*\* NEW PROTOCOLS WHEN ATTENDING THE DIVINE LITURGY ON SUNDAYS.....**

- 1) A Parish Council Member will greet everyone at the Front Entrance Doors to the Church. We will have the Sign-Up Sheet there to mark off your name if you signed-up to attend. If we did not sign-up, then we will write your name down and kindly remind you to sign-up before next Sunday.
- 2) EVERYONE attending the Divine Liturgy (those in the Nave and Parish Fellowship Hall – parishioners, choir members, parish council members) NEED to sign-up. Only Those in the Altar do not need to sign-up as they are not taking space in The Nave. Once we reach our capacity of 33 people in The Church, everyone else will be seated in The Parish Fellowship Hall.
- 3) When receiving Holy Communion, a Parish Council Member will call everyone up – pew by pew – to allow for social distancing (the children and Altar Servers will come first, then the first pews up front all the way to the back of the Church with the Choir being the last ones to receive Holy Communion). If any faithful are in The Parish Fellowship Hall, Fr Jason, Fr. Andreja, or Fr. Peter will bring Holy Communion to those in the Hall.

**\*\*If anyone has any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to see or contact Fr. Jason. May God continue to bless and guide all of you!\*\***

### **Regarding Receiving Holy Communion when we are unable to attend The Divine Liturgy**

If anyone would like to come and receive Holy Communion or if you would like Fr. Jason to come and bring Holy Communion to your home, please contact him to make arrangements: [jvansuch@hotmail.com](mailto:jvansuch@hotmail.com)/609.851.3811/716.875.4222

### **Regarding The Mystery of Holy Confession:**

*Taking into consideration the spiritual and mental healing that comes through the Sacrament of Confession, His Eminence blesses, for all priests and communities in the Diocese of New York and New Jersey, that for this period*

- Confession may continue to be held over the telephone or by live video communication; it may also be done in person with social distancing kept between the priest and the penitent (6 feet), and with face masks worn by both. The Prayer of Absolution can be given by video or phone and especially in person.

- When Confession is heard over the telephone or by live video, the priest must read the Prayer of Absolution before ending the phone call or video communication, in the hearing of the penitent.
- If anyone would like to have Confession, please contact Fr. Jason to make arrangements: [jvansuch@hotmail.com](mailto:jvansuch@hotmail.com). Phone: 609.851.3811/716.875.422

## Q&A with Fr. Jay

In this section, we will answer questions that have been given to Fr. Jason on various topics pertaining to our life as Orthodox Christians. If there are any questions that we may have about The Orthodox Faith and Her Teachings, please feel free to leave our question(s) in the box located at the candle desk in church (Questions for Father) or email it to Fr. Jason and he will be able to provide the answers for us. All questions are anonymous and are here for the benefit of everyone to help each of us grow closer in our relationship with Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ in understanding our Holy Orthodox Faith and Her Teachings.

### **What are the 12 Days of Christmas?**

#### **The Twelve Days of Christmas**

These 12 days that comprise the "12 days of Christmas" also include other observances on various levels. The first level are events that are directly associated to Christ's birth in the flesh, including the murder of the 14,000 baby boys that Herod ordered when Jesus was born (December 29) and the 8-day naming of Jesus (January 1).

A second level of observances during these 12 days are commemorations of people from the earliest decades of the spread of the Christian faith after the death and resurrection of Christ and Pentecost, such as St. Stephen (one of the first of the 7 deacons) who became the first martyr in Christianity (December 27); and the "seventy" as they are known, these being the 70 apostles that the 12 apostles trained and sent off to travel and preach (January 4).

The third level of commemorations of these 12 days are for those who in later centuries lived and honored Christ in marvelous ways and became saints of the church, such as St Melanie of Rome from the 5th century (December 31), St Basil the Great from the 4th century era (January 1), and St Sylvester, Bishop of Rome also from the 4th century (Jan 2).

In its development over many centuries, the twelve days of Christmas that we celebrate today have become a theological and historical cornucopia of both the life of Christ and the life of the Church through its Christian Witness. What follows is a brief review of the themes from each of the twelve days of Christmas.

## **Day 1 - Dec 25 - The Nativity in the Flesh of our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ**

The Shepherd's worship and the visit of the wise men from the East.

## **Day 2 - Dec. 26 - Synaxis of the Virgin**

Gives Glory and Praise to Her, who bore our Lord. Also on the 26th is the commemoration of the Flight into Egypt when an angel warned Joseph of King Herod's plans to kill the children in Bethlehem.

## **Day 3 - Dec. 27 - St. Stephen the Deacon and 1st Martyr**

He was the 1st of the 7 deacons in the "start up" Christian Church (Acts 7) who was stoned to death by the Jews, in 34 A.D. Tradition says that the Theotokos & St. John the Theologian witnessed the stoning.

## **Day 4 - Dec. 28 - 20,000 Martyrs of Nicomedia (men, women and children)**

An event in 302 AD when the wicked Emperor Maximian Hercules, while visiting in Nicomedia learned of the large number of Christians living there and devised a means to get rid of them. It was the days preceding Christmas that he visited so, on Christmas, as the Christians were in church....his soldier's surrounded the church, so no one could leave. The Emperor's envoy gave them a choice to deny Christ and offer sacrifice to the pagan idols, or, be burned to death. The congregation chose death (in fact catechumens were quickly baptized). The soldiers set fire on all 4 sides of the church and the building burned for 5 days The smoke had a fragrant scent and a golden light surrounded the church.

## **Day 5 - Dec 29 - 14,000 children of Bethlehem (Holy Innocents)**

King Herod was furious hearing from the wise men about a new born King in Bethlehem, and ordered that all the babies, 2 yrs and under to be killed in Bethlehem and the surrounding area. This occurred, 1 yr. after the birth. Herod sought out Zachariah's son, also newly born (John, who later became the Baptizer of Jesus) thinking that John would be the "New King". When Zachariah refused to hand over baby John, Herod killed Zachariah as he also killed Simeon who had received Christ as the 40 day old baby Jesus. Angered with the Jews in general – Herod also killed Hyrcanes, their high priest and 70 elders from the Sanhedrin (their council). Herod was so enraged that "someone" would take his position – he also killed own brother and sister, as well as his wife and 3 of his sons! What a crazed man!

## **Day 6 - Dec 30 - Deacon Timon (one of the 7 Deacons)**

Also counted as one of the 70 Apostles who became Bishop in Arabia. He died by crucifixion there in the third century (298AD). On the same day we have the martyrdom of St Anysia from Thessaloniki, born of wealthy and prominent parents. She was orphaned young. She assisted the poor and devoted herself to prayer and fasting. This was the time of Emperor Maximian Hercules again. One of his decrees was that anyone was free to kill Christians when and where they came across them, without trial or sentences. So as Anysia was out in the streets one day, a soldier approached her and confirmed through direct conversation with her, that she was a Christian. He ran her through with a knife under her rib and killed her. This was actually during the days that the pagans had their festival of the sun god (which ultimately became later on in history the date selected for the observance of Christ's Birth).

**Day 7 - Dec 31 - Nothing directly connected to Christmas per se, but 2 important figures of the 4th and 5th Century who witnessed greatly to Christian living.**

#### **4th Century - Martyr Zoticus, Protector of the Poor**

A priest in Constantinople, who had a home for the poor and those with infectious diseases. He was a close acquaintance of Emperor Constantine the Great. Constantine's son (Constantine) was jealous of all the money his dad gave to Zoticus to help the poor and the sick, that he tied Zoticus to the behind of a wild ass and he ultimately died of his wounds.

#### **5th Century - Holy Mother Melanie of Rome**

Born to wealthy parents, she was forced to marry a young nobleman. After having 2 children she convinced him that they should live as brother and sister. Their 2 children died some time later and they agreed to give their possessions to the poor and the church. They traveled as well to many far away places doing good works along the way. She ultimately became a nun at the Mt. of Olives in Jerusalem.

**Sunday After Christmas - Honor is given Joseph the Guardian (i.e. also called Righteous Joseph), David the King (the son of Jesse) and James the Brother of Our Lord,, the 1st bishop of Jerusalem.**

#### **Day 8 – Jan 1st - Circumcision and Naming of Jesus**

In observance of Jewish Law since the time of Abraham, Joseph and Mary took baby Jesus to the Temple for circumcision and he was also given the name "Jesus", the name announced to Mary at the time of the annunciation by Archangel Gabriel (Luke 1:31). This act of circumcision showed that Jesus took true human flesh upon Himself, (not its resemblance as heretics' would later say about him).

Also on Jan 1st, St. Basil the Great is remembered. Born around 330 A.D. under the reign of Constantine the Great. As an un-baptized person, Basil spent 19 years in Athens studying philosophy, rhetoric, astronomy and other secular disciplines. In his mature years, he was baptized in the Jordan River. He became ultimately Bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, died unfortunately young, at age 50. He was a great champion of the faith of moral purity and a great theological mind.

#### **Day 9 - Jan 2nd - St. Sylvester, Bishop of Rome**

At the age of 30 he was elected a bishop and served for 20 yrs/died in 335 A.D. He is the one attributed for bringing St. Helen to the Christian faith and ultimately King Constantine himself. He also is credited with "reforming" the Saturday fast (that it would not be a strict fast day) making only Holy Saturday a strict Saturday of fasting.

Jan. 2nd also remembers St. Theodota the mother of the brothers St. Cosmas and Damian, the unmercenary and miracle working doctors.

#### **Day 10 - Jan 3rd - Prophet Malachi (500 yrs. before Christ)**

Malachi, is the prophet who prophesied the coming and the mission of John the Baptist (Malachi 3:1). In fact there was no prophet between Malachi and John. Malachi also prophesied about the dread judgment, against ungrateful Israel and against the lawless Hebrew priests.

January 3rd also remembers Martyr Gordius. Born in Caesarea of Cappadocia/an officer in the Roman Army in the reign of Emperor Licinius. After the Army, he went to Sinai (to Mt. Horeb) in contemplation and prayer. He was stabbed to death in 320 A.D.

### **Day 11 - Jan 4th - Synaxis of the 70 Apostles**

This day honors these men, that Jesus also selected that followed the 12 Apostles (Luke 10:1-11), sending them out 2 by 2 going to every city before He himself has to go. This was similar to the Old Testament period in that Moses also had 70 elders that he appointed - Exodus 18:21, 22; 24:1. The 70 Apostles offered valuable service to Christ in those earliest of years as missionaries.

### **Day 12 - Jan 5th - Hieromartyr Theopemptos, Bishop of Nicomedia and also Martyr Theonas (a pagan magician)**

This was the era of Emperor Diocletian who persecuted Christians. When Theopemptos was brought before the Emperor, he responded to the Emperor's request to deny Christ, by quoting Scripture - (Matt 10:28) "Fear not them who kill the body, who are unable to kill the soul." Then he added - do unto my body as you please. Diocletian sent his magician to trick and outdo the bishop...when Theonas saw that even poison would not hurt the Bishop, he converted to Christ! Theopemptos was then beheaded 298 A.D. Theonas was buried alive 298 A.D.

### **The Glorious Observance of the Holy Baptism/Theophany of Our Lord**

Jan 5 - The Eve of the Feast of the Holy Theophany of Our Lord (Strict Fast)

Jan 6 - The Feast of the Holy Theophany of Our Lord

Jan 7 - Synaxis in honor of St John the Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist

Certainly, these 12 days are of great significance and should be known, honored and lived rightly.

## Parish Activities

### **PARISH COUNCIL**

The next meeting will be held on December 12 at 5:00 PM (via Zoom)

## **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

**(via Zoom) 4:00 PM – SATURDAY DECEMBER 19, 2020 – 4:00 PM (via Zoom)**

At their monthly meeting held on Saturday November 14, the Parish Council decided to postpone The Annual Parish Meeting until Saturday December 18 due to the fact of the COVID Pandemic and needing more time to properly prepare for our meeting. With this in mind, on Saturday December 19, following the Celebration of Great Vespers at 3:00 pm, we will be holding our Annual Parish Meeting **via Zoom** to review and discuss the life and mission of our beloved parish of St. George. As is our custom, all reports will be

emailed out and mailed out one week prior to our meeting to give everyone the opportunity ore reading them and reviewing them. We ask everyone to make every effort to read the reports and come to the meeting with our thoughts, ideas, questions. So that together, as a parish family, with one voice, one heart, and one mind, we may come together for the building up of The Body of Christ here at our beloved parish of St. George. Looking forward to coming together as a parish family on December 19 to review and discuss the life and mission of our beloved parish of St. George. If anyone has any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to see or contact Fr. Jason, Amil, or any member of the parish council.

**\*\* Nominations of Parish Council Officers/Financial Bookkeeper will take place at our Annual Parish Meeting in December. If anyone would like to run/be nominated for anyone of these positions (President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Bookkeeper, please see Fr. Jason or any member of the parish council. Also a written nomination must be presented to Fr. Jason prior to the December meeting of the parish council. Following the Annual Parish Meeting, we will be mailing out the Ballots as well as the proposed 2020 Annual Parish Budget to everyone for voting by mail-in ballot.**

## **CHURCH SCHOOL**

**Sunday December 6:** Youth Sunday  
Church School Q&A with Fr. Jay (The Acts of the Holy Apostles)

### **Christmas Gifts for Our Lady of Victory Children - due December 6**

- 1. Female - 3yrs. Tablet , pants/leggings/shirt- size 4T – color – blue or black – paw patrol or Dora toys** **Trinitee**
- 2. Female 15 yrs Nike outfit size large in beige/gray – belly button rings. **Julia****
- 3. Female 8 yrs – clothes size 8-10/favorite color baby blue. LOL surprise OMG, remix super surprise, earrings. **Allie Jayre****
- 4. Female 10 yrs, clothes size 10/12 purple/gray. Nike shoes size 3 anything LOL. **Jamie****
- 5. Male 17 yrs. Nike/Sabres clothing – men’s small, JBL Bluetooth speaker. **Ayden****
- 6. Male 10 yrs - call of duty video games, gold chain, fortnite, NBA sweatshirt **Nick****
- 7. Female 7 yrs – pants/leggings 6x or 7 – shirts size 7, LOL dolls – LOL house, Barbie house, baby dolls. **Breez****

8. Female-10 yrs - loves big baby dolls and baby alive w/food, pants/leggings size 10/12, shirts 10/12, baby doll items-clothing. **Desire**
9. Male 9yrs – shirts/pants size 8 wrestlers and rink, radio. **Mekhi**
- 10. Female** - 11yrs. Long sleeve black shirt – M/adult size, Leggings or jogging pants – M/adult size. loves art supplies, cheap led lights for bedroom. **Mekahla**
11. Male – 9yrs – New basketball/or football – Lamar Jackson poster. **Malakhi**
12. Male – 16yrs – any iPhone accessory (case, screen protector, speaker etc) Dick’s gift card. **Johnathan**
13. Female (DOB is unknown – she is less than 1) bubble bath solution, mobile/colored lights for bedroom decoration, crib blankets/sheets. **Aamara**
- 14. Male** – 1.5yrs – winter clothing – coat, pants, sweatshirts etc. any color – summer shorts any color. He weighs between 25-30 lbs. **Liam**
- 15. Male** – 3 months – neutral crib sheets, washcloths, stuffed animals, soft toys, teething ring. **Marshall**
- 16. Male** – 15 – MP3 player, basketball, **James**
17. Male – 12yrs – game stop gift card, Any X-box games, football. **Jacob**

### **New Pajamas Collection for Roswell Park - due December 13**

We will also be collecting New Pajamas for the patients at Roswell (adult men and women s-m-l/ children boys and girls s-m-l) as part of our care and compassion for the patients as they continue to receive treatment especially during this Christmas Season. Please bring the pajamas to Church no later than Sunday December 13<sup>th</sup> and place them in the bin located in the Parish Fellowship Hall. If anyone has any questions regarding the pajamas or cookies, please do not hesitate to let Fr. Jason know.

### To top off **Hearts for Homeless Cookies and Non-Perishable Items - due December 13**

our parish outreach ministry during this Holy Season, we will be collecting homemade Christmas Cookies as well as the following items (Canned Chili, Canned Beef Stew, Canned Kidney Beans, Canned Baked Beans, Canned Carrots, Canned Corn, Spaghetti Sauce) to be delivered to Hearts

for Homeless for their Annual Christmas Dinner. Please bring the cookies to Church no later than Sunday December 13<sup>th</sup> and place them in the bin located in the Parish Fellowship Hall.

Thank you for your continued love, prayerful support,, generosity, and stewardship not only for our parish but also for the community in which we live, serve, and dwell.

### **BIBLE STUDY**

Next Class - Monday, November 30 at 6:30 PM (Via Zoom). We are studying the Gospel According to Matthew. We will be starting Chapter 9.

### **BOOK CLUB**

Next Class - Monday, December 7 at 6:30 PM (Via Zoom). We are continuing our study of ***For the Life of the World*** by Alexander Schmemmann. We are reading Chapter 5: The Mystery of Love. The topic is Marriage

### **ADULT EDUCATION/CATECHUMENS' CLASS**

We will be offering a 4 part class on the Basics of Orthiodox Christianity

Next Class - Wednesday, December 2 & 16 at 7:15 PM (Via Zoom)Information will be sent out to everyone. Please tell our families, friends, neighbors and anyone who may be interested in learning more about The Orthodox Faith.

### **SISTERHOOD OF ST. GEORGE**

We will be collecting Christmas Cookies to donate to Hearts for the Homeless. Please bring your homemade cookies to church on December 13. We are looking for at least 2 dozen per donation. If anyone has any questions, please see or contact Barbara.

### **SEMINARIAN SPONSORSHIP**

Sbdn. Maximos, Michelle, and their daughter Madeline Gibson are being sponsored by the Parish. He is a 2nd Year Seminarian at St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary. The parish has committed to a monthly stipend of \$1,000.0. We also would like to send gift cards to them periodically. Local stores are Wegmans, Target, Walmart, Kohls. If anyone would like to contribute to our "Adopt a Seminarian Fund", please see or contact Fr. Jason or Barbara Kuvshinoff.

### **ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH PARISH CHRISTMAS CARD**

Last year, we began a new parish tradition with the sending of a Parish Christmas Card. The cost is only \$20 per family. The idea of sending a parish Christmas Card is to extend the greetings and prayerful best wishes of The Nativity of Our Lord to our families, friends, and neighbors.

If we would like to have our name in the Christmas Card, please fill out the form with how we would like our name to appear in the card and hand it in to Amil no later December 6 along with your payment of \$20.00. Besides our names, we will also have a Nativity Message and Greeting from our parish family.

Thank you for your continued generosity and support. Looking forward to seeing our Parish Christmas Card bring the joy, love, and peace of The Nativity of Our Lord to everyone!

May God continue to bless and guide all of you and your family.

## Good News Announcements

Got promoted? Birthday? Anniversary? Engagement? Any other announcements you would like to share with our parish family? Please send them to Fr. Jason so we can all rejoice with you.

## Up-Coming Events

### **THE LITURGICAL SERVICES FOR THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD GOD and SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO THE FLESH**

December 14-15-16-17 and 21	6:30 P.M..	The Little Compline Service
Wednesday	December 23	9:30 A.M. The Royal Hours
Thursday	December 24	9:00 A.M. Vespers with Liturgy of St. Basil 4:30 P.M. Festive Vigil Service
Friday	December 25	9:15 A.M. The Hours 9:30 A.M. Festive Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom Following Divine Liturgy, Parish Nativity Brunch in Parish Fellowship Hall or "On-The-Go" Christmas Care Package

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> Day of the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord (Synaxis of The Theotokos)**

Saturday	December 26	9:30 A.M. Festal Divine Liturgy 4:00 P.M. Great Vespers
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#### **3<sup>rd</sup> Day of the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord (Feast of St. Stephen the Protomartyr)**

Sunday	December 27	9:30 A.M. Festal Divine Liturgy Following Divine Liturgy, Parish Nativity Brunch in Parish Fellowship Hall or "On-The-Go" Christmas Care Package
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## **PARISH SHUT-INS**

As we say our daily prayers, let us also take time out to remember our loved ones who are homebound, who are in hospitals and who are in nursing homes. Let us remember them that GOD will continue to watch over them and protect them. Also, during the Year, let us take to either send them a card, give them a call, or visit them to let them know how much we love them, how much we remember them, and how much we pray for them.

If anyone has any questions or would like to add someone to our List of Parish Shut-Ins, please see or contact Fr. Jason.

Mr. Albert Fadell  
317.376.2562

Mrs. Luba Japadjief  
Elderwood Nursing Home (Memory Care Unit)  
245 Bassett Road  
Williamsville, NY 14221

Mrs. Diane Salvamoser  
147 West Hazeltine Avenue  
Kenmore, NY 14217  
716.875.9503

Reader Victor Shanchuk  
495 Lafayette Avenue  
Buffalo, NY 14222  
716.881.3096

Mrs. Catherine Tony  
274 Wadsworth Ave.  
Tonawanda, NY 14150  
716.695.3068

Mr. Andrew Wityk  
Ellicott Center  
200 Seventh Street  
Buffalo, NY 14201

### **ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH BOOKSTORE**

When you are in the Parish Fellowship Hall for coffee hour, don't forget to check out our Bookstore. We have some new items that just arrived. These items include icon ornaments, jewelry, icons, prayer books, prayer ropes, and much more. If you need a gift, come check out the bookstore.... you may find something you like!! We are also offering gift certificates for our bookstore. Please speak with Dave or Andrea for more details/information. We thank David and Andrea who are managing our bookstore for us. If you have any questions or if you would like to order something that you do not see, please see or contact Dave or Andrea and they will be able to assist you. You may also email them at [bookstore@stgeorgebuffalo.com](mailto:bookstore@stgeorgebuffalo.com). May God continue to bless and guide all of you.

### **ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH GIVING TREE**

Please be sure to check out "The Giving Tree" in the Parish Fellowship Hall to see how we may be able to donate towards the needs of our parish through our continued support and stewardship for our beloved parish. This is also located on our parish website: [stgeorgebuffalo.com](http://stgeorgebuffalo.com).

If anyone has any questions, please see or contact Fr. Jason or Barbara.

Thank you for your continued prayerful support and stewardship.  
May God continue to bless and guide all of you, your families and our entire Parish family and keep all of us in His Loving Care!

## Our Parish Outreach Missions:

**PUSH Buffalo** is a local Charity Organization that helps supports the needs of families:

[Donate Now | PUSH Mutual Aid Response to COVID-19 by PUSH Buffalo](#)

### **HEARTS FOR THE HOMELESS**

There are over 400 red bins located throughout the area. The organization collects items to sell in the thrift store as well as items that can be recycled. With the money earned, they provide meals for the homeless of Buffalo from their mobile soup kitchen as well as a food pantry open to local families. They also are in need of donations of food for the soup kitchen and food pantry.

In the spirit of outreach and almsgiving, the Sisterhood of St. George will be coordinating a monthly food drive to support Hearts for the Homeless, which is a mobile soup kitchen/thrift shop that feeds the poor and chronic homeless on the street. Characterized by a profound spiritual motivation, the program offers nourishing food, as well as clothing, pertinent information regarding area services, companionship and hope for the future. The website is <http://heartsforthehomeless.org>

Each month we will request a specific non-perishable food item or items that will be taken to the Hearts location at the end of the month. Items will be placed in a designated bin in the community center. How can you participate? It's easy! When you do your grocery shopping just pick up the monthly Hearts item and bring it to church and place it in the bin. We'll make sure it gets to the soup kitchen for Hearts to use.

### **HOMESPACE**

The mission of Homespace is to provide not only transitional housing, but also provide support programs to help families in need break away from dependency and begin a new life of personal growth and economic independence. Homespace provides affordable housing for young (ages 16 - 21), homeless, single parent families.

HomeSpace is a local community organization ministering to local teens and pre-teen moms which provides comprehensive care to 14-21 yr old moms (providing those essential items necessary for caring for their children: diapers, wipes, baby food, clothing (infants through 7/8 years old). Homespace Corporation supports at-risk young women to achieve independence two generations at a time. We have begun a partnership with HomeSpace as part of our continued on-going outreach parish ministry. For more information about HomeSpace, please visit their website: <http://www.homespacecorp.org>

### **BUFFALO CITY MISSION**

We have our on-going collection for The Buffalo City Mission which exists to meet the spiritual and practical needs of the poor through the demonstration of the love and preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in providing love, care, shelter, food, and other means necessary to those in need. This organization provides meals, shelter, and services to the homeless. They are looking for donations of canned goods and other non-perishable food as well as hygiene products, feminine products, socks, underwear, undershirts, etc). Items may be brought and placed in the bin located in the Parish Fellowship Hall. For more information about Buffalo City Mission, please visit their website: [www.buffalocitymission.org](http://www.buffalocitymission.org)

## **KEVIN GUEST HOUSE**

We provide monthly dinners to the residents and families who are here in the Buffalo Area receiving medical treatment at our local hospitals. If anyone is interested in helping out and assisting with this monthly ministry project by providing the earthly foods as well as the spiritual foods alongside Fr. Jason, please see or contact him. For more information about Kevin Guest House, please visit their website: <https://kevinquesthouse.com>

## **MATS FOR MISSION**

We collect, sort, and plarn plastic bags into secure, heavy, weather resistant sleeping mats for our brothers and sisters in need here in The Buffalo Area.

For more information about Mats for Mission, please visit their Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1731479957104391>

## Diocesan Ministries

### **AN INVITATION TO SUPPORT THE STEWARDS OF THE OCA**

The Orthodox Church in America (OCA) set the direction for expanding our apostolic work in North America at the 18<sup>th</sup> All-American Council. The foundation for this work is Jesus Christ, Whom we encounter in our spiritual lives, stewardship, evangelism and outreach, and relations with others as we engage the world. Being a steward of the OCA goes beyond the financial gifts which support the work of our church. Being a steward is about caring for and knowing the history of the mission of the Orthodox Church here in North America and finding your place in that history. Having received this great gift of our Orthodox Faith, we bear the responsibility to continue the legacy of Saint Herman and Saint Tikhon; Saint Innocent and Saint Alexis and all the other saints known and unknown who have worked to build up and expand Christ's Church here in North America. Please consider being a part of that mission today by giving to the Stewards of the OCA. For more information, please visit The OCA Website: <https://oca.org/become-a-steward>

### **AN INVITATION TO SUPPORT THE MINISTRY OF THE DDB**

In order to fund necessary ministries and fulfill the work of the Church in the Diocese of New York and New Jersey, **Distinguished Diocesan Benefactors** generously contribute financial support. To learn more about the DDB, please go to the following link: <http://vimeo.com/71021182> and watch a 60 second video inviting you to join the ever-growing list of Distinguished Diocesan Benefactors of The Diocese of New York and New Jersey who joyfully support the on-going work of our diocese. Their support allows us to provide assistance to new mission parishes, scholarships to seminarians, support the departments of The Diocese, and much-needed encouragement to older struggling parishes. How about you? Our parish is a member of the DDB. If anyone would like to join, please see Fr. Jason as well as take a pamphlet from the table in the back of the church. May God continue to bless and guide you for your continued support.

### **MONTHLY PUBLICATIONS**

The Diocese of New York and New Jersey has two monthly newsletters: **"First Fruits"** and **"Beyond the Plateau."** The goal, as expressed by Archbishop Michael, is to increase communication and grow the communal spirit of diocesan fellowship in the building-up and strengthening of our parish communities. To learn more about these monthly diocesan publications, please refer to the diocesan website: <http://www.nynjoca.org/newsletters.html>.

**"LESSONS IN OUR FAITH" VIDEO PRESENTED BY HIS EMINENCE ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL**

His Eminence Archbishop Michael presents a series of talks on matters of faith, belief, and the teachings of the Church. These instructional videos are concise and to the point, offering Orthodox Christians much-needed information, helpful advice for their spiritual journey, and assistance in answering questions that may come from non-Orthodox friends or acquaintances. The goal is that we might better know and better live our faith. These instructional videos can be found at the Diocesan Website: <http://www.nynjoca.org>! **There are 14 videos! Be sure to check them out.**

# St. George Orthodox Church December 2020 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 9 am Matins	2  6:00 pm Little Compline  6:30 pm  Inquirer's Class (via Zoom)	3 9 am Akathist Service	4	5 <b>Eve of the Feast of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker</b>  4 pm Great Vespers with Litiya
6 <b>Feast of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker</b>  9:15 am The Hours 9:30 am Divine Liturgy  Church School Q&A with Fr. Jay via Google Classroom (12:30-1:30 pm)	7	8  9 am Matins	9  6:00 pm Little Compline	10  9 am Akathist Service	11	12  4 pm Great Vespers  5 pm Parish Council Meeting via Zoom

<p>13</p> <p><b>Feast fo the Repost of St. Herman</b></p> <p>9:15 am Hours 9:30 am Divine Liturgy</p> <p>Church School via Google Classroom (12:30-1:30 pm)</p> <p>Pajamas for Roswell, Cookies for Hearts for Homeless, and Christmas gifts due today</p>	<p>14</p> <p>6:00 pm Little Compline Service</p>	<p>15</p> <p>9 am Matins 6 pm Little Compline Service</p>	<p>16</p> <p>6 pm Little Compline Service</p>	<p>17</p> <p>9 am Akathist 6 pm Little Compline Service</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p> <p>3 pm Great Vespers 4 pm Annual Parish Meeting via Zoom</p>
<p>20</p> <p>9:10 am Service of General Confession 9:30 am Divine Liturgy</p> <p>Church School via Google Classroom (12:30-1:30 pm)</p>	<p>21</p> <p>6:00 pm Little Compline Service</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p> <p>9:30 AM Royal Hours</p>	<p>24</p> <p><b>Eve of the Feast of Our Lord and Savior According to the Flesh</b></p> <p>9 am Vespers with Liturgy of St. Basil 4:30 Festal Vigil Service</p>	<p>25</p> <p><b>Nativity of Our Lord and Savior According to the Flesh</b></p> <p>9:30 am Festal Divine Liturgy</p>	<p>26</p> <p><b>Synaxis of The Theotokos</b></p> <p>9:30 am Festal Divine Liturgy 4 pm Great Vespers</p>

<p>27</p> <p><b>Feast of St. Stephen</b></p> <p>9:15 am Hours 9:30 am Divine Liturgy</p> <p>Church School via Google Classroom (12:30-1:30 pm)</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p><b>Eve of the Feast of the Circumcision of Our Lord/ St. Basil's Feast Day/ New Year's Eve</b></p> <p>4pm Great Vespers with Litiya</p>	<p>1</p> <p><b>Feast of the Circumcision of Our Lord/ St. Basil's Feast Day/ New Year's Day</b></p> <p>9:30 am Divine Liturgy followed by Moleben for the New Year and Blessing of St. Basil Bread</p>	<p>2</p> <p>4pm Great Vespers</p>
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