

SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

605 Washington Avenue, Manville, New Jersey 08835-1856

Voice: 908-685-1452 / fax: 908-685-1074 Email: frjames@ssppoc.org

Parish Website: www.ssppoc.org Diocese of NY-NJ: www.nynjoca.org

Face Book: "Friends of Ss. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church"

BULLETIN OF DECEMBER 21, 2014

SUNDAY/DECEMBER 21

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour; Church School
5:30p.m. Compline; Confession

MONDAY/DECEMBER 22

3:00p.m. Confessions
7:00p.m. Compline; Confessions

TUESDAY/DECEMBER 23

7:00p.m. Compline; Confessions

WEDNESDAY/DECEMBER 24

Eve of Nativity

9:30a.m. Royal Hours
4:00p.m. Vigil of the Nativity

THURSDAY/DECEMBER 25

Nativity of our lord Jesus Christ (One of "the 12 Great Feasts of the Year")

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
6:30p.m. Vespers

FRIDAY/DECEMBER 26

Synaxis of the Holy Theotokos

9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy

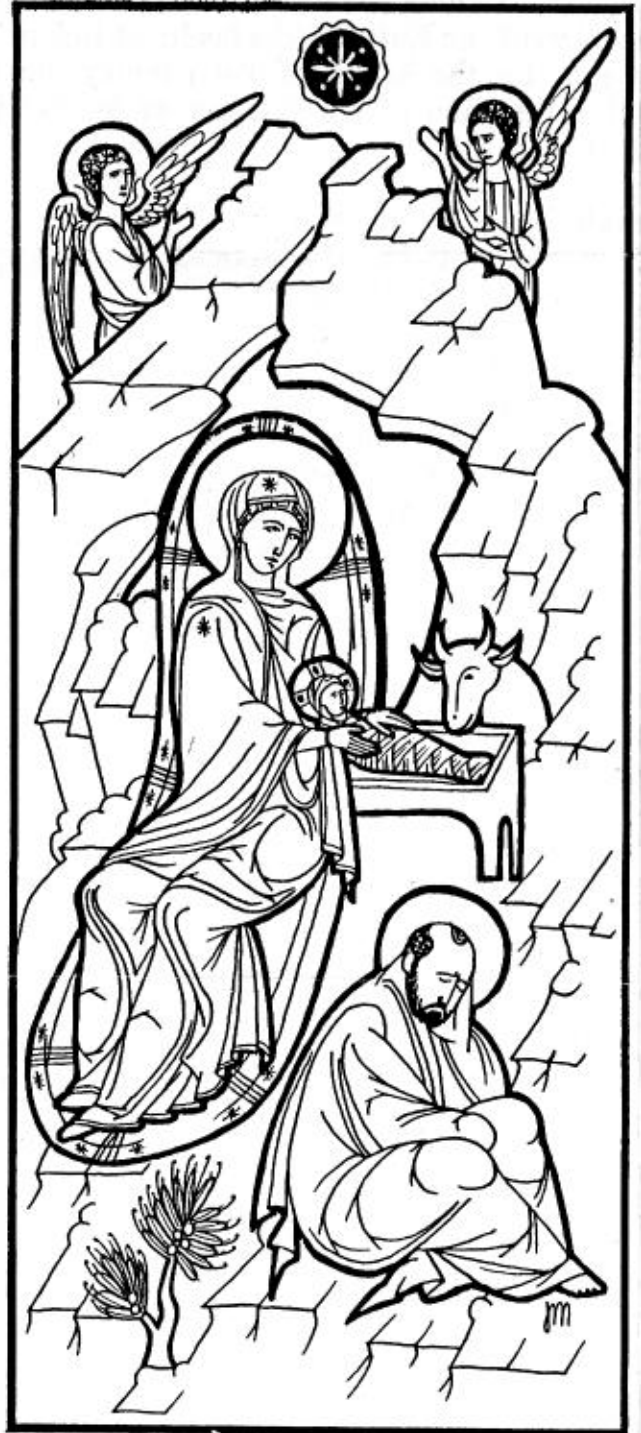
SATURDAY/DECEMBER 27

St. Stephen, the Proto-Martyr

9:30a.m. Akathist to Nativity; Confessions
5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions

SUNDAY/DECEMBER 28

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour and Caroling



Offerings Week of December 21

Olive Oil: in memory of Michael, Rosalia, Justina Anastasia, Anna and Anna; in memory of Vaschen and Emilia; for the health of John and Liam (birthdays); for the health and protection of John and Vera.

Wine: for health, protection and salvation of Marianna, Simona, Gabriel, Gabriella, Maria-Diana, David and Kurt; for the health of Helen.

Flowers: for the health of Turri family; for the health, protection of parishioners of Ss. Peter & Paul Church.

Parish Synodicon: Memory Eternal!

Dec. 21, 1946 Helen Semoskovich
Dec. 21, 1997 Nadia Marchuk
Dec. 21, 2006 Nicholas Chabra
Dec. 23, 1950 Gregory Persurance
Dec. 23, 1989 Peter Kozura
Dec. 23, 1991 Olga Barna
Dec. 24, 1946 Steven Holovach
Dec. 24, 1947 Catherine Hriniak
Dec. 24, 1961 Sophie O'Commell
Dec. 24, 1978 Anna Martinchuk
Dec. 25, 1990 Alexander Kuntzevich
Dec. 25, 1991 Helen Wislosky
Dec. 26, 1980 Jerry Russo
Dec. 26, 2004 Douglas Rose
Dec. 27, 1989 Mary George

Coffee Hour Hosts

Dec. 21 Sarchisian, Dunaenko & Wypych
Dec. 28 Peterson, Bakaletz, Mattei

Usher Schedule

Dec. 21 Dennis F. & Charles D.
Dec. 28 Edward S., Adrian M., & Kahka K.

2015 Parish Wall Calendars

The calendars are on a table in the back of the church. Please, only 1 calendar per household.

Names Day Greetings

Many Blessed Years!

Dec. 22/St. Anastasia: Anastasia Mickel and Anastasia Kita
Dec. 24/St. Eugenia: Joan Bongiorno
Dec. 27/St. Stephen: Stephanie Kachek

2015 Home Blessing Season

The Blessing of Homes will be from January 7th thru February 20th. If you wish to have your home blessed please arrange this with Father James.

2015 Schedule of Services & Events

Our Parish website has posted the full anticipated schedule of services and events Jan. thru June.

The Holy Nativity Lent of 40 Days

- Began on Nov. 15th and ends after the Divine Liturgy on Dec. 25th.
- Your Parish Wall Calendar indicates days when the fasting is lessened by usage of fish, wine or oil. Otherwise a fast is observed from meat, dairy and fish.
- The discipline for receiving Holy Communion on the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord, Dec. 25th, requires a **recent Confession** in the time period of Nov. or Dec. before Nativity Feast, Dec. 25th.
Dec. 21/Sun Wine & oil
Dec. 22/Mon
Dec. 23/Tue Wine & oil
Dec. 24/Wed
Dec. 25/Thur. The Nativity Fast ends after the Divine Liturgy and there is no fasting until Monday, Jan. 5, 2015, the Eve of the Theophany.

Increase Adjustments beginning in 2015

The Parish Council being mindful of the increases in purchasing costs of candles, wine, flowers and olive oil had determined new 2015 prices. Small Candle (\$3), large candle (\$4), Olive Oil (\$7) Wine (\$15) and flowers (\$25).

Winter Weather Conditions

Due to weather it may be necessary to make changes in the parish schedule of services, meetings, events, etc. Necessitated changes will be posted at least 1 hour prior to what time had been scheduled. Notifications will be found on 1) the Parish Email (subscribe on the parish website); 2) on the Parish Website Calendar; 3) on Face Book: "Friends of Ss. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church." If you are not into "social media," please arrange with a parishioner who is, so that they can alert you.



ON THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

By Metropolitan Hierotheos Vlachos

The Birth of Christ is a historical event, because it took place at a specific moment in history, when Caesar Augustus was Emperor in Rome and Herod was ruler of Judea. The Evangelists insist on emphasizing the historicity of the event, because they want to say that Christ is a historical person. This means that Christ assumed real human flesh, and the Incarnation was not merely seeming or imagined.

In spite of its historicity, this event remains a mystery. We know that the Godman, perfect God and perfect man, exists, but it remains a mystery how the divine nature united with human nature in the person of the Logos. Moreover, what happened to the person of Christ, that the divine nature was united hypostatically with human nature, happened just once. Therefore St. John of Damascus said that Christ is “the only new thing under the sun.” This means that since the creation of the world and man, nothing new has happened in the world. Everything is repeated [according to the natural order and rules which govern the universe]. The [successive] birth of human beings is a consequence and result of God’s words: “Let us make man in our image and likeness”, and “Be fruitful and multiple; fill the earth and subdue it” (Gen. 1:26-28). The only new thing is the Godman Christ.

Thus the fact that the event is historical does not remove the mystery, but also the mystery does not do away with the historicity. At Christmas we celebrate the birth of Christ, but at the same time we experience mysteriously in our hearts all the events connected with it, for when we are alive in the Church, we are participating in and experiencing all the stages of the divine Incarnation.



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!



WISDOM FROM THE FATHERS

On Prayer: There is a voice of the heart and a language of the heart. This inner voice is our prayer when our lips are closed and our soul is open before God. We remain silent and our heart speaks—not to human ears, but to God. You can be sure that God will hear you.

St. Augustine (4th century)

On Charity: Lift up and stretch out your hands, not to heaven, but to the poor; for if you stretch out your hands to the poor, you have reached the summit of heaven. But if you lift up your hands in prayer without sharing with the poor, it is worth nothing... Every family should have a room where Christ is welcomed in the person of the hungry and thirsty stranger. The poor are a greater temple than the sanctuary; this altar the poor, you can raise up anywhere, on any street, and offer the liturgy at any hour.

St. John Chrysostom (4th century)

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!

TWO QUESTIONS WE NEED TO ASK ABOUT THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

by St. John of Kronstadt (+1907)

Why did God become Man While Remaining God? The answer to this may be found in the words of the Archangel to Joseph, the betrothed of the Holy Virgin: God became man to save “His people from their sin” (Matthew 1:21). For this reason He is called Jesus, which means “Saviour.” And so, it was for our salvation that the Lord came to earth and became man, for the regeneration in us of the image of God which had fallen. The Son of God became the Son of Man in order to make us sons of God who were called the children of wrath and eternal damnation. In the words of the Apostle John the Theologian: that we should be called the sons of God (1 John 3:1); “Now God became man, that He may make Adam a god” (Stichera for the praises of the Annunciation). And so, my brethren, the Feast of the Nativity of Christ reminds us that we are born of God, that we are sons of God, that we have been saved from sin and that we must live for God and not for sin; not for flesh and blood, not for the world which lies in evil (1 John 5:19), not for earthly corruption, but for an inheritance incorruptible reserved in heaven.

What does God’s Incarnation require of us?

As we prepare for the feast of the Nativity of Christ, you must ask yourself:

Have you preserved the spiritual birth from God which we each received in Baptism?

Are you always heedful to the divine sonship and the sacred treasure of the Spirit which you acquired in Baptism?

Have you loved one another as befits the children of God?

Have you grown closer to God through faith and love, like His beloved children?

Have you despised evil and all-destructive sin?

Have you loved truth and every virtue?

Have you loved immortal and eternal life prepared in a land which will not pass away and to which we are called by Him Who now has come to our corrupt earth? These are the questions we must ask ourselves now and decide; not only with our minds, but above all, with our hearts and our very deeds. The Nativity of Christ requires of us to remember and hold in sacred honor the fact that we are born of God; and if we have sullied and trampled upon this birthright with our sins; we must restore it by washing it with tears of repentance. The Feast requires of us mutual love, humility, that we may help one another; for how can we not love one another when we see the love of God for us. Like the Wise Men, let us brothers also prepare gifts for the new-born King. Instead of gold, frankincense and myrrh, let us bring Him the Gifts of faith, hope and love.