

# Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church

Albanian Archdiocese - OCA

9230 Old Bustleton Avenue

Philadelphia, PA 19115

215-676-3311

Rev. Nicholas Dellermann – Rector (860-861-7468)

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24**

**Sunday of the Holy Fathers**

**Sunday Before the Nativity of Christ, Nun-Martyr Eugenia of Rome**

**Tone 4  
Troparion  
(Resurrection)**

*When the women disciples of the Lord learned from the angel the joyous message of Thy Resurrection, they cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the apostles: "Death is overthrown! Christ God is risen, granting the world great mercy!"*

**Tone 2  
Troparion  
(Holy Fathers)**

*Great are the accomplishments of faith, for the three Holy Youths rejoice in the fountain of flames as though in the waters of rest; and the Prophet Daniel appeared a shepherd to the lions as though they were sheep. So by their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls!*

**Tone 2  
Troparion  
(Forefeast)**

*Mary was of David's seed, so she went with Joseph to register in Bethlehem. She bore in her womb the Fruit not sown by man. The time for the birth was at hand. Since there was no room at the inn, the cave became a beautiful palace for the Queen. Christ is born, raising up the image that fell of old.*

**Tone 1  
Kontakion  
(Holy Fathers)**

*Rejoice, O Bethlehem! Prepare thyself, O Ephratha! The Lamb is on her way to give birth to the Chief Shepherd she carries in her womb. The God-bearing Forefathers will rejoice, beholding Him, and with the shepherds, they will glorify the Virgin nursing Him.*

**Tone 3  
Kontakion  
(Forefeast)**

*Today the Virgin comes to the cave to give birth to the Eternal Word. Hear the glad tidings and rejoice, O universe! Glorify with the angels and the shepherds the Eternal God, Who is willing to appear as a little child!*

↻ **Prokeimenon** ↻

**Tone 4 (Holy Fathers)**

Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers, / and praised and glorified is Thy Name forever!

*(Song of the Three Holy Children, v. 3)*

V. For Thou art just in all that Thou hast done for us! *(v. 4)*

## The Epistle Reading

### **Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40**

By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense. By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff. By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones. By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command. And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented – of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

### **Hebrenjve 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40**

Me anë të besimit shkoi e banoi në tokën e premtuar si në tokë të huaj, edhe banoi në tenda, bashkë me Isakun e me Jakovin bashkëtrashëgimtarët e po atij premtimi; sepse priste qytetin që kishte themele, mjeshtër edhe krijues i të cilit është Perëndia. Me anë të besimit Abrahami, kur provohej, pruri Isakun për theror; dhe ai që pati pritur premtimet pruri për theror birin e tij të vetëmlindur, për të cilin qe folur: "Se në Isakun do të quhet fara jote"; duke menduar se Perëndia mund të ngjallë edhe prej së vdekurish, prej të cilëve edhe e mori atë prapë simbolikisht. Me anë të besimit Isaku bekoi Jakovin dhe Esaun për punët që do të vinin. Me anë të besimit Jakovi duke vdekur bekoi secilin prej bijve të Josifit, "edhe u fal duke u mbështetur mbi majën e shkopit të tij". Me anë të besimit Josifi duke vdekur përmendi për daljen e bijve të Izraelit nga Egjipti, edhe porositi për eshtrat e tij. Me anë të besimit Moisiu, si lindi, u fsheh tre muaj prej prindërve të tij, sepse panë se djali ishte i bukur; edhe nuk u trembën nga urdhri i mbretit. Edhe ç'të them më? Sepse nuk do të më arrijë koha të tregoj për Gedeonin, për Barakun e Samsonin, edhe Jeftanë, për Davidin e Samuilin dhe profetët, të cilët me anë të besimit mundën mbretëri, punuan drejtësi, fituan premtime, mbyllën gojë luanësh, shuan fuqinë e zjarrit, shpëtuan nga tehu i thikës, morën fuqi nga dobësitë, u bënë të fortë në luftë, thyen ushtritë e të huajve. Gra morën të vdekurit e tyre të ngjallur; edhe të tjerë u munduan, sepse nuk pranuan shpëtimin, që të fitonin një ngjallje më të mirë. Edhe të tjerë u provuan me të përqeshura e me të rrahura, po edhe me të lidhura e me burgime. U vranë me gurë, u sharruan më dysh, u nganë, vdiqën të vranë prej shpate; endeshin lart e poshtë veshur me lëkurë dhensh, e me lëkurë dhish, në nevojë, në shtrëngime, në keqtrajtime, ata për të cilët bota nuk ishte e denjë; – duke u endur nëpër shkretëtira e nëpër male e nëpër shpella e nëpër vrimat e dheut. Edhe këta të gjithë, ndonëse morën dëshmi të mirë me anë të besimit, nuk morën premtimin, sepse Perëndia pati urdhëruar që përpara një gjë më të mirë për ne, që të mos bëhen të përsosur pa ne.

### **К Евреям 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40**

Верою обитал он на земле обетованной, как на чужой, и жил в шатрах с Исааком и Иаковом, сонаследниками того же обетования; ибо он ожидал города, имеющего основание, которого художник и строитель Бог. Верою Авраам, будучи искушаем, принес в жертву Исаака и, имея обетование, принес едиnorodного, о котором было сказано: в Исааке наречется тебе семья. Ибо он думал, что Бог силен и из мертвых воскресить, почему и получил его в предзнаменование. Верою в будущее Исаак благословил Иакова и Исава. Верою Иаков, умирая, благословил каждого сына Иосифова и поклонился на верх жезла

своего. Верю Иосиф, при кончине, напоминал об исходе сынов Израилевых и завещал о костях своих. Верю Моисей по рождении три месяца скрывается был родителями своими, ибо видели они, что дитя прекрасно, и не устрашились царского повеления. И что еще скажу? Недостанет мне времени, чтобы повествовать о Гедеоне, о Вараке, о Самсоне и Иеффе, о Давиде, Самуиле и (других) пророках, которые верю побеждали царства, творили правду, получали обетования, заграждали уста львов, угашали силу огня, избегали острия меча, укреплялись от немощи, были крепки на войне, прогоняли полки чужих; жены получали умерших своих воскресшими; иные же замучены были, не приняв освобождения, дабы получить лучшее воскресение; другие испытали поругания и побои, а также узы и темницу, были побиваемы камнями, перепиливаемы, подвергаемы пытке, умирали от меча, скитались в милотях и козых кожах, терпя недостатки, скорби, озлобления; те, которых весь мир не был достоин, скитались по пустыням и горам, по пещерам и ущельям земли. И все сии, свидетельствованные в вере, не получили обещанного, потому что Бог предусмотрел о нас нечто лучшее, дабы они не без нас достигли совершенства.

#### **Tone 4**

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

V. We have heard with our ears, O God, for our fathers have told us. *(Ps. 43:1a)*

V. For Thou hast saved us from them that oppose us, and hast put to shame them that hate us. *(Ps. 43:8)*

### **Nun-Martyr Eugenia of Rome**



The Holy Martyr Eugenia, was a Roman by birth. She lived at Alexandria, where her father Philip was sent by the emperor Commodus (180-192) to be Prefect of Egypt. Eugenia received a fine upbringing and was noted for her beauty and good disposition. Many illustrious youths sought her hand, but she did not wish to marry anyone, for she was determined to preserve her virginity.

Providentially, she became acquainted with the Epistles of the Apostle Paul. She yearned with all her soul to become a Christian, but kept this a secret from her parents. At that time, Christians were banished from Alexandria by the command of the emperor. Wishing to learn more about Christian teachings, she asked permission to visit one of the family estates outside the city, supposedly to enjoy the countryside. She left in the company of her two servants Protus and Hyacinthus, dressed in men's clothes. She and her companions were baptized at a certain monastery by Bishop Elias (July 14), who learned about her in a vision. He blessed her to pursue asceticism at the monastery disguised as the monk Eugene.

By her ascetic labors, Saint Eugenia acquired the gift of healing.

Once, a rich young woman named Melanthia turned to her for help. Seeing "Eugene," this woman burned with an impure passion, and when she was spurned, she falsely accused the saint of attempted rape. Saint Eugenia came to trial before the Prefect of Egypt (her father), and she was forced to reveal her secret. Her parents and brothers rejoiced to find the one for whom they had long grieved.

After a while they all accepted holy Baptism. But Philip, after being denounced by pagans, was dismissed from his post. The Alexandrian Christians chose him as their bishop. The new Prefect, fearing the wrath of the people, did not dare to execute Philip openly, but sent assassins to kill him. They inflicted wounds upon Saint Philip while he was praying, from which he died three days later.

Saint Claudia went to Rome with her sons, daughter, and her servants. There Saint Eugenia continued

## The Gospel Reading

### **Matthew 1:1-25**

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham: Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brothers. Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Ram. Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon. Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David the king. David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah. Solomon begot Rehoboam, Rehoboam begot Abijah, and Abijah begot Asa. Asa begot Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat begot Joram, and Joram begot Uzziah. Uzziah begot Jotham, Jotham begot Ahaz, and Ahaz begot Hezekiah. Hezekiah begot Manasseh, Manasseh begot Amon, and Amon begot Josiah. Josiah begot Jeconiah and his brothers about the time they were carried away to Babylon. And after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, and Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel begot Abiud, Abiud begot Eliakim, and Eliakim begot Azor. Azor begot Zadok, Zadok begot Achim, and Achim begot Eliud. Eliud begot Eleazar, Eleazar begot Matthan, and Matthan begot Jacob. And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, from David until the captivity in Babylon are fourteen generations, and from the captivity in Babylon until the Christ are fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins." So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which is translated, 'God with us.'" Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.

### **Mattheut 1:1-25**

Libri i gjenealogjisë së Jisu Krishtit, të birit të Davidit, të birit të Abrahamit. Abrahamit i lindi Isaaku; edhe Isaakut i lindi Jakovi; edhe Jakovit i lindi Juda dhe vëllezërit e tij. Edhe Judës i lindi Faresi dhe Zarai nga Tamara; edhe Faresit i lindi Arami. Edhe Aramit i lindi Aminadabi; edhe Aminadabit i lindi Nasoni; edhe Nasonit i lindi Salmoni. Edhe Salmonit i lindi Bozi nga Rahaba; edhe Vozit i lindi Ovidi nga Ruthi; edhe Ovidit i lindi Jeseu; Edhe Jeseut i lindi Davidi, mbreti. Edhe mbretit David i lindi Solomoni nga gruaja e Uriut. Edhe Solomonit i lindi Roboami; edhe Roboamit i lindi Abiai; edhe Abiait i lindi Asai. Edhe Asait i lindi Josafati; edhe Josafatit i lindi Jorami; edhe Joramit i lindi Ozia. Edhe Ozisë i lindi Joatami; edhe Joatamit i lindi Akazi; edhe Akazit i lindi Ezekia. Edhe Ezekisë i lindi Manasiu; edhe Manasiut i lindi Amoni; edhe Amonit i lindi Josia. Edhe Josisë i lindi Jehonia dhe vëllezërit e tij, në kohën e shpërnguljes në Babiloni. Edhe pas shpërnguljes në Babiloni, Jehonisë i lindi Salatieli; edhe Salatielit i lindi Zorobabeli. Edhe Zorobabelit i lindi Abiudi; edhe Abiudit i lindi Eliakimi; edhe Eliakimit i lindi Azori. Edhe Azorit i lindi Sadoku; edhe Sadokut i lindi Akimi; edhe Akimit i lindi Eliudi. Edhe Eliudit i lindi Eleazari; edhe Eleazarit i lindi Matani; edhe Matanit i lindi Jakovi. Edhe Jakovit i lindi Josifi, burri i Marisë, prej së cilës lindi Jisui që thuhet Krisht. Gjithë brezat pra, që nga Abrahami e deri te Davidi, janë katërbëdhjetë breza; edhe që nga Davidi e deri në shpërnguljen në Babiloni katërbëdhjetë breza; edhe nga shpërngulja në Babiloni e deri te Krishti katërbëdhjetë breza. Edhe lindja e Jisu Krishtit kështu ishte: Pasi u fejua e ëma e tij, Maria, me Josifin, përpara se të bashkoheshin, u gjend me barrë nga Fryma e Shenjtë. Edhe Josifi, burri i saj, duke qenë i drejtë, e duke mos dashur t'i nxjerrë asaj zë të lig, deshi ta linte fshehurazi. Po ndërsa ai ishte duke menduar këto, ja një engjëll i Zotit tek iu duk në ëndërr, duke thënë: Josif, bir i Davidit, mos u frikëso të marrësh me vete gruan tënde Mariamin; sepse mbarsja që u bë tek ajo është nga Fryma e Shenjtë. Edhe do të lindë djalë edhe do t'ia quash emrin Jisu; sepse ai do të shpëtojë popullin e tij nga mëkatet e tyre. Edhe gjithë kjo u bë, që të përmbushet e thëna prej Zotit me anë të profetit, që thotë: "Ja virgjëresha tek do të mbarset, edhe do të lindë djalë, edhe do t'ia quash emrin Emanuel", që e përkthyer do me thënë, Perëndia bashkë me ne. Edhe Josifi, si u zgjua nga gjumi, bëri siç e urdhëroi engjëlli i Zotit, edhe mori pranë vetes gruan e tij. Edhe nuk e njohu atë, derisa lindi të birin e saj, të parëlindurin; edhe ia quajti emrin Jisu.

## От Матфея 1:1-25

Родословие Иисуса Христа, Сына Давидова, Сына Авраамова. Авраам родил Исаака; Исаак родил Иакова; Иаков родил Иуду и братьев его; Иуда родил Фареса и Зару от Фамари; Фарес родил Есрома; Есром родил Арама; Арам родил Аминадава; Аминадав родил Наассона; Наассон родил Салмона; Салмон родил Вооза от Рахавы; Вооз родил Овида от Руфи; Овид родил Иессея; Иессей родил Давида царя; Давид царь родил Соломона от бывшей за Уриею; Соломон родил Ровоама; Ровоам родил Авию; Авия родил Асу; Аса родил Иосафата; Иосафат родил Иорама; Иорам родил Озию; Озия родил Иоафама; Иоафам родил Ахаза; Ахаз родил Езекию; Езекия родил Манассию; Манассия родил Амона; Амон родил Иосию; Иосия родил Иоакима; Иоаким родил Иехонию и братьев его, перед переселением в Вавилон. По переселении же в Вавилон, Иехония родил Салафииля; Салафииль родил Зоровавеля; Зоровавель родил Авиуда; Авиуд родил Елиакима; Елиаким родил Азора; Азор родил Садока; Садок родил Ахима; Ахим родил Елиуда; Елиуд родил Елеазара; Елеазар родил Матфана; Матфан родил Иакова; Иаков родил Иосифа, мужа Марии, от Которой родился Иисус, называемый Христос. Итак всех родов от Авраама до Давида четырнадцать родов; и от Давида до переселения в Вавилон четырнадцать родов; и от переселения в Вавилон до Христа четырнадцать родов. Рождество Иисуса Христа было так: по обручении Матери Его Марии с Иосифом, прежде нежели сочтались они, оказалось, что Она имеет во чреве от Духа Святаго. Иосиф же муж Ее, будучи праведен и не желая огласить Ее, хотел тайно отпустить Ее. Но когда он помыслил это, --се, Ангел Господень явился ему во сне и сказал: Иосиф, сын Давидов! не бойся принять Марию, жену твою, ибо родившееся в Ней есть от Духа Святаго; родит же Сына, и наречешь Ему имя Иисус, ибо Он спасет людей Своих от грехов их. А все сие произошло, да сбудется реченное Господом через пророка, который говорит: се, Дева во чреве приимет и родит Сына, и нарекут имя Ему Еммануил, что значит: с нами Бог. Встав от сна, Иосиф поступил, как повелел ему Ангел Господень, и принял жену свою, и не знал Ее. Как наконец Она родила Сына Своего первенца, и он нарек Ему имя: Иисус.

## Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! (*Ps. 148:1*)  
Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous; praise befits the just! (*Ps. 32:1*)  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

*Continued from page 3*

with monastic life, and brought many young women to Christ. Claudia built a wanderers' hostel and aided the poor. After several peaceful years, the emperor Galienus (260-268) intensified the persecution against Christians, and many of them found refuge with Saints Claudia and Eugenia.

Basilla, an orphaned Roman girl of imperial lineage, heard about the Christians and Saint Eugenia. She sent a trusted servant to the saint asking her to write her a letter explaining Christian teachings. Saint Eugenia sent her friends and co-ascetics, Protus and Hyacinthus, who enlightened Basilla, and she accepted holy Baptism.

Basilla's servant then told her fiancé Pompey that his betrothed had become a Christian. Pompey then complained to the emperor against the Christians for preaching celibacy and denouncing idolatry. Basilla refused to enter into marriage with Pompey, and so they killed her with a sword.

They dragged Saints Protus and Hyacinthus into a temple to make them sacrifice to the idols, but just as they entered, the idol fell down and was shattered. The holy Martyrs Protus and Hyacinthus were beheaded. They also brought Saint Eugenia to the temple of Diana by force, but she had not even entered it, when the pagan temple collapsed with its idol.

They threw the holy martyr into the Tiber with a stone about her neck, but the stone became untied and she remained unharmed. She also remained unscathed in the fire. Then they cast her into a pit, where she remained for ten days. During this time the Savior Himself appeared to her and said that she would enter into the heavenly Kingdom on the day He was born. When this radiant Feast came, the executioner put her to death with a sword. After her death, Saint Eugenia appeared to her mother to tell her beforehand the day of her own death.

PRAYERS	Birthdays, Names-days, & Anniversaries	SCRIPTURE THIS WEEK
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>For Those Who Have Fallen Asleep</i></p>		
<p>Newly Departed Stephen, Newly Departed Miriam, Newly Departed Theodore Newly Departed Prifteresha Elisabeth Bouteneff,</p> <p><i>[To be inserted after the petition for the departed]</i> Again we pray for those who have lost their lives because of conflicts in Ukraine, Armenia, and the Middle East: that the Lord our God may look upon them with mercy, and give them rest where there is neither sickness, or sorrow, but life everlasting.</p>	<p>December 24 – 31 Esther (N) Eugenia (N) Stephen Murianka (N) Tina Murianka (B) Anne Halkedas (B) Tamara Kiselev (B)</p> <p><b><u>Seven-Day Vigil Candles</u></b> Llukan Dylgjeri – health Michael Mogilevich - health</p> <p>Seven-Day Vigil Candles are used for the Eternal Light that hangs above the Royal Doors and are often placed in front of the icons of Christ or the Birth-giver of God. If you would like to donate a Seven-Day Vigil Candle, Please include the name or names of those for whom the candle is donated, and we will place them in this section for special prayers.</p>	<p><b><u>Church Lectionary</u></b></p> <p><u>Today</u> Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40 Matthew 1:1-25</p> <p><u>Monday</u> Galatians 4:4-7 Matthew 2:1-12</p> <p><u>Tuesday</u> Hebrews 2:11-18 Matthew 2:13-23</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>For Those Who Are Sick And Home-bound</i></p>		
<p>Virginia, Denise, Olvian, Marie, James, Alexandra, Andrew, Christina, Louise, Porter, Alvin, Tracy, Kathy, Andrew, Maria, Helen, John, Nina, Sophia, Spresha, Kristin, Niko, Spiro, Angeliki, Melod, Olgay, Ruth, Terry, Naomi, Annette, Tatiana, Lester Jr., Natalia, Otari, Lasha, Fr. Nikolas, Llukan, Marina, Sophia, Fr. Maxwell, Donna, Christina, Anastasia, Mary</p>		<p><u>Wednesday</u> Acts 6:8-15; 7:1-5, 47-60 Matthew 21:33-42 Hebrews 10:1-18 Mark 11:22-26</p> <p><u>Thursday</u> Hebrews 10:35-11:7 Mark 11:27-33</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Prayers In General</i></p>		
<p>The community of Ss. Peter &amp; Paul Miami, Fr. Dennis and his family, Fr. Ioan, Christian, Michael, Erica, Kaida, DuDash family, Michael, Robert, Ally, Steve, Jake and Amanda and their children, Katherine, Ron, Anthony, Volodymyr, Nick, Sophia, Michael, Rafael, Bob, Barbara, Sandra, Enoch, John, Victoria, Melenie, Grace, Michael, Barbara, Giorgi, Molly, Jim, Chloe, Marsha, Ann, Lilly, Stephen, Gela, Gabriel Joseph</p> <p><i>[To be inserted after the petition for the living]</i> Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, for those who are suffering, wounded, grieving, or displaced because of the conflicts in Ukraine, Armenia, and the Middle East.</p> <p><i>[Petitions at Augmented Litany]</i> Again we pray for a cessation of the hostilities in Ukraine, Armenia, and the Middle East, and that reconciliation and peace will flourish in these places, we pray thee, hearken and have mercy.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>COFFEE HOUR</b></p> <p><b><u>December</u></b> 24 31</p> <p>Coffee Hour is a wonderful chance for us to get together to break bread and spend time with each other, to celebrate those whom we have held memorials for, and to come together as the family of God outside of worship. To sign up, to host a coffee hour, contact Fr. Nicholas or Donna Bacon.</p>	<p><u>Friday</u> Hebrews 11:8, 11-16 Mark 12:1-12</p> <p><u>Saturday</u> 1 Timothy 6:11-16 1 Timothy 3:14-4:5 Matthew 12:15-21 Matthew 3:1-11 Ephesians 5:1-8 Luke 17:3-10</p> <p><b><u>Reading the Bible in a Year</u></b> Dec 25: Revelation 1-3 Dec 26: Revelation 4-6 Dec 27: Revelation 7-9 Dec 28: Revelation 10-12 Dec 29: Revelation 13-15 Dec 30: Revelation 16-18 Dec 31: Revelation 19-22</p>

## Nativity of our Lord 2023

To the clergy, monastics, and faithful of the Orthodox Church in America, my beloved children in the Lord,

Christ is born! Glorify him!

At the Vigil for today's feast, we sang with the words of St. Germanus of Constantinople: "Today the Virgin gives birth to the Maker of all. Eden offers a cave and a star discloses Christ, the Sun, to those in darkness" (second sticheron at the aposticha).

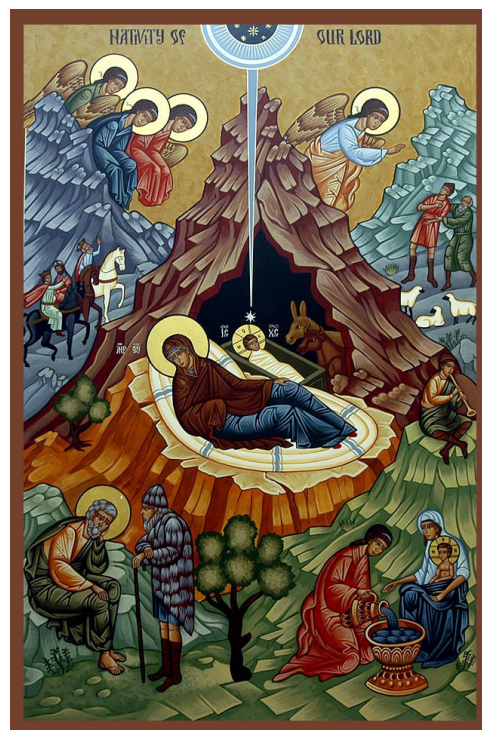
In a supreme paradox, the created world today offers shelter to the one who contains all things in the palm of his hand. Coming among us in obscurity, "born of a woman, born under the Law" (Gal. 4:4), in the form of a tiny baby, "in the form of a servant" (Phil. 2:7), hidden in a dark cave, nevertheless he shines his light upon our gloom.

Becoming small, he allows us to touch his greatness. Clothing himself in our weakness, he permits us to rest in his strength. Embracing obscurity, he brings enlightenment to the ends of the earth. Ministering as a servant, he shows his love as our Master, our Lord, and our King.

In our present day, as the gloom waxes and the darkness closes, as "wars and rumors of wars" abound (Mt. 24:6), the icon of the Nativity—Eternity laid as a baby in a crib, Salvation in the form of a newborn child, Redemption in the weakness of infant flesh—is as timely as ever. As an American hymn writer wrote over a century and a half ago, in the dark streets of Bethlehem, "the hopes and fears of all the years" are met together on the night of the Savior's birth. If we seek an answer, a solution, to the questions of our age and every age, that Answer, the very Word of the Father, can be found lying in a manger, sleeping, yet with his heart awake (Songs 5:2); resting in his tiny human body, but at work as God (Jn. 5:17).

Once the wise men journeyed, not to meet Herod in his court of splendor, nor to seek Caesar on his Roman throne, but to find a Child in his Mother's arms. Likewise, we do not seek peace, salvation, and joy from the hand and works of "princes and sons of men" (Ps. 145:3), but from the Lord who appears to us in silence, showing us the way of humility, stillness, forgiveness, meekness, and mercy.

Today, as we join the righteous Joseph, the magi, and the shepherds in worshipping the Lord at his Nativity, enthroned in the lap of his Mother, we place our trust in his care, his providence, his justice, which transcend all human comprehension. Setting aside our own righteousness, we repent and embrace the peace and silence of the manger. Setting aside the grand and distracting worries of the world, we concern ourselves with generosity and forbearance towards our brethren and neighbors.



As St. Porphyrius of Kavsokalyvia writes, "Only prayer, silence, and love are effective." Resting in prayer and silence, through faith and trust we encounter the love of the one who became flesh for our sake, in whom every conflict and battle ceases, the Peace and Power of God, come to reign in our hearts through his Incarnation. May we always accept that love with repentance, humility, and gratitude, and joyfully share it with others, this day and every day.

To Christ our God and Savior, born this Christmas day, be all glory, together with his Father who is without beginning and his All-holy Spirit, unto the endless ages of ages. Amen.

Christ is born! Glorify him!

I remain as ever,  
Sincerely yours in the joy of our newborn Lord and God and Savior,

+ Tikhon  
Archbishop of Washington  
Metropolitan of All America and Canada

## December Events

### December

24 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
7:00pm Compline & Matins

25 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
*Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord*

31 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

### January

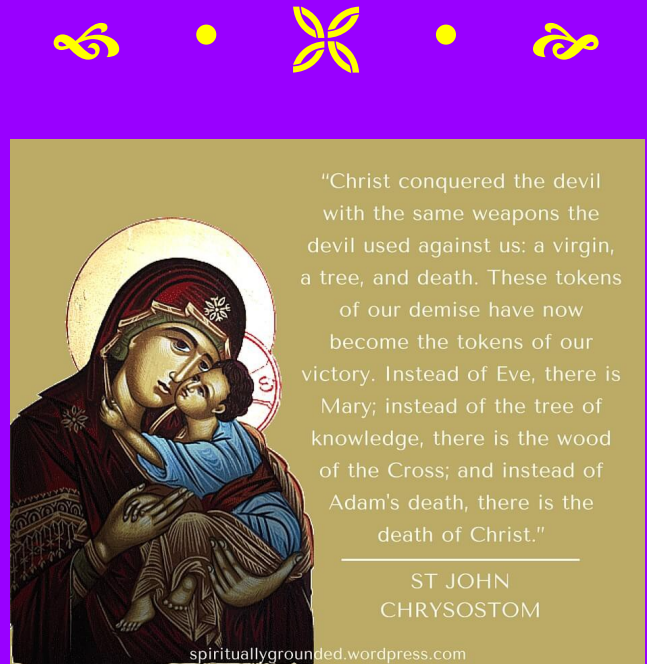
01 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
03 – 12:00pm 6<sup>th</sup> Hour  
7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets

06 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
*Feast of Theophany*

07 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
10 – 12:00pm 6<sup>th</sup> Hour  
7:15pm Bible Study via GoogleMeets

#### Can't join us in person?

We stream our services on our YouTube Channel:  
<https://www.youtube.com/@sspeterpaulorthodoxhurch01810>



*Praying for a Blessed and Wondrous Celebration  
of the  
Nativity of Christ  
for All!*