

SAINT JOHN'S ORTHODOX CHURCH

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Clergy:

Rev. Father David Mastroberte

Very Rev. Protopresbyter Michael Polanichka

Rev. Deacon John Anderson

A Parish of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese – Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople

Bulletin for December 10-23, 2017



The Journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem

CALENDAR OF SERVICES & EVENTS

MON 12/11/2017

6:00 PM December Board Meeting

WED 12/13/2017

5:30-5:50 PM Confessions

6:00 PM Moleben for the Nativity Fast

SAT 12/16/2017

Noon-6:00 PM Christmas "Wrap-Up" Fest

***SUN 12/17/2017 SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS; OF THE FOREFATHERS**

8:25-8:50 AM Confessions

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

Panachida: ++Tripp Family (Per.) ++Andras Family (Per.)

WED 12/20/2017 VISIT OF THE "NICULA" ICON OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

No Confessions Tonight

6:00 PM Akathist Hymn to the Mother of God

FRI 12/22/2017

4:00-5:00 PM Confessions

SAT 12/23/2017

9:00-10:30 AM Confessions

***SUN 12/24/2017 SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS; CHRISTMAS EVE**

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

No Coffee Hour

7:45 PM Singing of Carols from the Western Christian Tradition

8:00 PM Vigil Service for Christmas Eve

Followed by Singing of Carpatho-Rusyn Carols (Koljady)

MON 12/25/2017 CHRISTMAS—THE BIRTH OF OUR LORD

10:00 AM Divine Liturgy

Our gratitude is extended to the PTO and PTO President Shannon Baker for organizing our 2017 St. Nicholas Celebration. Thank you!

The Nativity Fast (Advent) continues! Please keep with your spiritual efforts of fasting, increased prayer (*especially the special Advent Prayer for Peace*), and acts of charity. Come to additional services as you are able.

Times for Holy Confession: In the days leading up to Christmas, Fr. David will be hearing Confessions at additional times, as well as before Sunday Divine Liturgy. Times are listed on the monthly calendar and in this bulletin. Please be sure to utilize these times in order to approach this sacrament before Christmas.

2018 Special Fund “Calendar Sweepstakes” tickets are available for a \$20 donation, as well as to sell to your family and friends.

When doing your Christmas shopping, don't forget to visit our church's **Religious Showcase** and check out our expanded Christmas inventory, as well as the **“Smart Money”** counter where you can purchase gift cards for a variety of stores.

Looking for a nice way to “keep Christ” in this pre-Christmas season? The **Nativity Scene Display** at Villa Maria Conference Center, Villa Maria, PA will take place December 10 from 12 to 5 p.m. Admission to the display is free. This indoor Advent tradition features hundreds of nativity sets from around the world. For more info, humilityofmary.org or 724-964-8920.

Reminder: Bring in Cookies for Christmas Day Fellowship. As is customary in our parish, we will have a Fellowship Hour following Liturgy on Christmas. We are asking our parishioners to bring in a dozen cookies or another small “finger” snack (*i.e. nothing that needs a fork, spoon, or knife!*) to share together. Don't skip this! *Share a cookie—and some time—with your fellow parishioners to celebrate Our Lord's Birth!*

Sunday School “Christmas Break” on Sunday, December 24 and Sunday, December 31. Classes will resume on January 7.



*Our sympathies are extended to Pete Roman at the passing of his wife, **Mary Jane**. May her memory be eternal! Vičnaja jej pamjat!*

Special Icon to Visit on December 20th

A copy of the wonder-working icon of the Mother of God from the Nicula Monastery in Romania (one of the most revered icons in Romania and thus in the Orthodox world) is currently traveling through the US and Canada.

This icon will be making a stop at OUR church on Wednesday, December 20th and will be with us for an Akathist Service at 6:00 PM. In addition to the service, we will include a short talk about the history of this particular icon.

What a great way to prepare to celebrate the Nativity – by honoring Our Lady and the Child Jesus in the presence of this traveling icon! Feel free to invite your friends and neighbors to join us in prayer for this spiritually-uplifting event.



The original icon, which wept in the year 1699.

Don't forget to offer this prayer daily as requested by Bishop Gregory!

Evening Prayer For Peace for the Advent Season

Lord Jesus Christ, Son and Word of God, You became flesh and dwelt among us. You made the womb of Your most-pure Mother more spacious than the heavens. Yet You, the true light, were born in the darkness of a cave, thereby enlightening the world that was darkened by sin. To redeem us, You shared Your whole life. You submitted to death on the Cross and rose from the dead, bestowing life. We share in Your death and resurrection, that we may indeed be dead to sin and alive in You. As we fast and prepare to celebrate Your life-giving manifestation, we pray especially that our respect for life will prevail in the world. Directed by Your command to care for “the least of these,” may we and all people heed Your call to show care and concern for life in the womb; for the lives of the poor, oppressed, and suffering; and for the lives of the sick, the elderly, and the dying. May Your peace reign in our hearts and throughout world, especially in places of unrest, so that the shedding of blood in warfare, violence, terrorism, tyranny, and all manner of strife may come to an end. May aggression between neighbors and nations fade away. May love reign in the lives of families. O Savior, You have said “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.” May we become partakers of Your abundant life, together with all the saints whose lives have pleased You from the beginning. For You are the way, the truth and the life, O Christ our God, and to You we give glory, together with Your eternal Father and Your most-holy, gracious and life-giving Spirit, now and ever and forever. AMEN.

Keeping “Christ” in CHRISTmas Means Keeping the “Mass” in ChristMAS!

What services do we have coming up?

- **Wednesday, December 20: Akathist at 6:00 PM**

This service has been described as a “sermon in song” as it takes us on a journey through the entire Incarnation story: the Annunciation, the Visitation to Elizabeth, the Nativity, the Adoration of the Shepherds, the Magi, and so on. It is a fitting service to offer in the days leading up to Christmas. In addition, we will be blessed by the presence of the traveling copy of the Nicula Icon of the Mother of God (*see previous page*). *Don’t miss it!*

- **Sunday, December 24: Divine Liturgy at 9:00 AM**

No, you don’t get to skip Sunday Liturgy because it is Christmas Eve! Christians having been gathering *every* Sunday morning for the Eucharist even before Christmas was on the calendar. This year, Christmas Eve falls on the Sunday before Christmas, thus we will hear the beautiful Gospel reading of the Genealogy of Christ from Matthew.

- **Sunday, December 24: Vigil Service at 8:00 PM**

“Vigil” means to keep watch, and we keep watch like the shepherds and begin the celebration of Christmas. This service includes many hymns and prayers celebrating the birth of Our Savior. We hear the Gospel of the Nativity announced. We will also sing familiar carols before and after the service.

- **Monday, December 25: Divine Liturgy at 10:00 AM**

Did you know that Bethlehem is Hebrew for “House of Bread”? What better way to join ourselves to the mystery of what happened in Bethlehem than by coming to the Divine Liturgy and receiving Christ, the Bread of Life in Holy Communion. **This is THE most important service of Christmas and shouldn’t be missed. Presents and cookies can wait, but Our Lord’s invitation to the Divine Liturgy on Christmas can’t!**

O Come, let us ADORE Him – Christ the Lord!

STEWARDSHIP

by Dan Hromyak

"Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." - 1Thessalonians 5:16-18

This scripture reading sums up Stewardship. "Rejoice always" means place your trust in God; He will provide all that you need. "Pray constantly" means prayer should be a running conversation with God throughout the whole day, every day. "Give thanks in all circumstances" means even in bad situations, thank God. Suffering a little bit helps build empathy for others in similar situations.

"Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!" - Luke 1:28

Faith is a gift from God. Take time in silence and thank Him for all the gifts He has given you. Try to set aside any anger or resentment you have and really open your heart to receive the gift of God's mercy and forgiveness. We can't give what we don't have. We need to receive God's mercy and forgiveness first before we can give it to others.

Visit our Diocesan Online Resources!

Diocesan Website: <http://www.acrod.org>

Camp Nazareth: <http://www.campnazareth.org>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/acroddiocese>

You Tube: <https://youtube.com/acroddiocese>

“Christmas Wrap-Up” Festival

Saturday, December 16th, 2017 from 12 Noon until 6:00 PM

- ◆ Pirohi and Halushki
- ◆ **Homemade Cookies and Baked Goods**
Russian Tea Cakes, 7 Layer Cookies, Pizzelles, Nut Tassies, Lady-Locks/Clothespin Cookies, Orange Poppyseed, Peanut Butter Blossoms, Brownie Tarts, Chocolate Chip (Several Varieties), Nut Roll, Apricot Roll, Poppyseed Roll, *AND MORE!*
- ◆ **Religious and Folk Craft Items**
Icons, Crosses, Jewelry, Nesting (Matryoshka) Dolls, Ornaments
- ◆ **Holiday and Decorator Items**
- ◆ **Gift Wrapping Station**

Tell your friends and neighbors about this NEW event at our church!



Coffee Hour Sponsors for December 17th:

Dorothy Pacinda

(No Coffee Hour on December 24th)

Eternal Lamp ~ Sunday, December 10th

In Memory of John Jisko, from daughter, Jennifer Jisko

Candelabrum ~ Sunday, December 10th

In Honor of the 40th birthday of our Godson, Matthew John Kolbrich!
God bless you for many more! From Father John and Nancy Hutnyan

Bulletin ~ Sunday, December 10th

In Thanksgiving for our Aunt Margie Hromyak. Thank you for all that you do for us!
Daniel, Nona & John, Matthew, Tracey & Peyton, Shelly & Paul,
Nancy & Father John, Sarah & Eric, Jillian & Joe

Bulletin ~ Sunday, December 17th

Dorothy Pacinda, and Bob & Michael Andras, in loving memory of
Father/Grandfather, John Andras, Jr.



BIRTHDAYS

Dec. 12 Katie Hartley
Dec. 16 Sue Boslough
Donnie Nameth
Dan Ristvey
Dec. 22 Richard Preston

MEN TO HOLD CANDLES

Sunday, December 17th

Chester Everett
Ed Fabian
Matt Fabian
Michael Holmes
Jim Hynes

Sunday, December 24th

Bob Kapusta
Matt Kulusich
Steve Lukac
Steven Lukac
Andy Lutz