

THE TROPHYBEARER

Pastoral Thoughts

This time of year, we are all getting ready for the holidays. We have rooms to sweep, bedding to put on the guest beds, menus to determine, and then for which to buy the groceries. We have gifts to buy to be ready for those visitors or to be sent across the country to distant loved ones.

Maybe we have travel to plan, tickets to buy, and reservations to make. It would be prudent to get the oil changed in the car and make sure our wipers and windshield washers are ready for the slush. Or it may be that we have already escaped the logical consequences of living in a temperate zone and flown south for the winter. In that case, don't forget the sunscreen.

In the years directly before the Nativity of Christ, the people of Israel were looking for a change. They were looking for a promised Messiah, though they were of several minds as to what form he might take. Perhaps he would restore the Kingdom of David, bring Israel out of the captivity and occupation, and be a political leader.

Perhaps he would bring about a golden age of prosperity when everyone would know God and would come to His holy city. Regardless, things would be better, dramatically better, profoundly better, for a people that had spent most of the last six centuries in strife and hardship.

As does a child who sees a large, beautifully wrapped present under a tree, those people knew they were waiting for something. They would be surprised, profoundly, when they opened that present. Some wanted something else, something they had in mind, so much so that they could not accept the gift before them.

We celebrate the Nativity of Christ, who is God. As such, He has no necessity, He is not bound by our expectations. He is what and Who we need, whether we know it or not. As God, He has claims on us.

As much as we love celebrating with family, as we love giving and receiving gifts, traveling, the music, and the joy, He wants most of all to show we are glad at His coming enough to show Him our love.

What He asks is not extraordinary. If you see a traveler that could use a little help, give him some help. If you know someone that will be alone, be present with them. Homeless shelters need money and supplies to serve those who have no hope of celebrating a great feast on that day.

Honor our Lord by serving His children in any small or large way that you can. Come to the services, and filled with the joy of Christ's coming, spread that joy far and wide. This is a sad, frightened, disillusioned, and divided world; it may not know what it needs, but it needs as much love and care, and kindness as happy, joyous, grateful Christians can give it. Christ is born! Glorify Him!



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PARISH NEWS

Epistle Readers

Anyone wishing to become an Epistle Reader, Please Contact Father Michael

Sunday, December 3, 2023:

14th Sunday of Luke: Alexa Florence

Sunday, December 10, 2023:

10th Sunday of Luke: Gus Pappas

Sunday, December 17, 2023:

11th Sunday of Luke: Georgjean Pitsoulakis

Sunday, December 24, 2023:

The Sunday before the Nativity: Loukia Constantinides

Sunday December 31, 2023: The Sunday before Theophany: Mary Rankin

Evening Meal Volunteers

(Thursday) December 14, 2023: Deacon Paul and Deaconess Romilie Speed

January 24, 2024: Susan Coin and Cathy Farrell.

February 28, 2024: Dr. Vickie Pyevich and Adrienne Johnson.

March 27, 2024: Diane Whitehead.

April 24, 2024: Helen Moorehead and Marge Stratton

Anyone interested in taking part in this worthwhile ministry should contact Mary Winters at 563-726-2880

Parish Council Sunday Duty Schedule

Sunday, December 3, 2023: Mary Kay Eckert, Gus Pappas, Ted Pitsoulakis, and Diana Spurgetis

Sunday, December 10, 2023: Kathy Begyn, Joe Burmeister, Dennis Spurgetis and Mary Rankin

Sunday, December 17, 2023: Tom Bakeris, Nick Coin, Mariellen Crosson, and Vickie Pyevich

Sunday, December 24, 2023: Mary Kay Eckert, Gus Pappas, Ted Pitsoulakis, and Diana Spurgetis

Sunday, December 31, 2023: Kathy Begyn, Joe Burmeister, Dennis Spurgetis, and Mary Rankin

PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Parish Council elections will be held on Sunday, December 10, 2023. Please remember to cast your vote.

Clothing Collection

We are collecting hats/gloves/mittens/coats for the less fortunate... If you would like to donate, please place them on the Christmas tree in the Narthex until January 7, 2024.

Donation Opportunity

We are accepting donations for our Poinsettias this Christmas to decorate the Solea. The Poinsettias that we will have will be in two sizes Small: \$10.00 (8) and Large: \$20.00 (2).

Please see Father Michael to make your Donations!

PROSPHORA MAKERS

Sunday, December 3, 2023:

Open

Sunday, December 10, 2023:

Adrienne Johnson

Sunday, December 17, 2023:

Open

Sunday, December 24, 2023:

Open

Sunday, December 31, 2023:

Open

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

Sunday, December 3, 2023: Presbyteria Maria

Sunday, December 10, 2023: Adrienne Johnson

Sunday, December 17, 2023: Vickie Pyevich

Sunday, December 24, 2023: Angela Spurgetis

Sunday, December 31, 2023: Open

LIVES OF THE SAINTS

Barbara the Great Martyr (December 4)

Saint Barbara was from Heliopolis of Phoenicia and lived during the reign of Maximian.

She was the daughter of a certain idolater named Dioscorus. When Barbara came of age, she was enlightened in her pure heart and secretly believed in the Holy Trinity. About this time Dioscorus began building a bath-house; before it was finished he was required to go away to attend to certain matters, and in his absence Barbara directed the workmen to build a third window in addition to the two her Father had commanded. She also inscribed the sign of the Cross with her finger upon the marble of the bath-house, leaving the saving sign cut as deeply into the marble as if it had been done with an iron tool. (When the Synaxarion of Saint Barbara was written, the marble of the bath-house and the cross inscribed by Saint Barbara were still preserved, and many healings were worked there.) When Dioscorus returned, he asked why the third window had been added; Barbara began to declare to him the mystery of the Trinity. Because she refused to renounce her faith, Dioscorus tortured Barbara inhumanely, and after subjecting her to many sufferings he beheaded her with his own hands, in the year 290.

Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra (December 6)

This Saint lived during the reign of Saint Constantine the Great, and reposed in 330. As a young man, he desired to espouse the solitary life. He made a pilgrimage to the holy city Jerusalem, where he found a place to withdraw to

devote himself to prayer. It was made known to him, however, that this was not the will of God for him, but that he should return to his homeland to be a cause of salvation for many. He returned to Myra, and was ordained bishop. He became known for his abundant mercy, providing for the poor and needy, and delivering those who had been unjustly accused. No less was he known for his zeal for the truth. He was present at the First Ecumenical Council of the 318. Fathers at Nicaea in 325; upon hearing the blasphemies that Arius brazenly uttered against the Son of God, Saint Nicholas struck him on the face. Since the canons of the Church forbid the clergy to strike him on the face. Since the canons of the Church forbid the clergy to strike him at all, his fellow bishops were in perplexity what disciplinary action was to be taken against this hierarch whom all revered. In the night our Lord Jesus Christ and our Lady Theotokos appeared to certain of the bishops, informing them that no action was to be taken against him, since he had acted not out of passion, but extreme love and piety. The Dismissal Hymn for holy hierarchs, The truth of things hath revealed thee to thy flock ... was written originally for Saint Nicholas. He is the patron of all travellers, and of sea-farers in particular; he is one of the best known and best loved Saints of all time.

The Nativity according to the Flesh of Our Lord

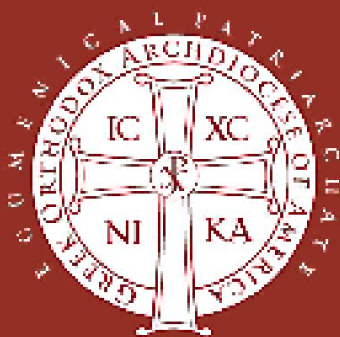
The incomprehensible and inexplicable Nativity of Christ came to pass when Herod the Great was reigning in Judea;

the latter was an Ascalonite on his father's side and an Idumean on his mother's. He was in every way foreign to the royal line of David; rather, he had received his authority from the Roman emperors, and had ruled tyrannically over the Jewish people for some thirty-three years. The tribe of Judah, which had reigned of old, was deprived of its rights and stripped of all rule and authority. Such was the condition of the Jews when the awaited Messiah was born, and truly thus was fulfilled the prophecy which the Patriarch Jacob had spoken 1,807 years before: "A ruler shall not fail from Judah, nor a prince from his loins, until there come the things stored up for him; and he is the expectation of the nations" (Gen.49:10).

Thus, our Saviour was born in Bethlehem, a city of Judea, whither Joseph had come from Nazareth of Galilee, taking Mary his betrothed, who was great with child, that, according to the decree issued in those days by the Emperor Augustus, they might be registered in the census of those subject to Rome. Therefore, when the time came for the Virgin to give birth, and since because of the great multitude there was no place in the inn, the Virgin's circumstance constrained them to enter a cave which was near Bethlehem. Having as shelter a stable of irrational beasts, she gave birth there, and swaddled the Infant and laid Him in the manger (Luke 2:1-7). From this, the tradition has come down to us that when Christ was born He lay between two animals, an ox and an ass, that the words of the Prophets might be fulfilled: "Between two living creatures shalt Thou be known" (Abbacum 3:2), and "The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib" (Esaia 1: 3).

But while the earth gave the new-born Saviour such a humble reception, Heaven on high celebrated majestically His world-saving coming. A wondrous star, shining with uncommon brightness and following a strange course, led Magi from the East to Bethlehem to worship the newborn King. Certain shepherds who were in the area of Bethlehem, who kept watch while tending their sheep, were suddenly surrounded by an extraordinary light, and they saw before them an Angel who proclaimed to them the good tidings of the Lord's joyous Nativity. And straightway, together with this Angel, they beheld and heard a whole host of the Heavenly Powers praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men" (Luke 2:8-14).

Metropolis of Chicago
Community
Christmas Celebration



METROPOLIS
OF CHICAGO

Sunday December 3, 2023
4 pm - 8 pm

At The Carlisle
435 E. Butterfield Rd.
Lombard, IL 60148

Appetizers and refreshments
will be served



We are collecting
hats/gloves/mittens/coats
for the less fortunate...

If you would like to donate,
please place them on the
Christmas tree in the
Narthex until January 7,
2024

2023 DECEMBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1 Fast Day	2 Fish, Oil and Wine Allowed
3 14th Sunday of Luke Fish, Oil and Wine Allowed 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School teachers meeting following the Divine Liturgy 4:00 p.m. Metropolis Christmas Celebration at the Carlisle	4 Fish, Oil and Wine Allowed	5 Fish, Oil and Wine Allowed	6 The Feast Day of Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker Oil and Wine allowed. 8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy at Assumption No "In person" or "Virtual" Study Forum	7 Fish, Oil and Wine Allowed	8 Fast Day	9 Fish, Oil and Wine Allowed
10 10th Sunday of Luke Fish, Oil and Wine Allowed 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy Parish Council Elections following the Divine Liturgy	11 Fish, Oil and Wine Allowed	12 Feast day of Saint Spyridon the Wonderworker Fish, Oil and Wine Allowed 8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy at Saint George	13 Fast Day 8:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship Group @ Coffee House (1315 Jersey Ridge Road, Davenport, IA) 11:00 a.m. Orthodox Study Forum 7:00 p.m. Virtual Orthodox Study Forum	14 Fast Day	15 Fast Day	16 Oil and Wine allowed
17 11th Sunday of Luke Oil and Wine Allowed 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy	18 Fast Day	19 Fast Day 6:30 p.m. Parish Council Meeting	20 Fast Day 8:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship Group @ Coffee House (1315 Jersey Ridge Road, Davenport, IA) 11:00 a.m. Orthodox Study Forum 7:00 p.m. Virtual Orthodox Study Forum	21 Fast Day	22 Fast Day 9:00 a.m. Royal Hours for the Nativity @ Assumption Church	23 Oil and Wine Allowed
24 The Sunday before the Nativity/The Eve of the Nativity Oil and Wine Allowed 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy 7:00 p.m. Great Vespers for the Nativity of the Lord @ Assumption Church	25 The Nativity according to the Flesh of our Lord Fast Free 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy	26 Fast Free	27 Fast Free 8:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship Group @ Coffee House (1315 Jersey Ridge Road, Davenport, IA) 11:00 a.m. Orthodox Study Forum 7:00 p.m. Virtual Orthodox Study Forum	28 Fast Free	29 Fast Free	30 Fast Free
31 The Sunday Before Theophany Fast Free 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy						