



HOLY RESURRECTION ORTHODOX CHURCH



A Parish of the Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese
Ecumenical Patriarchate
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www.holyresurrection.com
www.facebook.com/groups/hroc25
YouTube: HROC Media

Very Rev. Peter Zarynow, Pastor
Protopresbyter John Fedornock
Subdeacons Anastasios Davis & Michael Vaporis Reader Stephen Sudik

12 January 2025

Sunday after Nativity/Sunday before Theophany
Virgin Martyr Anysia

Epistle: Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40
Gospel: Matthew 1:1-25

Tone Three

The Schedule of Divine Services for the Week is as Follows:

**12 Jan (SUN) Sunday after Nativity
Sunday Before Theophany**

Singing of Christmas Carols 9:15am
Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom 9:30am
Coffee Social to follow

**14 Jan (Tue) FEAST OF THE CIRCUMSION/FEAST IOF ST
BASIL THE GREAT**

Divine Liturgy of St Basil the Great 9:30am
Coffee Social to follow

**18 Jan (Sat) Theophany Eve
STRICT FAST DAY**

Great Compline and Blessing of Water 3pm

**19 Jan (SUN) FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST
(Holy Theophany)**

Chanting of 3rd Hour 9:15am
Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom 9:30am
Coffee Social to follow
Blessings of Homes begins

Announcements:

Confessions be heard by appointment. Please contact Fr Peter to schedule. All faithful are encouraged to come to the Sacrament every 8-10 weeks, on average, to help maintain spiritual health.

Because of the celebra^on of the Feast of the Na^ovity there is no fas^ong, except for the fast prior to receiving Communion, from today un^ol the Eve of Theophany on 18 January. Enjoy the Feast! (These are the **real** 12 days of Christmas!)

Saturday 18 January, the Eve of Theophany, is a day of Strict Fasting, meaning no meat or dairy products are to be eaten. The traditional evening meal is once again the Holy Night Supper. Compline will be held mid-afternoon, so come to church, witness the Great Blessing of Water, and then go home and have your supper

Wall calendars for 2025 are available on the table under the TV. You may take as many as you need, but not more than you need. Offering Envelopes for 2025 are also available. Please take yours home today.

The HROC Book Club is going to be starting their next reading after the Feast of the Nativity. Since we will be getting ready for the Great Fast (beginning 03 March 25) we will be reading *Thirty Steps to Heaven-the Ladder of Divine Ascent for all Walks of Life* by Vassilios Papavassiliou. The first meeting of the book club will be during Coffee Social on Sunday 19 January and will be going over step 1-4

We will be needing coffee social hosts for the month of January. Please sign up for this vital ministry in the life of our parish! Never hosted a social before or you don't have the time or resources to think you can host? What about setting up a simple "Grab & Stay" social? We have all the ingredients here. The donations collected during a "Grab & Stay" go back into purchasing items for us to keep in stock. Or have you thought about maybe teaming up with one or two others so that you do not have to do everything yourself? All these are possible. Let us try to get some others into the rotation of hosts. Remember, the main idea of the coffee social is fellowship! What is served is secondary. Keeping it simple is best! (While we're at it, let's try to fill February, too)

2025 DIOCESAN ASSESSMENT

Being our parish, and we as its faithful, are a part of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese, each parish member (who is over 18 years of age and not a full-time undergraduate student or in first term of military service) has been assessed **\$84.00** this year to support the work of the Diocese (Seminary, Camp Nazareth, etc.) and administra^on. A special envelope, Diocesan Assessment, is included as the first envelope in your box. Everyone is asked to please pay the assessment in January since that is when the assessment is due by the parish. You may also see Debi Myers if you have any ques^ons

CANDLE OFFERINGS

Eternal Light: In memory of +Richard Matuga (10th Anniv of Repose)-sister Joan Kondratick and family (*Memory Eternal!*)LPeace on Earth-Lois (*Many Years!*)

Vigil Candles Offered For the Living- (*Many Years! Mnohaja L'ita!*)

- 2-for health-love Mom & Dad
Jonathan & Lara; Stephanie
- 1-health of Melanie-love Alex
- 1-health of Alex-love Melanie
- 2-safe travel-Alex & Melanie
Alex & Melanie; our family
- 1-health & Special intention John & Marie Smith, Georgene & Ray Ammon, Fr Peter & Pa i Bernadette, Alex Zarynow, Marie Skasko, Fr John & Pa i Marge Fedornock, Lois Erhard, Charlie & Debi Myers, Chris Fallon, Barbara Homick, All parishioners of HROC-Carol Miller
- 2-for health-Sheila
HROC parishioners; Family members
- 3-special intention-Sheila
Fr. Peter & family; Diocesan Priests & their families; OCMC Missionaries
- 1-health of children & grandchildren-Tom & Amy
- 1-health of Chris Fallon-Michael, Kathleen, John & Anna
- 1-health of cousin George Hazuda-Greg & Debbie Yakubik
- 2-special intention-brother George
Archbishop Michael; Barbara Harrington
- 1-special intention Metropolitan Gregory-George Dahulich
- 13-for health-George Dahulich
Archbishop Michael; Fr. Tom Kadlec; Fr. Jim Dutko; Chris Fallon; Charlie Myers; Barbara Harrington; Pañi Kathy Dutko; Alex Zarynow; Emily Dzubak; Katherine Chow; Psa. Diana Acsente; Fr. John & Pañi Marie Brancho; Georgia Wimberly
- 4-happy birthday-George Dahulich
Megan Antonishek; Cyndi Dzubak; Pañi Marge Fedornock; Matthew Rosics
- 3-happy anniversary-George Dahulich
John & Sophie Birkenmeier; Tom & Amy Koval; Vic & Staci Fitzwater
- 1-health of Savannah, Chloe, Caroline, Christopher, Natalie, Cole-love Grandparents
- 1-happy birthday George Dahulich-Ray & Georgene
- 2-for health-Ray & Georgene
Our family; Lois Erhard
- 16-health & special intention-John & Marie Smith
Irene Dzubak; Melanie Samson; Carol Miller; Barbara Homick; Marie Skasko; Georgene & Ray Ammon; Fr Tom & Pañi Linda Kadlec; FrJohn & Pañi Marge Fedornock; FrPeter & Pañi Bernadette; FrJohn & Pañi Eleanor Pribish; Eleanor Breno; Charlie Myers; Lois Erhard; FrJohn & Pañi Marie Brancho; Pañi Jean Hutnyan; Chris Fallon
- 1-safety & peace Ukraine & Israel and their people-John & Marie Smith
- 6-special intentions-the Breno Family
Breno Family; Fedornock Families; Peart Family; Nakonecznyj Family; Zankey Family; Fabian Family
- 3-happy birthday-the Breno Family
Dimi Riselvato; Pañi Marge; Cyndi Dzubak
- 2-special intention-the Breno Family
all who are ill; all who travel
- 2-specail intention-Mom & Dad
Brian, Angela & Dominic; Stephen
- 11-for health & special intention-Mark & Marie
Nancy Shields; Mike Czap; Skeets & Beth; Irene Dzubak; Carol Miller; Ray & Georgene Ammon; Eleanor Breno; FrJohn & Pañi Marge; FrPeter & Pañi Bernadette; Chris & Mike Fallon; Susan & Dan Zelensky
- 4-health-Charlie, Debi, Jacob & Joey
Skeets; Jessica; Carol Miller; Irene Dzubak
- 2-specail intention Jacob & Joey-love Mom & Dad
- 1-health & healing Hayley, Bob, Peggy and Bruce, Andrea, Carol Miller, Chris Fallon, AnneMarie, Pa i Jean, Ray Ammon, Tom Delare, Irene Dzubak, Jordan-Lois
- 1-for health Savannah, Caroline, Natalie, Karen K, Jeanne Delasko, Barbara Homick, Georgene, Debbie Delare- Lois
- 2-happy birthday-Lois
Rob; Pañi Marge & Cyndi Dzubak
- 1-happy anniv, Tom & Amy-Lois
- 1-health and wellbeing of Artem-Olga Vovk
- 1-health and wellbeing of Andrey, Lidia and Tatiana, Natalia, Konstantin, Eva, George, Michael, Lubov, Anastasia, Maxim and Ivan-Olga Vovk
- 1-health and wellbeing of Sofia, Sergey, Eva, Matthew, Tomothy, Yuliia, Alex, Dru, Irina and Dennis-Olga Vovk
- 4-for healing-Rose Plowchin
Carol Devine; Nancy Hall; Pañi Delores Zuder; Georgeann Shalayda
- 1-special prayer-Pa i Marge Fedornock
- 1-specail intention all my children-Pa i Marge Fedornock
- 1-health of all who are ill-Pa i Marge Fedornock
- 1-blessed Christmas to all-Pa i Marge Fedornock
- 1-safe travels-Pa i Marge Fedornock
- 2-for health-Pa i Jean Hutnyan
Muhlenberg Family; Hutnyan Family
- 2-peaceful & healthy new year-Pa i Jean Hutnyan
FrPeter & Pañi Bernadette; FrJohn & Pañi Marge

Vigil Candles In Loving Memory: (*Memory Eternal! Vicnaja Pamjat!*)

- 1+in loving memory of Les-love Carol
- 1+in memory Mother & Father. Carol Miller
- 1+In loving memory of Chris Hudack, Grandparents, Bettie Searfoss, Myrtle Miller, John Hudack, John Hrapchak, John Homick, Marge Tomasevich-Carol Miller
- 1+in loving memory of Tom, Ann & Chrysa Thear-Taina & Craig
- 2+loving memory-the Fallons
Pañi Jeannette; Anna & John Luchok
- 1+in memory of parents Helen & Larry Rowland-Diane
- 1+in memory grandparents Helen & Peter Sedlar-Diane
- 1+Memory Eternal Parents/Grandparents-Koval Family
- 1+Memory Eternal Uncle George, Aunt Marge & Uncle Tony- Koval Family
- 2+Memory Eternal-love Alex, Melanie
parents Michael & Elaine; parents John & Katherine
- 6+in memory-Sheila
John; Dad Kraynok; Mom Kraynok; Charles Hrapchak; Anna Hrapchak; Evelyn Hrapchak
- 1+In loving memory of Metro-Love, Joan and Family
- 1+in loving memory of parents Peter & Ann Dahulich-love son George
- 1+in memory of Grammy-Charlie, Debi, Jacob & Joey
- 1+loving memory of Vladimir, Irina, Sergey, Nina, Rafael, Germina, Maxim, Anna, Irena, Lidia, Pavel, Tatiana, Natalia, Olga-Olga Vovk
- 1+loving memory of Leonid, Anna, Izot, Natalia, Afanasii, Anastasia, Lidia-Olga Vovk
- 1+in memory of Mom-Mark & Dorothy Sudik
- 1+in memory of Grammy-Charlie, Debi, Jacob & Joey
- 1+in memory of Aunt Dorothy-Charlie, Debi, Jacob & Joey
- 2+in memory-Pa i Marge Fedornock
Parents; Brother & Sister
- 1+in memory of Missy Walker-the Breno Family
- 3+in memory-Ray & Georgene
Dorothy Sudik; Steve Elko; Fr John Baranik
- 2+in memory-Pa i Jean Hutnyan
Fr Andrew; Mom & Dad

ADDITIONAL CANDLES FROM CHRISTMAS

Tetrapod & Sacramental Table: health of Family & Friends-Jonathan Krynitsky & Lara Magill

1-birthday wishes & Many Years George Dahulich-John & Marie Smith

1-specail prayer-Pa i Marge Fedornock

1-specail intention all my children-Pa i Marge Fedornock

1-safe travels-Pa i Marge Fedornock

2-happy birthday-Pa i Marge Fedornock

Roman; George Dahulich

2-Christmas blessings-love Alex and Melanie

Michael Jr, Doug, Dr Michael III & Dr Heather; Mark, Jennifer, Emma, Timothy & Brooke

2-Christmas blessings-love Mom & Dad

Jonathan & Lara; Stephanie

4+Memory Eternal at Christmas-love Alex & Melanie

grandparents George & Mary; grandparents Francis & Sophia; grandparents Alexander & Helen; grandparents Peter & Tatiana

2025 Sponsorships for the Bulletin and the Parish website are now available. Please use the sign-up sheets on the bulletin board and hand in your sponsorship asap. Make sure you fill in the special intention column so that Father does not have to contact you last minute to fill it in. Thank you!

2025 because of many factors we have been very behind in getting our Sunday School together this year. We will begin our abbreviated program for our Middle and High School students on 27 January and go through until approximately 27 May. More details coming soon.

The ACRY corner



Soup Sales for 2025: 2025 Soup Sale dates are as follows: 12 January, 09 February and 09 March. All ACRY members, and any non-members who wish to help, are asked to make one (minimum) 5-quart batch of homemade soup. Quart containers are available in the ACRY closet in the parish hall. Please have your soup in the church kitchen fridge before Divine Liturgy on the morning of the sale.

Sr ACRY Annual Cash Day: Cash Day will be held on Meatfare Sunday, 23 February 2025. Tickets are now available from Nick Dzubak during Coffee Social. Tickets are still \$10 each. All 300 tickets need to be sold for Cash Day to work.

PARISH ANNUAL MEETING MARCH 16, 2025

Once a year the parish has an Annual Meeting to review the past year and plan for the future. Be at the 2025 Parish Annual Meeting on Sunday, March 16 from 11:30 to 12:30 to participate in making plans for 2025! In preparation for the meeting, this is a request for nominations for the election of officers.

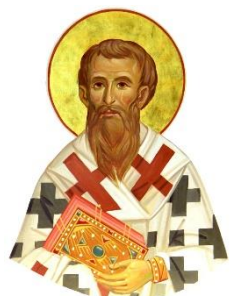


Election of Officers: This year the following Council officer positions will be elected. Vice President, Financial Secretary, Curator, Trustee, and two Auditors. Please refer to the flyer, "Serving on the Church Council 2025," for the position duties and eligibility requirements. If you would like to nominate yourself to be a candidate or have questions, please talk with Tim Dzubak, Nominating Chair.

Requests for Reports: Presidents of the Junior and Senior ACRY and Chairs of committees and ministries are asked to submit a written report summarizing their activities in 2024 and plans for 2025. Please email your report to Fr. Peter **no later than February 16.**

Suggestions for Agenda Topics: If you would like to have a certain topic discussed at the meeting, please give your suggestion to Marie Sudik, Council Secretary. We welcome them!

"If you see your neighbor in sin, don't look only at this, but also think about what he has done or does that is good, and infrequently trying this in general, while not partially judging, you will find that he is better than you." St Basil the Great



PREPARATION FOR THE BLESSING OF HOMES

Call or email FrPeter to make an appointment to have your home blessed.



Before the Priest arrives at your home, here are a few reminders on how to prepare:

- ❖ In the main room of the home, usually the kitchen or dining room, have placed on the table a white cloth, a candle and/or an Icon or cross. You may place a small container of Holy Water on the table as well. [Note: Father will bring water with him]
- ❖ Turn off TV's, radios, computers, etc. so as to keep focused on the blessing service
- ❖ Please make sure that pets are heeled or restrained so as not to get underfoot while Father goes through the home.
- ❖ If you have any items to be blessed (Icon, Cross, etc.), put them on the table where the blessing takes place.
- ❖ When the Priest arrives, have everyone in the home gather around the table and join in the blessing. Participation is important!
- ❖ Invite friends or neighbors to participate and witness the beauty of this Tradition.
- ❖ If you need to discuss a personal matter with Father, this is the time to do so. Time is made between appointments for this reason.

This year the Blessing of Homes will take place from Sunday 19 January to Saturday 22 February. Please schedule an appointment with Father as soon as possible. Please allow for changes due to Father's schedule or inclement weather.

Remember, the invitation to the priest to come and bless your home is an invitation to ask for the mercy of God upon the household. The sprinkling of the Holy Water is a sign of God's presence in the home as an extension of His Holy House, the Church. It is a time to renew our commitment to God as we begin another year in His mercy and love for mankind.

Why do we BLESS HOMES ON THEOPHANY WITH HOLY WATER?

Q: Why do we bless houses (and almost anything else that we can sprinkle) with water?

A: Many years ago, when I was yet a deacon, I was visiting with some non-Orthodox friends who were inquirers into Orthodoxy (they sadly, never followed through with their interest - or even their promise to become Orthodox) and we were discussing this topic in the context of blessing their house.

I look at it like this. This world, this creation, is in captivity; it is enemy held territory. The evil one, having enslaved all of creation at the fall, has laid claim to every nook and cranny of this earth. And for a while it looked as though he might be able to hold onto it. But then he reached too far and attempted to enslave the Master of All and to bind Life with the chains of death and his power was broken. But creation is still fallen, it is still contested land in the spiritual battle.

We, as Christians, are engaged in this struggle to reclaim fallen nature for the Kingdom of God. We often talk about this in terms of our own salvation, but the Church, addressing all of creation in a holistic manner, also reaches out and reclaims a bit here and a bit there of creation in general. We do this in order that we might restore the usefulness of creation for working out our own salvation. Hence, we bless anything that might help us in our salvation - and by blessing it we reclaim it for the Kingdom of God.

There are few things more vital to our lives than our homes. In our homes we pray, we work, we talk to others, we order our lives, we work out our marriages, etc. What more important place to reclaim for the Kingdom of God - or is it better to continue living in a place which is occupied by the enemy. For the most effective working out of our salvation, we must drive the enemy out of our homes, and keep him at bay by our prayers, our righteous life, and the annual sprinkling by Holy Water at Theophany.

(by Priest David Moser, St Seraphim of Sarov Orthodox Church, Boise ID)



Prayer For The Priesthood



O Lord Jesus Christ, Good Shepherd of Your sheep, light the fire of ardent love in the hearts of all Your priests, that they may ever and in all things seek only Your glory. Remember especially, Lord, our **Metropolitan Gregory**, and our spiritual fathers who are laboring in Your vineyard for the salvation of all those whom You have entrusted to them. Remember also, O Lord, our priests and deacons, especially **Fr Edward Pehanich, Fr John Pribish, Fr Deacon Art Steinstra and our Diocesan Seminarians & Graduates: Dn. Peter Sodini, Sbdn. Nicholas Worobey, Sbdn. Seamus Murry, Reader Samuel Loposky, Nicholas Laliberte, Ignatios Leonardo, an Alexander Hurtellers.** Make their lives as holy as the word they preach. Keep them from being discouraged. Hear their prayers for our salvation. Give them wisdom and courage to proclaim Your truth. Make them priests after Your own heart. For You are a merciful God who loves us, and to You we give glory, together with Your eternal Father and Your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

Please pray for the following: Metropolitan Gregory; Fr. Frank & Pañi Connie Miloro; Pañi Betty Jean Baranik; Fr Michael Rustik; Fr. Mark Leasure; Fr. John Fencik; Fr. Paul Stoll; Fr. Robert & Pañi Peggy Teklinski; Dn. Peter Skoog & family; Fr James & Pañi Kathy Dutko; Fr. Gregory Allard; Pañi Linda Barriger; Fr. James Gleason, Fr. Luke Mihaly; Fr. Ted & Pañi Marjorie Mozes; Fr. Thomas Blaschak; Hieromonk Michael; Fr Thomas Kadlec; Fr Stephen Krivonak; Fr David & Pañi Donna Smoley; Pañi Annamarie Slovesko; Pañi Patricia Duranko; Fr John & Pañi Cindy Zboyovski, Fr. Jonathan & Pañi Marsha Tobias, Pañi Delores Zuder; Pañi Amy George; Pañi Sharon Holowaty; Pañi MaryMargaret Conjelko; Fr John & Pañi Eleanor Pribish; Fr John Mikitish; Pañi Karen Miklos; Pañi Marie Brancho; Pañi Jean Hutnyan; Fr David & Pañi Paula Kossy; Fr Edward Pihanich; Pañi Betty Baranik; SGT Joey Myers; SPC Alexander Zarynow; Beth & Ed 'Skeets' Williams; Carol Miller; Dorothy Mastronicola; Tony Zanke; Justin Popek; Florence Gregoric, James & Melody Peyton; Jennifer Brady; Carol Blum, Alexi Williams, Missy Johns, Susan Buckley, Constance Amey, James Lazor, Debbie Dell; Grace Yoon; Michael Dinneen; Joan Detwiler; Joan Kondratick; Barbara Homick; Jim David & Jeanne Delasko; Melanie Samson; Laura Gary; Richard & Wendy Sulich; Wendy Taylor; James Durachko; Randi Cañalle, Hayley Marshall, Jon Green, MaryJane, Kyle & Rosie Brant, Mary Agnes, Alicia, Lisa Chernow, Stephen Brancho; Emily; MaryMargaret; Leslie Perez; Thomas & Deborah Delare; Diana Hannan; Bridget Myers; Devan Merrill; Bob Fitzurka; Olga Vovk; Lela; Carly; Robert; Vic Fitzwater; Taina Ferguson; Olya Romanova; Luke Griñith; Richard Durachko; Jennifer Haire; Mary, Simon, Alla; Artem Vovk; Charles Arnhold; Danielle V; Debbie Aumen; David Bulko; Bill Finken; Angelo Taveira-DaSilva, Andrew S.; Natalie Z; Stephen Hutnyan; Barbara Drillock; Dayton Naugle; Cassidy Riselvato; Phillip Trivett; Camila Bonilla; Hilary Soperak; Robert Knowlton; Ray Rushnak; Christine Sakmar; Joel F, Frank, Jordan, Ruth Moore; Hudson Kennedy, Maria H & baby

May Our Lord Jesus Christ Touch Them with His Healing Hand!!

Did you know that the parish has a grocery gift card

program? If you shop at Giant grocery stores, you can assist the parish, too. Every time you purchase a gift card our parish receives 5% of the proceeds. See Marie or Mark Sudik after Divine Services to purchase cards. The cards are available in increments of \$20, \$50 & \$100



CAMP NAZARETH SUMMER CAMP 2025

The time for Summer Camp is Rapidly Approaching!!! The clock is ticking!!

REGISTER ONLINE STARTING MARCH 1, 2025 @ 6PM (Eastern Time)!!!

Dates for the Summer Camping Program

Week 1: Sunday, July 20 ó Saturday, July 26, 2025 ó Pittsburgh, Mid-Atlantic, Washington D.C., and Tri-State Deaneries

Register Online Starting March 1, 2025 @ 6pm (EDT)

Register at ó campnazareth.org

Registration for Camp will be on a First-Come First-Serve Basis!! Once capacity for a given week is filled, all other campers will be put on a waiting list.

Cost for Camp ó Diocesan \$370/child, Non-Diocesan \$420/child

\$20 Early Bird Discount Per Child!!!!

(one-time only, not per week)

No child should be prevented from attending Camp because of cost. If a campership is needed, please contact Fr Peter

Must Register & pay by May 1, 2025!!!!

Online Registration **MUST** be complete **AND** payment must be submitted by **May 1** in order to qualify for the Early Bird Discount.

Registration will close on June 15, 2025 @ 12pm!

Feasts Commemorated on January 1/14

THE CIRCUMCISION OF THE LORD

The Circumcision of the Lord: On the eighth day after His Nativity, our Lord Jesus Christ . in accordance with the Old Testament Law, accepted circumcision, which was decreed for all infants of the male gender as a sign of the Covenant of God with the Forefather Abraham and his descendants (Gen. 17: 10-14, Lev. 12: 3). Upon the performing of this ritual the Divine Infant was given the name Jesus, which had been announced by the Archangel Gabriel on the day of the Annunciation to the Most-Holy Virgin Mary (Lk. 1: 31-33, 2: 21). According to the explanation of the fathers of the Church the Lord, the Creator of the Law, accepted circumcision, giving example for people how faithfully the Divine ordinances ought to be fulfilled. The Lord accepted circumcision for this reason . so that later on no one should be in doubt that He was truly Man, rather than merely being the bearer of illusion-seeming flesh as certain heretics (Docetism) happened to teach. In the New Testament (Covenant) the ritual of circumcision gave way to the sacrament of Baptism, which it pre-figured (Col. 2: 11-12). Accounts about the feastday of the Circumcision of the Lord in the Eastern Church continue right up through the IV Century. The Canon of the feast was written by the Monk Stephen Savvaites. Together



with the Circumcision, accepted by the Lord as a sign of the Covenant of God with mankind, He received also the Name Jesus (Saviour) as the seal of His service . the deed of the Salvation of the world (Mt. 1: 21 Lk. 9: 38-39, 16: 17 Lk. 10: 17 Acts 3: 6, 16 Phil. 2: 9-10). These two events, the Circumcision and Naming, remind Christians that they have entered into a New Covenant (Testament) with God and "are circumcised with a circumcision not done by hand, in putting off the sinful body of the flesh, by the Circumcision of Christ" (Col. 2: 11). The very name "Christian" witnesses to an entrance of mankind into a New Covenant with God.

ST. BASIL THE GREAT, ARCHBISHOP OF CAESAREA

Basil was born during the reign of Emperor Constantine. While still unbaptized, Basil spent fifteen years in Athens where he studied philosophy, rhetoric, astronomy and all other secular sciences of that time. His colleagues at that time were Gregory the Theologian and Julian, later the apostate emperor. In his mature years he was baptized in the river Jordan along with Euvlios his former teacher. He was Bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia for almost ten years and completed his earthly life fifty years after his birth. He was a great defender of Orthodoxy, a great light of moral purity, a religious zealot, a great theological

mind, a great builder and pillar of the Church of God. Basil fully deserved the title "Great." In liturgical services, he is referred to as the "bee of the Church of Christ which brings honey to the faithful and with its stinger pricks the heretics." Numerous works of this Father of the Church are preserved. They include theological, apologetical, ascetical and canonical writings as well as the Holy and Divine Liturgy named after him. This Divine Liturgy is celebrated ten times throughout the year: the First of January, his feast day. On the eve of the Nativity of our Lord. On the eve of the Epiphany of our Lord. All Sundays of the Honorable Fast [Lenten Season], except Palm Sunday. On Great and Holy Thursday and on Great and Holy Saturday. St. Basil died peacefully on January 1, 379 A.D., and was translated into the Kingdom of Christ.

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Fr Peter & Pañi Bernadette wish to thank all the members of the parish family for your prayers, candles, cards and gifts during the celebration of the Feast of the Nativity of Christ. May God bless you for your kindness!
Many Years! Mnohaja L'ita!

The Most Amazing Event in the History of the World The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Igumen Nikon (Vorobiev), on OrthoChristian.com

Today we celebrate the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ. There has been no event in the history of the world more amazing than the Nativity of Christ. The Lord God Pantocrator, who created the visible and invisible world and all that is therein with but a single word, that Same God humbled Himself, took for Himself Flesh of the Most-blessed Virgin Mary, was born in a cave, and as a helpless Infant, was laid in a manger.

Heaven was terrified, and the ends of the earth moved. A tremendous miracle and mystery had taken place, one utterly beyond the comprehension not only of man, but of the highest of the heavenly host.

For what reason did the Lord come down to earth?

There is but one answer: in order to save man. We should recognize that if the Lord performs this act for man, man must be of some particular value [to God], for [He] would not have employed such a means to salvation for the sake of anything worthless or insignificant. One thousand years before the Nativity of Christ, the king and prophet David had exclaimed in bewilderment [in Psalm 8: 4–5]: O Lord, what is man, that Thou art mindful of him? And the Son of man, that Thou visitest him? For Thou madest him a little lower than the Angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor?

We have even more cause to fall in fear and reverence before the Lord and cry out: Lord, what is man, that Thou didst not disdain a virgin womb, that Thou didst hide Thy Divinity and didst deign to become a man?"

What is man after all? The Word of God says: man is God's finest creation. Man is the image of God.

All was created by God's all-powerful word. God said: Let there be light: and there was light... (Genesis 1:3) Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after its kind... (Gen. 1:11) and it was so. And God said: Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of Heaven... (Gen. 1:20). And everything happened according to the word of God.

When all was arranged, God turned to the creation of man, but only after, as it were, deliberation and counsel. In what caused St Gregory of Nyssa to marvel, God [the Father] as it were invited the other Persons of the Holy Trinity to confer together. For the Lord first said: Let Us make man in Our Image, after Our Likeness... (Gen. 1:26). And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life... (Gen. 3:7).

The Lord created man by a special act: He first created the body, and then breathed into it the "breath of life," i.e. he instilled in it as it were a portion of His Divine Essence. That is why in the Psalm (Ps. 82:6 KJV/81:6 Septuagint), the Prophet David has God say about people: I have said, ye are gods, and all of you are sons of the Most High... The Incarnate Lord Jesus Christ Himself confirmed the Truth of those words to the Jews who were prepared to stone him to death, accusing him of making Himself equal to God by calling God his Father. The Lord replied to them thus: "Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods...and the scripture cannot be broken... (John 10:34–35). Thus, man is the image of invisible God, and has within him a "tiny piece" of Divinity.

Man was so fine and beautiful before the Fall into sin, and even more so after his redemption by the Lord, that Saints to whom the mysteries of heaven had been revealed, e.g. Makarios of Egypt, would say: "There is nothing finer than the human soul either on earth or in heaven." Man was predestined for blissful happiness, but because of the devil's envy, he fell, betrayed God, went voluntarily over to the side of the slanderer, the devil, and desired to know not only the good which he had known in paradise, but also evil, which he had not theretofore known. Having fallen away from God, he fell under the sentence earlier pronounced by God: "Thou shalt die."

Adam and Eve were spiritually devastated. Their intellect became darkened and clouded, their will perverse, their heart twisted. Where they had been given a heavenly body, they now received crude matter, like unto that of cattle. Because of them, the earth was cursed, and they themselves were doomed to sorrow and to knowledge of evil—that which they, on the devil's advice, had sought to know. The more mankind multiplied, the darker and more sullied did he become.

Lest man fall into despair and utterly perish, the Lord promised him that in time the family of the wife (not the husband)—i.e., Christ, born of a Virgin, by the Holy Spirit—would crush the head of the serpent and would save man. It is this mysterious event that we now celebrate. The Lord took pity on His creation, and came down to earth, in order to save the sheep that had been lost to predators. He came down to earth in order to raise us up to Heaven once again. He took on the form of a man, took upon Himself the sins of all mankind, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son..."

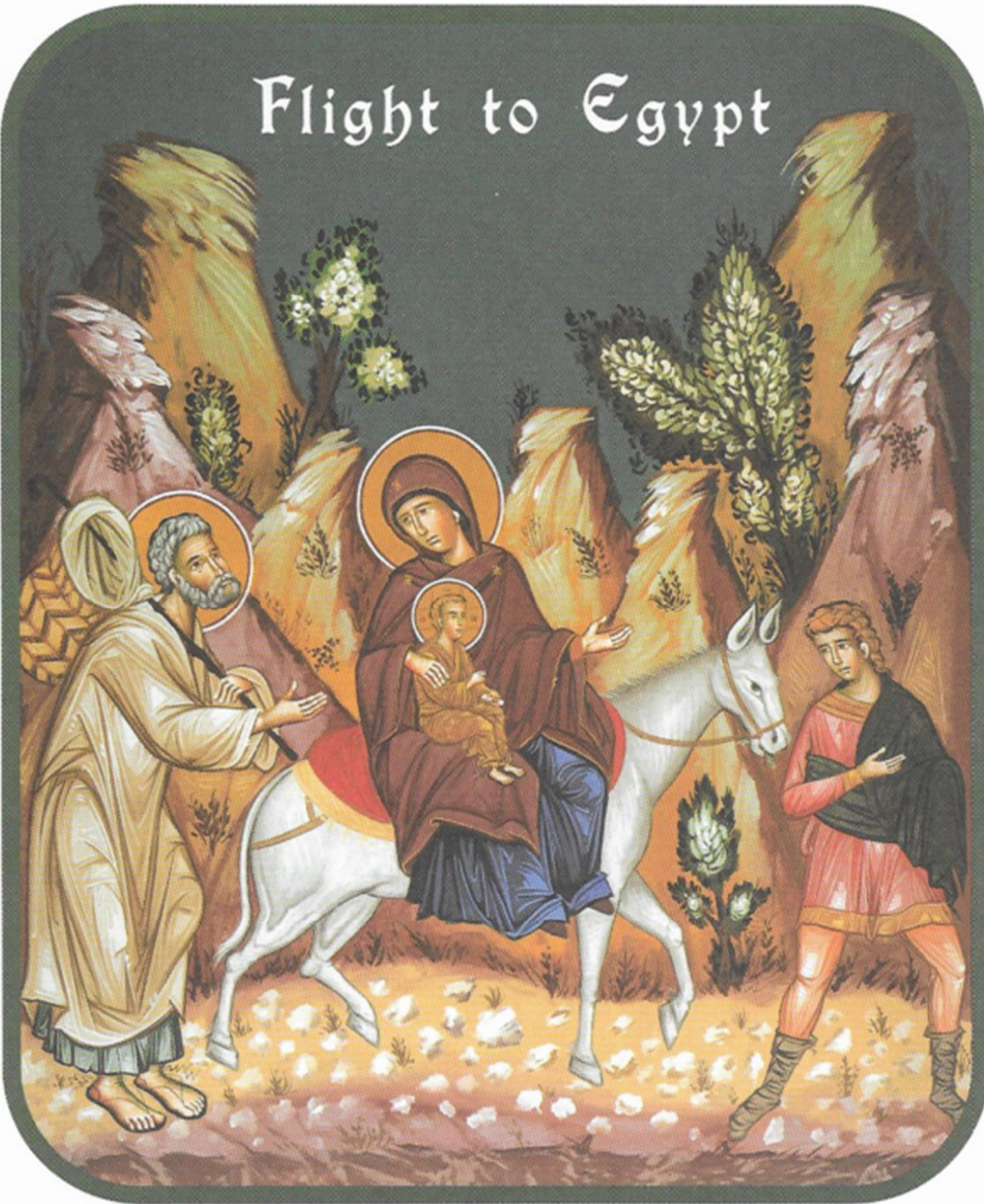
Jesus Christ opened the closed gates of paradise. He rebuilt the spiritual ladder by which man may ascend to Heaven.

In taking on human flesh, the Lord raised man above the ranks of Angels, and robed him in glory greater than that of Adam in Paradise before the Fall.

If we are in fact true Christians, if we force ourselves to act on the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ, who came for our sake, then we will also be with the Lord, as He promised his disciples in their final talk before His Ascension. The Lord said that those who are vouchsafed the Kingdom of God will become bright as the sun.

On Mt. Tabor, the Lord revealed to man his future glory. His face was like the sun, His garments sparkled like lightning. That external beauty and glory was but a tiny hint of the enormous glory that is within, for according to the prophet, The king's daughter is all glorious within... (Psalm 45:13 KJV/ Ps.44: 13 Septuagint).

Flight to Egypt



THE ULTIMATE "PROTECTIVE PARENTS"

Being a parent can be described as a multi-faceted vocation. A father and mother are called upon to provide for every need of their child - sometimes at great expense and often with greater sacrifice. A child must be taught, nurtured, fed and disciplined. These are just a few parental responsibilities that a father and mother are obligated to meet.

Perhaps the most important duty, however, that every parent must embrace is protecting their child from harm and misfortune. Sometimes lost in the story of our Lord's Nativity is the effort made by Joseph and the Virgin Mary to protect their precious Child from King Herod. He slaughtered scores of innocent children in Bethlehem and its surrounding region in his rage-driven quest to eliminate anyone who would dare be referred to as the "King of the Jews."

The Gospel of St. Matthew gives us the account of the courageous actions of our Lord's earthly parents. An angel of the Lord warns Joseph in a dream: "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him." (Matthew 2:13) In the dead of night, they fled from their home in Bethlehem and embarked upon a long and dangerous journey, traveling hundreds of miles over rugged, unfamiliar terrain. Somehow, they safely arrived in Egypt, remaining there until Joseph received another heavenly visitor saying: "Arise, take the Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the Child's life are dead." (Matthew 2:20) Their stay in Egypt is shrouded in mystery. What we do know is this: Joseph and Mary were the ultimate "protective parents," preserving unharmed the One Who would grow up to be the Savior of the world!