

We would like to welcome all parish visitors and invite you to join us after the Liturgy for Coffee hour.

Orthodox Church of the Mother of God

OCA – Diocese of New York-New Jersey

V. Rev. Dr. Matthew Searfoorce, Rector

Sub-Deacon Edward Dawson

Sub-Deacon Vlashi

Parish Council President: Andrew Romanofsky

Parish Council Vice President: Holly Dawson



Sunday, January 8, 2017

Gospel: Matthew 4:12-17 *(Sunday after Theophany)* Epistle: Ephesians 4:7-13

Tone 4

29th Sunday After Pentecost

Afterfeast of the Theophany. Sunday after Theophany. Ven. George the Chozebite, Abbot (6th c.). Ven. Domnica of Constantinople (474). St. Emilian the Confessor, Bishop of Cyzicus (9th c.). Ven. Gregory, Wonderworker of the Kiev Caves (Near Caves—1093). Ven. Gregory the Recluse, of the Kiev Caves (Far Caves—13th-14th c.). Hieromartyr Isidore and 72 others at Yuriev (Estonia—1472). St. Paisius of Uglich (1504). Hieromartyr Carterius of Caesarea in Cappadocia (304). Martyrs Theophilus the Deacon, and Helladius, in Libya (4th c.). Martyrs Julian and his wife, Basilissa, and with them Marcionilla, her son Celsus, Anthony, Anastasius, 7 children and 20 soldiers, at Antinoë in Egypt (313). Ven. Elias the Hermit, of Egypt (4th c.). Martyr Abo the Perfumer, of Tiflis (Georgia—790).

Troparion – Tone 4

Of old, the river Jordan / turned back before Elisha's mantle at Elijah's ascension. / The waters were parted in two / and the waterway became a dry path. / This is truly a symbol of baptism / by which we pass through this mortal life. / Christ has appeared in the Jordan to sanctify the waters!

Kontakion – Tone 4

Today the Lord enters the Jordan and cries out to John: / "Do not be afraid to baptize me. / For I have come to save Adam, the first-formed man."



Afterfeast of the Theophany of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

Prayer Requests

For Health of:

Presbyter John and Matushka Kathryn Malcom; Reader Paul Flurschutz; and Paul Chernay, offered by Archbishop Michael and the Diocese of NY/NJ.

In Memory of:

Olga Romanofsky, offered by the Romanofsky family.

The newly departed + **Irma Opacic**, offered by Archbishop Michael and the Diocese of NY/NJ.

Liturgical Schedule

Sunday, January 8th

9:30 am: Sunday School
9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, January 14th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, January 15th

9:30 am: Sunday School
9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, January 21st

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, January 22nd

9:30 am: Sunday School
9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Saturday, January 28th

6:30 pm: Vespers

Sunday, January 29th

9:30 am: Sunday School
9:40 am: Hours
10:00 am: Divine Liturgy

Bulletin Sponsors

Romanofsky Family

Readings:

The Prokeimenon in the 1st Tone (Sunday after Theophany):

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us / as we have set our hope on Thee!
(Psalm 32:22)
vs. Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous! Praise befits the just!
(Psalm 32:1)

Epistle: Ephesians 4:7-13 (Sunday after Theophany)

Brethren, grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it is said, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men." (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is he who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Alleluia in the 5th Tone (Sunday after Theophany):

I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Thy truth from generation to generation.
(Psalm 88:2)
vs. For Thou hast said: "Mercy will be established forever; Thy truth will be prepared in the heavens."
(Psalm 88:3)

Gospel: Matthew 4:12-17 (Sunday after Theophany)

At that time, Jesus heard that John had been arrested, He withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth He went and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Through the Grace of God – Orthodox Christianity

St John Chrysostom: Jesus At The Door of Your Heart

“Find Jesus at the door of your heart and you will discover paradise”



Afterfeast of the Theophany of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

The second day of the Afterfeast of Theophany falls on January 8. At Vespers we repeat a hymn which has already been sung at Compline for Theophany. In the hymn Saint John wonders in whose name he should baptize Christ. Should he baptize Him in the name of the Father? The Lord Jesus Christ already bears Him in Himself. Of the Son? He Himself is the incarnate Son of God. Of the Holy Spirit? Christ Himself sends the Spirit.



Bulletin Sponsor: Use the sign-up sheet at the candle stand for the health of, eternal memory of or a Pannikhida for a loved one or friend, for a donation of \$10. Sponsors will be remembered during Divine Liturgy for the day/week that you signed up for.

Memorial Candles: Candles be purchased at the candle stand, suggested donation of \$10 for a large one.

Private Confessions: Can be heard a half hour before any service. See Father Matthew for other times.

General Confession: Will be at 9:45 am on the first Sunday of the month.

Pannikhida Service: The third Sunday of each month there will be a Pannikhida after Divine Liturgy. If you would like your loved ones to be remembered please give a list of names to Father Matthew before that Sunday for those to be remembered in the month.

Special Announcements for the bulletin can be submitted by E-Mail:

OrthodoxChurchMotherOfGod@outlook.com

The Living Clean Group of Narcotics Anonymous meets every Friday from 8-9:15 pm downstairs in the community room.

The Grey Book Step Meeting Group of Narcotics Anonymous meets every Tuesday from 7-8:00 pm downstairs in the community room.



Orthodox Church of the Mother of God: Parish News

Next Council meeting: January 29, 2017

Annual Parish meeting: February 12, 2017 after Divine Liturgy

From the Treasurer: Trudy Ellmore:

- 2016 Budget: \$27,370.00
- 2016 Year End: \$28,646.23 (Income)
\$27,893.51 (Expenses)
\$752.72 (Difference)

Because of you and your generosity, the ministry of the parish is blessed! Thank you! May God be glorified!

2017 Budget (Tentative): \$28,229.00 will be presented at our Annual Parish Meeting, February 12, 2017. Please attend. Your voice is very important.

2017 Financial membership requirement \$200 per person (18 years of age and over).

Your 2016 Giving Record is available at the candle desk. Those not picked up today will be mailed.



NY/NJ Diocese News

“The Mystery of the Diaconate”

The **Annual Diocesan Altar Server Retreat** will be held at **Saint Basil Academy in Garrison NY from February 10-12, 2017**. It is designed for altar servers of all ages! The main focus of this annual retreat is to bring the young men of our diocese together in prayer, Christian fellowship, education, and lots of fun! Under the guidance and direction of Archbishop Michael, the participants will learn the importance and role of the order of the

“Orthodox Church of the Mother of God: Joy of all the Sorrowful” founded in 1966

Diaconate in the life of the Church – both in a liturgical function, and as a servant of God’s people, ministering to the outside world. More information is available in the "Upcoming Events" section of this website.

Complete information is available on the diocesan website in the “Upcoming Events” section and featured in a banner news headline. A convenient web-link is available for on-line registrations:

<http://nynjoca.wixsite.com/nynjocayouth/upcoming-events>

“A Fond Farewell in Retirement: Father Joseph and Matushka Charlotte Woodhill”

We extend our prayerful best wishes to **Archpriest Joseph** and **Matushka Charlotte Woodill** on Father Joseph's retirement from active parish ministry at Saint Nicholas Church in Whitestone NY, and the Diocese of New York and New Jersey, for health reasons, effective 1 January 2017 following his last Sunday service in the parish, at which he was honored by his loving community of faithful.

On 26 December 2016, Archbishop Michael and Deanery clergy served the Feast of the Synaxis of the Theotokos with Father Joseph at Saint Nicholas Church. At the conclusion of the Liturgy, Archbishop Michael presented a Gramota on behalf of the Holy Synod of Bishops (Orthodox Church in America) to Father Joseph for his exemplary service of 37 years in the Holy Priesthood. Father and Matushka Charlotte also received the Saint Innocent Medal from Archbishop Michael on behalf of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon, in recognition of their service to the Orthodox Church in America and to both Saint Tikhon's and Saint Vladimir's Seminaries. Following the Liturgy there was a fellowship hour with the parishioners of Saint Nicholas Church; then, the Archbishop and Deanery clergy and their wives took Father and Matushka to a farewell luncheon.

Father and Matushka have moved to Virginia to live with their son and his family. His Eminence and all the clergy and faithful of the Diocese pray that God will grant them His choicest blessings as they enter this new season of their life together.

Grant, O Lord, a prosperous and peaceful life, good health, salvation, visitation, and good hastening in all things, unto Thy servants, the Archpriest Joseph and Matushka Charlotte, and protect and preserve them for many blessed years! "Mnogaya Lyeta!"

“2017 Distinguished Diocesan Benefactors”

Thanks to the sacrificial generosity of **DDBs** from throughout the diocese and beyond, over \$831,000 was contributed during the first six years (2011-2016) of the program! Last year a record-breaking total of \$181,265 was received. As a result, vital ministries have received much-needed support; the work of the Church is being funded as never before! There are visible “fruits” of our labors and efforts as mission parishes are being established and supported, seminarians are receiving scholarships, and struggling parishes are being revitalized. **The 2017 DDB Initiative is now launched!**

“Saint Innocent Mission Parish”

Father Vasil Dubee, parish rector of **Saint Innocent of Alaska Mission Parish in Oneonta NY**, reports:

“We have had some wonderful happenings at our Mission. We purchased 5.1 acres of land for the future site of our church and rectory in the town of Oneonta back in October. The land was purchased with a donation from the Lindsay and Olive B. O'Connor Foundation for \$18,500! Just two weeks after the closing, I received a call from the realtor who handled the land sale to us and he said the seller had 5.3 acres on the south border of the land and would like to offer it to us for purchase at the same price of \$18,500. I told him I would love to, but most-likely cannot do it because I have no idea where the money would come from!”

“I let my parish council know about it, and one of our members works for the Lindsay and Olive B. O'Connor foundation. This Foundation exists to help out churches in the upper Catskill Mountains area, namely Delaware, Otsego and Schoharie counties. We celebrated a Moleben (service of thanksgiving) to the Theotokos “Kardiotissa” (a miraculous myrrh-streaming icon) in Taylor PA.”

“By the next parish meeting our parish treasurer, who works for the Foundation, had presented this to them ... and they granted us an additional donation of \$23,000 for the purchase of the second piece of land, making our total plot around 10.5 acres!”

“We closed on the property on 3 January 2017 at 1 p.m.”

“This is undoubtedly an incredible blessing from Almighty God and affirms His will to establish an Orthodox Church in Oneonta NY! Glory be to Him!”



Orthodox Church in America (OCA) News

“Teachers: It’s not too early to plan your Lenten lessons”

While we are anticipating the celebration of the Great Feast of Theophany on January 6, and while the Great Fast this year does not begin until Monday, February 27, it’s not too early for Church school teachers to begin planning lessons that focus on the Great Lent, Holy Week and the Feast of Feasts—Holy Pascha.

The Orthodox Church in America’s Department of Christian Education offers an excellent, six-session study unit titled “Journey to Pascha” with a wealth of lessons and activities for four different age groups, from four years old to 18, and a fifth unit for adults. The program includes numerous Bible stories, icons, activities and texts and explanations of services and prayers. Each session focuses on a different theme, beginning with the account of the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Subsequent sessions trace the days of Holy Week, what Jesus taught His disciples during this time, and what happened to Jesus as He was brought to trial, put to death and buried. The final sessions celebrate the events that led to His Resurrection from the dead. A palm cross activity for older students is also included.

“Journey to Pascha” lessons and related resources may be downloaded and printed for use free of charge.

“Hundreds of students attend OCF’s three regional Christmas conferences”

Every December, hundreds of Orthodox Christian college students flock to one of three simultaneously held regional conferences during the week after the Great Feast of the Nativity. As in past years, the conferences were sponsored by the Orthodox Christian Fellowship were held at Antiochian Village, Bolivar, PA; Saint Iakovos Retreat Center, Kansasville, WI; and Saint Nicholas Ranch, Dunlap, CA December 27-30, 2016.

In addition to celebrating the liturgical services and Divine Liturgy, participants heard challenging presentations, participated in discussion groups and workshops, and enjoyed meeting their peers from around the country. Students also were delighted by the presence of His Grace, Bishop Gregory of Nyssa of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of the USA, who delivered the homily during the conference Divine Liturgy.

The theme of this year’s conferences was “Come and See.” Introducing and developing the theme at the East Coast Conference at Antiochian Village was Archpriest Timothy Hojnicky, Rector of Holy Apostles Church [OCA], Mechanicsburg, PA. In his keynote address, he reflected on how people see Christ in us and how to share our faith with others. Other speakers included Archpriests Joel Gilliam [Antiochian Archdiocese] and Anthony Hughes [Greek Archdiocese]; Priests Nicholas Belcher, Bogdan Bucur, and Paul Abernathy, all of the Antiochian Archdiocese; and Jason Cantanese.

The theme was further developed in a series of workshops that enabled the participants to take a deeper look into prayer, the Orthodox Christian understanding of salvation, living the Christian life as a layperson, Scripture reading, and living the sacramental life.

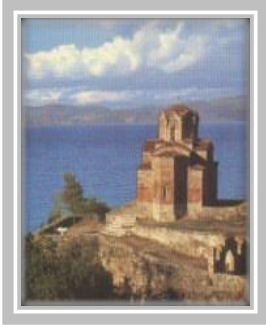
“It is quite a remarkable event to have close to 300 college students come together from all over the country, from different jurisdictions (even calendars!), during their Christmas break and participate in this wonderful four-day event,” observed Father Timothy. “We had an intense schedule of workshops, fellowship and worship services that filled these days of spiritual reflection with grace that will be felt for a lifetime!”

Emma Solak, a senior at the University of Pittsburgh, Student Leadership Board Chairman and a member of the OCA Youth Department, agreed. “College Conference is a time to actively engage in the Faith—whether that’s through the speakers, developing new friends or reconnecting with old ones, participating in the services, or taking the time for personal reflection,” she said. “I think as college students we too often passively participate in the life of the Church because we get bogged down by the chaos of the semester. College Conference always reminds me to take a step back and focus on deepening my relationship with and love for Christ and my neighbor.”

Through the generosity of the OCA faithful and the Stewards of the Orthodox Church in America, ten scholarships were made available to OCA students to help defray their expenses in attending the conferences.

In related news, OCF is accepting applications from those interested in participating in its annual “Real Break” mission trips in March 2017. As an alternative to “Spring Break” activities, “Real Break” makes it possible for Orthodox Christian students to put their faith into action in a variety of domestic settings—including Alaska, Cleveland, New Orleans and Project Mexico—as well as in Thessaloniki, Romania and Jerusalem. Details and registration information may be found on the OCF web site.

Orthodox Christian Fellowship is the official campus ministry organization of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America.



Prayers by the Laker, St. Velimirovich, LXXXIX:

Who is that staring at me through all the stars in heaven and all the creatures on earth?

Cover your eyes, stars and creatures; do not look upon my nakedness. Shame torments me enough through my own eyes.

What is there for you to see? A tree of life that has been reduced to a thorn on the road, that pricks both itself and others. What else—except a heavenly flame immersed in mud, a flame that neither gives light nor goes out?

Plowmen, it is not your plowing that matters but the Lord who watches.

Singers, it is not your singing that matters but the Lord who listens.

Sleepers, it is not your sleeping that matters but the Lord who wakens.

It is not the pools of water in the rocks around the lake that matter but the lake itself.

What is all human time but a wave that moistens the burning sand on the shore, and then regrets that it left the lake, because it has dried up?

O stars and creatures, do not look at me with your eyes but at the Lord. He alone sees. Look at Him and you will see yourselves in your homeland.

What do you see when you look at me? A picture of your exile? A mirror of your fleeting transitoriness?

O Lord, my beautiful veil, embroidered with golden seraphim, drape over my face like a veil over the face of a widow, and collect my tears, in which the sorrow of all Your creatures seethes.

O Lord, my beauty, come and visit me, lest I be ashamed of my nakedness—lest the many thirsty glances that are falling upon me return home thirsty.

Sayings of the Ascetics of the Orthodox Church, LXXXIX:

**III. Us and Our Neighbors
Relationships With Other People**

The holy Isaiah said: If one should speak to his brother with guile, he will not escape spiritual harm.

Ancient Patericon, 10.28



The Morning Offering – Daily Inspiration by Abbott Tryphon

Confession

On making a good confession

Following His glorious Resurrection, as He appeared to His Disciples, Our Lord Jesus Christ gave the command that: “Whosoever’s sins you remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever’s sins you retain, they are retained.” John 20:23

From that moment in history, the Church has seen Confession (or repentance) as one of the holy mysteries (or sacraments) of the Church, through which the penitent receives the divine forgiveness of Christ for any sins that are confessed.

The Lord Jesus Christ bestowed His authority upon the Church to forgive sins, and the priest or the bishop, as His representative on earth, through his ordination, prayers to God for the salvation of the servant of God who really repented of his / her sins and God forgives the sins through the priest. Not the priest but God through the priests’ prayer forgives. The Mystery of Holy Confession is holy because it connects God and His children, with the priest acting as the Bridge.

Dependent upon the sin committed, the priest has the right to ban a communicant from receiving Holy Communion, for serious sin requires a time of repentance. Every priest has the right to forgive and retain through God the sins of the faithful, who are coming to Confession, but every priest cannot listen to Confessions, they have to be appointed by the local Bishop, they should be trained in the practice and in the spiritual life.

To make a good confession it is necessary to prepare yourself carefully. Ask God to give you Grace to make a thorough examination of your conscience. The following can be of real value, as you prepare to stand before the Gospel Book, with the priest as the witness, and make your confession before Christ Himself.



Daily Reflection Faith and Ritual



“...And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, Begotten of the Father before all ages, Light of Light, True God of True God, Begotten, not made, of one essence with the Father, by Whom all things were made: Who for us men (τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, human beings) and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and was made man (ἐνανθρωπήσαντα, became human)...”
(Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed)

“Celebrating“ a great feast like the Nativity of our Lord, or Theophany, we are putting this faith into a special kind of action. It is the specific, very human action called “ritual“ (perhaps from the root “re(i)“ meaning “to count, number“). Through ritual we “keep track“ of, and emphasize, that which we hold dear, like life (when we celebrate birthdays), or love (when we celebrate marriage), lest we forget “who“ we are and “that“ we, indeed, are.

Let me prepare to celebrate our common faith “in one Lord, Jesus Christ,“ the “Light of Light,“ lest I forget the Source of all that is light in my life. Tomorrow some of us will sing, “Your Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone to the world the light of knowledge!“ (Troparion of the Nativity), and others of us – “Today You have shown forth to the world, O Lord, and the light of Your countenance has been marked on us” (Kontakion of Theophany). Mark Your light upon all of us, O Lord, through our light-giving rituals. Amen.

Holy Orthodox Quotes

“If we will not gladly disdain present delights, we will not with certainty feel and taste the whole sweetness of God.”

+St Peter of Diadochus

Psalms 34:9

But my soul shall greatly rejoice in the Lord; My soul shall delight in His salvation.

Psalms 111:1-3

Alleluia. † Blessed is the man who fears the Lord; He will delight exceedingly in His commandments; His seed shall be mighty on earth; The generation of the upright shall be blessed; Glory and riches shall be in his house, And his righteousness continues unto ages of ages.

1 John 2:15-17

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.† For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.† And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

The Philokalia: Daily Readings

Nothing is better than pure prayer. For it, as from a spring, come the virtues: understanding and gentleness, love and self-control, and the support and encouragement that God grants in response to tears.

+ St Theognostos, On the Practice of Virtue

Ancient Christian Wisdom

The Lord sometimes allows people who are devoted to Him to fall into such dreadful vices; and this is in order to prevent them from falling into a still greater sin... pride.

Your temptation will pass and you will spend the remaining days of your life in humility. Only do not forget your sin.

+ St. Seraphim of Sarov

Daily Readings with Early Church Fathers and Mothers

"Hopelessness" by St. Isaac the Syrian

Do not fall into despair because of stumbling. I do not mean that you should not feel contrition for them, but that you should not think them incurable. For it is more expedient to be bruised than dead. There is, indeed, a Healer for the man who has stumbled, even He Who on the Cross asked that mercy be shown to His crucifiers, He Who pardoned His murders while He hung on the Cross. ‘All manner of sin,’ He said, ‘and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men,’ that is, through repentance.

Wisdom of the Church Fathers

"Refuse to listen to the devil when he whispers to you: give me now, and you will give tomorrow to God. No, no! Spend all the hours of your life in a way pleasing to God; keep in your mind the thought that after the present hour you will not be given another and that you will have to render a strict account for every minute of this present hour".

**+Saint Nicodemus the Hagiorite
(1749-1809)**

