

**Sunday of the Forefathers:**

Two Sundays before the celebration of Christmas, the Orthodox Church rejoices in the festival of the **Holy Forefathers of the Old Covenant**, including those who came before the giving of the Law. The foretold the coming of the Messiah and are redeemed by his saving Pascha.

There is a great difference between *existing* and *living*. Many people exist. Very few really live. Only those who seek God have life. Only those who delight in His commandments and rejoice in accomplishing His will pass beyond mere existence and actually find life. **"Seek God, and your soul shall live"** (P's 69:32, LXX). This is the cry of the psalmist David who is especially hymned on this Sunday and on the Sunday after Christmas. His exhortation is in perfect harmony with the words of God given to Moses in His revelation of the divine Law.

*"See I have set before you this day life and good, death and evil. If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you this day, by walking in His ways, and by keeping His commandments and His statutes and His ordinances, then you shall live and multiply, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land which you are entering to take possession of it. But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, I declare to you this day, that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land which you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life, that you and your descendants may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying His voice, and cleaving to Him; for that means life to you and length of days, that you may dwell in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them."* (Deut 30:15-20)

The holy forefathers and mothers, together with all their descendants, have chosen life. They find it in God's Messiah, Jesus Christ, who is Life itself, God's incarnate Word. The celebration of the Winter Pascha is a celebration of Life in God's Word. For **"Christ who is our life"** has already appeared (Col 3:4). We have **"beheld His glory"** (Jn 1:14). Now that glory is hidden in the **"form of a slave"** (Phil 2:7), but it will be revealed at the end of the ages in power for those who **"have loved His appearing"** and **"live in Him"** (2 Tim 4:8; Col 2:6).

*You shone as heaven's lights upon the earth  
Enkindling the light of piety.  
You called forth the choir of all creation  
As you sang to the Master who saves all from temptation,  
"Bless Him, O children! Exalt Him, O priests!  
Praise Christ, all people, throughout all the ages!"*

(An excerpt from *The Winter Pascha*, by Fr. Thomas Hopko)

See us on the web at:

[ChurchMotherOfGod.org/bulletin](http://ChurchMotherOfGod.org/bulletin)

E-Mail us at:

[Bulletin@ChurchMotherOfGod.org](mailto:Bulletin@ChurchMotherOfGod.org)

Sunday Bulletin

**Church of the Mother of God**

**"The Joy of All the Sorrowful"**

115 Hudson St.  
Mays Landing, New Jersey 08330

**Rev. Boris Slootsky, Rector**

2B Pembroke Lane  
Manchester, New Jersey 08759  
(732) 350-9588



Sunday of the Holy Ancestors of Christ

Glory to Jesus Christ

Glory Forever

*Through faith You justified the Forefathers,  
betrothing through them the Church of the gentiles.  
These saints exult in glory,  
for from their seed came forth a glorious fruit:  
She who bore You without seed.  
So by their prayers, O Christ God, have mercy on us!*

Troparion - Sunday of the Forefathers

**On this day the Church remembers:**

**SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS** • Ven. Daniel the Stylite of Constantinople (489-90) • Ven. Nikon the Dry of the Kiev Caves (Near Caves—12<sup>th</sup> c.) • Martyrs Mirax, Acepisus and Aithalas, of Egypt (7<sup>th</sup> c.) • Ven. Luke the New Stylite of Chalcedon (ca. 970-980) • New Hieromartyrs Seraphim (Chichagov), Metropolitan of Petrograd, Archpriests Peter and Aleksy (1937—Nov 28<sup>th</sup> O.S.), and Nikolai (1941—Nov 28<sup>th</sup> O.S.).

**December 11, 2011**

Tone 1 of the Octoechos.  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday before Nativity)

26<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
12<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Luke

**Today's Bulletin Sponsors are:****For health of:**

**The Church School Students and Teachers**, offered by the Parish Council

**Readings:**

- **Colossians 3:4-11** (2 Sundays before the Nativity)
- **Luke 14:16-24;**( Matthew 22:14) [Combined] (2 Sundays before the Nativity)

**BRETHREN**, when Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. In these you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away; anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.

**The Lord said this parable:** "A man once gave a great banquet, and invited many; and at the time of the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for all is now ready.' But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I go out and see it; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I must go to examine them; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So the servant came and reported this to his master. Then the householder in anger said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame.' And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and there is still room.' And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet. For many are called, but few are chosen.'"

**Sunday service:**

**Hours - 9:40 AM**

**Divine Liturgy – 10:00 AM**

**(General Confession – 9 50 AM on the first Sunday of each month)**

**(Pannikhidas – after Divine Liturgy 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month)**

**Church School - 9:30 AM**

(no classes 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month)

**Coffee hour** after Liturgy

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

**Announcements:**

- **St Nicholas Celebration.** Our Saint Nicholas Day celebration will be held today at coffee hour after Divine Liturgy. There will be food, fun, and surprise guests. All are welcome.
- **Toys for Kids** The church school students are collecting for the "Toys for Kids" campaign again this year. Today is the last day of the collection. There is a collection box in the basement of the church. All of the toys will be distributed this month to needy children throughout the Atlantic County area. The website for the Atlantic County Toys For Kids Program is: [www.toysforkidsprogram.com](http://www.toysforkidsprogram.com)
- **On the next few Sundays, there will be a second collection for the Nativity flowers and decorations.**

**Special Announcements:**

- **Parish dues have been increased for the 2012-year by \$25.** That means that **the Parish Membership Fee will now be \$200.** This was needed because our monthly income has constantly been below our monthly expenses. (The Parish Membership Fee is the total of the \$55 parish dues, and the \$145 diocesan assessment.)

**Reminder:**

- Upcoming bulletins can be sponsored; this can be done with the signup sheet at the candle stand.
- Special Announcements for the bulletin can be submitted by E-Mail to: [Bulletin@ChurchMotherOfGod.org](mailto:Bulletin@ChurchMotherOfGod.org)