

(There were no Bulletin Sponsors for today)

### Readings:

- **Ephesians 2:4-10**
- **Luke 18:18-27 \***

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**BRETHREN**, God who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God: not because of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

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**At that time** a ruler asked him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.'" And he said, "All these I have observed from my youth." And when Jesus heard it, he said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." But when he heard this he became sad, for he was very rich. Jesus looking at him said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." Those who heard it said, "Then who can be saved?" But he said, "What is impossible with men is possible with God."

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\* (The reading for the 11<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Luke is always read 2 Sundays before the Nativity, which will be December 15<sup>th</sup> this year. The reading that would have been read that Sunday will be read today. This year, weeks 13 and 11 are switched.)

### Saturday service: Vespers – 6:30 PM

### Sunday service:

**Hours** – 9:40 AM      **Divine Liturgy** – 10:00 AM  
**Private Confession** – Half hour before any service. See Fr Matthew for other times.  
**General Confession** – 9:45 AM on the first Sunday of each month  
**Pannikhidas** – after Divine Liturgy 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month

### Coffee hour – after Liturgy

**Church School** - Sunday 9:30 AM (no classes 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month)  
 Church School will be held today, December 1<sup>st</sup>, at 9:30 AM.  
 Church School will not be held next Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>.

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

### Announcements:

- There will be a meeting of the Sisterhood of the Protection of the Mother of God today, after coffee hour.
- We would like to thank Fr. Daniel and Matushka Dunia Hubiak for joining us last Sunday.
- **Open House** – Saturday, December 14<sup>th</sup>, our church will participate in the neighborhood's open house. Visitors may stop by that evening from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm.
- The **baptism of Gabrielle Guedes** will be celebrated next Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup> during Liturgy.
- **Our annual St. Nicholas Day celebration** will be held next Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. All children are welcome to join us after Divine Liturgy to help decorate our tree. We are hoping for a visit from St. Nicholas himself. If you would like your child to participate in the festivities, please see Maribeth Romanofsky or Linda Dantinne for details.

### Special Announcements:

- **Books make great gifts.** Please check our online bookstore at: [astore.amazon.com/orchofthmoofg-20](http://astore.amazon.com/orchofthmoofg-20) or use the "Church Bookstore" link on our website: [churchmotherofgod.org](http://churchmotherofgod.org) (4% of all sales go to our parish)
- Special Announcements for the bulletin can be submitted by E-Mail to: [Bulletin@ChurchMotherOfGod.org](mailto:Bulletin@ChurchMotherOfGod.org)
- Upcoming bulletins can be sponsored; this can be done with the signup sheet at the candle stand.
- **As the year comes to a close**, the parish council wishes to remind parishioners to be generous in their donations, so that our yearly income will cover our yearly expenses.

The Privilege of Being Listened To:

**Because Saint Nicholas of Myra, celebrated on December 6, is remembered for generosity and gentleness, one event in his life surprises many people.**

It happened at the Council of Nicaea in 325, which both he and the heretic Arius attended. The well-spoken Arius was confidently trying to convince the Council to accept his teaching that Jesus Christ is not truly the Son of God.

Nicholas listened until he could bear no more. He rose and struck Arius, believing that dangerous lies and distortions did not deserve the privilege of being listened to.

A number of articulate, popular atheists today write books and make public statements attempting to convince people that God does not exist. To believe in God, they say, is to subscribe to a false idea that has caused strife all over the world.

Because these writers particularly attack Christianity, we Christians should determine whether the quality of their scholarship and their actual knowledge of the faith they criticize entitles them to the privilege of being listened to.

In his book "The God Delusion" atheist Richard Dawkins writes that Adam and Eve, as a result of their sin, were "banished forever from the Garden of Eden" and "deprived of the gift of eternal life." This is nonsense; the reason for Christ's coming is to restore our eternal communion with God.

Regarding Christ Himself, Dawkins says, "Jesus was a loyal Jew. It was Paul who invented the idea of taking the Jewish God to the Gentiles." He quotes one John Hartung: "Jesus would have turned over in his grave if he had known that Paul would be taking his plan to the [Gentiles]." Reading Matthew 28:19 20, a passage universally known as the "Great Commission", is enough to show that Dawkins is in error here—and is apparently unfamiliar with some of Jesus' best-known words.

Much more could be said about Dawkins' theological misrepresentations, but any serious reader will also take issue with his claims about other writers. For example, he writes that Martin Luther King, though a Christian, "derived his philosophy of non-violent civil disobedience directly from Gandhi..." But in his famous "Letter from the Birmingham Jail", King himself, having been called an extremist, lists other inspirational "extremists": Jesus, Amos, Paul. Gandhi's name does not appear.

Of fellow scientist Stephen Jay Gould, who wrote that science has nothing to say about God's existence, Dawkins says, "I simply do not believe that Gould could possibly have meant much of what he wrote..." What writer, whatever Dawkins believes, writes what he doesn't mean?

Again displaying his own beliefs, Dawkins refers to the Taliban dynamiting Buddhas in Afghanistan and writes: "I do not believe there is an atheist in the world who would bulldoze Mecca [or other holy sites]..." Is it possible he's unfamiliar with—for just one prominent example—the Soviets' destruction of countless churches in the name of atheism?

Saint Paul encourages us to "test everything" (I Thessalonians 5:21). Testing the claims of today's popular atheists shows their lack of intellectual substance. That lack means they have forfeited the privilege of being listened to.

- Department of Christian Education. Orthodox Church in America



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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"*

*Founded 1966*

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Prophet Nahum

Glory to  
Jesus Christ

Glory  
Forever

*We celebrate the memory  
of Your prophet Nahum, O Lord;  
through him we beseech You:  
Save our souls.*

Troparion -

**Today the Church remembers:**

Prophet Nahum (7th c. B.C.) • Righteous Philaret the Merciful of Amnia in Asia Minor (792) • Martyr Ananias of Persia.

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## December 1, 2013

**23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday After Pentecost**  
**11<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Luke**

**Tone 6** of the Octoechos  
(Nativity Fast)