

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

James Matthews on his birthday, offered by his mother-in-law Lore Steffy

Readings:

- **Hebrews 2:11-18** (Theotokos)
- **Luke 1:24-38** (Theotokos)
- Hebrews 6:13-20 (4th Sunday of Great Lent)
- Mark 9:17-31 (4th Sunday of Great Lent)
- Ephesians 5:9-19 (St John Climacus)
- Matthew 4:25-5:12 (St John Climacus)

BRETHREN, he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified have all one origin. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, "I will proclaim thy name to my brethren, in the midst of the congregation I will praise thee." And again, "I will put my trust in him." And again, "Here am I, and the children God has given me. Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage. For surely it is not with angels that he is concerned but with the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted.

In those days, Elizabeth the wife of Zacharias conceived and for five months she hid herself, saying, "Thus the Lord had done to me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men." In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you! But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there will be no end." And Mary said to the angel, "How shall this be, since I have no husband?" And the angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God

And behold, your kinswoman Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible." And Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Sunday service:

Hours - 9:40 AM **Divine Liturgy – 10:00 AM**
 (General Confession – 9 50 AM on the first Sunday of each month. **Except now during Lent**)
 (Private Confession – Half hour before any service. Please don't delay the service.)
 (Pannikidas – after Divine Liturgy 3rd Sunday of each month)

Church School - 9:30 AM
 (no classes 1st 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:

- **Services for Great Lent**
Friday, March 30, 6:00 PM - Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
Friday, April 6, 6:00 PM - Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
- **Holy Week Services**
Thursday, April 12, 6:00 PM - Thursday evening service (Friday Matins - 12 Passion Gospels)
Friday, April 13, 2:00 PM - Friday Vespers
Friday April 13, 6:00 PM - Good Friday Service (Saturday Matins)
- **Pascha Services**
Sunday, April 15, 2012 (Saturday April 14, 2012 11:30 PM) - **PASCHA - Midnight Service and Divine Liturgy**
After Liturgy - Blessing of Easter Food Baskets
- **St. Thomas Sunday Services**
Sunday, April 22, 2012 10:00 AM - Divine Liturgy (normal time)
After Liturgy - Blessing of graves

Special Announcements:

- There will be **Church School next Sunday, April 1st**, because there will be no General Confession on that date.
- **There will be a meeting of the Parish Council today** after coffee hour.
- **Today, and on the next two Sundays**, there will be a special collection for **Easter flowers** and other related expenses for Pascha.
- **The next meeting of the Sisterhood of the Protection of the Theotokos will be next Sunday, April 1st**, after coffee hour.
- **Choir practice** will be held at 9:30 Sunday mornings, downstairs. All those who wish to sing in the choir are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Reminders:

- **Dues and assessments are being collected for the year 2012**, Total **Parish Membership Fee is now \$200**. Partial payments are gladly accepted.
- **Volunteers are needed to clean the church**. Please use the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board, downstairs, to indicate when you can help.

Annunciation:

The feast of the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary comes nine months before Christmas on the twenty-fifth of March. It is the celebration of the announcing of the birth of Christ to the Virgin Mary as recorded in the Gospel of Saint Luke.

[see: Lk 1:26-38 inside this bulletin]

The services of the feast of the Annunciation, the Matins and the Divine Liturgy, stress again and again the joyous news of the salvation of men in the birth of the Saviour.

Today is the beginning of our salvation, the revelation of the eternal mystery. The Son of God becomes the Son of the virgin, as Gabriel announces the coming of Grace. Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos: Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you (Troparion).

A special feature of this feast is the **Matinal Canon**, which has the character of a dialogue between the Archangel Gabriel and the Virgin Mary. Also among the more popular elements of the feast is the **Magnification** which has the form of our own salutation to the virgin mother with the words of the archangel:

With the voice of the archangel we cry to Thee, O Pure One: Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with Thee! (Magnification).

The celebration of the Annunciation, therefore, is the feast of our own reception of the glad tidings of salvation, and our own glorification of the maiden Mary who becomes the Mother of God in the flesh.

Because the feast of the Annunciation normally comes during the season of Great Lent, the manner of celebration varies from year to year depending upon the particular day on which it falls. If the feast comes on a weekday of Lent, which is the most common case, the **Divine Liturgy** of the feast is served in the evening with **Vespers** and thus is celebrated after a full day of total abstinence. When this happens, the fasting rules for the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts are followed. The Divine Liturgy of the Annunciation is the only celebration of the eucharistic liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom allowed on a weekday of Great Lent.

St John Climacus (of the Ladder):

The **Fourth Sunday of Lent** is dedicated to **St John of the Ladder** (Climacus), the author of the work, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*. The abbot of St Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai (6th century) stands as a witness to the violent effort needed for entrance into God's Kingdom (Mt.10: 12).

The spiritual struggle of the Christian life is a real one, *"not against flesh and blood, but against ... the rulers of the present darkness ... the hosts of wickedness in heavenly places..."* (Eph 6:12). Saint John encourages the faithful in their efforts for, according to the Lord, only *"he who endures to the end will be saved"* (Mt.24:13).

See us on the web at: ChurchMotherOfGod.org/bulletin
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Sunday Bulletin

Church of the Mother of God

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Glory to
Jesus Christ

Glory Forever

Annunciation

*Today is the beginning of our salvation,
The revelation of the eternal mystery!
The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin
As Gabriel announces the coming of Grace.
Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos:
Rejoice, O Full of Grace,
The Lord is with You!*

Troparion - Annunciation

On this day the Church remembers:
**The Annunciation of Our Most Holy Lady, Theotokos And Ever-
Virgin Mary • St. John Climacus (of The Ladder)**

March 25, 2012
Sunday St. Gregory Palamas
4th Sunday of Great Lent (Tone 8 of the Octoechos.)
Triodion week 8