

Today's Bulletin Sponsors are:**For eternal memory of:**

Eufrozyna Kolobejczuk, offered by Lori Stefy

- Readings:**
- **Ephesians 2:4-10** • 1 Corinthians 4:9-16 (Apostle Matthew)
 - **Luke 10:25-37** • Matthew 9:9-13 (Apostle Matthew)

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.

At that time, a lawyer stood up to put Jesus to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read?" And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." And he said to him, "You have answered right; do this, and you will live."

But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; then he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.' Which of these three, do you think, proved neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed mercy on him." And Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

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 3rd Sunday of each month****Coffee hour – after Liturgy, downstairs in the Community Room****Church School - Sunday 9:30 AM (no classes 1st Sunday of each month)**

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

Announcements:

- **On Thursday evening, November 20**, at 6:30 PM we will celebrate a Vespers Liturgy for **Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple**.
- **The Nativity Fast has begun and the Sisterhood is busy making preparations for the celebration of the Feast.** This year instead of a collection for Nativity flowers, each family is being asked to bring in one **poinsettia plant** for our church's decorations. Please bring your plant in by December 7th.
- **The Sisterhood will be raffling off a Nativity gift basket** this year on December 14th. Tickets will be sold for \$1.00 each. Items are needed to fill up the basket. Please see the posted sheet downstairs if you wish to donate an item.
- **On December 28th**, the Sunday after the Nativity, we will welcome **His Grace, Bishop Michael**.

Special Announcements:

- **Any Announcements for the bulletin can be submitted by E-Mail to:** Bulletin@ChurchMotherOfGod.org
- Upcoming bulletins can be sponsored; this can be done with the signup sheet at the candle stand.

St. Maximus says: He who knows the Holy Trinity, the Trinity's creation, and providence, and who has brought his soul's possible aspect into a state of dispassion, is with God.

Nativity Fast (or Advent; also called St. Philip's Fast):

As Orthodox Christians, we begin the celebration of the Nativity of Christ (December 25) with a time of preparation. Forty days before the feast of the birth of Our Lord we enter the period of the Christmas Fast [Advent]: to purify both soul and body to enter properly into and partake of the great spiritual reality of Christ's Coming. This fasting season does not constitute the intense liturgical season that is characteristic of Great Lent; rather, Christmas Lent is more of an "ascetical" rather than "liturgical" nature. Nevertheless, the Christmas fasting season is reflected in the life of the Church in a number of liturgical notes that announce the coming feast.

Within the forty days preparation the theme of the approaching Nativity is introduced in the services and liturgical commemorations, little by little. If the beginning of the fast on November 15 is not liturgically marked by any hymn, five days later, on the eve of the Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple, we hear the first announcement from the nine *hirmoi* of the Christmas Canon: "Christ is born, glorify Him!"

With these words something changes in our life, in the very air we breathe, in the entire mood of the Church's life. It is as if we perceive far, far away, the first light of the greatest possible joy — the coming of God into His world! Thus the Church announces the coming of Christ, the Incarnation of God, His entrance into the world for its salvation. Then, on the two Sundays preceding Christmas, the Church commemorates the Forefathers and the Fathers: the prophets and the saints of the Old Testament who prepared that coming, who made history itself into the expectation, the waiting for, the salvation and reconciliation of mankind with God. Finally, on December 20th, the church begins the Forefeast of the Nativity, whose liturgical structure is similar to the Holy Week preceding Pascha — for the birth of the Son of God as child is the beginning of the saving ministry which will lead Him, for the sake of our salvation, to the ultimate sacrifice of the Cross.

Rev. Alexander Schmemmann

This Nativity Season, try to remember some of the remarkable saints of the season, such as Apostle Andrew, the Holy and All-Praised First-Called November 30; St. Nicholas, December 6; St. Herman of Alaska, December 13; St. Stephen the protomartyr, December 26; and on New Year's Day, St. Basil. Try to increase prayer time. Go to confession.

Remember to give alms with generosity and joy. Try to go to Church more often. And try to incorporate the Church's traditions in ways that make sense here and now (such as an Advent wreath and calendar for six Sundays, or a Christmas Eve dinner that is a variation of old traditions). Though we may not be perfect fasters, we must try to incorporate the spirit of Orthodox worship and emphasis to this time of year. Also remember:

"The Lord's birth and baptism are directly connected to His dying and rising. He was born in order to die. (The harmony between the events is overwhelming.) Jesus lay as an infant in the cavern in the reign of Caesar Augustus that He might lay in the tomb under Pontius Pilate. He was hounded by Herod that He might be caught by Caiaphas ... He was worshipped by wise men that the whole of creation might adore Him in His triumph over death."

- Rev. Thomas Hopko

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Orthodox Church of the Mother of God

"The Joy of All the Sorrowful"

Founded 1966

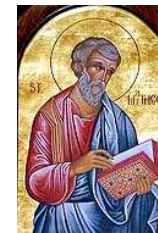
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Evangelist Matthew

Glory to
Jesus Christ

Glory
Forever

*With zeal, you followed Christ the Master,
who in His goodness, appeared on earth to mankind.
Summoning you from the custom house,
He revealed you as a chosen apostle:
the proclaimer of the Gospel to the whole world!
Therefore, divinely eloquent Matthew,
we honor your precious memory!
Entreat merciful God that He may grant our souls remission of transgressions.*

Troparion — Tone 3

Today the Church remembers:

Holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew (60 A.D.)

- St. Fulvianus, Prince of Ethiopia, in Baptism Matthew (1st c.).

November 16, 2014

23rd Sunday after Pentecost

Tone 6 of the Octoechos

Nativity Fast