

Today's Bulletin Sponsor is:**For the health of:**

Alex on his 18th birthday, offered by the Guedes family.

Readings:

Ephesians 4:1-7 (25th Sunday after Pentecost)

Luke 12:16-21 (9th Sunday of Luke)

BRETHREN I, a prisoner for the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.

The Lord said this parable: "The land of a rich man brought forth plentifully; and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' And he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns, and build larger ones; and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, be merry.' But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." As he said these things, he cried out: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

*Your holy memory delights the universe, O Plato,
bringing us together to honor you in our joy.*

*With hymns we praise your great deeds,
crying out to you with faith:*

"Save our land from its enemies, O holy one!"

Kontakion (Martyr Plato) - Tone 3

Saturday service: Vespers – 6:30 PM**Sunday service:**

Hours - 9:40 AM

Divine Liturgy – 10:00 AM

(**Private Confession** – After Vespers by appointment.)

(**General Confession** – 9:45 AM on the first Sunday of each month)

(**Pannikhidas** – after Divine Liturgy 3rd Sunday of each month)

Church School

2nd through 8th grades – 9:30 AM (No Church School on the first Sunday of each month.)

Preschool through 1st grades meet immediately after communion every Sunday.

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.

Upcoming Nativity season events:

- Dec. 2 - Tree decorating for parish children after coffee hour.
- Dec. 8 – Our church will be participating in the Mays Landing Open House from 5:00-8:00 pm.
- Dec 9 – Annual St. Nicholas Day Celebration: pizza party and visit from St. Nicholas! All parish and visiting children are invited to participate.
- Related information:
 - All parish families are asked to bring in one poinsettia plant to help beautify our church. Please have your poinsettia in by Sunday Dec. 2nd so our church will look lovely for the Open House on Dec. 8th.
 - Parents of parish children who will be participating in the St. Nicholas celebration should bring in a wrapped present for their child on that day, to be given out by St Nicholas.

Special Announcements:

- **Any Announcements or prayer requests 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.
- **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.

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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E-Mail us at: Bulletin@ChurchMotherOfGod.org

Orthodox Church of the Mother of God

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**Glory to
Jesus
Christ**

**Glory
Forever**

*Your holy martyrs Plato and Romanus, O Lord,
through their sufferings has received incorruptible crowns from
You, our God.*

*For having Your strength, they laid low their adversaries,
and shattered the powerless boldness of demons
Through their intercessions save our souls!*

Troparion (*Martyrs Plato and Romanus*) – Tone 4

On this day the Church remembers:

Martyr Plato of Ancyra (ca. 306) • Martyr Romanus the Deacon, of Caesarea, and the youth Barulas (303) • Martyrs Zacchæus the Deacon, and Alphæus, of Cæsarea in Palestine (303)

November 18, 2018 - Bulletin

Nativity Fast

Tone 8 of the Octoechos

25th Sunday After Pentecost

9th Sunday of Luke