



Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

Saints Peter and Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church Bulletin

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HOLY MYSTERIES

VISITATIONS OF THE SICK AND INFIRM – If you are going into the hospital for any reason, please inform Father Stephen at the Rectory. Our hospitalization code for Christiana and Wilmington Hospitals is **UKR**.

EMERGENCY CALLS – Please call the Rectory anytime (day or night) in an Emergency!

BAPTISMS – Celebrated by appointment.

CROWNING IN MARRIAGE – Please discuss timing with Father prior to setting a date. At least six months notice is needed. There are three 2-hour courses that must be attended prior to the Wedding.

BULLETIN DEADLINE – The deadline for getting information printed in the Weekly Bulletin is Wednesday.

SUNDAY COLLECTIONS – For the Needs of the Parish; 2nd Youth Ministry

January 7. 2024
Volume 60: Number 01
Schedule of Services and Activities
Week of January 7 - 14, 2024
Celebrating our 97th year of Service to the Lord

Sunday, January 7 – The Nativity in the Flesh of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

9:15 AM – Caroling

9:30 AM - Divine Liturgy for the Faithful

Coffee Hour



Monday, January 8 – Synaxis of the Mother of God

8:00 AM - Divine Liturgy

Panakhya: +Mary Winslow – Frank Proszowski

Tuesday, January 9 – St. Stephen – Veneration of his relics

7:00 AM – Divine Liturgy

Panakhya: +Fred Bilinski – Frank Proszowski

Wednesday, January 10

6:30 PM – Parish Board Meeting

Saturday, January 13

10:00 AM – Divine Liturgy (Holy Trinity, Whaleyville, MD)

Sunday, January 14 – Circumcision of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

8:30 AM - Confessions

9:15 AM – Hours

9:30 AM - Baptismal Divine Liturgy for the Faithful

Panakhya: +John Cramer (1 Yr) -- Sandy Cramer

Coffee Hour



SCRIPTURAL READINGS

Nativity of Our Lord: Matins: Matthew. 1:18-25; Liturgy: Galatians 4:4-7; Matthew. 2:1-12

Monday - Synaxis of the Mother of God: Matins: John 20:11-18; Liturgy: Colossians 3:12-16; Luke 18 35-43; Sunday after Nativity: Galatians 1:11-19 Matthew 2:13-23

Tuesday – Feast of St. Stephen – Acts of the Apostles 6:8-15, 7:1-5, 47-60; Matthew 21:33-42; Day: James 3:1-10; Mark 11:11-23

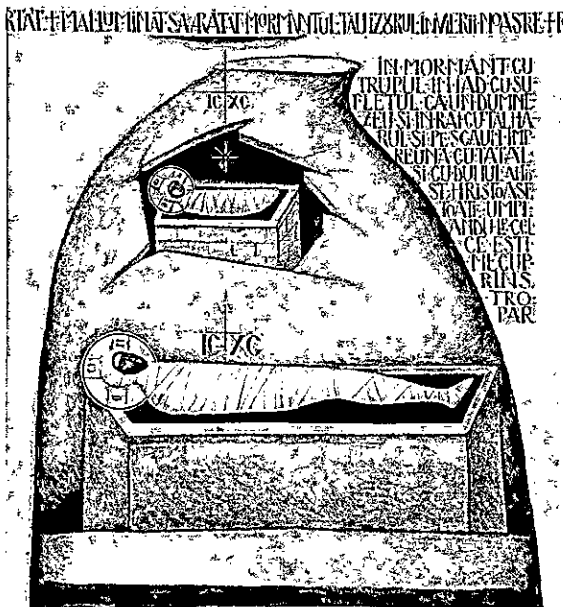
Wednesday – James 3:11-4:6; Mark 11:23-26

Thursday – James 4:7-5:9; Mark 11:27-33

Friday – 1 Peter 1:1-2, 10-12, 2:6-10; Mark 12:1-12

Saturday after Nativity & before Baptism: (Nativity: 1 Timothy 6:11-16; Matthew 12:15-21; Baptism: 1 Timothy 3:14-4:5; Matthew 3:1-11; Day: 1 Thessalonians 5:14-23; Luke 17:3-10

Circumcision and St. Basil the Great – Matins: John 21:1-14; Liturgy: Colossians 2:8-12; Luke 2:20-21, 40-52; St. Basil: Hebrews 7:26-28, 8:1-2; Luke 6:17-23; Sunday before the Baptism: 2 Timothy 4:5-8; Mark 1:1-8



DID YOU KNOW – that our celebration of the Birth of Christ is the foreshadowing of His Death and Burial? Both occur in a Cave. The swaddling clothes remind us of the Burial Shroud. Did you realize that the chopping down of the Christmas Tree represents the Death of Christ and the putting it up and decorating it is a symbol of the Resurrection. Did you realize that the Wreathes that we hang are never ending circles which represent eternity. Did you know that the candy cane represents the Good Shepherd (Christ Himself) and the staff of the shepherds who visit His birth. Did you know that the gifts that we give and receive are representations of the three gifts of the

Magi. Did you know that on that beautiful day we have received the "Perfect Gift", Christ Himself, Who was given to us to remove all of our sins.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

We would like to express our wishes for a most blessed and joyous Nativity to His All-Holiness, Patriarch Bartholomew, to His Eminence, Metropolitan Antony, to His Eminence, Archbishop Daniel, to Father Constantine and Pani Dobrodyka Georgia Christo and their family, to Father Charles and Pani Dobrodyka Melania Sanderson and their family, to all the members of the Clergy, to the members of the Consistory, to all of our Seminarians, to all of our Parish Organizations: our Church Choir; our Altar Boys; our Church School; our Parish Sisterhood; our Parish UOL; our Parish Boy Scout Troop #70 "The Peacemakers"; to all of the faithful Parishioners of Saints Peter and Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church and to their families, to all Orthodox faithful celebrating this great Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord today and to all men, women and children of good will for

Christ is Born!

Let us Glorify Him!

Father Stephen Hutnick

The Parish Board



**Council of Bishops of the Ukrainian Orthodox
Church of the USA
Archpastoral Letter for the Feast of the
Nativity of Our Lord**

CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!

**CHRIST IS BORN!
GLORIFY HIM!**



Dear and Beloved Clergy and Faithful of our Holy Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA, South America, Western Europe and Australia-New Zealand and all our Brothers and Sisters in Ukraine,

CHRIST IS BORN! LET US GLORIFY HIM!

Once again by the Grace of God, the Great Feast of the NATIVITY – INCARNATION of our Lord, God and Savior, Jesus Christ, is upon us. Even though it comes in wintertime, the joy it brings into our lives is much more like the joy we experience in spring when we witness the all the budding of nature's beauty. The Nativity fills us with joy without limits. "For there is born to us this day in the City of David (Bethlehem), a Savior, Who is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:11)

He is the promised One prophesized throughout the Old Testament, the One Who sustains all. He is born of the Ever-Virgin Mary as a humble infant so that He might make us children of God. He is the Son of God Who descends from Heaven in order to lift all humanity up to Heaven – to grant us eternal life "for it pleased the Father that in Him all fullness should dwell and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself". (Colossians 1:19-20) Today Angels and all mankind proclaim the spiritual song of the Nativity Canon: "Christ is born! Glorify Him! Christ has come from the Heavens! Welcome Him! Christ is on Earth! Exult Him!

It is sad to observe throughout this, our earthly world, a loss of relationship with God in the Holy Trinity. We have, however, another opportunity to change this estrangement into fullness of reconciliation with Father, Son and Holy Spirit – by opening our hearts, minds and souls to the Good News of the Nativity. We have the opportunity to relate to Emmanuel – "God with us" and to follow His lead into Heaven! We who live in the great democracies of the world, have the opportunity

to witness to the never-ending power of God, manifested to us in fullness of love – through the incarnation of His Son.

In Ukraine, however, and too many other nations around the world suffering invasion, repression and domination from beyond their borders, our brothers and sisters struggle each day to also witness - even at the darkest of times. They struggle to hear the Nativity Carols sung in their churches, their neighborhoods and in their own homes, but often the loudness of the bombs that rain down upon those homes, neighborhoods and churches drown out the beautiful carols glorifying the Christ Child, filling their lives with fear and pain.

As we gather together on the Eve of Nativity with all our loved ones present, we **MUST** remember in our prayers before Holy Supper, along with our family ancestors, all those who have suffered and perished over the last two years – simply because of greed and covetousness in those who have attempted for centuries to usurp our spirituality, our history, our culture and our very identity. We **MUST** also pray for those who still suffer under daily threats to their very existence, beseeching that the comfort and Love of the Christ Child will fill and warm their hearts even under the worst of circumstances.

We assure you, our spiritual children, of our continued prayers for each and every one of you during these holy Nativity days. May the Love of the Christ Child fill your homes and your lives in such an abundance that it cannot be contained but spread through you into the lives of all who need that Love – and you – to make their lives whole.

In our Lord's All-Encompassing Love,

+ ANTONY

By the Grace of God, Metropolitan

+ JEREMIAH

By the Grace of God, Archbishop

+ DANIEL

By the Grace of God, Archbishop



PATRIARCHAL ENCYCLICAL FOR CHRISTMAS

+ B A R T H O L O M E W

By God's Mercy, Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch

to All the Plenitude of the Church

Grace, Mercy, and Peace from the Savior Christ Born in Bethlehem

Most honorable brother hierarchs, Beloved children in the Lord,

With the grace of God, we are once again this year celebrating in chant, hymn, and spiritual song the Nativity according to the flesh of the pre-eternal Son and Word of God, namely the manifestation of the mystery of God and humankind. According to St. Nicholas Cabasilas, what occurs in the Divine Liturgy is "the mystagogy of the Lord's incarnation," while its introductory acclamation "Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" is evidence "that it is through the Lord's incarnation that people first learned that God is three persons."^[1] The same saintly Father proclaims that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was the first and only to demonstrate the authentic and perfect human being, concerning His ethos, life, and everything else."^[2]

The assumption of human nature in the person of the Son and Word of God, along with the opening of the way of human deification through grace, add unsurpassable value to humankind. Forgetting this truth leads to the diminishment of respect for the human person. The denial of the supreme destiny of human beings does not only liberate them, but also leads to diverse reductions and divisions. Without being conscious of their divine origin and their hope for eternity, humans struggle to remain human and are unable to handle the contradictions of the "human condition."

The Christian perception of human existence provides a solution to problems created by violence, war, and injustice in our world. Respect for the human person, peace, and justice are gifts from God; however, establishing the peace that comes from Christ demands the participation and cooperation of human beings. The Christian view on the struggle for peace lies in the words of Christ our Savior, who proclaims peace, addressing His disciples with the greeting "Peace be with you" and encouraging us to love our enemies.^[3] The revelation in Christ is called the "gospel of peace."^[4]

This means that, for us Christians, the way to peace is through peace and that non-violence, dialogue, love, forgiveness, and reconciliation have priority before As we navigate these dark

other forms of resolving differences. The theology of peace is clearly described in the Ecumenical Patriarchate's document *For the Life of the World: Toward a Social Ethos of the Orthodox Church* (2020):

"Nothing is more contrary to God's will for His creatures fashioned in His image and likeness than violence one against another . . . We may justly say that violence is sin *par excellence*. It is the perfect contradiction of our created nature and our supernatural vocation to seek union in love with God and our neighbor. . . Peace is a real revelation of the still deeper reality of creation as God intends it and as God fashioned it in his eternal counsels." [5]

Peace cannot be taken for granted; it is not self-evident. It is an obligation, an achievement, and an incessant struggle to preserve it. There are no automatic solutions or permanent recipes. In the face of ongoing threats to peace, we need to have vigilance and willingness to resolve problems through dialogue. The great heroes of politics are the champions of peace. As for us, we continue to underline the peacemaking role of religion. This is during a time when religions are criticized for nurturing fanaticism and violence "in the name of God" instead of being forces of peace, solidarity, and reconciliation. However, this indicates an alienation of religious faith and not an integral part of it. Genuine faith in God is the harshest critic of religious fanaticism. Religions are the natural allies of all human beings who strive for peace, justice, and the preservation of creation from human destruction.

This year, the world honors the 75th anniversary of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (December 10, 1948), constituting a summary of fundamental humanitarian ideals and values, "the shared standard, to which all peoples and all nations should aim." Human rights, whose central point of focus includes the protection of human dignity with its individual, social, cultural, economic, and ecological conditions, are only understood in their original dynamics if they are acknowledged as the basis and criterion of global peace, associating it with freedom and justice. In this sense, the future of human rights and peace is also linked to the contribution of religions in the matter of respecting them and making them a reality.

With these thoughts and festive sentiments, in full conviction that the life of the Church in itself comprises resistance against inhumanity, wherever such inhumanity arises, we invite all of you to the good fight of constructing a culture of peace and solidarity, where people will see in the face of their fellow human beings a brother or sister and a friend, rather than a threat and enemy. Moreover,

we remind you all, dear brother Hierarchs and children, that Christmas is a time of self-consciousness and thanksgiving, of the revelation of the difference between the God-man and "man-god," of the realization of the "great miracle" of freedom in Christ and of the healing of the "great wound" of alienation from God. Finally, we kneel respectfully before Mary, the Mother of God, who bears in her arms the incarnate Word, and we convey to you the blessing of the Mother Holy Great Church of Christ, wishing you an auspicious, healthy, fruitful, peaceful, and joyous new year of the Lord's favor.

Christmas 2023

+ Bartholomew of Constantinople
Your fervent supplicant of all before God

+++++

[1] *On the Divine Liturgy XII*, PG 150.392D.

[2] *On the Life of Christ VI*, PG 150.680C.

[3] Cf. Mt. 5:44

[4] Eph. 6:44

[5] § 42, 43 and 44.



+Theodore II

By the Grace of God Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria,
And the entire land of Egypt and all Africa

To the plenitude of the apostolic and patriarchal throne of Alexandria:

Grace and Mercy and Peace from our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ born in Bethlehem

My dear and blessed children,

Peace according to the eternal and true Word of our Lord journeys together with righteousness. As long as we human beings commit injustices toward others, we oppress them, take advantage of them, dishonor them, peace cannot successfully prosper.

Our illustrious Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa, having the pastoral and canonical jurisdiction of the entire African Continent, possesses the personal and bitter experience of the peoples to whom she ministers through the centuries, witnesses their unjust and atrocious exploitation, and the bleeding of their wealth producing springs, the provocative clash between them caused by the powerful of the earth, and the displacement from their birthplaces.

My blessed children:

Peace according to the Christian teaching is a chief gift of God – the fruit of the All-Holy Spirit. We are at peace when Christ resides in our hearts, when He guides our steps, and the eternal and unalterable Evangelical Law inspires our behavior. Peoples and nations coexist peacefully and harmoniously when they recognize their fellow human beings as living icons of God, if they actually respect the dignity and rights of other persons and nations. The Word of the Apostle Paul regarding our Christ: “For He is our peace” (Eph. 2:14), assures us that the entire Gospel of Christ is in essence the only Science about Peace that exists in the world.

With these paternal thoughts, we bless you abundantly and we paternally exhort each of you individually: Open wide the doors of your hearts so they may be filled with the peace of our Christ “which surpasses all understanding” (Philip. 4:7). With your presence, with your words and your actions, everywhere, in your family, in your work place, in your friendly and social circles, become the peaceful people – “walk as children of light” (Eph. 5:7).

“Be at peace,” as Paul the Great Apostle to the Nations commands, “and the God of peace shall be with you” (2 Cor. 13:11). And this peace is the consequence of the Nativity and gift of the Incarnate / Inhominat Christ. May the God of peace grant to those who pray and struggle for her: “Strive for peace with all men, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord” (Heb. 12:14).

Joyful and Peaceful Christmas!

May the Dawn of the Year 2024 be Good, Blessed, and Peaceful!

The Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa,
+ Theodoros II

In the Great City of Alexandria Holy Christmas 2023
Special thanks to Father Constantine Christo for translating from the Greek to English

By the mercy of God Almighty
+John X
Patriarch of Antioch and all the East

To My brothers, Pastors of the Holy Church of Antioch and My sons and daughters, all over this Apostolic See

"Bethlehem has opened Eden: come let us see!... come, let us seize Paradise hidden in the cave! ... here the Virgin has borne a child, quenching Adam's thirst..."

With these words, voicing the hymnographer, the Holy Church invites us to contemplate the Nativity of Christ. The Nativity of Christ is the birth of light and the birth of hope in the journey of our lives. His Nativity is the birth of our humanity yearning for the elixir of eternity. His Nativity is the birth of joy dispelling the darkness of worldly preoccupations.

In poor Bethlehem, the humble Enriching-God came to us. A child came to us from a virgin mother to quench the thirst of our hearts and humanity for the Creator.

From a cave beneath the earth, the Inhabitant of the Heavens, the Lord and Master of the Highest, chose to gaze upon humanity, which He loved. He became human to elevate humanity to the heights of His divinity and adorned its weakness to pour upon it the strength of His might. The Virgin was adorned with pure robe, divesting from His heavenly abode onto the soil of the humble land.

In Bethlehem, from the lands of Palestine, south of Jerusalem, adjacent to Jordan, from the cedars of Lebanon and the vicinity of Damascus, and from the expanses of the East, came to us the "East of the East," Christ the Lord. He came to us over a thousand years ago, planting His Gospel in the ears of the apostles and our ancestors. He reigned in souls, ruled the throne of the heart, and dwelled in the manger of the soul, making of this eastern land a manger of His Gospel. This land received Him as a child in the depths of her cave, crucified on her calvary, and rising from the grave of her garden. This East of ours is more than just land; it is identity, existence, and being. This East is baptismal font in Christ for us Antiochian Christians. The bleeding of the migration of Christians from their East is like the bleeding of a spear that pricks, once again, the side of Christ in the Calvary of His passions.

As we approach the celebration of Nativity, we draw near to the cave and lean towards her Child, entrusting Him with our entire lives, beseeching Him—the Lord of mercy and the God of all consolation—for mercy upon those who preceded us

to meet His holy face. We ask Him for peace for our beloved East, which He embraced willingly for our salvation. We pray for Palestine and the bleeding Gaza, crucified on the altar of the interests of nations and the condemned silence regarding the atrocities that have occurred and are happening there. We pray for Syria and Lebanon and for the peace of the entire world. We ask Him to instill, with the might of His silence, the strength of peace amidst wars and conflicts and to plant in hearts the seed of His growth and the breeze of His peace. We pray for our brothers, the abducted Metropolitans of Aleppo, Youhanna Ibrahim and Paul Yazigi, who have been missing for more than a decade in international condemnation and outrage, and our prayers are for every abducted person suffering the price of human exploitation in the marketplace of interests.

Many blessed returns to our sons in the homeland and abroad, and to all people. May God bless these days and fill them with grace and blessings from the Child of the cave, the Father of Lights, and the God of all consolation. Amen.



+John X
Patriarch of Antioch and all the East
Damascus, December 20, 2023.

THEOPHILOS III

By the Grace of God, Patriarch of Jerusalem

“A strange and marvellous mystery do I behold; the cave is a heaven; the Virgin a cherubic throne; the manger a space wherein Christ God the Uncontainable One hath reclined. Him do we praise and magnify” (*Christmas Canon, Heirmos of Ode 9*)

Mankind beheld “a strange and marvelous mystery” indeed, as the hymnographer of the Church writes, at the end of times, during the reign of Caesar Octavianus Augustus. We saw God’s condescension manifested in Bethlehem of Judea. Fulfilling His promises to the prophets, God “sent redemption to His people”. This redemption is the Only Begotten Son and His Word, “of the same essence” as the Father. Through God the Father, He was blessed to be incarnated, to take on human soul, flesh and body from the Holy Spirit and the Ever-Virgin Mary. “As He

willed and as He pleased" and as the Evangelist John says, "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us". (John 1, 14). For our sake, He "emptied himself" (Phil. 2, 7), and was "secretly born in a cave". He accepted the ultimate poverty; He was born in a cave and wrapped in swaddling clothes; He lay in a manger. In this poverty "the wealth of His Divinity shone". Because of this, "the heaven through the star brought over to Him the Magi as the beginning of the nations" and "precursors of the Church" according to Saint Chrysostom. An angel revealed Him to the shepherds who kept the night watch and a multitude of angels proclaimed Him from heaven through the hymn, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, goodwill among men", announcing that God's goodwill for men is peace. This all-pervading Divine peace is brought to the world by God's Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ; He is "the Angel of great counsel, the Prince of Peace and the Sun of righteousness".

Based on this Divine revelation, as it was witnessed by eye and ear witnesses in the Holy Scriptures, the Church believes and preaches to its members and the whole world, that Christ is the Savior and Redeemer of the human race, not as deified man but as God Incarnate, for the salvation, that is, the deification of man. God came down to earth, to raise man to heaven, because "our conversation remains" (Phil, 3, 20) according to Saint Paul. The Fathers of the Church say incessantly, "God became man and man became divine". And Saint Gregory Palamas proclaims that "the flesh is glorified along with the reception and the glory of the body, which becomes the glory of the Godhead". Through the Incarnation, the Cross, the Resurrection from the dead and His Ascension, Christ as God and man, God-man, sat down at the right hand of the Father after assuming His human nature and paved the deification for those believing in him.

Having ascended into heaven, the Incarnate One, the crucified in the flesh and risen from the dead, our Lord Jesus Christ, left the Church on earth, that is, the holy disciples and apostles, their successors, the hierarchs, priests and the Christ-named congregation, so that it may fulfil His mission unto the ages; the mission of the teaching, the conciliation and the sanctification of people, so that what was heard on the first night of His Nativity, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace goodwill among men" prevails on earth.

The Church worldwide, especially the blessed Church of Jerusalem, proclaims this word and performs this work, obedient to its founder, as it ministers in the places of His manifestation in the flesh, the first of which was the city of Bethlehem. In the magnificent Constantinian Basilica of the Nativity and the humble Grotto, the Mother of the Churches will celebrate again this year, starting

from Jerusalem, keeping its ancient tradition since the days of the pilgrim Aetheria and our late predecessor Patriarch Sophronios.

Filled with the joy of the Nativity of Christ, we address Our Patriarchal and Fatherly wishes and blessings to "every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh" (Jn.1, 4, 2), to the pious pilgrims, especially to Our reverend flock in Gaza, along with Our prayers, that Saint Porphyrios remains its protector and of all those suffering there under the raging war.

In the Holy City of Bethlehem CHRISTMAS 2023

+THEOPHILOS III

PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM

THE MIRACLE OF CHRISTMAS SPEAKS TO US TODAY!

Today Christ Is Born!

Today Christ is born of the Virgin in Bethlehem. Today He who is without beginning begins to be; the Word is made flesh. The powers of heaven rejoice, and the earth with humanity makes glad. The magi offer gifts, shepherds proclaim the marvel, we cry without ceasing: Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will to all!

Hymn from Matins of the Nativity

The above hymn for Christmas celebrates Christ's birth as a contemporary event. **TODAY** Christ is born! **TODAY** the eternal Word of God is made flesh! the Magi offer gifts in the **PRESENT**. The shepherds proclaim the marvel **NOW**. And we join in the celebration by **SINGING WITH THE ANGELS**.

THE SAME FOREVER How can this all be? The main reason is that Christ and His saving work are of eternal significance. "Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). In His incarnation, He fully embraced our human nature which is now glorified with Him in heaven forever. He also said to His disciples that He would not leave them "orphans" (John 14:18) but promised to them His abiding presence: "I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).

LIVING FAITH AND PRAYER Another important reason is that through faith, prayer and Christian living we offer the gift of ourselves to Him - the personal context in which we experience all the mysteries of Christ and His blessings. Our faith unites us with Him spiritually. Our prayers and worship invite His holy presence in the Church and our hearts as a cleansing and transforming experience. Our Christian living strengthens and demonstrates our new life in Him.

ONE LORD AND KING The incarnate and risen Christ, our one Lord and King, is forever present in the Church and always ready to make every soul His home, filling each person with the peace and joy of Christmas. Invite the heavenly Guest into your Parish, your home, your family, your heart. Celebrate today with the Magi and the Shepherds. Sing with the Angels: "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth and good will to all."

**Council of Bishop of the UOC of the USA:
Faith in the Face of Genocide!**

Beloved Faithful,

It is with a heavy heart and profound sorrow that we address you during this grievous time in the life of our beloved Ukraine. The inhumane bombing inflicted upon our land by the Russian forces has plunged us into a profound darkness, and our hearts ache for the countless lives affected by this senseless violence.

In the face of such devastation, we, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA and Diaspora, stand united in prayer, solidarity, and unwavering resolve. The sanctity of human life, a cornerstone of our Orthodox faith, is gravely threatened, and our duty to bear witness to the Gospel compels us to speak out against the injustice, brutality and yes, genocide, that have befallen our homeland.

As shepherds of this flock, we condemn in the strongest terms the aggression that has led to the loss of innocent lives, the displacement of families, and the desecration of our sacred land. Our churches, which have stood as symbols of hope and refuge, are now witnesses to the suffering of a people whose resilience has been tested beyond measure.

In this time of darkness, we turn to the Love of the Newborn Christ Child for solace and strength. Let us intensify our prayers for peace, invoking the intercessions of the Holy Birth-Giver of God, the Protectress of Ukraine, and all the saints who have borne witness to faith amidst adversity.

We call upon the global community to stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine. May the conscience of the world awaken to the urgency of this humanitarian crisis, and may justice prevail over aggression.

To our brothers and sisters enduring the horrors of war, know that our hearts are with you, and our prayers ascend for your protection, comfort, and deliverance from this ordeal. May the mercy of God overshadow our land, bringing healing, reconciliation and the restoration of peace.

times, let our love for one another and our steadfast faith be a beacon of hope. In the face of adversity, we, the Ukrainian Orthodox community in the USA, Australia, New Zealand, Brazil, Paraguay, Argentina, France, Belgium and Germany stand as a testament to the enduring power of faith, compassion, and the unwavering pursuit of justice.

With heavy hearts and fervent prayers,

+Antony, Metropolitan

+Daniel, Archbishop

Nativity flowers 2023

Donated by

Laura & Mark Andreas

Laura & Mark Andreas

Neil and Joyce Belles

Sandy Cramer

Sandy Cramer

Sandy Cramer

Fr. Stephen & Pani Liz Hutnick

Fr. Stephen & Pani Liz Hutnick

Nancy Hylwiak

Nancy Hylwiak

Leeza and Victor Kaliakin

Leeza and Victor Kaliakin

Christine and Stephen Morrison

Christine and Stephen Morrison

Barbara Mancuso

Barbara Mancuso

Elsie Moroz, DeeDee & Randy Allen

Elsie Moroz, DeeDee & Randy Allen

Lorraine Neff

Otamas family

Otamas family

Otamas family

Otamas family

Smith family

Linda Hnatow & Michael Tilson

Linda Hnatow & Michael Tilson

Linda Hnatow & Michael Tilson

In memory of +Layton, +Mary, +Paul Andreas

In memory of +Muriel Becker

In memory of +Berbick & +Belles families

In memory of +Minn & +John Cramer

In memory of +Richard Cramer

In memory of +Cramer family

In memory of parents +Nicholas, +Anna,

+Jaroslawa, & +Ella

Health of the Hutnick & Kurtasz Families

For peace in Ukraine

For the health of my family

For the health of family

In memory of +departed loved ones

In memory of +Father Paul & +Pani-Matka Anna

Health of Morrison, Marte, and Peer families

In memory of +Dale Mancuso, Sr.

For the health of Dale Mancuso, Jr.

In memory of +Boyko and +Moroz families

In memory of +Allen and +Dumas families

For my health

In memory of those who died in the recent invasion of Ukraine by Russia

In memory of +Mykola and +Maria Otamas

In memory of +Maria and +Vasil Tarnavsky

For the health of Otamas family

Health of Galyna, Ivan, Alexander, Zahar, Natalia,

Olena, Kateryna, Yevgen, Tymofiy, Gelyna

In memory of departed of +Hnatow family

In memory of departed of +Tyrawsky family

for the health of our loved ones

NATIVITY

S R A T S S T F I G D A E C F G O C
 A B M A R Y C H I U T D S H J J Z X
 F R A N K I N C E N S E H R E N R P
 K M E H E L H T E B E R E I R O A B
 L M K I N G S N O P V E P S U I C D
 R S L E G N A R S T O D H T S T M N
 A U V C H R I S T M A S E W A A D E
 T X N A T I V I T Y H Y R Z L N B A
 S U S E J A B G O L D T D C E R Y Z
 Y D E F O G K J J H C L R T M A Q P
 B M N O S V I R G I N A I I P C B A
 A T R Q E R E G N A M S V R B N O P
 B D R T P U X H G K I C A E B I J L
 U V V I H I G R I V S M Y R R H O P
 N Y E E B S A V I O U R L F O M C K
 F R A N N I N C E N S E Z C U P O T
 H B I J Q T P O E B V C X Z A S D F



ADVENT – St. Philip's Fast; 40 days of fasting in preparation for the Nativity

ANGELS – Angels sang "Peace on earth" the first Christmas morn.

BABY – The Infant Jesus, the Son of God.

BETHLEHEM – The City of David where the Messiah was born.

BIRTH – Mary gave birth to Jesus the Christ, the Son of God.

CAVE – The place where Jesus was born.

CHRIST – The Messiah, the Savior of the world, born on Christmas day.

CHRISTMAS – The holy day of glory and joy because Christ is born.

FRANKINCENSE – One of the gifts of the Wise Men to Jesus the newborn King.

GIFTS – The offerings given to Jesus on Christmas day.

GOLD – One of the gifts of the wise Men to Jesus, the newborn King.

INCARNATION – God became man by taking on our human flesh.

JESUS – Born on Christmas Day, the Messiah, the Son of God.

JOSEPH – Husband of Mary, guardian and protector of Jesus.

KINGS – They were the Wise Men who came to honor Jesus with their gifts.

MANGER – The Crib for the infant Jesus.

MARY – The Virgin Mother of Jesus.

MYRRH – expensive oil: One of the gifts of the wise Men to Jesus, the newborn King.

NATIVITY – Means "birth"

SAVIOUR – Jesus, the Messiah, the Redeemer of the People.

SHEPHERD – came to worship the infant Jesus.

STAR – The Wise men followed the star to the place where Jesus was born.

VISIT – The Angels, Shepherds and Wise Men came to spend time with Jesus.

Saint Stephen

Commemorated on December 27 (January 9)

The Holy Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen was the eldest of the seven deacons, appointed by the Apostles themselves, and therefore he is called "archdeacon." He was the first Christian martyr, and he suffered for Christ when he was about thirty. In the words of Asterias, he was "the starting point of the martyrs, the instructor of suffering for Christ, the foundation of righteous confession, since Stephen was the first to shed his blood for the Gospel."

Filled with the Holy Spirit, St Stephen preached Christianity and defeated Jewish teachers of the Law in debate. The Jews maligned St Stephen, saying that he had uttered blasphemy against God and against Moses. St Stephen came before the Sanhedrin and the High Priest to answer these charges. He gave a fiery speech, in which he recounted the history of the Jewish nation, and denounced the Jews for persecuting the prophets, and also for executing the promised Messiah, Jesus Christ (Acts ch. 7).

During his speech, St Stephen suddenly saw the heavens opened and Jesus Christ standing at the right hand of God. The Jews shouted and covered their ears, and rushed at him. They dragged him out of the city and stoned him, but the holy martyr prayed for his murderers. Far off on the heights stood the Mother of God with the holy Apostle John the Theologian, and She prayed fervently for the martyr. Before his death St Stephen said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. O Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Then he joyfully gave up his pure soul to Christ.

The body of the holy Protomartyr Stephen, left to be eaten by beasts, was secretly taken up by the Jewish teacher Gamaliel and his son Habib, who buried Stephen on his estate. They both believed in Christ, and later received holy Baptism.

St Stephen is also commemorated on August 2 (15) (Translation of his relics) and on September 15(28) (Uncovering of his relics in the year 415).

Troparion – Tone 4

O Protomartyr and mighty warrior of Christ our God, * You are victorious in battle and crowned with glory, O holy Stephen! * You confounded the council of your persecutors, * Beholding your Savior enthroned at the right hand of the Father. * Never cease to intercede for the salvation of our souls!

Kontakion – Tone 3

Yesterday the Master assumed our flesh and became our guest; * Today His servant is stoned to death and departs in the flesh, * The glorious Protomartyr Stephen.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

NOTE OF THANKS

On behalf of my wife, Pani Dobrodyka Elizabeth and our Family, we would like to thank all of our faithful parishioners for their kind greetings, cards, Christmas wishes, gifts and prayers. I would also like to thank our Parish Sisterhood for their most generous Christmas gift. May God bless you and keep you, may He always shower you with His tender loving care and may you always grow in His love!

Love and Prayers,

Father Stephen, Pani Matka Elizabeth,

SPECIAL THANKS - are expressed to those who helped make this year's celebration of the Nativity so special:

- ❖ To all who came and brought food to make this year's Holy Supper so special.
- ❖ To our good friends at McCreary – Harra Funeral Home for once again donating our annual calendars and this year's wreaths that decorate our Church doors.
- ❖ To our good friends at Belak's Flowers for once again donating the pointsettias
- ❖ To John of Kirks Flowers for also donating pointsettias.
- ❖ To Linda Hnatow for chairing the donations for the Flowers for Nativity.
- ❖ To Our Parish UOL for setting up the Christmas Tree and decorating the Church.
- ❖ To Nancy Hlywiak and our Parish Choir for singing like the angels!
- ❖ To our Altar Boys for serving and helping at the Altar.
- ❖ To all who helped in the cleaning of the Church!

May God grant all of you many, happy and blessed years!

A VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY - is expressed to Christine Morrison, 1/7; John Serth, 1/7; Autumn Rose Fox, 1/9; Stephanie Humeniuk, 1/9; Nancy Hlywiak, 1/10 & Joseph Stevens, 1/10. May God grant them a very happy birthday and keep them for many, happy & blessed years!

ENVELOPES FOR 2024 – The Church envelopes and Calendars for 2024 are ready and can be picked up in the back of the Church.

SCHEDULING FOR THE PARISH – Please remember that all events, work parties, use of the hall must be cleared through the calendar kept by Father Stephen so that dueling events can be avoided.

DONATIONS (CREDIT CARDS) ACCEPTED – for those who are interested, we can accept donations to the Church through credit cards. See Mark Andreas or Lorraine Neff for details.

MINISTRY SCHEDULE

(Please find a substitute if you cannot make a given week)

2024 – January 7 – Linda Hnatow and Matthew Andreas

January 14 – Victor Kaliakin and Lorraine Neff

January 21 – John Plachuta and Linda Hnatow

January 28 – John Plachuta and Linda Hnatow

February 4 – Matthew Andreas and Victor Kaliakin

February 11 – Matthew Andreas and Victor Kaliakin

CLEANING OF THE CHURCH MINISTRY SCHEDULE

Week of January 8 - Mark & Laura Andreas

Week of January 15 - John Plachuta and David Lazaration

Week of January 22 - Earle and Jennifer Robinson

Week of January 29 - Thomas and Lynn Sulpizi

Week of February 5 - Nancy Hlwiak, Jean Roeth, Zina Twardus

Week of February 12 - Earle and Jennifer Robinson

Week of February 19 - Michael Tilson & Linda Hnatow, Irene Maskaly

Week of February 26 – Mark & Laura Andreas

GREETER MINISTRY SCHEDULE

January 7 - Lorraine Neff, Sonya Patronik

January 14 - David and Eve Lazaration

January 21 - Zina Twardus and Nancy Tur

January 28 – Sandy Cramer

READER MINISTRY SCHEDULE

January 7 - Andrew Duncan

January 14 - John Plachuta

January 21 - Thomas Sulpizi

January 28 - Pani Elizabeth Hutnick

February 4 - Linda Hnatow

February 11 - Jean Roeth

MEETINGS

PARISH BOARD – Wednesday, January 10 @ 6:30 PM

TENTATIVE CALENDER OF EVENTS

Sunday, February 4 – Annual Meeting – Souper Bowl Sunday (UOL)

Monday, March 18 – 1st Day of the Great Fast

Saturday, March 23 – Spring Bazaar

Friday, May 3 – Good and Holy Friday

Sunday, May 5 – Pascha

Saturday, May 11 – Visit Cemeteries

Sunday, May 12 – Mother's Day Dinner

Sunday, June 16 – Father's Day Dinner

Monday, July 1 – Apostles' Fast

Sunday, July 14 – Patronal Dinner

Saturday, August 3 – UOL Flea Market

Saturday, November 2 – Fall Bazaar

Tuesday, November 26 – Community Thanksgiving Service – Atonement Methodist



CHRIST IS BORN TO US

REMEMBER TO PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE ILL – Metropolitan Antony, Archbishop Daniel, Archimandrite Raphael, Father Vasili Andrejuk, Father George Bazylevsky, Father Vasyl Dovhan, Father Oleh Hucul, Father Andrew Molewski, Father John Nakonechney, Father James Norton, Father Gerald Ozlanski, Father Volodymyr Wronskyj, Father Michael Zaparyniuk, Matushka Andrejuk, Matushka Laura Odell, Matushka Lisa Weremedic, Pani Matka Oksanna Bazylevsky, Pani Matka Annette Zaparyniuk, , Alicia, Nerry, Mykola, Brennan, Henry, Deborah, Galina, Dolores, Julian, Madison, Maria, Marie, Matt, Michele, Mykola, Penelope, Rita, Ryan, Jonathan Angelo, Randy Allen, Carolyn Angelo, Colby Atkinson, Shannon Austin, Stephanina Bacha, Joyce Belles, Neil Belles, Joyce Bendoakas, Ethel Bernhard, Yaroslav Bilinsky, Irene Billon, James Bolton, Maria Borowski, Betty Bosland, Becky Bosley, Angie Brengle, Paul Brengle, Patricia Bringle, Richard Bringle, Thomas Bringle, John Brick, Fedir Bukacz, Christine Cain, Mark Cello, Kathy Chalfont, Mildred (Myrophora) Christo, Erik Colazo, Alex Czernik, Sharon Dalaski, Stephen Dalecki, David Dalldorf, William Dewhurst, Peter DiVirgilio, James Dudrick, Kathleen Dugan, Margaret Durell, Maria Economou, Mary Eagleton, Rose Eldridge, Thomas Fagan, Archantula Fanjoy, Mary Farell, James Garrett, Lisa Gee, Peter Glenn, Ivan Golovniou, Kathleen Gortva, Staci Gray, Charles Gunther, David Hamilton, Richard Haslam, Rick Hastings, Victoria Herrschaft, Carla Hitchings, Greg Hitchings, Alicia Hlywak, John Hlywak, John Hnatow, Michael Hnatow, Daniel Holoviyak, Jennifer Huertes, Sally Hutnick, Joette Jago, Stephen Johnson, Linda Josepinson, Michael Kapelus, Charles Kaszytski, Walter Katolik, Diane Keyser, Wendy Klinedinst, Judith Kocinski, Lorissa Kozakova, Ludmyla Krawchenko, Mykola Krawchenko, Volodymyr Krasnopera, Sue Kreisa-Christian, Marlene Kuhar, Ron Lazaration, Karen Livick, Charles Lontor, Alla Lysenko, Jeremy Madea, Andrew Makolynyk, Jean Marano, Frederick McCarthy, Beth McKirachan, Fred McKirachan, Stephen McNulty, Ronald Michel, Mary Ann Michalcewicz, Michelle Michalcewiz, Lisa Miller, Matthew Miller, Mary Elizabeth Moran, Barry Morris, Elsie Moroz, Karen Needham, Julie Neff, Lorraine Neff, Ann Nester, Laurie Newman, Betty Painter, Anastasios Pantelopulos, Anthony Pantelopulos, Linda Phillips, Joseph Pierson, Barry, Bernice & Ryan Pinkowicz, Daphne Pantelopulos, Joseph Porini, Robert Powers, Joanne Procak, Joseph Ptak, Carol Purse, Sharon Reigh, Christopher Riehl, Arlene Roginski, Wyatt Roland, Andrea Roman, Jeff Rozwadowski, Glenn Runyan, Carol Rusk, Isaac Schmidt, Joella Seale, Clay Seman, John Serth, Larissa Serth, Dawn Sheets, Justin Sheets, Emily Smitheman, Kimberly Smitheman, Georgie Smolyar, Alexandra Sparco, Natalia Stanford, Rich Steinman, Joseph Stevens, Noel Strobino, Charles Joseph Sweeney, Evelyn Synczyszyn, Michael Synczyszyn, Pavlo Tabak, Nicholas Taylor, Sue Taylor, Elenora Thomas, Lydia Thomas, Brysen Tomei, Dominic Tomei, Mark Tomei, Violet Tomei, Aria Tonner, Mariel Trimble, Martha Vignali, Jack Vognetz, Margaret Vognetz, Marilyn Wagner, Olena Wasylevska, James Watts, Chris Way, Leah Way, Barbara Weeks, Peter Weremedic, Laura Worley, Jack Ziegler & James Zook.

THOUGHTS ON THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

THE PROPHET ISAIAH: "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His Name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

ST. JOHN OF KRONSTADT: "The Feast of the Nativity of Christ reminds us that we are born of God, that we are sons of God, that we have been saved from sin, and that we must live for God and not sin."

ST. PAUL: "But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons."

ST. LUKE: "And Mary brought forth her first-born Son and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger."

THE PROPHET ISAIAH: "Behold, the Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His Name Immanuel."

THE ANGELIC HOSTS: "Behold, I bring to you tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David, a Saviour, Who is Christ the Lord."

ST. ISAAC THE SYRIAN: "Today the Divine Being took upon Himself the seal of our humanity, in order for humanity to be decorated by the seal of Divinity."

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