

Saints Cyril and Methodius Orthodox Christian Church

A Parish of the Diocese of New England of the Orthodox Church in America

Fr. John Hopko, Pastor • Protodeacon Paul Nimchek

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Sunday, December 16, 2018

The 29th Sunday after Pentecost – Tone 4

The Sunday of the Holy Forefathers, the Second Sunday before Christmas

December 16th annually is the commemoration of, among others, the Holy Prophet Haggai

PERTAINING TO CHRISTMAS

Christmas Appeals: Our Parish's two Christmas Appeals, the General Christmas Appeal that goes to the basic support of the Parish, and the Flower Appeal, that helps us pay for the floral arrangements with which we decorate the Church at Christmas-time, are being distributed. Please be generous in your support of these appeals. Thank you!

Christmas Services in our Parish: The Services for the Feast of the Nativity (Birth) of Our Lord in our parish will take place as follows: On Monday, December 24, Christmas Eve, we will celebrate the Vigil of Christmas at 4:00 PM, followed by the Parish Holy Supper. On Christmas Day, Tuesday, December 25, we will celebrate the Divine Liturgy for the Feast beginning at 9:15 AM.

Parish Christmas Eve "Holy Supper" – Christmas Eve, after Vigil: Immediately following the conclusion of the Vigil of Christmas on Christmas Eve, there will be a "bring-and-share" Holy Supper in the Church Basement Hall. While many families have household events then, others are pleased to gather at the Church at that time for this traditional meal. If you are planning to participate in the Parish Holy Supper, please sign up on the sheet posted in the Church Basement indicating what you will be bringing so that we might then ensure that all needs are met for the Holy Supper. Suggestions are included on the sign-up sheet as to foods and other items that are needed for the Supper. If you have any questions about this, please see Fr. John.

Schedule of Services

- 12/16 Sunday**
9:15 AM – Divine Liturgy
- 12/19 Wednesday**
8:00 AM – Matins
7:00 PM – Advent Vespers
- 12/21 Friday**
7:00 PM – Compline (Evening Prayers) with the Reading of the entire Scriptural account of the Nativity of our Lord from both the Gospel of Saint Matthew and the Gospel of Saint Luke
- 12/22 Saturday**
6:00 PM – Vigil
Followed by Choir Rehearsal
- 12/23 Sunday**
The Sunday before Christmas
9:15 AM – Divine Liturgy
- 12/24 Monday**
Christmas Eve
4:00 PM – Vigil of Christmas
Followed by our Parish "Holy Supper"
- 12/25 Tuesday**
Christmas: The Nativity of Our Lord
9:15 AM – Festal Divine Liturgy
- 12/29 Saturday**
6:00 PM – Vigil
- 12/30 Sunday**
9:15 AM – Divine Liturgy
- 1/2 Wednesday**
The Feast of Saint Seraphim of Sarov and of Saint Juliana of Lazarevo
8:00 AM – Matins (Morning Prayers)
- 1/5 Saturday**
Eve of the Feast of Theophany
6:00 PM – Festal Vigil
- 1/6 Sunday**
Feast of Theophany: The Commemoration of the Baptism of our Lord
9:15 AM – Divine Liturgy
With the Rite of The Great Blessing of the Water
- 1/9 Wednesday**
8:00 AM – Matins (Morning Prayers)

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Please pray for all victims of disaster, difficulty and senseless violence throughout the world.

+ THOSE WHO HAVE DEPARTED THIS LIFE: *Memory Eternal!*

Newly Departed

Prdn, Dennis and Helen Lucak—died in tragic circumstances d. 11/11/18
John—Deacon Gregory Curran's father-in-law d. 11/24/18
John Sobestanovich—Fr. John presided at this man's funeral d. 11/24/18
Mary Rozum—a former parishioner of the Waterbury Parish d. 11/24/18

Anniversaries of Repose – Memory Eternal!

John Tikhansky 12/16/1918
Olga Grischuk 12/16/1927
Mark Mattson 12/17/1993
Anastasia Aleverides 12/18/1941
Johanna Slawnyj 12/19/2009
Dorella Panasuk 12/20/2007
Anna Mislecheff 12/21/1922
John Virovoy 12/21/1961
Tamara Oraschewsky—Maria and Roland's daughter 12/22/2015

THOSE IN NEED OF GOD'S MERCY AND HELP

Persons captive and suffering for the Faith

Metropolitan Paul and Archbishop John—hostages in Syria

Those who are sick and suffering

Archpriest Steven Belonick—C. Belonick's brother; suffering terribly in illness
Archpriest Nicholas Timpko—presently unwell
Fyodor (Frank) Guba—increasing sufferings from Multiple Sclerosis (MS)
Dolores Twombly—permanent colon malfunction following colon cancer treatment
Karen—Mary Fomenko's niece; unwell and in need of prayers
child Drew—grandson of friends of the Nimcheks; ongoing treatment for eye cancer
child Matthew—son of friends of M. Osuch; genetic disorder with medical complications
child Ava—young daughter of friends of Melanie Osuch; suffering seizures
Alexander—acquaintance of M. Osuch; suffering and in need of God's mercy and help
Michele—very close friend of M. Osuch; troubled and in need of God's mercy and help
Anna Osuch—suffering in ill health
Jadwiga ["Yahd-vee-gah"]—mother of an acquaintance of E. Watras; cancer
Steven Belonick—Cynthia Belonick's father; unwell
Alex—John Dubnansky's brother, suffering permanent effects of stroke
Darilyne—facing health challenges; daughter of Bob and Vera Martin

Gregory Shesko—long-time laborer in the Diocese of New England; lung cancer
child Asa—great-grandson of friend of E. Watras; child with developmental challenges
Barbara—Arlene Osuch's sister; epilepsy with complications
William ("Bill") Markovich—unwell and in need of prayerful support
Samantha—extremely ill child for whom we have been asked to pray
Eugene—Tania Bouteneff's uncle; battling cancer
Donna—Ann Sovyrda's niece; kidney disease
Dayrl—Ann Sovyrda's niece; kidney disease
JoAnn—acquaintance of Jeanne Moore; ovarian cancer
MaryEllen—Louine King's daughter-in-law; declining due to Huntington's Disease
Virginia ("Gina")—Elena Watras' sister; unwell and in need of prayers
Dawn—friend of Joan Markovich; Stage Four lung cancer
Vera Bouteneff—Tania Bouteneff's mother; presently unwell
Joan Spencer—has asked for our prayers
Michael—nephew of Joan Markovich; in need of prayerful support
Anna Szepele—Waterbury parishioner; unwell and in need of prayerful support
Vera—Waterbury parishioner; unwell and in need of prayerful support
Eleanor—Rdr. Joseph Boruch's mother; chronic health challenges
Maria Oraschewsky—now requires dialysis three times a week
Charlotte—Chezelle Serev's mother; unwell and in need of prayerful support
Nina Gorbachev—former parishioner; unwell and in need of prayerful support
Mark—friend of Frank Guba; 2nd phase non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
Michael—friend of Frank Guba; awaiting the possibility of a lung transplant
Arthur James "A.J." Brauer—Food Pantry volunteer; recent heart surgery
Carol Johnson—still unwell and in need of our prayerful support

Shut-ins and those resident in long-term Care Facilities

Eva Kopcha—at Sheriden Woods, Bristol
Sonya Petroff—at Sheriden Woods, Bristol
Irene Kiehart—Jayne Grasso's mother; now resident in Connecticut
Mary Fomenko—shut-in at home
Robert (Bob)—Patty Nimchek's brother

Expectant Mothers

Breanna and the child to be born of her – The Serevs' niece and her baby

Those traveling and soon to be traveling

John "Jack" Kriniske
Mat. Ann Sovyrda

Those from among us serving on active duty in the Armed Forces

Joel Orelup—U.S. Navy, hospital corpsman ("medic") serving with the Marines
Joseph Bellmay—a Terryville neighbor; U.S. Marine Corps
Joshua Pcsolyar—fiancé of a niece of Fr. John's; U.S. Army officer, helicopter pilot

Birthdays

Joel Kowaleski 12/22

Help Fr. John Edit the Prayer List

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Glory to Jesus Christ!

With the beginning of the New Year upcoming, please, help me to edit the Prayer List. We would like to review the Prayer List and, perhaps, choose to remove some of the names of persons who have been on the list for months and months, whose conditions may have now stabilized to the point where they can be prayed for under the all-inclusive heading of "and all those who are in need of prayers," rather than still being listed, specifically and individually, by name on the list.

If you are the person who has asked for a name to be included on the Prayer List and you know that the person in question is now stable, please, do consider asking Fr. John to remove that person's name from the prayer list. The section of the Prayer List designated "for those who are sick and suffering" should be reserved for those who are acutely and dangerously ill, especially those facing or approaching death. Please, let's all work together to edit the Prayer List in a good and responsible way. Thank you!

In Christ,

Fr. John H.

Annual Pledge Packets being distributed

This week we will be receiving, at home in the mail, the Annual Pledge Packet for the coming year, 2019. (We can, also, pick up a pledge packet at Church.) Our Parish depends for its existence on the free-will offerings of the faithful members, offered freely and generously. Unlike some of our neighboring parishes, we do not have large financial reserves (savings, endowments, investments, etc.) to draw upon to meet the material needs of the parish.

For 2019, having discussed the matter in Parish Council, we are asking each adult member to pledge at least \$5.00 a day, and to consider seriously a pledge of \$7.00 a day to the Parish.

Please note that \$7.00 a day, would be the Biblical “tithe” on an annual income of \$25,550.00. \$5.00 a day is the tithe on an annual income of \$18,250.00. For the people of Israel, the tithe was mandatory. The tithe is the instruction from God that the first 10% of all income and possessions, both in cash and in kind, is to be used for God’s purposes. Jesus said that we should fulfill the tithe (Matthew 23:23), while even going beyond the tithe in our efforts to love our neighbors by the self-sacrificial use of our wealth and possessions.

Indeed, for Christians today, endeavoring to be faithful to our Lord’s instructions, we could and, probably, should say that the first 5 cents of every dollar we possess ought to be donated to our local parish Church, and the second 5 cents of every dollar ought to be used for further charitable purposes. Having thus devoted the “tithe” (10% of assets) to God’s work, then we are left with 90% to satisfy the “world” (taxes, levies, bills, tolls, excises, dues, etc.) and ourselves, and, frankly, to assist further those in need.

We know, and have among us in our parish, people who live this way—who tithe, and who then experience what is told to us in the words of Holy Scripture: “He who gives heed to the word [of God] will prosper, and happy is he who trusts in the LORD.” (Proverbs 16:20)

NEWS AND NOTES

THIS SUNDAY – Sisterhood Cookie Tray Sale and Meeting: The Sisterhood wishes to thank everyone who in any way helped to make the Cookie Tray Sale a success. Bakers, buyers, contributors, and workers enabled us to raise \$800.00. The Sisterhood will hold a brief meeting on Sunday, December 16, during Coffee Hour to discuss the Cookie Tray Sale, and to decide on the disbursement of the funds raised.

THIS WEEK – Fr. John away for the day, Tuesday, December 18: On Tuesday, December 18, Fr. John will be out of town and away for the day.

Advent Confessions: Thanks and gratitude are expressed to all those who have made and kept appointments for the Sacrament of Confession in the Nativity Fast (Advent) season. If, however, you have not made or kept such an appointment, please contact Fr. John right away! (If, for some reason, you are struggling with the Church’s norms in this regard, please see Fr. John so that he might discuss this matter with you.) Thank you!

Financial Secretary Required: Unfortunately, due to changes in his employment status, it is now difficult for Tim Osuch, our Parish Financial Secretary, to fulfill his duties. So, we are looking for a parishioner who would be willing to take on that administrative position in our parish. Duties of the Financial Secretary include keeping track of and acknowledging all financial donations, and helping the Parish Treasurer with his duties. One important task fulfilled by the Financial Secretary is assisting the Treasurer with the processing of the Sunday morning collections. This is done during the Coffee Social Hour that follows the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy on Sunday mornings. Mark Orelup, our dedicated and faithful Treasurer, has been doing this task on his own lately, and that is not a “best practice.” Mark really must be assisted by a second person. Thanks for your consideration of this request. Our parish life depends upon the free-will offerings of time, talent, and treasure made by us all.

Weather Related Cancellations: If we need to cancel parish services and/or other events due to bad weather, those announcements will appear on NBC Connecticut Television and on the NBC Connecticut Internet web-site. We will, also, send out an email to the Parish email group and post an announcement on the Parish website. Finally, you can always call the Parish House (860-582-3631) for further information. *(NOTE: If you need to have your email address added to the Parish email group, please contact Fr. John.)*

Online Donations to the Parish: A PayPal Donation “button” is located on our parish website to make online donations possible. Our parish is registered as a charity with PayPal, so we have slightly lower fees connected to the use of that means of receiving donations. For us, PayPal’s fees are 2.2% + \$0.30 per transaction and no monthly fee. (So, for example, a donation of \$100.00 given via PayPal will realize us actual income of \$97.50.)

Readings from Holy Scripture

Scripture Readings for the Sunday of the Holy Forefathers of Jesus Christ, the second Sunday before Christmas

The Reading from the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Colossians (Col. 3:4-11)

Brethren: When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming. In these you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away; anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.

The Reading from the Gospel according to St. Luke (Luke 14: 16-24)

The Lord spoke this parable: "A man once gave a great banquet, and invited many; and at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for all is now ready.' But, one by one, they all began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So the servant came and reported this to his master. Then the householder in anger said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame.' And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.' And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet. For many are called, but few are chosen.'"

LOOKING AHEAD

LOOKING AHEAD—The Feast of Theophany, Sunday, January 6: On Theophany we commemorate the Baptism of our Lord. This year the Great Feast of Theophany, January 6, falls on a Sunday. So, this year, at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, January 6, the Feast of Theophany, we will perform the Rite of the Great Blessing of Water. It is a gift to us that the Feast of Theophany falls this year on a Sunday, because it means that many more of us than usual will be able to participate in this Rite of the Great Blessing of Water. Please, plan for and look forward to this occasion.

LOOKING AHEAD—House Blessings: Each year, after Theophany, we perform the annual blessings of homes. Soon, we will begin building our schedule of house blessings, so, please, begin thinking about days and times in the month of January when it will be convenient to invite Fr. John to your home for the annual house blessing.

LOOKING AHEAD—Year 2019 Parish Council: The Year 2019 Parish Council will be formally installed at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy on Sunday morning, January 6. The first regular monthly meeting of the Year 2019 Parish Council will take place on Monday evening, January 7, beginning at 7:00 PM. As usual, the venue will be the Parish Basement Social Hall. (**Reminder:** *Parish Council Meetings are open to any member of the parish. Non-members may attend, too, but only with advance permission.*)