

## 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 17, 2017

*The 28<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost – Tone 3*  
*Sunday of the Holy Forefathers*

Commemoration of the Holy Prophet Daniel

Commemoration the Three Holy Youths  
who endured the Fiery Furnace

### ***Schedule of Services***

**12/17 Sunday**

9:15 AM – Divine Liturgy  
"Visit of Saint Nicholas"

**12/20 Wednesday**

8:00 AM – Matins (Morning Prayers)  
7:00 PM – Advent Vespers

**12/23 Saturday**

6:00 PM – Vigil  
*Followed by Choir Rehearsal*

**12/24 Sunday**

***Christmas Eve***

9:15 AM – Divine Liturgy  
4:00 PM – Vigil of Christmas,  
Followed by "Parish Holy Supper"

**12/25 Monday**

***Feast of Christmas***

9:00 AM – Festal Divine Liturgy

**12/27 Wednesday**

8:00 AM – Matins (Morning Prayers)

**12/29 Friday**

Start Time to be announced:  
Festive Family Holiday-Season Family Supper

**12/30 Saturday**

6:00 PM – Vigil

**12/31 Sunday**

***Leave-taking of Christmas***

***Civil New Year's Eve***

9:15 AM – Divine Liturgy,  
with prayers for the New Year

**1/3 Wednesday**

8:00 AM – Matins (Morning Prayers)

**1/5 Friday**

***Eve of the Feast of Theophany***

7:00 PM – Festal Vigil

**1/6 Saturday**

***Feast of Theophany***

9:15 AM – Festal Divine Liturgy,  
with the Blessing of Water

6:00 PM – Vigil

### **Bishop Kallistos Ware, writing about the Incarnation**

We ended our last chapter by speaking of man's alienation and exile. We saw how sin, original and personal, has set between God and man a gulf which man by his own unaided efforts cannot bridge. Cut off from his Creator, separated from his fellow men, inwardly fragmented, fallen man lacked the power to heal himself. Where, so we asked, was a cure to be found? We saw also how the Trinity, as a God of personal love, could not remain indifferent to man's suffering, but was involved in it. How far has this divine involvement been carried?

The answer is that it has been carried to the furthest possible extent. Since man could not come to God, God has come to man, identifying himself with man in the most direct way. The eternal Logos and Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, has become true man, one of us; he has healed and restored our manhood by taking the whole of it into himself. In the words of the Creed: "I believe...in one Lord Jesus Christ...true God from true God, one essence with the Father...who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary..". This, then is our companion in the fire or the ice [that is, the difficulties and challenges of life]: the Lord Jesus who took flesh from the Virgin, one of the Trinity yet one of us, our God yet our brother.

– Metropolitan (Bishop) Kallistos Ware, an excerpt from Chapter 4, "God as Man," from his magnificent and timeless classic, **The Orthodox Way**, a book every Orthodox Christian should own and read and re-read. [NOTE: A British writer of the "old school," Bishop Kallistos has followed older conventions by using the words "man," "men," and "manhood," to mean all humans and their humanity. We might choose to render those words nowadays as "human," "humans," and "humanity." Please do not be distracted from the beauty and power of this passage by this older use of language.]

# 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***

Michael "Mischa" Semanitzky—Dn. Paul Nimchek's uncle d. 12/3/17  
child Maven-- child of friends of the G. and D. Wegh Family d. 11/29/17  
Ronald—a Food Pantry volunteer d. 11/27/17  
Valentina Tichy Rhodes—acquaintance of the Hopkos d. 11/17/17

## ***Anniversaries of Repose – Memory Eternal!***

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 12/22/2015  
Eve Stashenko 12/23/2015

## **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***

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  
Phyllis George—Donna Kriniske's cousin; battling breast cancer  
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  
Anatoli—a friend of Tania Bouteneff; diagnosed with colon cancer  
Galina—wife of above-mentioned Anatoli  
William "Bill" Markovich—recently unwell  
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  
Zachary—nephew of acquaintances of Nimcheks; recent double lung transplant  
George Klachany—our fellow parishioner; still in need of prayers for health  
Virginia ("Gina")—Elena Watras' sister; unwell and in need of prayers  
Dawn—friend of Joan Markovich; Stage Four lung cancer  
Vince—friend of the Oraschewsky Family; colon cancer  
Vera Bouteneff—Tania Bouteneff's mother; presently unwell  
Galina—Svetlana Shorey's sister-in-law; suffering with cancer  
Barbara Sovyrda—Mark Sovyrda's former wife; health challenges  
Joan Spencer—has asked for our prayers  
Bachloan—friend of Jeanne Moore; recent open heart surgery  
Jerry Grasso—Jayne Grasso's husband; unwell and in need of prayers

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

Eva Kopcha—at Sheriden Woods in Bristol; now on hospice care  
Sonya Petroff—at Sheriden Woods in Bristol  
Irene Kiehart—Jayne Grasso's mother; now resident in Connecticut  
Mary Fomenko

### ***Expectant Mothers and the Children to be born of them***

Matushka Holly (Hanna) and the child to be born of her  
Matushka Brenda (Barbara) and the child to be born of her  
And all the other expectant mothers and their children for whom we have been asked to pray

### ***Those from among us serving 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

### ***Travelers, those soon to be traveling and those away from us***

Douglas Henrick—O. Petroff's great-grandson; in China until spring 2018  
Peter and Chezelle Serev  
John "Jack" Kriniske

### ***Birthdays***

Joel Kowaleski 12/22

## A Christmas Prayer

This Christmas night bestowed peace on the whole world - so let no one threaten. This is the night of the Most Gentle One - let no one be cruel. This is the night of the Humble One - let no one be proud. Now is the day of joy - let us not revenge. Now is the day of Good Will - let us not be mean. In this Day of Peace - let us not be conquered by anger. Today the Bountiful impoverished Himself for our sake - so, rich one, invite the poor to your table. Today we receive a Gift for which we did not ask - so let us give alms to those who implore and beg us. This present Day cast open the heavenly doors to our prayers - let us open our door to those who ask our forgiveness. Today the DIVINE BEING took upon Himself the seal of our humanity, in order for humanity to be decorated by the Seal of DIVINITY.

— St. Isaac the Syrian (7<sup>th</sup> century Christian bishop, ascetic and theologian)

# News and Notes

**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!

**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, were mailed out this past week. Please be generous in your support of these appeals. Thank you!

**Online Donations to the Parish:** A PayPal Donation "button" is located on our parish website to make possible online donations. 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.)

**Ron McClain Memorial, December 22, 12:00 NOON:** There will be a memorial ceremony beginning at 12:00 Noon on Friday, December 22, at the Plymouth Community Food Pantry, in memory of Ron McClain, a dedicated volunteer who recently passed away.

**Parish "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.

**Fr. John out of the office, Tuesday, December 26, through Saturday, December 30:** Fr. John will be out of the office the week following Christmas, as he still has vacation allowance due in 2017. During that time, however, Father John will preside at Matins on Wednesday morning, December 27, and he will be present at the Parish Family Dinner scheduled for Friday evening, December 29. He will also preside at Vigil on Saturday evening, December 30.

**Festive Holiday-Season Parish Family Dinner, Friday evening, December 29:** This year, Friday, December 29, is the fast-free Friday that follows the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord (Christmas), and we will be having a festive family dinner that evening here at Church in order to celebrate the holidays together. That event will be led by Paul Senetcen and Tim Osuch. There will soon be a sign-up listed posted in the Parish Basement Hall, so that we can determine who will be attending that event.

**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. Also, you can always call the Parish House (860-582-3631) for further information.

# 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.'"

## *Scripture Readings for the Sunday before Christmas and the Forefeast of the Nativity of our Lord*

### **The Reading from the Epistle to the Hebrews (Heb. 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40)**

Brethren: By faith Abraham sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was ready to offer up his only son, of whom it was said, "Through Isaac shall your descendants be named." He considered that God was able to raise men even from the dead; hence, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back. By faith Isaac invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau. By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, bowing in worship over the head of his staff. By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his burial. By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful; and they were not afraid of the king's edict. And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets—who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated—of whom the world was not worthy—wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

### **The Reading from the Gospel according to Saint Matthew (Matt. 1:1-25)**

THE BOOK of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram, and Aram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa, and Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of She-alti-el, and She-alti-el the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called his name Jesus.