

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Icon of the Nativity of the Mother of God -- September 8th



September 4, 2016
16TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - TONE 7
*THE HOLY HIEROMARTYR BABYLAS, BISHOP OF GREATER ANTIOCH;
THE HOLY PROPHET MOSES THE GOD-SEER*

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 5 – SEPTEMBER 11

PLEASE NOTE: There will be **NO** vespers during the Summer months unless noted in the bulletin.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7

6:00 PM – Great Vespers for Nativity of the Theotokos (*satisfies obligation*)

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 8 – *THE NATIVITY OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS (OBLIGATORY FEAST)*

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy For All Parishioners

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 11 – *SUNDAY BEFORE THE EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS; POSTFEAT OF
THE NATIVITY OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS*

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy For All Parishioners

September Birthdays

Emma Hirniak	–	September 4
Maria Hughes	–	September 13
Brandon Avant	–	September 17
John Heltsley	–	September 25

Last Sunday's Bulletin

If you haven't yet picked up last Sunday's bulletin, it is available in the church hall, or on our website, stjohnthebaptizer.org.

Please Note:

When you are away, please don't forget that the church still relies on your contributions. Our bills do not go on vacation. Your absence on any Sunday does not negate your obligation to support your home parish.

Warm Welcome!

We warmly welcome all of our visitors!
It's good to have you with us!



“She (Mother of God) that assumed the exploit of love teaches us humble acceptance of these crosses of others. She summons each Christian soul to incessantly repeat after Her: “Behold the handmaiden of the Lord”, ever flowing with blood, even while sensing the sword slicing at the heart. Such is the measure of love, such is the extent, to which the human soul ought to strive. It might even be said, that such is the sole obligatory attitude of man towards man. It is only when the soul takes hold the cross of another man, his doubts, his grief, his temptations, downfalls, sins, -- only then can one speak about an obligatory attitude towards the other”.

St. Maria Skobtsova
(1891-1945)

NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS

In addition to the celebration of the Annunciation, there are three major feasts in the Church honoring Mary, the Theotokos. The first of these is the feast of her nativity which is kept on the eighth of September.

The record of the birth of Mary is not found in the Bible. The traditional account of the event is taken from the apocryphal writings which are not part of the New Testament scriptures. The traditional teaching which is celebrated in the hymns and verses of the festal liturgy is that Joachim and Anna were a pious Jewish couple who were among the small and faithful remnant—"the poor and the needy"—who were awaiting the promised messiah. The couple was old and childless. They prayed earnestly to the Lord for a child, since among the Jews barrenness was a sign of God's disfavor. In answer to their prayers, and as the reward of their unwavering fidelity to God, the elderly couple was blessed with the child who was destined, because of her own personal goodness and holiness, to become the Mother of the Messiah-Christ.

Your nativity, O Virgin, has proclaimed joy to the whole universe. The Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God, has shone from you, O Theotokos. By annulling the curse he bestowed a

blessing. By destroying death he has granted us eternal life (Troparion).

By your nativity, O most pure virgin, Joachim and Anna are freed from barrenness; Adam and Eve from the corruption of death. And we, your people, freed from the guilt of sin, celebrate and sing to you: The barren woman gives birth to the Theotokos, the Nourisher of our Life (Kontakion).

The fact that there is no Biblical verification of the facts of Mary's birth is incidental to the meaning of the feast. Even if the actual background of the event as celebrated in the Church is questionable from an historical point of view, the divine meaning of it "for us men and for our salvation" is obvious. There had to be one born of human flesh and blood who would be spiritually capable of being the Mother of Christ, and she herself had to be born into the world of persons who were spiritually capable of being her parents.

The feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos, therefore, is a glorification of Mary's birth, of Mary herself and of her righteous parents. It is a celebration as well of the very first preparation of the salvation of the world. For the "Vessel of Light," the "Book of the Word of Life," the

“Door to the Orient,” the “Throne of Wisdom” is being prepared on earth by God Himself in the birth of the holy girl-child Mary.

The verses of the feast are filled with titles for Mary such as those in the quotations above. They are inspired by the message of the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments. The specific Biblical readings of the feast give indications of this.

At Vespers the three Old Testamental readings are “mariological” in their New Testamental interpretation. Thus, Jacob’s Ladder which unites heaven and earth and the place which is named “the house of God” and the “gate of heaven” (Gen 28.10–17) are taken, to indicate the union of God with men which is realized most fully and perfectly—both spiritually and physically—in Mary the Theotokos, Bearer of God. So also the vision of the temple with the “door ‘to the East’” perpetually closed and filled with the “glory of the Lord” symbolizes Mary, called in the hymns of the feast “the living temple of God filled with the divine Glory” (Ezek 43.27–44.4). Mary is also identified with the “house” which the Divine Wisdom has built for himself according to the reading from Proverbs 9.1–11.

The Gospel reading of Matins is the one read at all feasts of the Theotokos, the famous Magnificat

from Saint Luke in which Mary says: “My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden, for behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed” (Lk 1.47).

The epistle reading of the Divine Liturgy is the famous passage about the coming of the Son of God in “the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of man” (Phil 2.5–11) and the gospel reading is that which is always read for feasts of the Theotokos—the woman in the crowd glorifies the Mother of Jesus, and the Lord himself responds that the same blessedness which his mother receives is for all “who hear the word of God and keep it” (Lk 11.27–28).

Thus, on the feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos, as on all liturgical celebrations of Christ’s Mother, we proclaim and celebrate that through God’s graciousness to mankind every Christian receives what the Theotokos receives, the “great mercy” which is given to human persons because of Christ’s birth from the Virgin.



MARRIAGE CAN BE DIFFICULT
THESE BEAUTIFUL BIBLE VERSES OFFER ENCOURAGEMENT FOR MARRIED COUPLES

1. "Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken." Ecclesiastes 4:12
2. "Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love, all the days of this meaningless life that God has given you under the sun—all your meaningless days. For this is your lot in life and in your toilsome labor under the sun." Ecclesiastes 9:9
3. Remember the power of patience and forgiveness.
4. "Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers a multitude of sins." 1 Peter 4:8
5. "Be completely humble and gentle; Be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace." Ephesians 4:2-3
6. "And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you." Ephesians 4:32
7. Do your best to resist life's temptations. "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it." 1 Corinthians 10:13
8. "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love." 1 John 4:7-8

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“But I wonder whether people who ask God to interfere openly and directly in our world quite realise what it will be like when He does. When that happens, it is the end of the world. When the author walks on to the stage the play is over. God is going to invade, all right: but what is the good of saying you are on His side then, when you see the whole natural universe melting away like a dream and something else—something it never entered your head to conceive—comes crashing in; something so beautiful to some of us and so terrible to others that none of us will have any choice left? For this time it will be God without disguise; something so overwhelming that it will strike either irresistible love or irresistible horror into every creature. It will be too late then to choose your side. There is no use saying you choose to lie down when it has become impossible to stand up. That will not be the time for choosing: it will be the time when we discover which side we really have chosen, whether we realised it before or not. Now, today, this moment, is our chance to choose the right side. God is holding back to give us that chance. It will not last for ever. We must take it or leave it.”

— C.S. Lewis (Mere Christianity)



Fr. Frank Pavone
Keynote Speaker
Priests for Life

7th Annual
"Pro-Life is Good"
Gala and Auction

OCTOBER 8th 2016

5:30 PM

Rancho Bernardo Inn

HOST BAR COCKTAIL HOUR
DINNER AND PROGRAM
SOCIAL HOUR

FR. FRANK PAVONE is one of the most prominent pro-life leaders in the world. Originally from New York, he was ordained in 1988 by Cardinal John O'Connor, and since 1993 has served full-time in pro-life leadership with his bishop's permission. He is the National Director of Priests for Life, the largest pro-life ministry in the Catholic Church. He is also the President of the National Pro-life Religious Council, and the National Pastoral Director of the Silent No More Awareness Campaign and of Rachel's Vineyard, the world's largest ministry of healing after abortion. Fr. Frank has a special message for us in the pro-life movement, and this will prove to be another special impactful COLFS Gala!



Steve Breen
Master of Ceremonies



Grace and Kirk Dulaney
Honorary Chairpersons



Russ Stalnack
Auctioneer

TICKETS \$200 EACH, TABLE for TEN \$2000

For more information and to RSVP online visit www.COLFS.org or contact Erica Tobin Rossio at 619-564-3307 (etobin@colfs.org). All proceeds support the lifesaving mission of COLFS. Culture of Life Family Services is a 501c3 Non-Profit Organization

EPARCHIAL SOBOR

On September 24, there will be an Eparchial Sobor (gathering) held in Chicago at the Cenacle Retreat House. Bishop Bohdan Danylo from Parma will be presiding. The subject will be the "Vibrant Parish" program established by Patriarch Sviatoslav for the entire Church. Each parish must send at least 2 lay representatives along with the pastor. Cost includes airfare and a 1 night stay (\$105.00/person) at the Cenacle

Between now and Mid-September there will be a special collection taken at each Sunday Liturgy to raise funds for this very important event. Please be generous!

Sunday offering for August 21

Amount	Number
\$12.00	1 (loose)
\$15.00	2
\$20.00	3
\$30.00	1
\$40.00	2
\$50.00	1
\$100.00	1
\$150.00	1
\$400.00	1
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\$912.00	

Parishioner Total: \$892.00

Visitor Total: \$20.00

Average / parish household (42): \$11.44

Weekly Stewardship Goal: \$2200.00

Deficit: (\$1308.00)

Year-to-date deficit: (\$35,099.00)

Special Collection for Sobor Total to date: \$513.00

PARISHIONERS THAT ARE HOME BOUND



If you or a loved one cannot make it to Church, Fr. James would be more than pleased visit at your home, in the hospital, at a nursing home, or any other place. It is no inconvenience at all.

Please be sure to schedule a visit.

PARISH COMMITTEES

FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Myra Heltsley
Stephen Hojsan
Maria Hughes
Bohdan Kniahynyckyj

PASTORAL COUNCIL:

Vladimir Bachynsky
Olena Bankston
Gabriel Espedal
Mark Hartman
Luke Miller

STEWARDSHIP (FUNDRAISING) COMMITTEE:

Bohdan Knianynyckyj
Susan Avant
John Heltsley (*fundraising consultant*)

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Olena Bankston
Olga Fedunyak
Michael Miller
Olga Miller
Lubomyra Yoldas



**Українська Греко-Католицька Церква
Святого Йоана Хрестителя
St. John the Baptizer
Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church**

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Website: stjohnthebaptizer.org

Pastor: Fr. James Bankston
frjames@mac.com
Fr. James' cell phone: (619) 905-5278

Virgin Mary, All Nature is Blessed by You

Blessed Lady, sky and stars, earth and rivers, day and night – everything that is subject to the power or use of man – rejoice that through you they are in some sense restored to their lost beauty and are endowed with inexpressible new grace.

To Mary God gave His only-begotten Son, whom He loved as Himself. Through Mary God made Himself a Son, not different but the same, by nature Son of God and Son of Mary. The whole universe was created by God, and God was born of Mary. God created all things, and Mary gave birth to God. The God who made all things gave Himself form through Mary, and thus He made His own creation. He who could create all things from nothing would not remake His ruined creation without Mary.

God, then, is the Father of the created world and Mary the mother of the re-created world. God is the Father by whom all things were given life, and Mary the mother through whom all things were given new life. For God begot the Son, through whom all things were made, and Mary gave birth to Him as the Savior of the world. Without God's Son, nothing could exist; without Mary's Son, nothing could be redeemed.

Truly the Lord is with you, to whom the Lord granted that all nature should owe as much to you as to Himself.

St. Anselm of Canterbury

**For more information on Eastern spirituality, visit
www.ecpubs.com**