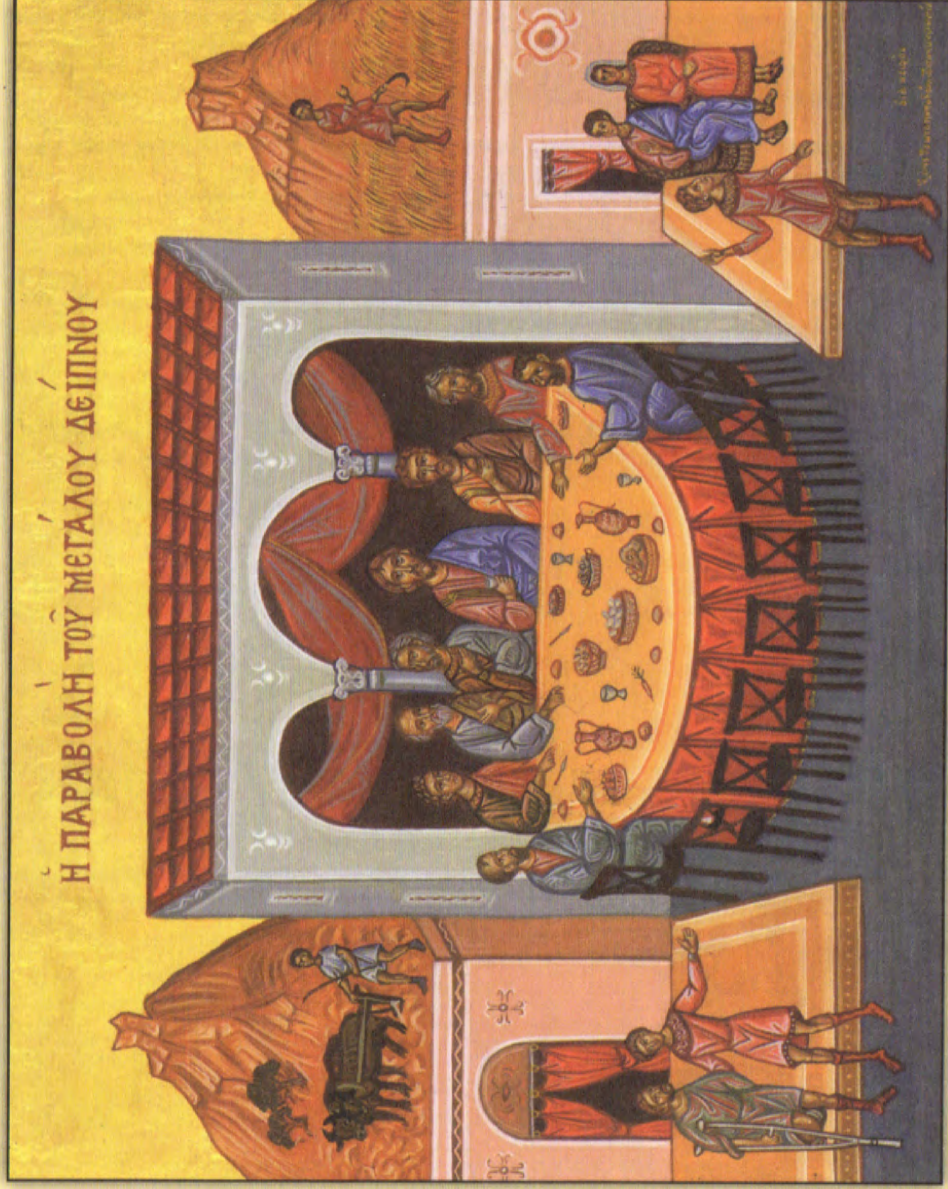


SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS
ELEVENTH SUNDAY OF LUKE



Icon of the Great Banquet



December 11, 2016

SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE NATIVITY - OF THE FOREFATHERS – TONE 5
OUR VENERABLE FATHER DANIEL THE STYLITE OF CONSTANTINOPLE

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 12 – DECEMBER 18

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17

6:00 PM – Great Vespers for Sunday

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18 – *SUNDAY BEFORE NATIVITY - OF THE HOLY ANCESTORS OF CHRIST;*
THE HOLY MARTYR SEBASTIAN AND HIS COMPANIONS

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy For All Parishioners

Thank You! Дуже Дякую!

A special “Thank You” to all those who helped to make Varenyky for the Christmas Bazaar.

May God bless your generosity!



Greeting Cards

Christmas Cards and various other greeting cards are for sale in the Church Hall. Please see Mary Kitt to purchase.



LET'S GO CAROLING!

BETWEEN DECEMBER 25 AND FEBRUARY 2 LET'S VISIT PARISHIONERS, SHUT-INS, AND NURSING HOMES TO BRING CHRISTMAS CHEER. PLEASE CONTACT FR. JAMES IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING, WOULD LIKE TO BE VISITED OR KNOW OF SOMEONE WHO WOULD LIKE TO BE VISITED.

Flower Collection

Special envelopes are available in the back of the church do help with the purchase of flowers for the Feast of the Nativity.

Did You Know We're on Facebook?

“Like” us to receive our posts, and so that your friends can get to know your church a little. Who knows who else may “Like” us too? <https://www.facebook.com/pages/St-John-the-Baptizer-Ukrainian-Catholic-Church/137098752989860>

This is the way . . .
 . the church sometimes
 looks to the
 pastor when he goes
 to the pulpit.

But...

The church would look like this if
 everybody brought somebody else
 to church with them.

WHO IS ST. NICHOLAS?

From The St. Nicholas Center, stnicholascenter.org

The true story of Santa Claus begins with Nicholas, who was born during the third century in the village of Patara. At the time the area was Greek and is now on the southern coast of Turkey. His wealthy parents, who raised him to be a devout Christian, died in an epidemic while Nicholas was still young. Obeying Jesus' words to "sell what you own and give the money to the poor," Nicholas used his whole inheritance to assist the needy, the sick, and the suffering. He dedicated his life to serving God and was made Bishop of Myra while still a young man. Bishop Nicholas became known throughout the land for his generosity to those in need, his love for children, and his concern for sailors and ships.

Under the Roman Emperor Diocletian, who ruthlessly persecuted Christians, Bishop Nicholas suffered for his faith, was exiled and imprisoned. The prisons were so full of bishops, priests, and deacons, there was no room for the real criminals—murderers, thieves and robbers. After his release, Nicholas attended the Council of Nicaea in AD 325. He died December 6, AD 343 in Myra and was buried in his cathedral church, where a unique relic, called manna, formed in his grave. This liquid substance, said to have healing powers, fostered the growth of devotion to Nicholas. The anniversary of his death became a day of celebration, St. Nicholas Day, December 6th (December 19 on the Julian Calendar).



Through the centuries many stories and legends have been told of St. Nicholas' life and deeds. These accounts help us understand his extraordinary character and why he is so beloved and revered as protector and helper of those in need.

One story tells of a poor man with three daughters. In those days a young woman's father had to offer prospective husbands something of value—a dowry. The larger the dowry, the better the chance that a young woman would find a good husband. Without a dowry, a woman was unlikely to marry. This poor man's daughters, without dowries, were therefore destined to be sold into slavery. Mysteriously, on three different occasions, a bag of gold appeared in their home—providing the needed dowries. The bags of gold, tossed through an open window, are said to have landed in stockings or shoes left before the fire to dry. This led to the custom of children hanging stockings or putting out shoes, eagerly awaiting gifts from Saint Nicholas. Sometimes the story is told with gold balls instead of bags of gold. That is

why three gold balls, sometimes represented as oranges, are one of the symbols for St. Nicholas. And so St. Nicholas is a gift-giver.

Through the centuries St. Nicholas has continued to be venerated by Catholics and Orthodox and honored by Protestants. By his example of generosity to those in need, especially children, St. Nicholas continues to be a model for the compassionate life.

6 Things Children Learn When You Skip Divine Liturgy On Sundays

adapted from an article by Becky Roach

It doesn't take long for a parent to realize that our children absorb everything we do and say. I remember the first time I heard my two year old let out a long sigh and say "Oh, my gosh. I can't even." Her tone and expression were exactly like mine. **Sometimes you come face to face with your own sinful ways through the words and actions of your children.**

I was recently at a Baptism in which the priest reminded each person present that it would be through his or her actions that the child being baptized would come to know about God and how to respond to Him. If the child witnessed us praying, she would learn prayer was important, but that if the child never saw any communication with God from the people in her life, the child would learn that it wasn't necessary.

Though none of us is perfect, we do have the responsibility to try to model behaviors that we want our child to emulate. As much as kids learn from what we do, they also learn from what we do not do. When we don't make going to Church a priority each Sunday, it speaks volumes about faith and life to the hearts of our children.

6 Things Kids Learn When You Skip Divine Liturgy On Sundays and Holydays

1. God is important, but not *that* important.

If I can fit God in, great, but only if it is convenient for me. Football games, sleeping in, and _____ (insert activity of choice) are more important than making an effort to be with God one and a half hours a week.

2. God doesn't *really* mean what He says.

Yes, it is a commandment to keep the Lord's Day Holy, but God doesn't understand how busy I am or how many kids I have or how tired I've been so I can just decide based on my life's circumstances what He really means by this commandment and all of His other commandments. It's up to us to pick and choose which of God's laws we want to follow.

3. The Church doesn't *really* expect us to adhere to Her teachings.

Yes, it is a precept of the Church to attend Liturgy on Sundays and Holydays, but the Church doesn't understand how busy I am or how many kids I have or how tired I've been so I can just decide based on my life's circumstances what the Church really means by this precept.

4. Liturgy is all about me and what I get out of it.

When we come and go to Liturgy as we please, we seem to forget that Liturgy builds the Church community. Your parish may need you to sing in the choir, or be a greeter or help in other ways. Seeing your family in Church might be just the thing an elderly person needs to bring joy to a lonely Sunday. There are many reasons that we are a community of faith and that we come together in Worship.

5. When things are difficult/boring, I don't have to do them.

If we don't attend Liturgy and we tell our kids it's because Liturgy is "boring" or we "don't get anything out of it," our children learn that we only have to do things that are fun and exciting. This is simply not true regarding both our faith and everyday life. Most people don't find doing their taxes fun and exciting, but we still have to do them.

6. To doubt the True Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist and the Graces that come from receiving Him

If you truly believe that Jesus is present in the Eucharist and that He comes to us each Sunday at Liturgy, what would keep you from Him? Why would you not want to receive the graces He bestows through this incredible gift?

Our Catechism teaches us “The summit of the Church’s liturgical life is the Divine Liturgy (from the Greek *litourgia*, meaning *a common work*) It is the service of God to His people and of God’s people to Him. In the Divine Liturgy the Father leads us into the fullness of His life by giving us His Son” in the Eucharist.

Parents, I know and fully understand how difficult it is to bring children to Church.

Often when I leave Liturgy, I feel as if I have just competed in a wrestling match. No matter how much I plan and prepare, we have plenty of days when the kids are less than angelic.

It is a battle. But, it is a battle worth fighting. There is no better place to bring our children than to the feet of Jesus. **There is no better lesson to teach them than to put God first ALWAYS, no matter what else is going on in our lives or how difficult it is to be at Liturgy.**

Guess what will happen if you wait to bring children to Liturgy until they can behave better or your life isn’t as busy? It won’t happen.

Satan will always give us an excuse to miss out on the celebration of the highest form of prayer we have here on earth, but God will always give us the graces to respond with a “yes” when we ask Him to help us.

Make Sunday and Holyday Liturgy the one thing that your family consistently does together. Trust me, the blessings and graces that will come from this discipline will transform your family life in a powerful way.

<http://catholic-link.org/2016/11/07/children-mass-sundays/>

THE CHURCH AND MISSION

By Alexander Schmemmann

To recover the missionary dimension of the Church is today’s greatest imperative. We have to recover a very basic truth: that the Church is essentially Mission, that the very roots of her life are in the commandment of Christ: “Go therefore and teach all nations” (Matt. 28:19). A Christian community that would lose this missionary zeal and purpose, that would become selfish and self-centered, that would limit itself to “satisfying the spiritual needs of its members”, that would identify itself completely with a **nation, a society, a social or ethnic group** - is on its way to spiritual decadence and death, because the essential spiritual need of a Christian is precisely that of sharing the

life and the Truth with as many men and women as possible and ultimately with the whole world. Mission thus is the organic need and task of the Church in the world, the real meaning of Church’s presence in history between the first and the second advents of her Lord, or, in other terms, the meaning of Christian history. Obviously not all members of the Church can go and preach in the literal sense of the word. But all can have a concern for the missionary function of the Church, feel responsible for it, help and support it. In this respect each diocese, each parish and each member of the Church are involved in the missionary ministry.

TRAVELING ICON OF OUR LADY OF POCHAIV

Why is it called the Traveling Icon?

Each week beginning next Sunday immediately following the Divine Liturgy, the Traveling Icon of Our Lady of Pochaiv will be formally passed from one family to the next. The recipient family will display the Icon throughout the week in their home and pray with it, as a family, once a day—total time about 15 minutes per day. The suggested prayers will be provided, along with scripture readings for each day.



Why are we doing this?

The purpose of the Traveling Icon is to recognize and encourage family unity. It is one element of a vibrant parish, and dovetails with the desire of our Bishops to encourage more time spent in prayer. The Icon will help bring the family together at least once each day in prayer, thus allowing the Holy Spirit to be present

daily amongst us. The goal is to encourage and enrich the daily prayer life of each parishioner and their family.

What if I'm single and/or live alone?

By all means, sign up for the Traveling Icon. Venerating the Icon is appropriate for individuals as well as families. Also, Fr. James will deliver the Traveling Icon to those parishioners who are homebound or otherwise unable to attend Liturgy.

How do I participate?

There will be a signup sheet in the back of the Church. Please sign up for a week to ensure there are no blanks. Volunteer for one or more weeks today!



SCHEDULE OF SERVICE FOR THE FEAST OF NATIVITY

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24 - VIGIL OF THE NATIVITY

9:30 AM - Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

9:00 PM - Great Vespers followed by *З Наму Бог!* "Велике Повечір'я з Литією -
"God is with us" Great Complines with Lytia.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25 – THE NATIVITY IN THE FLESH OF OUR LORD, GOD AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST

9:30 AM - Divine Liturgy

Mission Days Prayer

*O Lord, God, shine forth the light of
Your Holy Gospel, so that the Christian
faith might spread through us, the
baptized, as children of the Light. Let us
be witnesses to Your Living Presence in
our lives and in our parish community,
O Lord, hear us and have mercy.*

*The Holy Spirit provides everything:
He sends the prophets, leads priests
to perfection, teaches wisdom to
the uneducated, makes theologians
of fishermen, and unites the entire
Christian community, O Comforter,
Consubstantial with the Father and
Son, glory be to You!*

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



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Святого Йоана Хрестителя
St. John the Baptizer
Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church**

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Pastor: Fr. James Bankston
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Fr. James' cell phone: (619) 905-5278

Invited to the Banquet

It is written in the Gospel: The Master sent out his servants to call them who wish to come, inviting them: "My banquet is ready." But those who were called began to excuse themselves, one saying: "I bought some yoke of oxen." Another: "I have married" (Luke 14:16ff). You see, he was ready who called, but the invited refused. They themselves were alone responsible in the way they answered.

Thus, so great is the dignity of Christians. Consider, the Lord has prepared for them the Kingdom and has called them to enter, but they have refused. Concerning the gift that Christians will receive by way

of their inheritance, one could rightly say that if anyone, from the time of Adam's creation to the end of the world, should battle against Satan and put up with afflictions, it would be nothing in comparison to the glory which he is to obtain. For he will reign forever together with Christ. Glory to Him who so loved such a person that He gave himself and His grace and entrusted himself to Him. Glory to His greatness!

Pseudo-Macarius

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