

SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS -- SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FATHERS



Icon of the Nativity of Our Lord

DECEMBER 20, 2009

SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS - SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FATHERS

TONE 4

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 21 – DECEMBER 27, 2009

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24 VIGIL OF THE NATIVITY

10:00 AM

10:00 PM

ROYAL HOURS

“З Нами Бог!” ВЕЛИКЕ Повечір’я

“GOD IS WITH US” GREAT COMPLINES

FOLLOWED BY DIVINE LITURGY

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

10:00 AM

DIVINE LITURGY

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27 – SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY – FEAST OF DAVID, JOSEPH AND JAMES

9:30 AM LITURGY

FOR ALL PARISHIONERS

Remember in your prayers



Please remember in your prayers those members of our parish, our family and friends who are ailing, are in hospitals, nursing homes and

those who are not able to join actively in their community. Remember especially the following: Katherine Andrus, Walter & Isabella Bachynsky, Susie Boyko, Sonya Cronin, Helen Davis, Stephen Hricko, Bohdanchik James, Maria Laszok, Lesya Loznycky, Alice Melnyk, Gregorio Ortiz Peña, and Sophia Skop. Please let Fr. James know if there is anyone else who should be remembered.

Pancake Breakfast and Bake Sale

Today after the Divine Liturgy is our annual pre-Christmas Pancake Breakfast and Bake Sale. All are welcome!

Church Decorating

Please come on Tomorrow, December 21st at 10:00 AM to help decorate the Church for the feast of the Nativity.

Remember Those In The Armed Forces

Let us especially remember in our prayers those family members and friends who are actively serving their countries in the Armed Forces: Luke and



Slavamira Haywas, Elizabeth Heltsley, Oksanna Hirniak, Andrew Hryniw, Zenon and Susan Keske, Michael Lopes, Vasyl and Volodymyr Lylak, Paul Richelmi and Brian Tuthill. Please give any names of those you would like remembered in the Liturgies to Fr. James.



Let's go Caroling!

Between December 25 and February 2 we will be organizing visits to our parishioners, shut-ins, and nursing homes. If you are interested in participating or you would like to be visited or you know of someone who would like to be visited, please contact Fr. James.

Christmas Items

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

Christ is born! Glorify Him!

During the celebration of our Lord's Nativity, it is the custom of Eastern Christians to greet one another with the joyous exclamation, "Христос Раждається!" "Christ is born!", to which the one greeted responds, "Славите Його!" "Glorify Him!"

Fast Free Period

The celebration of Christmas begins on Christmas and concludes on February 9, with the leave taking of the feast of the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple. At the center of this longer celebration is not a mere one day observance, but a twelve day celebration of the fact that God has become man for us men and our salvation. During these twelve days of Christmas we do not fast, even on Wednesday and Fridays. A one day fast is observed on January 5th, the Eve of Theophany.

House Blessings



It is the custom among many Eastern Christians to have their homes blessed with the holy water sanctified on Theophany (the feast which commemorates the Baptism of the Lord in the Jordan River). If you would like your home blessed, please put your name on the sign-up sheet in the back of the church.

If you have any questions about house blessings, what is involved, why we bless our homes, etc., please speak with Fr. James.



Confession Times

Fr. James is available to hear Confession at almost any time. If you cannot make it to church either before or after a scheduled service, Fr. John can meet you at the church at just about any other time. If you would like more information about preparing for Confession, or if you have any other questions about it, please feel free to speak with your priest.



Thank You!

Today we welcome the Knights of Columbus who have so generously provided components and installation of our new security system. May God bless your generosity towards our community during our difficult time. We are humbled by your example of Christian Charity and Stewardship which you have extended towards us even though you are not parishioners. We are, however, united as members of the one Body of Christ. May God grant you many blessed years!





Dear Beloved Parishioners and
Friends of Our Parish,

Each Christmas, as we celebrate the birth of the Son of God in the flesh, we exchange gifts with one another as a token of our love and brotherly affection. This is an age old practice recalling the gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, offered to the Christ Child by the

wise men who had traveled from afar to Bethlehem in order to pay homage to the newly born King and Savior of the world.

As we know, not long after the wise men presented their gifts, St. James, the first bishop of Jerusalem, wrote in his Epistle to the early Christians that "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights." (James 1:17) As descendants of these first Christians, and joint heirs with them of God's rich bounties, we not only share these same sentiments of St. James but we also recite these exact same words at every Divine Liturgy. Likewise, we also acknowledge with him that of all the good and perfect gifts of the Lord there was none so great or so perfect as that of the Only-Begotten Son – the One who was given by the Father because He so loved the world, and the One who gave Himself up on the Cross so that we might share in His divine life and kingdom.

And so, as we rejoice in the gift of divine life offered to us by Jesus Christ through His Incarnation, let us also resolve to offer back to God a gift of like kind and value. As He has given His life to us and for us, let us also commend ourselves and each other and all our life unto Him. There is no greater gift that we can offer to God for the One great and perfect gift He has given to us – His Only-Begotten Son.

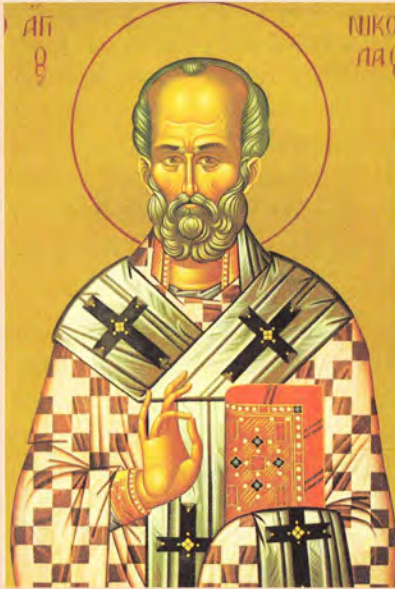
Finally, I extend to you my heartfelt prayers and best wishes for the festive season and New Year. May the Lord bless you, your families, and friends with peace, good will, and love!

With prayerful best wishes,
And with love in Christ,

Fr. James

CHRISTMAS AND THEOPHANY

THE INCARNATION AND MANIFESTATION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST



Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker

December 6th

When you appeared in a dream to Constantine the King, you gave him this warning: Release at once from prison those you have unjustly confined, for they are innocent; no murder did they commit as you claim. O King, listen to me, or else I shall call upon the Lord.

O holy Nicholas, holy preacher of Christ, always ready to help all on land or at sea. Whether they be near or far, you have compassion for all. You are a precious helper; therefore, we who gather here ask you to pray to the Lord that we be delivered from all distress and sorrow.

Sunday of the Holy Forefathers, the Patriarchs

Today we commemorate the ancestors of Christ. Sing with fervor a hymn of praise to Christ the Savior who exalted them among all nations. He is the Lord who does wondrous deeds because He is powerful and mighty. From them He brought forth a royal scepter, the immaculate maiden of God and virgin Mary. From her, Christ our God came forth to give life and eternal salvation for all.

The three holy youths were refreshed by the Holy Spirit when they walked in the fire as in a cool place. In them the Trinity and the Incarnation of Christ were prefigured in a mystical manner. By their wisdom and faith they overcame the power of fire. As for the just Daniel, he stopped the mouths of lions. Through their intercession, we beseech You: O Savior and Lover of Mankind, protect us from eternal fire and make us worthy of your heavenly kingdom.





Sunday of the Holy Fathers

The commemoration of the Holy Fathers is manifested to the ends of the world. It is truly of splendor, and it glistens with the rays of grace; for Christ the splendrous Sun has shone forth on high from afar. He forms the assembly of stars which glisten with Him, and the star reveals that the nativity of the God-man will be in Bethlehem. Therefore, we piously and faithfully clap our hands and leap for joy at this nativity, and we give praise before the feast.

The Holy Fathers are adorned by the glory of the divine sharing of our nature. Adam rejoices today, since he is the foundation and the strength of the wise Forefathers; Abel leaps for joy as well. Enoch is glad; Seth and Noah dance together. The praiseworthy Abraham sings with the Patriarchs. Melchisedek now sees from on high the birth without a father.

Nativity of Our Lord

December 25th

O Christ our God, your kingdom is eternal, and your reign is from generation to generation. You became incarnate of the Holy Spirit and became man from the ever-virgin Mary. Your coming, O Christ, has shed a great light upon us. You are the Light of Light and the radiance of the Father. You have illumined the whole creation. Therefore, everything that breathes sings a hymn of praise to You. You are the image of the Father's glory. You are the eternal God, existing before all ages, who shone forth from the Virgin. O Lord our God, have mercy on us.





Synaxis of the Holy Mother of God

December 26th

O Christ, what shall we offer You for your coming on earth in our humanity for our sake? Every creature that has its being from You gives thanks to You: the angels offer hymns of praise, the heavens give a star; the Magi present their gifts and the shepherds, their wonder; the earth provides a cave and the desert, a manger. As for us, we offer a Virgin Mother. O God who are from all eternity, have mercy on us.

Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth. Today Bethlehem receives the One who at all times sits with the Father. Today the angels sing the praises of the newborn infant. Glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace and good will to all.

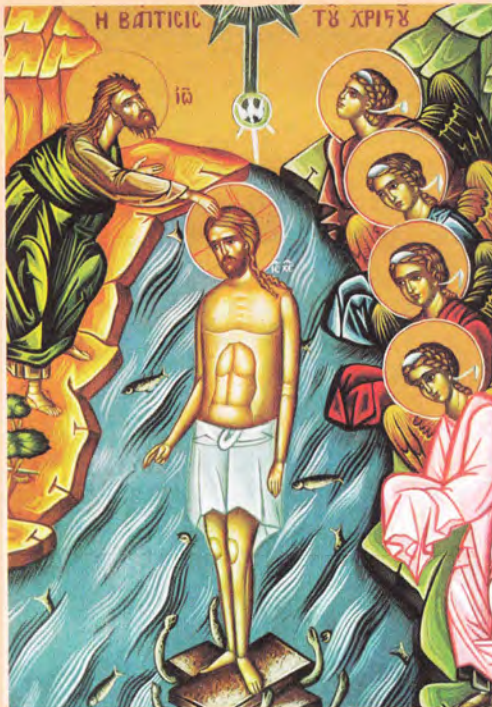
Saint Basil the Great

January 1st

You have been called by the name of Basil, after the kingdom. In your kingly rank you led the people of Christ to wisdom and knowledge. Then the Lord of all and King of Kings adorned you with the crown of the kingdom, O Basil. He is the everlasting and co-eternal Son who was united to her that bore Him. Therefore, intercede with Him that He may enlighten and save our souls.

Adorned with the vestments of a bishop, O Basil, you gladly proclaimed the Gospel of the kingdom and poured out the teachings of the true faith for the Church. Now enlightened by them, we confess and glorify the one Godhead, indivisible in three Persons; namely the Almighty Father, the only-begotten Word of God, and the Divine Spirit. Intercede with Him that He may enlighten and save our souls.





Theophany of Our Lord in the Jordan

January 6th

When the Jordan received You, O Fountainhead, the Comforter descended in the form of a dove. Now behold the marvel: the One who bowed the heavens bows his head to the Forerunner, and the one made of clay cries out to his Maker: Why do you command me to perform what is beyond my power? It is I who need to be baptized by You. O Christ our God, O Sinless One, glory to You!

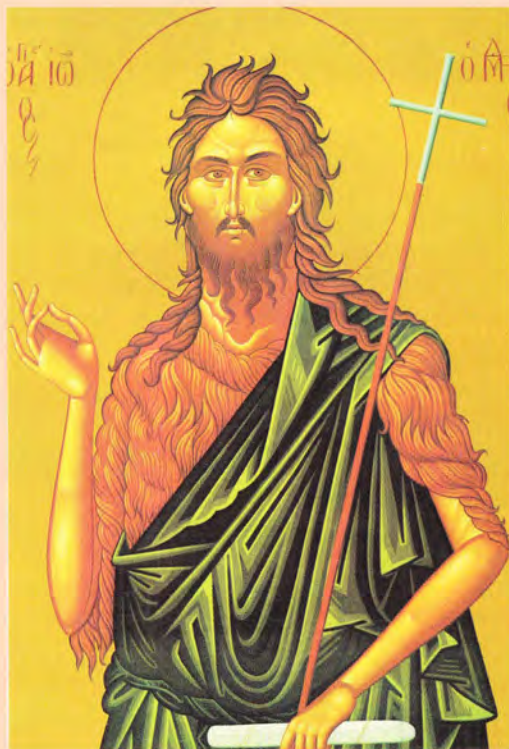
You have bowed your head before the Forerunner, and You have crushed the heads of the demons. You have descended into the waters and given light to all things that they may glorify You, O Savior, and Enlightenment of our souls.

Synaxis of John the Baptist

January 7th

The Forerunner said to the Creator: For my part I am held back, and I do not know where to flee. O generous One, You are the river of delight. How is it, therefore, that the streams of the river receive You as You enter them? To all those who venerate your holy manifestation, You pour out salvation, O Word!

O luminary in the flesh and Forerunner of the Savior, O offspring of the barren one, O friend, by leaping in the womb you adored the One who is born of the Virgin; and you baptized Him in the waters of the Jordan. O prophet, we pray to you: Implore Him that we may escape the future torments.



All text from Vesper Stichera of each feastday in The Festal Menaion, Sisters of Saint Basil, Uniontown, PA

Українська Католицька Церква Святого Йоана Хрестителя

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The Night of the Nativity

Pure is the present night, in which the Pure One appeared. Who came to purify us! Let our hearing be pure, and the sight of our eyes be chaste, and the feeling of our hearts be holy, and the speech of our mouth sincere.

The present night is the night of reconciliation; therefore, let no one be angry with his brother and offend him. This night gave peace to the whole world; and so, let no one threaten. This is the night of the Most Meek 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 take revenge for offenses.

Now is the day of good will; let us not be harsh. On this day of tranquility, let us not become agitated by anger. Today God came unto sinners; let not the righteous exalt himself over sinners. Today the Most Rich One became poor of our sake; let the rich man invite the poor to his table. Today we received a gift that we did not ask for; let us bestow alms to those who cry out to us and who beg.

The present day has opened the door of heaven to our prayers; let us also open our door to those who ask of us forgiveness. Today the Godhead placed upon Himself the seal of humanity, and humanity has been adorned with the seal of the Godhead.

St. Ephraim the Syrian