

SUNDAY BEFORE NATIVITY, OF THE ANCESTORS



*Icon of the Nativity -- December 25th*

# ***December 23, 2012***

## ***SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY***

***THE HOLY ANCESTORS OF CHRIST***

### ***TONE 5***

#### ***SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 24 – DECEMBER 30***

MONDAY, DECEMBER 24 – *VIGIL OF THE NATIVITY (STRICT FAST DAY)*

10:00 AM – Royal Hours

10:00 PM – *3 Нами Бог!* “Велике Повечір’я” “God is with us” Great Complines

Followed by Divine Liturgy      Special Intention

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 25 – *THE NATIVITY IN THE FLESH OF OUR LORD, GOD AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST (HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION)*

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy

For All Parishioners

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 26 – *SYNAXIS OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS; THE HOLY HIEROMARTYR EUTHYMIUS, BISHOP OF SARDIS*

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy

Special Intention

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 27 – *THE HOLY APOSTLE, PROTOMARTYR AND ARCHDEACON STEPHEN; OUR VENERABLE FATHER AND CONFESSOR THEODORE THE BRANDED, BROTHER OF ST. THEOPHANES THE HYMNOGRAPHER*

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy

Special Intention

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29 – *SATURDAY AFTER NATIVITY; THE HOLY FOURTEEN THOUSAND INFANTS SLAIN FOR CHRIST’S SAKE IN BETHLEHEM OF JUDEA BY HEROD; OUR VENERABLE FATHER MARCELLUS, HEGUMEN OF THE MONASTERY OF THE SLEEPLESS ONES*

6:00 PM – Great Vespers of Sunday

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30 – *SUNDAY AFTER NATIVITY – DAVID, JOSEPH AND JAMES; THE HOLY VIRGIN MARTYR ANYSIA; OUR VENERABLE FATHER ZOTICUS, PRESBYTER AND FRIEND OF ORPHANS*

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy

For All Parishioners

On December 21, we celebrated the Feast of Saint Ignatius of Antioch, a bishop killed in the Roman persecutions in the generation right after the apostles. He wrote the following in his letter to his followers on his way to Rome to die, begging them not to rescue him from prisoner, but to let him become a martyr:

*"It is better for me to die in Christ Jesus than to be king over the ends of the earth. I seek him who died for our sake. I desire him who rose for us. The pains of birth are upon me. Suffer me, my brethren; hinder me not from living, do not wish me to die. Do not give to the world one who desires to belong to God, nor deceive him with material things. Suffer me to receive the pure light; when I shall have arrived there, I shall become a human being. Suffer me to follow the example of the passion of my God."*

### **Welcome to Our Visitors**

We warmly welcome all those who are visiting from near and far. Please consider staying for a bite to eat at our coffee hour following the service. But even if you have to run, we thank you for worshipping with us today, and we wish you a blessed remainder of your visit!

### **Catechetical Video Series**

Today, after the Divine Liturgy we continue showing a series of catechetical videos. The first series to be shown will be “Catholicism” by Fr. Robert Barrons.

A future video series will be “The Way: Intruducing Orthodox Christianity.”

**Please attend! Будьмо Уважні!**



**Thank You!** - to all those who helped to clean and decorate the church for the feast of the Nativity. May God bless you for your generosity!

### God's Extended Hand

FOCUS (Fellowship of Orthodox Christians United to Serve) has provided us with a special bin for collecting donations of clothing, toiletries, etc. to be distributed at GEH. It is located near the door of the church hall.

### Sunday offering for December 16

Amount	Number
\$5.00	1
\$10.00	2
\$15.00	1
\$20.00	3
\$25.00	1
\$40.00	2
\$50.00	5
\$62.00	1 (loose)
\$75.00	1
\$100.00	2
\$200.00	1
\$300.00	1
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\$1292.00	21 Parishioners

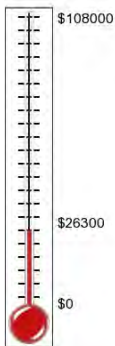
Parishioner Total: \$1292.00

Visitor Total: \$25.00

Average / parish household (40): \$30.76

Weekly Stewardship Goal: \$2125.00

Shortfall: **(\$833.00)**



*Stewardship Pledges*  
Pledges received: 11

***It is impossible to plan any sort of budget until all pledge forms are turned in. If you haven't returned your pledge, please do so.***



### Popcorn and a Movie with the Sisters

"Women of Spirit", the untold story of the Sisters of St. Basil in America, will be shown at our parish on Sunday, January 27th after the Divine Liturgy. Sr. Ann Laszok will be in attendance to answer any questions that people might have. We invite everyone to come and celebrate this amazing story with the Sisters.

Plan to attend! For further information on the Popcorn and a Movie with the Sisters call Fr James at (619) 905-5278.



### This Christmas

Think first of someone else.

Be kind and gentle. Mend a quarrel.

Seek out a forgotten friend.

Write a love letter.

Share some treasure.

Give a soft answer. Encourage youth.

Keep a promise.

Find the time.

Forgive an enemy.

Listen.

Apologize if you were wrong.

Laugh a little. Laugh a little more.

Express your gratitude.

Gladden the heart of a child.

Take pleasure in the beauty and wonder of the earth.

Speak your love. Speak it again.

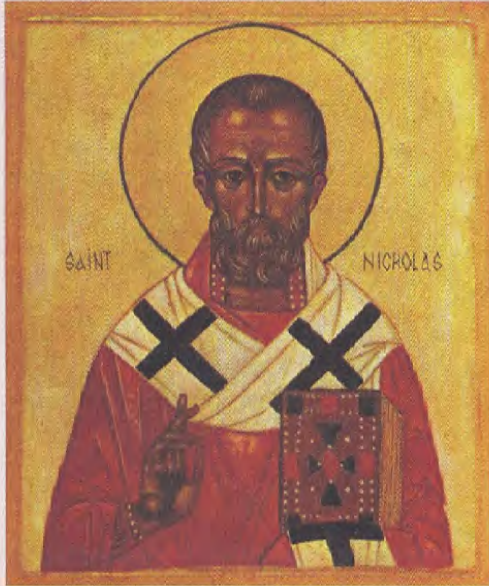
Speak it still once again.

- Anonymous



# CHRISTMAS AND THEOPHANY

## THE INCARNATION AND MANIFESTATION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST



### *Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker*

*December 6th*

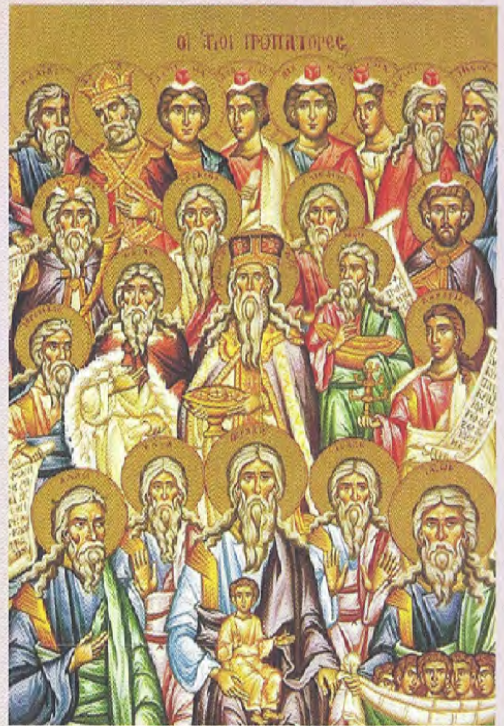
When you appeared in a dream to Constantine the King, you gave him this warning: Release at once from prison those you have unjustly confined, for they are innocent; no murder did they commit as you claim. O King, listen to me, or else I shall call upon the Lord.

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.

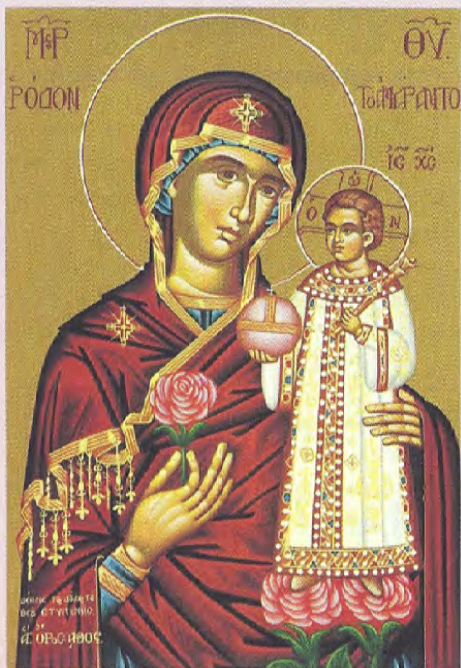
### *Nativity of Our Lord*

*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 25th*

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.

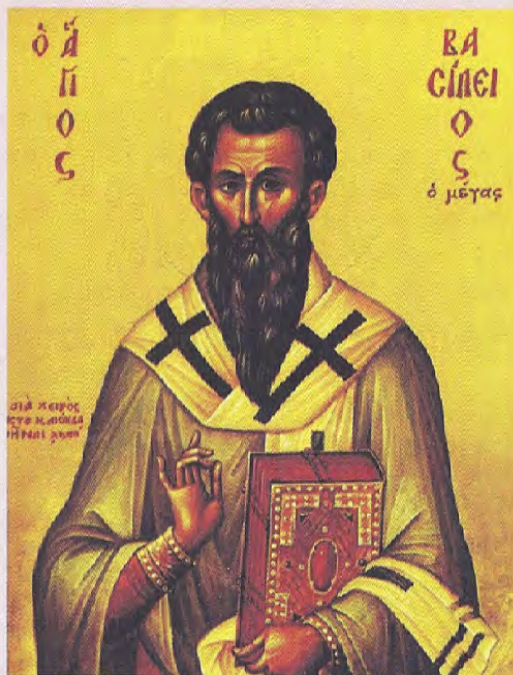
Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth. Today Bethlehem receives the One who at all times sits with the Father. Today the angels sing the praises of the newborn infant. Glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace and good will to all.

## *Saint Basil the Great*

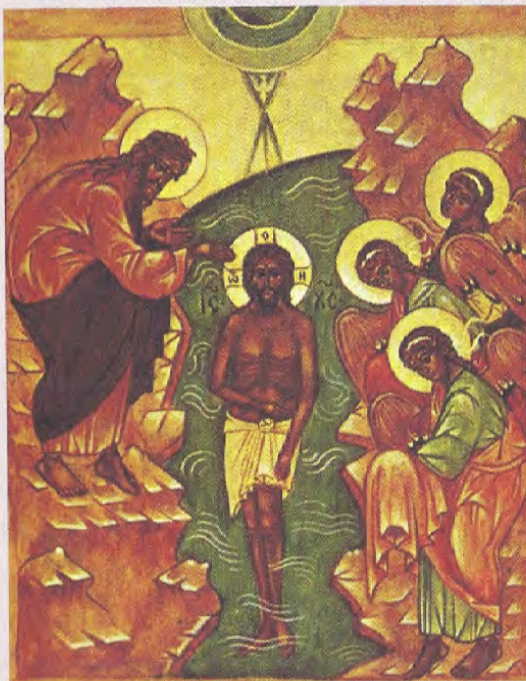
*January 1st*

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 Греко-Католицька Церква  
Святого Йоана Хрестителя  
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**Website:** [stjohnthebaptizer.org](http://stjohnthebaptizer.org)

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

***We Think of Him as Human, We Adore Him as God***

The care of the Creator for His creatures is well known to us, and it explains why the Redeemer became incarnate. It was consistent with His love not to leave the human race to go to perdition, from the moment He had constructed the universe and given existence to non-existent beings.

The Lord of the world did not consider it right to allow human beings, for love of whom everything had been made, to be besieged by sin and to be sold like slaves to death.

For this reason He assumed human form, hid His invisible nature under visible guise, and kept the visible nature free from the stain of sin.

Undoubtedly, it would have been easy for Him to save the human race without assuming the garment of the flesh. He could have overthrown the power of death by a simple act

of will. He could have made the father of that power, sin, disappear by exiling it from earth in such a way that no trace of it would remain on the earth.

Instead of that, He chose to demonstrate the holiness of His providential care.

To restore salvation to human beings He did not employ as His servants the angels and arch-angels, nor cause a piercing voice to resound from heaven. He preferred to build for Himself a chamber in the womb of the Virgin and from there to come among us.

For this reason we think of Him as man and adore Him as God. Begotten of the Father before the beginning of time, He took of the Virgin a visible body. He is the Being who is both new and pre-existent.

*St. Theodoret of Cyrrhus*