

WEEKLY BULLETIN

December 19, 2021 Vol. 38, No. 51

26th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Sunday of the Fathers & Before the Nativity



St. ELIA

ORTHODOX  CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America

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*His Eminence Alexander, Archbishop of Toledo, Bulgarian Diocese, OCA
Very Rev. Mitred Archpriest Father Don Anthony Freude, Parish Rector
Rev. Protodeacon James M. Gresh, Attached*



“Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.”

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

Advent - The Christmas Fast

26th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST -Tone 1 - Sunday of the Holy Fathers. Sunday Before the Nativity.

Saturday, December 18

5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions

Sunday, December 19

9:10 am 3rd & 6th Hours: Bud Graham

9:30 am Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Epistle Reader: Bud Graham

Epistle: Hebrews 11: :9-10,17-23,32-40

Gospel: Matthew 1:1-25

Lighting of the 6th Candle on the Advent Wreath

CHRISTMAS HOLY WEEK

The Feast of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ is preceded by a Holy Week. Prefestive Vespers will be celebrated at 6 pm on Monday, Dec. 20, Tuesday, Dec. 21, Wednesday, Dec. 22 and the Royal Hours on Thursday, Dec. 23.

Monday, December 20 - 6:00 pm

Vespers of the Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ

Tuesday, December 21 - 6:00 pm

Vespers of the Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ

Wednesday, December 22 - 6:00 pm

Vespers of the Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ

Thursday, December 23 - 6:00 pm

Royal Hours of the Nativity of Christ



**FEAST OF CHRISTMAS
CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!**

**THE NATIVITY ACCORDING TO THE FLESH
OF OUR LORD GOD AND SAVIOR
JESUS CHRIST**

**Friday, December 24 - Christmas Eve - *Strict Fast*
5:00 pm Vigil of Christmas
Compline and Matins
Matins Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25**

**Saturday, December 25 -Christmas Day
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
Epistle: Galatians 4:4-7 Gospel: Matthew 2:112**

**27th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST -Tone 2 -
SECOND DAY OF THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY.**

**Holy Righteous Ones: Joseph the Betrothed, David the King, James the Brother of the Lord.
Synaxis of the Theotokos**

Sunday, December 26

**9:10 am 3rd & 6th Hours: Sandy Graham
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
Epistle Reader: Sandy Graham**

Epistles: Galatians 1:11-19 Ephesians 6:10-17
Gospels: Matthew 2:13-23 Luke 18:18-27

**THIRD DAY OF THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY
Holy Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen**

Monday, December 27

9:30 am Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

January 2022

**THE CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR
JESUS CHRIST.**

**St. Basil the Great, Archbishop of Caesarea in
Cappadocia**

Friday, December 31 - New Year's Eve

**6:00 pm Vespers Divine Liturgy of St. Basil
the Great**

Prayers for the New Year

*That the Lord our God will bless this new year with
His grace and love for mankind, and grant us
peaceful times, healthful seasons and sinless lives,
let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mercy!*

**28th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST -Tone 3 -
SUNDAY BEFORE THE THEOPHANY. Forefeast of the
Theophany of our Lord**

Saint Juliana the Merciful

Repose of Ven. Seraphim Wonderworker of Sarov

Sunday, January 2

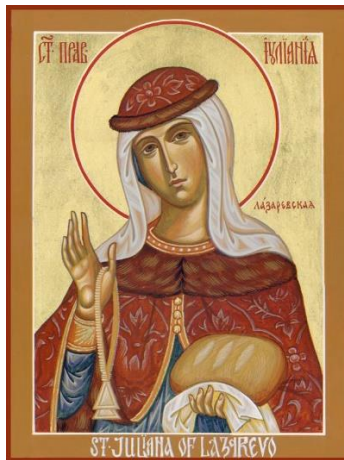
9:10 am 3rd & 6th Hours: Reader Michael Luc

9:30 am Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Epistle Reader: Reader Michael Luc

Epistle: 2 Timothy 4:5-8 Gospels: Mark 1:1-8

SLAVA OF SAINT JULIANA THE MERCIFUL
Patroness of St. Elia's Sisterhood



Troparion — Tone 4

By your righteous deeds you revealed to the world an image of the perfect servant of the Lord. By your fasting, vigil and prayers, you were inspired in your evangelical life, feeding the hungry and caring for the poor, nursing the sick and strengthening the weak. Now you stand at the right hand of the Master, Christ, O holy Juliana, interceding for our souls.



**FEAST OF THEOPHANY
CHRIST IS BAPTIZED IN THE JORDAN
GLORIFY HIM!**

**THE HOLY THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD AND
SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST**

Wednesday January 5 - *Strict Fast*

**6:00 pm Vespers Divine Liturgy of St. Basil
the Great
Great Sanctification of Water**

**29th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST -Tone 4 -
Afterfeast of Theophany Sunday After Theophany.**

Saturday, January 8

5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions

Sunday, January 9

9:10 am 3rd & 6th Hours: Reader Michael Luc

9:30 am Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Epistle Reader: Reader Michael Luc

Epistle: Ephesians 4:7-13 Gospel: Matt. 4:12-17

**3:00 pm Holy Mystery of Matrimony for
Kostadin Kostadinov and Sarah Niglio**



St. Elia Christmas Ornament

Designed by Reader Aaron Gray, as a fundraiser for St. Elia Church. This new Ornament is available now for purchase in our bookstore for \$10.00. *Spread the word!!!*

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS DONATIONS

With the celebration of Christmas just a few days away, please consider making a special donation for Poinsettias and decorations. Envelopes are available on the Candle Desk marked "Flower Fund." Thank you for your generosity.

2022 OFFERING ENVELOPES

The boxes of Offering Envelopes will be sent this year directly by mail by the Church Budget Envelope Co, of Salem, Ohio. They are to be mailed directly to your home in December of this year, 2021. If you do not receive them, please inform Father Don so that the envelope company can be informed.

PARISH COUNCIL 2022

On Sunday, November 28, 2021, a Parish Meeting was held following the Divine Liturgy to elect the 2022 Parish Council. Sandra Graham of the Nominating Committee presented the slate of those Nominated and accepted their nomination.

Elected were:

President: John Bohush IV

Vice President: Subdeacon Terrence A. Bilas

Secretary: Reader Aaron Gray

Treasurer: Reader Joshua Wherley

Members: Veronica Bilas, Bud Graham, Sarah Niglio.

Mary Marcin - COCA Representative

The Parish Council 2022 will be presented to His Eminence Archbishop Alexander for approval and then be installed at the Annual Meeting scheduled for **January 23, 2022**, following the Divine Liturgy. A special word to the 2021. We thank you for your willingness to serve this past year. *Many Years!*

CARPETING INSTALLATION

The remodeling of the Altar steps is completed and we thank Bud Graham, Subdeacon Terrence Bilas and their helpers Reader Aaron Gray, Reader Joshua Wherely, Kostadin Kostadinov, Alexander Bojanov, Tyler McKelvey, Michael Luc and so many others who are helping in this project. .

Our new carpeting has been installed by Spanky's Carpeting. The down payment – one half – has already been paid. The total cost is \$11,709.00 and has been made possible by generous donations.

OUR STEWARDHIP – December 12, 2021

Candles:	\$ 29.00
Improvement Fund:	100.00
Christmas Ornament:	90.00
Christmas Flowers:	100.00
Sunday Offering:	560.00
TOTAL:	\$879.00

THE ADVENT WREATH



On Monday, November 15th, forty days prior to the celebration of the Feast of our Lord's Nativity, the Holy Orthodox Church began the Christmas Fast. This period of six weeks is often called *Advent*, which means *the Coming*, and refers to the Coming of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the Mystery of His Holy Nativity.

Christmas and Theophany are Feasts of Light, celebrating the Coming and Manifestation of Christ, the Light of the world. Nature itself helps us to experience these Feasts of Light. With the coming of the winter the days get shorter and the nights longer, but once we reach Christmas Day itself the reverse begins to happen. Nature prepares for the Coming of Christ, the Light in the darkness – and so do we during the Holy Season of Advent.

To help in our preparation, we have an Advent Wreath in Church. The Wreath, made of evergreens, has six candles on it – one for each week in Advent. **Today, Sunday, December 19, we light the 6th Candle on the Advent Wreath** along with special prayers, as we prepare ourselves to receive Christ the Light of the world into our hearts with faith, hope, love, joy, peace and kindness. Beginning on December 20, we enter the immediate days of preparation with the celebration of the Vespers of the Forefeast and the Royal Hours of Christmas.

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, was born of the Most Holy Virgin Mary in the city of Bethlehem during the reign of the emperor Augustus (Octavian). Caesar Augustus decreed that a universal census be made throughout his Empire, which then also included Palestinian Israel. The Jews were accustomed to being counted in the city from where their family came. The Most Holy Virgin and the Righteous Joseph, since they were descended from the house and lineage of King David, had to go to Bethlehem to be counted and taxed.

In Bethlehem they found no room at any of the city's inns. Thus, the God-Man, the Savior of the world, was born in a cave that was used as a stable.

“I behold a strange and most glorious mystery,” the Church sings with awe, ***“Heaven, a Cave; the Virgin the Throne of the Cherubim; the Manger a room, in which Christ, the God Whom nothing can contain is laid.”*** (Irmos of the 9th Ode of the Nativity Canon).

Having given birth to the divine Infant without travail, the Most Holy Virgin ***“wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger”*** (Luke

2:7). In the stillness of midnight (Wisdom of Solomon 18:14-15), the proclamation of the birth of the Savior of the world was heard by three shepherds watching their flocks by night.

An angel of the Lord (Saint Cyprian says this was Gabriel) came before them and said: ***“Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, Who is Christ the Lord”*** (Luke 2:10-11). The humble shepherds were the first to offer worship to Him Who condescended to assume the form of a humble servant for the salvation of mankind. Besides the glad tidings to the Bethlehem shepherds, the Nativity of Christ was revealed to the Magi by a wondrous star. Saint John Chrysostom and Saint Theophylactus, commenting on Saint Matthew’s Gospel, say that this was no ordinary star. Rather, it was ***“a divine and angelic power that appeared in the form of a star.”*** Saint Demetrius of Rostov says it was a ***“manifestation of divine energy”*** (Narrative of the Adoration of the Magi). Entering the house where the Infant lay, the Magi ***“fell down, and worshipped Him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented Him gifts: gold, and frankincense, and myrrh”*** (Mt. 2:11).

The present Feast, commemorating the Nativity in the flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, was established

by the Church. Its origin goes back to the time of the Apostles. In the Apostolic Constitutions (Section 3, 13) it says, ***“Brethren, observe the feasts; and first of all the Birth of Christ, which you are to celebrate on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month.”*** In another place it also says, ***“Celebrate the day of the Nativity of Christ, on which unseen grace is given man by the birth of the Word of God from the Virgin Mary for the salvation of the world.”***

In the second century Saint Clement of Alexandria also indicates that the day of the Nativity of Christ is December 25. In the third century Saint Hippolytus of Rome mentions the Feast of the Nativity of Christ and appoints the Gospel readings for this day from the opening chapters of Saint Matthew.

During the first three centuries, in the Churches of Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria and Cyprus, the Nativity of Christ was combined with the Feast of His Baptism on January 6 and called “Theophany” (“Manifestation of God”).

The present order of services preserves the memory of the ancient joint celebration of the Feasts of the Nativity of Christ and Theophany. On the eve of both Feasts, there is a similar tradition that one should fast until the stars appear. The order of

divine services on the eve of both feastdays and the feastdays themselves is the same.

The Nativity of Christ has long been counted as one of the Twelve Great Feasts. It is one of the greatest, most joyful and wondrous events in the history of the world. *“The angel said to the shepherds, ‘Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, Who is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: you shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.’ Then suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly hosts, glorifying God and saying: ‘Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.’ Those who heard these things were astonished at what the shepherds told them concerning the Child. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen”* (Luke 2:10-20).

CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!

CHRISTOS RAZDAJETSJA!

CHRISTOS SE RODI MIR BOZE!

C ROZDECTVOM CHRISTOVIM! CHRISTOS GENNATI!

MASHEEH WULEDA! BUON NATALE! FELIZ NAVIDAD!

JOYEUX NOEL! WESOLY SWIAT! KRISZTUS SZULETIK

FROHE WEIHNACTEN! CHESTITA KOLEDA!