



SERVING THE LORD



JESUS CHRIST WANTS US!

For decades, the United States Armed Forces have effectively used the following slogan for recruiting purposes: "Uncle Sam Wants You!" Surely, we have all seen the poster of the old, bearded gentleman, attired in his patriotic suit of red, white and blue. With a piercing gaze, he points to us and appeals to our civic pride. Our country needs us! There is work for us to do for America! We are important to our government! Enlist now!

We should note, however, that the Church has placed a similar message before us for centuries: **JESUS CHRIST WANTS US!** Yes, we are all important to the Lord. Every Orthodox Christian is expected to contribute to the growth of Christ's Church. Christ wants us to be modern-day "apostles," defending His teachings and living according to His precepts. He wants us to be teachers, preachers, leaders and ministers -- there is something we all can be doing for our Savior. Indeed, ". . . we, being many, are one body in Christ." (Romans 13:5)

Our Orthodox Christian responsibility to Christ and His Church is great. The Church has prevailed for over 2,000 years largely because Christ's dedicated followers of every generation have recognized the role that they have been called upon to fulfill. Our Lord needs us to be true to our baptismal vows and serve Him with love to the best of our ability. The future of the Church now rests in **OUR** hands.

St. Mary's Orthodox Church
217 First Street – Coaldale Pa 18218-1602
Phone.....570-645-2772
OUR WEBSITE...www.stmarysnativity.org

Rector: V. Rev. James Weremedic
Retired Attached: V. Rev Paul Ropitsky
Reader Hours: Matushka Lisa

Sunday, December 31, 2023
Choir Director: Wash King
Reader Epistle: Edward Pierson

Christ is Born!

Glorify Him!

30th Sunday after Pentecost, Tone 5 Sunday After the Nativity of Christ

Holy Righteous Ones: Joseph the Betrothed, David the King, and James the Brother of the Lord

We welcome all our visitors today! We want to let you know that we are so glad you came to pray with us. Please come again; join us after the Divine Liturgy in the parish hall for fellowship. If you do not have a home church, we invite you to become a part of our parish family. Only those Orthodox Christians who have properly prepared themselves may approach the Chalice and receive Holy Communion.

SERVICES:

Saturday, Dec. 30	4:00 PM – Great Vespers & Confessions
Sunday, Dec. 31	9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy, New Year Pork & Sauer Kraut Meal
Sunday, Dec. 31	Youth Group New Year's Celebration
Friday, Jan. 5	4:00 PM – Great Compline and Matins (Theophany) Blessing of Water
Saturday, Jan. 6	9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy, Baptism of our Lord, Jesus Christ
Saturday, Jan. 6	4:00 PM – Great Vespers & Confessions
Sunday, Jan. 7	8:00 AM – Matins
Sunday, Jan. 7	9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy, Fellowship Hour

On December 24, 2023, we had **our first parish 'Holy Supper'** in our church hall with traditional strict fasting foods. The 39 members of the family of St. Mary's enjoyed the wonderful "Holy Supper" on the eve of the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ! We thank everyone who prepared via cooked, baked, served and cleaned up.

If anyone is in need of a priest, please call Father James Weremedic at 570-645-2772. Visitation of the Sick and Infirm: If you are going into the hospital for any reason, please inform Fr. James at the Rectory. Emergency Calls: Please call the Rectory (570-645-2772) anytime (day or night) in an emergency.

Prayer List*:

Fr. Michael Evans, Fr. James Weremedic, Sbdn. James Weremedic
Stephanie Chmel, Ilene Devine, Julia Forte, Michael & Julia Harahus, Karen & Rose Harkins,
Nancy King, Olga Kushnir, Anna Marie Mantey, Dorothy & Joseph Macenka, Anna Pierson,
Melissa Schmitt, Helen Sheers, Olga Sidoriak, Martha Stafiniak, Michael Teno, Elizabeth
Warcholak, Victoria Weremedic, Marie Yurchak

* Names will cycle off approximately every 30 days. You may request to have your name or
the name of a loved one placed back on the list at any time by contacting Fr. James directly.

Candles (December 31)

7-day Vigils-Altar... In health of **Russell & Geri King** offered by Gary Harahuess
Altar Candles... In memory of **Marion Pickenheim** offered by William Yelsh
Eternal Lamp... In memory of **Mary Lutash** offered by Raymond & MaryJo Danchak
7-day Vigils-Tetrapod... In memory of **Andrew & Mary Bybel** offered by family members
Decorated Candles... In memory of **Helen Butts** offered by Raymond & MaryJo Danchak
Vigil Crosses... In memory of **Andrew & Mary Bybel** offered by family members

January Birthdays: 2- Tommy Shanosky, Jhanyah Bracero, 13- Dr. Ronald Berezniak,
21- Helen Sheers, 28- Edward Pierson, 31- Michael Birosik

January Anniversaries: 1- Edward & Anna Pierson, 9- Wash & Helen King, 23- Russell &
Geri King

Financials 12/24/2023: Operating Acct: Weekly Envelopes \$502, Non-envelope \$265,
Donations \$270, Holy Day \$1,059, Altar Candles \$100, Candles \$58, Building Fund \$120

Fellowship Hour Hosts:

December 31 **New Year's Meal** January 7

If you have any Redner receipts, please call or get them to Helen King.
Please use your Boyer's card when shopping at Boyers; if you need one call Helen King.

Tone 2 Troparion (Righteous Ones)

Proclaim the wonder, O Joseph, to David, the ancestor of God; you have seen a Virgin great
with child; and you gave glory with the shepherds; you worshipped with the Magi, and
received the news from the Angel. // Pray to Christ God to save our souls!

Tone 3 Kontakion (Righteous Ones)

Today godly David is filled with joy; Joseph and James offer praise. The glorious crown of
their kinship with Christ fills them with great joy. They sing praises to the One ineffably born
on earth, // and they cry out: "O Compassionate One, save those who honor You!"

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31

Sunday After the Nativity of Christ, Leavetaking of the Nativity

Holy Righteous Ones: Joseph the Betrothed, David the King, and James the Brother of the Lord

Tone 5 Troparion (Resurrection)

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, born for our salvation from the Virgin; for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, to endure death, and to raise the dead // by His glorious Resurrection.

Tone 4 Troparion (Feast)

Your Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone to the world the light of wisdom!
For by it, those who worshipped the stars, were taught by a star to adore You,
the Sun of Righteousness, and to know You, the Orient from on high. // O Lord, glory to You!

Tone 3 Kontakion (Feast)

Today the Virgin gives birth to the Transcendent One, and the earth offers a cave to the Unapproachable One! Angels with shepherds glorify Him! The Wise Men journey with the star, // since for our sake the eternal God was born as a little Child!

Galatians 1:11-19 (Epistle, Sunday After)

But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it.

And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.

Silent Prayer before the Gospel:

Illumine our hearts, O Master Who lovest mankind, with the pure light of Thy divine knowledge. Open the eyes of our mind to the understanding of Thy gospel teachings. Implant also in us the fear of Thy blessed commandments, that trampling down all carnal desires, we may enter upon a spiritual manner of living, both thinking and doing such things as are well-pleasing unto Thee. For Thou art the illumination of our souls and bodies, O Christ our God, and unto Thee we ascribe glory, together with Thy Father, Who is from everlasting, and Thine all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Matthew 2:13-23 (Gospel, Sunday After)

Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him."

When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I called My Son."

Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men.

Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying: "A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted, because they are no more."

Now when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the young Child's life are dead." Then he arose, took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel.

But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of Galilee.

And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

Second Day of the Nativity of our Lord

Commemorated on December 26

On the day after the Nativity of Christ we celebrate the Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos, and come together to give her glory and praise. This is the second day of the three-day Winter Pascha.

Combining the hymns of the Nativity with those celebrating the Mother of God, the Church points to Mary as the one through whom the Incarnation was made possible. His humanity—concretely and historically—is the humanity He received from Mary. His body is, first of all, her body. His life is her life. This feast, the assembly in honor of the Theotokos, is probably the most ancient feast of Mary in the Christian tradition, the very beginning of her veneration by the Church.

Six days of post-feast bring the Christmas season to a close on December 31. At the services of all these days, the Church repeats the hymns and songs glorifying Christ's Incarnation, reminding us that the source and foundation of our salvation is only to be found in the One who, as God before the ages, came into this world and for our sake was "born as a little Child."
Father Alexander Schmemmann, The Services of Christmas (1981)