

**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**

**Sunday, December 27, 2020**

Retired Attached: V. Rev Paul Ropitsky

29<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

Choir Director: Wash King

Sunday after Nativity; Holy Righteous Ones; Archdeacon Stephen

***Christ is Born!***

***Glorify Him!***

Sun...**December 27**...9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy – NO COFFEE HOUR

Sat...January 2 – NO VESPERS

Sun...January 3...9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy – NO COFFEE HOUR

Sat... January 9 – NO VESPERS

Sun... January 10... Divine Liturgy and Blessing of Water – NO COFFEE HOUR

**Prayer List:** *HEAVENLY FATHER ... Physician of our souls and bodies, Who has sent your only begotten Son to heal every sickness and infirmity, visit us and heal us, Your servants, from all physical and spiritual ailments through the grace of Your Son Jesus Christ; grant to us patience in this sickness, strength of body and spirit, and recovery of health. Lord, You have taught us through Your word to pray for each other that we may be healed. You are the source of healing and to You, we give glory; to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Matushka Lovey Ropitsky, Matushka Lisa Weremedic, Andrew Balliet, Michael Birocik, Clark Bogosh, Theodore Bogosh, Cecil Buchanan, Emmalyn Naomi Buchanan, Evanna Jane Buchanan, Stephanie Chmel, Edward Conarty, Irene Davis, Ilene Devine, Julia Forte, Olga Hebda, Peter Holoviak, John King, Claire Kononchuk, Michael Kulick, John Kushnir, MaryAnn Macenka, Mary Maholick, Alexandra Miller, Britney Miller, Courtney Miller, Isaac Miller, Margaret Miller, Mildred O'Shura, Anna Pisko, Melissa Schmitt, Althea Shellock, Olga Sidoriak, Helen Suda, Martha Stafiniak, Joseph Tosca, Martha Teno, Michael Teno, Nancy Vanno, Elizabeth Warcholak, Russell Wishousky, Russell Yallas, & Richard York.

**December Birthdays:** 3- Richard York, 9- Odess Remington, 11- Stephanie Chmel (100), 16- Sbdn James Weremedic, 22- Karoline Vavra, 28- Sophia James; **January Birthdays:** 2- Tommy Shanosky, 3- Allysa Vavra, 7- Ted Bogosh, 10-Helen Yurchak

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.

Candles (December 27):

7-Day Vigils/Altar... For the health of **Aunt Olga Hebda** offered by Ray & Mary Jo Danchak  
Altar Candles... For the health of **sister, Althea Shellock** offered by Alice (Rosahac) Styer  
Eternal Lamp... In memory of **mother, Mary Lutash** offered by Raymond & Mary Jo Danchak  
Vigil Crosses ... For the health of **Russell Wishousky** offered by Ted Bogosh  
7-Day Vigils/Tetrapod... In memory of **Lillian Yelsh** offered by William Yelsh  
Decorated Candles/Tetrapod...In memory of **Mark & Anna Scarloss Family** offered by A Friend

Financials 12/14-20/20: *Operating Acct:* Candles 35 - Offerings 507 – Non-Envelope 150 -  
Holy Days 36 – Christmas 348 – Donation 150 = Total \$1,226.00; Poinsettias 20 –  
Building Fund 35 Please continue to keep filling your church envelopes. – Thank you!

Please use Amazon Smile when ordering from Amazon.

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

If you do not feel comfortable coming to church yet, you may continue to watch

On-line Services:

Go to the Diocese of Eastern PA website at the bottom of our church website.  
At the top of the page – Click on Live Streaming – Scroll down to church services  
St. Nicholas Orthodox Church – Mogadore, OH – You Tube

Calendars and 2021 Envelopes are available in the church on Sundays,  
if you did not get yours, yet.

We express our deepest sympathy to the family and  
friends of Jane Bubernak who fell asleep in the Lord.

Memory Eternal!



**CHRIST IS BORN!**

## ASK GOD TO RESTORE THE WONDER

**C**hristmas is a season of **WONDERS**. Our hearts and minds are filled with the wonder of the Birth of Jesus. We are surrounded by colorful decorations, beautiful music and children with happy faces. We both give and receive gifts from family and friends. However, some of us have lost this wonder. Has this happened to you? Has our current situation cost you the wonder? Let us attempt to bring it back by exploring several characters involved with Christmas.

The wonder of the **ANGELS** moved them to **GLORY**. Angels played an important role in the Birth of our Lord. The appearance of Gabriel to the Virgin Mary announced the good news. An angel came to Joseph in a dream, telling of Mary's miraculous conception. Angels proclaimed to the shepherds the arrival of the eternal Son of God. These "good tidings" are meant for all of us.

The wonder of the **SHEPHERDS** moved them to **GO SEE**. Imagine being one of these humble men. You just finished another difficult day and are settling down for the night. You sit and talk about common things, yet something uncommon is about to happen. An angel gets their attention with a wonderful message: "Christ is Born!" After finding the Baby Jesus, they went to tell others and spread the wonder.

Finally, the wonder of the **WISE MEN** moved them to **GIVE**. They are mysterious characters. We are not exactly sure where they came from, how many there were or even when they arrived. But what we do know is that they gave treasures to the New Born Lord. We are asked to do the same.

What has the wonder of Christ's arrival moved you to do? Has Christ's arrival given you hope and peace during these uncertain times? The answer is clear . . .  
**JESUS IS THE TRUE WONDER OF THE SEASON!**

**29<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 4. Third Day of the Feast of the Nativity. Holy Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen (34). Sunday after Nativity. Holy Righteous Ones: Joseph the Betrothed, David the King, and James the Brother of the Lord.**

### **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.

### **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."

## Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen

The Holy Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen was the eldest of the seven deacons, appointed by the Apostles themselves, and therefore he is called "archdeacon." He was the first Christian martyr, and he suffered for Christ when he was about thirty. In the words of Asterias, he was "the starting point of the martyrs, the instructor of suffering for Christ, the foundation of righteous confession, since Stephen was the first to shed his blood for the Gospel."

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Saint Stephen preached Christianity and defeated Jewish teachers of the Law in debate. The Jews maligned Saint Stephen, saying that he had uttered blasphemy against God and against Moses. Saint Stephen came before the Sanhedrin and the High Priest to answer these charges. He gave a fiery speech, in which he recounted the history of the Jewish nation, and denounced the Jews for persecuting the prophets, and also for executing the promised Messiah, Jesus Christ (Acts ch. 7).

During his speech, Saint Stephen suddenly saw the heavens opened and Jesus Christ standing at the right hand of God. The Jews shouted and covered their ears, and rushed at him. They dragged him out of the city and stoned him, but the holy martyr prayed for his murderers. Far off on the heights stood the Mother of God with the holy Apostle John the Theologian, and She prayed fervently for the martyr. Before his death Saint Stephen said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. O Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Then he joyfully gave up his pure soul to Christ.

The body of the holy Protomartyr Stephen, left to be eaten by beasts, was secretly taken up by the Jewish teacher Gamaliel and his son Habib, who buried Stephen on his estate. They both believed in Christ, and later received holy Baptism.

## Holy Righteous Joseph the Betrothed

Saint Joseph the Betrothed was of the lineage of King David. In his first marriage, he had four sons and two daughters. After he became a widower, Saint Joseph led a life of strict temperance. He was chosen to be the husband and guardian of the Most Holy Theotokos, who had taken a vow of virginity.

An angel told him of the Incarnation of the Son of God through her. Saint Joseph was present when the shepherds and the Magi worshiped the new-born divine Infant. On the orders of the angel, he fled into Egypt with the Mother of God and the Infant Jesus, saving them from the wrath of King Herod. He lived in Egypt with the Virgin Mary and the divine Child, working as a carpenter. Saint Joseph reputedly died at the age of one hundred.

Saint Joseph is commemorated on the Sunday after the Nativity. If there is no Sunday between December 25 and January 1, his Feast is moved to December 26.

December 20, 2020:

To the Venerable Hierarchs, Esteemed Clergy, Reverend Monastics, and Beloved Faithful of the Orthodox Church in America,

My Beloved Brethren and Blessed Children in the Lord, on this the glorious and lightfilled Feast of the Nativity in the Flesh of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ, I greet you with the words that resound throughout our Churches and homes during this season: Christ is Born! Glorify Him! By the grace of God, we have come through an extraordinary year fraught with challenges and trials that none of us could have expected. We have found ourselves confused, scared, and anxious. As we realized the frailty of our earthly life and the many fleeting things of this world to which we so often cling, more than anything, we have found ourselves in need of a Savior. It is especially in these challenging moments that we are strengthened by God's promise, spoken in the book of Deuteronomy, "Be strong and of good courage, do not fear or be in dread of them: for it is the Lord your God who goes with you; he will not fail you or forsake you (Dt 31:6)." As children of God, as children of the promise, we should remain steadfast in hope. We should never let our hope waiver, because, as the present feast reminds us, we are strengthened continually by the presence of Emmanuel, our Lord Jesus, who saves us from our sins and weaknesses, and reconciles us with our heavenly Father. The scripture, hymns, and rites of the feast testify that Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, is He who has also died on the Cross, and become the first-born of the dead, raised us all by the Power of God, and opened the gates of the kingdom to us. The great Prophet Isaiah, speaking of this kingdom, tells us: Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever (Is 9:7). Beloved hierarchs, clergy, monastics, and faithful, let your hope be renewed at the Nativity of Christ! Be assured that God is with us! Perceiving the mystery of this feast, difficulties and trials in this life will become bearable, as your faith is strengthened, and your hope remains firm. With all the blessings of the feast, I remain Sincerely Yours in Christ,

+ Tikhon Archbishop of Washington Metropolitan of All America and Canada

December 8, 2020

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

Beloved Clergy, Matushki, and Faithful,

26 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, 27 to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. 28 And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." [b] 29 But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. 30 The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31 And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. 32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. 33 He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." 34 Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" [c] 35 The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born [d] will be holy; he will be called Son of God. 36 And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. 37 For nothing will be impossible with God." 38 Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her (Luke 1:26ff). As the Archangel Gabriel reminds us, "For nothing will be impossible with God!" Let us earnestly seek to prepare our hearts, minds, bodies and souls to fully receive His Life Giving Presence. He is our peace and our hope. He is the source of Life! Have a blessed Feast of the Nativity and a Joyous New Year! May our Lord bless you with good health, length of days and a happy and peaceful new year! Thank you for your hospitality over the last year as well as your generosity.

Yours in Christ,

+ MARK, Archbishop of Philadelphia and the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

## The Four Candles

The Four Candles burned slowly. Their Ambiance was so soft you could hear them speak....

The First Candle said, "I Am Peace,  
but these days, the world is full of anger and fighting that nobody  
wants to keep me lit." Then the flame of Peace slowly  
diminishes and goes out completely.

The Second Candle said, "I Am Faith,  
but these days, I am no longer indispensable." It doesn't make sense that I stay lit another moment.  
Just then a breeze slowly blows and diminishes the flame of Faith  
and it goes out completely.

Sadly, The Third Candle begins to Speak,  
"I Am Love and I haven't the strength to stay lit any longer.  
People simply put me aside and don't understand my importance.  
They even forget to love those who are nearest to them."  
Waiting no longer, the flame of Love goes out completely.

Suddenly...A child enters the room and sees the three candles no longer burning.  
The child begins to cry, "Why are you not burning?  
You are supposed to stay lit until the end!"

Then, The Fourth Candle speaks gently to the little child,  
"Don't be afraid, for I Am Hope, and while I am still burning,  
we can re-light the other candles."

With Shining Eyes the child took the Candle of Hope and  
lit the other three candles. The Greatest of these is Love....  
But the flame of Hope should never go out of your life!  
No matter how bad things look; with Hope, each of us can live with Peace, Faith and Love  
and they can Shine Brightly in our lives.

In a world where love, faith, and peace can easily burn out...hope must stand strong for us all. Please  
be honest about what you think...you'll feel better in the long run.

Written February 15th, 2004 by Aino Makoto

Prayer:

Dear God,

You are my light and salvation. You are my hope.  
Please come into my heart, forgive all my wrongs  
and give me Your wonderful gift of eternal life.  
Help me be an instrument of Your love and cause  
Your light to shine on others through me.

Amen