

Ambo

ST. THEODOSIUS ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL



Mailing:

733 Starkweather Avenue

Cleveland, Ohio 44113

T 216. 741. 1310

F 216. 623. 1092

www.sttheodosius.org

- Archpriest John Zdinak,
Dean

dean@sttheodosius.org

Cell: 216. 554. 7282

- Dn. Daniel Boerio

- Subdeacon Theodore
Lentz, Sacristan

- Reader Julius Kovach,
Ecclesiarch & Choirmaster

- Casandra Vasu,
Office Administrator
Office Hours, M-F
9:00 AM-3:00 PM

Divine Services

Eve Sundays & Feast Days

5:00 PM Confessions

6:00 PM Great Vespers

Sundays and Feast Days

8:40 AM 3rd and 6th Hour

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

* AMBO: Articles for publication should be submitted to: sttheocemetery@yahoo.com by Wednesday of each week before noon.

* CALENDAR: Event dates must be submitted by the 15th of each month.

DECEMBER 20, 2015
SUNDAY BEFORE
NATIVITY

NATIVITY ICON



DECEMBER 25

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 be 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 (St 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. St John Chrysostom and St Theophylactus, commenting on St 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." St 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 feastdays; 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 St Clement of Alexandria also indicates that the day of the Nativity of Christ is December 25. In the third century St Hippolytus of Rome mentions the Feast of the Nativity of Christ, and appoints the Gospel readings for this day from the opening chapters of St Matthew.

In 302, during the persecution of Christians by Maximian, 20,000 Christians of Nicomedia (December 28) were burned in church on the very Feast of the Nativity of Christ. In that same century, after the persecution when the Church had received freedom of religion and had become the official religion in the Roman Empire, we find the Feast of the Nativity of Christ observed throughout the entire Church. There is evidence of this in the works of St Ephraim the Syrian, St Basil the Great, St Gregory the Theologian, St Gregory of Nyssa, St Ambrose of Milan, St John Chrysostom and other Fathers of the Church of the fourth century.

St John Chrysostom, in a sermon which he gave in the year 385, points out that the Feast of the Nativity of Christ

is ancient, and indeed very ancient. In this same century, at the Cave of Bethlehem, made famous by the Birth of Jesus Christ, the empress St Helen built a church, which her mighty son Constantine adorned after her death. In the Codex of the emperor Theodosius from 438, and of the emperor Justinian in 535, the universal celebration of the day of the Nativity of Christ was decreed by law. Thus, Nicephorus Callistus, a writer of the fourteenth century, says in his History that in the sixth century, the emperor Justinian established the celebration of the Nativity of Christ throughout all the world.

Patriarch Anatolius of Constantinople in the fifth century, Sophronius and Andrew of Jerusalem in the seventh, Sts John of Damascus, Cosmas of Maium and Patriarch Germanus of Constantinople in the eighth, the Nun Casiane in the ninth, and others whose names are unknown, wrote many sacred hymns for the Feast of the Nativity of Christ, which are still sung by the Church on this radiant festival.

During the first three centuries, in the Churches of Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria and Cyprus, the Nativity of Christ was combined together with the Feast of His Baptism on January 6, and called "Theophany" ("Manifestation of God"). This was because of a belief that Christ was baptized on anniversary of His birth, which may be inferred from St John Chrysostom's sermon on the Nativity of Christ: "it is not the day on which Christ was born which is called Theophany, but rather that day on which He was baptized."

In support of such a view, it is possible to cite the words of the Evangelist Luke who says that "Jesus began to be about thirty years of age" (Luke 3:23) when He was baptized. The joint celebration of the Nativity of Christ and His Theophany continued to the end of the fourth century in certain Eastern Churches, and until the fifth or sixth century in others.

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).

Thus the Nativity of Christ, a most profound and extraordinary event, was accompanied by the wondrous tidings proclaimed to the shepherds and to the Magi. This is a cause of universal rejoicing for all mankind, "for the Savior is Born!"

Concurring with the witness of the Gospel, the Fathers of the Church, in their God-inspired writings, describe the Feast of the Nativity of Christ as most profound, and joyous, serving as the basis and foundation for all the other Feasts.

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

BIBLE READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 20

Dec. 20 Heb. 11:9-10, 17-23,
32-40
Matt. 1:1-25

Dec. 21 Heb. 8:7-13
Mark 9:42-10:1

Dec. 22 Heb. 9:8-10,15-23
Mark 10:2-12

Dec. 23 Heb. 10:1-18
Mark 10:11-16

Dec. 24 Heb. 1:1-12
Luke 2:1-20

Dec. 25 Gal. 4:4-7
Matt. 2:1-12

Dec. 26 Heb. 2:11-18
Matt. 2:13-23



St. Theodosius Men's Mixer

**Come out and join us on Thursday,
January 14th at Agostino's for an
evening of fellowship and discussion
about how we can support our church
and church community.**

**6:30 PM at Agostino's
Pizza, Wings, and Beverages
\$5.00 donation at the door**

**Please RSVP to
waynevidovich@gmail.com via text @
440-989-6165 by January 10th, 2016 if
possible. If it is not possible to RSVP,
please come regardless.**





PRAYER REQUESTS

Departed:

Ill Afflicted & Special Intentions:

Father John Udics
Matushka Catherine Jula
Archpriest Theodore Bobosh
Mother Anna
Mary
Michael
Betty Balasz
David C. Baringer (*friend of Karen Felon*)
Judy Baughman
Carol Bohurjak
Frank Byndas
Elsie Conrad
John Conrad
Methodije Damljanovic (*Child*)
Horia Dascalescu (*Lavinia Morris's brother*)
Cindy Durkalski
Nadine Ellis
Nashwa Fam
Leonora Felon
Dorothy Fowler
Vladimir Fowler
Julia Grabowski

Roger Haupt (*Lisa Theodore's cousin*)
Janet Hennig (*friend of Judy Schwind*)
Sandee Holod
Matthew Hunley (*Phyllis Gindlesperger's brother-in-law*)
Donna Jacak
Victor Jacak
Kevin Jackam (*Sonia Vorell's cousin*)
Patrick Jacobson (*friend of Paul Pangrace*)
Joy Jahans (*friend of Paul Pangrace*)
Stephen Jahans (*friend of Paul Pangrace*)
Diane Kearsey (*Janice Tkacz's sister*)
Maher Khalil
Thomas Khalil
John Kovalski (*friend of Paul Pangrace*)
Dorothy Laskovich
Paul Laskovich
Susan Lentz
Ralph Magee (*Erin Zawolowycz's father*)
Paul Mihal
Anna Mysiw (*friend and neighbor of Helen Antonik*)
Lydia Mytrohovich

Maude Palumbo (*Michelle Rajisch's mother*)
Debra Parhamovich (*Karen Felon's sister*)
Grace Parhamovich (*Karen Felon's mother*)
Daria Petrokowski
Debby Pinta
Cindy Powkowski
Cheryl Regrut (*Deb Ellis's sister-in-law*)
Valerie Rolls (*Fr. John's cousin*)
Dorothy Romig
Julia Sankovic (*Child*)
Elaine Sudnick (*Joy Pfeiffer's mother*)
Janice Tkacz
Elisabeth Wright (*friend of Paul Pangrace*)
Erin Zawolowycz
Elizabeth Zimmerman
Theodore Zolikoff (*Nick Zolikoff's father*)
Alice Zdinak (*Fr. John's Mother*)

Douglas & Kaitlyn Evans
& Unborn Child

Gabriel & Shyanne Tabeling
& Unborn Child

Please note that names will remain on the list for approximately one month and then removed. If you would like a name to be relisted, please contact the office at 216-741-1310.

Welcome Visitors

Our parish welcomes you and thanks you for joining us at today's Divine Liturgy. While only Orthodox Christians may approach the chalice for Holy Communion, everyone is welcome to partake of the Holy Bread after Liturgy. You are also invited to join us for fellowship in the Parish Hall following Liturgy.

COFFEE HOUR & GREETERS SCHEDULES

Coffee Hour:

12/20/15	Joyce Tabeling & Judy Schwind
12/27/15	Joy & David Pfeiffer
1/3/16	Irina Chovelidze
1/10/16	Mat. Cindy Zdinak & The VanSickle Family
1/17/16	Dan & Lavinia Morris
1/24/16	Cathy Weber & Mat. Jenn Boerio
1/31/16	Lauren Miklos & Chandra Czaruk

Greeters:

Mat. Jenn Boerio & Tammy Ponomarenko
Nina & Elizabeth Antonik
TBA



GOD'S GIFTS TO US - OUR GIFTS TO GOD

Weekly expenses:	\$ 6,538.00
Last week's collection	<u>\$ 3,272.00</u>
Over/Under	< \$ 3,266.00 >

FOOD PANTRY

Our Food Pantry ministry continues through Merrick House. They currently use the bags in their Moms First program. We can always use your help by "sponsoring a bag". Envelopes are in the foyer, \$10 fills a bag. Thank you and God bless you for helping those in need. - Dan Morris



Dome Lighters

Donations to offset the cost of lighting the domes can be made for *The Health Of* or *In Memory Of* your loved ones. Contact the Parish Office if you are interested.

For the entire 2015 year:

In loving memory of Olga Fritskey
from John & Ruth Fritskey



DECEMBER 20, 2015 **CLEVELAND LANDMARK** **CHRISTMAS CONCERT**

39th Annual Concert at 3:00 PM

Please join us for a special Christmas holiday program in the historic St. Theodosius Cathedral in the Tremont community on Cleveland's west side. Each year our program reflects the large repertoire of liturgical music from the Orthodox Christian Church. We sing a cappella, in English, and in concert format.

Come experience the beauty of this national landmark and example of Eastern Orthodox Christianity in practice. Following the Cathedral Choir's program all are invited to participate in a sing-a-long of popular carols!

Tours: 1 PM
Concert: 3 PM

Visit the "Mother"
Church of the
many Orthodox
Churches in
northeast Ohio!

FREE AND OPEN
TO ALL!

Reception after
the concert.

We keep "Christ"
in Christmas!

ST. THEODOSIUS
CATHEDRAL

733 Starkweather Avenue

www.sttheodosius.org

Telephone: 216-741-1310

Help the Orthodox Christian Mission Center provide the means for priests in Kenya to “make the rounds” in the new year!

Diocese of the Midwest Nativity Fast fundraiser



■ Please send all donations to the **Diocese of the Midwest, 927 North LaSalle, Chicago, IL 60610** by **January 1, 2016**.

■ Please make checks payable to the **Diocese of the Midwest**, with “**Motorbikes for Kenya**” noted in the memo line.

■ Once **all donations** have been received, they will be **forwarded to OCMC**, with our **prayers** for the **ongoing ministry** of the Kenyan clergy and the **faithful they serve**.



Unlike the clergy of our Diocese, Orthodox Christian **priests in Kenya** must serve several far-flung and remote parish communities – a **difficult ministry** to pursue **without proper transportation!**

With the blessing of **His Grace, Bishop Paul of Chicago**, the **Diocese of the Midwest** is partnering with the **Orthodox Christian Mission Center** to raise funds to **provide motorbikes** for the clergy in Kenya. **With your help**, we can ensure that they will be able to **serve their flocks** more regularly while bringing the **Good News of Jesus Christ** to **far more people**.

Parishes, organizations and individuals are asked to **raise funds** during this year’s Nativity Fast to **make it easier** for the Kenyan clergy to “**make the rounds**” in **2016!**



Discovering the Wonder of Jesus Christ

This weekly bulletin insert complements the curriculum published by the Department of Christian Education of the Orthodox Church in America. This and many other Christian Education resources are available at <http://dce.oca.org>.



On December 24, the eve of the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord, the Church commemorates Saint Eugenia of Rome.

Born in 280, she belonged to a noble pagan family. Though Roman by birth, she lived in Alexandria, Egypt, where her father Philip had been sent by the emperor to govern.

Philip not only worshipped pagan gods, but strongly opposed Christianity. Like many highborn Romans, he distrusted this new religion that seemed to exalt the humble and weak. Rome had built its empire on brute power and conquest—ideals very different from those the itinerant preacher from Palestine taught. The preacher's teachings were spreading far and wide, and Philip worried that they threatened traditional Roman society.

The account of Eugenia's life tells us that she discovered Jesus Christ by reading the words of Saint Paul. How thrilled she must have been by the stirring description of Him in one of this day's readings, Hebrews 1: 1-3:

"God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high..."

Eugenia was determined to follow this wonderful Lord who so loved human beings that that He had "by Himself purged our sins." She fled her home, accompanied by two male servants. They accompanied her to a place far enough away that she could escape being found out.

Nearby was a men's monastery. Eugenia looked at it with a mixture of joy and sadness; joy because it was a place where her newly-discovered God was truly worshipped, and sadness because, as a woman, she could not join that worship.

But she was a resourceful, courageous woman, and so she decided to disguise herself as a man and apply to enter the monastery. Her servants hesitated to help her—cutting her hair, and putting together loose-fitting garments—but she convinced them, and in her disguise she approached the abbot.

Abbot Helenon saw at once that this delicate-featured person was not a man, even though she lowered the pitch of her voice. But he didn't turn her away, or reproach her. Seeing her sincere spiritual desire, he gave her an isolated cell, where she would spend many years in monastic effort.

Saint Eugenia saw the wonder of Christ in her own life. She was given the gift of healing, and had the joy of converting her adamantly-pagan father to the faith.

Both Philip and Eugenia were ultimately martyred. Like the shepherds who "made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child" (Luke 2: 17a) they had bravely spread the Gospel, and unflinchingly faced His enemies, who killed their bodies but not their souls.

Troparion - Tone 4

Your lamb Eugenia, O Jesus,
Calls out to You in a loud voice:
I love You, O my bridegroom,
And in seeking You, I endure suffering.
In Baptism I was crucified so that I might reign in You,
And died so that I might live with You.
Accept me as a pure sacrifice,
For I have offered myself in love.
By her prayers save our souls, since You are merciful.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

2015

Sunday, Dec. 20

HIEROMARTYR IGNATIUS
THE GOD-BEARER
ST. JOHN OF KRONSTADT
9:00 AM Divine Liturgy
3:00 PM Cleveland Landmark
Christmas Concert
6:00 PM Daily Vespers & 1st
Royal Hour

Monday, Dec. 21

VIRGIN MARTYR JULIANA
AND HER COMPANIONS
5:00 PM Confessions
6:00 PM Daily Vespers and 3rd
Royal Hour

Tuesday, Dec. 22

GREATMARTYR ANASTASIA
AND HER COMPANIONS
5:00 PM Confessions
6:00 PM Daily Vespers and 6th
Royal Hour
No Orthodoxy 101

Wednesday, Dec. 23

HOLY TEN MARTYRS OF CRETE
9:00 AM Vespereal Liturgy
5:00 PM Confessions
6:00 PM Daily Vespers and 9th
Royal Hour

REMINDER:



Please be sure
that cell phones
are turned off
before entering
the temple.

ADVENT FAST

Nov. 15th - Dec. 24th

DECEMBER Special Collection THE DEANERY

Thursday, Dec. 24

NUN MARTYR EUGENIA
AND HER COMPANIONS
9:00 AM Vespereal Liturgy
6:00 PM Vigil for the Nativity
Parish Office Closed
No Faith Enrichment

Friday, Dec. 25

NATIVITY OF OUR LORD
AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST
9:00 AM Divine Liturgy
Parish Office Closed

Saturday, Dec. 26

SYNAXIS OF THE
MOST-HOLY THEOTOKOS
9:00 AM Divine Liturgy
6:00 PM Great Vespers

Sunday, Dec. 27

PROTOMARTYR STEPHEN
VEN. THEODORE GRAPTUS
9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

**“Glory to God in the
highest!
and on earth, peace to
men of good will!”**



St. Theodosius Orthodox Cathedral
733 Starkweather Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44113

DECEMBER