



## NEWSLETTER & DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

**31st Week after Pentecost**

Monday, January 4 — Sunday, January 10, 2021

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*Eve of the Nativity of our  
Lord*

*The Nativity of our Lord God  
and Savior Jesus Christ*

*Synaxis of the Most Holy  
Mother of God*

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## ~ A NOTE FROM FATHER JOHN ~

“But you Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel,” Our Lord and Savior who lived a life of heroic virtue calls us like the Wisemen from the East to live a life of Faithfulness to Him. While we have the opportunity, when we can do this, we need to worship God in fulness and in truth, like the angels, like the wise men who came from the East, like the shepherds. We are to seek Him out in fulness and truth every single day of our life, and in so doing, the fruits of God will come forth from us, which are born of love. Love is the deciding factor in all things. Love is what distinguishes Christians from other people. I am not saying that people don’t have love; I am not here to judge anyone, but rather to say that in Christ is where we must find love. He gives us the ability to love one another, to love our neighbors, to love our enemies. Christ provides the living example of how to face one’s enemies in humbleness of mind, and in poverty of spirit, and by simply taking one step and then another. This includes for us saying prayers, living in the faith, receiving the body and blood of Christ, giving confessions, having unction services when you are sick and suffering, getting married in the church so that you have a life that is dedicated to that end, and staying with Him in all things—no matter how high, or low, or in between.

Glory to Jesus Christ!

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**~ “TWITTER SUMMARY” ~**

***The main points from Sunday’s sermon, in 280 characters or less!***

But how did the world greet the Incarnation? Not very well. The world itself was antagonized, and not feeling blessed. Yes, there were some individuals who lived in blessedness, but there were so many who were antagonized by the Birth of Salvation. They didn’t want to recognize it, and even tried to kill it through the slaughter of the 17,000 innocents.

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**~ THOUGHTS FOR EVERY DAY ~**

***Scripture and liturgical readings to enrich your prayer life every day of the week***

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>~ MONDAY~</b> <b>(1/4)</b></p> <p><b>Holy Scripture:</b> Hebrews 11:17-23, 27-31 Mark 9:42-10:1</p> <p><b>Excerpt from the Menaion:</b> <b>Forefeast of the Nativity, Troparion, Tone IV —</b> <i>Make ready, O Bethlehem! Open unto all, O Eden! Adorn thyself, O Ephratha! For the Tree of life hath blossomed forth from the Virgin in the cave./ Her womb is shown to be a noetic paradise,/ wherein lieth a divine garden,/ eating from whence we live,/ not dying like Adam.// Christ is born to raise up His image which before was fallen.</i></p> <p><b>Commemoration of the Day:</b> Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>~ TUESDAY~</b> <b>(1/5)</b></p> <p><b>Holy Scripture:</b> Hebrews 12:25-26; 13:22-25 Mark 10:2-12</p> <p><b>Excerpt from the Menaion:</b> <b>Forefeast of the Nativity, Troparion, Tone IV —</b> <i>Make ready, O Bethlehem! Open unto all, O Eden! Adorn thyself, O Ephratha! For the Tree of life hath blossomed forth from the Virgin in the cave./ Her womb is shown to be a noetic paradise,/ wherein lieth a divine garden,/ eating from whence we live,/ not dying like Adam.// Christ is born to raise up His image which before was fallen.</i></p> <p><b>Commemoration of the Day:</b> Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>~ WEDNESDAY~</b> <b>(1/6)</b></p> <p><b>Holy Scripture:</b> Hebrews 1:1-12 Liturgy Luke 2:1-20 Liturgy</p> <p><b>Excerpt from the Menaion:</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>~ THURSDAY~</b> <b>(1/7)</b></p> <p><b>Holy Scripture:</b> Matthew 1:18-25 Galatians 4:4-7 Matthew 2:1-12</p>

**Forefeast of the Nativity; Troparion,  
Tone IV —**

Once Mary, pregnant with a seedless pregnancy,/ was registered in Bethlehem with the elder Joseph,/ as being of the seed of David./ And while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered,/ but there was no room for them in the inn./ But the cave showed itself to be a beautiful palace for the Queen,// and Christ is born to raise up the image that fell of old!

**Commemoration of the Day:**

The Eve of the Nativity of Christ

**Excerpt from the Menaion:**

**Nativity; Troparion, Tone IV —**

Thy nativity, O Christ our God,/ hath shone forth the light of knowledge upon the world;/ for therein those who worship the stars/ have been taught by a star to worship Thee,/ the Sun of righteousness,/ and to know Thee the Orient from on high.// O Lord, glory be to Thee!

**Commemoration of the Day:**

The Nativity according to the Flesh of Our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ

**~ FRIDAY ~  
(1/8)**

**Holy Scripture:**

Hebrews 2:11-18 Theotokos  
Matthew 2:13-23 Theotokos

**Excerpt from the Menaion:**

**Synaxis of the All-Holy Theotokos;**

**Troparion of Nativity, Tone IV —**

Thy nativity, O Christ our God,/ hath shone forth the light of knowledge upon the world;/ for therein those who worship the stars/ have been taught by a star to worship Thee,/ the Sun of righteousness,/ and to know Thee the Orient from on high.// O Lord, glory be to Thee!

**Commemoration of the Day:**

Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos

**~ SATURDAY ~  
(1/9)**

**Holy Scripture:**

Acts 6:8-15; 7:1-5, 47-60 Saint  
Matthew 21:33-42 Saint

**Excerpt from the Menaion:**

**Protomartyr & Archdeacon Stephen,**

**Troparion, Tone IV —**

Thou didst fight the good fight, and, didst denounce the impiety of the tyrants,/ O protomartyr and apostle of Christ;/ for, stoned at the hands of the iniquitous,/ thou hast received from on high a crown from the right hand of the Lord,// and didst exclaim to God, crying aloud: O Lord, lay not this sin to their charge!

**Commemoration of the Day:**

Holy Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen (34)

**~ SUNDAY ~**  
**(12/10)**

**Holy Scripture:**

Galatians 1:11-19 Sunday After  
Matthew 2:13-23 Sunday After

**Excerpt from the Menaion :**

**Troparion of Righteous David, Joseph and James. Tone II —**

*Proclaim the wonder, O Joseph, / to David, the ancestor of God: / you saw a Virgin great with Child, / you gave glory with the shepherds, / you worshipped with the Magi, / you received the news from the angel. / Pray to Christ God to save our souls!*

**Commemoration of the Day:**

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

*“Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth, their words unto the ends of the world.”*

[Prokeimenon of Pentecost, Tone 8, Liturgy]

To read more:

<https://www.holytrinityorthodox.com/calendar/>

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**~ PONDER THIS ~**

*A few thoughts to ponder in light of this week's lessons and sermons.*

<https://orthochristian.com/136561.html>

**HOMILY ON HOW WE SHOULD GREET THE DAY OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY**  
**St. Ambrose of Milan**

Thus, in greeting the Nativity of our Lord let us purify ourselves, brothers, from all defilement of sin. Let us fill His treasury with various gifts, so that on this holy day there would be something to comfort strangers, relieve the sorrows of widows, and clothe the needy. For can it be good if in one and the same house there be one servant making merry in silk garments, while another desponds, wearing rough tunics, the former sating himself with food while the other goes hungry in the cold? And what effect will our prayer have when we ask to be delivered from the evil one, but we ourselves do not want to be merciful to our brothers? Let us emulate our Lord. If it pleases Him to make the poor, along with us, participants in heavenly grace, then why shouldn't they participate with us in

earthly riches? Brothers in the Mysteries should not be strangers to each other in possessions. We more surely acquire intercessors before the Lord when we feed at our own expense those who will give thanks to God. The poor man who blesses the Lord brings benefit to the one through whose cooperation the name of our Lord and Savior is blessed...

(... TO CONTINUE READING, CLICK ON THE LINK ABOVE)

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### ~LOOK IT UP~

**Did you know:** The establishment of the Nativity fast, like many other long fasts, dates back to the early days of Christianity. Already in the fourth century, St. Ambrose of Milan, Philastrius, and Blessed Augustine recall the Nativity fast in their works. St. Leo the Great wrote about the antiquity of the Nativity fast in the fifth century.

**Read more:** <https://orthochristian.com/50335.html>

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### ~ PRAYER CORNER ~

- Father John and Matushka Deborah.
- Please keep in prayer our older parishioners who, if they contract the COVID-19 virus, will be in greater risk of serious health complications.
- Anna and her family
- Ekaterina, memory eternal
- Please keep in prayer our heroic parishioners who work in the health care profession and are on the front lines of our society's fight against the Novel Corona Virus and COVID-19 disease.

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**~ THIS WEEK'S SERVICES ~**

Wednesday	8 am - Royal Hours 9am - Vespers Divine Liturgy 6pm - Nativity Vigil
Thursday	9am - Baptism of Sean & Joy 10am - Divine Liturgy 6pm - Vespers (Facebook Live)
Friday	9am - Divine Liturgy 6pm - Vespers (Facebook Live)
Saturday	7am - Matins 8:30 - Divine Liturgy 5pm - Vigil
Sunday	9am - Divine Liturgy

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**~ BOOKSTORE ~**

- The bookstore has been fully restocked, and we have many items ranging in the \$2-12 range. Come on in and take a look!
- Also, in observance of the Nativity of Christ, the bookstore will be closed Thursday, January 7, but will be opened around the many times of the scheduled services.

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To submit **commemorations for the next Divine Liturgy**, to make an appointment with Fr. John to give **confession by telephone**, to alert us to any pastoral needs, to submit an item for the **Prayer Corner**, or just to chat, please contact Fr. John or Mat. Deborah using the following contact information:

Archpriest John Tomasi \* (310) 749-0524 \* [frjohn\\_tomasi@yahoo.com](mailto:frjohn_tomasi@yahoo.com)  
Matushka Deborah Tomasi \* (310) 849-9451 \* [deborah\\_tomasi@yahoo.com](mailto:deborah_tomasi@yahoo.com)

**Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee!**