

SAINT MARY'S
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

✠ THE DIVINE LITURGY ✠

The Weekend of December 26/27, 2020

Saturday, December 26, 2020

Commemoration: Afterfeast of the Nativity; Synaxis of the Holy Theotokos; Euthemios the Confessor, Bishop of Sardis; Holy New Hieromartyr Constantine of Russia, Who Struggled in Constantinople (1743); Constantius the Holy Martyr; Barlaam the Righteous of Valaam.

Variable Hymns and Readings in the Liturgy

At the Second Antiphon

Save us, O Son of God, who was born of the Virgin, to you we sing, Alleluia!

At the Small Entrance

Hymn of the Nativity of Christ, Fourth Tone

Your birth, O Christ our God, did shine upon the world, and through the light of wisdom illumined the universe. And to those who held the stars in worship, did through a star learn to worship you, the Sun of Righteousness, and came to know you the Light from on high. Glory to you, O Lord.

Entrance Hymn, Second Tone

“I have begotten You from the womb before the morning star.” The Lord swore and will not repent, “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.” Save us, O Son of God, who were born of a Virgin.

Repeat the Hymn of the Nativity of Christ, above.

Kontakion of the Nativity of Christ, Third Tone

Today the Virgin gives birth to him who is above all being; and a cave is offered by earth, to him who no one can approach. Angels with shepherds give glory, and Magi journey with a star. For our sake was born, a young child, the eternal God!

Epistle..... *I Timothy 6:11-16*

Timothy, my son, aim at righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. In the presence of God who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ; and this will be made manifest at the proper time by the blessed and only Sovereign, and King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

Gospel..... *Matthew 12:15-21*

At that time, many followed Jesus, and he healed them all, and ordered them not to make him known. This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: “Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him, and he shall proclaim justice to the Gentiles. He will not wrangle or cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets; he will not break a bruised reed or quench a smoldering wick, till he brings justice to victory; and in his name will the Gentiles hope.”

The Communion Prayers are found on page 3 of this leaflet.

Communion Hymn

The Lord sent redemption to His people. Alleluia.

Stewardship Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, our God, accept our offerings as You have accepted the gifts of Your people throughout the ages. We offer these gifts to Your glory, for the support of the ministries of Your holy Church, for the alleviation of suffering and hunger, and for the proclamation of Your Gospel to the whole world.

Grant us Your blessing, Lord our Savior, that we may always be faithful stewards, continuing to share the gifts you have given us, by the power of Your grace, mercy, and love. May Your name be glorified forever. Amen.

The traditional Orthodox greeting for the Feast of Christmas is:

“Christ is born!”
“Glorify him!”

“Christos Yennáte!”
“Dhoksásate!”

THE COMMUNION PRAYERS

I believe and confess, Lord, that You are truly the Christ, the Son of the living God, who came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the first. I also believe that this is truly Your pure Body and that this is truly Your precious Blood. Therefore, I pray to You, have mercy upon me, and forgive my transgressions, voluntary and involuntary, in word and deed, known and unknown. And make me worthy without condemnation to partake of Your pure Mysteries for the forgiveness of sins and for life eternal. Amen.

Behold, I approach for Divine Communion. O Maker, burn me not as I partake, for You are fire consuming the unworthy. But cleanse me from every stain.

Receive me today, O Son of God, as a partaker of Your mystical supper; for I will not betray Your mysteries to Your enemies, nor give You a kiss as did Judas, but as the thief I confess You: Remember me, O Lord, in Your kingdom.

Tremble, O man, as you behold the divine Blood. It is a burning coal that sears the unworthy. The Body of God both deifies and nourishes me: It deifies the spirit and wondrously nourishes the mind.

You have smitten me with yearning, O Christ, and by Your divine eros You have changed me. But burn up my sins with spiritual fire, and grant me to be filled with delight in You, so that, leaping for joy, I may magnify, O Good One, Your two comings.

How shall I, who am unworthy, enter into the splendor of Your saints? If I dare to enter into the bridal chamber, my clothing will accuse me, since it is not a wedding garment; and being bound up, I shall be cast out by the angels. In Your love, Lord, cleanse my soul and save me.

Loving Master, Lord Jesus Christ, my God, let not these holy Gifts be to my condemnation because of my unworthiness, but for the cleansing and sanctification of soul and body and the pledge of the future life and kingdom. It is good for me to cling to God and to place in Him the hope of my salvation.

Approaching to receive, each makes a reverence and says:

✠ Behold I approach Christ, our immortal King and God.

Sunday, December 27, 2020

Commemoration: Sunday after Nativity; Afterfeast of the Nativity; Stephen, Archdeacon and First Martyr; Theodore the Confessor, brother of Saint Theophanes the Poet; Theodore, Patriarch of Constantinople.

Morning Gospel: Seventh

Tone: Fourth

Variable Hymns and Readings in the Liturgy

At the Second Antiphon

Save us, O Son of God, who was born of the Virgin, to you we sing, Alleluia!

At the Third Antiphon

Hymn of the Nativity of Christ, Fourth Tone

Your birth, O Christ our God, did shine upon the world, and through the light of wisdom illumined the universe. And to those who held the stars in worship, did through a star learn to worship you, the Sun of Righteousness, and came to know you the Light from on high. Glory to you, O Lord.

At the Small Entrance

Entrance Hymn

Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ. Save us, O Son of God, who rose from the dead, save us who sing to you: Alleluia!

Resurrection Hymn, Fourth Tone

The joyful news of your resurrection was proclaimed by the angel to the women disciples. Having thrown off the curse that fell on Adam, they ran elatedly to tell the apostles: Death has been vanquished; Christ our God is risen from the dead, blessing all the world with his great mercy.

Repeat the Hymn of the Nativity of Christ, above.

Hymn of Joseph, David, and James, Second Tone

O Joseph, proclaim to David, the ancestor of God, the good news of the miracles you witnessed; you saw a virgin give birth; you worshiped with the Magi; you gave glory with the shepherds; you conferred with an angel. Beseech Christ our God to save our souls.

Hymn of St. Stephen, Fourth Tone

Stephen, first athlete of the Martyrs, your head was crowned with a royal diadem, because of the suffering you endured, for Christ our God. For when you refuted the madness of the Judeans, you saw the Savior, at the right hand of the Father. Therefore continually entreat him, on behalf of our souls!

Hymn of the Dormition of the Theotokos, First Tone

In giving birth, you preserved your virginity, O Theotokos; in falling asleep you did not forsake the world. You passed over into life, O Mother of Life; and by your prayers you deliver our souls from death!

Kontakion of the Nativity of Christ, Third Tone

Today the Virgin gives birth to him who is above all being; and a cave is offered by earth, to him who no one can approach. Angels with shepherds give glory, and Magi journey with a star. For our sake was born, a young child, the eternal God!

Epistle.....Acts of the Apostles 6:8 – 7:5, 47-60

In those days, Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia, arose and disputed with Stephen. But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke. Then they secretly instigated men, who said, “We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God.” And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes, and they came upon him and seized him and brought him before the council, and set up false witnesses who said, “This man never ceases to speak words against this holy place and the law; for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place, and will change the customs which Moses delivered to us.” And gazing at him, all who sat in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

And the high priest said, “Is this so?” And Stephen said: “Brethren and fathers, hear me. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, and said to him, ‘Depart from your land and from your kindred and go into the land which I will show you.’ Then he departed from the land of the Chaldeans, and lived in Haran. And after his father died, God removed him from

there into this land in which you are now living; yet he gave him no inheritance in it, not even a foot's length, but promised to give it to him in possession and to his posterity after him, though he had no child.

“But it was Solomon who built a house for him. Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands; as the prophet says, ‘Heaven is my throne, and earth my footstool. What house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is the place of my rest? Did not my hand make all these things?’

“You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered, you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it.”

Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth against him. But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; and he said, “Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God.” But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together upon him. Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him; and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. And as they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” And he knelt down and cried with a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Gospel.....*Matthew 2:13-23*

When the wise men departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt have I called my son.”

Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: “A voice was

heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they were no more.” But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child’s life are dead.” And he rose and took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaos reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, “He shall be called a Nazarene.”

The Communion Prayers are found on page 3 of this leaflet.

Stewardship Prayer

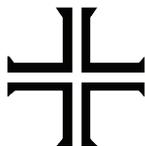
Lord Jesus Christ, our God, accept our offerings as You have accepted the gifts of Your people throughout the ages. We offer these gifts to Your glory, for the support of the ministries of Your holy Church, for the alleviation of suffering and hunger, and for the proclamation of Your Gospel to the whole world.

Grant us Your blessing, Lord our Savior, that we may always be faithful stewards, continuing to share the gifts you have given us, by the power of Your grace, mercy, and love. May Your name be glorified forever. Amen.

The traditional Orthodox greeting for the Feast of Christmas is:

*“Christ is born!”
“Glorify him!”*

*“Christos Yennáte!”
“Dhoksásate!”*



Calendar of the Week

Monday, December 28

3:00 p.m. – All 2020 contributions are due

7:30 p.m. – Online Bible Study

Thursday, December 31: Leave-Taking of Holy Nativity

Church Office closes at Noon

Friday, January 1: Circumcision of the Lord; Saint Basil the Great

Church Office closed

9:00 a.m. – Orthros: 10:00 a.m. – Divine Liturgy

Saturday, January 2: Saturday before Theophany

9:00 a.m. – Orthros: 10:00 a.m. – Divine Liturgy

Registration requested.

5:00 p.m. – Great Vespers *

Sunday, January 3: Sunday before Theophany

• “The Messenger” new item deadline - February 2021 issue

8:30 a.m. – Orthros; 9:30 a.m. – Divine Liturgy

Registration requested.

* = *services when advance registration is not asked.*

Please remember the sick, the suffering, and those in need, especially: The family of George Daravingas; Those suffering from COVID-19 and those who care for them; Our brothers and sisters living through the aftermath of disaster; For the victims of violence; Families Moving Forward; Metro Hope Ministries; Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry; FOCUS Minnesota; Our brothers and sisters serving in the Armed Forces throughout the world especially John Ellis; San Miguel Del Lago Orphanage; Nancy and Tim, Tom, Olga, Peter, Kristina, Armour family, Cora and family, Lamona, Bo, Tom Grund, Lynn, Deb, Sarah, Maia, Jeanette, Travis, Kassie, Tahnlee, Lois, Kalli, Alex, Quinn, Annie, Sue & Jim, Steve, Sue, Jane, Carole, Rifka, Pat, Nancy, Dave, Pam Katie, Bri, Gilbert, George P., Barbara, Thespina, Danielle, Jenny, John L., Steven E., Samir and Samira, Julia, Presvytera Janis, Sandra, Sophia, George, Rick, Bryn, Phil, Karen, Phil, Marnie and family; Joyce, Dorla, Linda, Fr. Elias, Vicki, Bill, Diana, Elpis Fotini, Dina, Landon, Luke, Aemiliane, Doria, Mike, Stephanie, Tyler, Ben, Brittany, Amy, Shinia, Chelsea, Christy, Karen, Anastasia, Jamie, Alex and Alexander, Slibe, Saleh & Deanna, Kristine, Henry, Toni, Gina, Julie, R.J., Allie, Elena, Speranta, Alexander, Stephanie, John, Vickie, Petra, Bob, Joseph, Avgi, Christopher, Alki, Elizabeth, Jaxon, Olle, Judi, Bodil, Ole, and others known to you.

Holy Theophany Worship Schedule

Tuesday, January 5 — Eve of Theophany

Royal Hours – 9:00 a.m.

* Vespers Divine Liturgy and Great Blessing of Water – 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, January 6 — Holy Theophany

* Orthros – 8:30 a.m.

* Divine Liturgy and Great Blessing of Water – 9:30 a.m.

Julian Calendar Christmas Eve Vigil – 6:00 p.m.

Thursday, January 7 — Synaxis of the John the Baptist

Julian Calendar Christmas Day

Festal Divine Liturgy – 10:00 a.m.

The Resurrection of Christ Russian Orthodox Church will be holding their Christmas Vigil and Liturgy at St. Mary's.

All are welcome to join the celebration.

Saturday, January 9 — Blessing of the River

Blessing of the River at Hidden Falls Park, St. Paul – 12:00 noon

* = *Registration is requested.*

Holiday Office Closures

The office will be open 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. on Monday, December 28-Wednesday, December 30. We will close at noon on Thursday, December 31 and closed on Friday, January 1.

Year-End Giving

As we approach the end of both our calendar and fiscal year, it is important that we correctly record all stewardship gifts. Every dollar we receive before 3:00 p.m. on Monday, December 28, will be recorded and reflected on your year-end Contribution Statement, and matched against your yearly pledge, as stewardship income for 2020. Donations received after the deadline will be counted towards our budget for 2021.

On occasion, a parishioner may choose to provide additional funds to the church, indicating these dollars should be recorded as a donation for a “future year.” While we can make a notation of this request, the funds will still be recorded and reported as income for 2020. Your Statement of Financial Giving will accurately reflect all income received in a particular calendar year.

Saint Mary's Giving Report

2020 Offering Income

2020 Year to Date Actual: \$956,189

Annual 2020 Offering Budget: \$1,069,426

Amount Remaining to Meet Budget: \$113,237

Monday Night On-line Bible Study

Monday Night On-line Bible Study wraps up tomorrow evening, 7:30-8:30 p.m. The link for the sessions is: <https://tinyurl.com/yyp83l77>, or you may find it on our website's homepage.

Preorder Your Vasilopita

Philoptochos' annual Vasilopita (Sweet Bread) Sale has been approved, and we're excited to implement this fundraiser for St. Basil Academy! The Sweet Bread will be provided by a Hellas Bakery. Cost is \$13 per loaf. Preorders end January 7 or until sold out.

Preorders can be made in two ways:

Online: Order bread and/or make a donation. Go to St. Mary's website for the links: stmarysgoc.org

By check: Checks for bread (\$13 each) and/or donations payable to *Philoptochos* with *St. Basil* in the memo line can be sent to church or put in the stewardship drop box in the narthex.

Pick Up: Vasilopita is scheduled to be delivered the week of Christmas. Assuming this happens, you can pick up your order in the Sunday School Hallway for 30 minutes after these services:

- 4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Vespers
- 10:00 a.m. Christmas Day Liturgy
- 10:00 a.m. January 9 Liturgy
- 9:30 a.m. January 10 Liturgy

Due to the New Year's Day holiday on Friday, January 1, Men's Fellowship has been rescheduled to the following Friday, January 8, 7:00 a.m., on Zoom.

Blessing of the River

The Minnesota Eastern Orthodox Christian Clergy Association (MEOCCA), will hold the annual Theophany/Epiphany Blessing of the Waters service on the Mississippi River on Saturday, January 9, 2021, at 12:00 noon, at Hidden Falls Park, 1313 Hidden Falls Drive, St. Paul. The half-hour service is free and open to the public. The service will end with the local priests immersing a gold cross in the Mississippi River, symbolizing Jesus Christ's baptism in the River Jordan 2,000 years ago.

House Blessings

During January and February, our clergy will be available for house blessings. To schedule a blessing, please send an e-mail request to: stmarysgoc@stmarysgoc.org or call the Office, 612.825.9595.

Situational Awareness and Personal Safety Training

Sunday, January 10, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Am I always mindful of my surroundings and personal safety...

- Once I step outside my home?
- Before I open my car door at Target?
- When I'm texting a friend as I walk to my next class?

The first step in maintaining personal safety is to be aware of your surroundings! Situational Awareness is the first and most important self-defense strategy. Please join us for this free and potentially life-saving seminar!

Join us on Sunday, January 10, 7:00-8:30 p.m. via Zoom. It is hosted by St. Mary's parishioners, Peter and Libby Cheolis. This extremely valuable training is for all: high schoolers, college-aged students, singles, couples, parents, and retirees.

Please note that this seminar focuses ONLY on Situational Awareness and Personal Safety. It will not include any weapons-related training. Pete and Libby Cheolis are the owners of MindSight Firearms Training. To register for the seminar, go to:

<https://tinyurl.com/SMGOCSituationalTraining>

Food Shelf Needs for Next Week

Canned fruits and vegetables

December's recipient has been Community Emergency Service (CES).

January's recipient will be Joyce Uptown Food Shelf.

Please do not bring opened packages. They will be discarded.

From the Fathers...on the Incarnation

“In the beginning was the Word”: behold Him to whom Mary hearkened;
“and the Word was made flesh”: behold Him whom Martha served.

—*Saint Augustine*

Daily Bible Readings

Monday, December 28

Hebrews 8:7-13 • Luke 14:25-35

Tuesday, December 29

Hebrews 2:11-18 • Matthew 2:13-23

Wednesday, December 30

Hebrews 10:1-18 • Mark 11:22-26

Thursday, December 31

Leave-Taking of the Nativity

Hebrews 10:35 – 11:7 • Mark 11:27-33

Friday, January 1

Circumcision of Christ; Saint Basil

Colossians 2:8-12 • Luke 2:20-21, 40-52

Saturday, January 2

1 Timothy 3:13 – 4:5 • Matthew 3:1-6

Sunday, January 3

Sunday before Theophany

2 Timothy 4:5-8 • Mark 1:1-8

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Fr. George Dokos, Proistamenos; Fr. Jason Houck, Associate

Fr. John Kostas; Deacon Paul Kalina