

SAINT MARY'S
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

✠ THE DIVINE LITURGY ✠

The Weekend of December 19/20, 2020

Saturday, December 19, 2020

Commemoration: Martyrs Boniface, Probus, Ares, Timothy, Polyeuktos, Eutychios and Thessaloniki; Our Righteous Father Gregentius, Bishop of Ethiopia; Aglaia the Righteous of Rome.

Variable Hymns and Readings in the Liturgy

At the Second Antiphon

Save us, O Son of God, who are wondrous among your saints, save us who sing to you: Alleluia!

At the Small Entrance

Hymn of Saint Ignatius, Fourth Tone

Becoming a partner with the Apostles in way of life and successor to their thrones, O God-inspired Saint, in the active life you found an entrance to contemplation. Hence you rightly expounded the word of truth, and you shed your blood in struggling for the faith, O Hieromartyr Ignatius. Intercede with Christ our God, beseeching Him to save our souls.

Entrance Hymn

Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ. Save us, O Son of God, who are wondrous among your saints, save us who sing to you: Alleluia!

Repeat the Hymn of Saint Ignatius, above.

Hymn of Saint Boniface, Fourth Tone (Come Quickly)

Your Martyr, O Lord, was worthily awarded by You * the crown of incorruption, in that he contested for You our immortal God. * Since he possessed Your power, he defeated the tyrants, * dashing the demons' powerless displays of defiance. * O Christ God, at his fervent entreaties, save 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 for the Day. For the Martyrs, Plagal Fourth Tone

O Planter of creation, Lord, to You does the entire world bring as an offering the God-bearing martyr Saints, as being nature’s first fruits. At their earnest entreaties, keep Your Church in a state of profoundest peace, through the Theotokos, O Lord abundantly merciful

Epistle..... Galatians 3:8-12

Brethren, the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “in you shall all the nations be blessed.” So then, those who are men of faith are blessed with Abraham who had faith. For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed be every one who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, and do them.” Now it is evident that no man is justified before God by the law; for “the righteous shall live by faith”; but the law does not rest on faith, for “He who does them shall live by them.”

Gospel..... Luke 13:19-29

The Lord said this parable, “The kingdom of God is like a grain of mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his garden; and it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches.” And again he said, “To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? It is like leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened.” He went on his way through towns and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem. And some one said to him, “Lord, will those who are saved be few?” And he said to them, “Strive to enter by the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the householder has risen up and shut the door, you will begin to stand outside and to knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, open to us.’ He will answer you, ‘I do not know where you come from.’ Then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets.’ But he will say, ‘I tell you, I do not know where you come from; depart from me, all you workers of iniquity!’ There you will weep and gnash your teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God and you yourselves thrust out. And men will come from east and west, and from north and south, and sit at table in the kingdom of God.”

The Communion Prayers are found on page 4 of this leaflet.

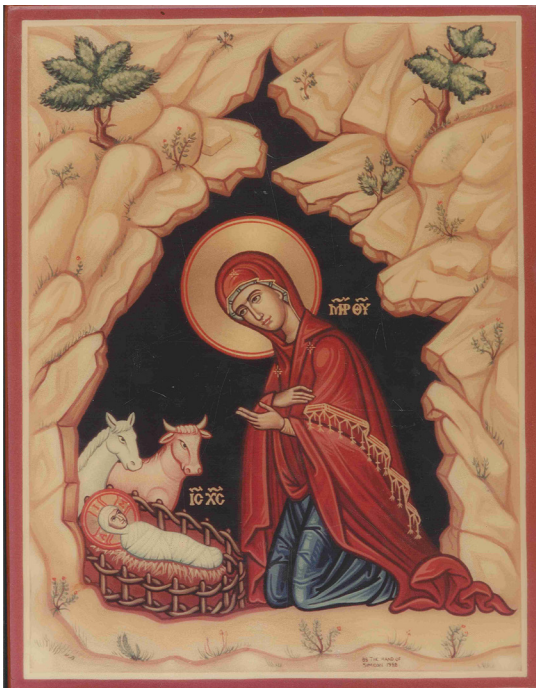
Communion Hymn

Blessed are they whom You have chosen and received, O Lord. Their memorial abides from generation to generation. 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 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 20, 2020

Commemoration: Sunday before Nativity; Forefeast of the Nativity of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ; Ignatius the God-Bearer, Bishop of Antioch; Our Righteous Father Philogonius, Bishop of Antioch; John the New Martyr of Thassos; Holy Father John of Kronstadt.

Morning Gospel: Fourth

Tone: Third

Variable Hymns and Readings in the Liturgy

At the Small Entrance

Resurrection Hymn, Third Tone

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, for the Lord has shown the mighty power of his arm. He has trampled down death by death, becoming the firstborn of the dead. He has delivered us from the depths of hell and has granted to all the world his great mercy.

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!

Repeat the Resurrection Hymn, above.

Hymn of the Forefeast of the Birth of Christ, Fourth Tone

“Joseph was astonished”

Make ready, O Bethlehem, for Eden is opened to all; and prepare, O Ephrathah, because the tree of life, has blossomed forth in the cave from the Virgin. For her womb, has become a spiritual paradise, in which is the divine plant; since by eating from it we shall live, and not die as Adam did. Christ is born, to resurrect, the fallen image!

Hymn of the Forefeast of the Birth of Christ, Second Tone

How great is the power of faith. By faith three young men rejoice in flames as if in refreshing water, and Daniel in the lions’ den is like a shepherd with his sheep. Through their prayers, Christ our God, save 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 Preparation for the Birth of Christ, Third Tone

Today the Virgin cometh, cometh unto the cave, To give birth to the Word who was born before all ages, Begotten in a manner that defies description. Rejoice therefore, oh, Universe if thou should hear and glorify with the angels and the shepherds. Glorify Him who by His will shall become a new born Babe and who is our God before all Ages.

Epistle..... Hebrews 11:9-10; 32-40

Brethren, by faith Abraham sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city which has foundation, whose builder and maker is God.

And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets - who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated - of whom the world was not worthy - wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

Gospel.....Matthew 1:1-25

The book of the Genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram, and Aram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by

Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king.

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa, and Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amon, and Amon the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Salathiel, and Salathiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called his name Jesus.

The Communion Prayers are found on page 4 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.



Memorial Prayers on Sunday are offered for: Chris J. Boosalis (40 days); Katherine D'Ambrogio (1 year), sister of Cleo Zarifis.



Chrismation

Sandy Jacobs (fiancé of Alex Dascalos) - Sunday, December 20



Please remember the sick, the suffering, and those in need, especially: 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.

Calendar of the Week

Monday, December 21

7:30 p.m. – Online Bible Study

Thursday, December 24: Eve of Nativity

Church Office closed

9:00 a.m. – Royal Hours *

4:00 p.m. – Vesperal Divine Liturgy

Friday, December 25: Holy Nativity

Church Office closed

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

Saturday, December 26: Synaxis of the Holy Theotokos

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

Registration requested.

5:00 p.m. – Great Vespers *

Sunday, December 27: Sunday after Nativity; Saint Stephen

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

Registration requested.

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

Saint Mary's Giving Report

2020 Offering Income

2020 Year to Date Actual: \$879,304

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

Amount Remaining to Meet Budget: \$190,122

Food Shelf Needs for Next Week

Baby Formula

December's recipient is Community Emergency Service (CES).

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

Christmas Weekend Worship Schedule

Thursday, December 24 — Eve of Nativity

Royal Hours – 9:00 a.m.

Vesperal Divine Liturgy – 4:00 p.m.

Friday, December 25 — Holy Nativity

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

Saturday, December 26 — Synaxis of the Theotokos

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

Sunday, December 27 — Sunday after Nativity; Stephen the First Martyr

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

*Registration is requested for all services except for
Royal Hours on Christmas Eve morning.*

Christ Is Born! Glorify Him!



Holiday Office Closures

Saint Mary's Church Office will be closed all day on Thursday, December 24 and Friday, December 25. 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 will be 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.

Christmas Decorations

This year, as in the past, we are accepting memorial donations for our Christmas decorations. Even though it may be difficult for many to attend a Liturgy this year, we still plan to decorate to celebrate the birth of our Lord and share our beautifully decorated nave with people watching online from various parts of the country and world. You can drop your decoration form and donation in the stewardship drop box in the narthex or go to our website, click the “Give Now” button and make your contribution there. Donations are due tomorrow, December 21.

Monday Night On-line Bible Study

Monday Night On-line Bible Study continues 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. The final session of the season is next Monday, December 28.

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

From the Fathers...on the Incarnation

God saw that mankind, worship things created:—
He put on a created body, that in our custom He might capture us.
—*Ephraim the Syrian, from “Hymns of the Nativity”*

Daily Bible Readings

Monday, December 21

II Timothy 2:20-26 • Mark 8:11-21

Tuesday, December 22

Saint Eleutherios

II Timothy 1:8-18 • Mark 2:23 – 3:5

Wednesday, December 23

II Timothy 4:9-22 • Mark 8:30-34

Thursday, December 24

Hebrews 11:33 – 12:2 • Mark 9:10-15

Friday, December 25

Titus 1:15 – 2:10 • Mark 9:33-41

Saturday, December 19

Saturday before Nativity

Galatians 3:8-12 • Luke 13:19-29

Sunday, December 20

Sunday before Nativity

Hebrews 11:9-10; 32-40 • Matthew 1:1-25

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