

Sunday Before Christmas—Of The Holy Fathers  
December 19, 2021, Tone 5

Christ is Among Us! He is and Always Shall Be!



### Fifth week of the Philip's Fast

By now we are coming close to "the holidays" - the current politically correct term for the Christmas celebration. The Visitation of Our Lady to Saint Elizabeth is not part of the Filipovka cycle, but it is important for us as we prepare to welcome the Savior. Our Lady went to what is now called Ein Karem, which is traditionally seen as the hometown of St. John the Baptist. When Mary greeted her elderly cousin, who had been granted a child by God in her old age who will prepare the people for Jesus' coming by his preaching, Elizabeth proclaimed that the baby in her womb leapt for joy. In icons, this moment is shown with St. John inclining his head toward Christ in the womb. Thus, this happens when Elizabeth is six months pregnant and Mary is just a few days into her miraculous pregnancy: on some Eastern calendars, the Visitation is on March 30, just five days later. The babies communicate to one another, and establish their unique relationship:

John filled with joy, Jesus "speaking" to His cousin of their mission.

What is my response when I hear that Christ is coming to me? He comes in so many ways: His Word, in the Mystery of the Eucharist, in other people. His mere presence in His Mother's womb electrifies the unborn John! How much more should we, as born individuals with faculties of hearing and reason among other things, be electrified by Jesus' Presence in our lives. This week, let us take a moment to reflect on this awesome mystery: Jesus Christ is coming to me. He wants to be with me, He desires to come into me, He hungers to be with me. Do I desire Him? Do I really want Him? When I come to church, am I starving to be fed with His Sacred Body and Life-giving Blood?

**Holy Protection of Mary Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Phoenix  
Most Reverend Thomas J Olmsted Apostolic Administrator**

**Our Lady of Perpetual Help Byzantine Catholic Church  
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[www.frchriszugger.com](http://www.frchriszugger.com)**

**OFFICE HOURS:**

Monday—Friday 10:00 am—4:00 pm  
Thursday OFF

**THEOSIS:** 2nd & 4th Thursday  
Bible Study 6:45 pm / Zoom

**Advisory Board**

Fr. Chris Zugger, Dan Riley, Rafael Plut,  
Jeff Brewer, Michael Grega, Alicia Wells

**Finance Council**

Matthew Blain, Maria Alden

**Confession (Mystery of  
Reconciliation):**

9:15—10:00 am on Sundays, before or  
after weekday Liturgies, or by appoint-  
ment with Father

**Mysteries of Baptism/Chrismation/  
Eucharist:**

Must be arranged three months in  
advance.  
(Pre-Jordan requirement)

**Mystery of Crowning:**

Must be arranged six months in  
advance  
(Pre-Cana requirement)

**Sick and Shut-Ins:** It is the family's  
responsibility to notify the parish office  
when a parishioner is in the hospital or  
confined to home because of sickness  
or old age. Father will bring the con-  
fined person the Holy Mysteries on a  
regular basis. It is recommended that  
one receive the Anointing of the Sick  
before any major surgery. Please don't  
let the priest be last to know that some-  
one is ill!

May the Lord Bless your kindness and  
generosity to His House!

Welcome to our Church! If you are looking for a spiritual home, contact Father Artur/Fr Chris or the office staff for more information. God bless you!

**Heb 11:9-16 & 32-40; Mt 1:1-25**

- YouTube Live** 8:30 am Rosary; 9:00 am Matins, Confessions  
10:00 am Divine Liturgy for Parish Family, Benefactors and Friends  
Eternal Lamp: Health & Recovery of Debbie Sanchez by Ann Rajala
- Dec 20 Mon** ***Prefestive of Christmas / Ignatius Bishop Martyr /  
Heb 11:17-23 & 27-1; Mk 9:42-1-0:1 (p. 283-284 & p. 383)***  
 9:00 am Divine Liturgy / +Priest Conon Howard Timoney
- Dec 21 Tue** ***Prefestive of Christmas / Juliana Martyr /  
Heb 12:25-26 & 13:22-25; Mk 10:2-12 (p.284 & p. 391)***  
9:00 am Divine Liturgy / Healing and conversion of Mitchell Newberry  
by Ashby Collinson
- Dec 22 Wed** ***Pre-festive of Christmas / Anastasia Great Martyr /  
James 1:1-18; Mk 10:11-16 (p.284 & p.391)***  
 5:30 pm OLPH Devotions  
6:00 pm Divine Liturgy / God's Blessing on Talamante Family by Talamantes
- Dec 23 Thu** ***Pre-festive of Christmas / Ten Holy Martyrs of Crete /  
James 1:19-27; Mk 10:17-27***
- Dec 24 Fri** ***Vigil of Christmas / Eugenia Martyr / Heb 1:1-12; Lk 2:1-20***  
**Strict FAST** 10:00 am Royal Hours  
4:30 pm Holy Supper / Caroling  
**YouTube LIVE** 7:00 pm Vigil Liturgy of St. Basil / Litija / +Michael Wasyl Dzek by Helga Dzek
- Dec 25 Sat** ***Christmas / Birth of Our Lord / Holy Day of Obligation  
Gal 4:4-7; Mt 23:1-12***  
**YouTube LIVE** 9:00 am Matins  
10:00 am Divine Liturgy / For Parish Family, Benefactors and Friends
- Dec 26 Sun** ***Sunday After Christmas / David, Joseph and James  
Gal 1:11-29 & Heb 2:11-18; Mt 2:13-23***  
**NO SATURDAY EVENING SERVICES**  
8:30 am Rosary; 9:00 am Matins, Confessions  
**YouTube LIVE** 10:00 am Divine Liturgy for Parish Family, Benefactors and Friends  
Eternal Lamp: Open

### Remember Those Who Request Our Prayers:

Physician and Help of Those in sickness, Redeemer and Savior of the infirm; O Master and Lord of all, grant healing to your servants. Be clement, show mercy to those who have sinned much, and deliver them, O Christ, from their Iniquities, that they may glorify your might divine

Sharif Rabadi	Buster Miscusi	Paola Terlaza
Jenny Ford	Barbara De Lap	Ruth Sousa
Priscilla Hughes	Irene Bradley	Linda Granci
Marilyn Fore	Sorlah Chavez	Vicki Frank
Sven & Barbara Svensson	Abraham Haddad	Christopher Barlow
Laurie Bienz	Marianne Gerace	Tracy McTernan
Brent Dodson- Sands	Lori Medina	Scott Fafrak
Lara Davis	Michael Baron	Jordan Smith
Jessica Pieniadz	Gabriel Preisler	Rebecca Baia
Rhonda Glasscock	Todd Bailey	Janet Worthington
Debbie and Mary Sanchez	Fr Chris Zegger	Patti Klinkovsky
	Marcie Dark	Matt Williamson

### Intentions of the Rosary:

- 1st Decade: Help for persecuted Catholics, especially in communist and Islamic states
- 2nd Decade: Spiritual and physical growth of our parish and the Byzantine Catholic Church
- 3rd Decade: Increase in vocations to priesthood, diaconate, and consecrated life to serve the Byzantine Catholic Church
- 4th Decade: Repose of the souls who have no one praying for them
- 5th Decade: Healing of the sick in body, mind and soul

***The joyful mysteries are recited from now until  
January 4***

### Holy Father's Intentions for December—Catechists

Let us pray for the catechists, summoned to announce the Word of God: may they be its witnesses, with courage and creativity and in the power of the Holy Spirit.



Vocation Icon

Today: Sullivan Family

Next Sunday: Carol Donlin

“They shall call his name Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.” The presence of God is seen through the salvation foretold in the Old Covenant, and is revealed through the Birth of Our Lord Jesus, Emmanuel. Our own lives can manifest the presence of God when we live according to our vocations. Are you being called to show God’s presence as a priest, deacon, monk or nun? Contact the Vocations Office at 206-329-9219 or email: [vocations@ephx.org](mailto:vocations@ephx.org)

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

**December 26, 2021**

Cantor: Evie Jilek

Reader: Brook Jilek

Altar Server: Michael Grega

Trojca: Lucy & Daniel Brewer

Counters: Rafael Plut, Ann Rajala

**Propers for 12/26/2021**

**Sunday after Christmas**

**Tone 6**

**Antiphons & Entrance Hymn -  
302**

**Troparion (Tone 6)- 152**

**Troparion (Nativity) - 290**

**Troparion (Saints) - 303**

*v. Glory...*

**Kontakion (Saints) - 303**

*v. Now & Ever...*

**Kontakion (Synaxis) - 295**

**Prokeimenon - 153 & 296**

**Alleluia - 304 & 296**

**Instead of 'It Is Truly Proper' -  
296**

**Our Father - 71**

**Communion Hymn - 305**

**OLPH Prayer Warriors**

Sunday (Zoom). Send your  
prayer requests to Patricia at  
pocb@unm.edu

THE PRAYER WARRIORS IS  
OPEN TO EVERYONE--WOMEN,  
MEN, & CHILDREN (children who  
have their parents' permission)!  
Please join us!!

**Barbara's Hall Report**

Well my report will be boring, it's the  
same as it was last week, and will  
probably be the same for the next few  
weeks!

Darn you, Covid, you are not giving us  
a Merry Christmas or Happy New Year!

**THE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF PHOENIX**

subscribes to the

*Charter for the Protection of  
Children and Young People*

adopted by the United States Catholic Conference  
of Bishops. The Eparchy, within all its parishes, in-  
stitutions and programs, is committed to assuring a  
safe environment in ministry for its children and  
young people that conforms to the Charter require-  
ments. For information regarding the Eparchial Safe  
Environment Program, please contact:

**Dcn. Michael Hanafin**

Safe Environment Program Coordinator

Cell: (480) 387-5182

Email: dcnhanafin@ephx.org

**Sbdcn. Paul F. Kilroy**

Asst. Safe Environment Program Coordinator

Office: (602) 861-9778 / Cell: (702) 498-5972

Email: sbdcnkilroy@ephx.org

**Dr. Caroline Bonham**

Victim Assistance Coordinator - Cell: (505) 314-  
3943

Email: victimassistanceofphoenix@gmail.com

**Retirement Fund for Religious:** Thanks for  
giving! "We are conscious of the great generosi-  
ty of the many benefactors who support the Re-  
tirement Fund for Religious each year," says a  
Catholic sister. "Support from the fund has been  
a tremendous blessing to our retired sisters."  
We collected \$350.00.

**ONLINE GIVING / ONLINE TITHING**

is available on our website:

For those parishioners who can't attend in per-  
son or traveling or anyone who find this more  
convenient, we just set up a new way to tithe  
online using your credit card or debit card infor-  
mation. You can do a one-time donation or set-  
up weekly donations!! You will receive a receipt  
and statement immediately after donating. The  
software takes a very small percentage of the  
donation, but its worth it for the ease of the sys-  
tem. You can donate using your computer /  
smartphone at: <https://www.ol.phnm.org/giving>.

Beautiful newly designed Mission Society **Christmas Cards** are available to purchase at OLPH. This year Bishop Nil, the apostolic administrator for the Mukachevo eparchy (Ukraine), has asked for **help in building a social center to assist the homeless**. Russia's long war in eastern Ukraine has increased poverty and weakened health care and social services in a country that was already poor. This results in more people losing their homes or what little support they had. The Catholic Church has been working hard at helping all those in need, regardless of religious affiliation. *Every dollar will go so very far over there*. Thank you for your generosity, and please encourage family, friends & other parishioners to purchase our cards!

**Year End Finances** For those parishioners who use their tithe as a part of their income tax charitable deductions for 2021, all contributions must be received at the church by December 31.

**ATTENTION PARISH FAMILY TITHING ENVELOPE BOXES FOR 2022 WITH YOUR NAME ON IT ARE AVAILABLE FOR YOU ON THE FRONT PEW AT THE ENTRANCE.**  
IF YOU CAN'T FIND YOUR NAME PLEASE SEE ANN

**Byzantine Wall Calendars for 2022** are now available on the greeting table by the church entrance.

## **December 20 St. Ignatius the God-bearer**

A God-bearer? How does this elderly bishop-martyr deserve such an auspicious title, given to no other saint? While he himself took on the spiritual name of Godbearer, or Theophorus, he earned it by his life. He was a disciple of both the Apostles Peter and John, and was the third bishop of Antioch, following St Peter himself, then St. Euodias who was one of the Seventy Apostles (January 4) and was martyred in 66 AD by Emperor Nero. Ignatius came to this see already revered as a priest and teacher. His fame was assured by the letters he wrote to six Churches in Asia Minor and the seventh to Rome's Church while he was being transported to die in the arena of Rome around the year 107 AD, having served as bishop for nearly 40 years. As Orthodoxwiki writes of him: These letters proved to be influential in the development of Christian theology, since the number of extant writings from this period of Church history is very small. They bear signs of being written in great haste and without a proper plan, such as run-on sentences and an unsystematic succession of thought. Ignatius is the first known Christian writer to put great stress on loyalty to a single bishop in each city, who is assisted by both presbyters (priests) and deacons. Earlier writings only mention either bishops or presbyters, and give the impression that there was usually more than one bishop per congregation. Ignatius also stresses the value of the Eucharist, calling it "a medicine to immortality." The very strong desire for bloody martyrdom in the arena, which Ignatius expresses rather graphically in places, may seem quite odd to the modern reader, but an examination of his theology of soteriology (the science of the doctrine of salvation) shows that he regarded salvation as being from the power and fear of death. So, for him, to try to escape his martyrdom would be to fear death and place himself back under its power. Ignatius is often depicted with lions, the animals who killed him in the arena and fulfilled his hope to die for Christ and thus to see God.

## Our Preparation Continues

From December 20 to 24 we observe a five-day “holy week” during which Christ’s birth seems ever closer. As we sing during those days, “Today the Virgin is on her way to the cave where she will give birth.”

This pre-feast of the Nativity culminates on December 24, the **Paramony (Vigil)** of the feast. Usually translated as vigil or eve, paramony actually refers to the uninterrupted nature of the Church’s prayer on this day. During the day, the lengthier Great Hours or Royal Hours are chanted, followed by the Typika and a more elaborate than usual Great Vespers, to which is attached the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil.

A special service of Great Compline with a Litia for the feast ends the day. Sometimes this leads directly into the Orthros (Matins) and Divine Liturgy of December 25. In some countries of Eastern Europe it culminates with a Holy Supper prior to the Liturgy. The same cycle of uninterrupted prayer is also prescribed for the Feast of the Theophany on January 5.

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**Christmas Eve** is a day of strict fast: no meat or dairy products, one full meal in the evening, two light ones during the day. The full meal is traditionally the Holy Supper, which is eaten when the first star appears in the evening sky. With its first shining, all approach the table, and the father greets everyone: Christ is born! To which all reply “Glorify Him!” Animals are fed before the Holy Supper, because they kept the Christ Child warm in the stable, and the ox and the donkey recognized their True Lord (Isaiah 1:3). One place setting is left open for the Prophet Elijah, who will come to announce the coming of the Messiah, according to both Jewish and Christian beliefs (Malachi 4:1-5). At the end of Supper, the father reads the Birth of Christ from the Bible.

Holy Supper handouts with recipes and customs are available in our Gift Shop.

Both the Eastern and Roman Churches have Jesse Trees, which depict the ancestors of Jesus through his foster-father St. Joseph. These Trees are based on the prophecy of Isaiah: “*There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.*” (Is 11:1), and thus will show Jesse as the base of the Tree. Much more common among Western Christians, the image of Matthew’s and Luke’s genealogies did appear in Byzantine icons from the 12<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> centuries in the Byzantine Empire itself. The Trees can often show Our Lady in the center of the Tree, holding the Infant Jesus in her lap, based on St. Irenaeus of Lyons who hailed Mary as the “rod” of Jesse, since it is she who conceived Christ through the Holy Spirit, and Jesus is the flower of the rod.

The Gospel of Christmas Day is from Matthew, chapter 2, and includes the coming of the Magi, popularly known as the Three Kings (2:1-12). In the Roman rite, the Magi come on January 6, which is Epiphany as the revelation of the God-Man in Jesus to the Gentiles. In the Eastern Churches, Epiphany is the Baptism of the Lord, the revelation of the Holy Trinity, and so called Theophany: manifestation of God. Both traditions celebrate the Twelve Days of Christmas, December 25 – January 6.

Plan now to keep Christmas joy alive in your home:

a. Keep up the tree at least until January 5 (In Transcarpathia we keep it up until the Feats of Encounter, February 2) if possible. For your family prayers, read part of the Christmas story from the Gospel from St. Matthew or St. Luke in front of your Christmas icon or Nativity set. Did you put up Christmas lights? Try to keep those up too.

b. Encourage Christmas carols during the season. This is the last week for "Come O Jesus Our Savior" and "O Come, O Come Emmanuel." There are lots of traditional western and Byzantine carols that you can sing yourself or with your spouse or your family.

c. If you have children, be sure that they make phone calls or write notes to thank people who sent them presents for the holiday. Perhaps have them thank a special person in their life, just for being a gift of joy to them. Help them learn to appreciate others and what they do for them: teachers, neighbors, relatives, friends.

d. Let us all make a point of thanking Jesus for coming into the world to save us from sin and death, and to open the gates of heaven to us once more.

Did you know that the Pew Book contains prayers to prepare for the Divine Liturgy, beginning on page 1, and prayers to read after receiving Holy Communion, on page 95? Make good use of them in order to enrich your reception of Christ in the Holy Eucharist!

## **Look Through My Eyes... by Laurie Bienz**

"Lord," I said, "I am not good." "Go on," Jesus said. "I don't like myself. I told Him. In a whisper I added,

I hate myself. Help me, please. I can't change the way I see myself." Jesus looked at me for a few minutes. Then He took my hand and said, "Come, look through my eyes and see what I see.

This is what my Jesus invited me to see:

"Look through my eyes and see the spark of life that I created to be my companion and walk in the garden with me.

Look through my eyes and see the infant in the womb rejected by the one entrusted with this new life.

Look through my eyes and see the child bewildered and in pain.

Look through my eyes and see the young woman frightened, angry and alone.

Look through my eyes and see a woman shattered, fighting to stay alive desperately alone.

Look through my eyes and see yourself as worthy of my unconditional love.

Look through my eyes and see yourself as worthy of my passion, of the blood I shed for you.

Look through my eyes and see yourself as worthy of my forgiveness, of my mercy.

Look through my eyes and see yourself as worthy to be treated with dignity and respect.

Look through my eyes and see yourself as worthy of redemption.

Look through my eyes and see yourself as worthy to be my friend and companion who walks with me in the garden."

My Jesus held me as I wept. He whispered in my ear, "I have redeemed you, I have called you by name. You are mine. Look through my eyes and see yourself as worthy to be called a child of God."