

December 24, 2023 / T one 5

Sunday Before Christmas—of the Ancestors

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

Христос Раждається! Славите Его! Christ is Born! Glorify Him! Prieāgus Ziemassvētkus! Fröhliche weihnachten! Veselé Vánoce! Boldog Karácsonyt! Krisztus születése! Boldog új évet! Joyeux Noël! Feliz Navidad! Feliz Natal! Buon Natale! Vrolijk Kerstfeest! Heri ya Krismasi!

"He who measures the heavens with the span of His hand
Lies in a manger a span's breadth;
He who's cupped hands contain the sea
Is born in a cave;
His glory fills the heavens
And the manger is filled with His splendor.
Moses wished to see His glory
But was unable to see Him as he wished;
Let us come and see Him today
As He lies in the manger in swaddling clothes.
Formerly there was none who dared to see God
and still live, But today all who have seen Him
Are saved from the second death." St. Ephrem the Syrian



Dearly Beloved Parish Family, the eternal God, who has no past or future, but only the eternal, today enters into the momentariness of human life in this world. And so, this moment of creation, which is limited by space and time, at the moment of the Birth of Christ is filled with this heavenly, divine now. Today Christ is born among us, filling our moment with heavenly light, power and meaning. St Ephrem the Syrian describes the manger that is filled with this splendor. In his Christmas poems St Ephrem contrasts the birth of the Messiah King, Jesus, with the activities of the Caesar Augustus. Augustus orders a census to be made of all citizens so that he can determine what taxes they owe him. Christ the King comes to cancel debts - the debt created by our sins against our Creator. Sin in this sense is our failing to give God what is due to Him (our thanks, tithes, praise, worship, our hearts). Christ not only pays that debt but as St Ephrem notes Christ in His own teachings takes on Himself the debt of all the poor to whom we give charity. What we give to the poor is what He as Lord owes us and He promises to repay us at the Resurrection of the Righteous. Christ is Born whenever we are caring for the least of His sisters and brothers. Christ is Born whenever our giving is not repaid in mutual gifts. This should cause us to look for that great last day in which Christ will bless us with all we have given to those in need.

May our newborn Savior bring His forgiveness and grace, His light, His peace, His hope to our present moment in life. Merry Christmas! Fr Artur, Fr Chris, Fr Tyler

Holy Protection of Mary Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Phoenix
Most Reverend Kurt Burnette Apostolic Administrator
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Byzantine Catholic Church
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www.olphnm.org

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

Father Artur Bubnevych, Pastor

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Parish Membership

From time to time it is good for us to reflect on what constitutes membership at Our Lady of Perpetual Help...a time to reflect on our relationship to God and His Church which is expressed by our commitment to this parish

Our parish community is open to any Catholic and to anyone

1. who is interested in seeking the Lord Jesus through His Word, the teachings of the Apostles, and the Sacred Mysteries;
2. who accepts the teachings of the Catholic Church;
3. who will help form a community based on the Lord's love;
4. who is willing to grow as a Christian within the legitimate spiritual traditions of the Byzantine Catholic Church within our American context;
5. who acknowledges the legitimate authority of the Pope, Bishop, and Pastor;
6. who will attend liturgical services on Sundays and great holydays;
7. and who is willing to support the growth of the Church (Eparchy and Parish) by sharing his/her time, talent and treasure (financial support); Actual Parish membership is based on the above and is determined by the following criteria:
 1. Being registered
 2. Attending liturgical services regularly on Sundays and Holydays
3. Contributing to the support of the Church—both Eparchy (Bishop's Appeal) and Parish through use of the Sunday Tithing envelopes! Membership in the parish gives the parishioners the right to have their children receive the Holy Mysteries of Christian Initiation, be married in church and be buried from the church.

Summary from the Eparchial Pastoral Handbook on “Membership in a Parish”

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!

Hebrews 11:9-10 & 32-40; Matthew 1:1-25 / PM Hebrews 1:1-12; Luke 2:1-20

- YouTube Live** 8:30 am Rosary 9:00 am Festal Matins & Confessions
10:00 am Divine Liturgy for Parish Family, Benefactors & Friends
12 noon All Parish Potluck Holy Supper in the hall
Eternal Lamp: Holy Protection of the Mother of God over People of Ukraine
- Dec 25 Mon** **Christmas-Birth of Our Lord / Holy Day of Obligation / Gal 4:4-7; Mt 2:1-12**
Fast free Week 9:00 am Matins
10:00 am Divine Liturgy of St Basil the Great / For the Parish Family
- Dec 26 Tue** **Synaxis of the Theotokos / Solemn Holy Day / Heb 2:11-18; Mt 2:13-23**
6:00 pm God's Blessing on Savanna Gloetzner by Cindy Loescher
- Dec 27 Wed** **Stephen Protomartyr / Simple Holy Day / Acts 6:8-7:5 & 47-60; Mt 21:33-42**
Fast Free Week 6:00 pm Healing and Salvation of Kent Cohen by Gloetzners
- Dec 28 Thu** ***20,000 Martyrs of Nicomedia / James 1:19-27; Mk 11:27-33***
6:45 pm THEOSIS Bible Study (zoom)
- Dec 29 Fri** ***Holy Innocents Martyrs / James 2:1-13; Mk 12:1-12***
Fast Free Week 6:00 pm +Michael Dzek by Helga Dzek
- Dec 30 Sat** ***Saturday After Christmas / 1 Tim 6:11-16; Mt 12:15-21***
9:00 am (masks required) Healing and Salvation of Madalyn Davis by Shari
- Dec 31 Sun** ***Sunday After Christmas—David, Joseph and James / Gal 1:11-19; Mt 2:13-23***
4:00 pm Great Vespers / YouTube LIVE
Hebrew Scriptures for Sunday: Genesis 25:21-34; Sirach 7:1-28; Zechariah 8:3-11
5:00 pm God's Blessing on Jilek Family
- YouTube LIVE** 8:30 am Rosary
9:00 am Matins & Confessions
10:00 am Divine Liturgy for Parish Family, Benefactors & Friends
Eternal Lamp: Holy Protection of the Mother of God over People of Ukraine

YOUTUBE LIVE-STREAMING: OLPH Sunday / Holy Day Liturgies are available on YouTube. The link is <https://youtube.com/c/olphmedia>. Please click the "Subscribe" button to make it easier for you to find the channel in the future. Please, send your feedback about the quality of the live stream / comments / suggestions to Dan Riley: riley.dan@gmail.com

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	Fr Robert Rankin	Juanita Montoya
Jenny Ford	Fr. Steve Washko	Jacob McTernan
Marilyn Fore	Buster Miscusi	Paola Terlaza
Sven & Barbara Svensson	Barbara De Lap	Ruth Sousa
Laurie Bienz	Irene Bradley	Linda Granci
Brent Dodson-Sands	Soriah Chavez	Vicki Frank
Lara Davis	Abraham Haddad	Christopher Barlow
Carol Donlin	Marianne Gerace	Jordan Smith
Marcie Dark	Michael Baron	Janet Worthington
Jesse Hebert	Gabriel Preisler	Patti Klinkovsky
Fr Chris Zuggger	Jessica Pieniadz	Matt Williamson
Fr Chris Andrews-Madalyn Davis	Rhonda	James Epstein
Rebecca Russo	Glasscock	Katy Ford
	Amber Roybal	Alton & Barbara
	Philip Leahy	Bertschinger

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

Holy Father's Intentions / December For Persons with Disabilities

We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.

“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, subdeacon monk or nun? Contact the Vocations Office at 206-329-9219 or email: vocations@ephx.org



Vocation Icon

Today: Gloetzner Family
Next Sunday: Montano Family

December 31, 2023

Cantor: Evie Jilek

Reader: Brook Jiek

Altar Server: Michael Grega

Trojca: Emilia Wells

Counters: Maria Alden &
Ann Rajala

Propers for 12/31/23

**Sunday After Christmas
Leave-taking of Christmas
Tone 6**

Antiphons & Entrance Hymn -
289 & 295

Troparion (Tone 6) - 152

Troparion (Christmas) - 290

Troparion (Saints) - 303

v. Glory...Now & Ever

Kontakion (Saints) - 303

Prokeimenon - 291 & 304

Alleluia - 292

Magnification & Irmos - 293

Our Father - 74

Communion - 294 & 305

The OLPH Prayer Warriors

make intercessory prayer a daily commitment. We pray voluntarily and without bias; that is, we take to the Blessed Trinity the requests that come our way.

The Prayer Warriors meet on Zoom every Sunday at 9:30 a.m. for themed meetings. If you would like to join the Prayer Warriors, would like additional information, and/or would like for us to pray for your intentions, please contact Patricia at pocb@unm.edu

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

Year End Finances— For those parishioners who use their tithe as a part of their income tax charitable deductions for 2022, all contributions must be received at the church by December 31

Father Chris' NEW book, *Looking to Tomorrow: The History and Mission of the Byzantine Catholic Church* is in our bookstore. This is an 800 page, two volume set, with professionally made maps, covering the entire history of our Church from the mission of Saints Cyril and Methodius in the 9th century to today, in Central Europe and North America. It is a limited edition, and there is no other book like it, and nothing on the internet that matches the details, sources from multiple languages, and comprehensive overview of our Church's life.

Cost is \$80 per set.

Alicia's Hall Report

Last Sunday we benefited from the leftovers from the Women's Spiritual Enrichment Weekend; and thank you again Evie for all your efforts! Thank you Ashley for the pot of rice to go with my beans! A big thank you to the Dodson-Sands family for cleaning up after- it was so good to have you all there and to catch up while we cleaned! Also it was a treat to have the Plut family there as well! Next week is New Year's Eve! Please come give thanks for a blessed 2023 and bring new years type finger foods or traditional foods to share: https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C054AAAAA2AA4F94-olph#.
Have a blessed last week of 2023, dear Parish Family!

The Christmas Letter Pope Benedict XVI Wrote to Baby Jesus as a Child

In 1934, a 7-year-old Joseph Ratzinger wrote a touching letter to the Christ Child, requesting three gifts for Christmas. This letter, preserved by his late sister Maria Ratzinger, offers a glimpse into the early life of the boy who would become Pope Benedict XVI in 2005.

The letter was discovered in the family home in Bavaria, Germany, a region known for its Catholic faith. Italian website Korazym reported that the letter was found in 2012 during restoration works at Joseph Ratzinger's birthplace in Marktl am Inn, which is now a museum.

"Dear Baby Jesus, you will soon descend to earth. You want to bring joy to children. You will also bring joy to me," begins Joseph Ratzinger's letter. "I would like a Volks-Schott, a green chasuble, and a Heart of Jesus. I always want to be good. Greetings from Joseph Ratzinger," concludes the text.

The Volks-Schott (People's Missal) is a German missal with a parallel Latin column, popular at that time. In a 2011 interview with Angela Ambrogetti, director of ACI Stampa, the Italian agency of the ACI Group, Monsignor Georg Ratzinger recalled how he and Joseph played and did many things together as children: "The two of us would set up the nativity scene together, and then among our most frequent games were spiritual ones, what we called the 'parish priest game,' which we played together, but our sister did not participate in," recounted Mons. Georg Ratzinger. "'We celebrated' Mass with chasubles made by our mother's seamstress just for us. Sometimes I was the priest or the altar boy," he shared. "From a very young age, we lived the liturgy with love, and this gradually continued into the seminary," until both were ordained priests together on June 29, 1951, on the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul. (source www.ewtnvatican.com/articles/christmas-letter-pope-benedict-xvi-wrote-to-baby-jesus-as-a-child-19)

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). The word "magi" is the plural of "magos" the name given to one who was a philosopher and astronomer. They were also called kings. In Holy Scripture, "magos" was a customary name given to one who ruled a single city. Melchior is depicted as an old man, with a beard and long gray hair. He brought gold to the King and Master Jesus. Caspar was young and beardless, with a ruddy complexion. His gift was frankincense to God Incarnate. Balthazar, who was bearded and very dark, presented myrrh to the Son of Man, Who would undergo death. The three Magi came from the East, from the neighboring countries of Arabia, Persia, and Ethiopia. They traveled independently with their entourages, then providentially met and joined company. It was not an ordinary star that led them, but a divine angelic power that appeared in the form a Star. Consensus is that the Star appeared in the sky at the Annunciation. Stars move from east to west, but this Star moved from east to southward to Jerusalem. It shone like the sun during the day, guiding the Magi to Bethlehem. They arrived in Jerusalem on the day of the Nativity, but the star hid itself so others would not go to Bethlehem. When they departed the city, the Star reappeared and descended near the earth, showing the exact location of the cave. It is said that the Holy Family remained in the cave for forty days, until just before the Presentation in the Temple. (Source: The Orthodox Calendar Company)

On arriving at Bethlehem and the Nativity of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ in the flesh on December 25th, we begin to prepare for the Theophany. We do not stop at the Nativity. In our joy at God's arrival, we press forward and see the Theophany. With Theophany we experience the beginning of Christ's revelation to us of the mysteries of God. Most important of all, this event points out the Mystery of the Trinity, a mystery long hinted in the Old Testament.

After the Fast comes the Feast: After fasting faithfully, the Church traditionally calls us to feast for a time. December 25 to January 4 is a time of such celebration and feasting. We eat meat on all of those days including Fridays.

What to eat on January 5? By tradition we do not eat meat or dairy (strict abstinence) on Theophany Eve. Though this is "optional", we become more authentic Byzantines when we do some optional things that benefit our spiritual life. God bless You!!!

Plan now to keep Christmas joy alive in your home:

a. Keep up the tree until the Feast of the Holy Encounter February 2nd 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. There are lots of traditional western and Byzantine carols that you can sing yourself or with your spouse or your family.

c. Everybody goes to see the infirm in nursing homes before Christmas, but after Christmas no one goes. Take children along - you'd be surprised what a difference it makes for the elderly infirm to have children around!

d. 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.

e. 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.

Christmas Week: Dec. 26 - Synaxis of the Mother of God. On this day we commemorate her role as Theotokos, or God-bearer, her divine maternity. This title is known to have been used as early as the 200s, and affirms that Jesus is both God and Man.

Dec. 27 - St. Stephen - the first person who willingly dies as a martyr for Christ.

Dec. 28 - The martyrs of Nicomedia, killed in their church on Christmas Day. While the calendar gives a highly inflated number, there may in fact have been as many as 200 who died in the massacre, but they were willing to go to church that day and take the risk of death during Diocletian's persecution so as to receive Communion.

Dec. 29 - The Holy Innocents, murdered by the paranoid Herod, due to his fear of the Infant Jesus. Herod was quite capable of ordering such a slaughter, and unfortunately as we see in our own day, there are always foolish people who will follow a dictator's orders, no matter how awful. Probably a dozen or so boys died that day, but each was dearly loved and deeply mourned. They serve as patrons of the innocents slain around the world by abortion.

Welcoming Jesus by Laurie Bienz

Christmas, the birth of Christ. He welcomes us into the stable to see and worship Him. Jesus invites us to share His life; the good times, His sorrows, His passion, His death, resurrection, and ascension. I wondered how does Jesus welcome me into His life? He points to the rosary. He gently tells me, "As you prayerfully, thoughtfully say the rosary with each mystery you enter more fully into my life where you are most welcomed." He then asks me, "How much of your life do you welcome Me into?" I consider this. There are the joys, the peaceful times, the successes, when things are going good. Jesus then asks me "What about the other part of your life?"

"You mean the difficult parts, the problems? I ask. "Yes," He responds.

Do I want to welcome Jesus into the choices I make - big or small, easy or hard? What about the big problems? What about the dark thoughts and feelings I have? What about the messiness of relationships like families, friends, neighbors? Do I want to welcome Jesus into the darkness I hide from myself? How much does pride keep Jesus out of my life?

As the rosary is a way to enter Christ's life, so the sacraments are ways to allow and welcome Christ ever deeper into our life. As we greet Jesus on Christmas day, let us welcome Him into all parts of our life now and every day.



Celebrating OLPH St Nicholas
award 2023

2024 Pysanky Workshops

OLPH will again host workshops for anyone interested in creating pysanky (Ukrainian Easter eggs). The workshops are open to all skill levels (children do need a supervising adult) and will be held in January-March at the following dates and times: 1/20 9am-12pm, 1/29 12-3pm, 2/17 12-3pm, 2/19 12-3pm, 2/22 6-9pm, 3/4 6-9pm, 3/7 12-3pm and 3/16 12-3pm. Workshop space is limited, so please sign up at <http://tinyurl.com/olph-pysanky> or by contacting Andrea Riley at 505-220-9137 or andrea.riley@gmail.com.