



St. Vladimir Orthodox Church

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SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS / RIGHTEOUS PRIEST AARON December 17, 2023

TROPARION, KONTAKION & PROKEIMENON

Troparion – Tone 3

Let the heavens rejoice! Let the earth be glad! For the Lord has shown strength with His arm. He has trampled down death by death. He has become the first born of the dead. He has delivered us from the depths of hell, and has granted to the world// great mercy.

Troparion – Tone 2

Through faith Thou didst justify the Forefathers, betrothing through them the Church of the gentiles. These saints exult in glory, for from their seed came forth a glorious fruit: she who bore Thee without seed.// So by their prayers, O Christ God, have mercy on us!

Kontakion – Tone 6

You did not worship the graven image, O thrice-blessed ones, but armed with the immaterial Essence of God, you were glorified in a trial by fire. From the midst of unbearable flames you called on God, crying: “Hasten, O compassionate One! Speedily come to our aid,// for Thou art merciful and able to do as Thou dost will!”

Prokeimenon – Tone 4

Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers, / and praised and glorified is Thy Name forever!
V. For Thou art just in all that Thou hast done for us!

LITURGICAL COMMEMORATION

Sunday of the Forefathers

The Sunday that falls between December 11-17 is known as the Sunday of the Holy Forefathers. These are the ancestors of Christ according to the flesh, who lived before the Law and under the Law, especially the Patriarch Abraham, to whom God said, “In thy seed shall all of the nations of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 12:3, 22:18).

Righteous Priest Aaron

The Righteous Aaron was the son of Amram and Jochebed, and the elder brother of the Prophet Moses the God-seer, and also of Miriam. He was a direct descendent of Levi by both parents. God called him “the Levite” in Exodus 4:14, when He appointed Aaron to be the spokesman for Moses, who was “slow of speech,” before the people. Later, he would also speak on behalf of Moses before Pharaoh in Egypt (Ex. 4:30; 7:2). Aaron was married to Elisheba, the daughter of the Prince of Judah (Ex. 6:23), who bore him four sons.

Moses was eighty years old and Aaron was eighty-three when they spoke to Pharaoh and asked that the Hebrews be released from their slavery. The Lord told Moses that Pharaoh would ask them for a miracle, and that Aaron should throw down his rod before him, and it would become a serpent (Ex. 7:9). When Pharaoh would not allow the Hebrews to leave Egypt, God told Moses to have Aaron stretch forth his rod over the Nile River, and it would turn to blood.

Following a succession of plagues, Pharaoh relented and let the people go, then Moses led them on their long journey to the Promised Land. In Chapter 17 of Exodus, the Hebrews fought Amalek in a battle at Rephidim. Moses stood atop a hill

with the rod of God in his hand. As long as he raised his hand, the Hebrews prevailed, but when he became tired and lowered it, Amalek prevailed. Aaron and Hur sat Moses on a rock and held up his hands, one on each side. This was a prefiguration of the suffering of Christ, because the arms of Moses formed a cross. In the Greek Septuagint, the names Aaron and Hur begin with the letters Alpha and Omega, another reference to Christ (Revelation 1:8).

Aaron and his sons were anointed and sanctified to serve God as priests (Exodus chapter 29). In chapter 32, Aaron fell into temptation when Moses went up on Mount Sinai to receive the Commandments. Since Moses was taking a long time, the people grew restless and asked Aaron to make them a golden idol in the form of a calf so that they could offer sacrifices. He gave into them, and Moses was angry when he returned and saw them dancing and singing before the calf. He threw down the tablets on which God had written the Ten Commandments, and then he burned the golden calf and ground it to powder. He scattered the powder on the water, and he made the people drink it. When Moses asked those who were on the Lord's side to gather around him, the Levites came to him. He ordered them to take their swords and slay their sons, companions, and neighbors. About three thousand people were killed that day.

Later, Aaron and Miriam criticized Moses for marrying a Cushite woman (Num. 12:1). God was angry with them, so He punished Miriam with leprosy. She was healed by God seven days after Moses interceded for her.

In chapter 17 of Numbers, the people murmured against Moses and Aaron, so God commanded that the leaders of the twelve tribes should have their names inscribed on their rods and placed in the tent of testimony. God would reveal His choice to make the people cease their grumbling against Moses and his brother. Aaron's rod bloomed miraculously in the tent of the testimony, to show that he had been chosen for this purpose.

Aaron reposed atop Mount Hor when he was one hundred and twenty-three years old. One of his descendants was Saint Elizabeth, the mother of Saint John the Baptist (Luke 1:5).

EPISTLE & GOSPEL READINGS

Epistle: Colossians 3:4-11

When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them. But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

Gospel: Luke 14:16-24

Then He said to him, "A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.' But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.' Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.' And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.' Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. 'For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.'"

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK, CAREGIVERS, AND DECEASED

Dates are when the name was added to the bulletin; names will remain in four bulletins and then removed. To add the name again, please email Darice at daricekeyes@gmail.com.

For the Sick / Caregiver

Liam (11/26)	Carmin (12/10)
Kelly (11/26)	Marianne (12/10)
Ted (11/26)	Lynne (12/10)
Kathleen (11/26)	Bill (12/10)
Nicole (11/26)	Bill (12/17)
Dorothy (11/26)	Margaret (12/17)
Phyllis (11/26)	Subdeacon Serge (12/17)
Vera (12/3)	Melody (12/17)
Nancy (12/3)	Michael (12/17)
Archpriest Paul (12/3)	Charlotte (12/17)
Matushka Mary (12/3)	Natasha (12/17)
Alexandra (12/3)	Michael (12/17)

For the Deceased

Eileen (11/26)
Mary (11/26)
Theodore (11/26)
Michael (11/26)
Lenore (11/26)
Gloria (12/3)
Demian (12/10)
Eva (12/10)
Anna (12/10)
John (12/10)

SERVICES

Service Schedule for the week of December 17

Sunday December 17 – 9:45 AM Hours; 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy followed by veneration and anointing; then Coffee Hour in Daria Hall

Saturday December 23 – 5:00 PM Vespers followed by Confession

Sunday December 24 – 9:45 AM Hours; 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy followed by Coffee Hour in Daria Hall.
5:30 PM Christmas Eve Supper (potluck Lenten) in Daria Hall followed by Great Compline with Litya at 7:00 PM. ***A sign-up sheet for the Supper is on the table in the back of the church.***

Monday December 25 – NATIVITY 9:45 AM Hours, 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy

Upcoming Service Schedule for 2023/2024

Tuesday December 26 – SYNAXIS OF THE HOLY THEOTOKOS 9:30 Divine Liturgy

Saturday December 30 – 5:00 PM Vespers followed by Confession

Sunday December 31 – FEAST OF THE CIRCUMCISION 9:45 AM Hours; 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy followed by Coffee Hour in Daria Hall; 5:00 PM Vespers with Litya followed by Confession

Monday January 1 – FEAST OF THE CIRCUMCISION 9:45 AM Hours; 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy

Friday January 5 – FEAST OF THE THEOPHANY 7:00 PM Great Compline with Litya

Saturday January 6 – FEAST OF THE THEOPHANY 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy followed by Great Blessing of Water; 5:00 PM Vespers followed by Confession

Sunday January 7 – SYNAXIS OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST 9:45 AM Hours; 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy

DONATIONS

Weekly Giving

December 10 – 67 adults, 21 youth, \$3,594

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Ladies Altar Society is selling raffle tickets today as follows:

Christmas Wreath - Tickets are \$2.00 each or 3 for \$5.00

Large tray of homemade cookies – Tickets are \$2.00 each

Winners will be announced today during Coffee Hour. Thank you for your support!

Christmas items are for sale in Daria Hall to support the Sunday School. Please stop and shop!

A sign-up sheet for Christmas Eve Supper is on the table across from the candle desk. Please sign up if you will be attending, and what Lenten dish you will bring to share with approx. 30-35 people.

Your donations are needed to sustain Coffee Hour. Donations are used to purchase kitchen cleaning supplies, paper products including paper towels, toilet paper, paper plates and bowls, coffee cups, juice cups, coffee, tea, coffee pot filters, plastic storage bags, trash bags, plastic wrap, plastic cutlery, sugar, juice, peanut butter, jelly, coffee creamers, water bottles, water for coffee and tea, etc. As you know, everything has gone up in cost but unfortunately our donations are severely down. The Coffee Hour hosts donate the refreshments, but money is needed to offset the cost of all the supplies. Please remember to put your donation in the basket on the food table every week. Thank you!

Coffee Hour Support Persons are needed. If you would like to volunteer to assist once or twice a month, please see Alla Strauss, Melody Stavisky, or Father Volodymyr. We encourage everyone to get involved in this weekly parish event.

It is important to partake of the sacraments of Confession and Holy Communion prior to our Lord's Nativity. Confessions are heard every Saturday after Vespers. Please contact Father Volodymyr if you need to schedule a particular time.

New items for sale at the bookstore in Daria Hall include incense, charcoal, votive candles, wicks & floaters, and additional books. Check it out – just in time for Christmas gift giving!

The FOCA Club will have a Chili Cook-off Fundraiser before the Annual Parish Meeting on Sunday January 28. There will be two categories – Mild and Hot. Sample cups will be sold for \$1 each; cups will be numbered so the chili can be voted on for Best Mild Chili and Best Hot Chili! The winners will receive a gift card. If you would like to volunteer to make a pot of chili, please see Nina Laushell or Herman Meyer by January 14 to register your name.

There will be five openings for the Parish Council in 2024. Voting will take place at our Annual Parish Meeting, which will be held on Sunday January 28, 2024. If you are interested in running for Parish Council, please speak with Father Volodymyr before the end of the year.

A Parish "Directory" with photos and identifying names of all parishioners is in the works. This will help us all with "putting a face to the name"! When you are at Daria Hall for Coffee Hour, please see Awet Tesfa to get your picture taken. ***It is important to get your picture taken soon!***

The Ladies Altar Society is creating and publishing the first Parish Cookbook – with your help! We are interested in your favorite recipes, ethnic recipes, recipes from your grandparents, parents, children, relatives and friends, and Lenten recipes. They can include Appetizers, Main Meals, Side Dishes, Soup, Salad, Dessert, and Beverages. In addition to recipes, the Cookbook will include a Helpful Hints section. In order for the Cookbook to be a success, we will need many recipes! Each recipe should include your name, who you may have received the recipe from, and your phone number (phone number is only if we have questions and will not be published in the Cookbook). Please give your recipes to Alla Strauss, Melody Stavisky, or Nancy Mitsos. Thank you!

BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK

Jennifer Cassar – December 20

Have a blessed birthday and may God grant you many years!

COFFEE HOUR

Hosts are responsible for providing and setting up the refreshments in Daria Hall at 9:00 AM and after Holy Communion, cleaning up after Coffee Hour including washing, drying and putting away dishes, taking out the trash, and cleaning up the Coffee Room including turning off and cleaning the coffee and tea pots. Hosts will be informed in advance if cream cheese, butter, or milk is needed. If you have any questions, please contact Melody Stavisky or Alla Strauss.

SUGGESTED MENU:

Bagels / Breads

Donuts / Pastries

Fruit

Salads

Tortilla chips & Salsa

Hummus

Sugar-free dessert

Oreos (non-dairy)

NOTE: Hosts may provide a luncheon for a specific event or holiday (panikhida, birthday, anniversary, holiday) with advance notice. The hosts will be responsible for all food preparation for such a luncheon.

- Dec. 17 **FAST** Paula & Ludwig Koerte, Melody Stavisky
Dec. 24 **FAST** Father Volodymyr & Matushka Oksana, Darice Keyes
Dec. 31 Nebiat Tesfa, Luwam Tesfa
Jan. 7 Father Volodymyr (birthday celebration)
Jan. 14 James & Monia Pitra, Valeria & Timothy Srock
Jan. 21 Olga & James Bates, Walter & Tanya Tribbey
Jan. 28 **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING** - Bill & Margie DiCicco, Chris Kasmer
Feb. 4 Aftan Chowansky, Matthew & Nana Barrett
Feb. 11 Eleni & Tom Sowanick, Sami Bachir
Feb. 18 Nour Ragab, Tyler Burger
Feb. 25 Mihaela & Tiberiu Milosav, Matthew & Kris Bohush
Mar. 3 Karina Kotelnicki, Gabriela Plesa
Mar. 10 Blake & Jessica Kilgore, Alex & Rebeca Medina
Mar. 17 **NO MEAT** Fiyori Habtesilasse, Gebrekvistas Amleset
Mar. 24 **FAST** Christine Waite, Alla & Perry Strauss
Mar. 31 **FAST** Svetlana Sosedov, Guy Radcliffe
Apr. 7 **FAST** Germain & Tahara Ortiz, Vera Pschenyczny
Apr. 14 **FAST** Corneliu & Florica Balasa, Viktoryia Baranava
Apr. 21 **FAST** Alan & Mimi Berck, Paul & Patti Denko
Apr. 28 **FAST** Alex & Brittani Brasowski, Anna & Leon Brasowski
May 5 **PASCHA – NO COFFEE HOUR**
May 12 Nina Schmidt, Alla & Perry Strauss
May 19 Carmen & Cezar Mateiescu, Anne Cheslock