



St. Vladimir Orthodox Church

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Sunday before the Nativity December 23, 2018

Troparion – Tone 5

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, born for our salvation from the Virgin; for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, to endure death, and to raise the dead// by His glorious Resurrection.

Troparion – Tone 2

Great are the accomplishments of faith, for the three Holy Youths rejoice in the fountain of flames as though in the waters of rest; and the Prophet Daniel appeared a shepherd to the lions as though they were sheep.// So by their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls!

Troparion – Tone 4

Prepare, O Bethlehem, for Eden has been opened to all! Adorn yourself, O Ephratha, for the Tree of Life blossoms forth from the Virgin in the cave! Her womb is a spiritual paradise planted with the Divine Fruit; if we eat of it, we shall live forever and not die like Adam.// Christ comes to restore the image which He made in the beginning.

Kontakion – Tone 5

You descended into hell, O my Savior, shattering its gates as Almighty, resurrecting the dead as Creator, and destroying the sting of death. You have delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of Man,// and we cry to You: “O Lord, save us!”

Kontakion – Tone 1

Rejoice, O Bethlehem! Prepare yourself, O Ephratha! The Lamb is on her way to give birth to the Chief Shepherd she carries in her womb. The God-bearing Forefathers will rejoice, beholding Him, and with the shepherds, they will glorify the Virgin nursing Him.

Kontakion – Tone 3

Today the Virgin comes to the cave to give birth to the Eternal Word. Hear the glad tidings and rejoice, O universe! Glorify with the Angels and the shepherds the Eternal God, Who is willing to appear as a little child!

Prokeimenon – Tone 4

Blessed are You, O Lord God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Your name forever!

v: For You are just in all that You have done to us.

Sunday before the Nativity

The Sunday before the Nativity of the Lord (December 18-24) is known as the Sunday of the Holy Fathers. On this day the Church commemorates all those who were well-pleasing to God from all ages, from Adam to Saint Joseph the Betrothed of the Most Holy Theotokos, those who are mentioned in the genealogy of Luke 3:23-38. The holy prophets and prophetesses are also remembered today, especially the Prophet Daniel and the three holy youths (December 17).

The Troparion to the Prophet Daniel and the three holy youths ("Great are the accomplishments of faith...") is quite similar to the Troparion for Saint Theodore the Recruit (February 17, and the first Saturday of Great Lent). The Kontakion to Saint Theodore, who suffered martyrdom by fire, reminds us that he also had faith as his breastplate (see I Thessalonians 5:8).

Epistle: Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40

By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense. By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff. By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones. By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command. And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented – of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

Gospel: Matthew 1:1-25

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham: Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brothers. Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Ram. Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon. Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David the king. David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah. Solomon begot Rehoboam, Rehoboam begot Abijah, and Abijah begot Asa. Asa begot Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat begot Joram, and Joram begot Uzziah. Uzziah begot Jotham, Jotham begot Ahaz, and Ahaz begot Hezekiah. Hezekiah begot Manasseh, Manasseh begot Amon, and Amon begot Josiah. Josiah begot Jeconiah and his brothers about the time they were carried away to Babylon. And after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, and Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel begot Abiud, Abiud begot Eliakim, and Eliakim begot Azor. Azor begot Zadok, Zadok begot Achim, and Achim begot Eliud. Eliud begot Eleazar, Eleazar begot Matthan, and Matthan begot Jacob. And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, from David until the captivity in Babylon are fourteen generations, and from the captivity in Babylon until the Christ are fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins." So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which is translated, 'God with us.'" Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.

Service Schedule for the week of December 23

Today – 9:00 AM Sunday School, 9:45 AM Hours, 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy followed by Coffee Hour in Daria Hall

Monday December 24 – 5:00 PM Christmas Eve Supper (Daria Hall), 7:00 PM Great Compline with Matins

Tuesday December 25 – **NATIVITY** 9:45 Hours, 10:00 Divine Liturgy

Wednesday December 26 – **SYNAXIS OF THE HOLY THEOTOKOS** 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

Saturday December 29 – 5:00 PM Vespers followed by Confession

Sunday December 30 – 9:00 AM Sunday School, 9:45 AM Hours, 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy followed by Coffee Hour in Daria Hall

Holy Day Service Schedule

Tuesday January 1 – FEAST OF THE CIRCUMCISION 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

Saturday January 5 – THEOPHANY 5:00 PM Vigil

Sunday January 6 – THEOPHANY 9:00 AM Sunday School, 9:45 AM Hours, 10:00 Divine Liturgy and
Blessing of Water

Monday January 7 – ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

Weekly Giving

December 16 – 59 adults, 30 youth, \$4,465

Parish Announcements

The Sunday School children presented a very joyful Christmas Yolka last Sunday. They worked very hard studying their parts. Thank you again to Melody Stavisky and Herman Meyer for the costumes, time, and rehearsals with the children, and Daria for leading the children in song. We are very fortunate to have so many children in our parish once again, and we look forward to next year's Yolka! We also thank Father Paul for the many years of Saturday afternoon rehearsals and Christmas Yolkas he had with the parish children during his 50 years as our Parish Priest; we are blessed to have the tradition continue!

Bible Study classes will be held on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month at 7:00 PM in the church basement. The next classes will be held on Wednesday December 26 and Wednesday January 9. All are welcome to attend!

A sign-up sheet is on the table in the back of the church for Christmas Eve Supper, which will be held tomorrow, Monday December 24 at 5:00 PM before services. Please sign up if you will attend and what Lenten dish you will bring to share with everyone.

There has been debris collecting along the fences in our cemeteries. Please remember to take your trash with you after visiting the cemetery as we do not have trash collection available.

Please sign up to host coffee hour during 2019. See Melody Stavisky or Michael Toth.

We look forward to having everyone attend church services on Christmas Eve and Christmas morning to celebrate the Nativity of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. If you have not yet had Confession please contact Father Volodymyr to schedule a time.

We are happy to announce that the handicap lift is finally finished and we are awaiting the final inspection and approval from the City. Once that happens the lift will be operational for those who need assistance getting into the church. We thank everyone for their donations, and especially those who helped plan the project so we could finally move forward. Fortunately there is very little change in appearance both inside and outside of the church. Since the church basement is accessible with use of the lift, new handicap toilets have been installed in both the mens and ladies rest rooms.