

St. Mary Protection of the Theotokos Parish

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GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST!

GLORY FOREVER!

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СЛАВА ІСУСУ ХРИСТУ!

СЛАВА НАВІКІ!



In Defense of the Rituals of Christmas.

Ritual is part of what allows us to live well. Not just the intentionally constructed rituals of liturgies and parades, but the accumulated hodgepodge of habits that pile up in random but repeatable mounds around every holiday. ...

Some people object when things that were created outside the formal historical channels of Orthodoxy are allowed in. I have friends that are tempted into hissy-fits that an Orthodox priest has such things as an Advent wreath and Nativity creche in his home. The temptations grow when they learn that we, members of an “Old Calendar” parish, celebrate Christmas twice; singing carols and opening our presents and stockings on 12/25 and then pulling out all the liturgical stops 13 days later on 1/7.

God has a certain gravity. One of my high school science teachers told us that any metal object we lost would eventually find its way to the magnetic North Pole. I imagined explorers on dog-sleds coming upon a huge pile of watches, bolts, matchbox cars, and pocket knives. All of creation emanated from and is sustained by the mind of the Creator. We have perverted many things, but He is drawing it all back towards Himself for the great re-making. All of these rituals are piling up around Him like offerings at an altar.

My youngest daughter has a game she likes to play: it’s the “bring all my favorite toys to daddy because I love him” game. After about fifteen minutes of this, my lap and all the couch around me are covered with dolls, books, and various other treasures. There’s no real rhyme to the arrangement... only the guiding logic of the game. I don’t need any of these things – and I usually end up putting most of them away myself. But I sure do love to play that game. I have no doubt that I love it even more than my daughter does.

No one would intentionally combine the rituals that guide our families through this Nativity season; no one would think of making the yule tree an essential element in (almost) every Christian home; but this is the glory of a timeless God who works to perfect His people through time.

(excerpted from goodguyswearblack.org)

Christmas & Theophany Worship Schedule

Sunday	12/25	9:00AM	Divine Liturgy, Coffee Hour
Saturday	12/31	4:00PM	Cathedral Vigil of the Saturday before Nativity
Sunday	1/1	9:00AM	Divine Liturgy, Coffee Hour, Greening of the Sanctuary
Friday	1/6	9:00AM 10:30AM 8:00PM	Royal Hours of Nativity (Church) Vesperal Liturgy of Nativity (Church) Great Compline of the Nativity w/Litya (Church)
Saturday	1/7	9:00AM 4:00PM	Divine Liturgy of the NATIVITY (Church) Cathedral Vigil (Chapel)
Sunday	1/8	9:00AM	Divine Liturgy, Coffee Hour
Friday	1/13	4:00PM	Cathedral Vigil - St.Basil & Circumcision (Chapel)
Saturday	1/14	9:00AM 4:00PM	Divine Liturgy - St.Basil & Circumcision (Chapel) Cathedral Vigil of the Sunday Between (Chapel)
Sunday	1/15	9:00AM	Divine Liturgy - Sunday Between, Coffee Hour
Friday	1/18	9:00AM 10:30AM 7:00PM	Royal Hours of Theophany (Church) Vesperal Liturgy of Theophany (Church) Great Compline of the Theophany w/Litya and Blessing of Water (Church)
Saturday	1/19	10:00AM 4:00PM	Divine Liturgy of THEOPHANY (Church) Cathedral Vigil (Chapel)
Sunday	1/20	9:00AM	Divine Liturgy, Coffee Hour

Check our website for the full listing of services & activities!!

Adult Education

Sunday (11AM). We will resume our “Spiritually Speaking” series after Theophany Nativity.

Wednesday (7PM). Bible Study. This week will continue the story of Moses and the Israelites, focusing on the plagues and the parting of the Red Sea.



Welcome to the God-loving and God-protected Orthodox Christian parish of *Pokrova* (“St. Mary Protection of the Holy Theotokos” or “St. Mary’s”)!

It is a blessing to have you with us today and we encourage you to come back as often as you are able. Like us, you may find that you have found your spiritual home here (and a wonderful home, it is)!

We are a parish of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA under the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople and our doors and hearts are open to you, your family, and your friends!

December 25th; Sunday of the Forefathers

The Order of Worship

(A more complete version is found in the black prayer book in the pews)

Blessed is the Kingdom Amen. Heaven and earth are joined in praise of God.

Great Litany. Prayers of supplication to God w/ refrain “Lord have mercy!”

Psalm 102. The Psalms are the greatest hymns of the Church. It is followed by a Small Litany (“Again and again...”).

Psalm 145 & “Only Begotten Son”. This psalm and song remind us why we are here. It is followed by a Small Litany (“Again and again...”)

The Beatitudes. The wisdom of the Logos offered in song – beautiful consolation. We take on the virtues of and in Christ to become “blessed.”

The Little Entrance/Gospel Entrance. This symbolizes Christ coming from heaven into the world. We can kiss the Gospel (an icon of “The Word”) in celebration saying; “Christ is in our midst” “He is and shall be!” “*Khristos Posered Nas*” “*I Ye I Budet*”

Hymns for Today. As with all the music, everyone is encouraged to sing along!

Tone 2 Tropar (*Resurrection*)

When You descended to death, O Life Immortal, / You destroyed hell with the splendor of Your Godhead. / And when from the depths You raised the dead, / all the powers of heaven cried out: // “O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to You!”

Tone 2 Tropar (*Forefathers*)

Through faith You justified 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 You without seed. // So by their prayers, O Christ God, have mercy on us! O greatly compassionate One, glory to You!

Tone 4 Tropar (*Pokrova*)

O Mother of God, sheltered by thy coming / we faithful people today keep feast in joy, / and looking at thy most pure image, / moved to the depths of our hearts, we say: / “Protect us with thy precious veil / and deliver us from every ill, // by entreating Christ, thy Son and our God, to save our souls.

Tone 6 Kondak (*Forefathers*)

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 You are merciful and able to do as You will!”

Tone 2 Kondak (*Parish Patron/Pokrova*)

The Choirs of Saints and the Virgin / stand in church praying to God for us. / Angels and hierarchs bow in adoration, / Apostles and Prophets all rejoice / in thee, O Mother of God, // who for us prays to God Eternal.

Trisagion: We join the angels in proclaiming God’s glory (Holy God, Holy Immortal...)

Prokimen **Tone 4** (*Song of the Fathers*)

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 for us!

Epistle: Colossians 3:4-11 (*Forefathers*)

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

v: Moses and Aaron were among His priests; Samuel also was among those who called on His Name. (Ps 99/100:6)

v: They called to the Lord and He answered them. (Ps 99/100:6)

Gospel: Luke 14:16-24. (*Forefathers*). Children are encouraged to come up front; “Let the little children come unto me.” (Matthew 19:14)

Litanies for the Faithful and for the Catachumens. Catachumens are Christians preparing to enter into the Mysteries of the Orthodox Church.

Cherubic Hymn. This song reminds us that we must “put aside all earthly cares” so that we can join the angels in worshiping God in fullness and in truth.

The Great Entrance. The priest brings out the bread and wine that will become the Body and Blood of Christ. The ritual reminds us of Palm Sunday... and the Passion of Christ. The children are welcome and encouraged to line the aisle.

Commemoration of the Last Supper and Consecration of the Gifts. This is when the Holy Spirit comes down and changes the gifts. Ukrainian Orthodox often kneel during this part of the liturgy, but standing is also welcome.

Hymn to the Birthgiver of God, Mary. We praise her among the saints because God became incarnate through her; she is the mother of our salvation!

Litany of Preparation. Lord’s Prayer. Please join us as pray together using the words Jesus the Messiah taught us during His earthly ministry.

“Holy Things for the Holy”. We enter into the greatest Mystery of Communion.

Communion of the Faithful. Communion is reserved for those who are members of an Orthodox parish and have prepared themselves through prayer, fasting, and regular confession. All are invited to join this parish and commune with us! See Fr. Anthony if you would like to learn more.

Post-Communion Prayers, Dismissal & Distribution of the Antidoron. At this point everyone is invited forward to kiss the cross and receive the blessed bread cut from the Eucharistic loaf before the service.

Parish News and Events

We will have a Kitchen Session on Saturday 1/28!

The **Grief Support Group** is offering everyone who is grieving the loss of a loved one special one-session classes on “Surviving the Holidays”! Christmas brings a special kind of stress to the lives of the heartbroken. The Final Date is 12/27. The next 13 week session starts on 1/10.

Please plan to attend our special St. Mary's “Holy Supper” on 1/6 in the parish hall before Great Compline. See Chris Z. for details (and if you want to request or sign-up for a dish – although both are optional). **All are invited!!!**

Members of St. Mary's have been invited to join **St. Elizabeth's Credit Union** in Northampton. If you are interested, see Fr. Anthony for more information and a letter confirming your membership.

Our **Ukrainian Dance Group** meets on Wednesday evenings from 6:30-8:00PM.



Reading and Greeter Schedule

Date	Epistle Schedule	Greeters
12/25	Nik Fartuch	Eleanor Fox
1/1	Reader Nicholas	Judy Miller & Vera Muzychka
1/8	Reader James	Richard Rosko
1/15	John Sokalsky	Eleanor Fox
1/22	Robert Noecker	Judy Miller & Vera Muzychka
1/29	Alex Mackiewicz	Richard Rosko
2/5	Richard Bodner	Eleanor Fox
2/12	Robin Bodner	Judy Miller & Vera Muzychka

Please let Fr. Anthony know if you will not be able to greet/read and cannot find a replacement. Also let him know if you would like to be added to the schedule!

Today's Scripture Readings

Epistle: Colossians 3:4-11 (NKJV)

4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

5 Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. 6 Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, 7 in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

8 But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, 10 and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, 11 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 (NKJV)

16 Then He said to him, “A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, 17 and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, ‘Come, for all things are now ready.’ 18 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.’ 19 And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.’ 20 Still another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’ 21 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.’ 22 And the servant said, ‘Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.’ 23 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. 24 For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.’”

THOSE MAKING EXCUSES. ST CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA:

“They began,” it says, “all of them at once to make excuse,” that is, as with one purpose, without any delay, they made excuse... By senselessly giving themselves up to these earthly matters, they cannot see things spiritual. Conquered by the love of the flesh, they are far from holiness. They are covetous and greedy after wealth. They seek things that are below but make no account in the slightest degree of the hopes that are stored up with God. It would be far better to gain the joys of paradise instead of earthly fields and temporary furrows.

Just, A. A. (Ed.). (2005). Luke (p. 237). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.