

The Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary

The Most Holy Virgin Mary was born at a time when people had reached such a degree of moral decay that it seemed altogether impossible to restore them. People often said that God must come into the world to restore faith and not permit the ruin of mankind.

The Son of God chose to take on human nature for the salvation of mankind, and chose as His Mother the All-Pure Virgin Mary, who alone was worthy to give birth to the Source of purity and holiness.

The Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary is celebrated by the Church as a day of universal joy. Within the context of the Old and the New Testaments, the Most Blessed Virgin Mary was born on this radiant day, having been chosen before the ages by Divine Providence to bring about the Mystery of the Incarnation of the Word of God. She is revealed as the Mother of the Savior of the World, Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Most Holy Virgin Mary was born in the small city of Galilee, Nazareth. Her parents were Righteous Joachim of the tribe of the Prophet-King David, and Anna from the tribe of the First Priest Aaron. The couple was without child, since Saint Anna was barren.

Having reached old age, Joachim and Anna did not lose hope in God's mercy. They had strong faith that for God everything is possible, and that He would be able to overcome the barrenness of Anna even in her old age, as He had once overcome the barrenness of Sarah, spouse of the Patriarch Abraham. Saints Joachim and Anna vowed to dedicate the child which the Lord might give them, to the service of God in the Temple.

Childlessness was considered among the Hebrew nation as a Divine punishment for sin, and therefore the righteous Saints Joachim and Anna had to endure abuse from their own countrymen. On one of the feasts at the Temple in Jerusalem the elderly Joachim brought his sacrifice to offer to God, but the High Priest would not accept it, considering him to be unworthy since he was childless.

Saint Joachim in deep grief went into the wilderness, and there he prayed with tears to the Lord for a child. Saint Anna wept bitterly when she learned what had happened at the Jerusalem Temple. Never once did she complain against the Lord, but rather she prayed to ask God's mercy on her family.

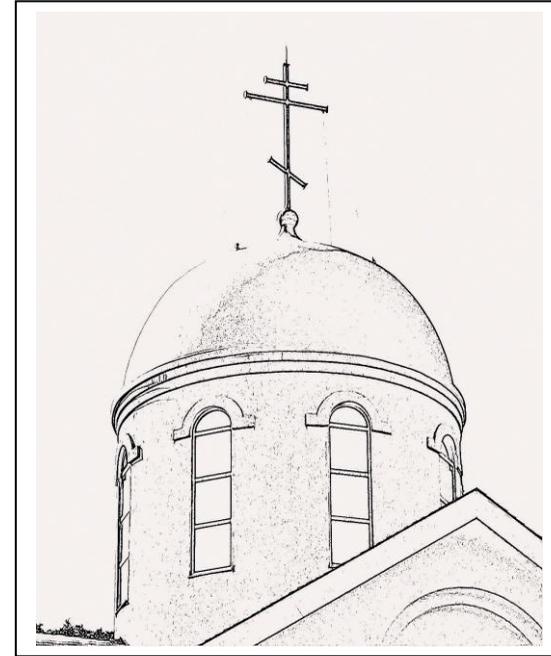
The Lord fulfilled her petitions when the pious couple had attained to extreme old age and prepared themselves by virtuous life for a sublime calling: to be the parents of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, the future Mother of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Archangel Gabriel brought Joachim and Anna the joyous message that their prayers were heard by God, and of them would be born a most blessed daughter Mary, through Whom would come the Salvation of all the World.

The Most Holy Virgin Mary surpassed in purity and virtue not only all mankind, but also the angels. She was manifest as the living Temple of God, so the Church sings in its festal hymns: "the East Gate... bringing Christ into the world for the salvation of our souls" (2nd Stikhera on "Lord, I Have Cried", Tone 6).

The Nativity of the Theotokos marks the change of the times when the great and comforting promises of God for the salvation of the human race from slavery to the devil are about to be fulfilled. This event has brought to earth the grace of the Kingdom of God, a Kingdom of Truth, piety, virtue and everlasting life. The Theotokos is revealed to all of us by grace as a merciful Intercessor and Mother, to Whom we have recourse with filial devotion.

WEEKLY



BULLETIN

Today is the beginning of our salvation, the revelation of the eternal mystery. The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin as Gabriel announces the coming of Grace. Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos: Rejoice O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you!

Troparion of the Annunciation to the Theotokos

ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION

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Rev. Fr. Alexander Smida, *Attached Priest*

Tara Paxton, *Senior Warden*

Matthew Hascha, *Choir Director*

September 8, 2019

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Nativity of the Most-holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary

Tone 3. Sunday before Elevation of the Cross. Icons of the Most-holy Theotokos: "KURSK-ROOT" Icon of the Sign (1259), "POCHAEV" (1559), "KHOLMSK", and others.

Today's Readings:

Epistle: Philippians 2:5-11, Galatians 6:11-18 and 1 Cor. 15:1-11

Gospel: Luke 10:38-42, 11:27-28, John 3:13-17 and Matthew 19:16-26

Upcoming Service Schedule:

Today – 9:00am Divine Liturgy

Friday – 7:00pm Great Vespers w/Litya (Cross)

Saturday – 9:30am Hierarchical Divine Liturgy (Cross)

Saturday – 6:15pm Panikhida

Saturday - 7:00pm Great Vespers

Sunday – 9:00am Divine Liturgy

Next Sunday's Readings:

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 16:13-24 and Galatians 2:16-20

Gospel: Matthew 21:33-42 and Mark 8:34-9:1



Nativity of the Most-holy Theotokos

Coffee Hour Teams:

Today – TEAM B (Nilsen, Christos)

Next Sunday – TEAM C (Diaz, Price)

Keep up on OCA news by visiting www.oca.org, diocesan news by visiting www.nynjoca.org, and parish news by visiting www.occa-brick.org.

Please pray for vocations to the Holy Priesthood!

We are happy that you have joined us for worship today and hope that you will join us for coffee hour after the service. Please note that **reception of the Holy Eucharist** is only for baptized members of the Orthodox Church who have prepared with prayer, fasting, and periodic confession. You are encouraged to receive the blessed bread that is offered at the end of the service and which may also be offered to you by one of your neighbors during Communion.

Special Prayers

We pray for **all** our parish family members, but we pray especially for those who are ill and afflicted. Among them are: **Betty James, Olga Kornafel, Deryl Tczap, Reader John Economou, Meni Mari, Matushka Cathy Smida, Tom Collins, Tom Kopec, Alan Diaz, Cathy Diaz, Ann Marie Gahr, Dennis Gahr, Ron Madensky, Dorothy Studier, Helen Ciurczak, Pauline Barnowsky, Elba Cinciarelli, and Catherine Ratushnik.**

Annunciations

TODAY is the Great Feast of the **Nativity of the Most-holy Theotokos and Ever-virgin Mary.**

TODAY – Our **Church School** year begins. Classes will take place after Coffee Hour. We will be asking parents to officially register their children into the program. **Forms are available today** for this purpose.

Friday, September 13 – **Great Vespers** will be served at 7:00pm for the **Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross.** Archbishop Michael will be present for the service.

Saturday, September 14 – Reader Veljko Pejovic will be ordained here to the Holy Diaconate during the **Hierarchical Divine Liturgy** for the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross. **Matthew Hascha and Andrew Bair** will be tonsured as Readers during the service. A light **lenten (this is a strict fast day) luncheon** will follow. All are invited!

Saturday, September 14 – A **Panikhida** will be served at 6:15pm to commemorate the falling asleep of: +David Pasick, +Alexandra Kulinyi, and +James Patrick Martin.

Sunday, September 29 – The **Annual Parish Ethnic Fair and Gift Auction** will take place on the grounds of the church from noon until 6pm.

- **Monetary donations** are being accepted to cover the costs of food and other related items. A **donation sign-up sheet** is located in the narthex.
- **Donations towards the Gift Auction** (gift cards, cash, gift basket items) are gratefully being accepted. Please speak with Olga Pasick or Cathy Berger for more information.
- **Event flyers** are available in the narthex (and on the parish website) for distribution to friends, local businesses, etc. Please let friends and family know about the event.

MEMORY ETERNAL – His Eminence, the Most Reverend **Nikon**, Archbishop of Boston and the Diocese of New England, fell asleep in the Lord this past Sunday. May his soul dwell with the blessed!

MANY YEARS

Birthdays this week:

Monday – Linda Washenko

Friday – Ann Marie Gahr

Wedding Anniversaries this week:

Today – Charlie & Joanne Bass (#19)

Monday – Brian & Marie Price (#52)

Tuesday – Mary Breton & Ben Horne (#2)

Thursday – George & Carole Stavrou (#51)

Thursday – Alan & Elaine D'Alessandro (#38)

OUTREACH

- **Food Pantry donations** are *always* accepted. Place non-perishable food items in blue bin in the narthex
- **Clothing donations** are accepted on the last Sunday of each month. Place donations next to the food pantry bin.