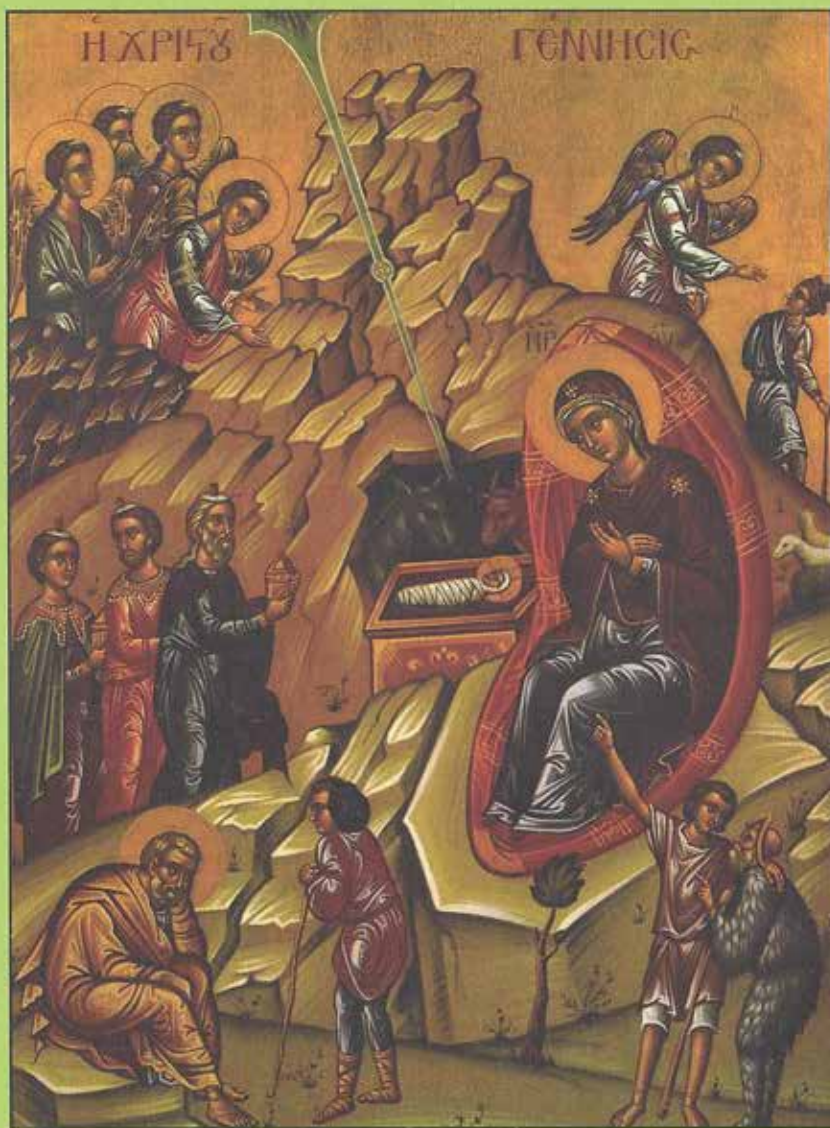


SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS



*Icon of the Nativity of Our Lord*

## Dec. 24, 2017: Sunday Before Christmas

Epistle: Heb. 11: 9-10 & 32-40

Gospel: Mt. 1: 1-25

**Sun., Dec. 24**

**Christmas Eve**

9:00 + Patrick & Mary Marcinko (Family)

11:30 For Our Parishioner

10:00 pm Divine Liturgy for Christmas

*N.B. Both the 9:00 am and the 11:30 am Divine Liturgies fulfill your Sunday Obligation. The 10:00 pm Divine Liturgy fulfills your Christmas Obligation.*

**Mon., Dec. 25**

**Nativity of Our Lord: Christmas Day**

9:00 Christmas Divine Liturgy: For Our Parishioners

11:30 Christmas Divine Liturgy: For Vocations

**Tues., Dec. 26**

**Synaxis of the Theotokos (Solemn Holy Day)**

9:00 + Howard & Olga Smith (Son Howard)

**Wed., Dec. 27**

**Feast of St. Stephen (Simple Holy Day)**

9:00 + Msgr. Stephen Hrynuck (Legate)

**Thurs., Dec. 28**

8:00 + Debra Altier (Dorothy Loden)

**Fri., Dec. 29**

8:00 + Uncle Bill Cron (Gawron Family)

**Sat., Dec. 30**

**No Morning Divine Liturgy**

10:30 Confessions

2:00 pm Confessions

4:00 pm + Betty Ann Tallo (Sister, Marian Kanuik)

**Sun., Dec. 31**

9:00 For Our Parishioners

11:30 + John & Olga Yuhnick & Jimmy Maslar (Family)



## **Christ Is Born! Glorify Him! Christos Razhdayetsia! Slavite Yeho!**

Another Christmas is here. Let us reflect on the true meaning of this celebration. We will receive gifts, many will receive more than others. But we will receive one gift equally. That is the gift of the Incarnate God. Let us acknowledge this unique gift by participating in as many of the special Christmas Services as possible and remembering the real reason for the season, and to pray for Peace

on Earth!

May the Incarnate Christ, be with each and everyone of you during this holiday season and throughout the year 2018. My prayers for your continued health and happiness.

Christ is Born! -- Glorify Him!  
Christos Razhdayetsia! Slavite Yeho!

*Father Nestor*

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## **Properly Receiving Holy Communion**

When approaching to receive Holy Communion, do not be afraid to approach the Priest. Father's arms are only so long and when you stand too far away, it is difficult to distribute Holy Communion.

We also remind everyone to tilt your head back and open your mouth WIDE. Please keep your tongue in your mouth. Please do not bite down on the communion spoon. There is no need to say anything since the

priest says the prayer. There is no need to say AMEN as is done in the Roman Catholic Church.

Now finally, a little about the red Communion Cloth. Sometimes the Altar Servers hold it; sometimes Father holds it. When the Altar Servers hold, simply approach (i.e., come close to the Priest). If Father is holding it, simply lift it up to your chin. The purpose of the Communion Cloth is to help prevent accidents.

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## **It's Okay to Say "Merry Christmas"**

Every Christmas, anti-Christian groups such as the American

Civil Liberties Union, the American Communist Party, various Islamic

# Merry Christmas



groups and Atheist groups sue some city for erecting a nativity scene on public property. Likewise, fearing they may be perceived as politically incorrect, a handful of retailers replace the word “Christmas” with “Holiday” in their marketing.

It may seem like a small issue, but these things are significant because they diminish the importance of the Christian foundations of our society.

Our ideas of justice, mercy, liberty and love for our fellow man are deeply rooted in the Traditions of the Apostolic Church which in-

cludes the Bible, particularly in the life, death and resurrection of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ. That’s why America has been a light among the nations in the world.

Like the angel who appeared to the shepherds saying: “I bring you good news of great joy,” we Christians have a story to tell about the blessings of honoring the true God. Telling the story can start with simply not patronizing stores that use “Happy Holidays” instead of “Merry Christmas” and by reminding those who say “Happy Holidays” that “It’s okay to say Merry Christmas.”

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## Trees And Poinsettias

The Christmas tree tradition was started in Germany in the late 1400s. At that time a popular theatrical performance, the Paradise Play, depicted the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise and was represented by a fir tree hung with apples. Soon

the tree was placed in the homes of Christians, who interpreted it as a symbol of the coming Savior. The apples were replaced with small white wafers representing the Holy Eucharist or Communion. Later the wafers were replaced by pieces of

pastry cut into shapes of stars, angels, hearts, flowers and bells.

Pennsylvania Germans claim to have brought the Christmas tree custom to America. The first Christmas tree is recorded under the date December 20, 1821, in the diary of a Matthew Zahm of Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The first known exhibition of a Christmas tree was held in York, Pennsylvania, in 1830. Early trees were decorated with fruits, nuts, popcorn, toys and candles. Today more than 80 percent of American families buy and decorate a tree at Christmas.

The tradition of poinsettias in churches and homes at Christmas traces back to a village in Mexico. According to the legend, it was a custom for villagers to place gifts before the Nativity scene at the church



on Christmas Eve. A small boy, too poor to give anything, knelt to pray in the snow outside. On the ground where he knelt, the legend says, a beautiful plant with scarlet leaves grew immediately.

The boy took it into the church and presented it as his gift to the Christ Child. Mexicans call the colorful plant Flor de la Noche Buena (Flower of the Holy Night), and it is thought to resemble the Star of Bethlehem. The poinsettia plant is named after Dr. Joel Roberts Poinsett, the first United States ambassador to Mexico and an accomplished amateur botanist. He discovered the beautiful plant there in 1828 and brought it to the United States, where it was named in his honor.

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## Come Home For Christmas!

We all know family members, friends, neighbors, co-workers, or school friends, who are Catholic and no longer attend the Divine Liturgy. Christmas is a great time to invite them to come home to the Church. Think about it, pray about it, and invite someone to come to

Church with you during the Christmas Season. There is always a chance that you will be rejected or your invitation will fall on deaf ears. Just remember that Jesus experienced the same kind of reception and He did not give up. So if your invitation receives no response or

a negative one, just wait a few weeks and ask again. In the meantime, pray for that person, but don't give up on them no matter how long it takes. It is hard to

persevere and it is hard to be rejected, but just be patient and kind and trust in the Lord.

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## 2017 Parish Dues

With the end of 2017 quickly approaching, we offer this gentle reminder to make sure that your 2017 Parish Dues are paid. Also, we remind our Parish Family Members

that as of January 1, 2011, Parish Dues are now \$25.00 per adult. There is no increased planned for 2018.

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## Christ Our Pascha

The New Catechism of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, *Christ Our Pascha*, is Now Available to Read Online. You can now access and read the online English language version of the Catechism of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, Christ Our Pascha at: <http://catechism.royaldoors.net/catechism/>

Every household should use this online text as a resource for family members to grow in knowledge and understanding of their faith and their church. Parents should especially use this text to share and teach the faith with their children.

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## 2018 Church Calendars

The 2018 Church Calendars are available in the Vestibule of the

Church. The calendars are free, but any donations will be appreciated.

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## Andrew's Pence

The Synod of Bishops of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC) has decided to hold a collection, called Andrew's Pence, to support faithful of UGCC abroad where there is no permanent ecclesiastical structure.

More than 100 years ago Ukrainians started to leave their native land in search of a better life, material welfare, and freedom. Many settled on another continent, where church buildings of the UGCC are not everywhere, so that

the faithful could not attend services in their native Church. Wishing to provide all faithful of the UGCC with spiritual care, the bishops call upon all to support the faithful of the UGCC abroad in prayer and financially, col-

lecting the so-called Andrew's Pence.

According to the Protocol of the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia, the "Andrew's Pence" collection is to be taken in all parishes each year in the month of December.

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## Annual Festival of Christmas Carols

The Annual Festival of Christmas Carols will be held on Sunday, January 14, 2018 at 3 p.m. at the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Con-

ception in Philadelphia. Choirs from different parishes will participate. Everyone is welcome.

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## Collection Processing Team...

We ask all the members of ALL the Collection Processing Teams to help with this Christmas Weekend's

Collection on Tuesday following the 9:00 Divine Liturgy.

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## Sunday Collection for Dec. 16 & 17, 2017:

### Altar Boy Schedule for Christmas Eve and Christmas

10:00 pm	David Slachtish -- Nicholas Muchisky
9:00 am	Patrick Marcinko -- John Nasevich
11:30 am	Samuel Sczesniak -- Thomas Radle -- Brian Radle -- Jordan Radle

### Altar Boy and Lector Schedule for December 30 & 31, 2017

	Altar Boys	Lectors
4:00 pm	Nicholas Muchisky -- Joseph Chylak	Bill Vervan
9:00 am	Cole Marcinko -- Patrick Marcinko	Pat Marcinko
11:30 am	Jordan Radle -- Brian Radle	Frank Lesnefsky

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Rev. Nestor Iwasiw, Pastor

### *Remember Your Dignity*

Dearly beloved, today our Savior is born; let us rejoice. Sadness should have no place on the birthday of life. The fear of death has been swallowed up; life brings us joy with the promise of eternal happiness.

No one is shut out from this joy; all share the same reason for rejoicing. Our Lord, victor over sin and death, finding no man free from sin, came to free us all. Let the saint rejoice as he sees the palm of victory at hand. Let the sinner be glad as he receives the offer of forgiveness. Let the pagan take courage as he is summoned to life.

In the fullness of time, chosen in the unfathomable depths of God's wisdom, the Son of God took for Himself our common humanity in order to reconcile it with its creator. He came to overthrow the devil, the origin of death, in that very nature by which he had overthrown mankind.

And so at the birth of our Lord the angels sing in joy: Glory to God in the highest, and they pro-

claim peace to his people on earth as they see the heavenly Jerusalem being built from all the nations of the world. When the angels on high are so exultant at this marvelous work of God's goodness, what joy should it not bring to the lowly hearts of men?

Christian, remember your dignity, and now that you share in God's own nature, do not return by sin to your former base condition. Bear in mind who is your head and of whose body you are a member. Do not forget that you have been rescued from the power of darkness and brought into the light of God's kingdom.

Through the Sacrament of Baptism you have become a temple of the Holy Spirit. Do not drive away so great a guest by evil conduct and become again a slave to the devil, for your liberty was bought by the blood of Christ.

*St. Leo the Great*

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