



HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH Parish Newsletter

New Parish Center: 20937 Ashburn Rd., #110, Ashburn, VA December 2015

DECEMBER—DAY 9 HOURS, NIGHT 15

- 5 Sat 5:00 p.m. Vespers
- 6 Sun^{27•I•Lk11} *St. Nicolas, Bishop of Myra in Lycia, Wonderworker*
10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Honshul**
- 12 Sat 5:00 p.m. Vespers
- 13 Sun^{28•II•Lk12} *32nd Anniversary of the death of Fr. Alexander Schmemmann*
10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Krisa**
- 19 Sat 5:00 p.m. Vespers
- 20 Sun^{29•III•Lk13} **SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY**
☞ 10:00 a.m. Common Confession Rite (*in conjunction with the penitential season*)
~10:45 a.m. a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Lynch**

*** THE WEEKS OF LUKE BRING US TO THE FEASTS OF LIGHT—ΤΑ ΦΩΤΑ ***
The Church celebrates and ponders the Divine Manifestations [ΤΑ ΦΩΤΑ] of our Lord Jesus Christ: Life from God (December 25) • Life with God (January 6) Encountered in the Sacramental Life of the Church (February 2)

- 24 Thu **CHRISTMAS EVE**—4:00 p.m. Vespers with the Divine Liturgy
- 25 Fri **NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST**
NOTE: Between Christmas and Theophany—what was long ago called by some the Dodekaïmeron or Twelve Days—there is no Wednesday/Friday abstinence.
- 26 Sat 5:00 p.m. Vespers
- 27 Sun^{30•IV•Lk14} 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Matyuf**

JANUARY—DAY 10 HOURS, NIGHT 14

- 2 Sat 5:00 p.m. Vespers
- 3 Sun^{31•V•Lk15} 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Miller**
- 5 Wed **THEOPHANY EVE**—4:00 p.m. Vespers with the Divine Liturgy and the Great Blessing of Water

6 Thu THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

In Greek and Slavonic books it is not uncommon to find the name of this feast in the plural: *Ta phōta*, The Lights, *Ta theophaneia*, The Divine Manifestations, in Slavonic, *Prázdnik svjatých bohojavlénij*, Feast of the Holy Theophanies. What are these theophanies? Well, in addition to the divine manifestation central to this feast, namely of Jesus's divinity in the Jordan, the Fathers had the following in mind: (2) The theophany in the flesh: the Nativity (the Incarnation); (3) The theophany to Israel, represented by the shepherds; (4) The theophany to the gentiles, represented by the magi; (5) The theophany at the wedding feast at Cana in Galilee. 2,3 and 4 have been drawn to December 25. The fifth seems to have been eclipsed. And let us not overlook the theophany within the Mystery of Baptism, to those men and women who were baptized on this Feast (of which the Great Blessing of Water is a remnant).

- 9 Sat 5:00 p.m. Vespers
- 10 Sun^{32•VI•Lk16} 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Mitkovitzer**
- 16 Sat 5:00 p.m. Vespers
- 17 Sun^{33•VII•Lk17} 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Morrow**
Followed by a festive first anniversary luncheon.
- 23 Sat 5:00 p.m. Vespers
- 24 Sun^{34•VIII•Lk18} 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Mosholder**
- 30 Sat 5:00 p.m. Vespers
- 31 Sun^{35•I•Lk19} 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy — **Coffee Hour: Smith**
Followed by our Annual Parish Business Meeting.

Take to heart among yourselves what you find in Christ Jesus: He was in the form of God, yet he laid no claim to equality with God, but made himself nothing, assuming the form of a slave. Bearing the human likeness, sharing the human lot, he humbled himself, and was obedient, even to the point of death, death on a cross! Therefore God raised him to the heights and bestowed on him the name above all names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend... and every tongue acclaim, "Jesus Christ is Lord," to the glory of God [and] Father.
Philippians 2.5-11

Something of value at no cost.

Plan to take part in the **Common Confession Rite** scheduled for Sunday, 20 December, at 10:00 a.m. Come on time. And come in the right frame of mind. Let us greet the Feasts of Light as "a people of his own, eager to do what is right" (Titus 2.14). Remember, children are welcome, but none under the age of 10.

On the peace-loving Moslem front—Indirect info suggests two archbishops kidnapped in Syria executed.

Moscow, December 2, Interfax — According to some reports, two Syrian hierarchs, namely Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch Metropolitan of Aleppo Paul and Syrian Orthodox Metropolitan of Aleppo John-Ibrahim, kidnapped in 2013, were executed.

"Leader of the only Middle Eastern Orthodox Party Mashriq Roderick Khoury spoke of this at a meeting with coordinator of the inter-faction State Duma deputy group for the protection of Christian values Sergey Gavrilov on Wednesday," executive secretary of the deputy group Oleg Yefimov told Interfax-Religion.

The leader of the Mashriq party told Gavrilov with reference to sources in

Turkey that representatives of radical North Caucasian groupings jointly with Al-Qaeda participated in the kidnapping of Syrian hierarchs, he said.

Meanwhile, a source referred to a statement made by Dagestani native and participant of the terrorist grouping Magomed Abdurakhmanov, who personally confirmed his participation in the kidnapping of the hierarchs.

“The source said that Abdurakhmanov showed a video in which the kidnapped metropolitans were filmed and also reaffirmed that they were executed,” the source said.

The inter-faction deputy group intended to urgently turn to the Turkish authorities for confirmation of the detention of Abdurakhmanov and the information he produced about the assassination of the Christian leaders kidnapped in 2013.

Archpriest Vsevolod Chaplin, spokesman for the Moscow Patriarchate—who so often leaves his hearers speechless—seems to be arguing for summary executions.

“We should discuss and decide on this issue, evaluating the threats, security level in society and various methods of ensuring it again in the same free manner. Terrorists, and also organizers and sponsors of terrorist attacks can and should just be eliminated without any trial and without any procedure in situations when law enforcement bodies have determined that we are talking about people who pose danger to the public,” the church representative said.

Pope Halts Canonization Process in Move “Without Historical Precedent.”

The Pope has halted the canonization process for Aloyziye Stepínats, the Croatian Catholic Archbishop of Zagreb from 1937 until his death in 1960. Pope John Paul II had beatified the fiercely anti-communist archbishop, who spent many years in prison and under house arrest in Communist Yugoslavia, in 1998. The archbishop’s actions during World War II, however, especially his ties to the Nazi-aligned, murderous [*meaning murdering Serbs on a large scale—Ed.*] Ustáshe regime, have raised criticism not only from the Serbian Orthodox Church but also from other victim groups.

Pope Francis has now halted the all-but-complete process of canonization for Stepínats and established a commission of Catholic and Serbian Orthodox experts instead, which will look more closely into the archbishop’s actions during World War II.

It appears this is being done out of deference to the Serbian Orthodox Church and Jewish groups who had raised concerns about the archbishop’s life and had wanted a more thorough investigation before he was beatified.

Pray Tell [*the blog which is the source of this piece*] quotes a German-language website that calls this move

an “unexpected ecumenical step, without any historical precedent.”

The archbishop’s Wikipedia entry has more background:

He was tried by the communist Yugoslav government after the war and convicted of treason and collaboration with the Ustáshe regime. He served his 16-year sentence first in prison, then confined to his home village of Krashits. He was made a cardinal in 1953. In 1998 he was declared a martyr and beatified by Pope John Paul II. His record during World War II and his subsequent martyrdom and beatification remain controversial.

The trial was depicted in the West as a typical communist “show trial,” biased against the archbishop; however, some claim the trial was “carried out with proper legal procedure.” In a verdict that polarized public opinion both in Yugoslavia and beyond, the Yugoslav authorities found him guilty on the charge of high treason (for collaboration with the fascist Ustáshe regime), as well as complicity in the forced conversions of Orthodox Serbs to Catholicism. He was sentenced to 16 years in prison, but was released to house arrest after five, with his movements confined to his home parish of Krashits.

After foreign and domestic pressure, Stepínats was released from Lepoglava prison. In 1952 he was appointed cardinal by Pope Pius XII. He was unable to participate in the 1958 conclave. Stepínats died of polycythemia in 1960 while still under confinement in his parish. On October 3, 1998, Pope John Paul II declared him a martyr and beatified him before 500,000 Croats in Mariya Bistritsa near Zagreb.

Stella Alexander, author of *The Triple Myth*, a sympathetic biography of Stepínats, writes about him that “Two things stand out. He feared Communism above all (especially above fascism); and he found it hard to grasp that anything beyond the boundaries of Croatia, always excepting the Holy See, was quite real.... He lived in the midst of apocalyptic events, bearing responsibilities which he had not sought.... In the end one is left feeling that he was not quite great enough for his role. Given his limitations he behaved very well, certainly much better than most of his own people, and he grew in spiritual stature during the course of his long ordeal.”

Archbishop Stepínats’s defenders at the time of his trial included Boston’s Cardinal Richard Cushing, Winston Churchill, and the American Jewish Committee. The New York Times editorialized: “Archbishop Stepínats was sentenced and will be incarcerated as part of the campaign against his church, guilty only of being the enemy of Communism.”

But controversy followed him, even after his death:

Pope John Paul had earlier determined that where a candidate for sainthood had been martyred, his/her cause could be advanced without the normal requirement for

evidence of a miraculous intercession by the candidate. Accordingly, he beatified the late cardinal after saying these words: One of the outstanding figures of the Catholic Church, having endured in his own body and his own spirit the atrocities of the Communist system, is now entrusted to the memory of his fellow countrymen with the radiant badge of martyrdom.

On the other hand, many non-Catholics have remained unconvinced about Stepínats's martyrdom and about his saintly qualities in general. The beatification re-ignited old controversies between Catholicism and Communism and between [*Orthodox*] Serbs and [*Roman Catholic*] Croats. The Jewish community in Croatia, some members of which had been helped by Stepínats during World War II, did not oppose his beatification but the Simon Wiesenthal Center asked for it to be deferred until the wartime conduct of Stepínats had been further investigated. The Vatican had no reaction, though some Croats expressed irritation.

Read more.

Worth noting: The subject of the archbishop came up during a recent meeting between the pope and Serbia's president. The pope reportedly told the president: "There is no rush to make Stepínats a saint," and there were discus-

sions about setting up a committee to investigate his life.

In Croatia, meantime, his legacy is inescapable: 119 streets carry his name, making it one of the most common street names in the country. He's also been honored outside his homeland; there's at least one high school, in suburban New York's Westchester County, named for him.

[Editor's Note: During World War II, the pro-Nazi Croats had one concentration camp in the town of Yasenóvats. (Tito, a Croat, razed it right after the War.) A poor outraged William F. Buckley got it into his head that it was a Serbian camp to kill Jews. But no. It was Croatian, for killing Serbs—Orthodox Christians—almost a million of them. In the same vein, it was not unheard of that Franciscan friars would lead war parties to kill Serbs in nearby Serb towns in Croatia—bishops, priests, monks, nuns and ordinary people, burning churches and monasteries, while Stepínats was archbishop. And during that Kosovo business when Serbia was waging its war on Kosovo's Shkiptars—Albanian Moslems—the United States demanded that Israel take *pro-tem* at least 2,000 Albanian refugees. I think it was Ariel Sharon who objected, saying it was the Serbs who protected the Jews in WWII, while the Moslem Albanian Nazis hunted them down.]



A solemn bronze statue of Saint Nicholas by Russian sculptor Gregory Pototsky was donated by the Russian government in 2000, and was given a prominent place in the square fronting the ruins of the medieval Church of St. Nicholas in Myra, Turkey. In 2005, mayor Süleyman Topçu had the statue replaced by a red-suited plastic Santa Claus statue, because he wanted an image more recognizable to foreign visitors. Protests from the Russian government against this were successful, and the bronze statue was returned (albeit without its original high pedestal) to a corner nearer the church. [The roly-poly red Santa Claus is still there.]