



HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

Parish Newsletter

R E S T O N

New Parish Center: 20937 Ashburn Rd., #110, Ashburn, VA November 2017

DECEMBER—DAY 9 HOURS, NIGHT 15

- 9 Sat 5:00 p.m. Vespers
 10 Sun^{27•II•Lk12} 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy—**Coffee Hour: Morrow**
 13 Wed *33rd Anniversary of the death of our father among the saints, Protos-presbyter Alexander Schmemmann*

“Whether we want it or not, we are challenged today with the tremendously difficult task of rethinking Church tradition as a whole, of applying it in a situation radically different from that of the past. It will take more than one generation to solve this problem but we must at least face it and also become aware of its meaning. Compromises, temporary solutions, adjustments—all these are admissible only if we firmly refuse once and for all consciously to alter Church traditions, to lower its standards in order to ‘fit’ them into our needs.”

“The Orthodox way of life consists in... creative “actualization” of Church Tradition; refusing to follow it, we consciously or unconsciously abandon Orthodoxy.” —Father Alexander Schmemmann, *Liturgy and Life*

- 16 Sat 5:00 p.m. Vespers
 17 Sun^{28•III•Lk13} 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy—**Coffee Hour: Mosholder**
 23 Sat 5:00 p.m. Vespers

* THE WEEKS OF LUKE BRING US TO THE FEASTS OF LIGHT—ΤΑ ΦΩΤΑ *

Who is this man—like us in everything but sin—whom we are following from Nazareth to Jericho and Jerusalem and the Cross?

The Church revisits, and contemplates, and celebrates, 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 Sun^{29•IV•Lk14} **CHRISTMAS EVE**
 10:00 a.m. Common Confession Rite (*in conjunction with the penitential season and the dawn of the Feasts of Light*)
 ~10:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy—**Coffee Hour: Smith**

- 25 Mon **NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST**
 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy of St. Basil—**Coffee Hour: Tarassova**

NOTE: Between Christmas and Theophany—what was long ago called by some the Dodekaimeron or Twelve Days—there is no Wednesday/Friday abstinence.

- 30 Sat 5:00 p.m. Vespers
 31 Sun^{30•V•Lk15} 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy—**Coffee Hour: Warden**

JANUARY—DAY 10 HOURS, NIGHT 14

- 5 Fri **EVE OF THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST**
 7:00 p.m. Vespers with the Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil and the Great Blessing of Water
 6 Sat **THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST**
 7 Sun^{31•VI•Lk16} 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy—**Coffee Hour: Wayland**

What then should Christian education be, if not the introduction into the life of the Church, an unfolding of its meaning, its contents and its purpose? And how can it introduce anyone into this life, if not by participation in the liturgical services on the one hand, and their explanation on the other hand? “Taste and see that the Lord is good”: first taste, then see—i.e., understand. The method of liturgical catechesis is truly the Orthodox method of religious education because it proceeds from the Church and because the Church is its goal.
 —*Liturgy and Life*

Looking at the Calendar.

As one can see, the feast of the Nativity of the Lord falls on a Monday. So with the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, we cannot celebrate the feast with Vespers with the Divine Liturgy on the eve of the feast as we have been doing these many years. In this circumstance, the tradition requires moving the Liturgy of Saint Basil to the morning, to the day itself, which is what one finds on our calendar.

Theophany, however, falls on Saturday, so we will be able to mark the feast on the eve, Friday, January 5th.

The Feasts of Light come to an end on Friday, February 2, with the feast of the Meeting or Encounter of the Lord; this is the fortieth day after the Nativity. In the Latin West these forty days are thought of as “the Nativity cycle,” but not so in the Orthodox Catholic East. It may come as a surprise to the president of St. Vladimir’s Seminary, but for the Orthodox these are the Feasts of Light—what the Greeks call *Ta Phota*, the Lights—wherein we ponder and celebrate Christ, the God-Man, in our midst and approachable by each one of us in the sacramental life of his holy Church. For us these forty days are a prolonged “happy birthday” and “welcome” in our midst. When Matthew and Luke write about the Lord’s birth and infancy, they really have in

mind the adult Lord Jesus who made himself known to the world—what the Church calls epiphany and theophany. That infant in a manger in Luke—with that ox and that ass in the ikon—is an image of the Church and the Eucharist through which each and every Christian encounters the Lord enfleshed for our sake. And when those magi show up in Matthew and you hear talk of the “king of the Jews” and Herod’s cruel reaction, you hear talk of the passion and the Cross. And when you hear about gold, frankincense, and myrrh, the talk is about the messianic king (gold), about the human being who is God (frankincense), who was made to suffer the Cross and burial (myrrh), about the Christ in our midst.

Come 2018, those first thirteen days of January, it is still December on the Julian calendar according to which December 25th falls on that first Sunday, January 1 falling on that second Sunday.

People who come to the Orthodox Catholic East from the Roman Catholic or Protéstant West, often feel our celebration of the Nativity a tad dull. No Christmas pageants. No life-size St. Francis-style stable/manger scenes. *Et cetera, et cetera.* (The Orthodox have to remind other Christians the stable was a cave.) In the Orthodox Church the big splash has always been Theophany—from Lalibela to Arkhangel’sk, from Kholm to Sitka. And the culture in which we find ourselves—Father Schmemmann talks about this at length—is making it very difficult to hold on to tradition which brings the adult Christ who pitched his tent among us healing the broken relationship between God and man into clear focus.

As we point out in our Liturgy Book: in our Greek and Slavonic liturgical books it is not uncommon to find the name of the January 6 feast in the plural: *Ta phōta*, The Lights, *Ta theophaneía*, The Divine Manifestations, in Slavonic, *Prázdnic svjatých bohojavlénij*, Feast of the Holy Theophanies (the Roman Church and Episcopalians have a very different take on January 6).

So, 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 Christmas (which was an innovation of Rome in the early IV century—accepted in the East by the end of the century). The fifth (Cana)

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—whence the Great Blessing of Water.)

The February 2 feast of the Meeting, or better Encounter, of the Lord—the Roman Church and Episcopalians have a different take on this feast—brings the Church’s 40-day reflection on these mysteries to an end. Unfortunately, the February 2 feast often gets caught up in the beginning of another season in the Church Year, that of the Triodion and the lead-in to the Great Forty Days. Which is the case this year.

Reading from the Gospel according to Luke, the Church reaches Jericho on the third Sunday in January (the 21st). The Triodion begins January 28 with the reading of the gospel concerning the Publican and Pharisee (Luke 18.10+). The Great Forty Days begin Monday, February 19, coming to an end Friday, March 30, which is also the biblical 14 Nissan and the beginning of the Pasch of the Law. Consequently the Christian Holy Pasch starts on Holy Friday, April 6, Resurrection Sunday being April 8 (a week after the Western Pasch). Ascension Thursday is May 17; and Pentecost, our Parish Feast, falls on Sunday, May 27 (in the Memorial Day weekend).

With Pentecost falling within the Memorial Day weekend, it is not likely that our Bishop will be in a position to join us for our Parish Feast—and the celebration of our fortieth year—inasmuch as all OCA bishops go to St. Tikhon’s for the annual pilgrimage there.

We can talk in more detail about this matter at our Annual Parish Business Meeting on Sunday, January 28 (snow alternate, February 4).

Loudoun Hunger Relief WISH LIST

Cans, jars—Peanut butter, Jelly. **Juices (100% Fruit), Vegetables, Canned Fruit**—Canned beans, Tomato products, Stews, Soups. **Boxed Items**—Macaroni and cheese, **Cereal**, Pasta, Rice, Potatoes, Crackers. **Other Items**—Sugar, Powdered milk, Coffee, Tea bags, Dry beans. **Needs for the Homeless**—Pop-top canned foods, Individual serve items, Can opener. **Infant Needs**—Diapers (all sizes), Baby personal hygiene. **Personal Hygiene**—Deodorant, Shampoo and conditioner, Bath/hand soap, Tissues, Tooth paste, Toothbrush, Laundry soap, Women’s hygiene products, Shaving cream and razors. **Distribution Center Supplies**—Ziploc bags (all types), Paper towels, Disposable gloves, Disinfectants, Bleach, Window cleaner, Antibacterial hand soap, Copy paper (white and colors), File folders.

“I am the light of the world....” John 8.12; cf. Luke 1.78

SCRIPTURE AT WORK IN THE TROPARION FOR THE NATIVITY

Your nativity, O Christ our God,
shines out on the world
the light of knowledge,^{cf. Jn. 8.12}
for thereby men who **served** the stars
were taught through a star^{Num. 24.17, Mt. 2.9}
to **bow down** to you,^{Is. 49.23, Ps. 71.10,11}
the **Sun of Righteousness**,
and to know you,
the **Sunrise** from on High,
O Lord, glory to you!^{cf. Lk. 17.18}

■ **Latreía, latrévein**—Biblical Greek for *religious service*.—*Deut. 6.13*: The Lord your God shall you fear, him shall you **serve**. To *serve* means to acknowledge the sovereignty of God by listening to what he says and putting it into action: *Deut. 10.12*: So now, O Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you? Only to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to **serve** the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.... (The fruit of this service is *communion*, not *appeasement*).

■ Allusion to Theophany in the Jordan/Temptation in the Desert.—By pairing Gk. *latrévein*, *serve*, line 4, with *proskyneín*, *bow down*, line 6, our poet, Romanos Melodos, is evoking *Mat. 4.10* and *Lk. 4.8* (English translations of the Gospels will obscure this). The allusion bespeaks the power of the Good News at work: the Lord Jesus—true Servant of God and definitive rejector of idolatry heals the broken relationship between God and man (here represented by three men who *served* star-gods). *Mat. 4.8+*: Then the devil took [Jesus] up to a very high mountain, and

showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their magnificence, and he said to him, “All these I shall give to you, if you will **bow down** to and **serve** me.”¹⁰ At this, Jesus said to him, “Get away, Satan! It is written: ‘Before the Lord, your God, shall you **bow down** and him alone shall you **serve**.’” To *bow down* is to express “the fear of the Lord,” to respect his existence and recognize his sovereignty, *Mat. 2.11*: Going into the house [Perdonami, *St. Francis, the magi never showed up at the stable-cave*.—*Ed.*] they saw the child with Mary his mother, and **falling down they bowed low** to him....

■ **Anatolē**—*The Sunrise*: a Messianic title unique to the LXX translation.—*Zech. 3.8*: Now listen, Joshua high priest, you and your colleagues...: I am going to bring my servant **the Sunrise**... and I will remove the guilt of this land in a single day. *Zech. 6.12*: Thus says the Lord the Pantokrator: Here is a man whose name is **Sunrise**... and he shall build the temple of the Lord.... *Luke 1.78*: ...the **Sunrise from on High** will visit us to shine on those who sit in darkness and death’s shadow, to guide our feet into the path of peace.

■ *Sun of Righteousness*.—*Jer. 23.5*: Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a **Righteous Sun**, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. *Malachi 3.20*: But for you who fear my name, there will arise the **sun of righteousness** with its healing rays.

The following piece was sent to us by a group in Canada calling itself Orthodoxy in Dialogue: A short essay by a gentleman who comes to the Orthodox Catholic East from the Roman Catholic West without an axe to grind.

BRIDGE DWELLER

by Jim Forest (November 29, 2017)

As someone who made his way to the Orthodox Church from a Roman Catholic background, I am often asked why I became Orthodox and how I would compare the two Churches.

In the 29 years since my Orthodox chrismation, my answers to both questions have evolved. One of the constants has been to stress that, in crossing the Great Schism's border in an eastward direction, I neither slammed nor locked any doors, and that my transition has not involved a conversion. There has been but one conversion in my life, and that occurred before I was either Catholic or Orthodox — my becoming a Christian, that is, an apprentice follower of Jesus. Finding a church came next.

"But after so many years a Catholic," friends have asked, "why your turn to Orthodox [Catholic] Christianity?"

In the early years, I tended to stress what I didn't like about [Roman] Catholicism: its monarchical papacy, a fast-food Liturgy that too often could be described as a McMass, a legalistic approach to pastoral issues such as failed marriages, its insistence that priests be celibate, its obsession with sexual sins, its insertion of the *filioque* into the ancient creed. (As Hilaire Belloc wrote, "The moral is / it is indeed / you must not monkey / with the Creed.")

Taking a slightly different tack, I sometimes said that the two Churches were like parallel highways which, at first glance, looked nearly identical; but then, on closer inspection, you notice the traffic moves more slowly on the Orthodox highway, and there are no police cars. With such slow-moving vehicles, cops aren't needed.

On the positive side of my change of address, I emphasized the unhurried beauty of Orthodox worship, saying that each Eucharistic meal is done "at Thanksgiving Day speed... you wouldn't want to eat a festive meal in a hurry." I praised the Orthodox Church for its married priesthood and its relative lack of clericalism. I contrasted Orthodoxy's more therapeutic approach to confession with the "shopping list of sins" approach that I had so often experienced in the [Roman] Catholic Church. Recalling Jesus's request to the apostles, "Let the children come unto me," I asked if the Orthodox admission of children to Communion as soon as they are baptized was not wiser than to delay Communion until the would-be communicant reaches "the age of reason." After all, I pointed out, few of us ever reach the age of reason. I argued that even Orthodoxy's notorious slowness to change is more a plus than a minus in a culture in which short-lived ideological

winds are blowing at hurricane force, with theological hemlines rising and falling as the winds howl.

But, Catholic friends would ask, are there no areas in which [Roman] Catholicism is more admirable? Is there nothing you miss?

I freely admit that there are aspects of Orthodox Christianity that lag significantly behind its Western counterpart, the most significant of which is tribalism. Catholics, in my experience, are far more likely to see themselves as members of a world church, a church in which national identity is secondary, a church on which the sun never sets, a church for whom all the dotted lines on world maps are provisional. One might be Korean, Irish, Italian, Polish, American, *etc.*, but recognize these words as mere adjectives; whereas, for too many Orthodox, being Greek, Russian, Serbian, or Bulgarian comes first. One was Orthodox because having an Orthodox identity was an essential aspect of having a particular national identity.

Another especially praiseworthy aspect of modern Catholicism is its conciliar teaching in regard to war. The one and only actual condemnation that was made by the Second Vatican Council was its condemnation of weapons of mass destruction and of city destruction. At the same time, the bishops endorsed conscientious objection, praised those who refuse to obey unjust orders, and urged nonviolent approaches to conflict resolution. One seeks in vain to hear similar statements from the various Orthodox jurisdictions; instead, one finds weapons — even nuclear weapons — still being blessed by priests and even hierarchs. Were a Greek or Russian Orthodox Christian to declare himself a conscientious objector, how many Orthodox bishops would give him support? We Orthodox prefer to remember that such saints as Martin of Tours were soldiers, and forget that later on they renounced military service as inappropriate for Christ's followers.

I have even learned to appreciate the papacy, which has been slowly undergoing its own reformation, most notably in the past half century. The pope is indeed a symbol of unity as well as the Christian voice most often heard in the world as a whole. Orthodox bishops are rarely heard beyond the borders of their citizenship.

"Okay," various friends have said, "thanks to all you've said, it's now even more puzzling that you're in the Orthodox Church."

I often respond with a joke: "Count me as a Catholic on loan to the Orthodox Church." It's not a perfect joke. Things on loan are normally returned to the lender. I am where God has nudged me to be, and expect to spend the rest of my life in the Orthodox Church, and gratefully so. But I remain deeply indebted to my years in the [Roman] Catholic Church, and see myself living and praying on an under-construction bridge crossing the river that flows between East and West in Christianity.

Whether Orthodox or Catholic, we have so much to learn from each other.

Jim Forest is the international secretary of the Orthodox Peace Fellowship and the author or editor of many books. His At Play in the Lions' Den: A Biography and Memoir of Daniel Berrigan was published just two weeks ago. His earlier The Root of War is Fear: Thomas Merton's Advice to Peacemakers won the International Thomas Merton Society's Louie Award. He serves as a reader at St. Nicholas of Myra Russian Orthodox Church in Amsterdam.

This piece turned up on Veterans' Day.

IT IS THE VETERAN

Author Anonymous

It is the Veteran, not the preacher, who has given us freedom of religion.

It is the Veteran, not the reporter, who has given us freedom of the press.

It is the Veteran, not the poet, who has given us freedom of speech.

It is the Veteran, not the campus organizer, who has given us freedom to assemble.

It is the Veteran, not the lawyer, who has given us the right to a fair trial.

It is the Veteran, not the politician, who has given us the right to vote.

It is the Veteran, who salutes the Flag,

It is the Veteran, who serves under the Flag,

To be buried by the flag,

So the protester can burn the flag.



A word from Marsha Morrow.

Several of us met in Ashburn and packed up all of the items that you contributed. As usual, Holy Trinity totally rocks! Maria and I delivered 12 big plastic bags of coats and blankets to one of the donation drop-off locations.

I want to thank everyone for their donations. The NOVA Relief group will be picking everything up and then shipping it all to Syria for distribution to the refugees. I am sorry that we had so little notice, so I will keep a better eye out on our Church email which is where all of these messages show up.

Father George sent this along earlier in December:

SILENCE

There are evident realities in the world...
and there are symbols also...
and then comes the idea, the theory,
which is an impoverishment.
That is why poetry,
and even more so prayer,
is nearer truth than is prose.
Lao-Dze used to say
that if he had absolute power,
before all else
he would reestablish
the original poetic meaning of words.
In this time of verbal inflation
that aggravates loneliness,
only the person of prayerful peace
can still speak to others,
and show them
that the word has become a face
and the gaze has become a presence.
Such a one's silence will speak
where no other preaching can reach.
His mystery will make others
attentive to revelation
that has now become close and accessible to them.
Even when the one who knows silence speaks,
he easily finds the unsullied freshness of every word.
His answer to questions of life and death
comes as the amen to his perpetual prayer."

—Paul Evdokimov

Left: Archbishop Tikhon arriving at the Cathedral Church of Christ the Saviour in Moscow for the 100th Anniversary of the restored Moscow Patriarchate, 4.xii.1917–4.xii.2017. Additional photos follow. (That chalice, next page lower left, must be at least 2 feet tall!)

