



FROM THE AMBIVON

ST MICHAEL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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September 8th, 2024 11th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 2. The Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady, Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary. Sunday before Elevation. Icons of the Mother of God: “KURSK-ROOT” Icon of the Sign (1259), “POCHAEV” (1559), “KHOLMSK”, and others.

Birthdays & Anniversaries for September

Birthdays: Michael Keklak (9/4); Judah Hart (9/8); Nadia Hart (9/10); Emily Hart (9/21); Gregory Krevko (9/14); Michael Jadick (9/26)

Nameday: Nadia/Nadezhda Macheska (9/17); Nadia/Hope Hart (9/17)

Baptism:

Anniversary:

Travelers: Joe & Kelly Cigna; Daniel & Sandy Pregmon; Uriel & Maura Vo

Prospora Schedule: PLEASE HELP! We have now signed up for prospora and we need families to start baking prospora at home. Please sign up. *The Church has a prospora kit if you would like to borrow it.* Thank you all for your offering “for the people by the people” and thank you to Emily Hart for today’s offering.

Sept 8 Emily

Sept 15 Maura & Jason

Counting: HELP! Please sign up to help us count weekly donations! Thank you Tammy & Emily for helping count today.

Sept 8 Tamy and Emily

Sept 15 Tammy

Visitors: PLEASE JOIN US DOWNSTAIRS for an Agape Meal. Thank you to everyone who donated. Please donate what you would spend for lunch at the agape meal to replenish our supplies.

PLEASE SING ALONG! Singing the hymns and responses to the litanies throughout the services is encouraged!

DEAR GUESTS AND FRIENDS: *A most sincere and heartfelt welcome to you from our community. According to the ancient traditions of the Orthodox Church, the Sacrament of Holy Communion is to be administered only to Orthodox Christians who have prepared to receive themselves by prayer, fasting, and a recent (monthly) confession. If you have questions please ask Fr Michael! Visitors, if you did not introduce yourself to Fr Michael at Vespers, please refrain from Holy Communion.*



Service Schedule

FRI, Sep 13th: @ 5:00 PM Great Vespers w/Litya

SAT, Sep 14th: Hours @ 9:00 AM Hours, The Universal Exaltation of the Precious and Life Giving Cross

SAT, Sep 14th: @ 5:00 PM Great Vespers

SUN, Sep 15th: Hours @ 9:10 AM Hours, 12th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 3.
Afterfeast of the Elevation of the Cross. Sunday after Elevation.



Words of Wisdom From the Saints & Teachers

Today's Readings

Epistles: (215) Galatians 6:11-18 (Sunday before the Exaltation); (141) 1 Corinthians 9:2-12; (240) Philippians 2:5-11 (Theotokos)

Gospels: (9) John 3:13-17 (Sunday before the Exaltation); (77) Matthew 18:23-35; (54) Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28 (Theotokos)

EPISTLE

Deacon: Let us attend!

Priest: Peace be unto all!

Reader: And to thy spirit.

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The Prokeimenon in the 6th Tone, a Psalm of David: O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance.

Choir: O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance.

Reader: To Thee, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not silent to me.

Choir: O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance.

Reader: In the 3rd Tone, the Song of the Theotokos: My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

Choir: My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The reading from the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Galatians.

Deacon: Let us attend!

[(215) Galatians 6:11-18] Brethren: See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand. * It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that would compel you to be circumcised, and only in order that they may not be persecuted for the Cross of Christ. * For even those who receive circumcision do not themselves keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may glory in your flesh. * But far be it from me to glory except in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. * For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. * Peace and mercy be upon all who walk by this rule, upon the Israel of God. * Henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus. * The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

[(141) 1 Corinthians 9:2-12] Brethren: You are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. * This is my defense to those who would examine me. * Do we not have the right to our food and drink? * Do we not have the right to be accompanied by a wife, as the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? * Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living? * Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard without eating any of its fruit? Who tends a flock without getting some of the milk? * Do I say this on human authority? Does not the law say the same? * For it is written in the law of Moses, "Thou shalt not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain." Is it for oxen that God is concerned? * Does He not speak entirely for our sake? It was written for our sake, because the plowman should plow in hope and the thresher thresh in hope of a share in the crop. * If we have sown spiritual good among you, is it too much if we reap your material benefits? * If others share this rightful claim upon you, do not we still more? Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the Gospel of Christ.

[(240) Philippians 2:5-11] Brethren: Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, * Who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, * but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. * And being found in human form He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. * Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, * that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, * and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Priest: Peace be unto thee, Reader.

Reader: And to thy spirit.

ALLELUIA

Deacon: Wisdom!

Reader: The Alleluia in the 1st Tone: I have exalted one chosen out of My people.

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Reader: For My hand shall defend him and My arm shall strengthen him.

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Reader: In the 8th Tone: Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thine ear.

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

GOSPELS

[(9) John 3:13-17] The Lord said, "No one has ascended into heaven but He Who descended from heaven, the Son of man Who is in heaven. * And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, * that whoever believes in Him may have eternal life." * For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. * For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

[(77) Matthew 18:23-35] The Lord said this parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. * When he began the reckoning, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents; * and as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. * So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee everything.' * And out of pity for him the lord of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. * But that same servant, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat he said, 'Pay what thou dost owe.' * So his fellow servant fell down and besought him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay thee.' * He refused and went and put him in prison till he should pay the debt. * When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. * Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'Thou wicked servant! I forgave thee all that debt because thou didst beseech me; * and shouldst not thou have had mercy on thy fellow servant, as I had mercy on thee?' * And in anger his lord delivered him to the torturers, till he should pay all his debt. * So also My heavenly Father shall do to every one of you, if ye do not forgive your brother from your heart."

[(54) Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28] At that time, Jesus entered a village; and a woman named Martha received Him into her house. * And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to His teaching. * But Martha was distracted with much serving; and she went to Him and said, "Lord, dost Thou not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me." * But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things; * one thing is needful. Mary has chosen the good portion, which shall not be taken away from her." * As He said this, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore Thee, and the breasts that Thou hast sucked!" * But He said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

Treasury



*"... but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.
+ Jesus Christ +++*

How Much is my tithe

Weekly	2%	4%	5%	10%
\$200	\$4	\$8	\$10	\$20
\$500	\$10	\$20	\$25	\$50
\$750	\$15	\$30	\$37	\$75
\$1000	\$20	\$40	\$50	\$100
\$1500	\$30	\$60	\$75	\$150

WEEKLY GIVING UPDATE: We thank you for your continued giving in gratitude for all that our loving God does for each of us, for His Holy Church, and all the blessings we receive through her.

September Income: \$3,152.00

September Expense: \$6,871.22

Average Weekly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$3,740.85

Average Monthly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$14,963.58



Announcements - Upcoming Parish & Diocesan Events

Silent Prayers and Confession: Every Wednesday 11:00AM - 1:30PM or before/after vespers. Or you can make an appt for confession.

Monthly Panikhida: September 28th, 4PM prior to Vespers

Church Work Day: Every Day is Church Maintenance day! I will begin a list of items that we will need to work on. If you are free and would like to work at the church let me know. Just check the list and when you finish the task, initial off that it has been done.

Sunday Parking: With the increase in parish attendance on Sundays we are asking that the parking row across the street be reserved for elderly, those with difficulty walking, handicap, and parish visitors. If you do not fall into one of those categories, please use the parking lot kitty-corner to us with the stairs so we can keep plenty of parking free for those who need to be closer. Thanks so much!

Parish Council Meeting: October 5th, 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM - All are invited. Nov 2nd, Dec 7th are the following meetings.

Choir practice: Saturday's @ 4pm prior to vespers. If you would like to sing in the choir please make every effort to be at the practice.

Bulletin Boards: Community and Administration Boards. Please, you can post on the community board as long as the post/event does not contradict our faith.

WISH LIST! Thank you for the purchase of Incense and a pitcher. Please consider purchasing from our wish list as this will reduce our cost of expenses and will allow us to increase and focus our giving in other vital areas needed.

<https://www.myregistry.com/giftlist/stmichaelsorthodoxchurcholdforgewishlist>

St. Michael's Greeters Ministry "*I was a stranger, and you welcomed me.*" Matthew 25:35 Our objective is to welcome visitors to the Parish, help them "feel at home" during the worship service, provide them with information about Orthodoxy and the Parish, invite them to Parish activities, introduce them to people of like interests, invite them back, follow-up to thank them for visiting us, and identifying whether we can help them in the future. Most people leave a church once they enter because no one greeted them. Please sign up to greet people.

2nd Annual Veteran's Day Pasta Dinner NOV 9th! It was a huge success last year and we want to go BIGGER! A portion of the proceeds will go to an organization that assists veterans. This year we have selected Camp Freedom in Carbondale. Check it out <https://campfreedompa.org/> Tammy and Sandy have already begun the process of getting volunteers to make baskets and local businesses to donate their product. We also need people to help bake the desserts and to donate drinks. Please see Tamara Wytovich to help volunteer, donate baskets or drinks, or to bake desserts.

Lights: If you can assist for about 30 minutes today; I would like to get the rest of the lights changed out. Thank you.

Parish Prayer List

NEWLY DEPARTED:

DEPARTED: *William Macheska (9/2); George Krenitsky (9/6); Nancy Jurnak (9/7); Natasha Stavisky (9/16); Mary Shrive 9/30;*

Please remember in your prayers LIVING

Ill-afflicted Archpriests Michael Evans, John Nightingale, & Theodore Orzolek

All those caring for the sick and suffering at this time throughout the world, especially our families and friends: *Christine Sevensky, Mike Jadick, Margaret Pregmon, Daniel Jones, Michael Sokol; Michael Krenitsky; Bernie Elko; The children of God Abigail and Nathan.*

Servants of God *Mark Bezhuly, David Barsigian, Patricia Jones, Anne Buday, Emily Krenitsky, Gregory Krenitsky, Barbara Sevensky, Beverly Elko, Sandra Condon, Marie Pasternak, Nicole Earl, Anna Tyrpak, Sandy & Danny Pregmon, Walter Pritchuk, Michael & Euphemia Keklak, Justin & Elisabeth Kane, Maria & Vitaliy Rakovsky, Ekaterina & Anna, Joe & Kelly Cigna, George, Natasha, Rosa, & Lucia Coyoy, Mat. Emilia, Blaise, Maximus, Rodion, Savina Shepherd, Joseph, Emilia, Judah, Nadezda, & Silas Hart, Eli & Paula Stavisky, Helen Wytovich, Tammy Wytovich, Sharissa & Debra, Nadia Macheska, Paulette Ezbiensky, Jason Vo & Maura Elko, Mary Krevko*

Seekers - *Christopher, Eugene, & Mike*

Catechumens - *Paul Dunay*

Volume II - Worship The Church Year Nativity of the Theotokos

In addition to the celebration of the Annunciation, there are three major feasts in the Church honoring Mary, the Theotokos. The first of these is the feast of her nativity which is kept on the eighth of September.

The record of the birth of Mary is not found in the Bible. The traditional account of the event is taken from the apocryphal writings which are not part of the New Testament scriptures. The traditional teaching which is celebrated in the hymns and verses of the festal liturgy is that Joachim and Anna were a pious Jewish couple who were among the small and faithful remnant—"the poor and the needy"—who were awaiting the promised messiah. The couple was old and childless. They prayed earnestly to the Lord for a child, since among the Jews barrenness was a sign of God's disfavor. In answer to their prayers, and as the reward of their unwavering fidelity to God, the elderly couple was blessed with the child who was destined, because of her own personal goodness and holiness, to become the Mother of the Messiah-Christ.

Your nativity, O Virgin, has proclaimed joy to the whole universe. The Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God, has shone from you, O Theotokos. By annulling the curse he bestowed a blessing. By destroying death he has granted us eternal life (Troparion).

By your nativity, O most pure virgin, Joachim and Anna are freed from barrenness; Adam and Eve from the corruption of death. And we, your people, freed from the guilt of sin, celebrate and sing to you: The barren woman gives birth to the Theotokos, the Nourisher of our Life (Kontakion).

The fact that there is no Biblical verification of the facts of Mary's birth is incidental to the meaning of the feast. Even if the actual background of the event as celebrated in the Church is questionable from an historical point of view, the divine meaning of it "for us men and for our salvation" is obvious. There had to be one born of human flesh and blood who would be spiritually capable of being the Mother of Christ, and she herself had to be born into the world of persons who were spiritually capable of being her parents.

The feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos, therefore, is a glorification of Mary's birth, of Mary herself and of her righteous parents. It is a celebration as well of the very first preparation of the salvation of the world. For the "Vessel of Light," the "Book of the Word of Life," the "Door to the Orient," the "Throne of Wisdom" is being prepared on earth by God Himself in the birth of the holy girl-child Mary. The verses of the feast are filled with titles for Mary such as those in the quotations above. They are inspired by the message of the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments. The specific Biblical readings of the feast give indications of this.

At Vespers the three Old Testament readings are "mariological" in their New Testamental interpretation. Thus, Jacob's Ladder which unites heaven and earth and the place which is named "the house of God" and the "gate of heaven" (Gen 28.10–17) are taken, to indicate the union of God with men which is realized most fully and perfectly—both spiritually and physically—in Mary the Theotokos, Bearer of God. So also the vision of the temple with the "door 'to the East'" perpetually closed and filled with the "glory of the Lord" symbolizes Mary, called in the hymns of the feast "the living temple of God filled with the divine Glory" (Ezek 43.27–44.4). Mary is also identified with the "house" which the Divine Wisdom has built for himself according to the reading from Proverbs 9.1–11.

The Gospel reading of Matins is the one read at all feasts of the Theotokos, the famous Magnificat from Saint Luke in which Mary says: "My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden, for behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed" (Lk 1.47).

The epistle reading of the Divine Liturgy is the famous passage about the coming of the Son of God in "the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of man" (Phil 2.5–11) and the gospel reading is that which is always read for feasts of the Theotokos—the woman in the crowd glorifies the Mother of Jesus, and the Lord himself responds that the same blessedness which his mother receives is for all "who hear the word of God and keep it" (Lk 11.27–28).

Thus, on the feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos, as on all liturgical celebrations of Christ's Mother, we proclaim and celebrate that through God's graciousness to mankind every Christian receives what the Theotokos receives, the "great mercy" which is given to human persons because of Christ's birth from the Virgin.