

St. Maximus the Confessor Orthodox Mission, Denton

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Priest Justin Frederick

Bulletin for Sunday, December 14, 2008

Schedule of Services

December 14th 26th Sunday After Pentecost

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

December 15th Monday

6:00 a.m. Matins

3:00 p.m. Vespers, Confession

December 16th Tuesday

6:00 a.m. Matins

7:30 p.m. Holy Unction

December 17th Wednesday

6:00 a.m. Matins

5:30 p.m. Class: St. Gregory Theologian: Theological Orations

7:00 p.m. Vespers, Confession

December 18th Thursday

8:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

7:00 p.m. *Russian Vespers, Dallas*

December 19th Friday

7:30 a.m. Matins

7:00 p.m. Vespers

8:00 p.m. Basics of Orthodoxy: *The Church & Holy Tradition*

December 20th Saturday

9:30 a.m. *Russian Divine Liturgy, Dallas*

5:00 p.m. Vigil, Confession

December 21st 27th Sunday After Pentecost

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

6:00 p.m. Vespers

Greater than Baptism itself is the fountain of tears after Baptism, even though it is somewhat audacious to say so. For Baptism is the washing away of evils that were in us before, but sins committed after baptism are washed away by tears. As Baptism is received in infancy, we have all defiled it, but we cleanse it anew with tears. And if God in His love for mankind had not given us tears, those being saved would be few indeed and hard to find. *St. John Climacus, The Ladder, Step 7.6*

Announcements for December 14th

To Our Visitors: Welcome! Please join us after the service for coffee and conversation and church school for the children. If you would, fill out a visitor's card for us and leave it in the basket on the table by the door. Be aware that shortly after the sermon, the catechumens, i.e., those preparing for Baptism & Chrismation, will be dismissed, but you are invited to stay for the rest of the service.

To All: Please be aware that Holy Communion is open only to Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves for worthy participation in the Mystery through prayer, fasting, and a recent confession to a priest (within the last month or so). We should be modestly dressed and present to hear "Blessed is the Kingdom" (in *unusual* circumstances no later than the Gospel reading), and not have missed Sunday Liturgy for three or more weeks in a row.

Please Move Forward during the Liturgy! Thank you!

The Special Freewill Offering today will be for the remodelling of our kitchen. We estimate the cost will be \$5000. The Mission Council has decided to go ahead with the project (so that we can make better use of the space) and pay for it out of the building fund IF we can raise at least \$1000.

The Mystery of Holy Unction for the healing of soul and body will be generally offered, this Tuesday December 16 at 7:30 p.m. To receive anointing, one must be an Orthodox Christian in communion with the Church who has made a recent Confession—and be aware of one's need for healing!

The Nativity Fast lasts through the Liturgy on Nativity morning (Dec 25). We abstain from meat and dairy for the whole fast, and fish, wine (alcohol), and oil (except when permitted per the wall calendar) and marital relations so that we can give more in alms, pray more effectively, and open our hearts more widely to God.

Nativity Lent Almsgiving: As is our practice, as part of our almsgiving during the Nativity Fast, we are collecting items for Woman to Woman and Interfaith Ministries, two worthy local charities. Boxes will be placed under the bookstore table with sheets describing what sort of items are needed.

Parish Membership: if you want or consider yourself to be a member of St. Maximus but have not filled out a parish membership form, please do so. They may be found on the candle table. Give it to Fr. Justin or any council member. Thank you.

Holy Supper signup has been posted on the bulletin board. If you plan to be here Nativity eve, please sign up.

Classes this Week:

Wednesday, Theological Orations of St. Gregory
Friday, the Basics of Orthodoxy Class at 8:00 p.m.

December 19: The Church and the Ecumenical Councils

Church School for our children will meet right after Liturgy today.

Please Pray for our Catechumen: Thom Anderson, **our inquirers** John Parsons and Adam Betz. Please pray for our **shut-ins** Nina Johnston and Samantha Stateson, and Lois Lyda's father James, and for Frieda Glusheknko's mother Galina diagnosed with cancer, Elder Zacharias, also diagnosed with cancer, and Gareth Tikhon Barnard who is working away from us in Kansas. Please remember our **new Metropolitan** Jonah in our prayers, and the newly departed Patriarch Aleksei II of Russia. Memory Eternal!

Tithes, Offerings & Attendance: Bringing our tithes and offerings to the temple of God is part of our worship of God and an act of obedience to God, a sign that Christ is, for us, Lord of all, including our money—that it all belongs to Him and we are but stewards of it. Your worship of God through giving supports our efforts to proclaim the fullness of the Gospel of Christ in Denton through the establishment of a permanent Orthodox parish and new missions throughout Denton County and north Texas. Checks should be made out to St. Maximus Orthodox Church. Stamped, addressed envelopes are available on the candle table if you know you will be gone.

Last week, we gave \$1331,46 in tithes and offerings; our monthly budget is \$6218 (\$1554 per week). Candles \$48.50; Building Fund \$29.75; Bookstore \$134.10. May God bless your faithful giving!
Attendance: Vigil 21, Liturgy 65.

From Saint Maximus

Virtue may be defined as the conscious union of human weakness with divine strength.

No benefit comes from a just man's prayer if he who asks for it finds more pleasure in sin than in virtue. For Samuel mourned over Saul when he sinned, but he was not able to obtain God's mercy, for his grief was not supported by the necessary change of life on the part of the sinner. Hence God put an end to the pointless grief of His servant, saying to him, "How long will you mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel?" *Various Texts 3.79, 3.81*

Abba Isidore of Pelusia said, 'To live without speaking is better than to speak without living. For the former who lives rightly does good even by his silence but the latter does not good even when he speaks. When words and life correspond to one another, they are together the whole of philosophy.'" *Sayings of the Desert Fathers*

... no one should communicate [receive Holy Communion] without tears...this is possible and truly suitable for all....Since no one is without sin, even if he lived but a single day, and no one is able to keep his heart pure, it is evident that a man must not spend one single day of all his life without penitence and tears, as far as he is able. Even if he has not tears, at least he ought to seek them with all his power and soul. In no other way can he become sinless, nor may his heart become pure. *St. Symeon the New Theologian*

Troparia and Kontakia for December 14th



Resurrectional Troparion, tone 1

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews / and the soldiers were guarding Thine immaculate body, / Thou didst rise on the third day, O Saviour, / granting life to the world. / The powers of heaven, therefore cried to Thee, O Giver of life: / Glory to the Resurrection, O Christ! / Glory to Thy Kingdom! / Glory to Thy dispensation, O only Lover of man.

Troparion, Holy Forefathers, tone 2

By faith, Thou didst justify the forefathers, / when through them didst betroth Thyself aforetime / to the Church from among the nations. / The Saints boast in glory / that from their seed, there is a glorious fruit, / even she that bare Thee seedlessly. / By their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls.

Kontakion, Holy Forefathers, tone 6

Ye would not worship a hand-wrought image, O thrice blessed ones; / but armed by the Undepictable Essence, / ye were glorified in your ordeal by fire. / Standing in the midst of the irresistible flame, ye called upon God: / Speed Thou, O Compassionate One, since Thou art merciful, / and hasten to come unto our aid; for Thou art able, if it be Thy will.