

St. Maximus the Confessor Orthodox Mission, Denton

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Priest Justin Frederick

Bulletin for Sunday, December 21, 2008

Schedule of Services

**December 21<sup>st</sup> Sunday Before Nativity**

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

6:00 p.m. Vespers

**December 22<sup>nd</sup> Monday**

6:00 a.m. Matins

3:00 p.m. Vespers, Confession

**December 23<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday**

6:00 a.m. Matins

Church Decoration

7:00 p.m. Vespers, Confession

**December 24<sup>th</sup> Wednesday Eve of Nativity**

8:00 a.m. Royal Hours

12:00 p.m. Vesperal Liturgy of St. Basil

5:30 p.m. Vigil of Nativity

7:30 p.m. Holy Supper

**December 25<sup>th</sup> Thursday Nativity of Our Lord in the Flesh**

8:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

**December 26<sup>th</sup> Friday Second Day of Nativity**

7:30 a.m. Matins

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

10:30 a.m. Brunch at Rectory

7:00 p.m. Vespers

**December 27<sup>th</sup> Saturday Third Day of Nativity**

7:30 a.m. Matins

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

5:00 p.m. Vigil, Confession

**December 28<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Nativity**

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

6:00 p.m. Vespers

A person who does not tolerate suspicion or disparagement of others  
possesses true love. *St. Thalassios, Philakalia*

## Announcements for December 21<sup>st</sup>

**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 debt reduction on our mortgage with the Diocese; we currently owe \$112,859.

**The Nativity Fast** ends with Liturgy on Nativity morning (Dec 25). We then do not fast until January 5<sup>th</sup>.

**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 are under the bookstore table with sheets describing what sort of items are needed.

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

**No Classes this Week!**

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

**Please Pray for our Catechumens:** Thom Anderson, **our inquirers** John Parsons and Adam Betz, & Melanie. 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, as well as all who are travelling. Please remember our **new Metropolitan** Jonah in your prayers.

**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 \$781.76 in tithes and offerings; in December we have given \$2113.22; our monthly budget is \$6218 (\$1554 per week). Candles \$44; Special offering for Kitchen Remodel: \$306 (\$694 to go in order to start!); Building Fund \$50; Bookstore \$108. May God bless your faithful giving! Attendance: Vigil 12, Liturgy 45.

### From Saint Maximus

The Logos [Christ the Word] bestows adoption on us when He grants us that birth and deification which, transcending nature, comes by grace from above through the Spirit. The guarding and preservation of this in God depends on the resolve of those thus born: on their sincere acceptance of the grace bestowed on them and, through the practice of the commandments, on their cultivation of the beauty given to them by grace. Moreover, by emptying themselves of the passions, they lay hold of the divine to the same degree as that to which, deliberately emptying Himself of His own sublime glory, the Logos of God truly became man. *On the Lord's Prayer*

### From Saint Thalassios (*friend of St. Maximus*)

If you tell your brother how someone else denigrates him, you conceal your own envy in the guise of goodwill.

Love and self-control purify the soul, while pure prayer illumines the intellect.

The true ruler is he who rules over himself and has subjected soul and body to the intelligence.

Patiently endure the distressing and painful things that befall you, for through them God in His providence is purifying you.

It is God's task to administer the world and the soul's task to guide the body.

Hardship and distress, whether of our own choosing or providential, destroy sensual pleasure.

Christ is the savior of both soul and body, and the person who follows in His footsteps is freed from evil.

God the Logos, in becoming incarnate while remaining unchanged, was united through His flesh with the whole of creation.

There is a new wonder in heaven and on earth: God is on earth, and man is in heaven.

He united men and angels so as to bestow deification on all creation.

## Troparia and Kontakia for December 21<sup>st</sup>



### Resurrectional Troparion, tone 2

When Thou, didst descend to death, O Life Immortal / Thou didst slay Hell with the lightning-flash of Thy Divinity, / and, when from the nether regions Thou didst raise the dead, / all the powers of Heaven cried out: / ‘O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to Thee!’

### 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.

### Troparion of the Forefeast, tone 4

Once Mary, bearing in her womb an Offspring conceived without seed, / was registered in Bethlehem with the elder Joseph, as being of the seed of David. / And while they were there, / the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. / But there was no room for them in the inn. / But the cave showed itself to be a beauteous palace for the Queen, // and Christ is born to raise up the image that fell of old!

### 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.

### Kontakion of the Forefeast, tone 3

Today the Virgin cometh to the cave / to give birth ineffably to the pre-eternal Word. / Hearing this, be of good cheer, O inhabited earth, / and with the angels and the shepherds glorify Him // whose will it was to be made manifest a young Child, the pre-eternal God.