

St. Maximus the Confessor Orthodox Mission, Denton
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Bulletin for Sunday December 1st, 2013

Schedule of Services

December 1st 23rd Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

December 4th Wednesday

7:00 p.m. Reader's Vespers

December, 5th Thursday

6:30 p.m. Compline with Akathist

7:00 p.m. Vigil for St. Nicholas, Confession

December 6th Friday St. Nicholas

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

8:00 p.m. *Liturgical Theology Class, St. Seraphim's, Dallas*

December 7th Saturday

5:00 p.m. Vigil, Confession

December 8th 24th Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

The Optina Elders on Curiosity, Moderation, & Ingratitude

Do not investigate the affairs of others—you will lose peace! *St. Anatoly*

Moderation in all things is good. There is a spiritual age (of a person) just as there is an outward age. Just as nine-year-olds cannot grasp what is proper for twenty-year-olds, so also in the spiritual life: with zeal that is foolish and beyond your strength, you can spiritually hurt yourself. But if the Lord spares someone from this, at the very least, he will take on the labor and grief in vain. Go slowly—and you'll go farther, as the experienced say. It is harmful not to take care of what is necessary, but it is dangerous to strive for what is beyond your limit. Above all, hold on to these three: fear of God, humility, and constant repentance. *St. Ambrose*

If you do good, you must do it only for God. For this reason you must pay no attention to the ingratitude of people. Expect a reward not here, but from the Lord in heaven. If you expect it here—it will be in vain and you will endure deprivation. *St. Ambrose*

Announcements for December 1

To Our Visitors: Welcome! Please join us after the service for coffee, food, and conversation. If you would, fill out a visitor's card for us and leave it in the basket on the table by the door. We invite you to go first through the food line and join the priest at the table.

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 (so as not to distract others) and present to hear "Blessed is the Kingdom" at the beginning of the Liturgy (in *unusual* circumstances no later than the Gospel reading), and not leave until the dismissal at the end.

The Special Offering this week will be for a new chalice set.

Temple wine and oil given in thanksgiving for Gregory, Basil, and Terence.

Blocking Doors: Please take care not to stand in front of either glass-paned door during Divine Liturgy. Doing so impedes the movement of those who must take children out and bring them back in and makes it difficult for latecomers to enter.

Classes this Week

Friday 8:00 p.m. Liturgical Theology Class, St. Seraphim's, Dallas.

Nativity Fast: We fast from meat, dairy, fish, wine, oil & marital relations (fish, wine, oil are noted on the wall calendar when permitted) and seek to increase in both quantity and quality our prayer (corporate and private), almsgiving, spiritual reading, and deeds of service in fulfillment of Christ's commandments that we may make more room for Christ in our lives. If you have not been to Confession and Communion in the past couple months, now is the time to prepare yourself to participate in those Mysteries. The Nativity Fast lasts through Liturgy on December 25.

A General Holy Unction will be served Tuesday, December 17 at 7:00 p.m. to pray for healing of soul and body. Any Orthodox Christian who has had a recent Confession may receive the anointing.

Please Pray: for catechumen Shannon Goodson, for inquirers Rebecca and Destiny Marcott, Holly Bellan, Kathy Wells and her family, Amber Payne, Leah Saunders, and Joseph; the novice Svetlana, Elizabeth (Chandler) Jones, and Paraskeve. Pray for Joe Fincher and Olga, for Joanna (Sherri) Hale. **Eternal Memory** to the nun Elizabeth.

Parish Food Pantry: As part of our parish almsgiving, you may bring non-perishable foods and toiletries and place them in the labeled tub in the hall outside the bathroom. These will be made available to parishioners and sundry who have need.

Tithes, Offerings & Attendance: Bringing our tithes and offerings to the temple of God is part of our worship of God, which also 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 in Denton County and north Texas. Checks should be made out to St. Maximus Orthodox Church and placed in the basket on the candle table, where there is also a box for alms (those in need) and a box for our building fund.

Last week, we gave \$2791.66; in November we gave \$8595.10; Our monthly budget is \$8700 (\$2008 per week.) Candles \$77.55, Special offering for IOCC \$6, building fund \$14, soda (building renovation) \$4. To build a church will require a monthly income in the neighborhood of \$11,000 a month.) Attendance: Saturday Vigil 26, Sunday Liturgy 86. November averages: Liturgy 88, Vigil 31

From Saint Maximus

The rewards for the toils of virtue are dispassion and spiritual knowledge. For these are mediators of the kingdom of heaven, just as passions and ignorance are mediators of eternal punishment. It is because of this that he who seeks these rewards for the sake of human glory and not for their intrinsic goodness is rebuked by the words of Scripture, 'You ask, and do not receive, because you ask wrongly' (James. 4:3).

Many human activities, good in themselves, are not good because of the motive for which they are done. For example, fasting and vigils, prayer and psalmody, acts of charity and hospitality are by nature good, but when performed for the sake of self-esteem they are not good.

In everything that we do God searches out our purpose to see whether we do it for Him or for some other motive.

When you hear the words of Scripture, 'Thou shalt render to every man according to his work' (Ps. 62:12. LXX), do not think that God bestows blessings when something is done for the wrong purpose, even though it seems be good. Quite clearly He bestows blessings only when something is done for the right purpose. For God's judgment looks not at the actions but at the purpose behind them.

400 Chapters on Love, 2.34-37

Troparia and Kontakia for Sunday, December 1

Resurrectional Troparion, tone 6

The angelic powers were at Thy tomb / and the guards became as dead men, / Mary stood by Thy grave, / seeking Thine immaculate body, / Thou didst despoil hell, not being tempted by it, / Thou didst go to meet the Virgin granting life, / O Lord, who didst rise from the dead, / glory to Thee.

St. Maximus, Troparion, tone 3

By an outpouring of the Holy Spirit / thou didst pour forth Christ's sacred teachings, / thou didst expound with Divine authority / the self-emptying of God the Word / and wast radiant in thy confession of the True Faith: / O, Glorious Father Maximus / pray to Christ our God / to grant us His great mercy.

St. Philaret the Merciful, Troparion, tone 4

Emulating Abraham in faith / and following Job in patience, / O father Philaret, thou didst distribute the blessings of the earth to the needy / and didst manfully endure the lack thereof. / Wherefore, Christ our God, the Judge of the contest, / hath crowned thee with a diadem of light // Him do thou entreat that our souls be saved.

Resurrectional Kontakion, tone 6

With His life-originating palm, from the valleys of gloom / the Life-giver Christ God hath raised all the dead. / He hath bestowed resurrection on the human race /, for He is the Savior of all, the Resurrection, and Life, and God of all.

St. Maximus, Kontakion tone 8 *Serbian Melody*

Let us the faithful praise with fitting hymns / that lover of the Holy Trinity, great Maximus, / who clearly taught the divinely-given Faith: / that we should give glory unto Christ our God, / Who, but one person, hath in very truth / two natures, wills, and energies. / Let us cry to him: // Rejoice, divine herald of the Faith.

St. Philaret the Merciful, Kontakion, tone 3

Truly seen is thy most excellent commerce / and judged to be wise by all the divinely wise, / for thou didst forgive transitory debts, / seeking that which is exalted and everlasting. / Wherefore thou hast acquired eternal glory as is meet, // O merciful Philaret.