

St. Maximus the Confessor Orthodox Mission, Denton
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Bulletin for Sunday, December 25th, 2016
Christ is born! Glorify Him!



Schedule of Services

December 25th Sunday Nativity of Our Lord in the Flesh
8:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

December 27th Tuesday Protomartyr Stephen
6:00 a.m. Matins
7:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

December 28th Wednesday
5:00 p.m. Open House at Rectory

December 29th Thursday
6:00 a.m. Matins
4:00 p.m. Vespers
5:00 p.m. Parish Game Night, Supper

December 30th Friday
6:00 a.m. Matins
8:00 p.m. Vespers

December 31st Saturday
9:30 a.m. Nativity Monastery Feast Day
8:00 p.m. All-Night Vigil

January 1st Sunday St. Basil, Circumcision of Christ
9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

St. Theodore the Great Ascetic 100 Texts

12. Bodily passions or passions concerned with material things are reduced and withered through bodily hardship, while the unseen passions of the soul are destroyed through humility, gentleness and love.

13. Self-control together with humility withers passionate desire, love calms inflamed anger, and intense prayer together with mindfulness of God concentrates distracted thoughts. Thus the tripartite soul is purified. It was to this end that the apostle said: 'Pursue peace with all men and the holiness without which no one will see the Lord' (Heb. 12:14).

St. Maximus the Confessor Orthodox Mission
belongs to the Diocese of the South, Orthodox Church in America

Announcements for December 25

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 also invite you to go first through the food line.

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).

The Special Offering this week will be for the Diocese of Aleppo in Syria.

Temple Oil offered in memory of William Frederick.

Many Thanks to those who helped clean and decorate the church and grounds last Thursday and Friday.

No Classes This Week or Next. They will resume the week of January 8. A daytime class will begin then on Friday afternoons.

Nativity: We keep the feast for seven days through the leavetaking next Saturday. We do not fast, and we greet each other with "Christ is born!" and answer "Glorify Him!". We may sing the troparion (before) and kontakion (after) of the feast in place of our usual prayers at meals.

Open House at Rectory: The parish priest and his family invite any and all who attend this parish for an open house at their home this Wednesday evening starting at 5:00. Food will be served. Instruments are welcome.

Parish Game Night: We will have a game night for the children and youth this Thursday. The evening will include Vespers at 4:00 with a potluck meal (bring your leftovers) and games following.

Holy Nativity Monastery will celebrate its patronal feast next Saturday with Bishop Alexander. You are invited, but you must call ahead soon. See the flier on the candle table for more information.

New Year's Vigil: Each year brings its share of weal and woe to the world. To enter A.D. 2017, we will keep a longer vigil than usual this coming Saturday, starting at 8:00 p.m. and ending about midnight, to celebrate the feasts of St. Basil the Great and the Circumcision of Christ and to pray over the upcoming year.

Resolutions for the New Year: This week as we celebrate the Nativity of our Lord is a good time to consider our lives and the new year ahead and what changes God would have us make in 2017. Rather than trying to change everything at once and doing nothing,

though, it is better to focus on changing a small number of things. A small change made now can produce a big result later.

Commemorations: Please try to submit your Sunday commemorations Saturday night (or earlier) whenever you can.

Tithes, Offerings & Attendance: Bringing our tithes and offerings to the temple of God is part of our worship of God and 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 slot in the candle table (or in the basket passed during service). There are also boxes for alms (those in need) and our building fund.

Last week we gave \$2767.16 in tithes and offerings; in December, we have given \$8092.85. Our monthly budget is \$11,250. Candles \$68.50; Special Offering for Holy Nativity Monastery \$207. Attendance: Liturgy 85, Vigil 30.

Please Pray: for the newly tonsured nun Susanna (or Shoshoni, the former Svetlana); for catechumens the Wells family and Marsha Northam, our inquirers the Dean family, for David & Sally Roberts, and for the Jones family; for the novice Elias. Pray for Patricia, Perpetua, and James Lydon. Please pray for Photina and Jude Bellan, for Olga Fincher and her husband Joseph.

From Saint Maximus 400 Chapters on Love

1.52 In time of trial do not leave your monastery [parish, family, etc.] but stand up courageously against the thoughts that surge over you, especially those of irritation and listlessness. For when you have been tested by afflictions in this way, according to divine providence, your hope in God will become firm and secure. But if you leave, you will show yourself to be worthless, unmanly and fickle.

1.53 If you wish not to fall away from the love of God, do not let your brother go to bed feeling irritated with you, and do not go to bed yourself feeling irritated with him. Reconcile yourself with your brother, and then come to Christ with a clear conscience and offer Him your gift of love in earnest prayer (cf. Matt. 5:24).

1.54 St Paul says that, if we have all the gifts of the Spirit but do not have love, we are no further forward (cf. 1 Cor. 13:2). How assiduous, then, we ought to be in our efforts to acquire this love.

1.55 If 'love prevents us from harming our neighbor' (Rom. 13:10), he who is jealous of his brother or irritated by his reputation, and damages his good name with cheap jibes or in any way spitefully

plots against him, is surely alienating himself from love and is guilty in the face of eternal judgment.

1.56 If love is the fulfilling of the law' (Rom. 13:10), he who is full of rancor towards his neighbor and lays traps for him and curses him, exulting in his fall, must surely be a transgressor deserving eternal punishment.

Troparia and Kontakia for December 25th



Nativity, Troparion, tone 4

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God / hath shone upon the world the light of wisdom. / For by it, those who worshipped the stars / were taught by a star to adore Thee, / the Sun of Righteousness, / and to know Thee, the Orient from on high. // O Lord, glory to Thee!

Nativity, Kontakion, tone 3 (*By St. Romanos the Melode*)

Today the Virgin giveth birth to the Transcendent One, / and the earth offereth a cave to the Unapproachable One! / Angels with Shepherds glorify Him! / The wise men journey with the star: // since for our sake the eternal God was born as a little child!