

St. Maximus the Confessor Orthodox Mission, Denton

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Bulletin for Sunday, December 24th, 2017
Christ is Born! Glorify Him!



Schedule of Services

December 24th Sunday Tone 4 Nativity Eve

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy, Coffee Hour
5:00 p.m. Vigil for Nativity

December 25th Monday Nativity of Our Lord in the Flesh

8:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy of St. Basil

December 26th Tuesday

6:00 a.m. Matins

December 27th Wednesday

6:00 a.m. Matins, Confession

December 29th Friday

6:00 a.m. Matins, Confession
7:00 p.m. Vespers, Confession

December 30th Saturday

9:00 a.m. *Feastday Liturgy at Nativity Monastery, Kemp*
6:00 p.m. Vigil, Confession

December 31st Sunday Tone 5

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy, Coffee Hour
10:00 p.m. All-Night Vigil

St. Theodore the Great Ascetic 100 Texts

96. Through active virtue desire is brought under control and anger is bridled. Through spiritual knowledge and contemplation the intellect makes its spiritual ascent and, being raised above material things, departs towards God, attaining true blessedness.

97. Our first struggle is this: to reduce the passions and to conquer them entirely. Our second task is to acquire the virtues, and not allow our soul to be empty and idle. The third stage of the spiritual journey is watchfully to preserve the fruits of our virtues and our labors. For we have been commanded not only to work diligently, but also to preserve vigilantly (cf. Gen. 2:15).

Announcements for December 24th

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 line at Coffee Hour.

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 is for our building fund.

Altar Wine offered for the health and salvation of Sophia; **Temple Oil** is offered for the health and salvation of Mykola.

Many Thanks to those who came and worked to clean and decorate on Friday, to Valentina Burhans for sewing a new covering for the Table of Oblation, to our bakers Melanie Betz and Andrea Rovny, and to our Warden Adam Skelton and Assistant Warden Ed Pier for covering up the openings in the kitchen.

Nativity Liturgy will be served 8:00 a.m., Monday, December 25.

Classes This Week

Sunday, noon Basics of Orthodoxy 201

The Nativity Fast ends after Liturgy tomorrow. We then have a period of no fasting until January 5.

Craft Sale: The children's bake sale will be next Sunday, December 31.

Building Fund Watch: Building fund balance: \$105,100. Our goal by the end of the year is \$125,000.

New Year Vigil: As has been our wont in recent years, we shall ring in the New Year with an All-night Vigil celebrating St. Basil the Great and the Circumcision of Christ. The Vigil will begin at 10:00 p.m. December 31. It will consist of Small Compline with the Akathist to the Theotokos sung, Great Vespers, Matins, the First Hour, Precommunion Prayers, the Third & Sixth Hours, and the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil followed by prayers of Thanksgiving. The service should conclude about 4:00 a.m. January 1. Readers and singers and servers are all requested.

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

Close Door Quietly: Please go easy on the bones of our old building and on the ears of those worshipping by not slamming the front door but closing it quietly.

Prophorion Bags of cloth are available in the bookstore, sewn by your own Anna Stokes. Starting in January, we will put the commemorative loaves out on a tray with your commemoration slip for you to pick up and bag to take home.

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 and our building fund.

Last Sunday, we gave \$1988 in tithes and offerings; in December, we have given \$7088, our monthly budget is \$12,383 (the money received above budget will go to the building fund). Candles \$82.50, Building Fund \$45. Attendance: Vigil 33; Sunday Liturgy 115; Thursday Liturgy 51.

Please Pray for Ksenia Williams in the hospital with an infection, for Reader Michael Rodgers recovering from neck surgery, for Cassian and Ruth Brown and their children Daniel, Anna, Elijah; for our catechumens Miguel Dean, Connor Patrick, Joel and Alta Morris and their children Solomon, Shilah, Benjamin, and Brandon and Lanie Veazey and their new baby Silouan; our inquirers Donna Lange, the Dean family, Jason Matthes, Chris; for the nun Susannah and the novice Elias. Please pray for Photina and Jude Bellan, for Olga Fincher and her husband Joseph, for Eugene and Rachel, for Jeremy Gleb Rovny, working in Georgia.

From Saint Maximus 400 Chapters on Love

3.10 If a man loves someone, he naturally makes every effort to be of service to that person. If, then, a man loves God, he naturally strives to conform to His will. But if he loves the flesh, he panders to the flesh.

3.11 Love, self-restraint, contemplation and prayer accord with God's will, while gluttony, licentiousness and things that increase them pander to the flesh. That is why 'they that are in the flesh cannot conform to God's will' (Rom. 8:8). But 'they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh together with the passions and desires' (Gal. 5:24).

3.12 If the intellect inclines to God, it treats the body as its servant and provides it with no more than it needs to sustain life. But if it inclines to the flesh, it becomes the servant of the passions and is always thinking about how to fulfill its desires.

3.13 If you wish to master your thoughts, concentrate on the passions and you will easily drive the thoughts arising from them

out of your intellect. With regard to unchastity, for instance, fast and keep vigils, labor and avoid meeting people. With regard to anger and resentment, be indifferent to fame, dishonor and material things. With regard to rancor, pray for him who has offended you and you will be delivered.

Troparia and Kontakia for December 24th

Resurrectional Troparion, tone 4

Having learned the radiant proclamation of the Resurrection from the Angel, /the women disciples of the Lord cast off the ancestral curse, /and, boasting, told the Apostles: /Death hath been despoiled, Christ God is risen, /granting the world great mercy.

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.