

St. Maximus the Confessor Orthodox Mission, Denton  
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## Bulletin for Sunday, December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2018

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**December 23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday before Nativity, tone 5**

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

11:55 a.m. Basics of Orthodoxy 102, Decorate Church

**December 24<sup>th</sup> Monday Nativity Eve**

7:00 a.m. Matins

8:00 a.m. Royal Hours

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

6:00 p.m. Vigil, Confession

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

8:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

**December 26<sup>th</sup> Wednesday**

7:00 p.m. Vespers, Confession

**December 27<sup>th</sup> Thursday Protomartyr Stephen**

6:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

**December 28<sup>th</sup> Friday**

6:00 p.m. *Basics Class at Rectory*

**December 29<sup>th</sup> Saturday**

9:30 a.m. *Pilgrimage to Nativity Monastery, Kemp*

6:00 p.m. Vigil, Confession

**December 30<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Nativity, tone 6**

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

St. Justin of Chelije (+1979), *Nativity Homily 1970*

As for you: live in Him, live in God-Man, and you will be healed of all deaths, sins, passions, and of every work of the devil. Let your life become Divine-life. In that, O man, as soon as you become a member of the Church, a member of the Divine-human Body of Christ, rests all of the Mystery of Heaven on earth: And how does one live in the Church of Christ? Live by the Holy Mysteries and the Holy Virtues. This is why the Feast of the Nativity is preceded by a Fast. Fasting is the first among the virtues, and is always accompanied by prayer. Those two fundamental virtues lead man to God-Man, and through Divine Wisdom teach him how to live by Him and in Him.

## Announcements for December 23<sup>rd</sup>

**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 with the priest 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 the new icons of Christ and the Theotokos for the analogia in front of the church. Next week, for the building fund to read our goal of \$200,000.

**Team Two** is cleaning today, last names De through K.

**Many Years** to the newly illumined Benedict Patrick, Miguel Dean, and Magdalena Rodgers and to their sponsors Paul Johnson, Subdeacon Michael Rehmet, and Reader Maximus & Michelle Gibson!

**A Vespers Liturgy**, a combination of Vespers up through Gladsome Light and the Old Testament readings and continuing with the Liturgy of St. Basil from the Trisagion, will be served on Nativity Eve, Monday at noon, earlier than the 3:00 p.m. appointed by the Typicon. The Eucharistic fast for partaking is from midnight.

### Classes this Week:

Sunday at the bell during coffee hour, Basics of Orthodoxy 102  
Friday, 6:00 p.m. Basics of Orthodoxy at the Rectory

### Building Fund Watch

"Establish Thou this holy house, even unto the consummation of the age."

*Liturgy of St. Basil*

Building fund balance: \$186,705.88.

New goal: \$200,000 by year's end. We tentatively aim to raise \$500,000 before we start building.

**No Coffee Hour** will follow the Liturgy on Nativity so that all may celebrate the feast with family and friends.

**Nativity Greeting:** it is customary in our parish and in many others to offer the Nativity greeting between now and Theophany: "Christ is born!" "Glorify Him!"

**The Nativity Fast** ends after Communion at Liturgy on December 25. There is no penitential fasting until January 5. (But we still keep the Eucharist fast when communing.)

**N.B.** All tithes and offerings that do not go in the basket during Liturgy should go in the slot in the candle table along with all candle

money, and offerings for temple oil, wine, and commemorations. We have removed the building fund box. All giving for the building fund should go in the slot: checks designated "building fund" in the memo cash in a building fund envelope from on top of the candle table. Remember that all monthly giving above budget goes to the building fund automatically.

**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). Alms may be placed in the box above the candle table.

Last week, we gave \$4750 in tithes and offerings; this month, we have given \$9,385; our monthly budget is \$15,112 (the money received above budget goes to the building fund). Candles \$84.50, Building Fund \$150; Special Offering for Interfaith Ministries \$68. Attendance last week: Vigil 52; Sunday Liturgy 141. Unction 74.

**Please Pray** for our catechumens James Blankenship, Donna Lange, Jonathan Kidd, Katelyn Davis, Chris Day, and the Heitzenrater family: John, Christina, Madeleine, Margaret, Aemelia, John "William", Isabella, Mary Elizabeth, Thomas, Charles, Charlotte; for Esteban Lopez, Brian, Adrienne, and Hannah Freas; for our inquirers the Dean family, Robert Peterson, Colby and Rebekah Meals and their children, David & Anita Charpie and their children, for Robert Osborne; for the nun Susannah and the novice Elias. Pray for Joseph and Olga Fincher.

### From Saint Maximus 400 Chapters on Love

4.74 In Scripture the virtues are called 'ways'. The greatest of all the virtues is love. That is why St Paul said, 'Now I will show you the best way of all' (1 Cor. 12:31), one that persuades us to scorn material things and value nothing transitory more than what is eternal.

4.75 Love of God is opposed to desire, for it persuades the intellect to control itself with regard to sensual pleasures. Love for our neighbor is opposed to anger, for it makes us scorn fame and riches. These are the two pence which our Savior gave to the innkeeper (cf. Luke 10:31), so that he should take care of you. But do not be thoughtless and associate with robbers; otherwise you will be beaten again and left not merely unconscious but dead.

## Troparia and Kontakia for December 23<sup>rd</sup>

### Resurrectional Troparion, tone 5

Let us the faithful hymn and worship the Word / who with the Father and the Spirit hath no beginning, / and was born for our salvation of the Virgin; / for He was pleased to ascend the Cross in the flesh, / and to endure death / and to raise the dead / by His glorious Resurrection.

### Holy Forefathers, Troparion, tone 2

Great are the achievements of faith! / In the fountain of flame, as by the water of rest, the Three Holy Children rejoiced. / And the Prophet Daniel / proved a shepherd of lions as of sheep. // By their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls.

### Troparion, Forefeast of Nativity, tone 4

Make ready, O Bethlehem! / Open unto all, O Eden! / Adorn thyself, O Ephrata! / For the Tree of life hath blossomed forth from the Virgin in the cave. / Her womb is shown to be a noetic paradise, / wherein lieth a divine garden, eating from which we live, not dying like Adam. // Christ is born to raise up His image which before was fallen.

### 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.

### Forefeast of Nativity, Kontakion, tone 1

Be glad, O Bethlehem! / Make ready, O Ephratha! / For lo! she who beareth the Lamb and Shepherd in her womb / doth make haste to give birth. / Beholding this, the God-bearing fathers are glad // hymning with the shepherds the Virgin who giveth milk.

### 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.

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“It is not he who begins well who is perfect. It is he who ends well who is approved in God’s sight.” *St. Basil the Great*

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