

December 24, 2017

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

Diocese of Toledo - Orthodox Church in America

2143 S. Center Rd, Burton, MI 48519

Served by: Fr. Matthew-Peter Butrie – Rector mobile:810-247-4265

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**The Gospel according to Saint John
20:1-10 (7th Matins Gospel)**

Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.” Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb. So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first. And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying there; yet he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying there, and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed. For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead. Then the disciples went away again to their own homes.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2017 29th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 4. Eve of the Nativity of Christ. Sunday before the Nativity. Nun-martyr Eugenia of Rome, and with her Martyrs Philip, her father, Protus, Hyacinth, Basilla, and Claudia (ca. 262). Ven. Nicholas the Monk, of Bulgaria (9th c.).

TROPARIA

(Tone 4) When the women Disciples of the Lord learned from the Angel the joyous message of the Resurrection, they cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the Apostles: “Death is overthrown! Christ God is risen, granting the world great mercy!”

(Tone 4) Mary was of David’s seed, so she went with Joseph to register in Bethlehem. She bore in her womb the Fruit not sown by man. The time for the birth was at hand. Since there was no room at the inn, the cave became a beautiful palace for the Queen.//Christ is born, raising up the image that fell of old.

(Tone 2) Great are the accomplishments of faith, for the three Holy Youths rejoiced in the fountain of flames as though in the waters of rest; and the Prophet Daniel appeared a shepherd to the lions as though they were sheep. // So by their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls!

(Tone 4) In truth you were revealed to your flock as a rule of faith, a model of meekness, and teacher of abstinence, so you won the heights by humility, and riches by poverty, O Holy Father Nicholas, intercede with Christ God to save our souls.

KONTAKION

(Tone 3) The Virgin cometh today to the cave to give birth, ineffably to bring forth the Word Eternal. Therefore, rejoice, O earth, at the message, with the angels and shepherds give glory to Him Who shall appear by His own will as a young child, He Who is from eternity God.

The Prokeimenon in the Fourth Tone: Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our Fathers / and praised and glorified is Thy name forever! v. For Thou art just in all that Thou hast done for us!

THE EPISTLE OF THE HOLY APOSTLE PAUL TO THE HEBREWS (11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40) Brethren: By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was ready to offer up his only son, of whom it was said, “Through Isaac shall your descendants be named.” He considered that God was able to raise men even from the dead; hence, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back. By faith Isaac invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau. By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, bowing in worship over the head of his staff. By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his burial. By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid for three months by his parents, because they saw

that the child was beautiful; and they were not afraid of the king's edict. And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets -- who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, and ill-treated -- of whom the world was not worthy -- wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

Alleluia, Tone 4

v: We have heard with our ears, O God, for our fathers have told us.

v: For Thou hast saved us from them that oppose us, and have put to shame them that hate us.

THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SAINT MATTHEW (1:1-25) The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa, and Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called his name Jesus.

COMMUNION HYMN Praise the Lord from the heavens! Praise Him in the highest! Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Archpastoral Message of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon Nativity of Christ 2017

Christ is born! Glorify Him!

My beloved Brethren and Blessed Children in the Lord,

As we come to the end of the civil year, we reflect back on a period in which tragedy, acts of terrorism, shootings in public spaces, political confusion, and sexual misconduct allegations dominate the news. The darkness which enshrouds the world adds to the burden of our personal and family struggles: addictions, estrangement, divorce and all manner of conflict wrought by human passions. We might be tempted to wonder how love could have so definitively fled from the hearts of human beings.

The feast of the Nativity in the Flesh of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ is a reminder to all of us that "heaven and earth today make glad prophetically" and angels and men "keep spiritual feast for God, born of a woman, has appeared in the flesh to those that sit in darkness and shadow." The light that we receive today is not merely a physical light that pierces the gloom which surrounds us, but rather a transfiguring light that both reveals God's love for us and inspires us to grow in our love for God.

There is no philosophy or ideology that can overcome the irrationality of the world. It is only the transfiguring light of Christ – His divine and sacrificial love – that can accomplish this. It is only through love that we can, with the animals and the manger, "accept Him who by His Word has loosed us dwellers on earth from acts that are against reason." When we despair at the tragedies in the world and in our lives, let us remember that it is precisely in the midst of such darkness that the Word of God chose to be incarnate.

Archimandrite Zacharias suggests that "when we are confronted by the ruins of human love and find ourselves completely broken, then two solutions can be given: either we turn to God with our pain, so that God enters our life and renews us, or we continue to be deceived by our human plans and slide from one tragedy and barrenness of soul to another, hoping that one day we will find perfection."

The world longs for authentic love but seems to remain mired in the global tragedies that we witness every day. In our horizontal and human relations with one another, what is missing is God Himself, a third and divine-human Person to purify and heal our imperfect and broken relationships. Whether it be husband and wife, brother and sister, or larger communities, true love and abiding peace can only be found through our communion with God.

In our Orthodox context, this takes place through the Divine Liturgy and through our efforts to nurture the sacrificial love of God in our own hearts. "Paradise begins on earth through love for God and love for our fellows. In this lies the entire wealth of eternal life, for man has been created to give eternal glory to God. His delight is to return this glory to His image, man, who then returns greater glory to his Creator."

Today's feast is a reminder that it is through this cycle of glorification and love between God and man that we find our true fulfillment. May the new-born Christ grant us the courage to keep His love in our hearts, to connect with our fellows through prayer, sacrifice, and humility, and to remember that, no matter the degree of our own brokenness or the brokenness of the world, Christ has come to give us hope for renewal, "for what He was, He has remained, true God: and what He was not, He has taken upon Himself, becoming man through love for mankind."

With love in the New-Born Christ,
+ Tikhon
Archbishop of Washington
Metropolitan of All America and Canada

December 24, 2017



CANDLE INTENTIONS FOR THE HEALTH AND BLESSINGS OF

Blessed Christmas & prayers for health & blessings to all in the New Year	Bosa Kantor
Fr. Tom, Fr. Dimitri, Fr. Gabriel, Deacon Anthony, Reggie, Allen, Deborah, Joann, Gloria, Luba, Kosta, Jimmy, Laurie, David, Helen, Anna, Walt, Zina, Nicolai, Dorothy, Michael, Nicolai, Allison, Stojan, Mira, Bosa, Jeanette, Nicholas, Margaret, Joseph, Gladys, my family and friends	Joe Tome
Special Intention	Joe Tome
Health & Blessings on her retirement, Susie Ford	Les Ford

CANDLE INTENTIONS FOR BLESSED REPOSE

Walt Borkovich	Mary Withee
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ETERNAL LIGHT AT THE ALTAR

Ivan & Evdokia Ponomarenko Blessed Repose ~ Memory Eternal	Lucy Hogg
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WELCOME to all our friends and visitors. Please join us for our luncheon in our fellowship hall.

COFFEE & PASTRIES are provided today by Joe Tome in memory of the fallen asleep of the Tome family.

OUR CHARITY MINISTRIES

HOPE IN A BOX is collecting **TOWELS, TOILETRIES & NEW TOYS** for the month of December. Place the items in the blue box in the hall. Catholic Charities Community Closet will distribute the items.

FOOD DRIVE Place non-perishable food items in the other blue box in the hall

PROSFORA/LITURGIA If you are able, please bake some loaves for Liturgy and drop them off at the office.

ANNUAL MEETING The Annual Meeting of Saint Nicholas Parish will be held on Sunday, January 14, 2018 beginning with a short prayer service after the Divine Liturgy. The Meeting will then reconvene in the Parish Hall. **All parish organizations must present a report, oral or written, to be given at this meeting.**

2018 CALENDARS are located in the narthex. One calendar per family, please.

2018 PLEDGE CARDS Please fill out and sign your pledge card even if you don't know the amount of your pledge yet. Remember in order to be considered a member here at St. Nicholas you must return a signed pledge card. **DO NOT** send your 2018 pledge donation back with the card or it will be credited to 2017.

2018 OFFERING ENVELOPES are ready to be picked up in the parish hall. If you give regularly (whether or not you filled out a pledge card) it's a tremendous help if you use the numbered envelopes. Please check to see if you have a box with your name on it, even if you marked No on your pledge card for them. If you do not see envelopes with your name on them and did request them, let Marcia know so that she can get envelopes for you.

6th ANNUAL PAN ORTHODOX WINTER DINNER to support the Dormition of the Mother of God Orthodox Monastery will be held on Thursday, January 18 at Assumption. The event will start at 5:30 with Vespers sung by the Mothers of Dormition Monastery, social time, dinner at 7:00 & the benediction at 8:30. Donations are requested at \$35 per adult and \$25 per student. Reservations need to be made by Sunday, January 14th. You may contact Deborah Gonsler-Adams at (810) 695-2464 for more information and to make your reservation(s).

BOOK CLUB will start meeting again January 2nd. Our plans are to read “The Jesus Prayer: The Ancient Desert Prayer that Tunes the Heart to God” by Frederica Mathewes-Green and we will be ordering soon! Please let Father Deacon Michael know if you plan on coming or would like a book (frdnmike@gmail.com).

THEOPHANY BANQUET AND OUTDOOR BLESSING OF WATER will be held on Sunday, January 7th following the Divine Liturgy. Bring your empty bottles to fill with Holy Water. Dress for the weather. The menu will consist of Lamb, Rice, Vegetables, Bread & Butter, Salad, Dessert and Drinks. There will be sign-up sheets in the parish hall for volunteers for set-up and clean-up, also for those that would like to make a dessert. Adults \$12, children 12 and under \$6.

Fr. Matthew will be away for New Year’s. For pastoral emergencies only please contact Fr. Joe (444-9108), Fr. Gabriel (330-285-1740) or Fr. Angelo (471-0316)

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS & GREENS DONATIONS ~ THANK YOU

Poinsettias

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|--------------------------|---|
| (2) Mike & Susan Goodman | In Memory of Harry & Julia Goodman & Alexandria Waskerwitz |
| (2) Lucy Hogg | In Memory of Evdokia & Ivan Ponomarenko |
| (1) Connie Maxim | In Honor of Loving husband Nick Maxim & in Memory of Loving brother Charles Gates |
| (1) Kira Rabkina | In Memory of Luba & Don Stevens |
| (5) Donna & Marv Zischke | In Memory of Daisy & Sam Marvosh |

24” Wreaths

- (1) Calvin & Ruth Conrad

36” Wreaths

- (1) Tom Branoff & family In Memory of Stella Branoff

20’ Garland

- (2) Diane Broadfoot In Memory of Mildred Bladecki

Non Designated Donations:

- Michael & Susan Goodman
Bosylka Kantor

CHRISTMAS SERVICES AT THE ORTHODOX PARISHES OF FLINT

	<u>Our Parish</u>	<u>St. Mary Magdalene</u>	<u>St. George</u>	<u>Assumption</u>
Monday, Dec. 25	10 am Liturgy	10 am Liturgy	no services	10 am Liturgy

Weekly Schedule:

Today

12:30 pm Great Vespers for the Nativity of our Lord

Monday, Dec. 25 **NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST** (Office Closed)

10 am Divine Liturgy

Christ is born!
Glorify Him!

Wednesday, Dec. 27 St. Stephen
9:30 am Divine Liturgy

Saturday, Dec. 30
5 pm Vespers

Sunday, Dec 31
9:30 am Third Hour
10 am Divine Liturgy



Offerings for the week December 17, 2017

Weekly Offerings	\$1,696.00
Estimated Average Weekly Expenses	\$4,034.03
	-\$2,388.03

74 people were in attendance on Sunday, December 17, 2017

“Lift up and stretch out your hands, not to heaven, but to the poor; for if you stretch forth your hands to the poor, you have reached the summit of heaven, but if you lift up your hands in prayer without sharing with the poor, it is worth nothing.” *St. John Chrysostom*