

December 25

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

Diocese of Toledo - Orthodox Church in America

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Welcome! We are honored that you have joined us in our celebration of the birth of Christ Jesus today.

If you are a first-time visitor to our parish, we invite you to sign our guest book in the vestibule. If you have a question, a prayer request, or any need, please speak with Fr. Matthew, Deacon Luke, or with one of the ushers.

For our friends present with us who are not Orthodox Christians, please note that we have specific disciplines regarding receiving Communion. We ask that you refrain from going to Communion until you have spoken with Fr. Matthew after the Liturgy and understand our discipline and piety regarding this sacrament and its implication for responsibility towards and membership in the Orthodox Church. The bread offered at the end of the service is available to all.

If you are an Orthodox Christian from another parish who has prepared in accordance with your discipline, and have a blessing from your home priest to do so, we invite and encourage you to partake of Holy Communion. **Again, welcome!**

DECEMBER 25 THE NATIVITY ACCORDING TO THE FLESH OF OUR LORD GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST. The Adoration of the Magi: Melchior, Caspar, and Balthasar. Commemoration of the Shepherds in Bethlehem who were watching their flocks, and went to see the Lord.

FIRST ANTIPHON

I will give thanks to You, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will make all Your wonders known! *(Psalm 110:1a)* **Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us!**

In the company of the upright, in the congregation, great are the works of the Lord! *(Psalm 110:1b-2a)* **Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us!**

They are studied by all who have pleasure in them! *(Psalm 110:3)* **Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us!**

His work is glory and beauty, and His righteousness endures forever! *(Psalm 110:2b)* **Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us!**

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen. **Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us!**

SECOND ANTIPHON

Blessed is the man who fears the Lord! Who greatly delights in His commandments! *(Psalm 111:1)* **O Son of God, born of the Virgin, save us who sing to You! Alleluia!**

His descendants will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed! *(Psalm 111:2)*
O Son of God, born of the Virgin, save us who sing to You! Alleluia!

Glory and wealth are in His house, and His righteousness endures forever! *(Psalm 111:3)* **O Son of God, born of the Virgin, save us who sing to You! Alleluia!**

Light rises in the darkness for the upright; the Lord is merciful, compassionate and righteous! *(Psalm 111:4)* **O Son of God, born of the Virgin, save us who sing to You! Alleluia!**

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen. Only-begotten Son and immortal Word of God, Who for our salvation willed to be incarnate of the holy Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, Who without change became man and was crucified, O Christ our God, trampling down death by death, Who are one of the Holy Trinity, glorified with the Father and the Holy Spirit: save us!

THIRD ANTIPHON

The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand!" *(Psalm 109:1a)* Your Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone to the world the light of wisdom! For by it those who worshipped the stars, were taught by a star to adore You, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know You, the Orient from on high. O Lord, glory to You!

Until I make Your enemies Your footstool! *(Psalm 109:1b)* Your Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone to the world the light of wisdom! For by it those who worshipped the stars, were taught by a star to adore You, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know You, the Orient from on high. O Lord, glory to You!

The Lord sends forth from Sion Your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of Your foes. *(Psalm 109:2)* Your Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone to the world the light of wisdom! For by it those who worshipped the stars, were taught by a star to adore You, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know You, the Orient from on high. O Lord, glory to You!

Authority shall be with You on the day of Your power, among the splendor of Your holy ones! *(Psalm 109:3)* Your Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone to the world the light of wisdom! For by it those who worshipped the stars, were taught by a star to adore You, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know You, the Orient from on high. O Lord, glory to You!

THE LITTLE ENTRANCE

Deacon: Wisdom! Upright!

Priest: From the womb, before the morning star I have begotten you; the Lord swore and will not change his mind. You are a Priest to the age, according to the order of Melchisedek. *(Psalm 109:4)*
O Son of God, who were born of a Virgin, save us who sing to You: Alliluia.

TROPARION

(Tone 4) Your Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone to the world the light of wisdom! For by it those who worshipped the stars, were taught by a star to adore You, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know You, the Orient from on high. O Lord, glory to You!

KONTAKION

(Tone 3) Today the Virgin gives birth, the Virgin gives birth to the transcendent One, the transcendent One! And the earth offers, offers a cave to the unapproachable One, unapproachable One! Angels, angels with shepherds glorify Him, glorify Him! The wise men journey, journey with a star, journey with a star! Since for our sake, for our sake the Eternal God, the Eternal God was born as a little child!

INSTEAD OF "HOLY GOD..."

As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ! Alleluia!

The prokeimenon in the eighth tone: Let all the earth worship You and praise You; / let it praise Your name, O Most High! (Psalm 65:3)

v. Make a joyful noise to the Lord all the earth! Sing of His Name, give to Him glorious praise! (Psalm 65:1)

THE READING IS FROM THE EPISTLE OF THE APOSTLE PAUL TO THE GALATIANS (4:4-7) Brethren, when the time had fully come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, to redeem those who were under the Law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" Therefore, you are no longer a slave but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

Alleluia, Tone 1

v: The heavens are telling the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims His handiwork! (Psalm 18:1)

v: Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge. (Psalm 18:2)

THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW (2:1-12) Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is He who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East, and have come to worship Him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it is written by the prophet: 'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judea, are by no means least among the rulers of Judea; for from you shall come a ruler who will govern My people Israel.'" Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star appeared; and he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found Him bring me word, that I too may come and worship Him." When they had heard the king they went their way; and lo, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy; and going into the house they saw the child with Mary His mother, and they fell down and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered Him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

INSTEAD OF "IT IS TRULY MEET..."

Magnify, O my soul, Christ the King who was born in a cave! I contemplate a marvelous and all-glorious mystery: heaven has become a cave, the cherubic throne – a virgin; and the manger has become an honorable place in which lies Christ, the uncontainable God. As we praise Him with song, let us extol Him!

COMMUNION HYMN

The Lord has sent redemption to His people! (*Psalm 110:8a*) Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

INSTEAD OF "WE HAVE SEEN THE TRUE LIGHT..." Your Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone to the world the light of wisdom! For by it those who worshipped the stars, were taught by a star to adore You, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know You, the Orient from on high. O Lord, glory to You!

MATINS GOSPEL THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD Matthew 1:18-25

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.