

BLESSED EMPRESS THEOPHANO

The Holy Empress Theophano was the first wife of Emperor Leo VI the Wise (886-911). She and Leo were locked up in prison for three years because Leo was falsely accused of intending to assassinate his father, Emperor Basil the Macedonian. After receiving her freedom, Theophano spent her life in prayer and fasting, earnestly struggling for her salvation.

Living in the world, she renounced everything worldly. She was a benefactor to the poor and was generous toward monasteries. She was a true mother to her subjects, caring for widows and orphans, and consoling the sorrowful. Saint Theophano died in 893 or 894.

Even before her death, her husband started to build a church, intending to dedicate it to Theophano, but she forbade him to do so. It was this emperor who decreed that the Sunday after Pentecost be dedicated to All Saints. Believing that his wife was one of the righteous, he knew that she would also be honored whenever the Feast of All Saints was celebrated.

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SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

6822 BROADVIEW ROAD

PARMA, OHIO 44134

THE TRINITARIAN

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HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH
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CHURCH WEBSITE: <http://www.holy-trin.org>
V. REV. ALEXANDER GARKLAVS, PASTOR

Divine Liturgy at 9:00 A.M.
Church School Every Sunday at 10:45 A.M.
(During the Months of September thru May)

Vespers - Every Saturday - 5:00 P.M.
Choir Rehearsals Every Thursday at 7:30 P.M.
Michael N. Pilat, Choir Director

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BULLETIN 7 - VOLUME LVI

TONE 4

DECEMBER 16, 2018

TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST ***SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS***

Prophet Haggai;
Martyr Marinus of Rome;
Bl. Empress Theophano

“You justified Your ancestors by their faith, and through them You espoused the Church of the gentiles in advance. The boast of these holy ones is a maiden of their lineage, the virgin who gave birth to You. For their sake, O Christ, our God, be pleased to have mercy on us.”

Troparion, Tone VIII

“Through the inspiration of the Divine Spirit, O holy prophet Haggai, you became an enlightened thinker, revealing divine mysteries to us, foretelling what is yet to come, and explaining to us the destiny of things. Entreat Christ, our God, to grant us His great mercy.”

Kondakion, Tone III

TODAY’S EPISTLE: COLOSSIANS 3:4-11

TODAY’S GOSPEL: LUKE 14:16-24

HOLY WORSHIP THIS WEEK:

Saturday, December 22 5:00 p.m. Great Vespers; Confessions

Daily Scripture Readings

Monday, December 17	Hebrews 8:7-13	Mark 9:42-10:1
Tuesday, December 18	Hebrews 9:8-10,15-23	Mark 10:2-12
Wednesday, December 19	Hebrews 10:1-18	Mark 10:11-16
Thursday, December 20	Hebrews 10:35-11:7	Mark 10:17-27
Friday, December 21	Hebrews 11:8,11-16	Mark 10:23-32
Saturday, December 22	Galatians 3:8-12	Luke 13:18-29
	Ephesians 5:1-8	Luke 16:10-15

COMING EVENTS

DECEMBER:

23, Sunday Church School Christmas Pageant; Potluck meal

30, Sunday No Church School classes

JANUARY:

POTLUCK:

Plan to join the HTOC parish family for our (lenten) Potluck on Sunday, Dec. 23, after the Church School Pageant. Sign up in the Fellowship Hall.

LA COUPOLE CHRISTMAS SALE:

There is a 30-50% markdown on all Christmas cards and ornaments! There are new arrivals now available, including books for children and adults as well as icons, handmade ornaments and nesting dolls imported from Russia. Please stop in and browse!

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS:

Please remember your donation for our church flowers; use the designated envelope in your box.

ST. ELIZABETH BOOK CIRCLE:

The Book Circle will meet Monday, January 14, at 12:30 p.m. We are reading Wounded by Love: The Life and the Wisdom of Elder Porphyrios. Please read Part I, pages 1-82. Books are available at La Coupole. All are welcome.

TRINITARIAN COVERS:

There is a sign-up sheet in the Fellowship Hall if you would like to be a donor for covers in 2019. Your offering helps cover the printing costs of our bulletin.

FLOWERS:

The flowers today are offered by the Bellack Family in memory of Bernie Roark.

COFFEE HOUR:

Coffee Hour is a regular and much-appreciated gathering after our Sunday Divine Liturgies. Our parish's practice is for individuals, families or groups of parishioners to take turns — by purchasing or preparing items to be offered with coffee and other beverages. Coffee Hour organizers can repay themselves for items purchased or make a donation, for which they are credited. Proceeds from Coffee Hour go to the parish's General Fund.

The success of Coffee Hour depends on parishioners' willingness to commit on the Sign-up Sheet, which is in the Hall kitchen. To keep it consistent and seamless, it is important to sign up ahead of time, for which purpose we will be printing the current signees and open dates in "The Trinitarian." As you may want to reserve a Sunday to commemorate an anniversary or special event, please check the future dates on the Sign-up Sheet.

Many thanks to December's donors: The families Svilar, Cundik, Smolarchuk, and Howe.

We have openings for December 30, January 6, 20, 27.

FUND CONSOLIDATION:

Several years ago the Parish Council created an Ethnic Foods and Icon Fund, which collected monies from food sales and donations, to be used for projects and items that decorated and beautified the church. Some of these monies were used to pay for portions of the iconography. After the completion of the iconography, there was the intention of applying the funds for a new outdoor sign. This summer a beautiful new sign was finally erected and is now functioning.

As the original intentions for this fund have been satisfied while maintenance projects are on ongoing reality, the Parish Council has decided to consolidate the Ethnic and Icon Funds into the existing Building Fund. Monies from the Building Fund are used for various maintenance and repairs that arise, however, Council can likewise use it for repairs to icons or liturgical items if necessary. Consolidation of the Funds will also streamline bookkeeping and reporting of parish financial statements.

THE GIFTS WE OFFER TO THE LORD WE LOVE

REGULAR COLLECTION, DECEMBER 9	\$ 4333.00
CHURCH ADMINISTRATION ASSESSMENT	75.00
BUILDING FUND	215.00
MORTGAGE FUND	170.00
CANDLES	157.00
CHRISTMAS FLOWERS	282.00
LOCAL CHARITIES	23.00

ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY

Bulletin 7 – Volume LVI

December 16, 2018

THE NATIVITY FAST - II

As the name indicates, the Nativity Fast signals a change in dietary practices, about which we wrote in the previous issue. But equally significant is the fact that the Nativity Fast has fascinating liturgical elements and beloved pious customs.

The Nativity Fast begins on November 15. The day before, November 14, the Church commemorates St. Philip the Apostle. For that reason, many Orthodox cultures call the Fast “Philipovka,” or “Philip’s Fast.” In English-speaking countries, we often used the term “Advent,” which is how Western Christians refer to the preparatory season before Christmas. While calling it Advent is convenient, the Nativity Fast is different in several ways. Western Advent is about 30 days, not 40, and it begins on the Fourth Sunday before Christmas. A beloved feature among Western Christians is the Advent Wreath, containing four candles which are lit sequentially, one on each of the four Sundays. Traditionally, the Christmas tree was decorated after, not before, the beginning of Advent. Another difference between Advent and the Nativity Fast is the more relaxed fasting tradition.

The Orthodox Nativity Fast does not have the elaborate liturgical offices that we find in Great Lent. There are no special liturgical hymns and prayers at the beginning of the Fast, although some monastic communities have incorporated the St. Ephrem Prayer during the weekdays, just like in Great Lent. The first notable liturgical element which directly connects to the coming of Christmas is the inclusion of the Nativity Canon on the Matins of the Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos on November 21. Two of the more important saints commemorated before Christmas are the Apostle Andrew (November 30) and St. Nicholas (December 6), and special Nativity-themed hymns are heard on those days.

Substantial liturgical services which are unique to the Nativity Fast first appear on the Sunday of the Forefathers, two Sundays before Christmas. This is followed by the Sunday before Christmas, Sunday of the Ancestors of Christ. Both of these call our attention to the great company of Old Testament prophets and patriarchs who preceded Jesus Christ and through words and deeds prepared for His coming. December 20 marks the official “Forefeast” of the Nativity on which, and on every day until December 24, full liturgical services exclusively focus on the imminent feast. Christmas Eve, December 24, is distinctive and unlike any other day, with the exception of Theophany Eve, with which it is very similar. It is a day of strict fasting, which is only broken after sunset, often with a special Lenten meal called “Holy Evening Supper.” The entire day is full of distinctive liturgical services which, done in their entirety, take about eight hours. These would include the Royal Hours, the Vespers and Divine Liturgy of St. Basil, Compline and Matins. Even in these shortened versions, these services present beautiful and rich hymns, full of theological meaning and spiritually uplifting, which provide us with wonderful material for a proper appreciation of the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord.

Fr. Alexander Garklaus