

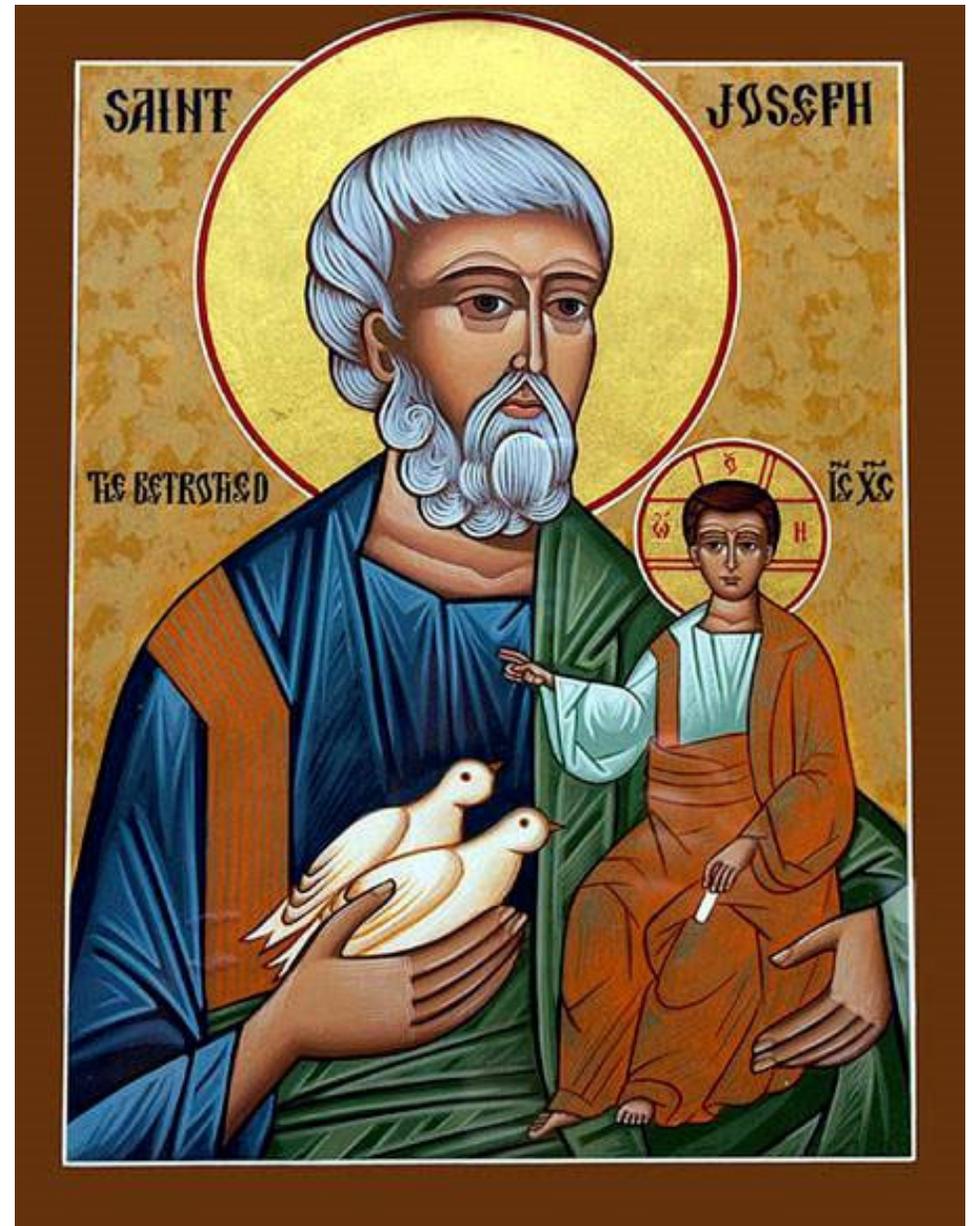
PROTOMARTYR AND ARCHDEACON STEPHEN

The Holy Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen was the eldest of the seven deacons appointed by the Apostles themselves and therefore he is called “archdeacon.” He was the first Christian martyr, and he suffered for Christ when he was about thirty.

Filled with the Holy Spirit, St. Stephen preached Christianity and defeated Jewish teachers of the Law in debate. The Jews maligned St. Stephen, saying that he had uttered blasphemy against God and against Moses. St. Stephen came before the Sanhedrin and the High Priest to answer these charges. He gave a fiery speech in which he recounted the history of the Jewish nation and denounced the Jews for persecuting the prophets and also for executing the promised Messiah, Jesus Christ (Acts, ch. 7).

During his speech, St. Stephen suddenly saw the heavens opened and Jesus Christ standing at the right hand of God. The Jews shouted and covered their ears and rushed at him. They dragged him out of the city and stoned him, but the holy martyr prayed for his murderers. Far off on the heights stood the Mother of God with the holy Apostle John the Theologian, and she prayed fervently for the martyr. Before his death, St. Stephen said, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. O Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.” Then he joyfully gave up his pure soul to Christ.

The body of the holy Protomartyr Stephen, left to be eaten by beasts, was secretly taken up by the Jewish teacher Gamaliel and his son Habib, who buried Stephen on his estate. They both believed in Christ and later received Holy Baptism.



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HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH
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THE TRINITARIAN

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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

RECTORY: 963 John Glenn Drive, Seven Hills, Ohio 44131 Phone 516-761-8772

BULLETIN 9 - VOLUME LVIII

TONE 4

DECEMBER 27, 2020

TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Third Day of the Feast of the Nativity of Christ

Holy Righteous Ones: Joseph the Betrothed, David the King, and James the Brother of the Lord

Holy Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen

Ven. Theodore Graptus, Confessor and brother of St. Theophanes the Hymnographer;

St. Theodore, Archbishop of Constantinople

“Today, the divinely favored David is ecstatic with joy, and, indeed, Joseph and James join him in celebrating, for they beam with pride in being relatives of the Lord Jesus. They exult in that ineffable birth that brought Him to earth, crying out with one accord: O generous One, save all those who are truly devoted to You.”

Kondakion, Tone III

“Yesterday, the Master came in the flesh, and today, His servant departs the flesh. Yesterday, the King robed Himself in our flesh, while today, His servant is stoned to death for love of Him. Thus, Stephen leaves this world for the next, the first of all to die for Christ, the Savior of our souls.”

Kondakion, Tone IV

TODAY’S EPISTLE: GALATIANS 1:11-19

TODAY’S GOSPEL: MATTHEW 2:13-23

HOLY WORSHIP THIS WEEK:

Friday, January 1 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy
Saturday, January 2 5:00 p.m. Great Vespers

Daily Scripture Readings

| | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Monday, December 28 | Hebrews 8:7-13 | Mark 10:46-52 |
| Tuesday, December 29 | Hebrews 9:8-10,15-23 | Mark 11:11-23 |
| Wednesday, December 30 | Hebrews 10:1-18 | Mark 11:23-26 |
| Thursday, December 31 | Hebrews 10:35-11:7 | Mark 11:27-33 |
| Friday, January 1 | Colossians 2:8-12 | Luke 2:20-21,40-52 |
| (St. Basil the Great) | Hebrews 7:26-8:2 | Luke 6:17-23 |
| Saturday, January 2 | I Timothy 3:14-4:5 | Matthew 3:1-11 |
| (St. Seraphim) | Galatians 5:22-6:2 | Luke 6:17-23 |

THIS IS A FAST-FREE WEEK.

ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY

Bulletin 9 - Volume LVIII

December 27, 2020

COMING EVENTS

JANUARY:
10, Sunday

Second Sunday Food Sale

GOD’S BLESSINGS:

And “Many Years” to new parishioner Cole Mathew Gest. Cole was chrismated in our Church last Saturday.

YEAR-END UPDATE:

The pandemic continues to affect all of us, and while the news of the vaccine is positive, it appears that it will be some time before most of us will be able to receive it. So, attendance and participation at the church will continue to be abnormal. We will continue to hold liturgical services, more or less as we have been doing, with attendance limited, wearing masks and keeping social distance. Coffee hours will not be held until further notice. But we hope to continue the monthly food sales for the time being.

THANKS TO ALL DONORS!

As attendance has diminished, regular weekly donations have also fallen off. But expenses continue. With winter upon us, heating costs will rise, and expenses for utilities and maintenance are always occurring and do not decrease. We are very grateful to all donors. Special thanks to those who have continued to support the parish by mailing or dropping off donations! We are confident that, through God’s mercies and His inspiring doctors and scientists, we will be able to return to normal parish life during the coming year.

DONATION ENVELOPES:

The boxes of envelopes for 2021 weekly offerings are available in the vestibule.

TRINITARIAN COVERS:

There is a sign-up sheet in the vestibule for those who would like to offer covers in 2021. Your donation goes toward the printing costs of our weekly Trinitarian. Cost is \$8, or \$20 for Pascha and Christmas. You can also call the office on Monday or Thursday morning; or call at any time and leave a message with the date you would like to reserve for your offering.

FOOD SALE:

Keep in mind the date of January 10—it is our next Food Sale. Plan to cook or bake a favorite item of yours and offer it for our sale! Our last sale realized a profit of about \$200.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS:

Thank you to those who have made offerings for the lovely Christmas flowers now in our church. If you haven’t yet made a donation, please do. There is a special envelope in your box.

2021 CALENDARS:

We have lectionary wall calendars available in the vestibule. Please take one home.

Let us not value either prosperity or adversity in the world
as things of importance or enduring;
Rather, let us live elsewhere and raise our minds to heaven,
acknowledging sin as the only real evil,
and nothing truly good except the virtue that unites us to God.

St. Gregory Nazianzen

THE TRUE STORY OF THE THREE WISE MEN
(conclusion)

Based on a newly-uncovered manuscript, it turns out that the Wise Men had motives in presenting their gifts to young Jesus. In giving gold, Melchior expected to impress Jesus with wealth and riches; the myrrh from Balthazar was symbolic of power, more of which he hoped to get; for Caspar, knowledge was most important, and the fragrance of frankincense would entice Jesus to share some secret truths. They presented their gifts, but didn't expect the surprising response from Jesus' mother, Mary.

When we finally found the young Jesus and his parents, we were surprised by the most humble and unpretentious setting; it was nothing like what we expected. As the child was yet an infant a little over a year old, the wise men presented their gifts – gold, frankincense and myrrh – to his mother, whose name we learned was Mary. She was gracious in thanking, and invited us to sit and rest for a while before beginning the long journey home. Kind and gentle in both manner and speech, she asked the wise men about their homes and families. As we began to prepare for leaving, she said the following:

“Thank you so much, you travelled so far, which must have been difficult and dangerous. Thank you also for these most exquisite gifts; I know that they all come from sincere wishes to please the young Jesus. He is smiling, as you can see, but is still too young to speak. But I am sure that he is impressed and grateful. However, I am asking you to take these gifts back with you.”

The three wise men and all of us were stunned by this. Mary looked at us, smiled and said, “Don't be upset. We appreciate your kindness; you are generous and noble. But as you came to impress young Jesus as well as to receive something from him, let me tell you what will surely make him happy. As you expect and as you indicated, Jesus will in fact be a king, a rich, powerful and wise ruler, but his kingdom will not be of this world! He will be the King of glory, his wealth will be in possession of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, his power will be his authority over demons, and his knowledge will be of the greatest truth that humanity can comprehend, which is love.

“So, these gifts that you brought, take them now as gifts from us, that is, from Jesus himself, and use them in those ways that would bring him honor and also much joy and fulfillment to you. Melchior, take the gold; and when you return to your land, find the people who are the poorest, the homeless and sick. Share the gold among them. You will still have gold for yourself, for your and your family, and now you will have the treasure of received gratitude, which is priceless.

“Balthazar, you are correct that myrrh oil is a symbol of royal authority. But authority is not to be used by one person, or group of persons, over others. All authority is ‘from above,’ and all humanity is subject to that heavenly power. Whatever power you may have should be used for uniting together as many people as possible together. So, as you go from province to province, bring some myrrh to the leaders of other places as a token of peace-offering, as a sign of brotherly and sisterly affection! Thus, you will promote the unity of all mankind.

“In appearance frankincense is inert and unappealing, but placed on hot coals, it changes and becomes a fragrant smoke ascending upwards. You see, Caspar, this is the meaning of knowledge – to lift the minds of men and women up, to raise them from the world of crude survival. That star your astronomers discovered is more than a bright light; it is energy. There's great knowledge there, and great scientific discoveries will be revealed to seekers like you in centuries to come. But there is the more awesome knowledge about holy energy which we can experience in love. This Jesus will grow up to reveal that knowledge to mankind through his teaching, life, and also in his dying! That is to come, but for now, know that here and now in his presence, in what you share with us, and we share with you, that holy love is already with us! And may it be with you all, to protect you safely on your way home.”

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6822 BROADVIEW ROAD; PARMA, OHIO 44134
VERY REVEREND ALEXANDER GARKLAVS

JANUARY 2021

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|------------|--|---|------------|--|---|
| | | | | | 1 Circumcision of Christ 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy No Fast | 2 5:00 p.m. Great Vespers |
| 3 30th Sunday after Pentecost Forefeast of the Theophany Prophet Malachi | 4 | 5 9:00 a.m. Royal Hours for Theophany | 6 Theophany of Our Lord Jesus Christ 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy; Blessing of Waters | 7 | 8 | 9 5:00 p.m. Great Vespers; Confessions |
| 10 31st Sunday after Pentecost St. Gregory of Nyssa Second Sunday Food Sale | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 5:00 p.m. Great Vespers |
| 17 32d Sunday after Pentecost Ven. Anthony | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 5:00 p.m. Great Vespers; Confessions |
| 24 33d Sunday after Pentecost Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 5:00 p.m. Great Vespers |
| 31 34th Sunday after Pentecost Sts. Cyrus and John | | | | | | |