

NATIVITY PROGRAM:

Our Church School students have prepared a Nativity presentation, which will be performed following the Divine Liturgy today. Please join us in the Fellowship Hall.

CARE TEAM FOR THE DYING AND THE BEREAVED:

Following the recent teaching series, we are forming a care team to minister to our faithful and their families at that time when each of us comes to the final days of our life. Ministries of the care team will develop as we form and could include: offering resources from an Orthodox perspective for end of life planning, being present for and praying with parishioners in their final days, preparing the body for the funeral, church funeral setup, encouraging bereaved family members after the death of a loved one. If you are interested in being a part of this ministry, please contact Fr. Chris.

COMMUNITY LISTS:

If you are not currently receiving the HTOC Community emails or the Prayer List and would like to be on either list or would like links to the monthly calendar, please notify Fr. Chris or Janene.

CHRISTMAS POTLUCK:

Plan to join your HTOC family on Sunday, December 28, following the Divine Liturgy for potluck refreshments as well as fellowship. There is a sign-up sheet in the Fellowship Hall.

FOOD SALE:

Many thanks to all who supported our monthly Food Sale. The profit was \$342. Next month's sale will be January 11.

COFFEE HOUR:

Coffee Hour today is hosted by the Evanoff Family, the Reed Family and Eric.

The 2026 sign-up calendar is posted on the kitchen door. January 4 and January 18 are open dates next month.

GIFTS WE OFFER TO THE LORD WE LOVE

	11/30	12/7	12/14
REGULAR COLLECTION	\$ 672.00	\$ 8573.00	\$ 2280.00
CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FUNDS	198.00	1694.00	552.00
CANDLES	81.00	191.00	139.00
SPECIAL ORTHODOX MISSION FUND		25,000.00	
BENEVOLENCE FUND			250.00
FLOWERS		160.00	330.00
COLLEGE CARE PACKAGES	25.00		
IN MEMORY OF PAT SCHWARTZ	948.00	50.00	
IN MEMORY OF SUSAN HAVERLY			105.00
COFFEE HOUR	107.00	25.00	88.00

THE TRINITARIAN

Published Weekly by the
HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH
6822 BROADVIEW ROAD, PARMA, OHIO 44134
CHURCH OFFICE PHONE: 216-524-4859
CHURCH WEBSITE: <http://www.holy-trin.org>
REVEREND CHRISTOPHER MOORE, PASTOR
Phone: 440-447-7704
Email: frchristopher@holy-trin.org

Divine Liturgy on Sundays at 9:00 a.m.

Vespers on Saturdays at 5:00 p.m.

BULLETIN 7 - VOLUME LXIII

TONE 3

DECEMBER 21, 2025

TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Sunday Before the Nativity

Sunday of the Holy Fathers

*Virgin Martyr Juliana of Nicomedia, and with her 500 men and 130 women;
Repose of St. Peter, Metropolitan of Moscow and Wonderworker of All Russia;
St. Juliana, Princess of Viaz'ma; Repose of Bl. Prokópii of Viátka, Fool-for-Christ;
Martyr Themistocles of Myra in Lycia*

Great are the accomplishments of faith, for the Three Holy Youths rejoiced in the source of the flame, as if by restful waters, and the Prophet Daniel appeared as a shepherd of lions as of sheep. By their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls.

Troparion, Tone II

Prepare, O Bethlehem, for Eden has been opened to all! Adorn yourself, O Ephratha, for the Tree of Life blossoms forth from the Virgin in the cave! Her womb is a spiritual paradise planted with the Divine Fruit; if we eat of it, we shall live forever and not die like Adam. Christ is born to raise up again what fell in former times, His image.

Troparion, Tone IV

TODAY'S EPISTLE: HEBREWS 11:9-10,17-23,32-40

TODAY'S GOSPEL: MATTHEW 1:1-25

HOLY WORSHIP THIS WEEK:

Monday, December 22	6:00 p.m. Daily Vespers and Small Compline
Wednesday, December 24	9:00 a.m. Royal Hours
	7:30 p.m. Vigil of the Nativity of Christ
Thursday, December 25	9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy - NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
Saturday, December 27	5:00 p.m. Great Vespers

WELCOME GUESTS!

We are very glad you have come to worship the Holy Trinity with us this morning! Please participate in the services at your comfort level. Our greeters will kindly assist you with whatever questions or needs you may have. During each Sunday service we offer Holy Communion. If you are a practicing Orthodox Christian and have come prepared to receive Christ's Body and Blood through fasting and prayer, please come forward to partake. All guests are invited to come forward at the end of the service to greet Fr. Christopher and receive the blessed bread. Please stay after the Divine Liturgy for coffee hour in the Fellowship Hall so we can get to know you better!

Families with children: we encourage children of all ages to be present and participate as they are able during worship. We know sometimes kids need a break, so please take good advantage of our Rest and Refocus Room located on the south side of the lobby/narthex when coming in the main entrance. If you have pre-school and school age children, we invite you to send them to Church School directly after the Divine Liturgy throughout the academic year. May God bless you!

Daily Scripture Readings can be found in the St. Tikhon's Wall Calendar or at www.oca.org/readings.



Nativity of our Lord 2025

To the clergy, monastics, and faithful of the Orthodox Church in America, beloved children in the Lord,

When it was time for thy coming upon earth, the first taxation of the world was held; and then thou madest ready to enroll the names of all who believed in thy birth. For this cause Caesar published such a decree, since thy timeless and eternal kingdom was newly made manifest.

– St. Germanus, Doxastichon at the Praises, tone six

Christ is born! Glorify him!

In one of her most famed hymns, the venerable Cassia draws parallels between the reign of Caesar and the reign of Christ: “When Augustus reigned alone upon earth,” she says, “the many kingdoms of men came to an end,” and when Christ was born in that reign, the many gods of the nations were done away. As the many cities of the world passed under one rule, all the nations came to believe in one God.

The relationship between these two reigns, two rules – that of Rome and that of Christ – goes beyond poetic parallels, however. Divine providence arranged for the birth of the Lord at precisely the right moment, when the Pax Romana, the peace secured by the ascendancy of the Roman Empire, ensured that the Good News of Jesus Christ could travel freely throughout the Mediterranean world, from Jerusalem to Italy, to Gaul and North Africa, and beyond it, to barbarian lands and the Persian Empire.

At the same time, we must not forget the role played by Roman rule also at the end of the Savior’s earthly life, when the Lord gave himself up for the life of the world: he was flogged by Roman soldiers, condemned by a Roman governor, pierced by a Roman lance. In the end, it was a Roman officer who recognized what had taken place: “Truly this was the Son of God.”

Roman imperial authority paved the way for the coming of Christ in the flesh and made possible the apostolic preaching of the Gospel; this same authority sentenced God himself to death. Thus, Rome occupies an ambivalent place in the tradition of the Church; as a symbol, it is bivalent. On the one hand, we speak of the New Rome and the Third Rome: the reign of Christ established on earth in Roman garb. Our bishops, with their eagle rugs and their sakkoi, still bear the trappings of Eastern Roman emperors.

On the other hand, in New Testament—in St. Peter’s first epistle and St. John’s Apocalypse (1 Pet. 5:13; Rev. 17–18 et passim)—we see Rome equated with Babylonian harlotry, with the old Jerusalem that kills the prophets and rejects those sent to her. Rome appears both as the city of God on earth and the supreme city of the world, the dominion of the flesh and of the devil.

However, St. Germanus of Constantinople, in the doxastichon I quote above, offers a new and higher perspective. He does not only draw parallels, as does St. Cassia; neither does he assign Roman rule an incidental, albeit providential, role. Instead, he views Rome as the direct instrument of God: “For this cause Caesar published such a decree,” so that the kingdom of God might appear and Christ might enroll his faithful in the book of life. Whatever else Caesar’s decree may have done, whatever Caesar may have intended, the cause for that decree was determined by God, and it was part of his holy design, his plan; God’s providence was the agent, the decisive factor.

When God made the world out of nothing, he did so in order that the world might come to know him and love him, and so that he could show his love to the world—so that he could love the world. This does not apply only to the world as an abstract whole; it applies to each of us, who are microcosms, little worlds unto ourselves. God loves each of us with his whole love; in love, he made everything for each of us—for me and for you. As St. Paul says, “all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future, all are yours; and you are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s” (1 Cor. 3:21–23).

All of history points toward the coming of Christ; all the actors on the world stage, all the empires of men, all the civilizations from furthest antiquity to the end of the world: all of this has existed, exists, and will exist solely for the sake of his First and Second Coming. Moreover, since his Coming was for our sake—not his own, since, in his divine aseity, he has no need of anything—this means that all the world exist for us, for each of us—for me and for you. All of history took place, takes place, will take place, for your sake.

Rome stands as a potent symbol of all this history, of the entire world of human events. Thus, it is inevitable that Rome both serves as a vehicle of the Gospel and an instrument of the Passion, both as an ally and an enemy of Christ. The Church, in her earthly sojourn, has known the two aspects of Rome as well: the Rome of Diocletian and the Rome of Constantine; the Rome of the catacombs and the Rome of the Hagia Sophia.

So it is in our own lives. Sometimes the circumstances of life bring us joy, sometimes they bring us pain. But no matter what happens to us, we must know, as the great spiritual testament attributed to St. Seraphim of Vryitsa says, that all of this was from the hand of the loving God. Every weal, every woe, every ease, every hardship: all of this was from him. Without all these events, known and unknown, past, present, and future, you would not be who you are. All of this is a gift from God to you, so that you could receive a still greater gift: God himself.

~~Today he appears as a newborn Child in the arms of his most pure Mother; soon she shall bear him to the temple of sacrifice, and thence to exile in Egypt. Thus, both in happiness and in trials, let us imitate her in always extending to him our heart’s embrace. Holding him close, we will come to understand, with St. Germanus and St. Seraphim, that everything that has taken place, from the very beginning of time, has happened so that we could come to this moment, to this cave, to this manger, and experience the Advent of God in the flesh. Everything has happened so that he could be ours, and we could be his.~~

To our infant Savior, the Creator and Sustainer of all, the true Love of our hearts, our deepest Desire, the Fulfillment of our being: to him be all love and adoration, together with his Father and his All-holy Spirit, throughout the ages of this world and unto endless eternity.

Greeting you with the joy of Christ’s Nativity,

With my primatial prayers and blessing,

+ Tikhon

Archbishop of Washington

Metropolitan of All America and Canada