

PASTORAL VISITATIONS

Please inform the Church Office 301-469-7990 (ext 300) of any loved ones who are hospitalized or "shut-ins," so they may be visited and receive the grace of Holy Communion.

2010 CALENDARS ARE AVAILABLE

The new Ecclesiastical Calendars for 2010 have arrived. **They will be available on Sundays following Divine Liturgy at a table in the Founders Hall.** You may pick up *ONE* calendar per family in order to make certain that every family in the parish has one.

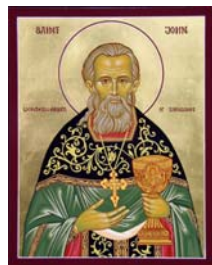
FIFTY PLUS Wishing all the members of the Fifty Plus Club and the community of St George a very blessed Christmas and a healthy New Year. The first meeting of the New Year will be January 13, 2010 in the Founders Hall at 11:30am with the cutting of the Vasilopita

HELPING OUR SISTER PARISH IN TAYBEH Once again our Sunday School is reaching out to our sister parish, St. George, in Taybeh, Palestine Help educate and warm the lives of children attending their Orthodox School . Your Christmas donation will help pay for student tuition fees and electricity for the school. Forms for donating are available on the table outside the Church Office or see Athena Kranias.

PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY The Philoptochos Christmas Bake Sale that was scheduled for last Sunday, December 20, 2009 is taking place today following Divine Liturgy. We are selling Vasilopites and pastries and this year's Christmas Ornament. The vasilopites will be \$17. each (with coin in them).

FROM A NATIVITY SERMON

BY OUR HOLY FATHER ST. JOHN OF KRONSTADT



Let us glorify God! With the coming of the Son of God in the flesh upon the earth, with His offering Himself up as a sacrifice for the sinful human race, there is given to those who believe the blessing of the Heavenly Father, replacing that curse which had been uttered by God in the beginning; they are adopted and receive the promise of an eternal inheritance of life. To a humanity orphaned by reason of sin, the Heavenly Father returns anew through the mystery of re-birth, that is, through baptism and repentance. People are freed of the tormenting, death-bearing authority of the devil, of the afflictions of sin and of various passions. Human nature is deified for the sake of the boundless compassion of the Son of God; and its sins are purified; the defiled are sanctified. The ailing are healed. Upon those in dishonour are boundless honour and glory bestowed. Those in darkness are enlightened by the Divine light of grace and reason. The human mind is given the rational power of God – we have the mind of Christ (Cor. 2, 16), says the Holy apostle Paul. To the human heart, the heart of Christ is given. The perishable is made immortal. Those naked and wounded by sin and by passions are adorned in Divine glory. Those who hunger and thirst are sated and assuaged by the nourishing and soul-strengthening Word of God and by the most pure Body and Divine Blood of Christ. The inconsolable are consoled. Those ravaged by the devil have been – and continue to be – delivered. What is necessary, first of all, is faith in the Son of God, in the Gospel as the salvation-bestowing heavenly teaching; a true repentance of sins and the correction of life and of heart; communion in prayer and in the mysteries [sacraments]; the knowledge and fulfillment of Christ's commandments. Also necessary are the virtues: Christian humility, alms-giving, continence, purity and chastity, simplicity and goodness of heart. Let us, then, O brothers and sisters, bring these virtues as a gift to the One Who was born for the sake of our salvation – let us bring them in place of the gold, frankincense and myrrh which the Magi brought Him, as to One Who is King, God, and Man, come to die for us. This, from us, shall be the most-pleasing form of sacrifice to God and to the Infant Jesus Christ. Amen.

SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

ST. STEPHEN THE PROTOMARTYR

DECEMBER 27, 2009



CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!

**THE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF
SAINT GEORGE**

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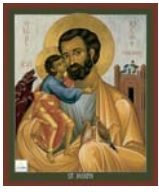
Proistamenos: Rev. Fr. Dimitrios J. Antokas

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Rev. Fr. Nicholas Despotides, Emeritus



On the Sunday that falls on or immediately after the twenty-sixth of this month, we make commemoration of Saints Joseph, the Betrothed of the Virgin; David, the Prophet and King; and James, the Brother of God. When there is no Sunday within this period, we celebrate this commemoration on the 26th. For example, Saint Joseph (whose name means "one who increases") was the son of Jacob, and the son-in-law - and hence, as it were, the son - of Eli (who was also called Eliakim or Joachim), who was the father of Mary the Virgin (Matt. 1:16; Luke 3:23). He was of the tribe of Judah, of the family of David, an inhabitant of Nazareth, a carpenter by Trade, and advanced in age when, by God's good will, he was betrothed to the Virgin, that he might minister to the great mystery of God's dispensation in the flesh by protecting her, providing for her, and being known as her husband so that she, being a virgin, would not suffer reproach when she was found to be with child. Joseph had been married before his betrothal to our Lady; they who are called Jesus' "brethren and sisters" (Matt. 13:55-56) are the children of Joseph by his first marriage. From Scripture, we know that Saint Joseph lived at least until the Twelfth year after the birth of Christ (Luke 2:41-52); according to the tradition of the Fathers, he reposed before the beginning of the public ministry of Christ.

EPISTLE Acts of the Apostles 6:8-15; 7:1-5, 47-60

IN THOSE DAYS, Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia, arose and disputed with Stephen. But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke. Then they secretly instigated men, who said, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God." And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes, and they came upon him and seized him and brought him before the council, and set up false witnesses who said, "This man never ceases to speak words against this holy place and the law; for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place, and will change the customs which Moses delivered to us." And gazing at him, all who sat in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel. And the high priest said, "Is this so?" And Stephen said: "Brethren and fathers, hear me. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, and said to him, 'Depart from your land and from your kindred and go into the land which I will show you.' Then he departed from the land of the Chaldeans, and lived in Haran. And after his father died, God removed him from there into this land in which you are now living; yet he gave him no inheritance in it, not even a foot's length, but promised to give it to him in possession and to his posterity after him, though he had no child. "But it was Solomon who built a house for him. Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands; as the prophet says, 'Heaven is my throne, and earth my footstool. What house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is the place of my rest? Did not my hand make all these things?' "You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered, you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it. "Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth against him. But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God." But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together upon him. Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him; and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. And as they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." And he knelt down and cried with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

TODAY'S READER: GEORGE COMINOS

GOSPEL Matthew 2:13-23

WHEN THE WISE MEN departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt have I called my son." Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they were no more." But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." And he rose and took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaos reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

DIVINE SERVICES

Friday, January 1, 2010: Circumcision of the Lord and the Feast of St. Basil the Great Orthros 8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.

Sunday, January 3, 2010: Sunday Before the Theophany Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Tuesday, January 5, 2010: The Eve of the Theophany Orthros and Royal Hours 8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.

Wednesday, January 6, 2010: The Feast of the Theophany Orthros 8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy and Great Blessing of the Waters 9:30a.m.

Thursday, January 7, 2010: Feast of St. John the Forerunner Orthros 8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.



ST. STEPHEN THE APOSTLE PROTOMARTYR

The holy, glorious, all-laudable **Apostle Stephen the Protomartyr** (Gk. Στέφανος, "crown") was an early Christian convert from among the Hellenistic Jews, one of the original seven deacons ordained by the Apostles, and the first martyr of the Orthodox Church. The Church remembers the martyrdom of St. Stephen on December 27. Stephen was a Jew living in the Hellenic provinces, related to the Apostle Paul and one of the first seven deacons ordained by the Apostles to serve the Church in Jerusalem (thus making him an archdeacon). In the words of Asterias: St Stephen was "the starting point of the martyrs, the instructor of suffering for Christ, the foundation of righteous confession, since Stephen was the first to shed his blood for the Gospel." The Holy Spirit worked powerfully through his faith, enabling him to perform many miracles and always defeat the Jews who would dispute with him. The Jews in their hatred of St. Stephen lied about him to the people, but St. Stephen with his face illumined reminded the people of the miracles God had worked through him and even rebuked the Jews for killing the innocent Christ. The people were enraged by what they thought was blasphemy and 'gnashed their teeth' at Stephen. It was then that he saw his Christ in the heavens and declared it so. Hearing this, the Jews took him outside the city and stoned him to death, with his kinsman Saul (later St. Paul) holding their coats while they did it. Afar off on a hill was the Virgin Mary and St. John the Theologian who witnessed this first martyrdom for the Son of God and prayed for him while he was being stoned. This occurred about a year after the first Pentecost.

MEMORIALS

A Memorial Service will be offered today for **Athanasios Angelis (10 Years)**, requestee by his daughter Patricia Angelis- Schrock and his grandchildren Dale, Daniel, and Christopher; for **Efstathios (Steve) Maragousis (3 Years)**, requested by Maria his wife, Demetrios, his son, Tina (Erin) his daughter and Evanthia his grandchild. A Memorial Service will be offered tomorrow, December 28, for **Niki Kazakou (1 Year)**, requested by Apostolos and Angela Eliopoulos. May their memories be eternal!



ON THE NATIVITY BY ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

Come, then, let us observe the Feast. Come and we shall commemorate the solemn festival. It is a strange manner of celebrating a festival; but truly wondrous is the whole chronicle of the Nativity. For this day the ancient slavery is broken, paradise is unlocked, the curse is taken away, sin is removed from us, error driven out, truth has been brought back, the speech of kindness diffused, and spreads on every side, a heavenly way of life has been implanted on the earth, angels communicate with men without fear, and men now hold speech with angels. Though He was God, He became Man; not denying Himself to be God. Though being the impassable Word, He became flesh; that He might dwell among us, he became flesh, He did not become God, He was God. He was placed in a manger so that He, by Whom all things are nourished, may receive an infant's food from His Virgin Mother. So, the Father of all ages, as an infant at the breast, nestles in the virginal arms, that the Magi may more easily see Him. Since this day the Magi too have come, and made a beginning of withstanding tyranny; the heavens give glory, as the Lord is revealed by a star.

PRAYER LIST: Antonia "Nitsa" Kempf, Connie Kanaris, Diana Lazar, George Markomanolakis, Argie Palaos, Katherine Panagakos, Priscilla Preuss, George Virvan, Sylvia Basdekas, George Speris, Mariah Smiley, Saxton, Doris Webb, the child Camille Feruzzi who is gravely ill, the child Heather Greene, Irene Pappas, Marty Levine, Lindsey Reijsoo, the child Ashley Lyvers, the child Alexis Ross, Thomas Jenkins, the child Joseph Saxon, Francine Bruggeman, Estrella Grandea Ocampo, Artie Constantinides, Stephanie Skanderis, Michael Giatzis, and Robert Shriver. **US ARMED FORCES:** (Col.) Fr. Alexander Webster, Rev. Fr. John Kalantzis, Lt. Nicholas Karnaze, Spc. Spiro Nino, John Xanthakos, Maj. Sydney Penix, Colonel James Karas, and Gary Hogman (Iraq) and his wife Cindy.