



# Holy Assumption Orthodox Church

OCA - Diocese of the Midwest

V. Rev. Archpriest Andrew Bartek, Rector Parish Council President: Ron Royhab



## JANUARY Bulletin Sponsor:

*Fr. Andrew in memory of my Father George & Uncle Eddie*

### *Liturgical & Events Schedule*

#### **Sunday, January 2**

9:10 am: Hours / Divine Liturgy / Social

#### **Tuesday, January 4**

9:20 am: Hours / Divine Liturgy

6:30 pm: Royal Hours for Theophany

#### **Wednesday, January 5 (Strict Fast Day)**

9:20 am: Hours & Vespers Divine Liturgy of St. Basil

6:00 pm: Holy Night Supper

7:30 pm: Vigil of Theophany & the Great Blessing of Water

#### **Thursday, January 6**

9:20 am: Hours followed by Divine Liturgy

#### **Saturday, January 8**

Noon: Public Blessing of Lake Erie

3:00 pm: (Time might be altered a little by how long people stay for social) / Great Vespers / Confessions

#### **Sunday, January 9**

9:10 am: Hours / Divine Liturgy / Social

## *Save The Date!*

- Wednesday, January 5- Theophany Holy Night Supper (**PLEASE SIGN UP IF YOU ARE COMING**)
- Saturday, January 8- Blessing of the Lake
- Sunday, January 23, 2021 @ 1:00pm - Local March for Life in Port Clinton. The March is about an hour (about a mile) followed by a reception at Knights of Columbus. If one can't walk, prayers will be offered at the Knights until the March is completed
- Sunday, January 30- Annual Church Meeting

## SUNDAY JANUARY 2, 2022

### **Gospel:**

Mark 1:1-8 (Sunday before Theophany)

Luke: 6:17-23 (for the Saint)

### **Epistle:**

2 Timothy 4:5-8 (Sunday before Theophany)

Galatians: 5:22-6:2 (for the Saint)

### **28<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**

Sunday before Theophany / Forefeast of Theophany / Hieromartyr Theogenes, Bishop of Parium on the Hellespont / Repose of the Ven. Seraphim, Wonderworker of Sarov / St. Sylvester, Pope of Rome / Ven. Sylvester of the Kiev Caves / Righteous Juliana of Lazarevo

## JANUARY BULLETIN CANDLE SPONSORS

**Bulletin:** (\$50) From Fr. Andrew in memory of his Father George and Uncle Edward

**Chandelier:** (\$50) From Fr. Andrew for his God-mother Helen

**Altar Candles:** (\$50) From Fr. Andrew for all his friends & all former priest's & Bishop's

**Candles on the Tomb:** (\$25)

**Eternal Light & Icon Screen:** (\$25) From Fr. Andrew for the Health of his Spiritual Father on the occasion of his 53<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary to the Holy priesthood

**Candles @ the Cross** (\$15) From Laura for B-day blessings to Jim & Sarah / Sandy for the Health of Marguerite

**Candles @ St Tikhon's Icon** (\$15) For the Health of Tim and Cami and safety of Nicholas, Tikhon and Gleice / From Tammy in memory of her dad William and husband Robley

**NOTE:** More than one person can sponsor candles or bulletin at any time.

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## DECEMBER LITURGICAL ATTENDANCE

**Sun. Dec. 5:** 11 attended Liturgy / 6 Communicants  
**Mon. Dec. 6:** 11 attended Liturgy (3 guests)  
**Sun. Dec. 12:** 12 attended (1 being a guest); 8 Communicants  
**Sat. Dec. 19:** 9 attended Vespers  
**Sun. Dec. 19:** 18 attended Liturgy (2 of which were guests) / 10 Communicants  
**Fri. Dec. 24 :** 14 attended Christmas Vigil (2 of which were guests)  
**Sat. Dec. 25:** 28 attended Liturgy ( 14 of which were guests) / 10 Communicants  
**Sun. Dec. 26:** 17 attended Liturgy (3 of which were guests) / 12 Communicants

### DECEMBER: MONTHLY TITHE ONLY

**Goal Pledged per month: \$4,825**

Dec. 5:           \$490  
 Dec. 12:         \$950  
 Dec. 19:         \$1,415  
 Dec. 26:         \$1,135

**FINAL Monthly Total: \$3,990**

### DECEMBER: RESTRICTED FUND DONATIONS

**Dec. 5:** \$60 Flowers; \$100 Zoe for Life  
**Dec. 12:** \$230 Flower; \$100; \$100 Zoe for Life  
**Dec. 19:** \$130 Flower donations; \$25 Food Pantry; \$75 Zoe for Life; \$100 Catastrophic Fund  
**Dec. 26:** \$50 Liturgical item donation; \$25 office supply; \$412 Catastrophic Fund; \$82 Bookstore

### JANUARY CHURCH CLEANING SCHEDULE

Week of Jan 2: Bill & Tim  
 Week of Jan 9: Susan  
 Week of Jan. 16: Stephanie  
 Week of Jan. 23: Sandy  
 Week of Jan 30: Bobbie



## TOTAL FINANCIAL'S FOR DECEMBER & YEAR TO DATE

### December

Income:       \$8,065  
 Expenses:    \$8,968  
 TOTAL:       -\$ 903

### YEAR TO DATE:

Income:       \$143,248  
 Expenses:    \$122,750  
 TOTAL:       +\$20,498

### NOTE:

**Without Festival & Market Days:       -\$25,743**

### 2022 TITHING PLEDGES:

Our goal that was pledged for 2022 is \$5,417 a month. This past year (2021), we averaged \$5,352 a month.

If we don't want to have any more fundraiser's, our goal needs to be \$8,167.

In 2021 we pledged to give in tithing \$58,000 & we actually gave \$64,228. This was \$6,000 more than expected. So if we can give another \$6,000 more in tithing again this year we will come close to our goal.

### DECEMBER: OTHER INCOME Goal for the month in this category: \$2,670

**Dec. 5:** \$25 Candles; \$105 Vigils; \$180 Holy Day Donations

**Dec. 12:** \$35 Candles; \$85 Vigils; \$50 donations; \$160 Holy Day donations; \$25 Candles on the Tomb

**Dec. 19:** \$15 Candles; \$85 Vigils; \$250 Holy Day Donations;

**Dec. 26:** \$215 Donations; \$77 Candles; \$105 Vigils; \$1,135 Holy Day Donations; \$131 Halupki Festival

**Month Total: \$2,678**

## Significant anniversaries for the Albanian Archdiocese and Bulgarian Diocese of the Orthodox Church in America

2021 marks 50 years since the Albanian Archdiocese was received into the Orthodox Church in America (OCA), and December 20 is the 45th anniversary of the reception of the Bulgarian Diocese. These anniversaries are significant not only for their respective Dioceses, but for the entire Church. The reception of these Dioceses into the OCA in the 1970s, as well as the renewal of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate's affiliation with the OCA in 1970, came in response to the call for unity by the newly-autocephalous OCA.

At the First All-American Council convened in October 1970, the bishops, clergy and laity of the newly-autocephalous OCA addressed a landmark "Message to all Orthodox Christians in America" calling for jurisdictional Church unity on the North American continent even while acknowledging the diversity of backgrounds and traditions and respecting national and cultural heritages. This was a clarion call to "witness to the truth of our Orthodox faith on this continent" in unity so "that all may be one... that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me." (Jn. 17:21)." The full text of that appeal is published online.

Both the Albanian Archdiocese and the Bulgarian Diocese trace their roots to the establishment of parish communities within the Diocese of the Aleutians and North America at the very beginning of the 20th century. The first Albanian parish in North America was founded in Boston in 1908 following the ordination of Father Theofan (Fan) Noli by Archbishop Platon (Rozhdestvensky) of the Aleutians and North America in accord with the vision for a united multi-ethnic Church in America as set forth in a 1905 report (see pages 4-5) by his predecessor, Saint Tikhon, Enlightener of North America. With the numeric growth of Albanian communities in America, the Second All-American Sobor in 1919 proposed Father Theofan for ordination to the episcopacy. However, due to political upheaval in Russia, canonical election by the Holy Synod could not take place. With the emergence of a sovereign Albanian state, Father Theofan became increasingly involved in Albanian politics. In 1923, he was ordained a bishop and elected Primate of the Church

in Albania. At the same time, he briefly served as the country's Prime Minister in 1924. However, political turmoil soon forced him to flee Albania and he eventually returned to the US in 1932 and established the Albanian Archdiocese under the Church in Albania but with the increasing suppression of religious expression by the totalitarian regime in Albania and irregular contact with the Mother Church, the Archdiocese de facto increasingly functioned autonomously. After Metropolitan Theofan's repose in 1965, he was immediately succeeded by Bishop Stephen (Lasko) who signed an agreement, dated October 14, 1971 with OCA Primate, Metropolitan Ireney (Bekish) just days before the Second All-American Council to formally affiliate the Archdiocese with the OCA. Bishop Stephen reposed in 1975. Subsequent ruling hierarchs have been Bishop Mark (Forsberg) in 1979-84 and Archbishop Nikon (Liolin) from 2003 until his repose in 2019. A search is now underway for a candidate to be the next hierarch of the Archdiocese. Of the 13 Archdiocesan parishes that joined the OCA in 1971, 11 remain active today.

Meanwhile, the first Bulgarian parish of the Diocese of the Aleutians and North America was established in Madison, IL in 1907. Years later, the Bulgarian and Macedonian communities in America formed a diocese under the Church in Bulgaria, but with the appearance of the communist regime in Bulgaria, a break developed between the Bulgarian Diocese in America and the Patriarchate in Bulgaria. Over a decade later, when the Diocesan Bishop together with some clergy and parishes returned to the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate, a group of clergy and parishes headed by Father Kyrill (Yonchev) joined the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR) where, in 1964 he was elevated to the episcopacy to shepherd the newly-formed Bulgarian Diocese of Toledo. In 1976, Bishop Kyrill and his diocese petitioned to be received into the OCA. On December 20, 1976, Bishop Kyrill signed an Agreement with Metropolitan Ireney that formalized the affiliation of his diocese with the OCA. He continued to oversee the Bulgarian Diocese until his repose in 2007. He was succeeded by Bishop (now Archbishop) Alexander (Golitzin) whose episcopal ordination took place in 2012. The 9 parishes that joined the OCA within the Bulgarian Diocese in 1976 have grown to 15 parishes and 2 monastic communities today. *Con't Next Page*

## VIGILS- DECEMBER 25 & 26

**Tamara Blackford (1)** In memory of Rob

**Laura Kovach(4).** For the health of Amanda, Matt, Jack, Andrew, Katy, Marguerite B., Stephanie R., and George K. For health of Betty K., Ben F., Earl R., Mary P., Andrea J., Wendy R., Mark M., Dana M., Bodhi C., Hattie K., Molly K., David M., Kathie J., Joe H., Margi H. , and Joe S., and Pete Rynski  
Birthday blessings, good health, and many years to my husband Jim. Safe travel for family and friends.

**Sandy Martin (3)** For health and healing of Marg,  
Loving memory of my mom on her birthday Dec 26,  
special intentions

**Greg Mazur (2)** Christmas Blessings and good health in the New Year to all friends and parishioners of Holy Assumption, Health and well being of Marguerite Bird

**Janice Timko (4)** In Blessed and loving memory of my precious parents, Sophia and Peter Monak, grandparents Baba Julia and Zedo Andrew Millie and family, Harry, Phil and Phillip “Andy” on Christmas. Vechnaya Pamyat!, Christmas blessing to my family Rebecca and grandchildren, Ruthe, Dorothy, Lew and family. “Mnohaya Leta!”, Christmas blessings to cousin-in-law Suellen, son Michael and all the family. Thanking God for His blessing for Suellen and son Michael-cancer levels are down. “Mnohaya Leta!”, Christmas blessings to the Bill Glovinsky family and the Greg Twarek family. “Mnohaya Leta!”

**Twarek (10)** For the health of Amber, For the health and recovery of Zach, Health and recovery of Marguerite, Health and recovery of Janice Timko, Health of the Kovach family, Health and recovery of Dorothy ‘Dottie’ Goldman, Jamie Philpot, Health and recovery of Joe Schutt, Health and recovery of , Jim, Stephanie, Ron, Ezra, Health of David, Helen Lis and Tina’s dad, Earl, Matt, Tom, Loren, Joe, Sonya, Margi & Joe, Betty, Jackie, MaryAnn & Bob, Chuck, Bohdi, Diane,

### *Significant Ann. Con’t from previous Page*

Copies of the agreements from the OCA Archives signed by the diocesan hierarchs of the Albanian Archdiocese and Bulgarian Diocese stipulating the conditions of their affiliations with the OCA are posted online for the first time in links provided above.

The formal Agreement renewing the 1960 affiliation of Romanian Episcopate with the then North American Metropolia (informal name of the OCA before autocephaly) was signed just two months after the OCA’s Message calling for unity.

While nurturing immigrants from their ancestral homelands and American-born faithful who share their cultural heritage within their diocesan flocks, these three dioceses continue to work toward a united Orthodox presence on this continent “without domination of any group by any other” in order to more effectively witness the Good News to all people. The Message of the First All-American Council is as germane today as it was 50 years ago, as, together on this continent, we seek to worship

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### **Luke 6:17-23 (Gospel, Saint)**

And He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases, as well as those who were tormented with unclean spirits. And they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all. Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said: “Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh. Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you, and revile you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man’s sake. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, for in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.



## PRAYER LIST- UPDATED DECEMBER 30

**HIERARCH'S / CLERGY:** His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman; Archbishop Benjamin from San Fransico; John Duranko (Father's home pastor); James Gleason (Father's Spiritual Father); Moses Berry; Gregory Grivna; Emilian Hutnyan; Joseph Von Klarr; Michael Kuzara; John Zabinko Deacon Paul Gansle, Deacon Peter Rentsch, Deacon Michael Wison / Sub-deacon Wylie Meath

**MATUSHKII:** Pani Patricia Duranko; Virginia Lecko; Maura McCarnthey; Roberta Spengler; Margaret Zabinko

**PARISHIONERS & THEIR FAMILIES:** James Bargdill (Schutt); John Beadle (Elchisco); Marguerite Bird; Maryann Cook (Twarek); Michael Glovinsky; Shirley Gresh (Glovinsky); Joseph Habegger (Kovach); Charisse (Hileman); Betty Kovach; David LaValle (Fr); Helen Lis; David Mazurik; Child Stella Miller (Elchisco); Nancy Naiser (Royhab); Earl Rindfleisch; Helen Jean Rofkar (Elchisco); Joe Rose; Sonya Rose; Ron Royhab; Maryann Royhab; Stephanie Royhab; Joe Schutt; Dacia Snider (Hileman); Diane Tryon; Greg Tyron; Tom Twarek; Child Bodhi (Cassell); Elinor Williams (Golob); Kathryn Tryon & her unborn baby

**OTHER REQUESTS:** Marge Dziama; Child Ezra; Baby Finn (Cassell); Zoe Finley (ABL);; Ruthe Flewelling; Ben Franklin (Kovach); Dorothy Goldman (Twarek); Donald Gresh (Glovinsky); Andrea Joy (Kovach); Ann Marie Krynock (Timko); Maria (ABL); Jake Lipstraw (Twarek); Mark Ludvik (Guzy); Mark Masica (Kovach); Pauline Meath (Fr); Karen Muzyka (fr); William Romanchak (Fr); Sandy Scafaria (Hileman); Loren Welch (Fr); Chuck Wiedenhoft (Twarek); Sara (Jake); Chris Quotap (Fr)

**MILITARY:** Alex, Nathan Brown, Craig Cassell, Cory Deaton , Jake Ellithorpe, Jordan Fulton, Alena Grabavoy, Nicholas & Tikhon, Cory Deaton, Alex Zarnow

**CAPTIVES:** Metropolitan Paul (Orthodox Archdiocese of Aleppo), Archbishop John Syriac Archdiocese of Aleppo, The UN & IOCC humanitarian aid workers in & around Syria; Those suffering persecution in Iraq, Syria, Israel, Egypt, Ukraine and throughout the world



**NOTE:** ABL (Archbishop's request) / Please let FR. Andrew know who can come off the list or be put on.

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### ***CATASTROPHIC RELIEF FUND***

Purpose of fund: To provide some small financial assistance to a parishioner, family member or community member who has suffered a catastrophic event.

Funds will be offered at the discretion & blessing of the Rector and the discretion of the Board.

This money can also be used for outreach programs in the parish.

Thank you and God bless!



### **BUILDING / RESTORATION FUND**

Our 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary is coming!  
Fund Purpose: To collect funds to pay for the restoration, repair and beautification of the building and parish room. This will avoid using general funds which are earmarked for budgetary items.

Please consider contributing generously to the *Building/Restoration Fund*.

## **Metropolitan Tikhon presides at the Divine Liturgy at St. Nicholas Russian Cathedral in New York City on the day of its patronal feast**

On Sunday, December 19, 2021, with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill, and at the invitation of His Grace Matthew Bishop of Sourozh and Administrator of the Patriarchal Parishes in the USA & Canada, His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon presided at the Divine Liturgy at New York City's Saint Nicholas Patriarchal Cathedral on the day of the Cathedral's patronal feast.

Concelebrating with His Beatitude were Archpriest George Konyev, Chancellor of the Patriarchal Parishes in the USA, Archpriest Alexander Golubov, Igumen Nikodim, Dean of the Cathedral and Secretary of the Administrator of the Patriarchal Parishes of the USA, and Priest Alessandro Margheritino, Secretary of the Orthodox Church in America. Metropolitan Tikhon's delegation included Deacon Peter Ilchuk, Executive Secretary to the Metropolitan.

After the Divine Liturgy, Igumen Nikodim shared the greetings of Bishop Matthew who welcomed His Beatitude, and noted his regrets for not being able to participate in the celebration.

Metropolitan Tikhon offered his greetings to both His Holiness Patriarch Kirill and Bishop Matthew, thanking them for the opportunity to celebrate the Divine Liturgy on such beautiful and joyous day in which we honor the beloved Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia. His Beatitude also thanked Father George and the Cathedral's clergy for their hospitality and love.

In his homily at the end of the Divine Liturgy, His Beatitude pointed out that, "In today's Gospel, we read that the crowds gathered around the Lord Jesus Christ and 'sought to touch him, for power went out from him and healed them all.' Perhaps, hearing this, we wish that we, too, could have seen Jesus with our eyes, touched him with our hands, and have received healing for the wounds of our bodies, our souls, our hearts. But of course, the Lord is always present to us, not just spiritually, in our inner being, but physically, through the saints." Metropolitan Tikhon then remarked that, "Wherever there is sanctity, there is Jesus Christ. And in some cases, in

accordance with God's providence, the holiness of a person is so great that, even after his death, his body remains with us, visibly full of God's healing grace, always making Christ's power present in our lives. This is the case with Saint Nicholas."

At the conclusion of the liturgical celebration, His Beatitude and his delegation were welcomed to the parish hall to share a festal meal with the Cathedral's community in honor of their patron saint. During the meal, Metropolitan Tikhon and Bishop Matthew were able to speak on the phone and exchange greetings of the feast.

A photo gallery can be viewed on the OCA website and Facebook page.

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### **Galatians 5:22-6:2 (Epistle, Saint)**

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another. Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

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### **2 Timothy 4:5-8 (Epistle, Sunday Before Theophany)**

But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

## JANUARY Celebrations

ANNIVERSARIES	BIRTHDAYS
11- Missy & Andy Schlotterer 1-24-2015: Bishop Daniel of Santa Rosa 1-25-2020: His Grace Bishop Alexis Bishop elect of Alaska 26- Fr. James Gleason Anniversary to the Holy Priesthood	1-Jim Kovach 3- Samuel Koren 4- John Starcher 7- Susan Guzy 7- Lueleta Dardovski 8- Mat. Melania Adamcio 8- Barbara Mazurik 11- Toussaint Jones
<b>NAMESDAY</b>	
1-2: Retired Bishop Seraphim of Sendai	

### 40 DAY REMEMBRANCE

- Jan. 9:** Victims of the school shooting in Detroit/  
Police officer killed in GA
- Jan 16:** Fr. John Loejos
- Jan. 30:** Archpriest Fr. Michael Macura

### READERS

- |                  |     |
|------------------|-----|
| Sunday, Jan. 2   | Ron |
| Wednesday, Jan 5 | Ron |
| Thursday, Jan 6  | Ron |
| Sunday, Jan 9    | Tim |
| Sunday, Jan 16   | Ron |
| Sunday, Jan 23   | Tim |
| Sunday, Jan 30   | Joe |

### For Your Prayers

- Diane Tryon**  
109 Joslyn Street  
Arcadia, OH 44804
- Marguerite Bird**  
512 Ottawa Street  
Marblehead, OH 43440

## JANUARY Reposed

- |  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 3- Mat. Marilyn Federoff (2019)                  | 23- Helen Beadle (1988)          |
| 3- Larry Naiser (2019)                           | 23- Fr. Michael Sopoliga (2009)  |
| 4- Margaret Reavley (1965)                       | 23- Deborah Pribanic (2020)      |
| 4- George Bartek (1983)                          | 25- Jane (2019) Ron's Aunt       |
| 4- Baby Clyde Madison (2020)                     | 25- William "Bill" Alber (2021)  |
| 5- Russell (2019) Heidi's relative               | 28- Michael Tarasavage (2021)    |
| 5- Donald (2019) Waynes Relative                 | 29- Anna Kravetz (1973)          |
| 5- Maria Semionow (1981)                         | 29- Marjorie Kowal (2003)        |
| 6- Helen Pender (2016)                           | 29- Ernest Gresh (2020)          |
| 8- Bishop Mark of Boston (2018)                  | 29- Rick Schlotterer (2020)      |
| 11- Anna Tomko (1960)                            | 30- Archpriest John Mason (2019) |
| 15- Archpriest Pavel Soucek (2009) Former Pastor | 30- Anna Schofield (2021)        |
| 20- Joshua Zdinak (2016)                         | 31- Edward Bartek (1983)         |
| 21- Daniel Kowal (2006)                          | Sara Rose (2005)                 |
| 21- Philip Kobb (2018)                           | Andrew Matway (1906)             |
| 21- Fr. Michael Shuster (2020)                   | William Gratson (1908)           |
| 22- Fr. John Stefanik (2000)                     | Eva Hritsko (1908)               |

## Mark 1:1-8 (Gospel, Sunday Before Theophany)

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the Prophets: “Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You. The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the LORD; make His paths straight.’” John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel’s hair and with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, “There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

### Greetings and homily of Metropolitan Tikhon at Saint Nicholas Patriarchal Cathedral

It is a great joy to be with you today at the beautiful and historic Saint Nicholas Cathedral, and to receive your wonderful hospitality. Among the first, I am grateful to His Holiness Patriarch Kirill for the blessing to celebrate here today. I look forward to traveling to Moscow whenever this becomes possible.

I am sorrowful that circumstances prevented His Grace Bishop Matthew from concelebrating with me today, but I am grateful for his friendship and his prayers.

I am also grateful to be with all of you, my beloved children, for this great feast. In today’s Gospel, we read that the crowds gathered around the Lord Jesus Christ and “sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all” (Lk 6:19).

Perhaps, hearing this, we wish that we, too, could have seen Jesus with our eyes, touched Him with our hands, and received healing for the wounds of our bodies, our souls, our hearts.

But, of course, the Lord is always present to us—not just spiritually, in our inner being, but physically, through the saints.

Wherever there is sanctity, there is Jesus Christ. And in some cases, in accordance with God’s providence, the holiness of a person is so great that, even after his death, his body remains with us, visibly full of God’s healing grace, always making Christ’s power present in our lives.

This is the case with Saint Nicholas, the patron of your holy temple, whose memory we celebrate today. To this day his relics in Bari, Italy, stream with myrrh, the so-called “manna of Saint Nicholas,” extracted once a year in May. And all year long, his relics are a source of wonders for Christians who pray before them.

But we don’t have to make a pilgrimage to Bari in order to receive the healing of Christ that comes through Saint Nicholas. For though his relics lie in Bari, Saint Nicholas is everywhere in the Spirit, as we sang at last night’s Vespers.

Just as Saint Nicholas’s love for Christ and his fellow man knew no bounds during his life, so Saint Nicholas’s power to intercede before Christ on behalf of the Christian people knows no bounds now.

This accords with the words of the Lord: “The measure you give will be the measure you get back” (Lk 6:38). When Saint Nicholas received the love of Christ, and the gifts of baptism, chrismation, and ordination, he did not receive them in vain. Instead, he labored to use those gifts for the good, to give Christ back to all his fellow men through his episcopal ministry, and especially through his extraordinary works of charity.

And the more he gave Christ away, the more Christ Saint Nicholas received. To those who keep the commandments, the Psalmist promises a great reward. And this reward is Christ Himself.

Therefore, though Saint Nicholas died some 1700 years ago, he is now more alive than ever, for he filled up the days of his earthly life with the very Life of the world, Jesus Christ Himself. And now, wherever Saint Nicholas is—either bodily through his relics, or in the Spirit—the power and presence of Christ is always with him and in him.

And so, as we celebrate the memory of the saint, and ask for his intercessions—as we ask him to send us the power of Christ to heal us—let us also imitate his love for God the Father and Jesus Christ our Savior.

*Con’t Next Page*



***Metro. Tikhon;s homily con't from Previous Pg***

If we do this, then we will be able to celebrate and experience the power of Christ, revealed in Saint Nicholas, not just one day a year, but all the days of our lives, and even unto the endless ages of eternity, giving all glory to the Father and the Son and the Most Holy Spirit. Amen.

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**Archbishop Paul's Travel Schedule:**

**Holy Ascension Church, Albion, MI,**  
December 31st to January 1st

Ordination of Deacon Anthony Saunders to the Priesthood

**Holy Trinity, Detroit, MI,**  
January 1st to 2nd

**St. Makarios Mission,**  
January 8th to 9th

**St. Nicholas Church, Joliet, IL,**  
January 15th to 16th

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**Snoopy's Christmas: A Seasonal Meditation**  
**By Fr. Lawrence Farley**

Each year one of my favourite Christmas songs is an old novelty song called Snoopy's Christmas, released in 1967 by the Royal Guardsmen as a follow-up to their previous hit Snoopy vs. the Red Baron. The song was inspired by actual events. During the First World War troops on either side of the front line crossed over into No Man's Land on Christmas Day to celebrate the holiday together. Soldiers who were previously trying to kill each other on December 24 stopped trying to do that and met together to talk, share cigarettes, show each other photos of their wives, sweethearts, and families, drink together, and even play a game of football. It was initiated entirely by the soldiers themselves (beginning with the Germans). The military leadership was utterly opposed to the whole thing, and was emphatically not amused. Like Christmas, the astonishing and undeclared truce lasted one day.

The Royal Guardsmen's song commemorating the event was as follows:

“The news had come out in the First World War:

The bloody Red Baron was flying once more. The Allied command ignored all of its men, And called on Snoopy to do it again.

T'was the night before Christmas, 40 below, When Snoopy went up in search of his foe. He spied the Red Baron; fiercely they fought; With ice on his wings Snoopy knew he was caught.

(Refrain:) Christmas bells those Christmas bells Ring out from the land! Asking peace of all the world, And good will to man!

The Baron had Snoopy dead in his sights. He reached for the trigger to pull it up tight. Why he didn't shoot, well, we'll never know, Or was it the bells from the village below?

The Baron made Snoopy fly to the Rhine, And forced him to land behind the enemy lines. Snoopy was certain that this was the end, When the Baron cried out, “Merry Christmas, my friend!”

The Baron then offered a holiday toast, And Snoopy, our hero, saluted his host. And then with a roar they were both on their way, Each knowing they'd meet on some other day.”

I can't help comparing it to another seasonal song, John Lennon's Imagine, released four years later in 1971. It also was an anti-war song, but came from a very different place. In Lennon's imaginary world (excuse the pun), wars could be eliminated by eliminating religion: “Imagine there's no countries. It isn't hard to do. Nothing to kill or die for, and no religion too. Imagine all the people living life in peace.” The idea seemed to be that war could be eliminated by eliminating religion and national borders. That was consistent with the billboards Lennon and his muse Yoko Ono sponsored, saying, “War is Over—If You Want It”. The scenario of evil men not wanting it seems not to have entered his brain.

Of course that's just the problem—there are evil men who don't want war to be over. Hitler was one of them. In theological terms, mankind is fallen (or, as the Lord put it, men were evil; see Matthew 7:11). The only thing that could possibly eliminate war is a ***Con't next Pg***

## *Snoopy's Christmas con't from previous Pg*

change in the human heart, the operation where our stony heart is removed and replaced with a heart of flesh (see Ezekiel 36:26). In other words, war can only be eliminated by the change in men that comes only through Jesus Christ. It is tempting to conclude by saying that this was the true message of Snoopy's Christmas—that Christianity is the answer to war and to all of mankind's problems.

But the issue is not quite so simple. For one thing, it is fatally easy to apply a thin varnish of Christianity over the human heart and to imagine that this thin veneer is all that is needed. It is not so. Byzantium fought wars, for all of their love of icons, and the Generals of the First World War who were opposed to that brief and blessed Christmas truce were Christians too.

We can even see this in the song Snoopy's Christmas itself. The endearing truce between Snoopy and the Red Baron warms the heart. But take a closer look at the last lines of the song: "And then with a roar they were both on their way, each knowing they'd meet on some other day." That is, on Boxing Day or later, they would both mount up into the sky once more and try to kill each other all over again.

Christmas Day is wonderful, and culturally speaking, it is the time when the Kingdom of God intersects with this world. For those alive to this intersection, it is indeed unthinkable that one could kill a man on Christmas and then go home to celebrate the birth of Christ with one's family by the family Christmas tree. But the cultural intersection ends soon enough.

What does this mean? It means that though individuals might allow Christ to transform them, to take out their heart of stone and replace it with a heart of flesh, cultures mostly resist this operation. They may allow a thin veneer of Christianity to be slopped on top, but that's about it. Or, in the aphorism of G. K. Chesterton, Christianity has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult and left untried. That explains both the wars of Byzantium and the chagrin of the World War One Generals.

Depend upon it: virtue in this age is always martyric, and a price will be paid for consistent Christianity by those determined to live their lives within that

blessed intersection of the Christmas Kingdom and this world. Christmas offers challenge as well as solace. And that (as Linus might say) is the true meaning of Christmas, Charlie Brown.

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## 2021 NATIVITY MESSAGE OF ARCHBISHOP PAUL

Diocesan, From the Archbishop, News, Spiritual Enrichment

Beloved Clergy, Monastics, and Faithful of the Diocese of the Midwest:

Christ is Born! — Glorify Him!

Man was made in the image of God, but he sinned, and lost immortality. He fell from the divine and better life, enslaved completely by corruption. Now the wise Creator fashions him again, for He has been glorified. (Verse from Ode 1 of the Nativity Canon)

This verse from the Nativity Canon underscores the reality of what we continually deal with in the Christian life. It seems like we need to repeatedly visit this verse, as we don't seem to get it. I fear that our Diocese and our churches continue to be affected by polarizing issues. These issues continue to revolve around ideology, morality, religious practices, politics, and now how to address the continuing pandemic with its new variants. Many have told me that they are weary of dealing with the latter issue. They are sick and tired of talking about it. People just want to move on and focus on the Gospel and the spiritual well being of our people. But the disagreement continues in the Diocese over how to move on.

What does the Feast of our Lord's Nativity offer us this day to help us address these issues in our daily lives?

First we need to see that in this Mystery of God becoming Man, our Lord identifies with the whole of our fallen humanity. He identifies with us and becomes fully man for all; whether we are conservative or liberal, white or black, capitalist or socialist, High church or Low Church, cradle or convert, pro-mask or anti-mask, and pro-vaccine, or anti-vaccine. The Church has had to address these realities since the time of the Apostles (just read Galatians, 1 Corinthians, or Acts, and you will see what I mean). But our Lord in **Con't Pg 12**