



Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople: www.patriarchate.org
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Website: www.goarch.org
Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta Website: www.atlanta.goarch.org
St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church Website: www.saintchristopherhoc.org

Liturgical Guide for the Eve of the Holy Nativity in the Flesh of our Lord, God and Savior, Jesus Christ



Wednesday, December 24, 2014

ON THIS DAY, THE DAY OF PREPARATION (EVE) BEFORE THE HOLY NATIVITY OF OUR LORD, GOD, AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST IN THE FLESH, WE COMMEMORATE *Eugenia, the Righteous Nun-Martyr of Rome. Through her holy intercessions, O God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.*

Welcome, Visitors & Newcomers, to our Parish!

We invite you to enter your name, mail/email addresses in our Guest Register (near the entrance) if you are interested in joining and assisting with our mission's development. We want to keep you informed of our schedule and location of services. *You and your family are welcome; we look forward to knowing you. We invite you and your family to join and assist us often!*

Please consider that only baptized and chrismated Orthodox Christians in canonical good standing may approach for Holy Communion. All are invited to partake of the Antidoron ("instead of the gifts") distributed at the conclusion of today's Divine Liturgy.

SPECIAL HYMN FOR ST. BASIL'S LITURGY

Megalynarion (Hymn to the Theotokos) – (Hymnal-pp. 298-301):

Today, instead of "Axion Estin" or "Truly it is proper to call you blessed...", we sing: In you, O woman full of grace, all creation rejoices, the orders of angels and the race of mankind. O hallowed temple and spiritual paradise, glory of virginal souls, from you our God was incarnate and became a child, He who is God from all ages. By making your womb His throne He made you more spacious than

all the heavens. In you, O woman full of grace all creation rejoices. Glory to you.

SCRIPTURAL PASSAGES FOR DIVINE LITURGY

The Scriptures were not given us for this only, that we might have them in books, but that we might engrave them on our hearts.

– St. John Chrysostom

Epistle Reading (Hebrews 1:1-12)

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets,² but in these last days He has spoken to us by a Son, Whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom He also created the worlds.³ He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and He sustains all things by His powerful word. When He had made purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name He has inherited is more excellent than theirs.⁵ For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are My Son; today I have begotten You"? Or again, "I will be His Father, and He will be my Son"?⁶ And again, when He brings the firstborn into the world, He says, "Let all God's angels worship Him."⁷ Of the angels He says, "He makes His angels winds, and His servants flames of fire."⁸ But of the Son He says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of Your kingdom."⁹ You have loved righteousness and hated

wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.”¹⁰ And, “In the beginning, Lord, You founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands;¹¹ they will perish, but You remain; they will all wear out like clothing;¹² like a cloak You will roll them up, and like clothing they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will never end.”

Gospel Reading (Luke 2:1-20)

*2*In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered.² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.³ All went to their own towns to be registered.⁴ Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David.⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child.⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped Him in bands of cloth, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people:¹¹ to you is born this day

in the city of David a Savior, Who is the Messiah, the Lord.¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.”¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.”¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child;¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

**THIS WEEK’S MEMORY VERSE (TRY TO
COMMIT TO MEMORY):**

“You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at His birth, for He will be great in the sight of the Lord.” (Luke 1:14-15)

**PASTORAL REFLECTION FROM
FR. GEORGE:**

The message of Christmas is that God intrudes upon the weak and the vulnerable, and this is precisely the message that we so often miss. God does not come to that part of us that struts through life, confident in our self-sufficiency. God leaves His treasure in the broken fragmented places of our life. God comes to us in those rare moments when we are able to transcend our own selfishness long enough to really care about another human being.

On the wall of the museum of the concentration camp at Dachau is a large and moving photograph of a mother and her little girl standing in line of a gas chamber. The child, who is walking in front of her mother, does not know where she is going. The mother, who walks behind, does know, but is helpless to stop the tragedy. In her helplessness she performs the only act of love left to her. She places her hands over the child's eyes so she will at least not see the horror to come. When people come into the museum they do not whisk by this photo hurriedly. They pause. They almost feel the pain. And deep inside I think that they are all saying: "O God, don't let that be all that there is."

God hears those prayers and it is in just such situations of hopelessness and helplessness that His almighty power is born. It is there that God leaves His treasure, in Mary and in all of us, as Christ is born anew within. Amen!

On this the Twelfth Eve of the Holy Nativity of our Lord, we continue to thank each of you for your presence and support. Although it may seem like we are just a handful of men, women and children, if we

commit ourselves to serving our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, we will experience the miracle of growth as the Holy Spirit brings others into His service to help us build His new church in the Peachtree City, Georgia area for the glory of God!

COMMUNITY SCHEDULE

Wednesday, December 24th, Christmas Eve

4:00 p.m.: Great Hours of the Nativity of our Lord

5:15 p.m.: Vespers of the Holy Nativity

**6:00 p.m.: Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
for the Holy Nativity of our Lord**

Thursday, December 25th, Christmas Morning:

8:00 a.m.: Orthros of the Holy Nativity

**9:00 a.m.: Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
for the Holy Nativity of our Lord**

**11:30 am Feed the Homeless at St. John the
Wonderworker in Atlanta**

*(In celebration of the Feast of the Nativity, the
period from 12/25-1/4 is fast free.)*

Sunday, December 28 (Sunday after the Nativity of our Lord):

7:45 am Orthros Service

9:00 am Divine Liturgy/Coffee Fellowship

**11:00 am Let's EAT™ Join us at Broadway Diner,
535 S. Glynn St., Suite 1009, Fayetteville, GA 30214**

Wednesday, December 31 (Eve - Circumcision of our Lord/St. Basil/New Year's):

4:00 pm Great Vespers Service

**4:45 pm Divine Liturgy of St. Basil/Doxology
on the 1st of the Year & Blessing of the Vasilopita**

Fr. George, the Chantors, and the
congregation join our earthly choir
in singing the traditional
Christmas carols!

Christ Is Born! Glorify Him!

*"For the poor will never cease from the land;
therefore, I command you to do this word which
says, 'You shall surely open your hands to your
brother, to your poor and needy in your land.'"
(Deuteronomy 15: 11)*

Feed the Homeless Today...

December 25, 2014, 11:30 a.m.

Christmas at St. John the
Wonderworker Church

We will be helping St. John the Wonderworker's
Loaves and Fishes Program distribute food, hats,
scarves, and gloves for adults on Christmas Day,
beginning at 11:30 a.m. Please join us!

For location information, go to:
www.saintjohnwonderworker.org.

Stewardship 2015

We thank everyone who has offered your family's 2015
Stewardship Commitment Card. If you have not done so
already, please place your envelope in today's offering
tray. Extra cards/envelopes are on the entrance table.
*Every parishioner is asked to support our Stewardship
Program!*