



**ST. PETER & ST. PAUL
UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**
105 CLIFTON AVE
ANSONIA, CT 06401
Rectory Phone 203-734-3895
Church Hall 203-732-2414
Fax 203-732-3191



Leaders of the Apostles and teachers of the world, pray to the Master of all to grant peace to the world and great mercy to our souls.

Fr. Ed Cell 413-218-6404
Email: YoungE8073@aol.com

Web Site: www.stspucc.org.

Very Rev. Archpriest Edward Canon Young, Pastor
December 5, 2021

Twenty- Ninth Sunday after Pentecost, Our Venerable and God-bearing Father Sabbas the Sanctified (532) Nativity Fast

Epistle: Colossians 1:12-18 GOSPEL: Luke 17: 12-19 Tone: Sheet

DIVINE LITURGY SCHEDULE

WEEKDAYS: MONDAY–FRIDAY 10:00AM

SATURDAY: Not Now! 4:00PM (Vigil Sunday-Eng.)

SUNDAY: 8:30 AM (Ukr.) & 10:00 AM (Eng.)

Confessions are heard before each Divine Liturgy:

Saturday 3:00PM to 3:30 PM
Sunday 8:00AM to 8:30AM and
9:30AM until 10:00AM

Religious Education – Saturday 10:00AM – 11:00AM
Call Alice O'Doy @203-734-3055 for more information.

Preservation – Please use the form in church vestibule, mail it to the church or bring it to Bob Jaskilka, Michael Wysowski, Jr. or Fr. Edward Young

Address or Name Change/New Phone Number –
Please update your records. See Bob Jaskilka, or Michael Wysowski, Jr. to update this info.
Returned checks are subject to a **\$35.00 fee**.

Bulletin Notices – Notices for the bulletin must be **in writing** by Wednesday @6PM to be included in that week's bulletin.

Parish Council meets every 3rd Wednesday of every month @7:15pm in the church hall.

Rectory Office Hours - Thursday 10AM – Noon
or by Appointment on other days

****Please Note ****

Mass Offerings , Sorokousty
Mother's Day, Father's Day
Checks must be made out to the Fr. Young
not the Church ! Thank You...

Baptism Arrangement for baptism is to be made personally at the Parish Office. Please call rectory for an appointment.

Marriage – Arrangements for marriage are to be made at least **6 months prior** to the Wedding date. Please call rectory for an appointment.

Sick Calls – To arrange for Sacraments for the elderly and sick at home, please call Parish Office Fr. Young at 203-734-3895, **Please advise the rectory of any hospitalization.**

In your Estate planning – Remember Sts. Peter & Paul Church in your will.

Stewardship - "As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace" (1 Peter 4:10). All Catholics, should give generous support—time, money, prayers, and personal service according to their circumstances—to parish and diocesan programs and to the universal Church

Special Share in the Eucharist *- Bread & Wine

offered for a week, month, or year. Donations: one week - \$20.00 Donors/intentions will be listed.

Bob Jaskilka, or Michael Wysowski, Jr or Fr. Edward Young

Eternal Light *- offered to light for a week \$10.00.

Bob Jaskilka, or Michael Wysowski, Jr. or Fr. Edward Young

Virgin Mary's Lamp and Sacred Heart Lamp* also available for offering! Offered to light for a week is 10.00, each.

Bob Jaskilka, or Michael Wysowski, Jr. or Fr. Edward Young

All start on Monday to Sunday!

***Offering must be made when dates are reserved!**




A **Welcome to St. Peter and St. Paul Parish** to all who are worshipping with us today. If you are over twenty-one years of age and have not yet registered, have moved or will be moving, or have a new telephone number, **please fill out the form below**. Each household **must be registered** at St. Peter and St. Paul and every adult receives a set of stewardship envelopes. Registration also entails an annual dues to the parish. If a parishioner is not registered, it is difficult for church authorities to issue him or her a sponsor certificate, reference, or any other certification.

Name _____ Phone# _____
Address _____ E-mail _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

(Please come down to the Basement to be properly registered after or before liturgy)

Akathist Hymn to the Nativity of Christ Icos V The Persian kings, seeing the King of kings sitting on the arm of the Virgin as upon the throne of the cherubim, and understanding Him to be the Master, even though He had assumed the form of a servant, hastened to offer Him gifts-gold, as to the King of all; frankincense, as to God; and myrrh, as to One immortal;-and making obeisance, they chanted: Glory to Thee Who hast shone forth light upon all! Glory to Thee Who by a star hast summoned us to do Thee homage! Glory to Thee Who didst reprove the malice of cruel Herod! Glory to Thee Who didst show his plotting to be in vain! Glory to Thee Who hast delivered us from his deception! Glory to Thee Who hast taught us to worship Thee, the Sun of righteousness! Glory to Thee Who hast enlightened all with the light of understanding! Glory to Thee Who by Thy nativity hast abolished the delusion of polytheism! Glory to Thee Who hast utterly laid low the dominion of the enemy! Glory to Thee Who hast taught us to worship Thee with the Father and the Spirit! Glory to Thee Who hast crushed the head of the serpent who beguiled us! Glory to Thee Who hast delivered us from everlasting death! O Jesus, Son of God, Who becamest incarnate for our sake, glory be to Thee!

<i>Bread and Wine Offering - None Offered</i>			
12/04	Saturday	10:00 AM	Religious Education
12/05	Sunday	8:30 AM 10:00 AM	Pro Populo (For All Parishioners) - За Всіх Парафіян +Leo & Marilyn Michel req. by Daughters
12/06	Monday	10:00 AM	Feast of the of St. Nicholas +Stefania Gebuza req. by John & Helen Zanowiak & Family
12/07	Tuesday	10:00 AM	+William & Clementina Stevenson
12/08	Wednesday	10:00 AM 7:00 PM	The Conception of Saint Anna,-Conceived the Most Holy Mother of God- Immaculate Conception Pro Populo (For All Parishioners) - За Всіх Парафіян +Sr. Anne Katherine Binkowski M.S.M.G.
12/09	Thursday		No Liturgy
12/10	Friday		No Liturgy
12/11	Saturday		No Liturgy
12/12	Sunday	8:30 AM 10:00 AM	Pro Populo (For All Parishioners) - За Всіх Парафіян +Szymon & Stefania Gebuza req. by M/M Roman. Gebuza & M/M Andrew Kowalczyk and Family

ETERNAL LIGHT		<i>None Offered</i>	
BLESSED VIRGIN MARY LAMP		<i>Good Health Leonila Gebuza by John & Helen Zanowiak & Family</i>	
SACRED HEART of JESUS LAMP		<i>In loving memory +Maria Leszkiw by Julia Garan</i>	
BREAD & WINE OFFERING RESERVED DATES 12/13/21-12/19/21 12/20/21-12/26/21 1/3/22-1/9/22 1/10/22-1/16/22 2/7/22-2/13/22 3/7/22-3/13/22 4/4/22-4/10/22 5/2/22-5/8/22 6/6/22-6/12/22 7/4/22-7/10/22 8/1/22-8/7/22 9/5/22-9/11/22 10/3/22-10/9/22 10/10/22-10/16/22 11/7/22-11/13/22 12/5/22-12/11/22	ETERNAL LIGHT LAMP OFFERING RESERVED DATES 12/13/21-12/19/21 12/20/21-12/26/21 12/27/21-1/2/22 1/3/22-1/9/22 1/10/22-1/16/22 1/17/22-1/23/22 1/24/22-1/20/22 5/2/22-5/8/22 5/9/22-5/15/22 8/8/22-8/14/22 9/5/22-9/11/22	BLESSED VIRGIN MARY LAMP OFFERING RESERVED DATES 12/13/21-12/19/21 12/20/21-12/26/21 12/27/21-1/2/22 1/3/22-1/9/22 1/10/22-1/16/22 1/17/22-1/23/22 1/24/22-1/30/22 3/7/22-3/13/22 5/2/22-5/8/22 5/9/22-5/15/22 8/8/22-8/14/22 9/5/22-9/11/22 10/3/22-10/9/22	SACRED HEART OF JESUS LAMP OFFERING RESERVED DATES 12/13/21-12/19/21 12/20/21-12/26/21 12/27/21-1/2/22 1/3/22-1/9/22 1/10/22-1/16/22 1/17/22-1/23/22 1/24/22-1/30/22 3/7/22-3/13/22 5/2/22-5/8/22 5/9/22-5/15/22 8/8/22-8/14/22 9/5/22-9/11/22 10/3/22-10/9/22

2021 & Past Church Dues (Blue Book) (Kollekta)

During Lent & every Saturday & Sunday dues current & past will be collected in the church hall after 8:30 AM & 10AM Sunday Liturgies.

Please bring your dues book to the church hall dues will not be collected in the rectory Back on January 25, 2005 the Parish Council voted to increase the yearly dues to \$75.00 per member. This is the first increase since 1998. The number of upcoming projects that are needed to keep the church building in good repairs, such as painting, doors, walls, fixing the roof, warranted this increase.

Do not place dues in your weekly envelope offering !

Please remember - this is not our church but YOUR church! Please fulfill your responsibility to your Church!!

Friendly Reminder - 2021 & Past Church Dues are due during lent to support your church to pay our obligations to keep the church running such as salaries; electricity; oil ; gas; water ; and continual maintiance; repair of the church, rectory and cemetery; insurance ; chancery fees; and telephone just to name a few.

At Divine Liturgy and All other Divine Services: In the month of October Father Edward took part in the Catholic Deanery meeting for our area. The Catholic Parishes are following the Mask mandate of their cities. The City of Ansonia has no Mask mandate, Father Edward spoke personally with the mayor. Therefore, Masks are not required though those who feel safer wearing a Mask should continue to do so. Social distancing must continue to be followed. The priest must use a mask while giving out Holy Communion.

Volunteers needed for Our 125th Anniversary

The parish will be celebrating Our 125th Anniversary in June 2022.

A committee needs to be formed to discuss ideas for this event.

If your interested please contact Bill Platosz platosz@hotmail.com or Scott

Walker sjjawalk@aol.com There has been the First meeting but more assistance is need. Thank you

The Third Organizing Meeting for the 125th Anniversary of Saint Peter and Saint Paul Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church: will be 12 January 2022 at 6:30 PM in the church hall. This is a very important moment for our parish. We must recall those pioneers who sacrificed such much to establish this parish and build this magnificent church. We call all who will honor memory of our forefathers and foremothers in faith. We ask you to please come out and join in this important work. God Bless and Protect



Today

Sunday, at 9:30 AM there will be the Recitation of the Holy Rosary of Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God. One of the intentions for our prayers will be for our parish, as we prepare to celebrate our 125th Anniversary as a Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church

here in Ansonia, Connecticut.



**SAINT PETER & SAINT PAUL UKRAINIAN
CATHOLIC CHURCH
105 CLIFTON AVE.
ANSONIA, CT 06401**

One Hundred & Twenty Four Years 1897-2021
PHONE 203-734-3895

Sanctify those who love the beauty of Your house.

June 28, 2021

Subject: Need for Church upkeep and restoration

Dear Parishioners:

In the year 2022, it will be the 125th Anniversary of the establishment of Saint Peter and Saint Paul Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. His Excellency Bishop Paul Chomnycky, O.S.B.M., Eparch of Stamford, has approved Sunday June 5, 2022 to be present with us to celebrate this significant moment in the history of this parish.

This parish community has been blessed and has much to be proud of in its long history. *Sanctify those who love the beauty of Your House* is quoted from the prayer from the end of Divine Liturgy. It speaks measurably of how the founders of this parish understood the importance of the beauty of God's Holy House.

We, as a parish family, will begin preparation for our 125th Anniversary. There are many needs to be met in our church because of its age. One is our church kneelers. The pads need to be replaced and the kneelers repaired. This is a very costly project, a goal of at least \$50,000. In addition, there are a number of structural issues with the upstairs church and downstairs that need to be addressed. For example, we just received a quote for \$10,000 for repairs that need to be done due to water damage.

In the past year, our church financial situation has been greatly affected because of the Covid19 pandemic. We have been unable to have fundraisers and weekly donations were tremendously low. Therefore, we are launching a fundraising initiative to attend to the many needs of our church.

All members of the parish are called to assist and be as generous as possible in this fundraising effort, following the example of the founding fathers and mothers of this parish, who gave selflessly to build our beautiful church building. We pray our efforts will help sustain our church building for us and future generations.

Enclosed you will find an envelope to make your donation and a stamped return envelope.

Do not use PayPal !

Please make checks payable to:

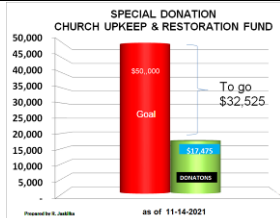
Saint Peter & Saint Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church.

We thank you in advance for your generosity and wish God's blessings on you and your families.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Very Rev. Archpriest Edward P. Young, Pastor

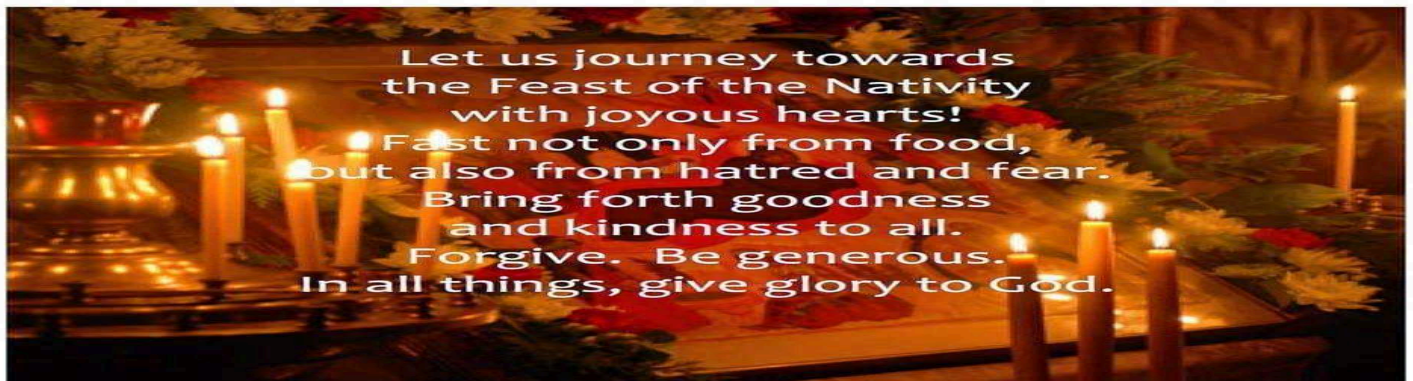
Mr. Scott Walker, Parish President



Goal \$50,000 – Donated to Date \$17,475 35.0% to go \$32,525

Church Up Keep and Restoration Donations: Donations \$0.00 this week. -----

Church Donation – In memory of +Virginia Ferencz \$500.00 by Robert & Kathleen Ferencz



HOLIDAY LUNCHEON WITH ST. NICHOLAS



ANNUAL

HOLIDAY LUNCHEON WITH ST. NICHOLAS takes place on Sunday, December 12th, 2021 following 10AM Divine Liturgy

Menu: Hot dogs, rolls, sauerkraut, baked beans, macaroni salad, potato chips, beverage, dessert and coffee.: Youth program, music, activities table, photo with St. Nick **Tickets:** Youth (up to 18) FREE, Adults: \$10.00 Tickets will be on sale after weekend masses from Nov. 7th to Dec. 5th, 2021. **No tickets will be sold at the door.** For more information please call Jolanta Kowal @ 203-393-7370 or Josephine Sembrat @ 203-929-4813.

Lunch with St. Nick is fast approaching. Parish children and youth are encouraged to participate in the artistic program. Practices will **Entertainment** be on Sundays after 10:00 AM liturgy on the following dates: November 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th, and December 4th (Saturday @ 11:00 AM) in the church hall. For more information please call Jolanta Kowal @ 203-393-7370 or 203-278-1288.



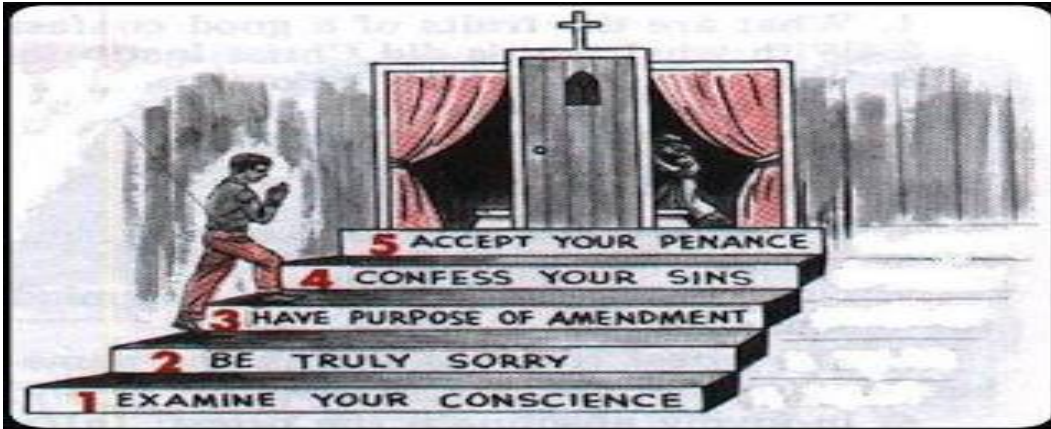
Father Philip Sandrick is our Nativity Fast Missionary
Nativity Fast Mission

Friday, 17 December 5:00 PM Confession (Ukr & Eng)
6:00 PM Divine Liturgy

Saturday, 18 December 9:30 AM Confession for Children
10:00 AM Children Divine Liturgy
2:30-4:00 PM Confession (Ukr & Eng)

Sunday, 19 December 8:30 AM Divine Liturgy Mission Sermon
10:00 AM Divine Liturgy Mission Sermon
Confession will be heard before and after Liturgy

Sacrament of Confession 5 Parts of a Good Confession



“Create
in me a
clean heart,
O **God,**
and put a
new **and right**
spirit
within me.”
Psalm 51:10



Obituary Sr. Anne Katherine Binkowski, M.S.M.G., 92, died peacefully at the convent of the Missionary Sisters of Mother of God (711 N Franklin St. Philadelphia, PA 19123) on Friday, Nov. 26, 2021, of Alzheimer's Disease.

Born in Derby, CT on April 14, 1929, she was the youngest daughter of the late John and Mary Grabowski Binkowski. Sr. Anne was a member of SS. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church in Ansonia, CT. After graduating from Derby High School, she completed a training program to become a hairdresser. She then owned and operated a hair salon for 10 years with her good friend Grace Ceraso.

On June 15, 1963, at age 34, she entered the MSMG convent at Stamford, CT. She made her first profession in 1966 and took Final Vows on January 1, 1972. Sr. Anne worked for 20 years (1972-92) at Mother of God Academy in various capacities, including high school secretary, chief maintenance engineer, prefect of resident students; she was also an instructor of typing, bookkeeping, accounting, childcare and earth science. She held the position of Headteacher at St. Ann's Nursery School for 40 years (1972-2012), teaching multiple generations of young souls not only their ABC's and 123's, but their first prayers, and lovingly instilling virtue and devotion to Jesus and Mary.

Sr. Anne used her talents to help the Congregation with the publication of The ARK, the training of novices, as well as serving as a Councilor, landscaper and vegetable gardener. She enjoyed hands-on work, drawing, wood carving, and watching football. Her favorite book for spiritual reading was the Bible and she cherished praying in Old Church Slavonic. Sr. Ann was a unique and noble soul, a woman of strong convictions and a lively wit who always exhibited a spirit of heartfelt gratitude. It was therefore quite fitting that her last full day on this earth was the celebration of Thanksgiving!

Surviving are a brother, William (Maura "Mary") Binkowski of Derby; many fond nieces and nephews, including Alice Odoy (Edwin) and Jean Petriw Walker (Scott) of Derby; as well as many beloved great nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death her siblings: Mary (Paul) Mudry, Anna (Stephen) Petriw, John (Martha) Binkowski, Julia Binkowski, Peter Binkowski, Helen Binkowski, Paul Binkowski, and Msgr. George Binkowski.

Funeral will be on Thursday, Dec. 2 at the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, 830 N Franklin St. Philadelphia, PA 19123. Viewing at 9:30 A.M. with Requiem Divine Liturgy to be celebrated by Bishop Andriy Raby and members of the clergy at 10:30 A.M. Interment will directly follow at Our Lady of Sorrows Ukrainian Catholic Cemetery, 2590 Village Rd, Langhorne, PA 19047.

In lieu of flowers, Divine Liturgies for the soul of Sr. Anne, MSMG, are most appreciated.

Forth Day Liturgy for Sr. Anne will be celebrated Tuesday 4 January 2022 at 6:00 PM

Again, since we are in the season of the Nativity Fast/Advent, let's presume this morning's Gospel of the ten lepers is a Christmas Gospel given for our contemplation to help us prepare for the coming of Our LORD's saving nativity.

The prayers of the Church themselves teach us to look for the spiritual meaning of the Gospels. In several places, they teach us to see our soul as "all leprous and sinful." As we see in this morning's Gospel, leprosy is not limited by ethnic boundaries, since one of the lepers was a Samaritan; the others, presumably, were Jews. Leprosy carried terrible social consequences.

Note that the Savior in this morning's Gospel gives the lepers a command: "**Go, show yourselves to the priest,**" He says. He is calling them to an obedience; and, you see how the lepers, as soon as they obey are cleansed. Obedience to the Word of God is the fundamental principle of existence and life in God. Obedience is the active expression of humility before God and of love for God. In obedience to the will of God's Word, we begin to uncover our natural likeness to God that is the fundamental principle of our having been created in the Image of God. The lepers obey. They set out immediately to find the priest, and at once every single one of them is healed and made clean—as were every single one of us when we were immersed into the saving waters of the Holy Font at our Baptism.

How should we understand the one leper, who was a Samaritan who, when he saw he was healed and was no longer 'unclean', returned to worship the LORD Jesus? I believe the Psalmist, again, shows us the meaning: "**I will praise Thee with the harp (with my heart, let's say) for Thy faithfulness, O my God! I will sing praises to Thee with the lyre (my soul), O Holy One of Israel. My lips will shout for joy when I sing praises to Thee; my soul, also, which Thou hast delivered [from Sheol]. My tongue will speak of Thy righteous help all the day long**" (Ps 71:21ff.) But we hear also at the Matins: "**Let everything that has breath praise the LORD!**" To live truly is to live in a heart that overflows with praise and love for God, whose spontaneous movement, whose very heart-beat is thanksgiving to God. To be saved, then, is to come truly to life, and truly to live is to love God in a 'new and right spirit' whose very "essence" is love for the LORD who "leads us up from out of the abyss" (Ps 70:20).

The Samaritan was 'saved' because his heart fell in love with the Savior. He wanted to be with the LORD; he wanted to belong to the LORD and to no one else. This is the mark of those who are the LORD's people, this, not one's ethnic heritage or social status, is the mark of those who are saved.

If you can imagine yourself actually receiving this healing love of God, of becoming one with Him, of being clothed in the divine majesty of His Glory, are you not suddenly very afraid? Perhaps we begin to see why the shepherds were afraid when they heard that first Noel. Yet, it is not a debilitating fear. It is a fear that makes one rise up, in fear and trembling, but with a joy and desire springing from the depths of one's soul to make haste with the shepherds, to "go right now to Bethlehem to see this Glory of God that has come to pass"! And so the Shepherds will very soon join this one leper to begin crying out to us: "**Let us raise our minds on high, and in spirit, let us go to Bethlehem to see the Virgin giving birth to God in the cave!**"

Let us understand who we are setting out to see on that blessed Holy Night. Let us understand who this Christ is whose angels and shepherds and all those whom He has cleansed and made whole and raised from death to life are crying out to us to come to Bethlehem to see Him, to adore Him, to worship Him! Let S.t Isaac of Syria tell us: "Be diligent to enter the chamber that is within you," he says. This is the closet the LORD tells us to enter (Mt 6:6). It is the mystery of our heart, the mystery of the Cave of Bethlehem, the mystery of the LORD's Tomb.

Through prayer, work to uncover your deepest, most intimate yearning. There you will discover that you are a beloved of God who longs to love Him who first loved you! Then you will desire deep in your soul to rise up and go in spirit to Bethlehem—into the cave, the innermost chamber of your heart, following the shepherds, the leper and all "the people who know the festal shout, who walk in the Light of His countenance, who exult in His Name all the day, who extol His righteousness" (Ps 89:8)—in order to behold the Master, the LORD God of all, born as a little child, born of the most merciful Virgin mother. May we see as a little Child, already prefiguring His Holy Resurrection, the God who alone our soul longs for and wants to cherish, who by His death has cleansed us of our leprosy and restored us to our original beauty.

This is the Master, the Savior, the LORD of all to whom all who love the LORD, who want to belong to Him and to no one else, it is to Him that we all now hasten that we may satisfy our heart's deepest longing and joy: to fall down before Him, to adore Him and worship on Christmas Night the Only Lover of Mankind who has destroyed our death by His death, born as a little Child that we might become children of God, born in the lowliness of a cave that we by His poverty might become rich in the riches of His love and grace. May it be so!
(Excerpts from <https://www.sthermanmpls.org/homilies>)

CATECHISM - CHRIST OUR PASCHA - TODAY'S EPISTLE / GOSPEL LESSON :

FAITH: Page 42, Section 99; Page 143, Section 416-417

SALVATION: Page 60, Section 160-163 **OBEDIENCE:** Page 261, Section 811

MONDAY, DECEMBER 6 - FEAST OF ST. NICHOLAS

Saint Nicholas, was the Bishop of Myra in the province of Lycia during the fourth century. He is remembered as a man of great faith and compassion. St. Nicholas is known for selling all his possessions and giving his money to the poor. Raised as a devout Christian, St. Nicholas dedicated his whole life to serving the sick and suffering. The life of Saint Nicholas is an example of faith made flesh in actions of true charity. The most common way to celebrate St. Nicholas Day is to leave shoes out for St. Nicholas to place small gifts in.

"We extol you, Holy Father Nicholas, and we celebrate your memory, for you intercede for us with Christ our God." — From the Matins for the Feast of St. Nicholas

Wednesday, DECEMBER 8 - FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

The Conception of the Theotokos + December 8

The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, defined by Pope Pius IX on December 8, 1854, states that *"The Most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first instant of her conception, by a singular privilege and grace granted by God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the human race, preserved exempt from all stain of original sin"* (Ineffabilis Deus).

"Today the great mystery of all eternity, whose depths angels and men cannot perceive, appears in the barren womb of Anna. Mary, the Maiden of God, is prepared to be the dwelling place of the eternal King Who will renew human nature. Let us entreat her with a pure heart and say: Intercede for us with your Son and God that our souls may be saved." +Vespers of the Feast

"Today a branch has sprouted forth from the root of Jesse, today Mary is conceived without any stain of sin, today she crushed the head of the ancient serpent." Alleluia ! (Tone 4 from Matins)

Week 4 of the Nativity Fast: St. Nicholas the Wonderworker

1. Read the material on this Week's Feast slowly and meditatively to yourself. Recall that St. Nicholas was a miracle-working saint who had a special love for children and the poor.

St. Nicholas the Wonderworker

St. Nicholas' parents could not have children for many years, but when they prayed to God, God gave them a child, St. Nicholas. His mother, Nonna, after giving birth, was immediately healed from illness. The newborn infant, while in the baptismal font, stood on his feet to pray, praising the All-Holy Trinity. St. Nicholas was chosen Arch-Eparch thus: a bishop had a vision of Jesus telling him that the next Arch-Eparch of Myra would be the first person to arrive in church. The bishop went to church at night to see who it would be. The first person in church was the child Nicholas (he was always the first to arrive). "What is your name, child?" the bishop asked. The boy-saint replied, "My name is Nicholas, Master, and I am your servant." When he grew up, St. Nicholas participated in the First Ecumenical Council. This Council proclaimed the Nicene Symbol of Faith, which we pray in every Liturgy. One time, a poor man, with three daughters had no food. In desperation the man planned to sell his daughters so they would

have money for food. When the saint learned of the man's poverty and his wicked intention, he secretly visited him one night and threw a sack of gold through the window. With the money, the man arranged an honorable marriage for his daughter. St. Nicholas also provided gold for the other daughters, thereby saving the family from falling into spiritual destruction. In bestowing charity, St. Nicholas always strove to do this secretly and to conceal his good deeds. Another time, a family went on a pilgrimage to Vyshorod, Ukraine — a special place because its Church contained relics of Ss. Borys and Hlib (2 brothers who, witnessing to Christ, were killed by an evil prince). Returning home, their only child, not being careful, fell into the Dnipro-

Slavutych River and was lost. The distraught parents asked St.

Nicholas to pray to God for the life of their only child. St. Nicholas, hearing the grief-filled prayers of the parents, took the infant from the waters, revived him and placed him in the choir loft of the church of Holy Wisdom before his wonderworking icon. In the morning, the infant was found safe — though all wet— by his thrilled parents, who praised St. Nicholas the Wonderworker. The icon depicting this event is called St. Nicholas the Soaked.

2. Reflect on this Week's reading and on what it is like to be poor

in our society/world and read what Jesus says about the poor (Luke 6:20-26; Luke 12:22-34; Matthew 25:31-46). Ask yourself the

following questions: • What are some new ways we can help the poor as families and as a parish? • What can you do to help the poor?

3. Pray/sing the Tropar and Kondak of the Week with your family.

Tropar - Tone 4: The truth of your deeds made you for your flock a rule of faith. You are an image of meekness, a teacher of continence. And so you gained the heights through humility, riches through poverty, father and bishop Nicholas. Intercede with Christ our God for the salvation of our souls.

Kondak - Tone 3: In Myra, O holy one, you proved yourself a priest. You fulfilled the Gospel of Christ, O venerable father. You laid down your soul for your people and saved the innocent from death. And so you were sanctified as a great initiator of God's grace.

4. Read the material on this Week's Feast aloud, slowly and meditatively with your family. 5. Share with your family member(s) your thoughts about the life and lot of the poor. 6. Discuss with family member(s) their experience of meeting/seeing the poor. Consider the following questions:

What might it be like to be poor? • Does Jesus love the poor with a special love? How does Jesus want us to help the poor? What are ways in which we can love the poor? 7. Conclude with the antiphon of St. Philip's Fast. **Antiphon of St. Philip's Fast:** O Bethlehem, be prepared; Eden is opened to all; O Ephratha, be made ready; for in the cave the tree of life has blossomed forth from the Virgin; for her womb has been shown to be a spiritual paradise, in which is the divine plant, from which having eaten, we will live and not die as Adam did. Christ is born to raise the image that had fallen.

3 Simple words to guide you during Nativity Fast

1 WAITING – memory of the first, humble coming of the Lord in our mortal flesh; waiting-supplication for his final, glorious coming as Lord of History and universal Judge.

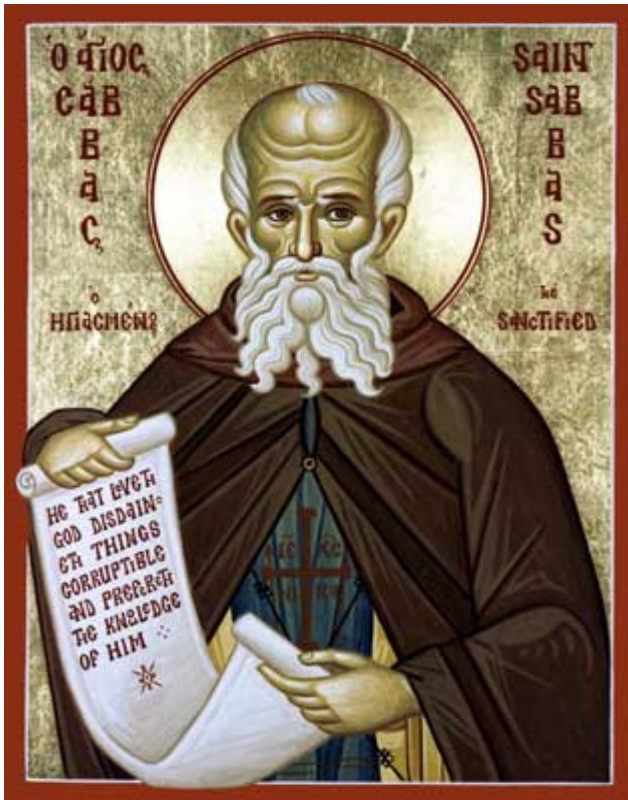
2 CONVERSION, to which the Liturgy at this time often refers quoting the prophets, especially John the Baptist, "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt 3:2).

3 HOPE: Joyful hope that the salvation already accomplished by Christ (cf. Rm 8, 24-25) and the reality of grace in the world, will mature and reach their fulness, thereby granting us what is promised by faith, and "we shall become like him for we shall see him as he really is" (John 3:2). If you are looking to deepen your Nativity Fast season, keep these three words in the back of your mind, letting them guide your preparations for the glorious celebration of Christmas.

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Our Venerable and God-bearing Father Sabbas the Sanctified (532)

Commemorated on December 5

Saint Savva the Sanctified was born in the fifth century at Cappadocia of pious Christian parents, John and Sophia. His father was a military commander.

Journeying to Alexandria on military matters, John and Sophia left their five-year-old son Savva in the care of an uncle. When the boy reached eight years of age, he entered the monastery of Saint Flavian located nearby. The gifted child quickly learned to read and became an expert on the Holy Scriptures. In vain did his parents urge Saint Savva to return to the world and enter into marriage. When he was seventeen years old he received monastic tonsure, and attained such perfection in fasting and prayer that he was given the gift of wonderworking. After spending ten years at the monastery of Saint Flavian, he went to Jerusalem, and from there to the monastery of Saint Euthymius the Great (January 20). But Saint Euthymius sent Saint Savva to Abba Theoctistus, the head of a nearby monastery with a strict cenobitic rule. Saint Savva lived

in obedience at this monastery until the age of thirty. After the death of the Elder Theoctistus, his successor blessed Saint Savva to seclude himself in a cave. On Saturdays, however, he left his hermitage and came to the monastery, where he participated in divine services and ate with the brethren. After a certain time Saint Savva received permission not to leave his hermitage at all, and he struggled in the cave for five years. Saint Euthymius attentively directed the life of the young monk, and seeing his spiritual maturity, he began to take him to the Rouba wilderness with him. They set out on January 14, and remained there until Palm Sunday. Saint Euthymius called Saint Savva a child-elder, and encouraged him to grow in the monastic virtues. When Saint Euthymius fell asleep in the Lord (+ 473), Saint Savva withdrew from the Lavra and moved to a cave near the monastery of Saint Gerasimus of Jordan (March 4). After several years, disciples began to gather around Saint Savva, seeking the monastic life. As the number of monks increased, a lavra sprang up. When a pillar of fire appeared before Saint Savva as he was walking, he found a spacious cave in the form of a church. Saint Savva founded several more monasteries. Many miracles took place through the prayers of Saint Savva: at the Lavra a spring of water welled up, during a time of drought there was abundant rain, and there were also healings of the sick and the demoniacs. Saint Savva composed the first monastic Rule of church services, the so-called "Jerusalem Typikon", accepted by all the Palestine monasteries. The saint surrendered his soul to God in the year 532.

From Today Vespers: O divinely wise Sabbas,* you are an unquenchable lamp of abstinence,* a radiant beacon for monastics, illumined with rays of love.* You are an unshaken tower of patient endurance,* the support and strength of those who honor you with faith,* a treasury of healings and true dweller in the desert,* which you showed to be the Paradise of God bearing the divine fruit of salvation.* Entreat Christ, O holy Father,* and implore Him to grant to the Church unity, peace and great mercy! O divinely wise Sabbas,* you are a fiery pillar of the virtues,* a beacon guiding men from the sea of life to the harbor of God.* As a pure dwelling of the Holy Spirit, you cast down the spirits of deception.* You are an instructor of monastics,* a sure measure of abstinence,* a height of humility visible to all,* and a fountain pouring forth a depth of healing.* Entreat Christ, O venerable one,* and implore Him to grant to the Church unity, peace and great mercy!

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