

Archpastoral Message of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon

Christ is born! Glorify Him!

My beloved Brethren and Blessed Children in the Lord, As we come to the end of the civil year, we reflect back on a period in which tragedy, acts of terrorism, shootings in public spaces, political confusion, and sexual misconduct allegations dominate the news. The darkness which enshrouds the world adds to the burden of our personal and family struggles: addictions, estrangement, divorce and all manner of conflict wrought by human passions. We might be tempted to wonder how love could have so definitively fled from the hearts of human beings. The feast of the Nativity in the Flesh of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ is a reminder to all of us that “heaven and earth today make glad prophetically” and angels and men “keep spiritual feast for God, born of a woman, has appeared in the flesh to those that sit in darkness and shadow.” The light that we receive today is not merely a physical light that pierces the gloom which surrounds us, but rather a transfiguring light that both reveals God’s love for us and inspires us to grow in our love for God.

There is no philosophy or ideology that can overcome the irrationality of the world. It is only the transfiguring light of Christ – His divine and sacrificial love – that can accomplish this. It is only through love that we can, with the animals and the manger, “accept Him who by His Word has loosed us dwellers on earth from acts that are against reason.” When we despair at the tragedies in the world and in our lives, let us remember that it is precisely in the midst of such darkness that the Word of God chose to be incarnate.

Archimandrite Zacharias suggests that “when we are confronted by the ruins of human love and find ourselves completely broken, then two solutions can be given: either we turn to God with our pain, so that God enters our life and renews us, or we continue to be deceived by our human plans and slide from one tragedy and barrenness of soul to another, hoping that one day we will find perfection.”

The world longs for authentic love but seems to remain mired in the global tragedies that we witness every day. In our horizontal and human relations with one another, what is missing is God Himself, a third and divine-human Person to purify and heal our imperfect and broken relationships. Whether it be husband and wife, brother and sister, or larger communities, true love and abiding peace can only be found through our communion with God.

In our Orthodox context, this takes place through the Divine Liturgy and through our efforts to nurture the sacrificial love of God in our own hearts. “Paradise begins on earth through love for God and love for our fellows. In this lies the entire wealth of eternal life, for man has been created to give eternal glory to God. His delight is to return this glory to His image, man, who then returns greater glory to his Creator.”

Today’s feast is a reminder that it is through this cycle of glorification and love between God and man that we find our true fulfillment. May the new-born Christ grant us the courage to keep His love in our hearts, to connect with our fellows through prayer, sacrifice, and humility, and to remember that, no matter the degree of our own brokenness or the brokenness of the world, Christ has come to give us hope for renewal, “for what He was, He has remained, true God: and what He was not, He has taken upon Himself, becoming man through love for mankind.”

With love in the New-Born Christ,
+ Tikhon
Archbishop of Washington
Metropolitan of All America and Canada

UPCOMING EVENTS AND SERVICES

~~~ **NO Church School Today—will resume on Jan 7th**

### THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD SERVICE SCHEDULE

- **Holy Supper begins at 5:00pm with Nativity Vigil to follow.(6:15)**  
- **Divine Liturgy *Nativity of our Lord (Christmas Day) Monday, Dec. 25th 9:30am***

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- **The Royal Hours of *Theophany* – Friday, Jan. 5th 9:00am**
  - **Vigil for Theophany- 6:00pm (with the Great Blessing of Waters)**
  - **St. Basil's Divine Liturgy – (With blessing of waters- Cussewago Creek) Saturday, Jan. 6th – 9:30am ~ Blessing of Homes begins.**
  - **Pro-Life Breakfast – 9:00am Bay Front Center – See Jane for tickets**
  - **MARCH FOR LIFE – Friday, Jan. 19<sup>th</sup> – Washington D.C.**
  - **Diocesan Family Ice Skating , PPG Place – Pittsburgh 4pm**
  - **Blessing of Lake Erie – Sat. Jan. 20<sup>th</sup> 12noon – Bay Front**
  - **Erie March fro Life - Sat. Jan. 27<sup>th</sup> 11am Perry Square, Erie**

**Parish Council Meeting – Wed. Jan 10<sup>th</sup> 6:00pm**

**Men’s Fellowship Meeting – Sun. Jan. 14<sup>th</sup>**

**Ladies Altar Meeting – Sun. Jan. 21<sup>st</sup> Following Coffee Hour**

**GREAT AND HOLY LENT BEGINS Feb. 19th**

**MISSIONS TEAM –“*We bless Christ when we bless the poor*”**

Fall/Winter Missions Drive: The missions committee is currently collecting clean winter clothing, blankets, and quilts which will be donated to The Upper Room of Erie. All donations can be dropped off in the first Sunday School Class room on the left.

\*Please support our Kenyan Orthodox children. Please contact Marilyn Filipos.

# Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church

25636 N. Mosiertown Rd Crossingville, PA 1641 Rev. Fr. Daniel Mathewson – *Rector* **Lord’s Day – Dec 24th, 2017** Parish phone: 814-734-3801 Find us on the Web at: [www.orthodoxcrossingville.org](http://www.orthodoxcrossingville.org) or on Face book: Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church

## GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST!

**29<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost/ Sunday before the Nativity of Christ Eve of the Nativity of Christ/Nun Martyr Eugenia of Rome**

PLEASE INCLUDE THESE OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN YOUR DAILY PRAYERS:

Those in need –Fr. Andrew, Fr. David, Mat. Donna, Fr. John, Fr. Nicholas, Fr. Paul, Fr. George, Mat. Suzanne, Meghan, Pearl, Karen, Mary, Stavros, Marilyn, Theona, Sara, Evan, Eugene, John, David, Ann, Thomas, Timothy, Jeremiah, Renee, Delani, Emily, George, Tanya, The Homebound... Vincent, Tanya, Mary-Louise, Richard, Helen, John, Irene, Ruth, Josephine, William, Claudia... Travelers.. ...Catechumens –Rick and Christian Our Missionaries Abroad...Fr. David and Mt. Rozanne, Military servers...Greg ...Departed Orthodox...Newly Departed – Ann, Katherine. Vernon, Paul, James, Andrew, Peter, Paul, Margaret, Michael Mary Ann, Timothy special requests... Anthony, Ian, Paul, Daleen, Penni, James, Sean, Liam, Susan, James, Joel, Jen, Roger, Jasmine, Cassandra ....

**Today’s Hymns**

**Tone 4 Troparion (Resurrection)**

**When the women disciples of the Lord learned from the angel the joyous message of thy Resurrection, they cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the apostles:**

**“Death is overthrown!**

**Christ God is risen,//**

**granting the world great mercy!”**

**Tone 2 Troparion (Fathers)**

**Great** are the **accomplishments** of faith,  
for the three **Holy Youths** rejoice in the fountain of flames as  
though in the **waters** of rest; and the **Prophet Daniel** appeared  
a shepherd to the lions as **though** they were sheep.//  
So by their prayers, O **Christ** God, **save** our souls!

**Tone 4 Troparion of the Forefeast**  
Mary was of **David's** seed,  
so she went with **Joseph** to register in **Bethlehem**.  
She bore in her womb the **Fruit** not **sown** by man.  
The time for the **birth** was at hand.  
Since there was **no room** at the inn,  
the cave became a beautiful **palace** for the **Queen**.//  
**Christ** is born, raising up the image that **fell** of old.

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;*

**Tone 1 Kontakion (Fathers)**

**Rejoice**, O **Bethlehem**! Prepare thyself, O **Ephratha**!  
The **Lamb** is on her way to give birth to the **Chief Shepherd** she  
**carries** in her womb. The **God-bearing** Forefathers will rejoice,  
**beholding** Him, and with the shepherds, they will glorify the  
**Virgin nursing** Him.

*now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

**Tone 3 Kontakion (Forefeast)**

Today the **Virgin comes** to the cave  
to give birth to the **Eternal Word**.  
Hear the glad tidings and rejoice, O **universe**!  
Glorify with the angels and the **shepherds**  
the **Eternal God**, Who is willing to **appear** as a **little child**!

**Tone 4 Prokeimenon (Song of the Fathers)**

**Blessed art Thou**, O Lord God of our fathers, and praised and  
glorified is Thy name forever! (*Song of the three Holy Youths, v. 2*)  
*v: For Thou art just in all that Thou hast done to us. (v. 3)*

**Tone 4**

**Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

*v: We have heard with our ears, O God, for our fathers have told us. (Ps 43/44:1)*

*v: For Thou hast saved us from them that oppose us, and hast put to shame them that hate us. (Ps 43/44:7)*

**Today's Scripture Readings:**

**Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40 (Epistle, Sunday Before)**

By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense. By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff.

By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones. By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command. And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented – of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided

something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

**Matthew 1:1-25 (Gospel, Sunday Before)**

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham: Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brothers. Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Ram. Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon. Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David the king. David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah. Solomon begot Rehoboam, Rehoboam begot Abijah, and Abijah begot Asa. Asa begot Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat begot Joram, and Joram begot Uzziah. Uzziah begot Jotham, Jotham begot Ahaz, and Ahaz begot Hezekiah. Hezekiah begot Manasseh, Manasseh begot Amon, and Amon begot Josiah. Josiah begot Jeconiah and his brothers about the time they were carried away to Babylon. And after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, and Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel begot Abiud, Abiud begot Eliakim, and Eliakim begot Azor. Azor begot Zadok, Zadok begot Achim, and Achim begot Eliud. Eliud begot Eleazar, Eleazar begot Matthan, and Matthan begot Jacob. And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, from David until the captivity in Babylon are fourteen generations, and from the captivity in Babylon until the Christ are fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins." So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which is translated, 'God with us.'" Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.

