

The Wonderworker
is a quarterly publication of
Saint George Orthodox Church,
Trumbull, Connecticut
a parish of the
Albanian Archdiocese
of the
Orthodox Church in America
Archpriest Dennis R. Rhodes,
Rector
James Bowe
Council President

The Wonderworker

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Saint George Orthodox Church

Winter, 2015

From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Each year on November 15th, Orthodox Christians begin a forty-day period of preparation for the Feast of the Nativity of Christ.

This period, known as the *Nativity Fast* or *Advent*, is an opportunity to collect ourselves so that we can concentrate on the true meaning of Christmas. We do this by means of fasting, prayer, good works and the sacraments.

During the Nativity Fast, we are called to abstain from meat and dairy products on most days, adding fish to this list on Wednesdays and Fridays. In addition, we are called to pay closer attention to our prayer life, to increase our help and outreach to the poor and needy around us, and to approach the sacraments of Confession and Communion, especially if we are not already doing so on a regular basis.

Of course, these things are not easy to do, especially when people all around us are already celebrating the Feast with parties, decorations and the like. But it can be done. When invited to a Christmas party, for example, we can either decline or make sure that we eat only foods that fall within the fasting guidelines.

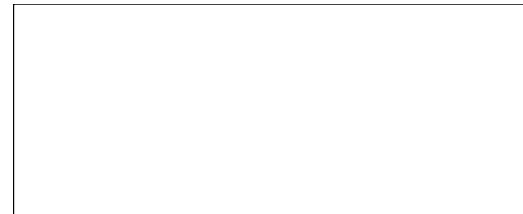
Our society insists on celebrating Christmas *before* the fact, while we Orthodox celebrate it, and all other feasts, on and *after*. Remember — the “Twelve Days of Christmas” so often sung about at this time of year are the days between Christmas and Theophany!

To top it all off, when the feast finally does arrive, people are so tired of it that everything stops. Just when we start singing about the Nativity of Christ in Church, the rest of the world moves on. The radio stations stop playing Christmas carols at about 3:00 on Christmas Day, trees are tossed onto sidewalks like so much trash on December 26th, and so forth.

Let's all make the effort this year to prepare for the feast of our Lord's Nativity properly so that when it does come, we can celebrate it with the proper Christian spirit.

In Christ,

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FORWARD AND ADDRESS CORRECTION



The Beatitudes

In the Gospel writings, the beatitudes introduce the teachings of Jesus and are traditionally considered to contain the most concise summary of the spiritual life of man. In the Orthodox Divine Liturgy, the beatitudes are chanted when the Book of the Gospels is carried in solemn procession to the sanctuary to be proclaimed as the Word of God to the faithful. Thus it is the clear teaching of the Gospel and the Church that one enters into the mysteries of Christ and the Kingdom of God only by way of following the Lord's teachings in the beatitudes.

And He opened His mouth and taught them, saying:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for your reward is great in heaven..." (*Matthew 5:2-12; Cf. Luke 6:20-26*)

from *The Orthodox Faith*,
by Fr. Thomas Hopko

Lumurimet

Në shkrimet e Ungjijtë, lumurimet paraqesin mësimet e Jisuit dhe janë mbajtur tradicionalisht të përmbajnë përmbledhjen më të ngjeshur të jetës shpirtërore të njeriut. Në Liturgjinë Hyjnore Orthodhokse, lumurimet këndohen kur Libri i Ungjillit del në procesionin solemn nga altari për t'u shpallur si Fjala e Perëndisë tek besimtarët. Kështu është mësimi i qartë i Ungjillit dhe i Kishës se njeriu hyn në misteret e Krishtit dhe Mbretërisë së Perëndisë vetëm nëpërmjet zbatimit të mësimet të Zotit në lumurimet.

Atëherë Ai hapi gojën dhe i mësoi duke u thënë:

Lum të varfërit në shpirt, sepse e tyre është Mbretëria e qiejve.

Lum ata që vajtojnë, sepse ata do të ngushëllohen.

Lum ata që janë zemërbutë, sepse ata do ta trashëgojnë tokën.

Lum ata që janë të uritur dhe të etur për drejtësi, sepse ata do të ngopen.

Lum ata që janë të mëshirshëm, sepse ata do të gjejnë mëshirë.

Lum ata që janë të pastër në zemër, sepse ata do ta shohin Perëndinë.

Lum ata që përpiqen për paqen, sepse ata do të quhen bij të Perëndisë.

Lum ata që janë përndjekur për hir të drejtësisë, sepse e tyre është Mbretëria e qiejve.

Lum ju kur do t'ju shajnë dhe do t'ju përndjekin dhe, duke gënjyer, do të thonë të gjitha të zezat kundër jush, për shkakun tim. Gëzohuni dhe ngazëllohuni, sepse shpërblimi juaj është i madh në qiej. (*Matheu 5:2 – 12; Lluka 6:20 – 26*).

nga *Besimi Ortodoks (The Orthodox Faith)*
i At Thomas Hopko

Coming Events

December

6: St. Nicholas of Myra in Lycia

13: St. Herman of Alaska

24: Christmas Eve

5:00 p.m. — Festal Matins and Carol Sing

25: The Nativity of our LORD

10:00 a.m. — Festal Divine Liturgy

31: New Year's Eve

7:00 p.m. — Service of Thanksgiving

January, 2016

1: St. Basil the Great

6: Theophany — The Baptism of our LORD
10:00 a.m. — Divine Liturgy and Blessing
of Water

17: Teuta Holiday Luncheon

25: St. Gregory the Theologian

30: Three Hierarchs: Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom

February

2: Meeting of our Lord in the Temple
10:00 a.m. — Divine Liturgy

14: Sunday of Zacchaeus

21: Sunday of the Publican & Pharisee

24: First & Second Findings of the Head of John the Forerunner and Baptist
10:00 a.m. — Divine Liturgy

27: St. Raphael, Bishop of Brooklyn

28: Sunday of the Prodigal Son
Visit of Archbishop Nikon

Looking ahead...

March 14: Great Lent begins

March 23: Martyr Nikon and his disciples
(*Archbishop Nikon's Nameday*)

March 27: Western Easter

April 23: Great Martyr George

May 1: Pascha
The Resurrection of our LORD

May 8: Mother's Day

June 9: Ascension of our LORD

June 19: Pentecost
The Descent of the Holy Spirit
Father's Day

Teuta Holiday Luncheon

The **Teuta Ladies' Society** has scheduled its annual **Holiday Luncheon** for 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, January 17, 2016, at Marisa's Restaurant in Trumbull.

Diners will have a choice of *Broiled Lemon Sole, Chicken Piccata or Sliced Pork Roast*.

The cost for the meal is \$30.00 per person, payable by check only, made out to Teuta. Indicate your menu choice on the memo line.

Please make your non-refundable reservations with *Elsie Gartsu* before January 9th.

Parish Christmas Card

We are currently collecting donations for our annual **Community Christmas Card**.

Please fill out the form inserted in this issue and return it to Church with your donation. If you have not received before the December 13th deadline, telephone Father Dennis at 203-598-4678 and then send in your form and donation.