



Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

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December 26, 2010

Liturgy is at 10 AM. Today is the Sunday after the Nativity. Tone 6. The Epistle is Hebrews 2:11-18. Gospel is Matthew 2:13-23. Synaxis of the Mother of God.

There is NO FASTING until the Eve of Theophany January 5.

Annual Parish Meeting is set for Sunday, January 23

This is the second of three Announcements

Schedule of services and events for the week:

- Tuesday, December 28, 8:30 Am – First Hour
- Tuesday, December 28, 9 Am – Meet for Bowling at Church
- Tuesday, December 28, 10 Am – Bowling Nutmeg Lanes in Fairfield, CT
- Thursday, December 30, 8:30 AM – First Hour
- Saturday, January 1, 10 AM – Divine Liturgy of St. Basil
- Sunday, January 2, 10 AM – Liturgy

Epistle and Gospel Reading for the Week:

- Monday, Acts 6:8-15, 7:1-5, 47-60; Matthew 21:33-42 – First Martyr Stephen
- Tuesday, James 3:1-10; Mark 11:11-23 – Apostle Nicanor
- Wednesday, James 3:11-4:6; Mark 11:23-26 – 14,000 Slain by Herod
- Thursday, James 4:7-5:9; Mark 11:27-33 – Virgin Martyr Anysia
- Friday, 1 Peter 1:1-2, 10-12, 2:6-10; Mark 12:1-12 – Venerable Melania
- Saturday, Galatians 4:4-7; Matthew 2:1-12 – Nativity of Christ
- Sunday, Hebrews 2:11-18; Matthew 2:13-23 – Synaxis of the Holy Theotokos

The New England Deanery Winter Break Bowling is set for Tuesday, December 28 at Nutmeg Bowling Lanes, 802 Villa Avenue, Fairfield, CT. Cost is \$10.00 per person and includes 2 games, shoes and disco lights, rack and bumpers if needed. A Pizza luncheon, group activity and movie to follow at St. Johns' at 600 Silver Lane, Stratford. Fr. Luke needs to know ASAP if you or your children will be attending so we can notify the bowling alley as to how many lanes will be needed and get them set up with the names before we arrive.

Church School starts every Sunday at 9 AM before church begins. Parents need to understand the importance of church school. Just as school is not an option for your children during the week, please do not make church school an option for your children. If you want them to be brought up as good Orthodox Christians you have to make the effort to do so by bringing them to church school. It should not be seen as an option, but part of your Sunday of worship. Fr. Luke has class upstairs in the church itself for parents and adults who want to learn more about the Orthodox Faith. All of us will be using the Orthodox Children's Bible Reader as our primary text.

Cleaning Schedule

- 12/16 –12/31 Soto
- 2/16-2/28 A. Villa
- 3/1-3/15 Toaso

The parish council has hired a cleaning service for \$50.00 a cleaning to come in twice a month to clean the church and the church hall. If you are unable to clean the church during the time assigned for you, you are encouraged to make a donation to the church to help pay for the cleaning service.

COFFEE HOUR SCHEDULE

- 12/26 Gross Family

The dumpster is located at the far end of the parking lot. PLEASE sweep the floors in the basement after coffee hour. Please remember that those who volunteer for coffee hour are only expected to get something simple such as bagels. With everything increasing in prices, please do not feel that you have to feed the entire parish.

Orthodox Children's Computer Games are located at this site on the Greek Archdiocese web site. Use these to help your kids learn more about their Orthodox Faith. <http://games.goarch.org/>

Our Cathedral in Johnstown has begun a 'prayer and Fasting' initiative for His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas. We are asked to do the same. Please join us and the entire diocese in fasting on the first day of every month, in addition to praying at noon on that same day for His Eminence's well being.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- New England Deanery Winter Break Bowling – Tuesday, December 28
- New Years Party – Saturday, January 15
- Annual Parish Meeting, Sunday, January 23

The fourth Sunday of every month is designated for Mortgage repayment. If every parishioner contributes \$50 every month (\$600/year) to the mortgage, we will be able to meet our monthly mortgage payments.

Collections have been off more than usual. The Parish Council urges parishioners to do your best to help the parish financially. Your financial support is essential to the life of your parish. As part of the Parish Council's efforts to keep the parish informed, the monthly general financial income and expenses will be posted.

General Financial Summary for November 2010	
Income.....	\$ 6550.00
Total Recd Expenses.....	\$9644.00
	\$3309.50



Candles: \$34.00
Bake Sale: \$2249.00
Church Building: \$60.00

Weekly general collection: \$786.50
Mortgage: \$110.00
Christmas: \$70.00

Birthdays and Anniversaries

December	
Marty Howley	26
Elaine Toaso	30
January	
Andres Villa	1
Adam Varney	2
Stephanie Fong	10
Nicholas Huott	18
Kate Kerpchar	27
Connie Somoskovec	30

We need more houses/businesses to switch to Viridian.

Holy Trinity has teamed up with **Viridian**, A Connecticut Electric Supplier

There are 3 ways to sign up. You may go online to sign up by using our website www.viridian.com/holytrinity (make sure you click **everyday green** for the low rate). You can also call the toll free # 866-657-8617 (Let them know **Holy Trinity referred** you). The third way is to **talk to our** Viridian Representative Jim Kavallines. His number is (203) 948-1684. It is my hope that you would be in favor of switching to Viridian to benefit yourself as well as the **Holy Trinity Orthodox Church**.

READERS SCHEDULE

12/26	Nicholas Fong
1/2	Bob Faubel
1/9	Paul Toaso
1/16	Susan Paltauf
1/23	Suzanne Molineaux
1/30	Stasia Mihaly

Parishioners to send cards to for the Holidays

Thomas Krafick, Sr.
c/o Lisa Oorlog
8316 E. Jenson Circle
Mesa, AZ 85207
(480)985-6557

William and Stella Woodfield
7 Briarwood Drive
Sherman, CT 06784
Telephone: (860) 350-2846

E-mail: Wwoodf3455@aol.com

Martin Howley
Brookside Home
134 Franklin Street
Danbury, CT 06810
Telephone: 203-743-9130

Diana Kuo
101 Mistywood Circle, Apt. G
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
New mobile #: (919) 537-9320
E-mail: diana.kuo@gmx.com
Fr. Deacon Robert Alexander and Sally Hubiak
6310 Ridge Plaza Dr
North Ridgeville, OH 44039
Telephone: (440) 353-3833

Scripture Reading for Sunday, December 26

Prayer Before Reading Holy Scripture

O Master Who loves mankind, illuminate our hearts with the pure light of Your divine knowledge and open the eyes of our mind to understand the teachings of Your Gospel. Instill in us also the fear of Your blessed commandments, that we may overcome all carnal desires, entering upon a spiritual life and understanding and acting in all things according to Your holy will. For You are the enlightenment of our souls and bodies, O Christ God, and to You we give glory together with Your eternal Father and Your all-holy, gracious and life-giving Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

The Reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 11:9-10. 32-40

Brethren, he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified have all one origin. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, "I will proclaim thy name to my brethren, in the midst of the congregation I will praise thee." And again, "I will put my trust in him." And again, "Here am I, and the children God has given me. Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage. For surely it is not with angels that he is concerned but with the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted.

The Gospel Reading is from Matthew 2:13-23

When the wise men departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt have I called my son."

Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they were no more." But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." And he rose and took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaos reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

***PRAYER LIST
For the Living***

Metropolitan Nicholas	Stephanie (Fong)	Matthew (Bracey)	Elaine (Toaso)
Thomas (Krafick)	Paul (Stagen)	Eugene (Brown)	Patricia (Zeleniak)
Pauline (Meath)	Valerie (Stagen)	Joe (Derevjanik)	James (Rush)
Sally (Hubiak)	Mary (Derevjanik)	Sophie (Tomasini)	Jerry (Kachevsky)
Bill (Murphy)	Marianna (Parsamyan)	Marlene (Miller)	Anthony (Noto)
Judi (Snodgrass)	Greg (Chilek)	Joelle (Alsdorf)	Serge (Mihaly)
Sophia (Buterakos)	Paul (Willis)	Kathy (Valentine)	Karen (Elrod-Williams)
Rebecca (Sahin)	Ethel (Montauredes)	Irm (Manton)	Lou (Biondi)
Carol (Wilenchek)	Anne (Popp)	James (Sapione)	Tony (Centofanti)
Anna (Salony)	Mary (Kovach)	Charles (Davis)	Joe (DaSilva)
Andrew (Valentine)	Jennie (Curran)	Bill (Kahn)	Jerry (Arangelovich)
Delia (Stefan)	Lynn (Cavallo)	Dorine (DelPo)	Louis (Apostol)
Josh (Horner)	Dorothy (Brown)	Phyllis (Duclos)	Patrick (Meath)
Fr. John (Zdinak)	Pani Donna (Smoley)	Bob (Sully)	Octi (Bundra)
Catherine (Quarberg)	Fr. Stephen (Jula)	Rebecca (McCarthy)	Maria (Duclos)
Marian (Beschle)	Julia (Zimmerman)	John (Schigel)	Thomas (Pellegrino)
Julia (Zimmerman)	Helena (Prudkov)	Sonia (Pellegrino)	Ann (Rossi)
Judi (Snodgrass)	Rev. Paul (Dorn)	Eric (Stefanik)	Kathy (Koffs)
Pani Patricia (Duranko)	Bill (Pellegrino)	Sonya (Spear)	Steven (Eigenrauch)
Samuel (Magri)	Barbara (Hollister)	Radu (Timoscsa)	Pani Helen (Shutack)
Steve (Schell)	Karen (Williams)	Debra (Noto)	David (Hollister)
Christina (Somoskevich)	Steven (Noto)	Tatyana (Nanocchio)	Helen (Kazolas)
Annalisa (Paltauf)	Coriolan (Bundra)	Alyssa (Melnick)	Donna (Kazolas)
Nickolas (Noto)	Mickey (Melnick)	Wylie (Meath)	Mike (Walsh)
Janet (Melnick)	Rose (Hubiak)	Marty (Vizi)	Sheila (Walsh)
John (Hubiak)	Barbara (Polasky Wren)	Mary (Derevjanik)	Olga (Saranotski)
Richard (Guilmartin)	Carmen (Sanchez)	Anastasios (Orfanos)	Charlotte (James)
James (Buterakos)	Stella (Woodfield)	Justin	John (Kasper)
Maria (Pauta)	Lucinda	William (Obrevko)	Melissa (Cooke)
Stephen	Edna (Kasper)	Julia (Durney)	Tom (Kasper)
John (Kasper)	Vladimir (Obrevko)	Alicia	Benjamin
Marina	Richard (Stack)	Infant Leo	Anna
Fr. Andrew	Matushka Galina	Scott	Joanne
Cyril (Gutzman)	Marika (Gutzman)	Trianna (Gutzman)	Deacon William (Friedel)
Jessica (Cochrane)	Serge (Mihaly, Jr.)	Elaine (Cookie Bily)	Helen (Popp)
June (Elrod)	Jackie (Roe)		

For the Departed

Fr. Theophil	Mary (Tuller)	Stephanie (Fedyna)	Jeffrey (Gustafson)
Archbishop Job	Ann (Repicky)	Olga (Slupatchuck)	Luis (Encalada Bueno)
Philip (Trahan)	Julia (Zimmerman)	Dorian Peter (James)	Michael (Tsirulnikov)
David (Stanczyk)	William (Jantzen)	Robert (Henry Elrod)	Anastasia (Grigorowich)
Josephine (Bensko)	Phyllis (Duclos)	Joanne (Yoder)	Archbishop Basil (Schott)
Joseph	Raisa	John	Metropolitan Christopher
Yuri (Obrevko)	Grace	Douglas J. Kozar	Fr. Blagoy (Topusliev)
Jason (Proteau)	Michael (Hubiak)	Marilyn (Beardsley)	Adam (Patzuk)
Mildred (Valasek)	Megan (Green)		

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LEAVE YOUR WORLD. FIND GOD. jesusprayermovie.com

"Mysteries of the Jesus Prayer" a new documentary feature film from SnagFilms (Comcast & Fios On-Demand) and HarperOne book, focuses on the mysteries behind the prayer that is thought to have first been practiced by the Apostles some 2,000 years ago. The prayer is still chanted by monks and nuns in far away caves and monasteries but is mostly unknown to the rest of the western world. Many say that with this prayer, it is possible to communicate directly with God. Very Rev. Dr. John A. McGuckin and Dr. Norris J. Chumley bring you to ancient lands of peace and solitude, filming for the first time hermits, monks and nuns in caves, monasteries and convents who share this ancient mystical prayer. The documentary retraces their steps and beyond, bringing the wisdom of both ancient saints and living Christian spiritual masters to worldwide audiences.

Because there was no room for them in the katalyma"

<http://sacrificium-laudis.blogspot.com/2008/12/because-there-was-no-room-for-them-in.html>

I'm sure that most of us are at least familiar with the story of the very first Christmas ever:

And it came to pass, that in those days there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that the whole world also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem: because he was of the house and family of David, to be enrolled with Mary his espoused wife, who was with child. And it came to pass, that when they were there, her days were accomplished, that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him up in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; *because there was no room for them in the inn.* Luke 2:1-7 (Douay-Rheims Challoner)

Because of that little statement that Luke makes in verse 7, as the ages pass by, many inspirational stories, poems, and sermons have been made on the innkeeper who either gave Mary and Joseph room or shoos them away. However, did Luke really refer to an inn in Luke 2:7? First, we need to realize what word it was that Luke used in his story which is rendered as "inn" in our Bibles. Luke had used the word **κατάλυμα** (*katalyma*). In extra-biblical literature, *katalyma* has a wider connotation than "inn;" it can also mean "house," "guest room" or "lodging-place". It is a noun form of the verb **καταλυο** (*kataluo*), a compound verb (*kata* "among" + *luo* "break up" or "(un-)loose") which translates literally as "to disintegrate" or "to unyoke," i.e. "to loosen down." As a place of rest and lodging, a *katalyma* was a place to drop your baggage, to untie the straps and packs of the beasts of burden and simply sit down and relax.

When Luke speaks of a commercial inn, as he does in Luke 10:34 (in the parable of the Good Samaritan), he uses a different word, **πανδοχείον** (*pandocheion*), which literally means "accepting all comers", a type of public lodging-place or hostelry which was more common in Palestine, Syria, and southern Anatolia in Jesus' time than in the western Roman world (in a former time, *pandocheia* were more geographically distributed; many of these had diminished in Jesus' time). The only other place where Luke uses *katalyma* is in 22:11, where it refers to the upper room where Jesus and company held the Last Supper, which is clearly not an "inn" but a large guest room attached to a private house. Mark (14:14) also uses *katalyma* to describe the upper room itself. During the time of Jesus, the only inns that existed were essentially truck stops for caravans. It was a place for travelers and pack animals to eat, a shelter in which to sleep overnight, a market for supplies for the road and is considered to be a hangout for prostitutes (female innkeepers were referred to as *pundaqit* in Aramaic, which was synonymous with the Hebrew *zonah* "harlot"; cf. Joshua 2:1) and others of an unsavory reputation; the word *pandocheion* itself had some negative connotations due to this.

Another thing that we need to consider is that at the time of Jesus, Bethlehem was a small town that was not near a major highway, so there is no reason to think that there would have been a commercial inn there, since inns were mostly built where there is more traffic, i.e. major roads, especially Roman ones; indeed, there is no archeological evidence for the existence of any inns in Bethlehem. With the population of the town in the 1st century being estimated as being around a thousand (only about a few times bigger than Nazareth, which is estimated to have had 200-400 residents at this time) and the lack of any highway nearby, the existence of a commercial inn in Bethlehem seems rather unlikely.

It then becomes more likely that Luke meant *katalyma* to be understood as "guest room" or "house" rather than "commercial inn." Middle Eastern hospitality **required** people to give shelter and sustenance to travelers (relatives or no), to make themselves as comfortable as possible at the host's expense. Since Joseph and Mary came to Bethlehem in the region of Judea since that was his ancestral home, we could assume that Joseph, at least, may have had a number of distant relations living in the town who could serve as potential hosts. Kinship ties throughout the village would have been the rule, not the exception.

Archeological and literary evidence shows that houses in Bethlehem and its vicinity often had stables *within* the house where the family would keep their animals while the guest room was in the front of the house. The animals as well as the family stayed under one large enclosed space that was divided so that the animals would usually be on a lower level, while the family would sleep on a raised upper level. Joseph and Mary would have come too late to get *the* guest room (Luke uses the definite article in the original Greek), which would have been totally crowded with other travelers who had come because of the census, so the hosts (Joseph's distant relatives?) did the best they could to help both husband and wife by putting the newborn Jesus at the stables inside the house, since no space for the baby could be had in the now-crowded guest room.

For the Middle Eastern peasant, it is a bad thing to be alone. He does his thinking in a crowd, as his culture is a group-centered one (as opposed to the individualistic thinking of the 21st century West). Thus, in the case of a birth, the men will sit apart with the neighbors, but the room will be full of women assisting the midwife; the assumption therefore that Mary and Joseph were alone, as they are so often depicted in Nativity scenes, is probably historically inaccurate. We are told that Mary swaddled the newborn infant by herself, and indeed some take this as evidence that the Holy family were alone; however, there are accounts on how Palestinian women are not incapacitated by childbirth and could even give birth in a field and go back to the village, baby in tow, with no unusual effort required. In this scenario, it would then perhaps be natural that Mary would have swaddled the babe, since she could physically do so with little to no assistance; so when Luke tells us that Mary "*wrapped the babe in swaddling clothes*" that does not necessarily mean that they were alone.

In an alternative scenario, the *katalyma* could also refer to an area where large crowds are gathered, as might have been the case with the census. In this arrangement, people and animals were crowded next to each other in a large, open area where temporary shelters could be erected. The area would then be a totally busy place bustling with activity, noise and cooking fires. If Bethlehem had such a very crowded "camping area" of sorts for the census, then a less busy and a less crowded accommodation like a stable would certainly have been preferable for the birth of Jesus.

St. Justin Martyr, in the 2nd century (*Dialogue with Trypho* 79), cites a tradition where Mary and Joseph took shelter in a cave near the village - which to an extent is still mainly present in the Eastern Church, which continues to depict the "stable" in iconography as a cave. This is also plausible from a historical point of view, as caves were oftentimes used as stables and various peasants were in fact known to use caves as houses in the time of Jesus. Interestingly, ancient translations of the Bible never directly translate *katalyma* into inn. For example, the Syriac Peshitta says that Mary put the baby in the manger "*because there was no room where they could lodge*" while the Latin Vulgate and Codex Bezae (which preserves a Vetus Latina translation of the Bible) translates the word as *diversorio*, which like *katalyma* has a broader meaning than "inn" and could also be translated as "lodging house," "stopping place," or even "accommodations" in general. In Latin, more specific terms for an inn is *taberna* or *stabulum*; the latter term, also meaning "dwelling," "tavern" (or even "brothel"!) is the one which Jerome uses for *pandocheion* in Luke 10:34. Interestingly, Arabic translations of the Bible themselves have never rendered *katalyma* as inn.

John Wycliff's version of the Bible into English even renders *diversorio* as "*chaumbri*"; it was only from Tyndale's 1520 translation that the tradition of rendering *katalyma/diversorio* as "inn" in English Bibles started.

Another popular misconception is that Mary went into labor immediately or shortly after arriving to Bethlehem. Luke merely states that Jesus was born "*when they were there*" (not upon arrival); exactly when is not specified, yet this implies that the couple was already in Bethlehem for some period of time prior to Mary going into labor. Thus the popular image of Joseph and Mary arriving at Bethlehem at the very same day/night that she gave birth to Jesus probably has no historical basis. When fitted with the above, the picture becomes thus:

Joseph and the now-pregnant Mary arrive into Bethlehem. They either stay in the house of a certain resident of the village (relying on traditional Middle Eastern hospitality) or camp out in a large open area which functioned as a large "camping area" as the influx of "visitors" to Bethlehem continue.

Eventually, as the number of guests staying in the house or the campsite increase, Joseph and Mary find it increasingly difficult to have some space for their child, necessitating that the newborn baby be placed inside the stables instead.

This may not fit our traditional understanding and depictions of the Christmas story and may prove to be 'uncomfortable' for a number of people, but hey, Jesus Himself who "*set up His dwelling among us*" did not meet His contemporaries' expectations and was even a stumbling-block!

In Conclusion

I read a true story recently about potato farming in Northern China many centuries ago. I want to tell you about what happened when they planted their potato crop. It is directly related to how we understand stewardship properly.

Apparently these ancient Chinese had always planted their potatoes, not from seeds, but like even modern gardeners and farmers do. They cut up some of the previous year's potatoes into small pieces and planted these in the soil instead of seeds as they did for every other vegetable. They did this year after year, until at one point someone got the bright idea of sorting out all of the very smallest potatoes (some call them "runts") each year, and they planted them. They would sort out all the large potatoes, save those to eat, and cut up and plant all of the "runts." Of course, the ancient Chinese did not know anything about genetics. The problem, as you might guess, is that after several years of doing this they found that all the potatoes they grew were very small. By keeping the biggest ones to eat and planting only the smallest, soon all they were able to grow were small potatoes!

As you look out at any of our parishes on any Sunday, consider what kind of treasure is being returned to God, the Master-lender of all things. For the most part, there are some mighty small potatoes being planted. After all, the only thing that grows from small potatoes is – you guessed it – small potatoes!

We cannot scold, or threaten or scare small potato folks. They are God's people, too. But we can sit down with them and gently, lovingly and in a spirit of prayer let them know that they can receive far more in return on their crop if only they would plant bigger potatoes. But it does not begin with programs, with

great plans and proper execution of procedures. Stewardship is a Way of Life. Making any changes in ways of life takes time, effort and a lot of prayer. Think again about personal satisfaction; about being a steward; about repentance and change.