

## HOLY TRINITY HERALD



December 2020, №21

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### FROM FR. NIKON

Dear brothers and sisters!

It is a pleasure to welcome you on this first week of winter. I would like to wish us all, in the coldest season, to preserve and increase the warmth in our hearts.

Recently, we celebrated Thanksgiving Day. Let's let the word "thanksgiving" be a personal reminder to us of how important it is to say "thank you" to the people around us. And, of course, a reminder of how important it is not to forget to thank God, without whom there would be nothing.

After all, if we turn to the Lord with words of gratitude, then we understand that we really have something to say "thank you" to Him for in our life, despite any troubles. It means that we have no doubt that God remembers us, loves and takes care of us. Since the Heavenly Father protects and leads us to salvation, as the Holy Church teaches, then we have refuge and joy - firm hope. Without which everything is vain and meaningless. Such a simple "arithmetic" is obtained. And if we forget to thank God, and if we do not remember that without Him nothing can happen at all, then it is extremely difficult to discern and realize the miracle of every day, the joy of earthly life and the awaited bliss of eternity. Only discontent, anxiety and fear remain.

Fortunately, we are not alone and the opportunity to hear and understand the words of Christ is always available to us; the opportunity to see the joy and meaning of our life; the



opportunity to find words of gratitude and receive comfort. These possibilities are available in the Holy Church of Christ. Thank God, we have a wonderful church with a choir, Divine services and Sacraments being performed, and all this is crowned by a friendly growing parish family.

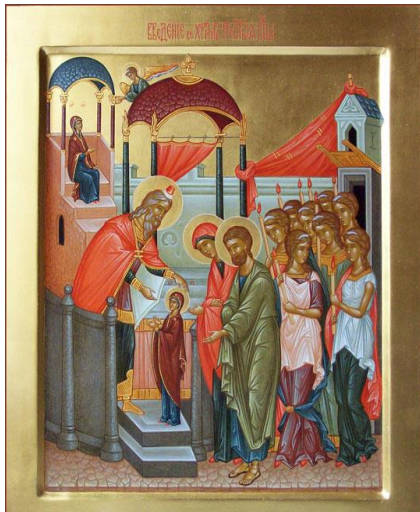
Therefore, despite the difficult situation around, - in joy and sadness - always, we are waiting for you in our church. And, I always sincerely rejoice receiving even a small message from you. Due to the virus, there haven't been many people visiting the church for almost a year now, no common meals, meetings or events for a long time. Nevertheless, we continue to be in unity, we've kept in touch and haven't forgotten that we are Christians and active members of our church community.

Dear ones, take care of yourselves. Be attentive to your physical health and, of course, spiritual. Let the beginning of the Nativity Fast help us in the latter - a time of restrictions on food and entertainment helps us to focus special attention on our soul and heart; remember our living relationship with the Lord. We will certainly be attentive and caring to our loved ones!

All peace, joy and undoubted hope!  
With love in Christ  
Hieromonk Nikon

## HOLIDAYS IN DECEMBER

### The Entry of the Most Holy Mother of God into the Temple (December 4th)



The introduction of our Most Holy Lady the Theotokos into the temple is one of the great Orthodox holidays. It was installed in honor of the future Mother of the Lord Jesus Christ when She was brought to the Jerusalem temple. And this is a kind of introduction to winter, an introduction to Christmas fast, and an introduction to the pre-holiday, pre-Christmas days.

On this celebration, we begin to hear at the evening service the Christmas hymn "Christ is born, glorify..." and anticipate the Nativity of Christ.

Mary, a pure Child, was dedicated to God from birth. Such a vow was made by Her righteous parents Joachim and Anna, when praying for the resolution of infertility. They brought their three year old daughter to the walls of the Temple. According to Holy Tradition, with

God's help, Mary easily climbed the steep steps to the top, where the high priest was waiting to bless Her.

As Bishop Vasily (Rodzianko) notes, "it is no coincidence that the high priest turned out to be Her close relative (that year the high priest was Zechariah, who was the father of John the Baptist, and John the Baptist was the closest relative of Her divine Son, Jesus Christ). This is how this holy family brought salvation to the human race. And this is also no coincidence,

because the Lord Christ the Savior set the family as the basis of salvation of the larger human family, which he called the Church. “

Many details of the earthly life of the Most Holy Theotokos from infancy to ascension to heaven are unknown to us. We only know that Mary constantly prayed and read the Holy Scriptures, diligently engaged in needlework, and most importantly, She loved God. "If someone asked me," said Blessed Jerome, "how the Most Holy Virgin spent the time of Her youth," I would answer: this is known only to God and the Archangel Gabriel, Her guardian angel. "

Separated from her parents, the Virgin Mary eventually became a Mother to all of us. Chants addressed to the Most Pure One call Her the Patroness, the Comforter, and the Intercessor. Her icons are called: "Fadeless Colors", "Inexhaustible Chalice", "Life-Giving Source", "Peacemaker", "Blessed Sky", "Unexpected Joy" ... These names sound like a wonderful hymn in honor of the Patroness. All earthly and heavenly Forces glorify the One Who unites everything earthly and heavenly.

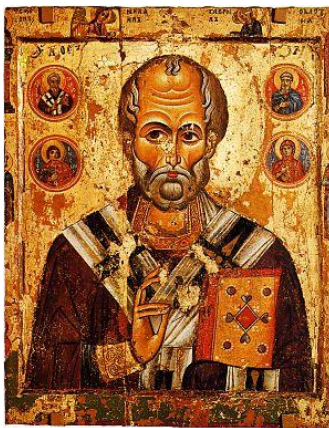
From a sermon by Bishop Basil (Rodzianko):

What is the Introduction? The introduction of the Most Holy Theotokos. She was brought into the temple at the age of three - this had a special meaning - She was well prepared for the great service to which the Lord had called Her. The Church of Christ was created in paradise, even before (as Clement of Rome says) our sun and moon. That is why this Pure Child was introduced by the high priest Zechariah directly into the holy of holies, that is, into the main shrine of the Old Testament Temple. And from this began the transformation of this Old Testament Temple into the New Testament. This was the moment when the Holy Spirit began to gradually turn into one which can exist in every Orthodox Christian church, pronounced at every liturgy - "Holy of Holies."

Paradise for earth has been restored, and we may be raised again to the heaven of God. This Child marked the transition from the Old Testament to the New Testament.

Let us try to follow this holy path in the struggle against all temptations, so that the Lord will give us the opportunity to approach the One who made this symbolic transition.

### **DAY OF SAINT NICHOLAS, THE WONDERWORKER (December 19th)**



God has given us a wonderful treasure - the angelic Nicholas. The Blessed Nicholas was meek like Moses, courageous like David, glorious for simplicity of character, like Jacob. Like Noah, he saved the flock of the Lord from the flood of heresies.

Saint Nicholas saves people from death, poverty, shame, ruin, slander, captivity, executions, drowning. The Holy Man of God helped us not only during his life, but also after death - in eternal life. Saint Nicholas is especially loved and revered in Russia. In every Orthodox house there is a triple icon of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Most Holy Theotokos and St. Nicholas. In the life of the saint there is a very interesting story explaining why he

is always pictured together with the Lord and the Mother of God.

It happened during the reign of King Leo and Patriarch Athanasius in Greece. Saint Nicholas appeared in a dream to a pious old man named Theophan and ordered him to commission Haggai, an icon painter, to paint three icons: the Lord Jesus Christ, the Most Pure Lady of Theotokos and Nicholas.

Theophan did not hesitate. When the icons were brought to the house of Theophan, he prepared a meal and invited the patriarch and entire cathedral to his house. The patriarch praised the icons of the Savior and the Mother of God, but said that the icon of the saint should not have been placed next to the other two, since he was the son of ordinary people.



With sorrow, Theophan carried the icon of the saint out and put it in a place of honor and asked a clergyman to pray over it. There was not enough wine during the meal. Theophan fell on his knees before the icon and asked the Wonderworker Nicholas for help. Approaching the empty vessels, he was surprised to find them filled with fine wine.

The next morning, a nobleman begged the patriarch to read the Holy Gospel over his daughter who was possessed by demons. The patriarch boarded a ship and went out into the

open sea. Suddenly a terrible storm began, huge waves swept the ship, and everyone found themselves in the water, praying for salvation. Saint Nicholas suddenly appeared. Walking on the sea, as on land, he approached the patriarch and took his hand with the words: "Patriarch Athanasius, do you need help from the son of ordinary people?"

Having pulled everyone out of the water and put them on the ship, the saint became invisible. The ship arrived in Constantinople. The patriarch immediately went to the church of St. Sophia and sent for Theophan, ordering him to bring the icon of St. Nicholas. When the icon was brought, he fell on his knees in front of it and with tears said: "Forgive me, Saint Nicholas, I am a sinner." Having kissed the image, the patriarch carried it to the church of St. Sophia. The next day they laid the foundation for a new church in Constantinople in honor of St. Nicholas. When it was built, it was consecrated on the day of the saint. On that day, Saint Nicholas healed 40 sick men and women. Many after that came there: the blind, the lame, the lepers, and, having touched the icon of the saint, left healthy, glorifying God and His wonderworker.

### CALENDAR OF HOLIDAYS IN DECEMBER

- December 2 Icons of the Mother of God "Consolation in sorrow."
- December 4 Entry into the temple of the Most Holy Theotokos.
- December 6 of the Blessed Grand Duke Alexander Nevsky.
- December 7, Great Martyr Catherine.
- December 10 Icons of the Mother of God "The Sign".



- December 13 Apostle Andrew the First-Called.
- December 17, Great Martyr Barbara. Saint Gennady, Archbishop of Novgorod.
- December 18 of St. Sava the Sanctified.
- December 19, St. Nicholas, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia, the Wonderworker.
- December 20 Saint Ambrose, Bishop of Mediolana.
- December 22 Icons of the Mother of God "Unexpected Joy".
- December 25 Saint Spyridon, Bishop of Trimyphus, miracle worker.

### News from the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia



**The Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR) celebrates its 100th anniversary this year.** It began its journey together with the last ships that sailed from the shores of the Crimea, taking Old Russia aboard, and with it the Kursk Icon of the Mother of God, which has now become the Guide to the Russian Diaspora. Due to the pandemic, all celebrations had to be postponed. However, they have not been canceled, but only postponed, possibly for the next year. Bishop Nicholas of Manhattan (Olkhovsky) spoke about how the Church is going to celebrate its

centenary, how the Russian people managed to preserve their faith for such a long time, and when the Kursk icon will come to Russia again.

The full interview of Vladyka Nicholas to the Pravoslavie.ru channel can be viewed at the link: <https://pravoslavie.ru/135303.html>

### PARISH LIFE



Almost every Sunday we hear the voice of **our church reader Alexey Mikhailov** reading the Apostle, and prayers for Holy Communion. Alexey is a scientist, professor, and doctor, engaged in kidney pathological anatomy and diagnostics of transplanted organs (Assistant Professor, Department of Pathology, Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center, Winston-Salem, North Carolina).

The Azbuka Vera channel published an interview with Alexey "My path to God. The path of a doctor". The conversation turned out to be not

only interesting, but also frank. The interview can be viewed at the link: <https://azbyka.ru/way/put-vracha/>. On December 7, 2020, Alexey, together with a group of medical scientists, flies to Nicaragua to help local doctors. We wish Alexey a successful, fruitful and safe trip, and we will wait for his safe return and news from Nicaragua.

At our Holy Trinity Church, we have a **Children's Literary Club**. For the meetings to be even more fruitful and interesting for every child, Fr. Nikon now leads two groups: for younger children (8-10 years old) - every Friday at 17.00 and for older children (11-13 years old) - every Friday at 18.00. We invite all children. If you want to enroll your child in the club, please write to us at: [rus.church.org@gmail.com](mailto:rus.church.org@gmail.com). Participation is, of course, free. However, we always pray for benefactors and ask you to support our parish financially for our all-encompassing ministry.

**Every Sunday Divine Service is broadcast live on our temple's Facebook page:** [facebook.com/russian.church](https://www.facebook.com/russian.church) (the broadcast starts at 10 o'clock).

If you are at risk and do not have the opportunity to attend Divine Services due to your health, but **wish to light candles, submit notes and Church prayer**, we will be happy to do it for you. Below, in the section "We ask for help," it is indicated how to make a separate donation for a candle, which will be lit with prayer for your loved ones at the service. After making a donation, please also write to Father Nikon the names of those to pray for their health and remembrance of the dead along with a request for a candle: [rector@holytrinitymission.com](mailto:rector@holytrinitymission.com).

Our Holy Trinity Church is always adorned with flowers during divine services. If you wish to contribute to this good and Godly deed and **bring flowers to the beginning of Saturday or Sunday services**, we will be sincerely grateful to you. You can also **make a cash donation for flowers** (see below in the section "Please help" how to make a transfer; please do not forget to mark: "For flowers").

**Readings of the Akathists** are resumed in our temple. See the timetable on our ward page: [holytrinitymission.com](http://holytrinitymission.com).

### Sisterhood of St. Tatiana



A joyful event took place in our parish and sisterhood. **The Hunt family has a new addition to the family, baby Sofia.** The sisterhood congratulates sisters Daria (mother) and Natalia (grandmother), as well as brothers Wesley (dad) and Vladimir (grandfather) and older sister Elizabeth on such a wonderful event in the family. We wish all the best to our little parishioner and all her relatives.

The photo shows the family after the Sacrament of Baptism of Sofia.

An application to join the Sisterhood can be obtained by emailing [sisterhood@holytrinitymission.com](mailto:sisterhood@holytrinitymission.com) or by requesting an application form in the church shop.

### IN MEMORY



Our beloved and unforgettable father Gabriel would have turned 52 on December 4, 2020. Many of us remember, love and pray for the priest. Last year, parishioners of the church, relatives and clergymen shared their memories of Fr. Gabriel. The memoirs were published in our "Holy Trinity Herald" in December 2019:

<http://www.holytrinitymission.com/files/Father-Gabriel-Memorial.pdf>

### Parish Members Recommend



The new parishioners of our church are surprised when they learn that we have **the relics of saints in our church**. Knowing the names of the saints and having read about their lives, we treat with great reverence the shrines in our church.

The first casket contains the relics of the saints: **Saint Nicholas (Velimirovich), Bishop of Zichy and Ohrid; Saint Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia; Reverend Herman of Alaska.**



The second casket contains the relics of the **Kiev-Pechersk saints: the Monk Onuphrius the Silent; Saint Gregory the hermit; Saint Macarius the fasting man; Saint Ephraim of Pereyaslavl; The Monk Nikon dry; Venerable Niphont of the Caves, Bishop of Novgorod.**



## Photo of the Month



Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, Mebane, NC (November, 2020)

## WE ASK FOR HELP

We ask you to support us with prayer to God and with donations. You can send your donations:

1. Check to the address of the church: Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, 6803 US 70, Mebane, NC 27302
2. Online via PayPal, by finding the "Donate" link in the upper right corner of our website: [holytrinitymission.com](http://holytrinitymission.com)
3. Through AmazonSmile when shopping on Amazon. To do this, on the website [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com), choose Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, Mebane NC for charity support. A small percentage of the purchase payment will be automatically transferred (donated) to the account of our parish.



**Dear brothers and sisters, we invite children and adults to our virtual Christmas show in January 2021. The exact broadcast date will be announced shortly on the temple website.**