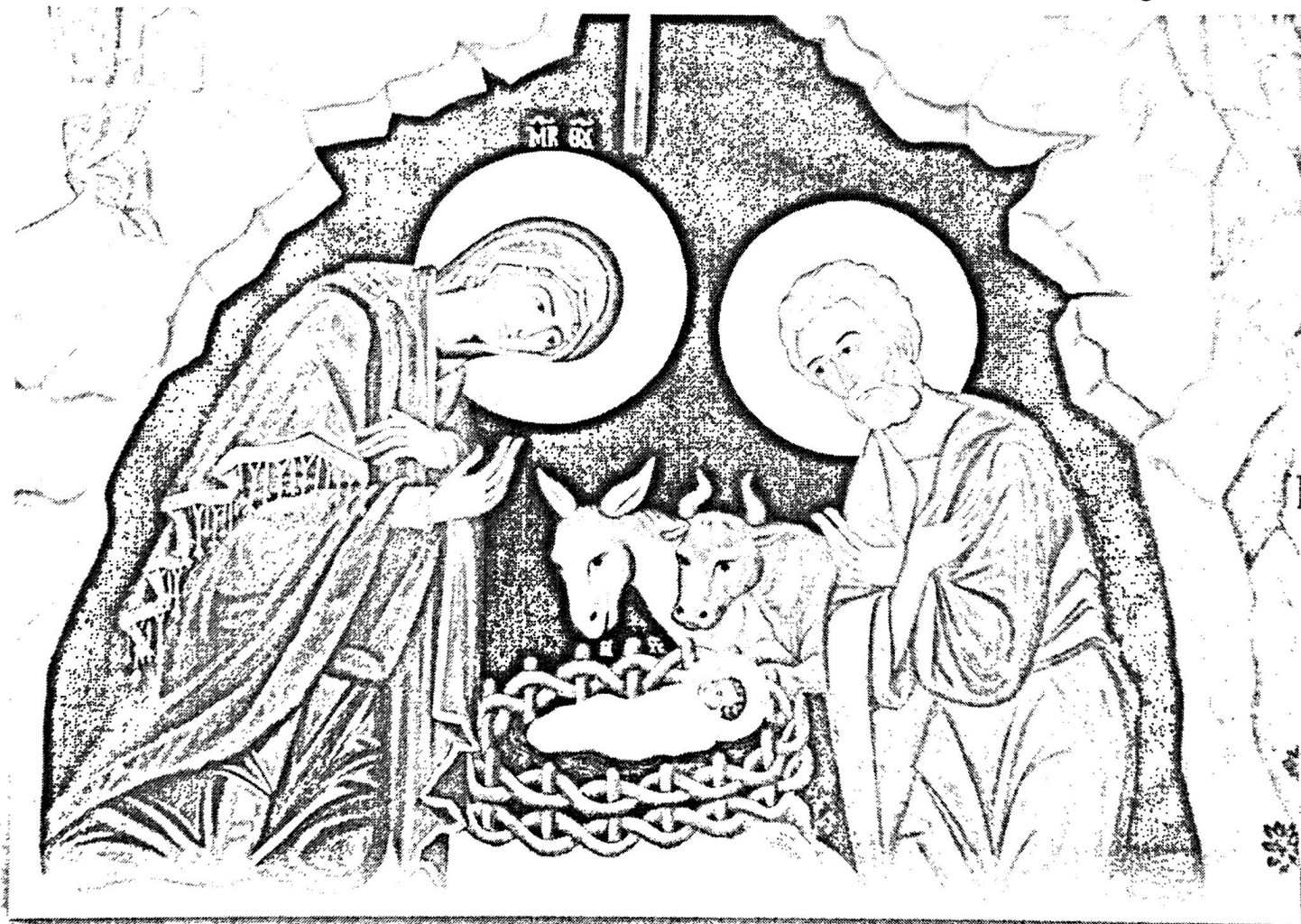


ST. NICHOLAS

Serbian Orthodox Church

971 St. Clair Road, Johnstown, PA 15905 ■ 814-255-1853; Parish Priest: *Rev. Dragan Zaric*



"I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior who is Christ the Lord" (St. Luke 2, 10-11)

Weekly Bulletin - Sunday January 3, 2016

**Sunday, Dec. 21. 2015/Jan. 3, 2016. Sunday of the Holy God-bearing Fathers
Holy Virgin– mart. Juliana; St. Peter of the Kievan Caves, (Fathers' Day)**

Liturgical Readings: Gospel St. Matt. (1, 1-25); Epistle: Heb. 11,9-10,17-23;32-40.

Donations Received Sunday, December 27, 2015

Offering \$1450.00 Candles \$20.00 Dues \$90.00

Donations to the Sunday School in memory of Mike Podolak for \$20 from David & Susan Seitz
And \$25 from Ranka Marinkovich

Donations to the Building Fund in memory of Michael & Evelyn Raich for \$100 from
Tom & Ann Luy, Ev & Steve King and Mike & Mary Raich. Also in memory of Mike
Podolak for \$20 from Charles & Olga Bulich, Lazo Gjurich, Sylvester Gjurich,
Michael Martinovich, Brian Gjurich, Nick Saula, Dianne & Dan Tomak, and
\$10 from Pat Niel

Donation of \$50 in memory of Milo & Ben Sikirica from Josephine Sikirica

● Parostas today in memory of Stanka Sikirica who died 12/23 from Josephine Sikirica.

Comfort & Joy

The deadline for donations of cookies/gifts for the Comfort and Joy Christmas Program is January 3, 2016. As always, we are asking for two dozen of cookies, any variety.

All volunteers are welcome to help distribute our Comfort and Joy gift bags immediately following the Sunday School festivities on that date.

If you have any questions, please contact Susan Seitz at 814.243.4182. Thank you!

Schedule of services:

JANUARY 6 (Wednesday) Holy Nun-martyr Eugenia - Divine Liturgy at 9:00 a.m.

-CHRISTMAS EVE (Бадње Вече) - Evening service and blessing of Yule log at 7:00 pm, *followed by a hot drinks at the social hall*

JANUARY 7 (Thursday) NATIVITY OF OUR LORD (Божич)- Divine Liturgy at 10:00 a.m.

JANUARY 8 (Friday) SYNAXIS OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS - Divine Liturgy at 9:00 a.m.

JANUARY 9 (Saturday) ST. STEPHEN THE ARCHDEACON - Divine Liturgy at 9:00 a.m.

JANUARY 10 (Sunday) SUNDAY THE HOLY GOD-BEARING FATHERS - Divine Liturgy at 10:00 a.m.

JANUARY 14 (Thursday) CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD - ST. BASIL - Divine Liturgy at 9:00 a.m.

JANUARY 17 (Sunday) SYNAXIS 70-APOSTLES - Divine Liturgy at 10:00 a.m.

JANUARY 18 (Monday) HOLY CROSS DAY– (STRICT FAST) Крстовдан - Divine Liturgy at 10:00 a.m.

Great Blessing of the Waters following the Divine Liturgy

JANUARY 19 (Tuesday) THEOPHANY (Богојављење) - St. Basil Divine Liturgy at 9:00 a.m.

JANUARY 20 (Wednesday) ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST (Јованџдан)- Divine Liturgy at 9:00 a.m.

St. Matthew (1, 1-25). The Feast of the Nativity of the Lord Jesus Christ will be celebrated in a few days. The current Gospel is read each year on the Sunday before the Feast of the Nativity.

Believers are reminded each year of the genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Church considers the genealogy sufficiently important for it to be repeated throughout the world.

The virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ is recorded in this Gospel reading. That Jesus would save His people from their sins is clearly stated. Believers of each century and in each location hear these lasting declarations.

Each generation is enriched and guided by the reading of the Holy Gospel.

Each generation of believers places greatest confidence in the Holy Gospel.

Believers of each generation experiences Christ through hearing the Holy Gospel.

The Holy Gospel guides believers in facing contemporary problems. The Holy Gospel is the firm resource for answers and solutions to personal problems.

The Holy Gospel reveals the goodness, mercy and glory of God.

Lives are enriched through attentive reading and listening to the Holy Gospel. Perspective for personal lives is found in the Holy Gospel. The words of Christ speak directly to each person.

God's Holy Church is the best place to hear and learn from the Holy Gospel.

The Holy Gospel is read with order and consistency. The Holy Gospel is integral to God's Holy Church and all aspects of the Church.

Individuals seeking to address the hunger of their souls find satisfaction in God's Holy Church. Christ satisfies the hunger of each soul. Christ is the authentic satisfaction for each life.

Lasting joy exists in Christ. Continued unity with Christ enables the joy to continue. Sin must be repudiated. Constant vigilance and repentance are necessary to remain united with Christ and be faithful followers of Christ.

Faithful followers of Christ immerse themselves in preparing for the Feast of the Nativity. Faithful believers celebrate the Feast according to the teachings of the Church.

The Church's celebration of the Feast of the Nativity stands in stark contrast to worldly commercialism and greed. The Church looks to the Christ-Child as the unequalled example of humility.

The Church looks to the humble circumstances surrounding Christ's birth. Believers are expected to learn from Christ's example of humility. Believers benefit from the simplicity of Christ's earthly life.

Christ's birth is a marking point in the history of the world. The world changed completely with Christ's birth. The birth of the Christ-Child was similar to all births, but has distinct, lasting and unequalled differences.

Individuals do well to ponder Christ's virgin birth. Individuals benefit from pondering the action of the Holy Spirit. Being thankful to the Lord Jesus Christ for taking on human flesh has a place in each serious believer's daily life. *(By Father Rodney Torbic)*

"Christ is Born"

"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. Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews?" For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him. When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired them where the Christ was to be born. So they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet;"

In the above Bible passage, we seen the line, "Behold the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel." We may ask, how did this bible passage end up in the New Testament in the Gospel of Matthew? To find the answer, we need to go back in time to the land of Judah, in the time of Isaiah around 739 to 686 B.C. There lived a king by the name of Ahaz, son of Jotham, who was the son of Uzziah. King Ahaz led the people away from God and brought the worship of false gods, going so far as to offer infant sacrifices. Judah had become unfaithful to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God called upon the prophet Isaiah to speak with King Ahaz as surrounding kingdoms were preparing to attack the land of Judah. Instead of turning to God in faith, King Ahaz sought an alliance from Assyria.

When Isaiah spoke to King Ahaz, Isaiah instructed King Ahaz to choose a sign from God to show Ahaz and the land of Judah that God would deliver His people; in other words, God would not let Jerusalem or Judah be destroyed. "But Ahaz said, *"I will not ask, nor will I test the Lord!"* And the Lord, who was not impressed with the false humility of King Ahaz, spoke to Isaiah and said that He will give the sign. And God chose the birth of a child from a virgin as the sign of His promise to save His people, and the name of the child was to be called "Immanuel." Thus, this little child was going to be the salvation of God's people; this little child was going to be God with His people; this little child would be destined to become King according to the line of David; this little child would be called the "anointed one" of God.

In the little town of Bethlehem, God kept His promise and a little child was born, fully man and fully God. This little child was destined to be the salvation of God's people by eventually paying the penalty of sin, which is death. This little child would die so that others would live, and this little child would live among His people and experience the pain, hardships, and struggles of life so that He could give His people life, strength, courage, joy, and love in their journey on this earth towards salvation. Have faith in and trust our Lord Jesus Christ so that despite the hardships of life, you may still have hope, joy, and love in your heart.

As a Christian writer explained, no present will bring you joy, satisfaction, peace, or life. Only the little child from Bethlehem will give you the peace, life, and fulfillment you seek.

The Lord has given us a sign of His Promise to save His people; Christ is Born! Amen!