

Saints Cyril and Methodius Orthodox Christian Church

A Parish of the Diocese of New England of the Orthodox Church in America

Fr. John Hopko, Pastor • Protodeacon Paul Nimchek

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Sunday, December 26, 2021 – Tone 2

27th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 2. Second Day of the Feast of the Nativity . Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos . Sunday after Nativity. Holy Righteous Ones: Joseph the Betrothed, David the King, and James the Brother of the Lord. Hieromartyr Euthymius, Bishop of Sardis (ca. 840). Ven. Constantine of Synnada (8th c.). Ven. Evaristus of the Studion Monastery (9th c.). Saint Nikódēmos the Sanctified of Tismana, Romania (Macedonia—1406). Hieromartyr Constantine the Russian of Lavra on Mt. Athos (Mt. Athos—1743).

<https://www.oca.org/saints/lives/2021/12/26>

Services and Events, Upcoming

- **Wednesday morning Matins, December 29, 8:00 AM:** Morning Prayers Service (a simplified order of Matins), beginning at 8:00 AM, on Wednesday.
 - **Saturday evening Vigil, January 1, 6:30 PM:** Saturday evening Vigil (Great Vespers, with the Reading of the Matins Gospel), beginning at 6:30 PM. With added prayers for the New Year.
 - **Sunday morning Divine Liturgy, January 2, 9:15 AM:** The weekly Sunday morning Lord's Day celebration of the Divine Liturgy, beginning at 9:15 AM.
 - **Wednesday evening, January 5, 6:30 PM, Eve of Theophany:** Festal Vigil with the Great Blessing of Water
 - **Thursday morning, January 6, 9:15 AM, Feast of Theophany:** Festal Divine Liturgy
 - **Saturday evening, January 8, 6:00 PM:** First Year Anniversary of Repose Memorial Service ("Panikhida") for Mrs. Anna Szepel.
 - **Saturday evening Vigil, January 8, 6:30 PM:** Saturday evening Vigil (Great Vespers, with the Reading of the Matins Gospel), beginning at 6:30 PM.
 - **Sunday morning, January 9, 9:00 AM:** Prayers and Rites for the Reception into the Fullness of the Orthodox Faith of David Crosby, with his Sponsor being Protodeacon Paul Nimchek
 - **Sunday morning Divine Liturgy, January 9, 9:15 AM:** The weekly Sunday morning Lord's Day celebration of the Divine Liturgy, beginning at 9:15 AM.
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PARISH PRAYER LIST

We pray for all victims of disease, disaster, difficulty, and senseless violence throughout the world.

+ THOSE WHO HAVE DEPARTED THIS LIFE: *Memory Eternal!*

First of all, we pray for all the thousands of victims of COVID-19.

Newly Departed

Archpriest Igor Soroka—prominent priest and Church musician d. 12/18/21
Archpriest Michael Macura—priest at St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church, Silver Lane, Stratford, CT d. 12/18/21
Barbara Welch—Tim and Melanie O.'s aunt d. 12/18/21
John—a relative (through marriage) of Fr. John H. d. 12/18/21
Michael—associated with Hartford Parish, a young man, victim of cancer d. 12/18/21
Eugenia "Jean" Mickewich, who was Arthur Charkowsky's sister d. 12/13/21
John A.—husband of Claudia A. of the W'bury Parish d. 12/8/21
Mat. Anne Pawlush—wife of past Pastor, Fr. George Pawlush d. 12/7/21
Sophie (Sonia) Ozerov—Fr. John's great aunt d. 12/2/21
Lorraine Lucien—former parishioner in Waterbury Parish d. 11/19/21

Anniversaries of Repose – *Memory Eternal!*

Harry Kanot 12/26/1952
Joseph Pawelchak 12/27/1972
Afton Susidko 12/30/1963
Anna Baychuk 12/30/1967
Harry Leba, Sr. 12/31/1999
Afton Andrash 1/1/1937
Peter Duke 1/1/1956

THOSE IN NEED OF GOD'S MERCY AND HELP

First of all, we pray for all those suffering due to COVID-19, and those working to alleviate their suffering.

Persons captive and suffering for the Faith

Metropolitan Paul and Archbishop John—hostages in Syria

Those who are sick and suffering

Priest John M.—a young priest, suffering with a vexing illness
Matushka Anne Hosking—chronic illness; in need of our prayers
Matushka Ann S.—chronic health challenges
Fyodor (Frank) G.—suffering from Multiple Sclerosis (MS)
Dolores T.—permanent colon malfunction following colon cancer treatment
child Drew—grandson of friends of the Nimcheks; ongoing treatment for eye cancer
Donna—Ann S.'s niece, Deb W.'s cousin; kidney disease
Dayrl—Ann S.'s niece, Deb W.'s cousin; kidney disease
JoAnn—acquaintance of Jeanne Moore; ovarian cancer
MaryEllen—Louine K.'s daughter-in-law; suffering with Huntington's Disease
Yelena "Lenna" M.—overcoming, by God's grace, serious health challenges
Katie and Aubrey—a mother and daughter for whom we have been asked to pray
Tanya B.—suffering long-term and lingering effects of brain hemorrhage
Claudia A.—Waterbury parishioner; health challenges and recently widowed
Mary Lynn—friend of Donna O.; battling breast cancer
Barbara—friend of Patty N.; unwell and in need of prayerful support
Dorothy F.—Waterbury parishioner; still recovering from a serious surgery

Michael "Mike" L.—ongoing health issues
child George—young son of a Kenyan Orthodox priest; quite unwell
Bill M.—struggling with health issues, please keep in prayer
Paula—friend of Jim L.; struggling with cancer
Dimitri—brother of Carolyn P.; health issues
Maryna B.—dealing with some health issues
Thomas—Patty N.'s nephew; battling cancer
Wayne—Donna O.'s father
Richard—a man struggling with cancer, for whom we have been asked to pray
George Kla.—our fellow parishioner; facing a variety of health challenges
Lorraine—friend of Joan M.; cancerous blood disease
Joseph—friend of Jeanne M.; in need of prayers
Dianna—Jennifer W.'s mother; suffering some health problems
Thomas—fighting cancer; father of a friend of the Parish (S.H.)
Yvonne K.—a person we have been asked to pray for; multiple myeloma
James B.—husband of a Waterbury parishioner; very unwell recently
Mark—friend of a parishioner (F.G.); critically ill
Domenic—friend of a parishioner (F.G.); facing serious illness
Louis—friend of a parishioner (F.G.); facing serious illness
Brittney—facing possibly severe health issues; at the request of Kathy M.
Jeanne M.—recovering from joint replacement surgery (doing well)
Albert ("Al")—in need of prayers for healing; very unwell
Kathy S.—Waterbury parishioner; facing health challenges
Earlene L.—Mike and Jim L.'s mother; recent health issues
Natonya L.—Mike and Jim L.'s family member; heart surgery
Bach-Loan—a neighbor of Jeanne M.'s; recent serious health challenges
Barbara S.—W'bury parishioner; recovering from surgery
Rosemary—friend of Jack K.; recovering from recent stroke
Rick—Deacon Paul and Patty's nephew; Rick is unwell and in need of prayers
Peter—Deacon Paul and Patty's acquaintance; battling leukemia
child Zoe—appendicitis; at request of Deb. W.

Shut-ins and those resident in long-term Care Facilities

Alex—John D.'s brother; suffering permanent effects of stroke
Dolores—Bob M.'s mother; resident in long-term eldercare

Expectant Mothers

Tracey and the child to be born of her—Geo. and Jenn. W.'s daughter-in-law

Travelers, Those Soon to be Traveling, and Those Apart from Us

And all those who are traveling, soon to be traveling, or apart from us, especially in this holiday season

Those from among us serving on active duty in the Armed Forces

Fr. James P., Chaplain (MAJ)—deployed to Africa with the CT ARNG
Joel O.—U.S. Navy; hospital corpsman ("medic")
Joseph B.—a Terryville neighbor; U.S. Marine Corps
Joshua P.—husband of a niece of Fr. John's; U.S. Army officer and helicopter pilot
Alexander—relative of Carolyn P.; 82nd Airborne Division U.S. Army soldier
Derek—relative of Carolyn P.; U.S. Army soldier

Birthdays this coming week

Roland Oscar Joseph Massicotte 12/26
Nina Dubnansky 12/29
Juliana Haskins 12/29

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Once again this Christmas, we face odd circumstances. We are still vexed by the COVID-19 event, and are not necessarily in agreement—being mere, fallible human beings—about how to respond to it, even within the Church, even among and with fellow Christians.

However, this we know, and of this we are convinced: We can depend, always, on God, Our Heavenly Father, and we can depend, always, on His unending love for us. In the Scriptures, again and again, we read about how God never forgets, how He always remembers us, how He is always faithful to us. We sometimes forget God, but He never forgets us. And "in the fullness of time" He sends His Son, Our Lord Jesus, to save us from our sins.

With the Psalmist, we cry out, "Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!"

Lord, we call upon You! Hear us, O Lord! Hear us, now at Christmas, as we celebrate Your Birth! Lord, have mercy!

News and Notes

Prayers Requested: One of our parishioners who is a teacher has asked prayers for one of her students. This student is battling a very serious illness. Please, keep this child and their loved ones in your prayers. Thank you. (Lord, hear us and have mercy!)

More Prayers Requested: A number of people recently diagnosed with COVID-19 have asked our prayers, specifically. Please, remember all those suffering with COVID-19, and all those working to alleviate their suffering. Thank you. (Lord, hear us and have mercy!)

David Crosby to be received into the fullness of the Orthodox Faith: David Crosby will be received into the fullness of the Orthodox Faith by means of Prayers and Rites that will be said and performed on Sunday morning, January 9. David's Sponsor will be Protodeacon Paul Nimchek. Fr. Vladimir Aleandro, who has been working with David in preparation for this occasion, will be on hand to preside. Please, keep David, and his wife Lucy, in your prayers.

House Blessings: In January, after the Feast of Theophany, it is customary to perform the annual blessing of homes. Obviously, we are still working our way through the present public health crisis, the COVID-19 event. So, we need to think about how best to accomplish house blessings this year. In some cases, we may wish to postpone this blessing until a more favorable time. In other cases, we may wish to explore performing the blessing in a slightly different way than in the past. We will think and pray about this matter between now and the Feast of Theophany and come to some conclusions about the best way to handle this matter, this year.

2022 Pledge Forms: The Annual Pledge Forms for 2022, whereby we make our pledges to support the Parish financially during the 2022 Fiscal Year (1/1/22 to 12/31/22), will be distributed this coming week. Please, plan to maintain your generous financial support for our Parish. Thank you.

2022 Contribution Envelopes: The Weekly Contribution Envelopes for 2022 will be distributed this coming week, and will be available at Church next weekend.

Help Fr. John Edit the Prayer List

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Glory to Jesus Christ!

With the beginning of the New Year upcoming, please, help me to edit the Prayer List. We would like to review the Prayer List and, perhaps, choose to remove some of the names of persons who have been on the list for months and months, whose conditions may have now stabilized to the point where they can be prayed for under the all-inclusive heading of "and all those who are in need of prayers," rather than still being listed, specifically and individually, by name on the list.

If you are the person who has asked for a name to be included on the Prayer List, and you know that the person in question is now stable, please, do consider asking Fr. John to remove that person's name from the prayer list.

The section of the Prayer List designated "for those who are sick and suffering" should be reserved for those who are acutely ill, facing significant difficulties, right now, in the present moment. Please, let's all work together to edit the Prayer List in a good and responsible way. Thank you!

In Christ,

Fr. John H.

Readings from Holy Scripture

Scripture Readings for the Sunday after Christmas, this year Sunday, December 26

The Reading from the Epistle to the Galatians (Gal. 1:11-19)

Brother and Sisters: I would have you know that the gospel which was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it; and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother.

The Reading from the Gospel according to Saint Matthew (Matt. 2:13-23)

When the wise men had 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 fulfil 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 Archelaus 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."

A Prayer on the Occasion of the New Year

O Master, Lord our God, the Fountain of Life and Immortality, the Creator of all things, both visible and invisible, who governs the seasons and the years and guides all things by Your wise providence; we thank You for all the blessings that You have poured out upon us during the past years of our lives, and we beg You, all-bountiful Lord, bless this coming New Year with Your Goodness, direct our civil authorities in the path of goodness, and bestow Your heavenly blessings upon all Your people, especially the blessings of salvation, health and growth in virtue. Deliver Your Church and this town and countryside from every assault of the Evil One, and grant us peace and tranquility; and grant, also, that we may always offer thanksgiving to You, the Father who is without beginning, together with Your only-begotten Son, and Your most-holy Spirit, God glorified in three persons, and may we joyfully praise Your all-holy Name: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, always, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.