

December 25, 2022



# THE IMAGE... (Jn 12:45 & 14:9; Heb 1:3; Col 1:15)

www.stjohnofdamascus.org



Publication of St. John of Damascus Orthodox Church in Poway, CA

## NATIVITY ACCORDING TO THE FLESH OF OUR LORD GOD & SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

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### Welcome!

...to all who have gathered to follow Jesus Christ and manifest the Kingdom of God in the Liturgy of His Church. If this is your first time with us, give us a chance to get to know you. Please join us for our fellowship meal following the service.

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### A Word from the Holy Fathers

I too will proclaim the greatness of this day: the Immaterial become incarnate, the Word is made flesh, the invisible makes itself seen, the intangible can be touched, the timeless has a beginning, the Son of God becomes the Son of Man, Jesus Christ, always the same, yesterday, today and forever.... This is the solemnity we are celebrating today: the arrival of God among us, so that we might go to God, or more precisely, return to Him....

*St. Gregory the Theologian*

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**Include Something in the Bulletin or  
Be Included in our Weekly E-mails  
([News@stjohnofdamascus.org](mailto:News@stjohnofdamascus.org))  
E-mail [info@stjohnofdamascus.org](mailto:info@stjohnofdamascus.org)  
with your request**



*From a virgin You rose, O Christ,  
our spiritual Sun of Righteousness.  
Though nothing can contain You,  
a star revealed You as contained in a cave.  
You have led the Wise Men to worship You;//  
With them we magnify You:  
"O Giver of Life, glory to You!"*

ST JOHN OF DAMASCUS ORTHODOX CHURCH + THE DIOCESE OF THE WEST + THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA



**Diamond Circle  
Christmas Luncheon  
Dec 27—Home of  
Joe & Cora Temnick**

Mark your calendar—Tuesday, December 27—for the Diamond Circle Christmas Potluck Luncheon. Joe and Cora Temnick have again graciously offered their home to host this event. Please gather at the Temnick home (12276 Casero Court, San Diego 92128) by 11 AM and prayer will be at 11:30 AM. This is a Christmas potluck lunch, so wear your most festive holiday outfit and bring your favorite main or side dish to share with your church family. Please be on time--arrive before our prayer at 11:30 AM.

*Make glad, O ye righteous! Greatly rejoice, O ye heavens! Ye mountains, dance for joy! Christ is born; and like the cherubim the Virgin makes a throne, carrying at her bosom God the Word made flesh.  
Shepherds, glorify the newborn Child! Magi, offer the Master gifts! Angels, sing praises, saying: "O Lord past understanding, glory to Thee!"*

*—First Sticheron of the Praises,  
Nativity Matins*

**2023 Membership/Pledge Drive**

December is the time for our membership and pledge drive to help us prepare our budget for next year. Please take a moment to complete the membership and pledge (time, talent & financial) form (3 pages) and return it to myself ([powaypadre@stjohnofdamascus.org](mailto:powaypadre@stjohnofdamascus.org)) or our Treasurer ([treasurer@stjohnofdamascus.org](mailto:treasurer@stjohnofdamascus.org)) before the end of the month.

**Dates for 2022**

**FAST-FREE WEEKS**

After Christmas                      Dec 26-Jan

## Today's Worship — Hymns



### TROPARION

#### Nativity — Tone 4

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God,  
Has shone to the world the Light of wisdom!  
For by it, those who worshipped the stars,  
Were taught by a Star to adore Thee,  
The Sun of Righteousness,  
And to know Thee, the Orient from on High.  
O Lord, glory to Thee!

### KONTAKION

#### Nativity — Tone 3

Today the Virgin gives birth to the  
Transcendent One,  
And the earth offers a cave to the  
Unapproachable One!  
Angels with shepherds glorify Him!  
The wise men journey with a star!  
Since for our sake the Eternal God was  
born as a Little Child!

### LITURGY PROKEIMENON

**Tone 8 (Nativity)** — Let all the earth worship Thee and praise Thee; let it praise Thy Name, O Most High! (*Ps 18:2*)

*v: Make a joyful noise to the Lord all the earth! Sing of His Name, give to Him glorious praise! (Ps 65:2)*

### LITURGY ALLELUIA VERSES

**Tone 1 (Nativity)** — *V. The heavens are telling the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims His handiwork. (Ps. 18:1)*

*V. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge. (Ps. 18:2)*



## Today's Worship — Scripture Readings

### GOSPEL AT MATINS

#### MATTHEW 1:18-25

<sup>18</sup>At that time, now the birth of Jesus Christ happened like this: after his mother, Mary, was promised in marriage to Joseph but before they came together, she was found pregnant by the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>Joseph, her betrothed, who was a righteous man did not want to make her a public spectacle and so intended to put her away quietly. <sup>20</sup>But as he was thinking about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife home, for what is conceived in her is by the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>She will give birth to a son and you shall give him the name Jesus because he will be the one to save his people from their sins."

<sup>22</sup>Now all this happened so that what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled:

*<sup>23</sup>Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bring forth a son.  
They shall call his name Emmanuel;  
which means, 'with us [is] God.'*

<sup>24</sup>Joseph arose from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him: he took his wife to [live with] him, <sup>25</sup>and had no relations with her before she had brought forth her firstborn son; and he named him Jesus.

### EPISTLE AT DIVINE LITURGY

#### GALATIANS 4:4-7

Brethren, but when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup>so that he might redeem those who were under the law and so that we might receive adoption as children. <sup>6</sup>And because you are children, God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, "Abba, Father!" <sup>7</sup>Now you are no longer slaves, but children; and if [you are] children, then [you are] heirs of God through Christ.



**Angels announce Christ's birth to the shepherds**



**GOSPEL AT DIVINE LITURGY**

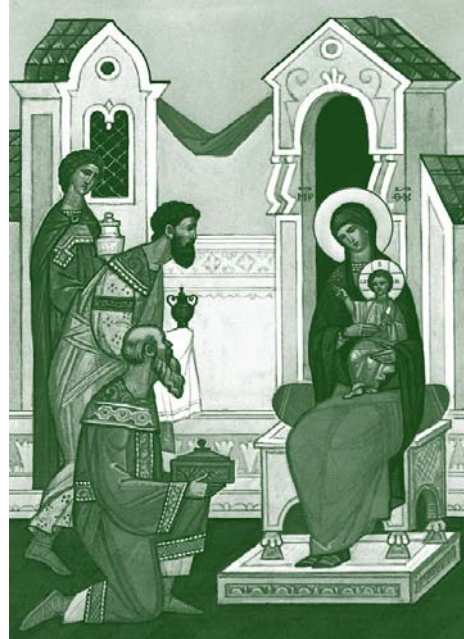
**MATTHEW 2:1-12**

2 At that time, When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying: <sup>2</sup>“Where is he who is born King of the Jews? For we saw his star in the east and we have come to express adoration to him.” <sup>3</sup>When King Herod heard about this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. <sup>4</sup>Gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he asked them where the Christ would be born. <sup>5</sup>They replied, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for this is written through the prophet:

*<sup>6</sup> You Bethlehem, land of Judah,  
are in no way least among the rulers of  
Judah:  
for out of you shall come forth a ruler  
who will shepherd my people Israel.*

<sup>7</sup>Then Herod privately called the wise men, and learned from them exactly what time the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup>He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search diligently for the young child. When you have found him, bring me word, so that I also may come and express adoration to him.”

<sup>9</sup>After listening to the king, they continued on their journey and behold, the star which they had seen in the east was going ahead of them, until it came and stood over the place where the young child was. <sup>10</sup>When they saw the star, they were filled with tremendous joy. <sup>11</sup>Entering the house, they saw the young child with Mary, his mother, and they fell down and expressed adoration to him. Opening their treasures, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. <sup>12</sup>But having been warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they returned to their own country using another way.



**Adoration of the Magi**



## Archpastoral Message of His Beatitude Metropolitan TIKHON

### THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD 2022

#### **CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!**

**TO THE HONORABLE CLERGY, VENERABLE MONASTICS, AND PIOUS FAITHFUL OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA:**

My Beloved Children in the Lord,

**CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!**

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..." (Mt. 2:19-20)

The protagonist, so to speak, for the first two chapters of Saint Matthew's Gospel is the humble and silent man whom we call the Righteous Joseph the Betrothed.



Joseph is called 'just,' that is, he walked according to the commandments of God (Mt. 1:19). And, according to the scriptures, in keeping the commandments, a man may learn true knowledge. As the Psalmist says, 'Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments' (Ps. 118:66).

We find that this is exceptionally true in the case of Saint Joseph. So just, so righteous, was he, that he was worthy to be taught and led by an angel. In an event that is sometimes called the annunciation to Saint Joseph, an angel comes to the righteous man in his moment of doubt concerning the pregnancy of his betrothed, telling him not fear.

And this exhortation not to be afraid is no mere formality, for the next words of the angel disclose a dread and fearful task. The angel asks Joseph to serve the most holy Theotokos and Ever-virgin Mary in place of an earthly husband ('take Mary your wife'), and to minister to the Lord Jesus Christ in the place of an earthly father ('you shall call his name Jesus').

This alone—the command to serve as a foster father to the God of all and as a guardian for the Mother of the Light—would be fearful enough. But soon Saint Joseph and the holy Mother and Child for whom he is obliged to care are beset by extraordinary circumstances: a murder plot, an es-cape to a distant land, and a sojourn in that foreign country. We can only assume that, in Egypt, among strangers, away from home and property, the responsibility to provide for his supposed wife and son weighed very heavily upon this righteous man.

But again, the words of an angel, and this time these are words of relief and joy: 'Go the land of Israel.' Return home to your kin; return home to your property; return home to your people and your customs and your land.

The first time an angel visited the righteous Joseph, he brought a dread order from the Almighty, an order that would have to be carried out under the most trying of circumstances. The second time an angel came, he brought a welcome reprieve.

But in both cases, the just man Joseph was equally obedient to the divine will. When he was

## Archpastoral Message of His Beatitude Metropolitan TIKHON



commanded to care for Mother and Child, he took up the task without hesitation, no matter what difficulties ensued. And when he was told to return to Israel, he went just as readily.

The same paradoxical way that Saint Joseph protected and cared for the omnipotent Master who holds all creation in the palm of his hand, God has given to us, Orthodox Christians, a special charge of sacred stewardship. God needs nothing from us, and yet he delights in allowing us to cooperate with him in the work of preaching the Gospel and sanctifying the world.

We might say that, just like the Righteous Joseph the Betrothed, we are, by divine grace, charged with caring for the newborn Christ. For what is the Church but Christ's Body, growing in this world in wisdom and stature until it reaches the measure of the stature of the fullness in the age to come (Lk. 2:52, Eph. 4:13)? And we all share a responsibility, according to our station in life, to care for the Church through prayer, financial support, sacramental participation, and sharing and teaching the faith.

And then, on another level, we are each charged to care for Christ in our life, in our own heart. Saint Paul wrote to the Galatians that he was in travail until Christ be formed in them (Gal. 4:19). Each of us is called to reveal Christ in our life, to become a saint, to become Christ by grace. Through baptism and the Eucharist we have all received Jesus Christ within ourselves, as it were as a new-born Child. By prayer, careful practice of the virtues, attentiveness to our thoughts, and the cultivation of authentic love for God and man, we allow Christ to grow in us, until, we pray, it is no longer we who live, but Christ who lives in us (Gal. 2:20).

Today, celebrating the Nativity of the Savior in the flesh, may we all take Saint Joseph as our example as we seek to foster Christ in the Church and in our own hearts. Let us practice the commandments, discern the will of God, and do his will, even when the circumstances are difficult.

Truly, this world is an Egypt, and caring for Christ and his Church as Saint Joseph did always involves obstacles and challenges. But if we sojourn with the Christ-child in Egypt, faithfully attending to him in our lives and our communities, we can be assured that we, like Saint Joseph, will one day hear those welcome words: 'Go to the land of Israel'—that is, come, ye righteous, and enter the heavenly mansions the Father has prepared for you from before all ages (Mt. 25:34).

By caring for our infant Savior and Lord in this way, we show our willingness to cooperate with the grace of God, God who so desired to have us as his fellow-workers, his brethren, and his friends that he deigned to be born in a cave and laid in a manger, on a cold night 'while gentle silence enveloped all things, and night in its swift course was now half gone' (Wis. 18:14). To him, our newborn God and Lord, be all glory, honor, and adoration, together with his eternal Father and his most holy, good, and life-giving Spirit.

With the blessing of the newborn Messiah, who is Lord and God before the ages, I remain sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Tikhon  
Archbishop of Washington  
Metropolitan of All America and Canada



## LOOKING AHEAD

*The following are services and parish events **in addition** to the usual weekend services (Sat 6pm & Sun 9:30am)*

### **Sunday December 25—Nativity of Our Lord in the Flesh**

8:30am — Hours & Festal Divine Liturgy followed by Carol Sing

#### **Mon 12/26—Friday 12/30**

Fr Michael Travels to Visit Family

#### **Tuesday December 27**

11:00am-2:00pm — Diamond Circle Luncheon (at Tennick Home)

#### **Wednesday January 4**

10:30am—Father's Café

### **Thursday January 5—Eve of Theophany**

*Strict Fast*

9:00am — Royal Hours for Theophany

6:00pm—Vigil for Theophany

### **Friday January 6—Holy Theophany**

8:30am — Hour & Festal Divine Liturgy & Great Blessing of Water

#### **January 6-February 25**

Annual House Blessings—Contact Fr Michael to Schedule

#### **Monday January 9**

7:00pm—Adult Ed: Orthodox Christianity 101

#### **Tuesday January 10**

7:00pm — Parish Council Meeting

#### **Wednesday January 11**

10:30am — Father's Café (Church Hall & Zoom)

#### **Monday January 16**

7:00pm—Adult Ed: Orthodox Christianity 101

*For more dates please visit our website: [www.stjohnofdamascus.org/calendar](http://www.stjohnofdamascus.org/calendar)*

### **Many Years!**

To the Faithful Members & Friends of St John of Damascus Orthodox Church!

#### *Birthdays*

|                |       |
|----------------|-------|
| Michael Geralt | 12/26 |
| Nathan Jones   | 12/28 |

#### *Wedding Anniversaries*

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Tanya & Dale (Michael) Franchak, George & Tania Minakov | 12/28 |
| Dmitriy & Caitlin (Juliana) Panasenko                   | 12/29 |

### **PARISH CONTACT INFO:**

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**Priest:** V. Rev. Michael Anderson, Rector

**Email:** [powaypadre@stjohnofdamascus.org](mailto:powaypadre@stjohnofdamascus.org) — **Phone:** (858) 717-2172

**Attached Clergy:** V. Rev. Alexander Federoff, Retired & Pdcn. George Shumaik

**ST. JOHN OF DAMASCUS ORTHODOX CHURCH + THE DIOCESE OF THE WEST + THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA**