

December 25, 2023



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

+

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.

+

A Word from the Holy Fathers

When God, the Son of God, entered the womb of the All-Holy Virgin and took flesh from her, He was born a perfect person and perfect God, without confusion. When has anything more important ever happened for us? We all believe in this Son of God and Son of the ever-virgin Mother of God, Mary, which is why we confidently accept this information about Him and this event. If we confess Him and repent from the bottom of our heart then the word of devotion [to Him] is born within us like a seed, in exactly the same way as the Word of the Father entered the womb of the Virgin. Marvel at this great and astonishing miracle and accept it in all certainty and faith.

—St Symeon the New Theologian



*"Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and his name shall be called Emmanuel,
translated (God is with us)."*

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



**Choir to Carol for Residents
Of Westmont Town Court Senior
Care Facility
Wednesday Dec 27**

Choir members are asked to gather at the church at 5pm on Wednesday Dec 27 for a mini-rehearsal prior heading over to the Westmont Town Court Senior Care Facility in Escondido for some good ole fashioned caroling.



**Diamond Circle
Christmas Luncheon
Dec 28—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 11:00 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.

Dates for 2023

FAST-FREE WEEKS

After Christmas Dec 26-Jan 4



“Christ is born, glorify Him!”

With these words something changes in our life, in the very air we breathe, in the entire mood of the Church’s life. It is as if we perceive far, far away, the first light of the greatest possible joy—the coming of God into His world! Thus the Church announces the coming of Christ, the Incarnation of God, His entrance into the world for its salvation.

—Fr Alexander Schmemmann

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

¹⁸At 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. ¹⁹Joseph, her betrothed, who was a righteous man did not want to make her a public spectacle and so intended to put her away quietly. ²⁰But 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. ²¹She 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."

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

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

²⁴Joseph arose from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him: he took his wife to [live with] him, ²⁵and 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, ⁵so that he might redeem those who were under the law and so that we might receive adoption as children. ⁶And because you are children, God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, "Abba, Father!" ⁷Now 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

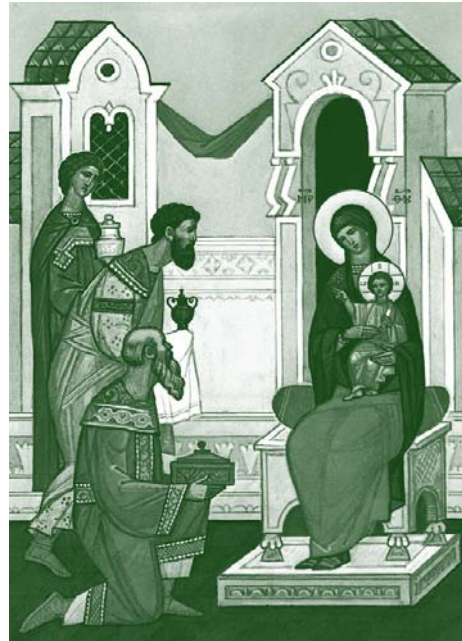
2 At that time, When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying: ²“Where is he who is born King of the Jews? For we saw his star in the east and we have come to express adoration to him.” ³When King Herod heard about this,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

*⁶You 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.*

⁷Then Herod privately called the wise men, and learned from them exactly what time the star had appeared. ⁸He 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.”

⁹After 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. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they were filled with tremendous joy. ¹¹Entering 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. ¹²But 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 CLERGY, MONASTICS, AND FAITHFUL OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA:

My Beloved Children in the Lord,

CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!

At the Vigil for today's feast, we sang with the words of St. Germanus of Constantinople: "Today the Virgin gives birth to the Maker of all. Eden offers a cave and a star discloses Christ, the Sun, to those in darkness" (second sticheron at the aposticha).



In a supreme paradox, the created world today offers shelter to the one who contains all things in the palm of his hand. Coming among us in obscurity, "born of a woman, born under the Law" (Gal. 4:4), in the form of a tiny baby, "in the form of a servant" (Phil. 2:7), hidden in a dark cave, nevertheless he shines his light upon our gloom.

Becoming small, he allows us to touch his greatness. Clothing himself in our weakness, he permits us to rest in his strength. Embracing obscurity, he brings enlightenment to the ends of the earth. Ministering as a servant, he shows his love as our Master, our Lord, and our King.

In our present day, as the gloom waxes and the darkness closes, as "wars and rumors of wars" abound (Mt. 24:6), the icon of the Nativity—Eternity laid as a baby in a crib, Salvation in the form of a newborn child, Redemption in the weakness of infant flesh—is as timely as ever. As an American hymn writer wrote over a century and a half ago, in the dark streets of Bethlehem, "the hopes and fears of all the years" are met together on the night of the Savior's birth. If we seek an answer, a solution, to the questions of our age and every age, that Answer, the very Word of the Father, can be found lying in a manger, sleeping, yet with his heart awake (Songs 5:2); resting in his tiny human body, but at work as God (Jn. 5:17).

Once the wise men journeyed, not to meet Herod in his court of splendor, nor to seek Caesar

Archpastoral Message of His Beatitude Metropolitan TIKHON



on his Roman throne, but to find a Child in his Mother's arms. Likewise, we do not seek peace, salvation, and joy from the hand and works of "princes and sons of men" (Ps. 145:3), but from the Lord who appears to us in silence, showing us the way of humility, stillness, forgiveness, meekness, and mercy.

Today, as we join the righteous Joseph, the magi, and the shepherds in worshipping the Lord at his Nativity, enthroned in the lap of his Mother, we place our trust in his care, his providence, his justice, which transcend all human comprehension. Setting aside our own righteousness, we repent and embrace the peace and silence of the manger. Setting aside the grand and distracting worries of the world, we concern ourselves with generosity and forbearance towards our brethren and neighbors.

As St. Porphyrius of Kavsokalyvia writes, "Only prayer, silence, and love are effective." Resting in prayer and silence, through faith and trust we encounter the love of the one who became flesh for our sake, in whom every conflict and battle ceases, the Peace and Power of God, come to reign in our hearts through his Incarnation. May we always accept that love with repentance, humility, and gratitude, and joyfully share it with others, this day and every day.

To Christ our God and Savior, born this Christmas day, be all glory, together with his Father who is without beginning and his All-holy Spirit, unto the endless ages of ages. Amen.

Christ is born! Glorify him!

I remain as ever,
Sincerely yours in the joy of our newborn Lord and God and Savior,

+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)*

Wed Dec 27

10:30am — Father's Cafe
5:00pm —Choir Meet at Church for Caroling

Thurs Dec 28

11am — Diamond Circle Christmas Party at home of Joe & Cora Temnick

Fri Dec 29

7:00pm — Adult Ed: The Lives of the 12 Apostles—A Primer

Sat Dec 30

4:30pm — Baptism of Vincent & Emmanuel Palumbo

Monday January 1

7:00pm—Adult Ed: Orthodox Christianity 101

Wed Jan 3

10:30am — Father's Cafe
5:00pm —Choir Meet at Church for Caroling

Friday January 5—Eve of Theophany

Strict Fast

9:00am — Royal Hours for Theophany
6:00pm—Vigil for Theophany

Saturday January 6—Holy Theophany

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

January 6-March 16

Annual House Blessings—Contact Fr Michael to Schedule

For more dates please visit our website: www.stjohnofdamascus.org/calendar

Many Years!

Name Days

Stephen Brown, Steve Zmina, Steven Drexler, Huyen Sarah Do 12/27

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:

Church: 16903 Espola Rd Poway — **Mailing Address:** PO Box 28291 San Diego, CA 92198

Web: www.stjohnofdamascus.org

Email: info@stjohnofdamascus.org — **Phone:** (858) 674-1931

Priest: V. Rev. Michael Anderson, Rector

Email: 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