



Holy Ghost Orthodox Church

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## **ADVENT/NATIVITY FAST/SAINT PHILIP'S FAST/PYLYPIVKA**

**ON THE MEND:** Please keep the following parishioners and others in your prayers for recovery from their illnesses and injuries: Father Bob, Archbishop Daniel, Metropolitan Antony, Metropolitan Yuriy, Archbishop Jovan, Metropolitan Savas, Father Jakiw Norton, Father Paul & Pani Judy Stoll, Father Joseph Kopchak, Father Elias Warnke, Father George Yatsko, Father Paul Bigelow, Father Emilian Balan, Father John & Pani Mary Anne Nakonachny, Father Steve Repa, Archpriest Dionysi Vitali, Protodeacon Joseph Hotrovich, Father Paisius McGrath, Father Michael Smolynech, Father Lawrence & Matushka Sophia Daniels, Father Joe & Protinica Linda Cervo, Father John Harrold [Saint Sylvester], Igumen Patrick, Father Jim Orr, Father Rick Seilier, Panimatka Laryssa Charest, Father Vasyl Sendeha, Father George & Dobrodijka Oksana Bazylevsky, Father Angelo Artemas, Father John Haluszczak, Dr. Christina Nellis, Father Joshua [Anna], Father Justin (Todd) Mokhiber, Pani Cathy Danczak, Protopresbyter Gerald Ozlanski, Father James Norton, Monk Andrew, Father Dan & Matushka Myra Kovalak, Father Joe Uzar, Father Deacon James & Diakonissa Kari Rossetti, Pastor Terry Polen, Chaplain Rachelle Zazzu, Joshua Agosto and his family, Eva Malesnick, Nick Behun, Grace Holupka, Gary & Linda Mechtly, Evelyn Misko, Jeanne Boehing, Alex Drobot, Rachelle, Jane Golofski, Doug Diller, Harry Krewsun, Mary Alice Babcock, Dorie Kunkle, Mary Evelyn King, Sam Wadrose, Isabella Olivia Lindgren, Ethel Thomas, Donna, Erin, Michael Miller, Grace & Owen Ostrasky, Patti Sinecki, David Genshi, Sue Segeleon, Mike Gallagher, Liz Stumpf, Theodore Nixon, Michelle Corba Kapeluck, Linda Hippert & family, Margaret Vladimir, Luke Emmerling, Robert McKivitz, Liz Obradovich, Halyna Zelinska [Archbishop Daniel's mother], Charlotte, Andrew Mark Olynyk, Deborah Finley, Claire Senita, Eleanor Kelly, Bryan, Nancy Barylak, Patrick Keenan, Khrystyna Chorniy, Anthony Cormier, Nathan Forbeck, Sarah Doyle, Samuel Peters, Esther Holupka, David Vallor, Henry Faraly, Julie Eiler, Dorothy Lednovich, Bob C., Allie—young girl with leukemia, Heather Kramer, Jane Wartinbee, Matthew—young man with cancer, Nicholas Orlando, Mary Ann Kuznik, Michael Pryhodzenko, Theresa Ditto, Mary Ann Musial, Yvonne Christy, Father Deacon Myron & Barbara Spak, Julia Duda, Lisa Pandle, Kris & Julie Hanczar, John Kennedy, Gaelle Kelly, Irma McDivitt, Robin Young, Mckayla, Rachel, Carl & Margaret Reed, Lydia Wilson, Robert Pointon, Walter Cecelia, John Persico, Jeff Miller, Mary

*Kernick, Glenn Miller, Jean Marie, Donna & Walter McCrackin, Bonnie & Eugene Blair [Pani Gina's parents], David Hoenshell, Barbara Macino, Shelley Hill, Linda Cawley, Gerald Cogley, Corey Guich, Robert Vangrin, Pauline Witkowsky, Sera White, Deborah Smith, Nancy & Eric Dunik, Julian Strozh [young lady with cerebral palsy], Dr. Kirsten Ream, Patricia Corey, Michelle, Katie Swarm, Michelle, Patrick, Linda Morris, Chris, David Hiles, Jennifer, Cher Mount, Frank & Janet Horrell, Jim Wandling, Gail, Sirena Sharp, Ron Paulovich, Sandi Anderson, Lina, Shirley, Denny Mader, Ella Campbell, Tom Hyatt, Bill Janiro, Jean Symanko-Andy's sister, William Lemonakis, Alma Wyke, Lindsay Romanczak & family, Susan Lucas, Neil Carter & family, James Paluh, Mickie Weikel, Evelyn Krempasky, Tammy Strunk, Loida Esbry, Darlene Chicka Deskins, Drew, Alice & Keith Philipa, Kateryna Kocelko, Mira Filipović, Lynn, Jacqueline, Sharon, Zan Cheng, Kristy, Elaine Ellenberger, Brandon, Anna Tranchine, Demetra, Blase Urban, Catherine Hogel & children, Jennifer & Dylan, Ron Schwartz, Lydia Wilson, Flora Tomlin, Howell Swarm, Jane Bielewicz Allred, Katie Elizabeth, Mileva, & Michael, Deirdré Straughan, Terri Paluh, Lori & Steve Lucier, Kyranna Cherpas, Pastor Bruce Nordeen, Heather Ried, Carla Perry, Linda Elliot, Dennis McDaniel, Luke Tinsley, Brent, Tricia, Katherine Gorman, Pamela Jaquette, Sherri Walewski, Marika Zeliszczyk, Donna Davis, Jackie Crimbchin, Marta Charron, Mary [Corba], Margie Sekelsky, Gary Howell, Fran Fulton, Gina Catanese, Bill Vizza, Jamie Swarm, Kevin Allen (from Ancient Faith Radio), Kathy Flaherty, Tori Reade-Henry's niece, Derick-Glen Burlack's neighbor, Michael, Nichole & Christopher, Ben Douglas, Dianne Donahue, Zachary, Natasha, Noah Willard, Jodi Hanczar, Gregory Cervo, Lisa Bruce, Martha Nezolyk, Kathy Cvetkovich, Judy, Will, Emma, Ginny, Ye-Jin, Maria, John & JoAnn, Jim & Kitty, Phil Bouse, Ralph & Beverly Stoker, Noah Willard, Nikola, Natalie, Nikola, & Nevenka Jovonovich, Julia Collier, Amy Kemerer, Thomas Smith, Tracy Slaugenhaupt, Louis & Terri Berceli, Tom Nolan, Silvia Martin, Dena & George, Georgia, Lawanda [Evelyn's niece], Maureen Sams, John Kendall, Judi Danser, Darcy, Nancy, Ian Brick, Cecilia Barnhart, Logan Magorien, Pam & Gordon Grant, Debbie & Jerry Novosel, Noah Willard, Sandra Dillard, Danielle McCann, Barry [Father Jim Orr's cousin], Tim Joyce, Joe Samchuck—vocations, Stephen Popichak—Fr. Bob's brother, Brianna Stumpf, Stanley Porembka, David & Terry Coyne Hartnett, Mike C., Jennifer Scheirer [Nick Behun's daughter], Catherine Beecham [Father Bob's cousin], JoAnne & Dave Andrews, Rev. Peg Bowman, Pat & Jan Jennings, Mike Ruzzi, Mary Kay Ludovicy, Pastor Sara Irwin, George Dilendorf, Sharon Torick, Carol Behun, Erv Frye, William Lusherand, Colin Kirton—Stage 4 pancreatic cancer, Clifford, Paul Riley, Tonee & Sydnee Turner, Annette Paluh, Theresa Paluh, Cathy Lotinsky, Jeff & Buschra Kerr, Margaret Sekelsky, Robert Sekelsky, Robert Rodriguez, Rita*

*& Joe Mrvos, Alexandra & Bowen, Katherine Kulik, Eleanor Kitt, Stacie & Gary, Maria Warholak, Stacie & Gary, Anna Sekelik, Christy, Mariruth, Rich & Judy Previc, Ben Williams, Tim—surgery, John Wakin, Olivia—girl with a brain tumor, Rick & Sharon Morgan, John Stasko, John, Kris, & Kait, Kristi Wilson, Wendy LaGamba, Melissa Gross [hip replacement], Amy Forbeck, David Salazar, Kitty Mary, Dr. Paul Riley, David Hess, Serena, Wyatt, Makenzie, Jennifer, Alexandra Roberts, Candace, Dave, Jared, & Beth Irvin, Carol Muschick, Grace Love [knee replacement], Stacie Riley, Joseph Paul Cervo, Jr., Elizabeth, Lillian Skowvron, Sue & Greg Heinen, Paul Simpson [Father Bob's cousin], Sharon Curtis Rivas, Kathy Milcic, Lisa Bolan, David G. [cancer], Donna [dementia] & Darla, Adam Snow, the McKenna family, David Gazella, Brian & Michele Cannone, the Rodrigues family, Michael Welsh, Nick Solominsky, Samantha & Lisa Houser, Sarah Stepanovich Clark, Julia Baloga, Brett Crosby, Randy Lapuh, Henry Tkacik, Diane & Arthur Chaklis, Denny Mader, Zoe Oswalt—Fr. Bob's cousin [cancer], Barbette [cancer] & Scott, Kristin [cancer], Erm Hartmann, Barbara Bookser [cancer], Bob Mazzuca [cancer], Marko, Taylor, Terri Crosby-Vega [knee replacement], Christine Mohamed & family, Sue Demko, Tammy Marsico, Terry & David Hartnett, Jamie Ball, Kay Williams, Hannah Stewart, Jim Wyko—Alex's friend, Dan Losego, Lisa Bruce, Yvette, Barry Bender, Scott McDougall, Andrew Zelleznick, Byron & Cecilia Scott, Vespina, Michelle Russo, Julie Tripodi, Alby Oxenreiter, Debbie—HTUCC Jackie May, Barbara Morvay, David Salsar, N&O, Randy & Adrienne Kuny, Vince Berardinelli, Mason Martin [Karns City HS QB] & family, Martin Mrvos, Jeff McCoy, Lauren & Sloane Valentina Persico, Alexis & baby Colton Rosati, Jessica Shirley, Mark [kidney cancer], Steve Milcic, Wilbert Wagner, Bob Wojciechowski, Ashley, Beth & Cindy Skowvron, Sharon Svitek, Laura, Christopher, & Baby Jane Dickson, Luke D, Diane Murphy, Kristin Vaughn [Harry's daughter], George Petronsky, Doug & Darcie Burkholder, Michael, Jeane, and Katie Byerly, Acolyte Photios & family [Joanne, Richard, Heather, Keith, James, Debbie, James, Sophia, Zachary, Tabitha, Arqynios, Barbara, Aristotle, Alexander, Kalev, Nina, Elias, Elijah, Jessica], Richard & Daniel Scharba [Metropolitan Antony's brothers], George Lawrence, Edie McGrath, Samantha Lopez, Bob [cancer], Syble Elliott, Maria Ancevski, Krystyna, John, & Jeffrey, Dottie & family, Bonny Diver & Ashley Smock, Steve, Jill Morocco, Peter Popichak [Father Bob's cousin], Mike Pelino, Maddie Stewart, Hutchinson Family, and Lauren & Dan... We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.*

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY to our December babies: Scot Brunermer on the 14<sup>th</sup> & Donna Karas on the 18<sup>th</sup>. May God grant them Many Happy, Healthy, Prosperous, and Blessed Years! M'nohaya Lita!**

**Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ... There is NOTHING to keep us from praying...for each other, for our family and friends, and most of all for the first responders—EMTs, nurses, doctors, firefighters, police officers, and members of our military who keep us safe. Be well and be SAFE!!! God Bless!**

**Please remember ALL American service men and women in your prayers. May God watch over them and ALL service men and women—and bring them all home safely!**

**REMEMBER—PRAYERS ARE ALWAYS FREE!**

Communion Fasting: nothing to eat or drink after midnight, EXCEPT in cases where your doctor tells you to eat or drink something for medical reasons: medication, diabetes, etc. ***If you have a question, please ask Father Bob.***

**AT ANY TIME**—if there is an emergency, if you have questions, or if you just need to talk, please CALL FATHER BOB at [412] 956-6626.

**SERVICES IN SLICKVILLE**

**SUNDAY, December 08 OBEDNITZA—SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM—UPSTAIRS 10:30 AM  
24<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; LEAVE-TAKING OF THE ENTRY OF THE  
THEOTOKOS; HIEROMARTYR CLEMENT-POPE OF ROME; HIEROMARTYR  
PETER-ARCHBISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA; VENERABLE PETER THE SILENT OF  
GALATA-SYRIA**

*Tone 7*

Ephesians 2:14-22; Hebrews 9:1-7

Luke 13:10-17; Luke 10:38-42, 11:27-38

***Litany in Blessed Memory of Thomas Bryan, Pearl Hanczar, John Hanczar, Helen Pytlak, Mary Blitzkan, Marjorie Yarmeak, Mary Sharon, Rose Pynch, Cynthia Mycyk, Frank Barankovich, Mary Krevanich, Katherine Holowaty, & Robert Vetosky—Fr. Bob***

**SUNDAY, December 15 \*\*\*\*\*NO SERVICES IN SLICKVILLE\*\*\*\*\*  
25<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; PROPHET HABAKKUK, MARTYR MYROPE OF  
CHIOS; VENERABLES JOHN, HERACLEMON, ANDREW, & THEOPHILUS OF  
EGYPT; VENERABLE JESSE-BISHOP OF TSLIKANI, GEORGIA; SAINT  
ATHANASIUS-RECLUSE OF PERCHEVSKY LAVRA-NEAR CAVES; SAINT  
ATHANASIUS-RECLUSE OF PERCHEVSKY LAVRA-FAR CAVES**

*Tone 8*

Ephesians 4:1-6

Luke 18:18-27

**SUNDAY, December 22 DIVINE LITURGY—SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM—UPSTAIRS 10:30 AM  
26<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; CONCEPTION OF SAINT ANNA; PROPHETESS  
ANNA-MOTHER OF PROPHET SAMUEL; SAINT SOPHRONIOS-ARCHBISHOP  
OF CYPRUS; VENERABLE STEPHEN THE "NEW LIGHT" OF  
CONSTANTINOPLE**

*Tone 1*

Ephesians 5:8-19; Galatians 4:22-31

Luke 17:12-19; Luke 8 16-21

**BULLETIN INSERT FOR 08 DECEMBER 2024  
24<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; LEAVE-TAKING OF THE ENTRY OF  
THE THEOTOKOS; HIEROMARTYR CLEMENT-POPE OF ROME;  
HIEROMARTYR PETER-ARCHBISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA; VENERABLE  
PETER THE SILENT OF GALATA-SYRIA**

**TROPARION—TONE 7**

By Thy Cross, Thou didst destroy death!  
To the thief, Thou didst open Paradise!  
For the Myrrhbearers, Thou didst change weeping into joy.  
And Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God,  
To proclaim that Thou art risen, granting the world great mercy!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever,  
and unto ages of ages. Amen.

**KONTAKION—TONE 7**

The dominion of death can no longer hold men captive,  
For Christ descended, shattering and destroying its powers!  
Hell is bound, while the prophets rejoice and cry:  
The Savior has come to those in faith!  
Enter, you faithful, into the Resurrection!

**PROKEIMENON—TONE 7**

**READER:** The Lord shall give strength to His people! The Lord shall bless  
His people with peace!

**PEOPLE: The Lord shall give strength to His people! The Lord shall  
bless His people with peace!**

**READER:** Offer to the Lord, O you sons of God! Offer young rams to the  
Lord!

**PEOPLE: The Lord shall give strength to His people! The Lord shall  
bless His people with peace!**



**READER:** The Lord shall give strength to His people!

**PEOPLE:** The Lord shall bless His people with peace!

**ALLELUIA VERSES—TONE 7**

It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to Thy name, O Most High!

To declare Thy mercy in the morning, and Thy truth by night!

Embracing a Spirit of Gratitude: A Thanksgiving Message from the Council of Bishops of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA



Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we mark the annual observance of Thanksgiving Day in the United States, we invite each of you to join us in a deep, spiritual reflection on gratitude—a gift from God that is central to our Holy Orthodox Christian faith. Thanksgiving is not merely a moment on the calendar but an essential part of the life in Christ, a time for giving thanks.

The very word "Eucharist" in the Orthodox Church means "Thanksgiving." Each Divine Liturgy is a moment when we, as the faithful, unite in thanksgiving, offering ourselves and all of creation back to the Lord, who has blessed us with life, love, and freedom. Thanksgiving is, therefore, not only a holiday but a holy way of life—a life that calls us to see every blessing as a gift from God and to respond with love, reverence, and gratitude.

As Orthodox Christians in America, we are blessed to live in a nation that treasures freedom: freedom of speech, expression, and religion.

These freedoms enable us to worship God openly, to bear witness to His truth, and to serve one another in Christ's love. On this Thanksgiving Day, let us be mindful of these privileges. Many throughout history and across the world have suffered greatly to secure these liberties, and many are deprived of them today. Our freedom is both a blessing and a responsibility, calling us to use these gifts for the glory of God and the betterment of our society.

We also give thanks for our Holy Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA, which, since its founding in 1918 and even before, has been a steadfast beacon of the Gospel, a spiritual home for our faithful, and a guardian of the rich traditions of our Orthodox Christian faith. Throughout the decades, our Church has grown, strengthened by the sacrifices and faithfulness of those who came before us. We honor the memory of these spiritual forebears, and we take inspiration from their example as we continue their holy work of ministering the Word of God, caring for our communities, and supporting the beloved homeland of Ukraine.

This Thanksgiving, let us come together as families, friends, and communities to share our gratitude with one another. The Apostle Paul reminds us to "give thanks in all circumstances" (1 Thessalonians 5:18), an instruction that speaks to the heart of the Orthodox way of life. Let us express our thankfulness to God, and let us also show our gratitude to those around us—our families, our parish communities, and our neighbors. Let us be grateful for the kindness and love of those who support us, as well as for the opportunity to serve others.

As we gather around our tables this Thanksgiving Day, let us take a moment to remember those who are less fortunate. Let us offer prayers and share what we have with those in need, particularly the suffering, the lonely, and those affected by the tragic events in Ukraine. May our hearts be filled with compassion and our lives with generosity, as we honor Christ's command to love one another.

Together, let us offer a heartfelt prayer of thanksgiving: **"O Lord Almighty, Giver of every good and perfect gift, we thank You for the abundance of blessings You have poured out upon us. Grant us grateful hearts, that we may always recognize Your providence in our lives. Strengthen our love for one another, inspire us to serve those in need, and guide us in the ways of peace. We thank You for our Holy Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA, our country, and for the freedom to worship You. May we live in constant remembrance of Your goodness, as we strive to become true bearers of Your love in this world. To You be all glory, honor, and worship, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen."**

As your hierarchs, we extend our prayers and blessings to each of you, beloved faithful. May this Thanksgiving season be a time of renewed faith, heartfelt gratitude, and joyous fellowship, reflecting the love of our Savior, Jesus Christ. We remain united in thanksgiving and prayer, as one holy family in the Lord.

*With love and gratitude in Christ,  
+Antony, Metropolitan  
+Daniel, Archbishop*



My whole life is a battle  
between me and me -  
between as I am and me as  
God wants me to be.

**St. Nikolaj Velimirovic**

### **Giving Thanksgiving to God**

***Psalm 26:7-That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works. (KJV)***

Every day, throughout the day it is proper and beneficial to thank the Lord God. God's unending blessings exceed the full comprehension of the human mind. The blessings of God are immeasurable and not always visible to the human eye. Attentive ears will experience blessings from the Lord God that fill the heart. Joy arises in the heart due to unexpected blessings appearing from the Lord God.

***Psalm 50:14-Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High: (KJV)***

God's blessings have continued down through the centuries uninterrupted. The human mind can not reach back and record all of God's blessings in time. Blessings for the benefit of humans occur in all parts of the earth near and far. New blessings from God continue to be revealed



and discovered by humans. The capacity to love and appreciate love is a blessing from the Lord God.

***Psalm 69-30-I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving. (KJV)***

God's Church is an immeasurable blessing offering direct experience with God. Believers learn about blessings in Church and offer thanks in the Divine Liturgy. Thanksgiving is an integral and important part of each Divine Liturgy celebrated. All good comes from God and thanking the Lord is always totally appropriate, Grateful believers integrate giving thanks to the Lord God throughout their lives.

***Psalm 95:2-Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. (KJV)***

Thanksgiving Day has come to be known in parts of America as the national Slava. Taking a day in America to give thanks to God is a way to open hearts to God. Open hearts and minds to the Lord God serve to benefit the souls of believers. Grateful believers draw closer to the Lord God when giving heartfelt thanks. Pausing to give heartfelt thanks to God helps to put life in the proper perspective.

***Psalm 100:4-Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. (KJV)***

God never ceases to bless individuals and thanking God should never cease. Thanksgiving Day is a way to pause and look clearly at the Lord's blessings. The Lord's blessings bring joy to the heart, mind and soul of attentive believers. Hunger in the soul is always addressed by the blessings of the Loving Lord God. Thanking God is a way of acknowledging God's goodness, kindness and mercy.

*Holy and All Praised Apostle Philip. St. Gregory Palamas.*

*November 14/27, 2024. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic*

Blessed is the man who ever strives to prepare a pure heart for grace, that when she comes she might find the fragrance of virtues and a sacred place in the soul and reside therein unto the ages of ages. ***Venerable Ephraim the Syrian***, *A Spiritual Psalter or Reflections on God* p.183

***The Twenty Third Sunday after Pentecost*** Luke 8:26-39

*And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee. And when He went forth to land, there met Him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with Thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech Thee, torment me not. (For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man.*

*For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.) And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him. And they besought him that he would not command them to go our into the deep. And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that He would suffer them to enter into them. And He suffered them. Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked. When they that fed them saw what was done, they fled, and went and told it in the city and in the country. Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. They also which saw it told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed. Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought Him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear: and He went up into the ship, and returned back again. Now the man out of whom the devils were departed besought Him that he might be with Him: but Jesus sent him away, saying, Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him. (KJV)*

God's Holy Church is now in the period of the Nativity Fast. God's mercy is present to begin anew in Christ. The Church provides this time to earnestly prepare for celebrating Jesus Christ taking on human flesh.

The Nativity Fast inspires serious believers to focus on the purity of the Mother of God. The Mother of God was chosen among all women of all centuries to give birth to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Believers are challenged to live in purity in Jesus Christ from the time of Holy Baptism until departure from this life. Believers are expected to reject the temptations and the corruption in the world that are perilous to the soul.

The current Gospel proves the power of the Lord Jesus Christ over the devil. The devil seeks to corrupt the human soul. Believers taking the present Gospel seriously will turn to Christ to seek purity in their personal lives.

Repentance has a place throughout life. Believers often unwittingly and unintentionally corrupt their lives during daily living. The Church provides the Nativity Fast and other days of fasting for repentance and purification.

Jesus Christ is ever-present and within reach for believers seeking to live healthily. During the Nativity Fast, serious believers consciously act on the desire to begin anew in Christ.

The Feast of the Nativity of Jesus Christ is worthy of great preparation. The Son of God taking on human flesh radically changed the world forever. The Church celebrates Jesus Christ taking on human flesh in the present each year.

The Church offers guidance and nourishment for humans from conception until departure from this life. The Church provides understanding of human life and the way to life eternal.

Nourishment and guidance exist in the Church for believers throughout life. The Lord Jesus Christ is alive and present in the Holy Mysteries of the Church. Unsurpassed and unending joy in Christ are always available.

The Nativity Fast is a time of discovery. Believers seeking to learn more about Jesus Christ and to grow in Christ consciously approach the Nativity Fast with seriousness and deliberate effort.

The Nativity Fast is an investment in the Kingdom of God. The effort invested in adhering to the Nativity Fast will be fully realized in the experience of the Feast of Christ's Nativity.

The Christ Child born to the Virgin Mary links heaven and earth. Jesus Christ's birth links the human with the eternal. The Christ Child is Perfect God and Perfect Human. Believers come to the Church to learn about and appreciate Jesus' birth.

From Baptism until departure from this life, believers are to grow in understanding and appreciation of Jesus taking on human flesh. The Nativity Fast is a time for believers to reject and crucify desires that are perilous to the soul.

Worldly undertakings seek to overshadow and draw believers away from the way of Jesus Christ. Commercialism and materialism entice humans to pursue a way of life having nothing to do with Jesus Christ.

Discipline, vigilance, and repentance are necessary throughout life to remain faithful and united with Jesus Christ. Joy in Jesus Christ is possible when resolute faith exists and continues.

The Gospel strengthens and educates attentive believers. Today's Gospel assures believers of Jesus Christ's power over devils that impair human life. Believers need never fear in life and always have reason to hope in Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is always present to allay anxieties arising in life over the threat of devils. Now is the time during the Nativity Fast to choose the life of purity and faithfulness in Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ's Nativity is associated with unsurpassable joy in the world. Now is the time to commit to fully honoring the Nativity Fast. Today

turn to Jesus Christ fully and reject any devils impairing personally living in Christ.

*The Twenty Third Sunday after Pentecost. Holy Martyr Plato, Holy Martyr Romanus and Child Barulas. November 18/December 1, 2024. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic*

**Thus, make it a habit to rejoice when an opportunity for obedience offers. *Tito Colliander, Way of the Ascetics p.44***

**We must be extremely careful. A hurtful word should never come out of our mouth. May each one of you bite your tongue so as not to grieve one another. There will be no salvation if we do not keep our lips sealed. *Gerondissa Makrina (Vassopoulou), Words of the Heart p.411***

**Man, in his present state, is wholly permeated with pride, wickedness, unbelief, doubt, incredulity, disobedience, heedlessness, malice, fornication, envy, covetousness, avarice, slothfulness, sometimes cowardice, despondency, theft, falsehood, and blasphemy. What a great labour lies before every Christian man to cleanse himself from all the impurity and corruption of the passions! *Righteous John, Wonderworker of Kronstadt, My Life in Christ p.269***



**WANT TO KEEP "CHRIST"  
IN CHRISTMAS?**

**FEED THE HUNGRY, COMFORT THE  
AFFLICTED, LOVE THE OUTCAST, FORGIVE  
THE WRONGDOER, INSPIRE THE HOPELESS**

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