

**St. Nikolai Orthodox Mission of Alliance, as part of Orthodox Campus Fellowship at Mount Union University, Dewald Chapel. Divine Liturgy, 9:00 am.**

**Very Reverend Father Joseph Cervo, Archpriest (AOCANA-retired)**

**Rev. Protodeacon James Gresh, Mission Administrator (Bulgarian Diocese OCA)**

**September 8, 2013: 11<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**

**Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary**

**Sunday before the Elevation of the Cross**



**IMPORTANT MESSAGE:**

Today we are returning to the Dewald Chapel at the University of Mount Union. Because a campus ministry service is scheduled every Sunday at 11 am, we have use of the chapel from 8:30 to 10:30 am. Therefore it is necessary that we begin Divine Liturgy promptly at 9 am. On those occasions when there are added liturgical events and services, we will make adjustments on the front end of our service time schedule.

Next Sunday, we will have the liturgical observance for the Elevation of the Holy Cross (which Great Feast is Saturday, September 14, a strict fast day) hence we will have the procession with the Holy Cross on Sunday at 8:50 am.

**Tone 2 Troparion (Resurrection)**

When You descended to death, O Life Immortal,

You destroyed hell with the splendor of Your Godhead.

And when from the depths You raised the dead, all the powers of heaven cried out:// "O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to You!"

**Tone 4 Troparion (Nativity of the Theotokos)**

Your nativity, O Virgin, has proclaimed joy to the whole universe!

The Sun of righteousness, Christ our God, has shone from you, O Theotokos.

By annulling the curse, He bestowed a blessing.

**Tone 4 Troparion (St. Nikolai)**

In truth you were revealed to your flock as a rule of faith, an image of humility and a teacher of abstinence; your humility exalted you; your poverty enriched you. Hierarch Father Nikolai, entreat Christ our God that our souls may be saved!

**Tone 2 Kontakion (Resurrection)**

Hell became afraid, O almighty Savior,

seeing the miracle of Your Resurrection from the tomb!

The dead arose! Creation, with Adam, beheld this and rejoiced with You, //  
and the world, my Savior, praises You forever.

**Tone 4 Kontakion (Nativity of the Theotokos)**

By your nativity, most pure Virgin, Joachim and Anna are freed from barrenness,  
Adam and Eve -- from the corruption of death.

And we, your people, freed from the guilt of sin, celebrate and sing to you://  
"The barren woman gives birth to the Theotokos, the nourisher of our Life."

**Tone 6 Prokeimenon**

O Lord, save Your people, and bless Your inheritance!  
*v: To You, O Lord, will I call. O my God, be not silent to me!*

**Tone 3 Prokeimenon** (Song of the Theotokos)

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

**Epistles:** Galatians 6:11-18 (*Sunday before Cross*); Philippians 2:5-11 (*Theotokos*)

**Tone 1** Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

*v: I have exalted one chosen out of My people.*

*v: For My hand shall defend him and My arm shall strengthen him.*

**Tone 8** *v: Hear, O daughter, and see, and incline your ear!*

**Gospels:** John 3:13-17 (*Sunday before Cross*); Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28 (*Theotokos*)

(Instead of "It is truly meet ...," we sing in Tone 8:)

Magnify, O my soul, the most glorious birth of the Mother of God!

Virginity is foreign to mothers; childbearing is strange for virgins.

But in you, O Theotokos, both were accomplished./

Therefore all we nations of the earth unceasingly magnify you.

**Communion Hymns**

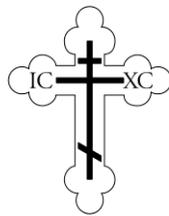
Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest!

I will receive the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

**ADDED PETITION FOR THE AUGMENTED LITANY**

Again we pray for those who are being persecuted for their faith, especially the Christian faithful across the Middle East, that the Lord God will send down upon them every spiritual weapon to endure their tribulations; and that He will grant His Peace which passes all understanding upon the region, and throughout the whole world, as a foretaste of His heavenly Kingdom



**The Nativity of our Most Holy Lady the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary:** The Most Holy Virgin Mary was born at a time when people had reached such a degree of moral decay that it seemed altogether impossible to restore them. People often said that God must come into the world to restore faith and not permit the ruin of mankind.

The Son of God chose to take on human nature for the salvation of mankind, and chose as His Mother the All-Pure Virgin Mary, who alone was worthy to give birth to the Source of purity and holiness.

The Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary is celebrated by the Church, September 8, as a day of universal joy. Within the context of the Old and the New Testaments, the Most Blessed Virgin Mary was born on this radiant day, having been chosen before the ages by Divine Providence to bring about the Mystery of the Incarnation of the Word of God. She is revealed as the Mother of the Savior of the World, Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Most Holy Virgin Mary was born in the small city of Galilee, Nazareth. Her parents were Righteous Joachim of the tribe of the Prophet-King David, and Anna from the tribe of the First Priest Aaron. The couple was without child, since St Anna was infertile.

Having reached old age, Joachim and Anna did not lose hope in God's mercy. They had strong faith that for God everything is possible, and that He would be able to overcome the barrenness of Anna even in her old age, as He had once overcome the barrenness of Sarah, spouse of the Patriarch Abraham. Saints Joachim and Anna vowed to dedicate the child which the Lord might give them, to the service of God in the Temple.

Childlessness was considered among the Hebrew nation as a Divine punishment for sin, and therefore the Righteous Joachim and Anna had to endure abuse from their own countrymen. On one of the feast days at the Temple in Jerusalem the elderly Joachim brought his sacrifice to offer to God, but the High Priest would not accept it, considering him to be unworthy since he was childless.

St Joachim in deep grief went into the wilderness, and there he prayed with tears to the Lord for a child. St Anna wept bitterly when she learned what had happened at the Jerusalem Temple. Never once did she complain against the Lord, but rather she prayed to ask God's mercy on her family.

The Lord fulfilled her petitions when the pious couple had attained to extreme old age and prepared themselves by virtuous life for an inspirational calling: to be the parents of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, the future Mother of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Archangel Gabriel brought Joachim and Anna the joyous message that their prayers were heard by God, and of them would be born a most blessed daughter Mary, through whom would come the Salvation of all the World.

The Most Holy Virgin Mary surpassed in purity and virtue not only all mankind, but also the angels. She was manifest as the living Temple of God, so the Church sings in its festal hymns: "the East Gate... bringing Christ into the world for the salvation of our souls" (2nd Stikhera on "Lord, I Have Cried", Tone 6).

The Nativity of the Theotokos marks the change of the times when the great and comforting promises of God for the salvation of the human race from slavery to the devil are about to be fulfilled. This event has brought to earth the grace of the Kingdom of God, a Kingdom of Truth, piety, virtue and everlasting life. The Theotokos is revealed to all of us by grace as a merciful intercessor and Mother, to whom with devotion we have recourse, as children to our Mother.

**Icon of St. Nikolai of Zica:** The work on our mission patron saint handwritten icon, St. Nikolai, has begun. The Icon size has increased in conjunction with the scope of its depiction of prominent scenes of St. Nikolai's life; it will also house his holy "relics." No Icon of St. Nikolai exists that will encompass the important points of remembrance of his holy ministry. We are humbly accepting donations towards the icon which has now been finalized to cost \$1800. If you would like to make a contribution, please make your check payable to "St. Nikolai Orthodox Mission of Alliance;" make a notation that it is for the Icon of St. Nikolai.

**St. Nikolai Orthodox Mission of Alliance Financial Policy:**

1. According to civil law, "Restricted donations" must be used only for the purpose for which they are given. If such purpose no longer exists, donations must be returned to the respective donors at which time the donors may designate, if they wish, that their gift be used for another purpose.
2. St. Nikolai Mission will maintain strict confidentiality of all donor information and records. Only the clergy and financial officers will be knowledgeable of individual donation records.
3. A yearly financial statement will be disseminated to each donor.

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