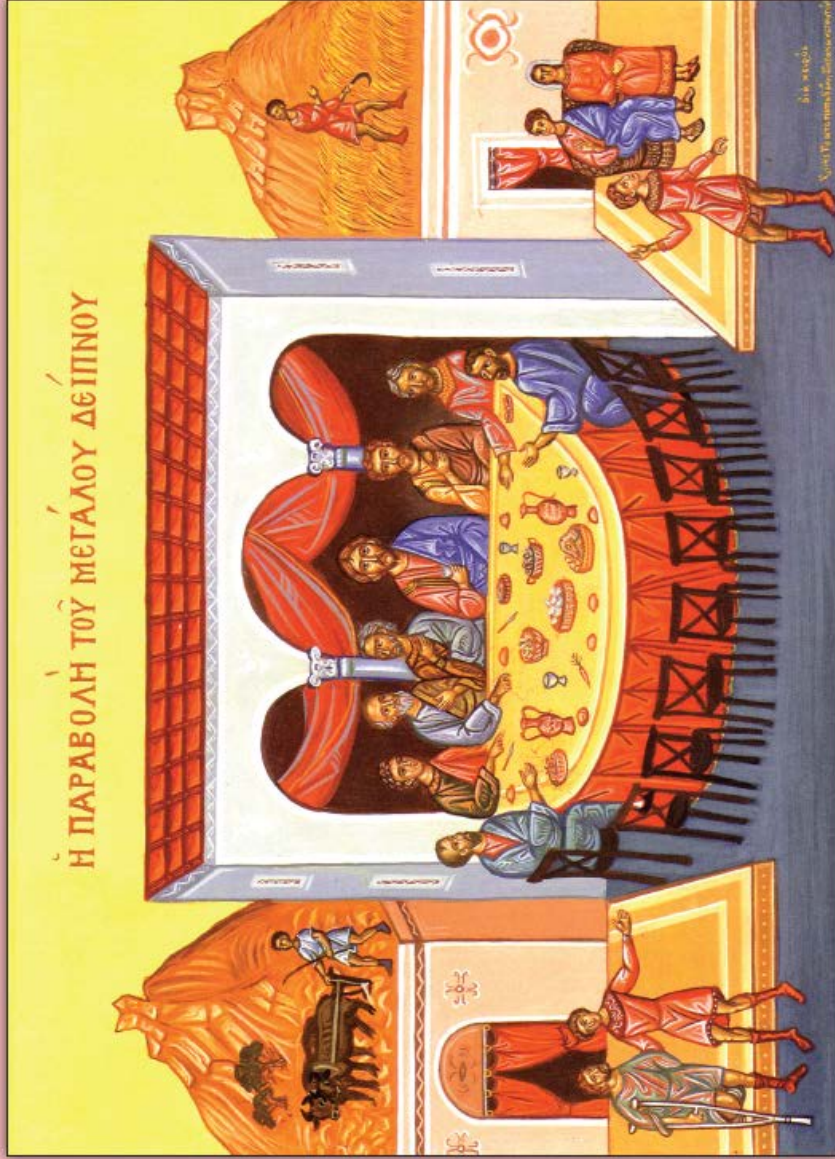


SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS

Ἡ ΠΑΡΑΒΟΛΗ ΤΟΥ ΜΕΤΑΛΛΟΥ ΔΕΙΠΝΟΥ



Icon of the Parable of the Great Feast

St. Mary Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church

A Parish of the Self-Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese (antiochian.org) ... and ...
The Diocese of Charleston, Oakland & The Mid-Atlantic (antiochian.org/east)
(“...the Disciples were called Christians first in Antioch!” [Acts 11:26](#))



111 Alberta Avenue // Johnstown, PA 15905-3002
Website: stmaryaocc.org // E-Mail: stmaryaocc@outlook.com

Most Rev. Metropolitan SABA – Archbishop & Primate
Right Rev. Bishop THOMAS – Auxiliary Bishop
Very Rev. Fr. Donald E. Shadid, M.Div. & D.Min. – Archpriest & Pastor
Sub-Deacon Timothy (Cade) Scott, MAT
Edward Makdad, Jr. – Parish Council Chairperson

“Go to Church ... Say Your Prayers ... Don’t Forget God!” (+Fr. Tom Hopko’s Mom)

Fr. Don – Cell: 814-242-0084 – abeenad1@gmail.com – Office: 814-255-2148

+ SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS (ANCESTORS) OF CHRIST +

Sunday, December 17, 2023

Glory be to Jesus Christ! Glory be to Him Forever!

Today is “Order of St. Ignatius Sunday!”

Holy Prophet DANIEL & THE THREE HOLY YOUTHS, ANANIAS, AZARIAS & MISHAEL /
DIONYSIOS of Zakynthos, The Wonderworker

*We welcome all of you, our Faithful and our Visitors, to St. Mary Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church!
It is a pleasure to have you with us as we glorify and praise the Name of our God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Please sing along with our Choir during the Liturgy.*

Please note, as has been the practice of the Church since the Feast of Pentecost, that the Sacrament of Holy Communion can only be given to Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves by prayer, fasting, regular Confession (at least twice per year ... 7 Yrs. old & up), who attend Liturgy regularly & on time (at least 3 times a month) ... and ... are at peace with all people.

When receiving Holy Communion, please fold your arms over your chest, open your mouth wide, tip your head back slightly, and allow the priest to place the elements in your mouth.

For our non-Orthodox brethren, we welcome you to sing and pray with us, venerate the Cross, and receive the Blessed Holy Bread at the end of the Divine Liturgy. Please join us again soon. May God Bless You Always!

HOLY OBLATION: Offered by: The Faithful of our St. Mary Parish Family for the health & safety of *all within Palestine, Israel, Ukraine & Russia*; and in beloved memory of those who have perished in the conflicts which have enveloped these nations.

PASCHAL CANDLES: Offered in beloved memory of: son, brother & uncle, *Eddie Martin (+16 Yrs.)* by Huda Martin & Family ... and ... *Jesse George* by his mom, Christine Asfar.

PROSKAMEDIA CANDLE: Offered: in beloved memory of father, *William ("Speedo" – +59 Yrs.)* & mother, *Barbara (+4 Yrs.)* and for all within the *Salem & Galayda Families who have "Fallen-Asleep in the Lord;"* and for the health of all within the *Salem & Galayda Families* by Christine Salem.

SEVEN-BRANCHED CANDLE: Offered: for the health of niece, *Lexi*, & sister, *Susan*, as they celebrate their Birthdays; and in beloved memory of grandmother, *Domnicki* & great-grandmother, *Maria*, by Jay & Nitsa McClatchey.

PRAYERS OF LITURGICAL REMEMBRANCE

Offered for the health of: *Olga Hodge* by Kathie Povich & our parishioners who are members of The Order of St. Ignatius (*Larry Bertino, Lisa Catanese, Renee D'Ettore, William & Lindsay (Heider) Fennell, Albert Ghantous, Elaine Heider, Norman Joseph, Dr. Adib Khouzami, Ed Makdad, Jr., Sandy Milkie, Christine Salem, Fr. Don, Khouria Janet, Fr. Christopher & Dr. Stephen Shadid and Loretta Shahade*) by our St. Mary Parish ... **and** ...

Offered in beloved memory of: our parishioners who belonged to The Order of St. Ignatius and have "Fallen-Asleep in the Lord" by our St. Mary Parish.

TRISAGION PRAYERS OF MERCY (Naha): Offered in beloved memory of: *grandmother, Linda Cramer, aunt, Lois Brant, friend, Donald Garber, Jr. & Helen Jaber* by Preston Hauger. ***May Their Memory Be Ever Eternal ... Christ is Risen!***

***For The Living – "God Grant Them Many Years!"...and...
For The Departed – "May Their Memory Be Ever Eternal!"***

+++++

- VARIATIONS & NOTES ON THE LITURGY -

THIRD ANTIPHON: (*Troparion During The Little Entrance – Tone Three*)
See "Troparion of The Resurrection" Below.

AFTER THE LITTLE ENTRANCE:

TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION: (*Tone Three*)

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, for the Lord hath done a mighty act with His own arm. He hath trampled down death by death and became

the first-born from the dead. He hath delivered us from the depths of Hades, granting the world the Great Mercy.

TROPARION OF THE FOREFATHERS: *(Tone Two)*

Thou hast justified by faith the ancient Forefathers, and through them Thou hast gone before and betrothed unto Thyself the Church of the Gentiles. Let the saints, therefore, take pride in glory; for from their seed sprouted forth a noble fruit, and it was she who gave birth to Thee without seed. Wherefore, by their pleadings, O Christ God, save our souls.

TROPARION OF THE DORMITION: *(Patron Feast Day - Tone One)*

In thy birth-giving, O Theotokos, thou didst keep and preserve virginity; and in thy falling-asleep thou hast not forsaken the world for thou wast translated into life, being the Mother of Life. Wherefore, by thine intercessions, deliver our souls from death.

KONTAKION OF PREPARATION FOR CHRIST'S NATIVITY: *(Tone Three)*

On this day the Virgin cometh to the cave to give birth to God the Word ineffably, Who was before all the ages. Dance for joy, O earth, on hearing the gladsome tidings; with the Angels and the shepherds now glorify Him Who is willing to be gazed on as a young Child Who before the ages is God.

EPISTLE: Colossians 3:4-11 *(The Holy Forefathers)*

HOLY GOSPEL: Luke 14:16-24 *(The Holy Forefathers)*

Concerning the “Kiss of Peace,” prior to the Nicene Creed, we encourage you to greet those around you with a bow of the head and your hands across your chest, saying: **“Christ is in Our Midst!”**...the response being: ***He is and Always Shall Be!*** In this way, we express: **(1)** our Joy that God has acted to restore our Communion with Him ... **and ... (2)** our Hope in the Resurrection from the Dead that is offered to us by our Lord’s own “trampling down death by death!” ***God is With Us (“Emmanuel”)*!**

+++++

+++ CONFESSION SCHEDULE +++
By Appointment ... Please Call or Text Fr. Don @ 814-242-0084.
Due to Fr.’s Commitment to Matins, Confession Will Not Be Offered On Sun. Mornings.

THOSE IN SPECIAL NEED OF OUR PRAYERS: UPMC PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL (Pittsburgh): Anna Marie (Abraham) Rovanseck; AMBER HILLS @ CAMBRIA CARE CENTER (Ebensburg, PA): Mary Ann Unis-Asfar (#606); LAURELVIEW VILLAGE: George Zdravecky (Health Care #302) & Rhoda (Nasser) Zdravecky (Vista – 913); LAURELWOOD CARE CENTER: Suzanne George (#37-W) & George Haidar (#49); (LUTHERAN HOME (Johnstown): Elaine Heider (#34); WESTMONT WOODS – QUALITY LIFE SERVICES (Westmont): Emma (Nasser) Audey (#115-W) ... and ... IN TREATMENT, RECOVERING AND / OR “SHUT-IN AT HOME”: Becky Azar;

Larry Bertino; Renee D'Ettorre; Michael & Patty Devich; Joanne George; John & Dalal George; Olga Hodge; Denise Khorey-Harriman; Matthew Makdad; Huda Martin; George Milkie; Maryanne Milkie and Sara Shahade. **May God Be With All of Them & All of Those Who Are Ill and/or in Need!**

STEWARDSHIP OFFERINGS TO ST. MARY PARISH

Please note that for your Stewardship Offerings to be on your Stewardship Statements for the calendar year of 2023, we must receive them by next Sunday, December 24, 2023. If there are any questions, please contact Eddie Makdad (Council Chair) or Fr. Don. **Thank You and God Bless You & Your Loved Ones!**

CHRISTMAS CONCERT TONIGHT!

You are invited to a Christmas Chorale Concert
Westmont Presbyterian Church ... 601 Luzerne Street
Sunday, December 17, 2023 ... 7:30 PM ... Free Admission!

101 THINGS GOD CAN'T DO

What You Must Know to Win ... by Maisie Sparks (12/17)

22. God can't be poor.

"O Lord, Your works shall be magnified greatly;

You made all things in wisdom; the earth was filled with Your creation." (PSALM 103:24)

Parishioner Envelopes & Calendars - 2024:

Please stop in the Social Hall for refreshments and/or to pick up your 2024 Parishioner Envelopes & Calendar.

Poinsettias for the Church - If you did not have a chance to purchase a poinsettia(s) "for the health" or "in memory of" a loved one, you may email Anne at stmaryaocc@outlook.com or call the office and leave a detailed message, 814-255-2148 on Monday, December 18.

Please Note: See the upcoming Liturgical Schedule included in the insert in this bulletin.



Epistle

(For the Holy Forefathers)

*Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our Fathers.
For Thou art just in all that Thou hast done for us.*

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Colossians. (3:4-11)

Brethren, when Christ, Who is our life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. In these you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its Creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.

Gospel

(For the Holy Forefathers)

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke. (14:16-24)

The Lord spoke this parable: "A man once gave a great banquet, and invited many; and at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for all is now ready.' But, one by one, they all began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So the servant came and reported this to his master. Then the householder in anger said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame.' And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.' And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.' For many are called, but few are chosen."

May God Be With You!

Saint of the Day – December 17, 2023

THE HOLY PROPHET DANIEL AND THE THREE CHILDREN: ANANIAS, AZARIAS, AND MISAEAL

All four were of the royal tribe of Judah. When Nebuchadnezzar destroyed and plundered Jerusalem, Daniel, as a boy, was carried away into slavery together with the Jewish King Jehoiachim and countless other Israelites. An account of his life, sufferings and prophecies can be found in detail in his book. Completely devoted to God, St. Daniel from his early youth received from God the gift of great discernment. His fame among the Jews in Babylon began when he denounced two lecherous and unrighteous elders, Jewish judges, and saved the chaste Susanna from an unjust death. But his fame among the Babylonians began from the day he deciphered and interpreted the dream of King Nebuchadnezzar. For this, the king made him a prince at his court. When the king made a golden idol on the Plain of Dura, the Three Children refused to worship it, and for this they were cast into a fiery furnace. But an angel of God appeared in the furnace and cooled the fire so that the children walked around the furnace unharmed by the fire, singing: *Blessed art Thou, Lord God of our fathers* (Daniel 3:26). The king saw this miracle and was amazed. He then brought the children out of the furnace and bestowed upon them great honors.

In the time of King Belshazzar, when the king was eating and drinking with his guests at a banquet from consecrated vessels taken from the Temple in Jerusalem, an invisible hand wrote three words on the wall: *Mene, Tekel, Upharsin* (Daniel 5:25-28). No one was able to interpret these words except Daniel. That night, King Belshazzar was killed. Daniel was twice thrown into the lions' den because of his faith in the One, Living God, and both times the Lord saved him and he remained alive. Daniel beheld God on a throne with the heavenly hosts; saw angels; discerned the future of certain people, of kingdoms, and of the whole human race; and prophesied the time of the coming of the Savior on earth. According to St. Cyril of Alexandria, Daniel and the three children lived to old age in Babylon and were beheaded for the true Faith. When they beheaded Ananias, Azarias stretched out his cloak and caught his head; following this, Misael caught Azarias's head and Daniel caught Misael's head. An angel of the God translated their bodies to Judea, to Mount Gebal, and placed them under a rock. According to tradition, these four God-pleasers arose at the time of the death of the Lord Christ, appeared to many and again fell asleep. Daniel is numbered among the four great prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel). He lived and prophesied five hundred years before Christ.

To God be the Glory and Praise Always!

THIS WEEK'S EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

+ Wednesday, December 20 – EVENING PRAYERS – 6 PM ... followed by Potluck Fellowship!

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE FOR THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

+ Friday, December 22 – GREAT (ROYAL) HOURS FOR THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST – 9 AM.

+ Saturday, December 23 – GREAT VESPERS FOR SUNDAY OF THE GENEALOGY OF JESUS CHRIST – 5 PM.

+ Sunday, December 24 – SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST (SUNDAY OF THE GENEALOGY), WHICH FALLS ON THE PARAMON (EVE) OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST – ORTHROS (Early Morning Prayers) @ 8:30 AM & DIVINE LITURGY @ 9:30 AM ... Followed by Agape Fellowship ...

AND ...

– FESTAL ORTHROS (Early Morning Prayers) @ 6:45 PM & DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. BASIL THE GREAT FOR THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST @ 8 PM.

+ Monday, December 25 – FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD, GOD & SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST – “CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!”

+ Saturday, December 30 – NO GREAT VESPERS.

+ Sunday, December 31 – SUNDAY BEFORE THE THEOPHANY OF CHRIST, WHICH FALLS ON THE APODOSIS (LEAVE-TAKING) OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST – ORTHROS (Early Morning Prayers) @ 8:30 AM & DIVINE LITURGY @ 9:30 AM ... Followed By Agape Fellowship ... HAPPY NEW YEAR! ... May our Lord Bless all within our St. Mary Parish Family with Health, Joy, and peace ([John 14:27](#)) during the New Year of 2024!

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE FOR THE FEAST OF THE THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

+ Friday, January 05 – GREAT (ROYAL) HOURS FOR THE FEAST OF THE THEOPHANY (EPIPHANY) OF OUR LORD – 9 AM ...

AND ...

– FESTAL ORTHROS (Early Morning Prayers) @ 5:45 PM & FESTAL DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM and THE GREAT BLESSING OF THE WATERS FOR THE THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST @ 7 PM.

+ Saturday, January 06 – THE FEAST OF THE DIVINE EPIPHANY / THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD, GOD & SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST!

+ Sunday, January 07 – GREAT VESPERS – 5 PM ... and ...

“OLD CALENDAR” CELEBRATION OF THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD, GOD & SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST! We pray that all of our brothers & sisters-in-Christ who observe the “Old Calendar” cycle of Fasts & Feasts will enjoy a Most Blessed, Joyous & Peaceful (John 14:27) Feast of The Nativity ... we wish them a “Merry Christmas” and greet them with “Christ is Born! Glorify Him!”

May God bless you with Peace, Joy, & Love!

Help Beautify The Church for Christmas

St. Mary Orthodox Christian Church Christmas Flower Project



For the Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

Purchase a Christmas Poinsettia
"for the Health of" or "in Memory of"
a loved one to help beautify the Church.

(Flowers may be taken home with you following the Divine Liturgy
for the Nativity or left to beautify the Church – the choice is yours.)

Deadline for orders is December 17, 2023

Checks should be made payable to "St. Mary Church" and forwarded to:

St. Mary AOCC

111 Alberta Avenue

Johnstown, PA 15905-3002

Detach and forward with proper payment.

I, _____, would like to sponsor _____ Red and/or
_____ White

Poinsettia(s) are \$12.00 each (Only one petition per plant, please)

Amount Enclosed = \$ _____

My Flower is offered for the Health of

My Flower is offered in Memory of
