

St. Maximus the Confessor Orthodox Mission, Denton

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Priest Justin Frederick

Bulletin for Sunday, December 25th, 2011

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

Schedule of Services

December 25th 28th Sunday Nativity of Our Lord in the Flesh

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

December 27th Tuesday

7:00 a.m. Matins, Confession

December 28th Wednesday

7:00 a.m. Matins, Confession

5:00 p.m. Vespers

6:00 p.m. Nativity Fellowship at the Rectory

December 30th Friday

7:00 a.m. Matins, Confession

December 31st Saturday

5:00 p.m. Vigil, Confession

January 1st 29th Sunday Circumcision of Lord & St. Basil

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

Spiritual freedom is release from the passions; without Christ's mercy you cannot attain it.

The promised land is the kingdom of heaven whose ambassadors are dispassion and spiritual knowledge.

The Egypt of the spirit is the darkness of the passions; no one goes down to Egypt unless he is overtaken by famine.

If you make a habit of listening to spiritual teaching, your intellect will escape from impure thoughts.

God alone is good and wise by nature; but if you exert yourself, your intellect also becomes good and wise through participation.

Control your stomach, sleep, anger, and tongue, and you will not 'dash your foot against a stone.' (Ps 90:12)

Strive to love every man equally, and you will simultaneously expel all the passions.

The contemplation of sensible things is shared by the intellect and the senses; but the knowledge of intelligible realities pertains to the intellect alone.

St. Thalassios the Libyan, 400 Chapters on Love, Self-Control & Life, 2.33-40

Announcements for December 25th

To Our Visitors: Welcome! Please join us after the service for coffee and conversation. If you would, fill out a visitor's card for us and leave it in the basket on the table by the door.

To All: Please be aware that Holy Communion is open only to Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves for worthy participation in the Mystery through prayer, fasting, and a recent confession to a priest (within the last month or so). We should be modestly dressed (so as not to distract others) and present to hear "Blessed is the Kingdom" at the beginning of the Liturgy (in *unusual* circumstances no later than the Gospel reading), and not leave until the dismissal at the end.

Nativity Greeting: From now through the Leavetaking (Dec 30), we customarily greet one another with the words "Christ is born!" and respond "Glorify Him!" In Russian/Slavonic, we say: "Khristos Rozhdayetsya!" "Slavtye yego!" (or yevo)

No Church School today.

The Special Offering today is for our choir director.

No Classes this Week

Nativity Leftover Meal: Instead of Basics Class this fast-free week, we'll gather at the rectory down the street (2127 West Oak) after an early 5:00 p.m. Vespers for festal fellowship and a parish meal of leftovers and whatever else you'd like to bring to augment what the Fredericks provide.

Jesus Prayer: When you enter the church before a service, venerate the icons, place your candles, and find a place either to sit or stand, and begin to pray the Jesus Prayer silently until the service begins. Please keep conversations in the narthex and anywhere else but the nave. Thank you!

Ministry to Shut-ins: We currently have two shut-ins who would welcome visits from parishioners. To visit Nina Johnston at 5892 Mills Road in Denton, call her son Richard to set up a visit at (972) 900-0201. Sherrie Joanna Hall, a long-time parishioner at St. Barbara's in Fort Worth who now lives in Denton, may be reached at (817) 925-4183.

Tithes, Offerings & Attendance: Bringing our tithes and offerings to the temple of God is part of our worship of God, which also supports our efforts to proclaim the fullness of the Gospel of Christ in Denton through the establishment of a permanent Orthodox parish and new missions in Denton County and north Texas. Checks should be made out to St. Maximus Orthodox Church

and placed in the basket on the candle table, where there is also a box for alms (those in need).

Last week we gave \$2299.39; this month we have given \$6543.21; our monthly budget is \$8179 (\$2045 per week). In addition: Building Renovation (soda jar) \$58, Candles \$65, Alaska Seminarian \$22, Hall Expansion (food jar) \$11.10, church building fund \$71. May God bless your faithful giving! Attendance: Vigil 33, Liturgy 70.

Hall Expansion Fund: A Total of \$52,123.27 has been raised so far of the estimated \$62,000 it will cost. All **Coffee Hour Donations** go to support this.

Expansion Update: We have approval from the city for our expansion. We need to get the construction documents stamped by the architect, who has two projects waiting ahead of us, and then we can get the building permit and start building.

Please Pray for our Catechumens: David Eaton who is preparing for Holy Illumination; Sean Chaney, Caleb Rehmet, Elizabeth Dakak, and Hunter Bellan; and for our inquirers Shane and Ashley Gibson and Philip Smith who will be received as catechumens next week, and for Joel and Mindy Brown and their children. Please pray for our **shut-ins** Nina Johnston and Sherrie Joanna Hall, and for the novice Svetlana.

From Saint Maximus

There are four principal ways in which God abandons us. The first is the way of the divine dispensation, so that through our apparent abandonment others who are abandoned may be saved. Our Lord is an example of this (cf. Matt. 27:46). The second is the way of trial and testing, as in the case of Job and Joseph; for it made Job a pillar of courage and Joseph a pillar of self-restraint (cf. Gen. 39:8). The third is the way of fatherly correction, as in the case of St Paul, so that by being humble he might preserve the superabundance of grace (cf. 2 Cor. 12:7). The fourth is the way of rejection, as in the case of the Jews, so that by being punished they might be brought to repentance. These are all ways of salvation, full of divine blessing and wisdom.

Only those who scrupulously keep the commandments, and are true initiates into divine judgments, do not abandon their friends when God permits these friends to be put to the test. Those who scorn the commandments and who are ignorant about divine judgments rejoice with their friend in the times of his prosperity; but when in times of trial he suffers hardships, they abandon him and sometimes even side with those who attack him.

400 Chapters on Love, 4.96-97

Troparia and Kontakia for December 25th



Nativity, Troparion, tone 4

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God / hath shone upon 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!

Nativity, Kontakion, tone 3 (By St. Romanos the Melode)

Today the Virgin giveth birth to the Transcendent One, / and the earth offereth a cave to the Unapproachable One! / Angels with Shepherds glorify Him! / The wise men journey with the star: // since for our sake the eternal God was born as a little child!

