

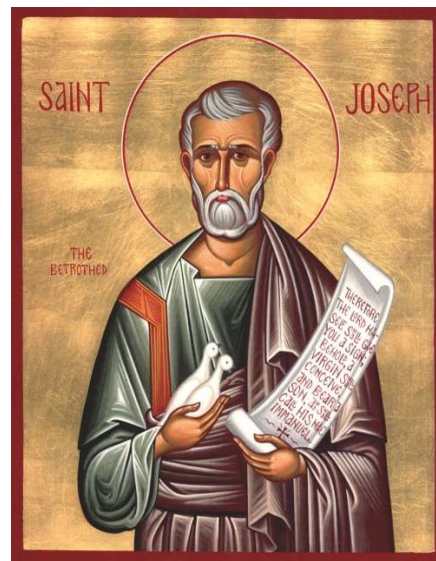
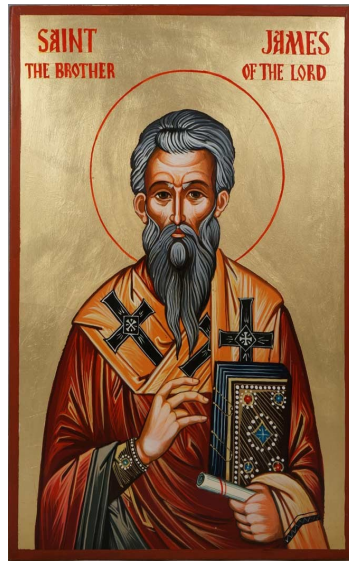
*From the Divine Office for the Sunday after the Nativity*

*O Christ our God, Your Kingdom is eternal and Your Dominion from generation to generation. You have become incarnate of the Holy Spirit, being made man through the ever-virgin Mary. Your coming, O Christ, has shed upon us a great Light, O You Light of Light and Radiance of the Father! You have illumined the whole creation. Wherefore, everything that has breath sings to You a hymn of praise, O Image of the Father's glory, eternal God, existing before all ages, who shone forth from the Virgin! O Lord, glory to You! (Vespers)*

*Let us praise James, the noble brother of the Lord; with him, let us extol David, the ancestor of God, and the venerable Joseph, the spouse of the Theotokos. They served the holy Nativity of Christ in a fitting way in the city of Bethlehem, singing praises with the angels, the Magi and the shepherds, for Christ is our God and our Lord. (Orthros)*

*From on high our Savior came, the rising Sun who shone from the East to visit us in His mercy, who sat in darkness and gloom. But now we see the Light of Truth for the Lord Jesus is born of the Pure Virgin Mother. (Orthros)*

**SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY  
DECEMBER 26, 2021**





**Our Lady of Perpetual Help Melkite Catholic Church**  
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Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM

### Antiphon of the Nativity

1. The Lord has said to my Lord: Sit at my right until I make of Your enemies a footstool.

**O Son of God, who were born of the Virgin, save us who sing to You, Alleluia!**

2. The Lord shall send You from Zion a scepter of power: be the master in the midst of Your enemies.

**Khallisna YabnAllah, ya man wulida min al Batul, nahnulmuraneemeena Laka. Haleloueya.**

3. With You was the beginning, on the day of Your might in the splendor of the holy ones.

**O Son of God, who were born of the Virgin, save us who sing to You, Alleluia!**

### Entrance Hymn

**Priest:** Before the Morning Star I have begotten You. The Lord has sworn and will not repent: You are a Priest forever according to the Order of Melchizedek

**People:** O Son of God, who were born of the Virgin, save us who sing to You, Alleluia!

### Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 6) pg. 41

The angelic powers were around Your tomb, and the guards became as dead, and Mary stood at the tomb, seeking Your spotless body; Then You despoiled Hades without being tried by it, and You met the Virgin O Bestower of life. O Lord, who rose from the dead, glory to You!

### Troparion of the Nativity (Tone 4)

Your Nativity, O Christ our God, has shed the light of knowledge upon the world. Through it, those who had been star-worshippers learned through a star to worship You, O Sun of Justice, and to recognize in You the One who rises and who comes from on high. O Lord glory to You!

### Troparion of St. Joseph (Tone 2)

O Joseph, proclaim to David, the ancestor of Christ our God, the great miracles you have witnessed: you have seen the Virgin with child, given praise with the shepherds, adored with the wise men, and an angel of the Lord has appeared to you. Intercede with Christ God that He may save our Souls

### Kondakion of the Nativity (Tone 3)

Today the Virgin gives birth to the Transcendent in Essence, and the earth presents a cave to the Inaccessible. The angels with the shepherds sing His glory, and the Wise Men with the Star travel on their way, for to us is born a New Child, who is God from all eternity.

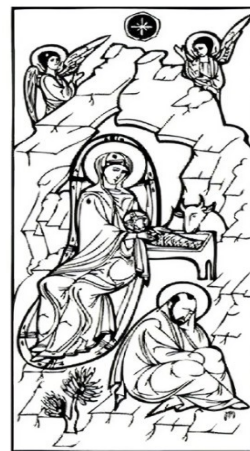
The first centuries also saw the rise of teachings that denied:

- The value of the Old Testament (Marcionism); -
- The value of marriage (Montanism);
- The true brokenness of our human nature (Pelagianism).
- The value of icons (iconoclasm);
- The nineteenth and twentieth centuries saw the rise of groups with their own alternative gospels which teach that:
  - God is the physical father of Jesus. They are “one God” only in that they are united in spirit, mind and purpose (Mormons); -
  - Jesus is the incarnation of Michael the Archangel, God’s first creation. He became Messiah only at His baptism (Jehovah’s Witnesses); -
  - Jesus was one of the many good spiritual teachers like Buddha, Mohammed, Confucius and others who attained divinity (New Age groups).

All of these tendencies we call heresies, from the Greek word heteran (other), as in “another gospel.” These heresies spoke about God and Christ but not in ways deemed consistent with the Scriptures. They came from another source than divine revelation and ultimately were rejected by the Church. Bishops, gathered in councils, divided what they saw as true from false teachings and rejected the early heresies. Their summary of the true Gospel, the Nicene Creed, remains the unique statement of our common faith.

### Our Dogmatic Hymns

For centuries the Eastern Churches have also used liturgical hymns to assert their teaching in the face of heresies. The following sticheron from the vespers of the Nativity proclaims the Gospel faith of the Church with clarity and thereby refutes many of the heresies mentioned above. St. Paul would have approved. Come, let us rejoice in the Lord! Let us proclaim the present mystery by which the partition has been broken and the flaming sword withheld: now shall the Cherubim let us all come to the Tree of Life. As for me, I am returning to the bliss of Paradise whence I had been driven by the original disobedience. Behold, the Image of the Father and His immutable Eternity has taken the form of a servant! He has come down to us from a Mother all-pure, and yet He has remained unchanged: He has remained true God as He was before,



## DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today  
Healing of Archie Opatka  
Health and Salvation of Mae Yanni and Family. Requested by Mae Yanni.  
Health and Salvation of our families and friends.  
Deceased members of our families and friends.  
+Joseph Shabouk

This morning's coffee hour is hosted by Ryan and Tina Dumont and family.  
Next Sunday's coffee hour is hosted by

### Last Week's Collection

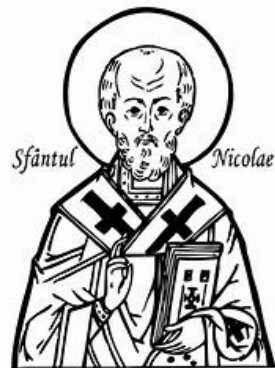
Weekly	\$1,280
Candles	\$ 21
Coffee Hr.	\$ 30
Donations	\$2,550
Christmas Flowers	\$ 35
Christmas Donations	\$ 50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,966</b>

**God bless you for your generosity!**



## ORDER OF SAINT NICHOLAS

**Bishop Nicholas has reactivated the Order of Saint Nicholas. The Order has done much to support the work of the Eparchy over the years. Please see the flyers in the back of the church for the bulletin boards for more details. Please prayerfully consider joining the Order.**



## LITURGICAL SCHEDULE FOR THEOPHANY

**Wed 1/5, 6PM - Vespers**

**Thur 1/6, 6PM—Divine Liturgy followed by the Great Blessing of Water**

**Please go to [archiesarmy.net](http://archiesarmy.net) to see updates on Archie Opatka's battle heptoblastoma. "O Christ, Physician of our souls and bodies, heal, bless and have mercy on Your child Archie!"**

### 2022 Calendar

The 2022 calendar is available at the back of the church. Please pick one up. We will not be mailing the calendar *en masse* this year. I will be sending the calendar to folks I know who cannot get to church. If you or someone you know cannot get to church to pick up a calendar, please let me know and I'll be happy to send them one.

### MERRY CHRISTMAS!

In our tradition, the Christmas season lasts for forty days, beginning with the feast of the Nativity and ending on the feast of the Encounter (Feb. 2). During this period, we celebrate the Lord's birth, circumcision, baptism, and presentation in the Temple. Christmas doesn't end on December 25; it is just beginning! Don't take down your Christmas decorations on December 26. Leave them until Theophany at least. Bask in the glow of this holy season!

We have lived in a challenging environment for almost three years. The pandemic has made our everyday lives somewhat uncertain. There is one thing I know to be certain. God loves us and wants only what is best for us. Let each of us love each other in the same way He loves us! Sometimes, that means sacrificing part of ourselves for the greater good. It always requires us to use our talents to build up the Body of Christ, the Church!

Thanks to all who have helped with various things during 2021! Your love for your parish is a blessing for us all!

On behalf of Khourieh June, Alana, Richard and Meredith, I wish you all the blessings of this holy season.

God bless you all!

Fr. Bryan

## Are There “Other Gospels”? (Gal 1:8)

AT EVERY DIVINE LITURGY the celebrant prays for the Church hierarchs in words such as these: “Graciously bestow them to Your holy Churches in peace, honor, safety health, long life, rightly dispensing the word of Your truth.” This last phrase is actually taken from St. Paul’s Second Epistle to Timothy: “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim 2:15). When the verse is translated as “dispensing” or “imparting” the word of Your truth, it suggest the act of passing on the Gospel from the bishop to His Church. When the translation “rightly dividing the word of truth” is used, something more is suggested. The bishop’s role is to separate the ideas circulating as “Gospel” into true and false, dividing one from the other. Anyone can say that their interpretation is faithful to the Tradition. It is the bishop’s role, St Paul tells Timothy, to make a judgment and separate true from false teaching. St Paul spent his life proclaiming Christ despite all kinds of hardships. He was indignant that others were proclaiming false teachings and attributing them to Christ and His Church. He wrote to the Galatians, “I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel – which is not another – but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed” (Gal 1:6-8). These “other gospels,” which were no authentic gospel at all, were generally doctrines or practices from other traditions which some teachers were intermingling with the Gospel of Christ. The one St Paul found himself opposing most vigorously was that believers in Christ were required to be circumcised. People had to physically become Jews, its practitioners, taught, in order to unite to Christ. St Paul had cleared his teaching with the chief Apostles (see Gal 1:18-19) but his opponents continued in their views until the Jerusalem Church, led by St. James, the “brother of God” as he is called, confirmed that circumcision was not necessary, only faith in Christ (see Acts 15:6-21). The Apostolic Church had rightly divided the word of truth, determining what was essential and what was not.

### What Was Paul’s Gospel?

The Gospel which Christ had preached was simple, according to the Evangelists. “The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel” (Mk 1:15). Paul’s summary of the Gospel which he preached in 1Cor 15:3-8 tells us how he understood the kingdom of God to be at hand. “For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures: and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.” It was in the death and resurrection of Christ that the kingdom of God was to be found.

### Perversions of the Gospel

St. Paul did not hesitate to say that the promoters of circumcision in the Church were perverting the Gospel. Over the centuries a number of alternatives to the Gospel emerged: teachings which St Paul would surely have called “another gospel.” Some of the following first millennium teachings about Christ were quickly discarded; others have been revived over the years by different sects.

Some of the early alternative gospels taught that:

- Jesus was the illegitimate son of Mary and Panthera, a Roman soldier (the Talmud);
- Jesus was born as man and later adopted as a “son of God”
- Jesus was not fully man: he had a human body and a divine mind; - Jesus was created by God the Father and not equal to Him (Arianism);
- Jesus’ physical body was only an illusion, therefore He did not die on the cross;
- Jesus’ human nature was overwhelmed by His divine nature (Eutychianism);
- Jesus had two natures but only one will, the divine, therefore His humanity was incomplete (monothelitism)
- Jesus only seemed to die on the cross; instead God took Him to Himself (Islam)

**TRISAGION:** *"All of you who have been baptized...."*

### Prokimenon

**Reader:** Awesome in His saints is God, the God of Israel.

**People:** Awesome in His saints is God, the God of Israel.

**Verse:** In the churches, bless God, the Lord out of Israel’s wellsprings.

**People:** Awesome in His saints is God, the God of Israel.

**Reader:** Awesome in His saints is God,

**People:** The God of Israel.

### Epistle: Gal. 1:11-19

### Alleluia Verses

O Lord, remember David and all his anxious care!

**Verse:** The Lord has made a truthful oath to David from which he shall never depart: “Of the fruit of your loins, I will place one upon your throne.”

### Gospel: Mt. 2:13-23, Sunday After the Nativity

### Hirmos of the Nativity (Tone 1)

O my soul, magnify the Virgin more glorious than the heavenly powers . Behold a strange and wonderful mystery: the cave is heaven, the Virgin a cherubic throne, the manger a noble place where reposes Christ the Uncontainable God. Let us praise and magnify Him!

### Kinonikon

The Lord has sent redemption to his people. Alleluia.

### After Communion

Troparion of the Nativity

