



DECEMBER



HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH



From
Father
Kosta

Beloved in Christ,

As a teenager, I had the blessing to go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. One of the must-visit sites is the town of Bethlehem and the Church of the Nativity. We walked down the stairway into a room with an alcove. We all knelt and bowed to worship Christ at the place of our Lord's Nativity. A pilgrimage to the Holy Land can be a beautiful, life-changing, and faith-affirming experience, and I encourage all of you to visit with an Orthodox tour guide at least once. However, if we don't see those holy places in person, it doesn't mean that our worship and faith are somehow lacking. Our worship of God in Thunder Bay is just as important and acceptable to God as it would be if we were at the Church of the Resurrection across from the Tomb of Christ. With every confession and every moment of repentance, God welcomes us into His presence. God is not present only in Jerusalem; as Jesus Christ explained, we worship God in spirit and truth, and wherever we two or three are gathered in His name, He is among us. We especially find Him in the Chalice, where His sacred Body and Blood are offered to us, and we should take every opportunity to partake of these Holy Gifts and enter into communion with God.

As we join the shepherds and the Magi to worship and adore the newborn Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, let's consider the beautiful mystery of His birth. The pre-eternal Word and Son of God chose to humble Himself, empty Himself, and become one of us so He could unite Himself with our human nature, sanctify it, and draw us to our original purpose: communion with God in His presence. St. Paul wrote that the Word of God "...emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men." I encourage you to take a few minutes in your day and truly contemplate this act of "self-emptying" (kenosis) by Jesus Christ. Then, we can start to appreciate God's love and mercy for each of us, His beloved creations. It is humbling to consider that God, this omnipotent and all-knowing being Who exists in perfect love as the three Persons of the Holy Trinity, would create us and the whole universe out of love so we could experience and share His love with Him and each other. It is incredibly humbling to realize we haven't done anything to earn His extraordinary humility, which allowed Him to become human while still being fully God. This humility reached its beautiful height at Golgotha, where He willingly and lovingly gave His life on the Cross. The same love that inspired God to create the world also fuels His mercy and compassion toward His creatures.

Christ is "the Light of the World," inviting us to shine brightly as Christians. Yet some still find themselves spiritually indifferent or even hostile toward Him and His Church. Instead of embracing His love, we sometimes choose separation and negativity. In the Liturgy, when we receive the Body and Blood of God, our bodies become temples of the Holy Spirit. We are called to take these sanctified temples into the world, allowing God's light to shine on the world through our love and dedication to our Lord. Let's consider this: how can someone who, at their baptism, has been sealed with the Holy Spirit and marked as God's own and being a temple of the Holy Spirit choose darkness? While we face temptations from the devil and are often lured toward sinful thoughts and actions, we must remember that our world frequently prioritizes self-serving and idolatrous ideals over the radiant Truth found in the God of the Holy Trinity, the only true God. Though we may fall short, the Church - the Body of Christ to which we all belong - continues to worship and strive to do His will with faithfulness.

Let's joyfully worship and glorify Christ this Christmas and into the New Year with the Angels, Archangels, and every rank of the Heavenly Hosts. Let's honour the incredible mission God has entrusted us as Christians—to be temples of the Holy Spirit and the light of the world. I wish you a blessed Nativity Season and an upcoming calendar year full of hope, peace, and health. Christ is born! Glorify!

In Christ,
Fr. Kosta

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

(Under the Auspices of the
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of
Canada)

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Thunder Bay ON P7B 6N2**

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CHURCH ETIQUETTE

- Food and drink are not allowed in the church. Please do not chew gum during a church service.
- Phones should be silenced and not used during a service unless there's an emergency. Please refrain from conversations during services.
- Hands in our pockets, wearing sunglasses or earbuds and crossing our legs in the church are considered irreverent.
- Please arrive before the beginning of Divine Liturgy or any other service. If you arrive late, there are certain times one should wait before entering the nave. Please do not enter or leave the nave:
 - During the Small and Great Entrance or any other processions
 - During the Scripture readings and the sermon
 - During the Anaphora (offering), when we are kneeling
 - During the recitation of the Creed of Faith and the Lord's Prayer
 - If the priest is censing
 - Whenever the priest is facing the congregation
- We cross ourselves anytime we wish, but particularly when:
 - We enter the nave
 - We hear the name of the Holy Trinity
 - We hear the name of a Saint
 - We walk in front of the Altar

Holy Communion

- Only those baptized in the Orthodox Church and in good standing may receive the Sacraments. If you have any questions, speak with the priest before Sunday morning.
- Please stand reverently at your pew if you aren't receiving Holy Communion.
- Please remove your lipstick before approaching the Chalice.
- Please hold the Communion cloth under your lower lip so there are no spills, and gently wipe your lips with the Communion cloth to remove any Eucharist from your lips.
- Do not try to kiss or touch the Chalice to avoid spilling the Eucharist.
- Talking in the church's Nave should be kept to a minimum and only in a low voice.

Antidoron (blessed bread)

- Please have the bread cupped in your hand while you eat it so you don't drop crumbs on the floor.
- Please avoid stepping on breadcrumbs as you exit the church. If you see a piece of Antidoron, kindly pick it up and toss it in a bush outside where a bird may eat it.
- Antidoron does not belong in the trash can. It is blessed bread. Please don't leave any in the pews or other inappropriate places.

Dress code

- Although not enforced or expected in Thunder Bay, the traditional Orthodox dress code is pants, a shirt for men, and skirts/dresses with a headscarf for ladies. However, we only ask that your outfit be respectful to the best of your abilities. If you have any questions, ask our priest.
- Shorts, tank tops, and flip-flops are not appropriate.

CHURCH SERVICES FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER 2024

SUNDAY	1	14TH SUNDAY OF LUKE Matins 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:30 am
FRIDAY	6	NICHOLAS THE WONDERWORKER ARCHBISHOP OF MYRA IN LYCIA Matins 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:30 am
SUNDAY	8	10TH SUNDAY OF LUKE Matins 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:30 am
MONDAY	9	CONCEPTION OF THE THEOTOKOS BY ST. ANNA Matins 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:30 am
SUNDAY	15	11TH SUNDAY OF LUKE, Priest-Martyr Eleftherios & His Mother Anthia Matins 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:30 am
SUNDAY	22	SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY Matins 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:30 am
TUESDAY	24	EVE OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD Great Vespers with Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great 7:00 pm - 9:30 pm
WEDNESDAY	25	THE BIRTH OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST Matins 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:30 am
SUNDAY	29	SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY, The Holy Children Killed by Herod Matins 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:30 am

CHURCH SERVICES FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY 2025

WEDNESDAY	1	THE CIRCUMCISION OF JESUS CHRIST, St. Basil the Great Matins 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:30 am
SUNDAY	5	SUNDAY BEFORE THEOPHANY Matins 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:30 am EVE OF THE BAPTISM AND THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD Gr. Vespers followed by Liturgy of St. Basil the Great & Blessing of the Waters 6:00 pm
MONDAY	6	THE BAPTISM AND HOLY THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD AT THE JORDAN Matins & Blessing of the Waters 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:30 am
TUESDAY	7	SYNAXIS OF THE HOLY PROPHET JOHN THE BAPTIST & FOREFUNNER Matins 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:30 am
SUNDAY	12	SUNDAY AFTER THE THEOPHANY Matins 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:30 am
FRIDAY	17	ST. ANTHONY THE GREAT Matins 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:30 am
SUNDAY	19	12TH SUNDAY OF LUKE Matins 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:30 am
SUNDAY	26	15TH SUNDAY OF LUKE Matins 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:30 am

ΑΚΟΛΟΥΘΙΕΣ ΓΙΑ ΤΟ ΜΗΝΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΕΚΕΜΒΡΙΟΥ 2024

ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ	1	14Η ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΛΟΥΚΑ Όρθρος 9:00 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.
ΠΑΡΑΣΚΕΥΗ	6	ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΘΑΥΜΑΤΟΥΡΓΟΥ ΑΡΧΙΕΠ. ΜΥΡΩΝ Όρθρος 9:00 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.
ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ	8	10Η ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΛΟΥΚΑ Όρθρος 9:00 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.
ΔΕΥΤΕΡΑ	9	ΣΥΛΛΗΨΗ ΤΗΣ ΥΠΕΡΑΓΙΑΣ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟΥ ΑΠΟ ΤΗΝ ΑΓΙΑ ΑΝΝΑ Όρθρος 9:00 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.
ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ	15	11Η ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΛΟΥΚΑ, Ιερομάρτυρος Ελευθέριου & μητέρας αυτού Ανθίας Όρθρος 9:00 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.
ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ	22	ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΠΡΟ ΤΗΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ ΓΕΝΝΗΣΕΩΣ Όρθρος 9:00 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.
ΤΡΙΤΗ	24	ΠΡΟΕΟΡΤΙΑ ΤΗΣ ΓΕΝΝΗΣΕΩΣ ΤΟΥ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ Μέγας Εσπερινός Μετά Θείας Λειτουργίας Αγ. Βασιλείου 7:00 μ.μ - 9:30 μ.μ.
ΤΕΤΑΡΤΗ	25	Η ΓΕΝΝΗΣΗΣ ΤΟΥ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ ΗΜΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ ΙΗΣΟΥ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ Όρθρος 9:00 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.
ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ	29	ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΜΕΤΑ ΤΗΣ ΓΕΝΝΗΣΕΩΣ Όρθρος 9:00 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.

ΑΚΟΛΟΥΘΙΕΣ ΓΙΑ ΤΟ ΜΗΝΑ ΤΟΥ ΙΑΝΟΥΑΡΙΟΥ 2025

ΤΕΤΑΡΤΗ	1	Η ΠΕΡΙΤΟΜΗ ΤΟΥ ΙΗΣΟΥ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ, Αγίου Βασιλείου του Μέγα Όρθρος 9:00 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.
ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ	5	ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΠΡΟ ΤΗΣ ΒΑΠΤΙΣΕΩΣ ΤΟΥ ΙΗΣΟΥ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ Όρθρος 9:00 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ. ΠΡΟΕΟΡΤΙΑΤΩΝ ΘΕΟΦΑΝΕΙΩΝ ΤΟΥ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ ΗΜΩΝ ΙΗΣΟΥ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ Μέγας Εσπερινός Μετά Θ. Λειτουργίας Αγ. Βασιλείου & Αγιασμού των Υδάτων 6:00 μ.μ
ΔΕΥΤΕΡΑ	6	ΤΑ ΑΓΙΑ ΘΕΟΦΑΝΕΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ ΗΜΩΝ ΙΗΣΟΥ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ Όρθρος & Αγιασμός των Υδάτων 9:00 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.
ΤΡΙΤΗ	7	ΣΥΝΑΞΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΠΡΟΦΗΤΟΥ ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΠΡΟΔΡΟΜΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΒΑΠΤΙΣΤΟΥ Όρθρος 9:00 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.
ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ	12	ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΜΕΤΑ ΤΩΝ ΦΩΤΩΝ Όρθρος 9:00 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.
ΠΑΡΑΣΚΕΥΗ	17	ΑΓΙΟΥ ΑΝΤΩΝΙΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ Όρθρος 9:00 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.
ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ	19	12Η ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΛΟΥΚΑ Όρθρος 9:00 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.
ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ	26	15Η ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΛΟΥΚΑ Όρθρος 9:00 π.μ. Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.



Annual General Meeting Sunday, December 1, 2024

The Board of Directors
of
the Greek Orthodox Community of the Holy Trinity
call all members to the Community's AGM at the
end of the Divine Liturgy.

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
651 Beverly Street
Thunder Bay ON P7B 6N2

The agenda and notice will be mailed regularly or
electronically to all members. Please make sure
your annual commitment is up to date in order to
receive the notice and be able to vote at the AGM.

Blessing of Homes for Theophany in January 2025

Feel free to reach out to Fr. Kosta via phone, text, or
email to set up a time for him to bless your home or
business. Just let him know when you'll be available,
and he'll be happy to arrange the visit!

House Blessings scheduled for January 2025

- **Tuesday, January 7th:** 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm
- **Wednesday, January 8th:** All Day
- **Thursday, January 10th:** 10:00 am to 2:00 pm
and 4:00 pm to 8:30 pm
- **Friday, January 11th:** 10:00 am to 2:00 pm
and 4:00 pm to 8:30 pm

For a visit outside of the above times, please make direct
arrangements with fr. Konstantinos.



Seniors Movie Night

Great success! We're so excited
that our Seniors Movie Night was
a great success! It provided a
lovely chance for all of us to come
together and enjoy each other's
company. A huge thank you to
our Board of Directors, everyone
who lent a hand in organizing this
event, and all the participants who
joined in to make it a delightful
evening filled with fun and
friendship.

Merry
CHRISTMAS



Warm wishes from Father Konstantinos and our Board of Directors! We hope you and
your families have a wonderful Christmas celebration, and God bless you with a healthy
and prosperous New Year ahead!



HOLY TRINITY
PHILOPTOCHOS

CHRISTMAS BAKE SALE

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2024 @ NOON
AFTER THE DIVINE LITURGY

**Get your Christmas bread
and desserts and support
our Philoptochos Ladies!**

For more information, please speak
with Jennie Hartviksen or email our
church at holytrinity@tbaytel.net

Talks on the Orthodox Faith

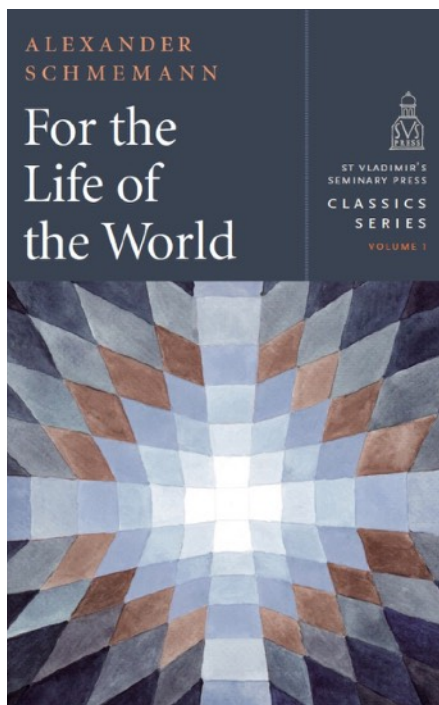
**Every second Sunday
at coffee hour.**

Some of the Topics covered:

- **Divine Liturgy**
- **The Sacraments**
- **Orthodox Spirituality**
- **Traditions of the Church**
- **Participation in the Life of the Church (Kolyva, Prosphopa, etc.)**
- **Q & A**

All are welcome.

**The schedule may be adjusted
during Christmas and Easter
breaks.**



***For the Life of the World,*
Alexander Schmemmann**

Books To Enrich our Libraries and our Lives

In *For the Life of the World*, Fr. Alexander Schmemmann suggests an approach to the world and life within it that stems from the liturgical experience of the Orthodox Church. He understands issues such as secularism and Christian culture from the perspective of the Church's unbroken experience, as revealed and communicated in her worship and liturgy—the sacrament of the world, the sacrament of the Kingdom.

Found at:

store.ancientfaith.com, www.amazon.ca

The book is also available as an ebook through Apple, Amazon, and Barnes & Noble.

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church



651 BEVERLY STREET
3:00 pm to 6:30 pm

Thursday, September 19, 2024
 Thursday, October 3, 2024
 Thursday, October 17, 2024
 Thursday, October 31, 2024
 Thursday, November 14, 2024
 Thursday, November 28, 2024
 Thursday, December 12, 2024

Cash, Debit, and Credit Accepted

Lakehead and Confederation College Students: \$2 off on any order over \$10
greekdinner4@gmail.com

WORK SCHEDULE FOR SOUVLAKI WEEK

TUESDAY

9:00 am to approximately 12:00 pm

Food deliveries arrive - received usually by Fr. Kosta

WEDNESDAY

9:00 am to approximately 1:00 pm

Chopping vegetables, preparing salads, and setting up for the next day.

THURSDAY

9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Preparing and cooking the rest of the menu and setting up for customers.

3:00 pm to 6:30 pm

Doors open for customers

6:30 to 7:30 pm

Clean-up - washing dishes, mopping, putting equipment in storage.

Please speak with a board member or Fr. Kosta if you or someone you know would like to help out, especially near the end of the night for the clean-up.

In Memoriam this Month

This month, we remember and pray for the souls of our following departed Orthodox brothers and sisters who lived in Thunder Bay. The following list is based on our church's Registry Book of Deaths and Funerals entries.

Please inform our priest if there are any errors or omissions.

DECEMBER

Vasilios Gerasimos (1960)
Maria Andreou (1960)
Efstathos Pappas (1964)
Georgia Pagonis (1971)
Panagiotis Saïtes (1972)
Agni Chronopoulos (1988)
Alexander Drombolis (1998)
Constantinos Glymitsas (2000)
Olympia Bulgaria (2002)
Athena Vlotaros (2010)
Ljubomir Velickovic (2010)
Anastasios Mellas (2015)
Chris Metsopoulos (2016)

*With the Saints, give rest, O Christ,
to Your servants' souls where there
is no pain, sorrow or lament but life
everlasting.*

May their memory be eternal.

—

*Μετά των Αγίων ανάπαυσον Χριστέ
τας ψυχάς των δούλων Σου, ένθα
ούκ εστί πόνος, ου λύπη, ου
στεναγμός, αλλά ζωή ατελεύτητος.*

Αιωνία αυτών η μνήμη.

CHILDREN IN THE DIVINE LITURGY

To the parents and grandparents of our young children, may we suggest...

Relax! God put the wiggle and curiosity in children; don't feel you must suppress it. All are welcome! Sit somewhere where it is easier for your little ones to see and hear what is going on - even if that means you sit at the front. They tire of seeing the backs of others' heads. We know how hard it is to have small children in Liturgy. Please don't be discouraged. We love you and want you here.

If you need to give your child a break, that's fine too. Usually, a walk outside, in the church hall, or the narthex is enough to help them refocus.

Quietly explain the Liturgy to your children:

The Small Entrance

The Gospel (the Good News) coming into the world

The Epistle and Gospel Readings

Our message for the day

The Sermon/Homily

The clergy speaks about the Bible readings, the Saints, and the Holy Days.

The Offering (Anaphora)

Bowing to our King and offering Him our gifts, that He may change them into His Body and Blood and offer them back to us

Holy Communion

Christ is in us, and we are in Him. It's not just bread and wine, but the Mystical Body and Blood of our Lord.

Sing the hymns, pray, and voice the responses with the chanters and the people. Children learn liturgical behaviour by copying you. Remember that we are here to worship Christ. If you have to leave the service with your child temporarily, feel free to do so, but please come back when your child calms down. As Christ said, "Let the children come to Me." Also, we encourage you to visit the church and Fr. Kosta with your children when there is no service so that you can explain a few things about the church to them. The children will also appreciate the church differently when they have it all to themselves.

To the members of our Community, the presence of children is a gift to the Church and a reminder that our Community is growing. Please pray for our children and welcome them by giving a smile of encouragement to their parents. Remember that how we welcome children in the Church directly affects how they respond to the Church, Christ, and one another. Let them know they are home!

WHICH SEAL IS PROPER FOR PROSPHORO?

Use a proper stamp when preparing the Offering Bread for the Divine Liturgy. The symbols in the Prospophora (Offering Bread) Seal convey theological and doctrinal truths, and it is, therefore, essential for them to be correct. The correct seal bears the lettering ICXC NIKA or ΙΣΧΣ ΝΙΚΑ.



Celebrating the Nativity of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ

The Nativity of our Lord, God, and Saviour Jesus Christ, also known as Christmas, is one of the Great Feasts of the Orthodox Church. It is celebrated on December 25 or January 7.

In the fullness of time, our Lord Jesus Christ was born to the Holy Theotokos and the Virgin Mary, thus entering the world as a man and revealing Himself to mankind.

According to the Bible and Holy Tradition, Jesus was born in Bethlehem in a cave surrounded by farm animals and shepherds. The infant Jesus was placed in a manger by the Virgin Mary, assisted by her betrothed, St. Joseph. St. Joseph and the Theotokos were forced to travel due to a Roman census; the unusual birth location resulted from the refusal of a nearby inn to accommodate the expecting couple (Luke 2:1-20). Since it is historically known that dwellings were built directly over such caves housing livestock—to make use of the heat

In the feast's hymnography, the gifts (gold, myrrh, and frankincense) offered to Jesus by the Magi signify Christ's royalty, divinity, and suffering.

Though Jesus' birth is celebrated on December 25, many scholars agree that he was unlikely born on this date. Some claim that the Church's choice of December 25 to celebrate the Nativity is most likely to have been to squelch attendance at pagan solstice festivals on the same day. At least, this is the urban myth promulgated by both heterodox Christians and unbelievers for centuries.

However, the solstice festival fell on December 21st. To suggest that the Church chose a day of sacred observance defensively instead of proactively is to devalue and disregard the Church's sacred and authoritative action in establishing a proper date for commemorating the Nativity of Christ the Lord.

Others within The Orthodox Church have observed that, under Hebrew law, male infants

were both circumcised and received their names eight days after their birth. Within The Orthodox Church, January 1st is celebrated as the "name day" of The Lord Christ Jesus. Thus, the selection of December 25th to celebrate the nativity of Christ (who would not be named for eight more days) would appear to have been a conscious counting backward from the first day of the calendar year - the day of His being proclaimed Son of Man - to the date of His birth, the day of his being proclaimed Son of God. Additionally, December 25 is nine months after the Feast of the Annunciation of the Theotokos, when the Archangel Gabriel announced to Mary that the Son of God would be conceived in her womb.

The cycle starts with a forty-day fast before the feast, the Nativity fast or Advent. For the faithful, this fast purifies both soul and body so they can correctly enter and partake of the great spiritual reality of Christ's Coming, much like the preparation for the fast of the Lord's Resurrection.

Any hymns do not liturgically mark the beginning of the fast on November 15. Still, five days later, on the eve of the Feast of the Presentation of the Theotokos, we hear the first announcement from the nine hymns, or *Katavasies* (Concluding hymns of an ode) of the Christmas Canon: "Christ is born, glorify Him!" This period includes other special preparatory days announcing the approaching Nativity: St Andrew's Day, November 30; St Nicholas Day, December 6; the Sunday of the Forefathers; and the Sunday of the Fathers.

(Continued on the next page)

Celebrating the Nativity of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ

In some churches, December 20th begins the Fore-feast of the Nativity, which has a liturgical structure similar to the Holy Week preceding Pascha. The Orthodox Church sees the birth of the Son of God as the beginning of His saving ministry, which will lead Him to the ultimate sacrifice of the Cross for the sake of man's salvation.

At some churches and in monasteries, the Royal Hours are read on the eve of the Nativity, and the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great is served with Vespers. The Old Testament prophecies of Christ's birth are chanted at these services.

The order of Matins is that of a great feast. Here, for the first time, the entire Canon "Christ is born" is sung while the faithful venerate the Nativity icon.

Concluding the celebration of the Nativity of Christ is the Liturgy. It begins with psalms of glorification and praise instead of the three normal Antiphons. The troparion and kontakion mark the entrance with the Book of the Gospels. The baptismal line from Galatians 3:27 ("As many as have been baptized in Christ have put on Christ") once again replaces the Thrice-Holy. The Epistle reading is from Galatians 4:4- 7, the Gospel reading is the familiar Christmas story from Matthew (2:1- 12), and then the liturgy continues in the usual fashion.

The second day of the feast starts a two-day celebration of the Synaxis (gathering of the Church) of the Theotokos. Combining the hymns of the Nativity with those celebrating the Mother of God, the Church points to Mary as the one through whom the Incarnation was made possible. St Stephen, the First Martyr, is also remembered these two days.

On the Sunday after Christmas, the Church commemorates James the Brother of Our Lord, David the King, and Joseph the Betrothed, and the

children that Herod ordered killed. Eight days after the Nativity is the feast of Circumcision of our Lord and the Feast of St. Basil the Great.

The festal period extends to Theophany, during which Christmas songs are sung. The Church does not call for fasting or kneeling in prayer during this Time. Throughout this time, some Orthodox Christians greet each other with the words, "Christ is born!" and the response, "Glorify Him!" Many in the English-speaking world also use the culturally common "Merry Christmas!"

Greek tradition calls for children to go out with triangles from house to house on Christmas Eve, New Year's Eve, and Epiphany Eve and sing the corresponding folk carols, called the *Κάλαντα* (*Kálanda*, the word deriving from the Roman calends). There are separate carols for each of the three great feasts, referring respectively to the Nativity, St. Basil and the New Year, and the Baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan, along with wishes for the household.

Longer carols follow a more or less standard format: they begin by exalting the relevant religious feast, then proceed to offer praises for the lord and lady of the house, their children, the household and its personnel, and usually conclude with a polite request for a treat, and a promise to come back next year for more well-wishing.

(Continued on the next page)

Celebrating the Nativity of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ

Many carols are regional, famous in specific regions but unknown in others, whereas some are popular throughout Greece and Cyprus. Examples of the latter are the Peloponnesian (Southern Greece) Christmas carol "Christoúgenna, Prōtoúgenna" ("Christmas, Firstmas"), the Constantinopolitan Christmas carol "Kalēn hespéran, árchontes" ("Good evening, my lords"), and the New Year's carol "Archimēniá ki archichroniá" ("First of the month, first of the year"). The oldest known carol, commonly referred to as the "Byzantine Carol" (Byzantine Greek: Ἀναρχος θεός καταβέβηκεν, Ánarchos Theós katabébēken, "God who is beyond all authority descended"), is linguistically dated to the beginning of the High Middle Ages.

Almost all the various carols are in the common dekapentasyllabos (15-syllable iambic with a caesura after the 8th syllable) verse, meaning their wording and tunes are easily interchangeable. This has given rise to many local variants, parts of which often overlap or resemble one another in verse, song, or both.

In older times, carolling children asked for and were given gifts such as dried fruit, eggs, nuts, or sweets; during the 20th century, this was gradually replaced with monetary gifts — ranging from minor change in the case of strangers to considerable amounts in the case of close relatives. Carolling is also done by marching bands, choirs, school students seeking to raise funds for trips or charity, members of folk societies, or merely by groups of well-wishers. Many internationally known carols, like "Silent Night," are also sung in translation.

Troparion (Dismissal Hymn) of the Nativity:

Your Nativity, O Christ our God, has caused the light of knowledge to rise upon the world. For therein the worshippers of the stars were by a star instructed to worship You, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know You as Orient from on high. Glory to You, O Lord.

Kontakion (Hymn) of the Nativity:

On this day, the Virgin gives birth to the Super-essential. To the Unapproachable, earth is providing the grotto. Angels sing and, with the shepherds, offer up glory. Following a star, the Magi are still proceeding. He was born for our salvation, a newborn Child, the pre-eternal God.

May Christ our true God, who was born in a cave and lay in a manger for our salvation, have mercy on us and save us as a loving and merciful God through the intercessions of His most pure and holy Mother, the power of the precious and life-giving Cross, the protection of the honourable, bodiless powers of heaven, the supplications of the honourable, glorious prophet and forerunner John the Baptist, of the holy, glorious, and praiseworthy apostles, of the holy, glorious, and triumphant martyrs, of our righteous and God-bearing fathers, of the holy and righteous ancestors of God Joachim and Anna, and of all the saints.

MEMORIAL SERVICES

Memorial services are offered for Orthodox Christians, typically on the fortieth day after death, six months after death, and the anniversary of death. They are usually held on Sundays at the end of the Divine Liturgy or may also be held as separate services on weekdays at the church or the grave. Please speak with our priest if you have any questions regarding Kolyva or to arrange for a memorial service.

Items needed for a memorial at the church:

- Kolyva (boiled wheat tray) - Recipes can be found online or through our Priest.
- Prosphoro and red wine (Mavrodaphne or a red dessert wine)
- The names of the persons commemorated.

Memorials are not allowed on the following days:

- Feast Days of the Lord (Christmas, Theophany, Easter, Presentation, Transfiguration, etc)
- All Feast Days of the Mother of God (Nativity of the Theotokos, Entrance into the Temple, Dormition, Annunciation, etc)
- From the Saturday of Lazarus up to and including the Sunday of Thomas, which is the Sunday following Easter)
- Sunday of Pentecost

WEDDINGS, BAPTISMS, & FUNERALS

Information on the Sacraments can be found on our website, www.gothunderbay.org. Please speak with Fr. Kosta directly regarding dates, sponsors (Koumbaroi), preparations, and any other questions about booking a Sacrament or a funeral. Please ensure the church and the priest are available for weddings and baptisms before booking reception venues.

Dates a Wedding cannot be performed:

- Any evening that comes before one of the Twelve Major Feasts
- Nativity Fast (Nov. 15 – Dec. 24)
- Great Lent (dates change each year)
- Apostles' Fast (the Monday after All Saints to the feast day of Sts. Peter and Paul on June 29)
- Dormition Fast (Aug. 1 – Aug. 14)
- Aug. 28/29 (the Beheading of St. John the Baptist)
- Sept. 13/14 (the Exaltation of the Holy Cross)

Dates a Baptism cannot be performed:

- Christmas Day through the Feast of Theophany (December 25-January 6)
- Holy Week (dates vary each year)
- Great Feast-days of the Lord

STEWARDSHIP IN ACTION

Stewardship means we take ownership of our church and teach our children to do the same in many ways.

There are many items our church needs to replenish throughout the year, such as:

- Phosphoro (Bread used for the Eucharist)
- Charcoal disks
- Incense
- Candles
- Oil & Oil Lamp Wicks
- Red Wine for Holy Communion (Mavrodaphne or other red dessert wines)

Ways to help out our church prepare for major Feast Days and throughout the year:

- Washing the Holy Communion cloths
- Ironing the coverings for the Altar table and the icon stands.
- Decorating the church for major Feast Days
- Helping organize retreats and events for youth and adults.

Please speak with our Priest about opportunities to get involved in our church.

Common Questions by Visitors or Inquirers

Q: What does "Greek Orthodox" mean?

The term Greek Orthodox may refer either to the Orthodox Church as a whole, to the churches of the Eastern Roman Empire or "Byzantine" areas, or to Orthodox Christians of Greek descent. However, "Eastern Orthodox" is a more correct term for the whole Church. Greek Orthodox also refers to the style of liturgical rite used in the Church.

Q: What language are your services in?

Our Divine Liturgy is conducted in Greek and English, with English being the predominant language. Prayers are said in English. The hymns chanted by the cantors are usually balanced between Greek and English. Vespers and Matins (Orthros) are chanted in both Greek and English. The sermon is given in English.

Q: Do I have to be Greek or Orthodox to attend services?

You do not have to be Orthodox or Greek to attend services. Everyone is welcome to visit and inquire about our theology and liturgical practices. We often have visitors in our Church.

* Please note that you must be baptized as an Orthodox Christian and be in good standing with the Church to receive the Sacraments. Our Priest is available if you have any questions about attending our Church. Don't hesitate to contact him via text or email a few days before your visit, and he'll answer any questions.

Q: What worship service can I attend if I've never been to an Orthodox service?

It would help if you spoke to the Priest beforehand about attending a service so you will be prepared for what to expect. You're always welcome to participate in Sunday Divine Liturgy and speak with our priest during coffee after the service.

Q: How will I fit in your congregation if I'm not Greek?

You will fit in just fine. Our congregation is comprised of people of different nationalities. Orthodoxy is universal. You do not need to be Greek to attend our church. You're encouraged to come to the church hall for coffee hour after the Sunday Divine Liturgy and have a coffee with Fr. Kosta and the rest of the congregation.

Q: I'm an Orthodox Christian but visiting for the first time. What should I do?

Please inform the Priest that you are visiting, especially if you wish to receive Holy Communion.

Q: Can I speak with the Priest privately regarding learning more about the Orthodox Church?

Of course! Our Priest is available most days and times to speak with you. Please feel free to reach out to him. His contact information is in this bulletin.

Q: What's the most significant difference between the Orthodox Church and other denominations?

Apart from the liturgical, theological, and visual differences, the mentality and way we approach God, the Saints, spirituality, and sin differ from some, if not most, "Western" theological approaches. Our approach to the Bible and Holy Tradition may vary from one's experience. Depending on one's background, the above can be of the more considerable differences and the most significant adjustments for those exposed to the Orthodox approach to the Saints, life, death, and God.

Q: Can I receive the Eucharist at Holy Trinity if I belong to the Oriental (Non-Chalcedonian) Orthodox Churches?

Since Thunder Bay is relatively isolated, if your church is not located in the Thunder Bay area, you may receive Holy Communion upon receiving permission from your priest or bishop. Our Archdiocese has granted this special exemption, as the Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian churches are still not in communion with each other. However, to make our church your permanent spiritual home or to continue receiving the Sacraments for a long time, you must discuss this with our priest.

Q: Do you rent your church to other denominations or faith groups?

We do not rent our church. The policy is that only our parish priest can celebrate worship services unless another canonical Orthodox Priest is visiting, has written permission from his bishop and our Archdiocese, and has discussed it with our priest to lead services.

The church hall is available for rent as long as the event does not contradict the spirit of the Orthodox Christian faith.

Orthodox services can be overwhelming or confusing for those experiencing them for the first time. Feel free to speak with our Priest after the Service regarding your experience. Please join us in the church hall after Sunday Liturgy for fellowship and coffee when ready.

**For the Members, Benefactors, and Stewards of our
Holy Church and their Salvation, let us pray to the
Lord.**

2024

1. Steve Amorgianos
2. Phyllis Amorgianos
3. Joyce Avgeropoulos
4. Peter Avgeropoulos
5. Nick Balina
6. Katerina Biniaris
7. George Biniaris
8. Athena Blieske
9. Edric Blieske
10. Alex Bradatanu
11. Iuliana Bradatanu
12. Ourania Biniaris
13. Anastasios Catanzaro
14. Gus Chimbakis
15. Helen Chimbakis
16. Bill Comminos
17. Angela Damianakos
18. Athena Damianakos
19. Bill Damianakos
20. Vicki Dowhos
21. Paul Dowhos
22. Joanne Frisky
23. Tara Giardetti
24. Peter Giardetti
25. Harry Glymitsas
26. Dimitra Glymitsas
27. Jennie Hartviksen
28. Sotirios Hatzis
29. Theodora Hatzis
30. Bill Hatzis
31. Stella Hatzis
32. Penny Kahramanos
33. Lisa Kahramanos
34. Despina Kargatzis
35. Faye Karoutas
36. Nick Koukos
37. Joyce Koukos
38. Peter Koukos
39. Ray Leino
40. Virginia Leino
41. Jack Lotsios
42. Effie Lotsios
43. George Lotsios
44. Chrysoula Mayer
45. Despina Metsopoulos
46. Achileas Metsopoulos
47. Angela Metsopoulos

48. Theresa Meyer
49. Penny Millionis
50. Maria Morakis
51. Florina Nisioiu
52. Peter Pantoulis
53. Helen Pantoulis
54. Nikki Pantoulis
55. Jim Pazianos
56. Tom Pazianos
57. Leila Pazianos
58. Olivia Pietrangelo
59. Effie Saïtes
60. Maria Sancartier
61. Katerina Scocchia
62. Steven Scolie
63. Irene Binaris
64. Marinos Spourdalakis
65. Constantin Todosia
66. Manuella Todosia
67. Elaine Tsekouras
68. Harry Tsekouras
69. Lily Tsekouras
70. Constantine Tsekouras
71. Jane Tsekouras
72. Ahileas Tsekouras
73. Paul Tsekouras
74. Sylvia Tsekouras
75. John Tsekouras
76. Daniel Vasiliu
77. Christine Vlotaros
78. Peter Vlotaros
79. Theodora Voulgaris
80. Georgina Voulgaris
81. Pat Welbourne
82. Chris Welbourne
83. Austin Williams

2025

1. Nikki Pantoulis

Stewardship and Fees

As you know, our church operates on financial and volunteer help. Please renew your stewardship and support your church with an annual commitment.

Please pay all fees to the treasurer or send them through e-transfer at holytrinity@tbaytel.net.

Annual Stewardship

Family (couple): \$600

Single Regular Members (Age 18+) & Seniors: \$300/person

University/College Students: \$100

Associate Members (non-Orthodox spouses): \$150

Funerals

Up-to-Date Members: No Fee

Not Up-to-Date Members: \$300 for each year of no membership paid, up to 2 years

Hall Rentals

Members: \$150 Non-Members: \$400

Sacrament/Services Fees

Wedding: \$250 Baptism: \$150

The treasurer must receive fees at least two (2) weeks before a Sacrament.

- * Parents, godparents, couples, and sponsors (Koumbaroi) must be in good financial standing with our community by having paid for **their stewardship (membership) for the past two consecutive years**. Please speak with our treasurer and ensure your financial obligations are current.
- * Brides, Grooms, Godparents, and wedding Sponsors (Koumbaroi) must also be in ecclesiastical good standing in the Orthodox Church by being baptized Orthodox, having their marriages blessed in the Orthodox Church, and haven't participated in a Sacrament outside the Orthodox Faith. Out-of-town Sponsors and godparents must provide a letter from their Priest stating they are canonically able to participate in an Orthodox Sacrament.
- * Couples where one member is not baptized Orthodox must speak with the Priest before booking a Wedding.
- * If neither the groom nor the bride is Orthodox, a wedding cannot be performed in the Orthodox Church.

If your name needs to be added to the above list, please inform our Priest. Memberships paid after the publication of this Bulletin will appear in next month's issue.

MEMBERS AND STEWARDS: WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES?

Who is a Member?

A member of the Orthodox Church is any person baptized and chrismated according to the rites of the Eastern Orthodox Church. However, not every member is a Steward.

Who is a Steward?

A Steward is any baptized Orthodox Christian who is 18 years or older, is self-supporting, desires to assume responsibility for their local church, and commits their time, talent, and treasure to advance the Church's sacred mission.

These three commitments collectively represent one's Stewardship and are often expressive of one's Active faith. However, not every Steward is an Active Steward.

Who is an Active Steward?

The Active Steward is actively living their faith. They don't merely give their treasure. They also provide their time regularly attending Divine Liturgy and other worship services; they regularly participate in Holy Communion and Holy Confession; they spend their time in, and offer their talent to, the ministries and needs of the church, respectively; and they try to adhere to and live according to the teachings of the Orthodox Christian Faith, including not receiving or participating in Sacraments or rites outside the Orthodox Church. This active steward is often called a "member in good standing with the Orthodox Church."

What is Stewardship?

Stewardship is giving your time, talent, or treasure to your Church while requiring neither perfect participation in its ministries nor a minimum financial commitment. Stewardship is biblical, which teaches the Four Fundamental Principles of Stewardship:

1. **Ownership:** God created and owns everything. Everything we are and have is a gift from God. [Psalm 24:1; Deuteronomy 8:28]
2. **Responsibility:** We have been entrusted with managing and administering God's gifts, making us Stewards. Therefore, giving Stewardship is committing ourselves and our possessions to advance the Ministry of Christ to others. [Mt. 25:14-30]
3. **Accountability:** Having been entrusted with this sacred responsibility, the Parable of the Talents reveals that each of us will be called to give an account of how we managed God's gifts. [Mt. 25:14-30]
4. **Reward:** St. Paul reminds us, "Whatever [we] do, work it with all your heart as working for the Lord, not for man since you know you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving." [Colossians 3:23-24; Prov. 18:16; Lk. 6:38]

Because some of you have asked regarding your weekly offerings in Church, we offer you the Weekly Giving Guideline chart below to help you determine your giving level.

Weekly Income	10%	5%	4%	2%
\$500	\$50	\$25	\$20	\$10
\$750	\$75	\$37	\$30	\$15
\$1000	\$100	\$50	\$40	\$20
\$1500	\$150	\$75	\$60	\$30
\$2000	\$200	\$100	\$80	\$40

VISITATIONS, CONFESSIONS, GRAVESIDE MEMORIALS, AND OTHER PRAYERS & SERVICES

Confessions, prayers at your home or business, visitations at home or in the hospital, and graveside memorial services can be scheduled directly with Fr. Kosta. Please feel free to call/text him at 807-357-9984 or email him at fatherkosta@gmail.com.

DIGITAL CHANT AND CHURCH SERVICES RESOURCE

The services for all Sundays and significant feast days of the year are available in Greek and English in PDF format—what many of our churches use for their services. Go to the website, follow along, or download their Digital Chant Stand app.

dcs.goarch.org

I'M ORTHODOX; WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

This booklet answers the fundamental questions about what it means to be an Orthodox Christian. It is available at the website below or through our Priest.

<https://goarchdiocese.ca>

PRAYER BOOKS

We have prayer books printed by our Archdiocese available. The books include morning and evening prayers and prayers for meals and various occasions and circumstances. Please speak with Fr. Kosta about whether you'd like a prayer book for your home or if you'd like to discuss prayer at home, icon corners, and other aspects of practical Orthodoxy.

MANY THANKS TO OUR BULLETIN SPONSORS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORTERS

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Olivia Pietrangelo JD, is a member in good standing with the Greek Orthodox Holy Trinity Church in Thunder Bay. She also works as a lawyer at Larson Lawyers.

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Our records need to be updated and organized, and we need your help. Please tear off this page, complete the form, and return it to the church office, Fr. Kosta, or drop it off at the church's mailbox at your earliest convenience. If you have any questions, please speak with Fr. Kosta.



HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

Members Information Form

(Please Print Clearly)

NAME: _____
(First) (Middle/Maiden) Last

MOBILE PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

BIRTHDAY: _____

CHURCH AFFILIATION (IF NOT ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN): _____

SPOUSE (If Applicable): _____
(First) (Middle/Maiden) Last

MOBILE PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

BIRTHDAY: _____

CHURCH AFFILIATION (IF NOT ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN): _____

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY: _____

PLACE WHERE MARRIAGE WAS SOLEMNIZED: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

HOME PHONE: _____

NAMES OF CHILDREN AND CHURCH AFFILIATION (IF NOT ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN):

Βελτιώνουμε τα αρχεία μας και χρειαζόμαστε τη βοήθεια σας. Παρακαλούμε κόψτε αυτή τη σελίδα, συμπληρώστε τις πληροφορίες σας και επιστρέψτε τη σελίδα στο γραφείο της εκκλησίας, στον π. Κωνσταντίνο, ή αφήστε το στο γραμματοκιβώτιο της εκκλησίας το συντομότερο δυνατόν. Εάν έχετε οποιεσδήποτε ερωτήσεις, μιλήστε με τον π. Κωνσταντίνο.



HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

Πληροφορίες Μελών
(Παρακαλούμε γράψτε καθαρά)

ΟΝΟΜΑ: _____
(Πρώτο) (Μεσαίο / Μητρικό) Επώνυμο

ΚΙΝΗΤΟ ΤΗΛ: _____

EMAIL: _____

ΓΕΝΕΘΛΙΑ: _____

ΘΡΗΣΚΕΥΜΑ (ΑΝ ΟΧΙ ΟΡΘ. ΧΡΙΣΤΑΝΟΣ): _____

ΣΥΖΥΓΟΣ (Εάν ισχύει): _____
(Πρώτο) (Μεσαίο / Μητρικό) Επώνυμο

ΚΙΝΗΤΟ ΤΗΛ: _____

EMAIL: _____

ΓΕΝΕΘΛΙΑ: _____

ΘΡΗΣΚΕΥΜΑ (ΑΝ ΟΧΙ ΟΡΘ. ΧΡΙΣΤΑΝΟΣ): _____

ΕΠΕΤΕΙΟΣ ΓΑΜΟΥ: _____

ΤΟΠΟΣ ΠΟΥ ΕΓΙΝΕ Ο ΓΑΜΟΣ: _____

ΤΑΧΥΔΡΟΜΙΚΗ ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΣΗ: _____

ΤΗΛ. ΣΠΙΤΙΟΥ: _____

ΟΝΟΜΑΤΑ ΠΑΙΔΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΣΤΙΚΟΣ ΛΟΓΟΣ (ΑΝ ΟΧΙ ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΟΙ ΧΡΙΣΤΙΑΝΟΙ):

Εάν επιθυμείτε να ανανεώσετε την ετήσια συνδρομή σας, η πληρωμή μπορεί να γίνει με επιταγή, μετρητά ή ηλεκτρονικό έμβασμα στη διεύθυνση holytrinity@tbaytel.net.