

December 25, 2011 – 28<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost. Tone 3. **THE NATIVITY (BIRTH) ACCORDING TO THE FLESH OF OUR LORD GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST.** Adoration of the Magi: Melchior, Caspar, and Balthasar. Commemoration of the Shepherds in Bethlehem. Massacre of Monk-martyr Jonah and with him 50 Monks and 65 Laymen at St. Tryphon of Pechanga Monastery, by the Swedes (1590). **Epistle:** Gal. 4:4-7. **Gospel:** Matthew 2:1-12.

Next Sunday, Jan. 1 – 29<sup>th</sup> Sun. after Pentecost. Tone 4. Sun. before Theophany. Circumcision of Christ. **Epistle:** 2 Tim. 4:5-8 (Sun. before); Col. 2:8-12. **Gospel:** Mark 1:1-8 (Sun. before); Luke 2:20-21, 40-52.

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**THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S (Dec. 25)**

**TODAY**

11:15 AM Choir Christmas Caroling (in Church)

**MONDAY**

9:30 AM Divine Liturgy: Synaxis of the Theotokos

**TUESDAY**

9:30 AM Divine Liturgy: Firstmartyr and Archdeacon Stephan

**SATURDAY**

5:00 PM Great Vespers & Prayers of Confession

**SUNDAY (Jan. 1)**

9:30 AM Divine Liturgy: Nativity of Christ

11:15 AM Coffee Hour & Sisterhood Mtg. (in the Library)

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+ The Choir will be caroling at various members' homes on Monday, December 26. Please talk with our Choir Director Vadim Stehnach if you have any questions about caroling or would like to participate.



Thank you to everyone who provided food, hams, assistance, and gifts during this Christmastime. May God bless us all to continue providing from the abundance that God has given us, to the glory of the name of the Most-holy Trinity.



**FISH DINNER DATES 2012**

**JANUARY 13 & 27**

**FEBRUARY 10 & 24**

**MARCH 9 & 23**

**APRIL 6**

**ALL DINNERS ARE FRIDAYS FROM 4-7 PM.  
PLEASE SEE JOHN TUTOKI (330-720-3541) WITH  
QUESTIONS OR TO VOLUNTEER.  
MAY GOD BLESS OUR EFFORTS!**



Some sausage orders are still in the Church freezer – please pick yours up if you're able.

If you still haven't paid for sausage received, see Jim Stan or Greg Bobosh to finalize the sale.

*"But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons." (Gal. 4:4-5)*

# The Friend of the Bridegroom

"He Must Increase and I Must Decrease" (John 3:29-30)

## St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church Orthodox Church in America

2220 Reeves Road NE Warren, Ohio 44483  
Church Phone: 330-372-3895 www.stjohnswarren.com  
General Office Hours: 9:00 - 11:00 AM (TThF)

Fr. Jonathan H. Cholcher, Rector...330-980-0134 (Cell)  
Pastoral Emergencies 10 PM - 7 AM ... 330-469-2907  
Judy Reed, Sisterhood/Repasts...Home: 330-793-5145  
Cell: 330-519-5730  
John Tutoki, Hall Coordinator.....330-720-3541

Saturday: Vespers at 5:00 PM Sunday: Liturgy at 9:30 AM  
Feast Day Liturgy - 9:30 AM Sunday School (after Liturgy)

### GENERAL INFORMATION

**12-18-11: 90** (attendance); **\$2,564.00** (offering)  
**12-25-11: candle commemorations** – **Theotokos**: blessed memory of George Datish; **Altar**: blessed memory of George Tutoki, Jr.; **Christ**: blessed memory of Charles Fedash.

### Please Pray for:

**Living: Chariessa** (Stichick, sister of Mark Malacky); **Kerya** (Brisbine); **Raymond** (Flannery); **Vera** (Campbell, at home); **Archpriest Michael** (Mihalick; husband of Janet [Maksimoff]); **Antonio** (Dinello; young son of Vadim Stehnach's co-worker); **Prdn. Vladimir** (Maksimoff; at home); **Aaron** (Meterko, at Community Skilled Nursing); **Joseph** (Sabino; at home); **Olga** (Obletiloff) & **Helen** (Molnar, at Shepherd of the Valley, Howland); **Elizabeth** (Perschka; at home); **Mary Ann** (Zylka, home from surgery at Trumbull Memorial); **Charlotte** (Howell, outpatient knee surgery); **Mary** (Ferko, home from Trumbull Memorial); **Barbara** (Yugovich, surgery at St. Elizabeth's, Boardman).  
**Departed: James** (Tomlin; d. 11/18/11); **Karen** (George; d. 12/5/11); **Mary** (Regnall; d. 12/16/11).

### This Month's Charity – December 2011:

[charity envelope or baskets after Liturgy]  
FOCUS North America

### COMING EVENTS SCHEDULE

Dec. 26/27 Synaxis of Theotokos/Firstmartyr & Archdeacon Stephan  
Jan. 6 Theophany/Baptism of Christ; Mahoning River Blessing  
Jan. 7 Synaxis of St. John the Baptist; House Blessings begin



### SPIRITUAL FORMATION:

#### Sundays:

- Church School** for children age 4-18;
- Adult Class** (in Hall): "God, Church, and the Bishop"
- St. John's Society** (for teens; at 1:30 PM – see weekly schedule for dates)

#### Tuesdays:

- Vespers** at 6:00 PM; followed by
- Path to Salvation Class** (current study: "Watchfulness and Holiness")

#### Wednesdays:

- Divine Liturgy** at 9:30 AM; followed by
- Classic Literature Reading Group** (at the Mocha House on High St.; current book: *East of Eden*, by John Steinbeck)

**Thursdays: Matins** at 6:30 AM

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#### + Charity of the Month – December 2011

This month's Charity is **FOCUS North America**; FOCUS [Fellowship of Orthodox Christians United to Serve] provides and assists ministries for persons in need of occupation, food, shelter, and care, all in the service of God's Kingdom. Please give generously in your Charity Envelope or basket collections following Divine Liturgy.

#### + Youth Lock-in (Dec. 30)

A Cleveland Deanery Youth Lock-in is scheduled for December 30/31 at St. Michael's Church in Broadview Heights. See the flyer on the bulletin board, or speak with Fr. Jonathan for details.

#### + New Sunday Adult Bible Study

"God, Church, and the Bishop" is the new topic of study in the Hall after Divine Liturgy on Sunday mornings. All are invited to get some refreshments and stay for mutual learning.

#### + Old/New Calendar Christmas

In the Orthodox world people are familiar with "Russian" Christmas celebrated on January 7. In fact, "Russian" Christmas (also kept by the Serbian and Coptic Orthodox among others) is celebrated on December 25, *but on the Old Calendar*.

The Old Calendar refers to the Julian Calendar first used in the Roman world by decree of Julius Caesar (d. 44 B.C.). The Julian Calendar was not exactly accurate to the day from year to year, meaning that over the course of time a number of days were lost from the year.

People knew the Julian Calendar was losing days; for instance, the Winter Solstice kept occurring on earlier dates in December, from the 21<sup>st</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup>, etc. So in the late 1500's the Roman Pope, Gregory, decided to revise, or update, the calendar adding back the days that were lost and keeping the length of the year more precisely. This revised, Gregorian Calendar is called the New Calendar which is followed around the world and kept more accurately with the help of modern astronomy.

We celebrate Christmas according to the New Calendar on December 25. Those using the Old Calendar also celebrate Christmas on December 25, but their Old Calendar December 25 is 13 or 14 days behind ours, occurring on our January 7.

#### + Origins of Christmas

It is a common myth that the Feast of Christmas replaced the pagan festival of the "birth of the unconquered sun" established by the emperor Aurelian in 274 A.D. The opposite is true as the Christian feast *predates* that of Aurelian, based on the prophecy of Malachi (3:20): "the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings."

Why is Christmas on December 25? The date is related to St. John the Baptist who was six months older than Jesus Christ (cf. Lk. 1:26). St. John was conceived at the time of the Day of Atonement (Sept. 23; Lk. 1:9-10) and born on June 24, six months prior to December 25, the birth of Jesus Christ.