

• People give all sorts of reasons to excuse their lack of charity, their hard-heartedness. Some say, ‘hard times.’ But if the times are hard for those who have a sufficiency, how much harder are they for the poor? This pretext alone should lead one to give all the more generously. *St. Theophan the Recluse*

• If you give something to one in need, let the cheerfulness of your face precede your gift, and comfort his sorrow with kind words. When you do this, by your gift the gladness of his mind surpasses even the needs of his body. *St. Isaac the Syrian*

• No one can say, “I am poor and hence I have no means of giving alms.” For even if you cannot give as the rich gave their gifts into the temple treasury, give two farthings as the poor widow did, and from you God will consider it a greater gift than the gifts of the rich. *St. Dorotheos*

• NATIVITY SERVICES:

So that the spiritual celebration does not get lost in the activity of Christmas day, make your plans now to come to services and make a confession: Dec. 20–22, Vespers at 6 PM. Dec. 23, 9 AM, Royal Hours. Sat., Dec. 24, 9 AM, Divine Liturgy, and at 5 PM, Matins. Sunday, Dec. 25, 10 AM, Divine Liturgy; Monday, Dec. 26, 9 AM, Liturgy for the Theotokos.

• THANKSGIVING DAY AND THE CHRISTMAS FAST:

Certainly, observe both the Fast, and the Feast to the fullest.

• GRATITUDE:

We offer thanks to God for the good work of Anderson Woodworking, which provided the extensive shelving system in the new storage building. We thank God for those who participated in the Saturday work party. We are thankful for those who arranged the retreat last weekend on Stewardship and Caring for God’s Gifts—especially Fr John Dresko, our Sisterhood, and the parish members who participated. We thank God for those who gave toward the new fresco of the Holy Trinity. FYI: the wall behind the Crucifix will be plastered to match the corresponding wall on the south side of the church.

WELCOME:

To our new Catechumens: Sean and Vipassana and their children Athena and Tatiana; Karen; Karen and Elizabeth. With Rosalyn, George and Edwin we now have ten people preparing for Holy Baptism.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday ~ November 20, 2011

Pre-feast of the Entrance of the  
Theotokos into the Temple

---

• TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Six:

The angelic powers were at Thy tomb; the guards became as dead men. Mary stood by Thy grave, seeking Thy most pure body. Thou didst capture hades, and wast not tempted by it. Thou didst come to the Virgin granting life. O Lord who didst rise from the dead: Glory to Thee.

• KONTAKION OF THE PREFEAST, Tone Four:

The whole world is filled to-day with joy and gladness on the Theotokos’s auspicious and resplendent feast, where-on with great voice it crieth out: she is in truth the heavenly tabernacle.

## ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, Nov. 19: 9 AM, Parish Work Party  
3:30 PM, Catechism: *On Daily Prayer*  
5 PM, Great Vespers, Confessions
- Sunday, Nov. 20: 9 AM, Confessions  
9:30 AM, Reception of Catechumens  
10 AM, Liturgy  
11:30 AM, Church School  
*1 PM, Great Vespers for the Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple*
- Mon., Nov. 21: 8:30 AM, Matins & Divine Liturgy for the Feast
- Wed., Nov. 23: 6 PM, Vespers for Great Martyr Catherine

• Thurs., Nov. 24: 9 AM, Divine Liturgy for St. Catherine and Thanksgiving Day

• FINDING TIME FOR PRAYER—in search of Peace:

The coming week offers many opportunities for worship, prayer, Holy Communion, and fellowship. On Sunday afternoon, at 1 PM, Vespers for the *Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos* will be served (see last week's announcement sheet for a brief explanation of the feast). Normally, we have Vigil for this feast, but, Sunday afternoon presents scheduling problems for many, so we will have only Vespers.

However, Matins for the feast will be served on Monday at 8:30 AM, followed by the Divine Liturgy. At the Matins we hear of the approaching holy day of Christmas in the hymn “Christ is born, glorify Him. Christ is from heaven, meet Him. Christ is on earth, be exalted, O all the earth sing to the Lord...”

On Wednesday evening we will have Vespers at 6 PM for the Great Martyr Catherine, whose fresco adorns the north aisle of our church. There are a number of women in our parish named after this prominent saint who will be celebrating their name day.

On Thursday morning, Thanksgiving Day, the Divine Liturgy will be served, not only because it is St. Catherine Day, but in order to offer our gratitude to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, for the blessings given to us, and to beg forgiveness for our failings at living up to what has been entrusted to us.

• COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL OF THE FOOLISH RICH MAN:

We have begun the Nativity Fast as of November 15—forty days before Christmas. All around us preparations are being made for Christmas. The stores are setting out—have set out—their “holiday” decorations, TV commercials abound with Christmasy themes, all very general in nature, and the colorful Christmas lights will be going up in our neighborhoods. Let us Christians put as much spiritual effort into preparing for Christmas as those worldly organizations do to gain profit. Let us try to please our Lord and Savior as much as the retail stores strive to attract customers. Then, no doubt, our Christmas celebration will be as great as St. Gregory the Wonderworker of Neo-Caesaria described: “On this great day now celebrated, of shattered chains, of Satan shamed, of all demons to flight, the all-destroying death is replaced by life, paradise is opened to the thief, curses be trans-

formed into blessings, all sins forgiven and evil banished, truth is come, and they have proclaimed tidings filled with reverence and love for God, traits pure and immaculate are implanted, virtue is exalted upon the earth, Angels are come together with people, and people make bold to converse with Angels. Whence and why hath all this happened? From this, that God hath descended into the world and exalted mankind unto Heaven.” The Gospel today, from Luke 12, about the Foolish Rich Man, helps us to begin our Christmas preparations by teaching us to safeguard our desires and hopes, so that they remain focused on the goal of acquiring heavenly blessings and riches. Every worldly blessing and all riches come from God, and we must use them in the service of this goal, rather than for the foolish goals of the man in the Parable. Below are a number of commentaries on this theme:

• ...since wealth is from God, when it flows in, dedicate it to God, and it will go out as holy wealth. Share all surpluses with the needy: this will be the same as returning to God what was given by God. Whoever gives to the poor, gives to God. By exhausting wealth, as it were such a man truly grows rich, being enriched by good works—he grows rich for God's sake, in forms of pleasing Him; he grows rich in God, attracting His good will; he grows rich from God, Who sets whoever is faithful in a little over many things; he grows rich from God, and not for himself, for he does not consider himself as an owner, but only a steward and a disburser, whose whole concern consists in satisfying all who come to him in need, and who is especially afraid to spend anything on himself, considering this as an incorrect use of the property entrusted to him. *St. Theophan the Recluse*

• Send your treasures to the heavenly storage room. Deposit your wealth in God's Bank, distributing it to the poor, the orphans and the widows, so that you can receive a million times more in the Second Coming of Christ. *Elder Joseph the Hesychast*

• Almsgiving above all else requires money, but even this shines with a brighter luster when the alms are given from our poverty. The widow who paid in the two mites was poorer than any human, but she outdid them all. *St. John Chrysostom*

• Almsgiving heals the soul's incensive [desiring, impulsive] power; fasting withers sensual desire; prayer purifies the intellect and prepares it for contemplation of created beings. For the Lord has given us commandments which correspond to the powers of the soul. *St. Maximos the Confessor*