

**St. Mary's Orthodox Church
(Dormition of the Mother of God)**

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Sunday February 5, 2017
Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee
Triodion Begins

Afterfeast of the Meeting of our Lord in the Temple; Martyr Agatha of Palermo in Sicily; Saint Polyeuctos, Patriarch of Constantinople; New-Martyr Anthony of Athens; Martyr Theodula of Anazarbus in Cilicia, and with her Martyrs Helladius, Macarius, and Evagrius; Saint Theodosius, Archbishop of Chernigov; New-Martyr Anthony of Athens; New-Martyrs Matushka Agatha of Belo-Russia, Schemamonk Eugene, and Righteous Paramon; Martyr Prince Alfred, at Ely; Saint Theodosios of the Isle of Skopelos; Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos "Seeking Out of the Lost." **Other events:** repose of Righteous Michael, Metropolitan of Serbia

Services for the week of February 5

Saturday, February 11: 6:00 pm Great Vespers

Parish News

WELCOME: to all of our guests today. We are so glad that you have come to enjoy our Orthodox worship. We invite you to come for coffee and sweets in our church hall and to enjoy fellowship with us. May God bless you!

OFFERING: January 29: \$1152.66

FAST FREE WEEK: During this week, we do not fast on Wednesday or Friday as we remember the boastful words of the Pharisee concerning HIS fast. As Orthodox Christians, we are called to remembrance this week that our fasting is but a TOOL to come to know God and that neither through fasting, nor any other good work can we boast of righteousness. The most effective tool in drawing near to God is REPENTANCE...the true meaning of Great Lent.

SEMI ANNUAL MEETING: Will take place next Sunday, February 12. If you are a parishioner of our parish, please attend and listen to a number of reports which will update us all on the condition of our parish as of early 2017.

CHILI COOK OFF! Our men's group (named in honor of the Protomartyr Stephen) is hosting a chili cook off on Saturday, February 18 from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm. Prizes will be offered at 7:30. Further information will be offered on our website and announced today at the Coffee Hour. Please attend and help in any way you can!

WEBSITE IMPROVEMENTS are happening all the time. Please visit our website at least once a week and spread its reach by linking it to your social media accounts. EVERYTHING that is going on in our parish and diocese is announced on the website and it is really beginning to look good. Thanks to Father Peter Paproski (Diocesan Webmaster) for all of his assistance in the updating of this crucial tool.

DIOCESAN ASSESMENTS: Please see our treasurer, Annie Fancher, to fulfill the diocesan duty of paying the assessment. This is a way for the diocese to know who is officially of each parish and assists the diocese in many ways.

PLEASE PRAY for Ernie Chizmar and his wife, Dorothy. Ernie took a fall on Friday evening and is recovering as of this writing at Bluefield Regional. He should be home by Sunday morning at the latest, and the family sends their thanks for any and all cards, prayers and remembrances. Thank you all for your love!

REFLECTION

Speaking about the spread and celebration of Christmas, St. John Chrysostom says: "Magnificent and noble trees when planted in the ground shortly attain great heights and become heavily laden with fruit; so it is with this day." So it is with the day of the Meeting of our Lord in the Temple. (*which we celebrated last Thursday*) In the beginning this day was discussed among Christians but the solemn celebration began from the period of the great Emperor Justinian. During the reign of this emperor, a great pestilence afflicted the people in Constantinople and vicinity so that about five-thousand or more people died daily. At the same time a terrible earthquake occurred in Antioch. Seeing the weakness of man's ability to prevent these misfortunes the emperor, in consultation with the patriarch, ordered a period of fast and prayer throughout the entire empire. And, on the day of the Meeting [The Presentation] itself, arranged great processions throughout the towns and villages that the Lord might show compassion on His people. And truly, the Lord did show compassion; for the epidemic and earthquake ceased at once. This occurred in the year 544 A.D. Following this and from that time on, the Feast of the Presentation [Meeting] began to be celebrated as a major feast of the Lord. The tree, in time, grew and began to bring forth-abundant fruit.

St. Nikolai (Velimirovich)

