

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

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Sunday January 21, 2017

Martyrs Eugenios, Candidus, Valerianus, and Aquilas, at Trebizond (303); Virgin-martyr Agnes of Rome (c. 304) (*see also January 20*); Martyr Neophytus of Nicaea (305); The Holy Four Martyrs of Tyre, by the sword; Venerable Apollonios of the Thebaid, ascetic (4th century) (*see also March 31*); Venerable Maximus the Confessor (662); Martyr Anastasius (662), disciple of St. Maximus the Confessor; Saint Zosimas, Bishop of Syracuse (662); Martyrs Gabriel and Zionios, and companions, under the Bulgarian ruler Omurtag (c. 814-831); Venerable Neophytus of Vatopedi (Mount Athos); Saint Publius, first Bishop of Malta and later Bishop of Athens (c. 112 or c. 161-180) (*see also March 13*); Saint Fructuosus, Bishop of Tarragona in Spain, and Deacons Augurius and Eulogius (259); Martyr Patroclus of Troyes, under Aurelian (ca. 270-275); Saint Epiphanius of Pavia, Bishop of Pavia (496); Saint Brigid (*Briga*), known as St Brigid of Kilbride, venerated around Lismore in Ireland (6th century); Saint Lawdog (6th century); Saint Vimin (*Wynnin, Gwynnin*), a Bishop in Scotland, said to have founded the monastery of Holywood (6th century); Saint Meinrad of Einsiedeln, hermit, martyred by robbers (861); Saint Maccallin (Macallan), Abbot of Saint-Michel-en-Thiérache Abbey and Waulsort (978); Venerable Maximus the Greek of Russia (1556); Venerable Timon, monk (desert-dweller) of Nadeyev and Kostroma (1840); Saint George-John (Mkheidze) of Georgia (1960); New Hieromartyr Elias Berezovsky, Priest of Alma-Ata (1938); **Other Commemorations:** Synaxis of All the Martyred Saints, from Protomartyr Stephen up to the present; Synaxis of the Church of Holy Peace (*Saint Irene*), by the Sea in Constantinople; **Icons:** "Paramythia" Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos (*Vatopedi Mother of Consolation, Mother of God of Vatopedi*), at Vatopedi monastery, Mt. Athos (807); Icon of the Mother of God "Stabbed" (*Greek: "Esphagmeni", Slavonic: "Zaklannaya"*), at Vatopedi monastery (14th century); Icon of the Mother of God "Xenophon Hodigitria" (1730).

Services for the week of January 21

Saturday, January 27: 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!

OFFERINGS: January 14: \$757.00

PLEASE REMEMBER Janet Mikel and Martha Smith as well as Marin Sandu (Dr. Alina's stepfather) who are suffering from serious illness. May God continue to bless and strengthen them!

PLEASE ALSO REMEMBER Georgi Kolomiyets who has suffered a small stroke. His vision is affected, but he is recovering quickly. May God grant him a full recovery!

HOME BLESSINGS begin TOMORROW. If you would like your home to be blessed PLEASE sign up on the form provided next to the charity box in the narthex. Father would like to bless your home as soon as possible. There is very little time until the Great Fast. Appointments need to be made now. Thank you!

HOMILY

About understanding through doing

"Whoever chooses to do His will [God's Will] shall know whether my teaching is from God" (St. John 7:17).

It benefits little to prove by human logic and words that the teaching of Christ is the teaching from God. The fastest and most reliable way to know this is truth is to do the will of God in the same way that Christ proclaimed it and testified to it. Whosoever would do this, that one will know that the teaching of Christ is the teaching from God.

If you cry for the sake of God, you will know what kind of comfort He is. If you are merciful, you know the mercy of God. If you build peace, you will know how it becomes you to be called the Son of God. If you forgive men, you will know God forgives you.

Never can anyone be able to know that the teaching of Christ is the teaching from God, except he who does the Will of God. For only doing the Will of God, fulfilling the commandments of God, that is the key for unlocking Paradise in which God is seen. That is the key for understanding Holy Scripture and all the mysteries of revelation.

St. Basil writes: "In order to understand that which is hidden in Sacred Scripture, purity of life is needed."

What else does the Lord want from us when He teaches us that through doing His will, we arrive at the understanding of the divinity of His teaching? He simply wants that we, by our deeds, become convinced of the divinity of His teaching. He does not want that we be convinced of this in an easy manner, but rather in a more difficult manner, not only by listening but by doing, because whoever is convinced in an easy manner will easily waver and change his mind and for him who is convinced in a difficult manner, it would be difficult for him to change his mind. Brethren, that is why we must endeavor to fulfill the Will of God in order that we may know God and save our soul.

O Lord, All-Wise, help us by the power of Your Holy Spirit to do Your will.

To You be glory and thanks always. Amen.