

December 19: Advent IV



The Lord is at Hand! Philippians 4, 5

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The theme of today is *expectant joy*. The epistle, Philippians 4, 4-7, repeats the introit from last week: *rejoice, because the Lord is at hand*. Soon He will be born for our salvation. The same idea appears in the Gospel, John 1, 19-28, which focuses on *John the Baptist*, the one who heralds the Coming of the Lord. But this Coming is not just a single event. The Lord is always near to us, *coming to us, with great might to succour us* (collect), to help and aid us in our every need.

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The propers for today will be found on pp. 38-41 of the black *Orthodox Missals*.

Christmas Services: Friday 24, Solemn High Mass, 8pm, with chrismation of the Shea family and Jack Leahy; Friday 25, Low Mass, 9.30pm.

Cards with the times on them are available at the back, for you or your family and friends.

That the temple may be beautiful for the Lord, *Lara* is collecting *money for Christmas flowers*. Please give contributions to her, or put a check in the basket, marked flowers.

Today, also, I would ask everyone who can to lend a hand getting the temple ready for Christmas. We especially need strong folks to help with the outside creche.

Today, we will *bless the new altar-bread-maker*. Anyone who would like to make a financial contribution to this wonderful piece of equipment which *Subdeacon Ignatius* has brought to the parish is very welcome to do so.

Congratulations to *Lisa* on her doctorate, and to *Anna* on her graduation.

We are looking for a *member of the parish council*: 18 years old, a voting member for one year (i.e. someone who is a regular communicant and makes a contribution to the parish in some way).

Annual Meeting Sunday January 30, after mass.

PRAYERS

Metropolitan Paul and Archbishop John; Fr Les and Kh Sue; Kay; Justin (Miller); Nick and Debbie; Maksymilian; Paul and Kelli; Paul; Caleb; Dave, Dori, and Brielle; Glenn; Ed; Mia; Galena; Cole; Stella, Bill, and family; Jack (our catechumens); Chris; Bebe and family; Anthony; James; Matthew; Katy; Drew; Melissa; Becky; Alice; Lee; Fr Jason; Brett and Lois; Fr Alex; Erich; Ryan; Madelin

+ Patriarch Gregory; Archpriest Nicholas; Priest Justin; Priest George; Priest Nicholas; Kh Ilene; Subdeacon Lawrence; Valerie; Joanne; Chuck; Roy; Bill; Adrian; Melvin; Don; Le Ann; Henry; Alvin; Egon; Herbert; Penelope

20: Mon: Feria: O Oriens: Fast and abstinence

21: Tues: St. Thomas the Apostle (mass on Wednesday): O Rex gentium: Micah Kitsmiller, feast (St Micah the Prophet)

22: Wed: O Emmanuel; **mass, 6.30pm (St Thomas)**: fasting and abstinence

23: Thurs: O Virgo virginum: **matins, 10; church open to noon: Fr Les and Kh Sue, wedding anniversary**

24: Fri: Vigil of the Nativity: Fast and Abstinence

8.00pm: FIRST MASS OF CHRISTMAS

25: Sat: CHRISTMAS DAY, com. St Anastasia, VM: Mass, 9.30pm: Anna Bundy, feast (St Anastasia); Kh Sue, birthday

PARTING THOUGHT

John speaks of himself as a *voice crying in the wilderness*, a quotation from Isaiah 40, 3. Voice and wilderness are opposites in many ways; the wilderness, the desert is empty, devoid of sound. But the voice which cries makes the desert *blossom like a rose* (Isaiah 35, 1). Everywhere He comes Christ, brings life and joy, even in the barren emptiness.