

# HOLY ASCENSION PARISH

## JANUARY 2009 NEWSLETTER



THE HOLY ASCENSION ORTHODOX CHURCH is the Washington, DC, parish of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCA), under the *omophor* (or the conciliar leadership) of Metropolitan Agafangel of New York and North America. The Holy Ascension Parish was organized on Ascension Day, May 17, 2007.

### BISHOPS & LOCAL CLERGY

✠ Agafangel, Metropolitan of New York and North America of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad ✠  
Andronik, Archbishop of Ottawa & North America ✠  
Joseph (Hrebinka), Vicar Bishop of Washington ✠  
Michael Foster, deacon ✠  
Seraphim Englehardt, subdeacon ✠  
John Hinton, subdeacon ✠  
Daniel Olson, reader & choir director ✠

### ADDRESS

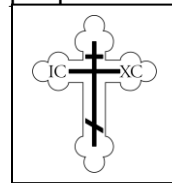
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## PART 1. OUR PARISH

The Holy Ascension parish welcomes all Orthodox people to its sacraments and all people with an interest in Christianity and the abiding Tradition of the Holy Orthodox Church. The immediate Holy Ascension parish background is Russian émigré with many English-speaking converts. Members, visitors, and people in touch online come, however, from all ethnicities: Arab and African, Greek, Romanian, Serb, Ukrainian, as well as American, western European, and far eastern peoples. The Church is One.

<http://ruschurchabroad.com/engindex.htm>  
<http://ruschurchabroad.com/>  
<http://www.holyascension.info/>



## PART 2. WINTER EVENTS

After the November *sobor* (church council), our two American-based bishops have delivered Nativity messages. We have first the Nativity Epistle of the Most Reverend Andronik, ROCA Archbishop of Ottawa and North America:

*“WHAT SHALL WE OFFER YOU, O CHRIST, WHO FOR OUR SAKES HAVE APPEARED ON EARTH AS A MAN?”* [Sticheron to the Lord, proclaimed at the vigil before the feast of the Nativity of Christ]

CONGRATULATIONS ON THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST & THE 2009 NEW YEAR!

**T**o you, dear brothers and sisters in Christ, honorable pastors, clergy, and the faithful flock of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, I direct my greeting and congratulations upon the glorious and salvific feast day of the Birth of our Lord in the flesh!

Once again, on this day, our thoughts return more than 2,000 years back to the cave in Bethlehem to witness the event that which is sacred to all mankind – the Coming of the Lord, our Jesus Christ, to this world.

Like the Star of Bethlehem, our Mother Church, the Church Abroad, has brought us to this joyful event and with the Magi we bring to the Christ Child in place of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, our spiritual gifts, cleansed by fasting, and we glorify the Most Blessed Empress and Mother of God.

In awe and with song we glorify the wonder before our eyes, the Nativity of Christ, and we offer the Christ Child our profound gratitude for all of God’s blessings that have been bestowed upon the Church Abroad.

The year past, 2008, will remain an epochal year in the history of the Russian Church. By the Grace of God, the ruin wrought on our Holy Church in May 2007, on par with that manifested by the Herodians, was overcome in this year for all time. Slowly and with fidelity to the canons, all the elements of the Church Administration of the Church Abroad were restored; the Fifth All-Diaspora Council was convened and concluded; the Synod of Bishops and Council of the Church Abroad were re-established; and the Chairman and First Hierarchy of the Russian Church Abroad was elected – the Most Reverend Agafangel, Metropolitan of Eastern America and New York.

Our Nativity joy is further heightened by the fact that the honorable episcopate of the Church Abroad was further enlarged: the Most Reverend Georgiy (Kravchenko) was named to the Bolgrad cathedra, the Most Reverend Joseph (Hrebinka) was named to the Washington, D.C. cathedra, and two bishops joined the ROCA from the “Tikhon-Seraphim-Gennadiy” branch of the Russian Catacomb Church--Bishop John of Buinsk and Bishop Afanasiy of Vologodsk.

The vessel that is the Church Abroad has weathered the storm through the intercessions of St. John of Shanghai and Holy Hierarch St. Philaret (who was glorified during the Fifth All-Diaspora Council), for which we thank the Lord, born those many years ago in Bethlehem.

Sadly our joy is not complete, as several of our brothers have recently left the redemptive haven of the Church Abroad.

Again, I appeal to all our former brethren, brothers and sisters, who left the Church Abroad at various times and under various circumstances and who may now find themselves in various "jurisdictions," return, for God's sake return to the Church. Leave behind your hurtful aspersions, pride, and enmity and may all of us here on earth join together in the angels' joyful singing: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests!"

+ Archbishop Andronik of Ottawa & North America



BISHOPS, FROM LEFT BISHOP KLEMES OF GARDICON, GEORGIY OF BOLGRADM  
SOPHRONIY OF STPETERSBURG, METROPOLITAN AGAFANGEL, JOSEPH OF  
WASHINGTON, AMBROSE OF METHONE, AND ANDRONIK OF OTTAWA

*Bishop Joseph of Washington has also written a Nativity Epistle to all the ROCA faithful in the Washington DC Diocese.*

In these sacred days of the Glorious Feast of the Nativity of Christ, we always congratulate everyone and wish each other peace and joy.

The majestic angels' prayer heralds "Glory be to God in the highest, and peace on earth." This peace is not the peace as we know it in human terms, a calm which cannot exist on this sinful earth, as it is not the peace which God created in the Garden of Eden for those people who were sinless at that time.

The peace of which the angels sang is a spiritual peace, a peace with God, which can bless anyone and anywhere. It is that peace which the martyrs for Christ possessed and which gave them, and gives us, the strength for the soul to overcome the flesh in any circumstance and in any place.

It is this peace we wish to all of you in these festive days and in the year to come.

Christ is born, glorify Him!

+ Bishop Joseph of Washington, Nativity of Christ, 2008



PART 3. BUILDING COMMITTEE. The committee continues searching for a building or building site convenient to highways in Virginia and Maryland. If you notice a site that looks promising to you, please mention it to the committee--to Mr Herbst, chairman; Mr Gontscharow, Mr Hinton; or Bishop Joseph (Hrebinka).

#### PART 4. JANUARY LITURGIES, *CIVIL CALENDAR*

All Sunday Liturgies begin at 10:00 AM. A luncheon buffet always follows. Volunteers may help with cooking at home and preparation at the church. The food brought so cheer-fully from our homes should try to match the Orthodox calendar rubrics for fasts and feasts, but no one's gift is going to be turned away. We also keep a schedule

that designates a family responsible for cleaning the church after the services. The cleanup duty is for one month at a time. If you wish to volunteer, please see the warden/*starosta*, Mr Gontscharow. He and Mrs Herbst of the Sisterhood also know the rubrics and can advise about Lenten seasonal recipes.

We have several copies of a 2009 Calendar & Typikon prepared and printed with the blessing of Bishop Agafangel in Odessa. These are sold at the candle stand for \$10 each.

On most Saturday afternoons a BIBLE STUDY GROUP meets at 3:30 PM, chaired by Bishop Joseph. Please check beforehand with the church office, to be sure that the study group will meet.



Saturday, January 3 at 5:00 PM, Vigil.

Sunday, January 4, the 29<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
9:40 AM, Hours & Divine Liturgy, *Forefeast of the  
Nativity of Christ. Sunday of the Holy Father.*

Tuesday, January 6, Eve of the Nativity of Christ at  
8:00 AM, Royal Hours, Typica, Great Vespers &  
Divine Liturgy. Tuesday, January 6 at 6:00 PM, Vigil.

Wednesday, January 7, NATIVITY OF CHRIST at 9:40  
AM, Hours & Divine Liturgy.

Thursday, January 8, the Synaxis of the Most Holy  
Theotokos at 7:30 AM, Matins, Hours & Divine  
Liturgy.

Saturday, January 10 at 5:00 PM, Vigil.

Sunday, January 11, the 30<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost at  
9:40 AM, Hours & Divine Liturgy. *Sunday after the  
Nativity of Christ. Righteous David the King, Joseph the*

*Betrothed and James the Brother of the Lord.*

Tuesday, January 13 at 6:00 PM, Vigil.

Wednesday, January 14, CIRCUMCISION OF CHRIST at  
7:40 AM, Hours & Divine Liturgy, *St. Basil the Great.*

Friday, January 16 at 8:00 AM, Royal Hours & Typica.

Saturday, January 17, at 5:00 PM, Vigil.

Sunday, January 18, the 31<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
9:40 am Hours, Divine Liturgy, Great Vesper, & the  
Great Blessing of Water. *Sunday Before Theophany  
Martyrs Theopemptus and Theonas.*

Sunday, January 18 at 5:00 PM, Vigil.

Monday, January 19, THEOPHANY at 7:40 AM, Hours,  
Divine Liturgy & the Great Blessing of Water.

Monday, January 19 at 6:00 PM, Great Vespers & Matins

Tuesday, January 20, *Synaxis of St. John the Baptist* at  
7:40 AM, Hours and Divine Liturgy.

Saturday, January 24 afternoon, Baptism of Captain Adam  
Frick, US Army, into the Holy Orthodox Church.

Saturday, January 24 at 5:00 PM, Vigil.

Sunday, January 25, the 32<sup>d</sup> Sunday after Pentecost, at  
9:40 AM, Hours and Divine Liturgy. *Sunday after  
Theophany. Martyr Tatiana.*

Sunday, January 25 afternoon, Wedding & Crowning of  
Captain Adam Frick & Miss Xenia Herbst.

Saturday, January 31 at 5:00 PM, Vigil

Sunday, February 1, the 33<sup>d</sup> Sunday after Pentecost at  
9:40 AM Hours and Divine Liturgy. *Venerable Macarius  
the Great.*



PART 5. READING & CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.

SUNDAY SCHOOL. Classes continue to meet after liturgy. Smallest children meet with Mrs Edmunds and Mrs Kotchoubey, and middle and high school students meet with Mr Hinton.

PARISH AUTHORS. Bishop Agafangel has an Internet website with a wide range of information regarding the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCA). The English website is <http://ruschurchabroad.com/engindex.htm>.

PART 6. DEVOTIONAL & PRACTICAL

BOOKSTORE. The bookstore sells icons, religious books, and other articles that are part of an Orthodox life, such as liturgical calendars. The new icon of ROCA hierarch Saint Philaret is shown below.



*Please report matters of newsletter distribution and by all means all corrections to the newsletter preparer, Patrick Brown ~ [hpcjfbrown@cox.net](mailto:hpcjfbrown@cox.net).*