

The Martyr

St. George Orthodox Church

5490 Main Street, Trumbull, CT 06611 ✉ Office: 203-268-1968 ✉ Hall: 203-268-4900

Archpriest Dennis Rhodes, Rector

749 Garfield Ave., Bridgeport, CT 06606 ✉ email: DennisR648@hotmail.com

Home: 203-345-3504 ✉ Cell: 203-598-4678

December 25, 2011

Up-coming Services/Events

Today: **The Nativity of our Lord**

10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

January 1: 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

4: 7:00 p.m. Bible Study

6: **The Theophany of our Lord**

9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy and
Blessing of Water

8: 9:30 a.m. Church School

10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

15: 9:30 a.m. Church School

10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

Prayers for Blessings/Health

His Grace **Bishop Nikon**; **Christy Adams**;
Leonora Balla; **Kirsten Battachio (USMC)**;
Paul Betts; **Eileen Bochino**; **Georgika Boria**;
Diana Breaz; **Jeanne Brideau**; **Elvira**
Chadwick; **Jessica Chadwick**; **Eva Demetri**;
Charles Dougiello, Sr.; **Eva Fedash**; **Cindy**
Held; **David Hirst, Sr.**; **Nicholas Hotova**;
Diane Hoffmeyer; **Eva Karajani**; **William**
Kovachi; **Meni Kyriacou**; **Christy Lambert**;
John Louis; **Thomas Matthews**; **Michael**
Molnar; **Kelly Montagna**; **Louise Moran**;
Theodore Morrison; **Michael Nastu**; **Thomas**
Nicholas, Sr.; **James Pando**; **Pandora Plasa**;
Eleanor Polena; **Violet Polena**; **Sarah &**
Alexa Rhodes; **Mark Rizzo**; **Suzanne Russell**;
Mark Sabatino; **Mary Sak**; **David Schutte**;
Noella Sidarweck; **Gloria Simo**; **David**
Snedegar; **Vangel Soter**; **Tessie Sotir**; **Helen**
Tallcouch; **Jo Anne Tallcouch**; **Mary & Peter**
Themel; **Michael**; **Thalia & Leonora Thomas**;
Aphrodita (Rita) Vangel; **William Vasil**;
Marilyn Vissar; **Robert Volpe**; **Galina**
Voronin; **Alexa Wilson**; **Kaitlyn Woolard**;
Quincy.

As a community of Faith our prime responsibility is to support one another – in both faith and action. Prayer combines both. Please submit the name of the person for whom you wish to pray – and remember that when the prayers have been answered, to take that name off the list as well.

Prayers in Memoriam

December

- 25 Harry Kamberis (1948)
Thomas Tallcouch (1971)
Theresa Goures (1980)
Andromaqi Guri (1985)
Elaine Marko (1988)
George Polena (2004)
- 26 Kulla George Jordhamo (1988)
Theodore Michael (1991)
- 27 Elpinichi Costa (1969)
Emilia Gregory (1993)
- 30 Andromaqi Bedgio (1993)
- 31 Violet Polena Hotova (1998)

Coffee Hour

Today: ??????????????????????????????

January 1: Bring your left-over Christmas cookies

8: ??????????????????????????????

15: ??????????????????????????????

If you would like to sponsor coffee hour, please notify Kim O'Brien. Phone: 203-877-2286 or email: IBALL007@aol.com.

Fast-free Season

According to Orthodox Tradition, the period of time from Christmas Day to January 4th, the day before Theophany Eve, is a **Fast-free Period**.

Thank you!

We express our gratitude to the following people who contributed to our Christmas celebration:

- **Jennifer Goetz** and **Cheryl Themel** who decorated the Church;
- **Mary Nikola** who prepared and changed the altar cloths;
- **Ron Dougiello** and **Commerce Hill Funeral Home** for donating the 2012 Wall Calendars and poinsettias;
- **Vi Bowe** and **Laura Chadwick** for decorating the Christmas tree; and
- **Our Church Choir** for singing the responses at the services.

Thank you! Falëminderit!

Father Dennis to be away

Father Dennis will be leaving today to visit his family in Philadelphia. He will return on Wednesday, December 28th.

New Year's Day Coffee Hour

Please bring any left-over Christmas Cookies you might have for Coffee Hour next Sunday, January 1, 2012.

2012 Wall Calendars and Offering Envelopes

The **Wall Calendars** and **Offering Envelopes** for 2012 have arrived. Pick yours up at the Candle Desk.

Teuta Christmas Luncheon

The annual **Teuta Christmas Luncheon** will be held on Sunday, January 15, 2012, at *Ralph n' Rich's Restaurant* on Main Street in Bridgeport.

The luncheon will begin at 12:30 p.m., and will cost \$30 per person. Reservations must be made by January 8th. Send your check, made payable to the Teuta Ladies' Society to *Elsie Gartsu, 21 Mohawk Dr., Trumbull, CT 06611*. Guests are welcome.

Our Church Health Team

The **Church Health Team** has met and has tentatively scheduled the **Natural Church Development Survey** for the first week of January, 2012.

The team will be contacting potential survey takers personally, making sure that all parts of our parish community are represented.

Women's Council news

The Women's Council of Eastern Orthodox Christian Churches of Greater Bridgeport will have their next Regular Monthly Meeting on Saturday, January 14, 1:30 pm at St. George's Albanian Church, 5490 Main Street, Trumbull. We will be selecting a Nominating Committee for our upcoming election in 2012. We do need a good turnout for this meeting, so please plan to attend.

The Women's Council will also hold its Post-Holiday Luncheon on Sunday, January 29, 1:00 pm, at Marissa's Restaurant. Cost is \$30 per person. Menu will include cheese and crackers, salad, pasta, choice of beef, chicken marsala, eggplant or salmon, coffee or tea and dessert. Please see your Church Representative to make reservations.

December Charity Collection

During the month of December, our Charity Collections will help support **Fisher House**, an organization that provides a "Home away from Home" for wounded veterans and their families at VA hospitals around the country.

*Christ is born!
Glorify Him!
Krishti U-Lind!
Lavdërojeni!*

Galatians 4:4-7

Brethren, when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, that he might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba, Father!" So that one is no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, an heir also of God through Jesus Christ.

Matthew 2:1-12

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, Magi came from the East to Jerusalem saying, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East and have come to worship him." But when King Herod heard this, he was troubled, and so was all Jerusalem with him. And gathering together all the chief priests and Scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. And they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for thus it is written by the prophet, 'And you, Bethlehem, of the land of Judah are by no means least among the princes of Judah; for from you shall come forth a leader who shall shepherd my people Israel.'" Then Herod summoned the Magi secretly, and carefully ascertained from them the time when the star had appeared to them. And sending them to Bethlehem he said, "Go and make careful inquiry concerning the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may go and worship him." Now they, having heard the king, went their way. And behold, the star they had seen in the East went before them, until it came and stood over the place where the child was. And when they saw the star they rejoiced exceedingly. And entering the house, they found the child with Mary his mother, and falling down they worshipped him. And opening their treasures, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they went back to their own country by another way.

Galatianëve 4:4-7

Vëllezër: Kur u mbush koha, Perëndia dërgoi të Birin, që lindi prej gruaje dhe që ishte nën ligj, që të shpërblejë ata që ishin nën ligj, që të marrin birësinë. Edhe meqenëse jemi bij, Perëndia dërgoi Shpirtin e Birit të tij në zemrat tuaja, që thërret: Ava, o Atë. Prandaj nuk je më shërbëtor, po bir; dhe nëse je bir, je edhe trashëgimtar i Perëndisë me anë të Krishtit.

Matheut 2:1-12

Si lindi Jisui në Betlehem të Judesë, në ditët e mbretit Irod, ja, ca magë nga Lindja erdhën në Jerusalem, e thoshin: Ku është mbreti i Judenjve që ka lindur? Sepse pamë yllin e tij nga lindja dhe erdhëm që t'i falemi. Edhe mbreti Irod kur dëgjoi, u drodh, dhe bashkë me të edhe gjithë Jerusalemi. Edhe si mblodhi gjithë kryepiftërinjtë dhe shkruesit e popullit, pyeste të merrte vesh prej tyre se ku lind Krishti. Edhe ata i thanë atij: Në Betlehem të Judesë. Sepse kështu është shkruar me anë të profetit: "Edhe ti, Betlehem, dheu i Judesë, aspak nuk je më i vogli ndër zotërinjtë e Judesë; sepse prej teje do të dalë një i parë, i cili do të kullojë popullin tim Izrael". Atëherë Irodi thirri fshehurazi magët, dhe mori vesh mirë nga ata kohën e yllit që ishte dukur. Edhe duke i dërguar ata në Betlehem, tha: Shkoni e vëzhgoni mirë për djalin, dhe si ta gjeni, të më lajmëroni, që të vij edhe unë e t'i falem atij. Edhe ata si dëgjuan mbretin ikën; dhe ja ylli që kishin parë në lindje tek shkante përpara tyre, deri sa erdhi e qëndroi sipër tek ishte djali. Edhe ata kur panë yllin, u gëzuan me gëzim fort të madh. Edhe si erdhën në shtëpi, gjetën djalin bashkë me të ëmën, Marinë, dhe ranë mbi dhe e iu falën atij, dhe si hapën thesaret e tyre, i prunë atij dhurata, ar e temjan e miro. Edhe si iu tregua atyre nga Perëndia në ëndërr të mos kthehen tek Irodi, shkuan në vendin e tyre nga një tjetër udhë.

Christ is Born and the Wise Men Worship

This weekly bulletin insert complements the curriculum published by the Department of Christian Education of the Orthodox Church in America. This and many other Christian Education resources are available at <http://dca.oca.org>.



One of the ways we celebrate the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ on December 25 is to sing the Troparion of the Feast. The words of the hymn describe Jesus Christ as the light of the world, the Sun of Righteousness and the Orient from on high. The hymn also refers to the wise men from the East who followed a star to find this newborn King.

Depictions and descriptions of the wise men differ. They are sometimes called Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar, but have also been given other names. In Western art they are often shown riding camels, presumably to indicate that they come from the East, but in icons they ride horses, a way of showing that they wanted to get to the Savior as quickly as possible. Swift horses can certainly maintain a different pace from that of plodding camels, though the ride was arduous no matter what animals they rode.

While in many representations all three men look to be approximately the same age, icons show one as distinctly older than the other two, emphasizing that the urgent work of seeking salvation is for people of all ages, just as it is for people of every background and origin.

One word that is used by most traditions to identify the three travelers is "magi." This word brings to mind images of men who watched the stars closely and tried to derive wisdom from them, or who "worshipped the stars," as the Troparion states.

The wise men are not the only ones to whom this word is applied. In Acts 8: 9-24 we meet a "magus" (the singular of "magi") named Simon, who says of himself that he is "something great." He is popular and is listened to because he has amazed the people with magic. But Simon's response to the truly great things he sees the apostles doing is all wrong. He hopes to buy the power they have, so that "anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." Peter rebukes him and urges him to repent.

The magi who come to worship Jesus in the cave are quite different. They are ready to humble themselves before this Child. They are willing to be "taught by a star to adore" Him, as the Troparion puts it, not seeking to share His power but just to offer Him gifts. They are ready to accept what God is showing them by means of a star that is different from all the stars they have studied so attentively.

In his poem "Journey of the Magi" T.S. Eliot writes that the men returned to their kingdom homes but were "no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation, With an alien people clutching their gods." The magis' lives were changed, and perhaps they would never again be comfortable. God had shown them something entirely new in the stars, and the only possible response was the one we sing in the Troparion: "O Lord, glory to Thee."

Troparion - Tone 4

Your Nativity, O Christ our God,
Has shone to the world the Light of wisdom!
For by it, those who worshipped the stars,
Were taught by a Star to adore You,
The Sun of Righteousness,
And to know You, the Orient from on High.
O Lord, glory to You!