

ST. DEMETRIOS

Volume XXXV, No 11

Saco, Maine

DECEMBER 2024

“Christ is born; glorify him.

Christ is from heaven; go and meet him.

Christ is on earth; be exalted!”

Be exalted... in the light of love!

St. Gregory the Theologian [Nazianzen, 4th c]

We wish you a grace filled & joyous:

Nativity Season!

A Joyous & Blessed Christmas

and

may His Grace come upon us with the New Year!

In less than 3 weeks the days will start getting longer!

In the fifty-fourth chapter of *On the Incarnation*, St. Athanasius wrote a sentence that has echoed down through the centuries even into our own time as a brilliant summary of the Gospel.

He wrote this:

“God became man so that man might become god”

(54:3).

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:1,14).

“To those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God” (John 1:12).

By God’s own glory and power, “you may come to partake in the divine nature” (2 Pet 1:4).

*With Christ taking flesh from the Theotokos, we are truly “adopted” as The Father’s children,
we are now Christ’s brothers & sisters!*

Blessed Christmas!

NATIVITY DAY CAMP FOR KIDS

Saturday, Dec 14th

10:00am - 2:30pm @ St. Demetrios

Lunch provided

RSVP by Dec 7th to Lisa Tompkins:

Email: lisatompk@gmail.com

Call or Text: 207-286-6526

For: 14yo and under

Contact Lisa with any questions

UNDERSTANDING THE NATIVITY FAST IN THE CHURCH

The Nativity Fast, a beautiful and spiritually enriching time in the Orthodox Christian Church, prepares us for the joyous celebration of the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. This period is steeped in tradition and offers a wonderful opportunity to deepen our faith and reflect on the true meaning of Christmas.

WHAT IS THIS FAST?

The Fast, is one of the canonical fasting seasons in the Church. Its roots can be traced back to the early Christian Church, with references found in both the Old and New Testaments. This period prepares us for the Feast of the Nativity of Christ.

Historically, it was established to mirror the 40-day fast of Moses on Mount Sinai before receiving the Ten Commandments (Ex 34:28). It also reflects the 40 days Christ fasted in the desert before beginning His public ministry (Mat 4:1-11). These biblical references underscore the importance of fasting as a means of drawing closer to God, and struggling with drawing closer to the Creator, through the cleansing our bodies and souls, and preparing for significant spiritual events.

Since the Nativity is a joyous event, this Fast is much more lax, even joyous one can say.

Christ is Born!

* * * * *

A quick word about the Fast.... from St John Chrysostom:

....abstaining from food during this period of preparation does us no good if we do not also:

"... the eye and the ear and the feet and the hands and all the members of our bodies.

Let the hands fast, by being free of avarice.

Let the feet fast, by ceasing to run after sin.

Let the eyes fast, by disciplining them not to glare at that which is sinful.

Let the ear fast, by not listening to evil talk and gossip.

Let the mouth fast from foul words and unjust criticism.

***For what good is it if we abstain from meats and fishes,
but bite and devour our brothers?"***

CHRISTMAS CHURCH NEEDS 2024:

Listed below are some of the Christmas needs.

FMI: *Please check with or call Paul MacDowell. Thank you.*

CHRISTMAS NEEDS (Call Paul MacDowell @712-0016)

Charcoal	\$50 each box
6 Wreaths, Large	\$30 each
Incense	\$100
1 Nativity Icon	\$50
1 Theophany Icon	\$50
Communion Cloths	We have enough.

.....
Flowers *** See note

Poinsettias, Large only *** See note

***NOTE: *Items like flowers, poinsettias etc., we ask that you offer a monetary donation. Prices fluctuate so it is difficult to quote prices. If you would like to bring these items in, please let Paul know soon.*

.....
Please call the office (weekdays) if you would like to donate the following item:

XL Candles --- 12 needed @ \$9 each, needed for the Proskomidi. Total cost is \$108.
This is a special gift, the XL Lambatha (candle) to burn from the Preparation (Proskomidi) Service to the end of Liturgy. During the "Proskomidi" all the Orthodox names given to +Fr. Basil are commemorated (prayed for). For those who are non-Orthodox, they are prayed for before the "Proskomidi" begins.

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2024 NATIVITY VIGIL LIGHT

For the Nativity, we are offering a Family or Individual VIGIL LIGHT. It will be lit at every service. The cost is \$25. Make your check payable to St. Demetrios, earmarked Vigil Light. Please call/see/speak with Stephanie during the week, so that your light can be properly prepared. If you mail in a request, please put Attn: Stephanie on the envelope. Thank you.

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CHRISTMAS GIFTS... BOOKSTORE!

In our showcase/bookstore we have many-many new wonderful gifts/books of "Faith". We also have **CHILDREN'S books!**

As you consider gifts & stocking stuffers, come by any day to look/browse.

It is important with all the other things we give to others, that spiritual gifts should be part of this.

Notes (December 2024)

THE NATIVITY FAST, ADVENT

The 40 days end on December 24 (January 6)

The Christmas Fast is similar to that of the Apostles' Fast in June. We abstain from meat and dairy products.

The custom is to begin every day with a little Holy Water & Antidhoron, if we are NOT attending Liturgy. (Pick up at the church.)

On Wednesdays and Fridays we also do not eat fish, olive oil and wine. On the other days, it is permitted to eat fish along with o/o and wine. During the last 12 days preceding Christmas the fast become stricter; we completely abstain from fish.

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Daily Liturgies

As we do every year, starting Dec 1, we again will begin the daily Liturgies in our side chapel of the Life Giving Spring.

We need: The Offering/Prosforo every day; **NO** wine; **EXTRA** Large CANDLES \$9 a piece (a total of about a dozen – *NOT the large ones @ the Pangari* - ask Fr Basil OR in the office).

Time: At **8:15am** we will read the First Hour (about 15-20 min), then begin the Liturgy. Check the Calendar...

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Bible Study

Our **Bible Study**, is on **Tuesdays @ 6:00-7:15pm.**

Last one on Dec. 10.

The Epistle of St Paul to the **EPHESSIANS.**

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Email/call to Fr Basil!

Please **do NOT email** Fr Basil.

Call the office or text him.

For appointments always connect with the office.

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Let it Snow!!

Remember, in case of **INCLEMENT** weather always call first for any & all activities/services!!

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Notes continued for December 2024

CANISTERS. Just a reminder to take one of the Canisters (located at the Candle Stand), and fill it with quarters. Bring the filled canister to the office when ready. Thank you for your offering.

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SACO FOOD PANTRY NEEDS FOR 2024 continues for Christmas.

Our annual food drive for the Saco Food Pantry is here. Please consider picking up some of the following items. We are asking that you only bring these items because the Food Pantry recipients rely on hot "winter foods". Thank you. Please leave your items in the Narthex.

- **Chunky Soups or Hearty Soups**
- **Complete Pancake Mix (buy only Complete)**
- **Pancake Syrup**
- **Canned Pasta or Canned Dinty Moore Stew or Chili**

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CHURCH COUNCIL ELECTIONS, NAMES SUBMITTED INCLUDE: The Nominating Committee (Sam Anagnostis, Cindy Carr, Chris Hadjaris, Dr. Phil Kowash, and Maria Zafirson), along with Fr. Basil Arabatzis have accepted the Church Council Candidates. They are: Thomas Carr, Michael Christakis, Pota Kouzounas Desjardins, Stavro Nashi, Adriana Popa, Antonia Spirounias, Irene Steltzer, Caton Tompkins from the present council; and Fox Christopher Silva, Asha Tompkins and Stephen Zafirson.

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TWO CARVED ICONS AVAILABLE. FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED.

Once again, we are blessed with two donated carved Icons, one of the Panaghia and one of St. Nicholas. Minimum donation is \$400 (each). To benefit St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church. Please see Fr. Basil or Stephanie.

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WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA will be at the St. Demetrios Cemetery on Saturday, December 14th. As to time and other details, they will be announced as we receive them.

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HELLENIC SOCIETY OF MAINE has events scheduled for December.

- **Sun. Dec 8**, at 3:00pm, Talk on the 50th Anniversary of the war on Cyprus and the fall of the Greek Junta by Victor Papacosma.
- **Thurs. Dec. 12**, at 7:00pm. **Film** discussion of *Mythopathy* (Notias) (2016) by Tassos Boulmetis. View film online from Dec. 5-12.
- **Sun. Jan 12**, at 3:00pm, **2nd Biblia Mazi**: book discussion of *A Thousand Ships* by Natalie Haynes.
- **TBA: January Vasilopita will be announced.**

December 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 14 th Sunday of Luke	2 8:15am Liturgy Proph Habakkuk Porphyrios Προφ Αβακουμ	3 8:15am Liturgy Proph Zepheniah Προφ Σοφονιας	4 oo/wine 8:15am Liturgy St. Barbara Αγ Βαρβαρα	5 8:15am Liturgy St. Savas Αγ Σαββα	6 oo/wine 8:15am Liturgy St. Nicholas Αγ Νιλολαου	7
Nativity Fast						
		6:00pm Bible Study/ Faith		Feast Day Vespers @ Portsmouth, NH St. Nicholas Αγ Νιλολαου	5:00pm Liturgy St. Ambrose Αγ Αμβροσιος	
8 10 th Sunday of Luke	9 8:15am Liturgy Conception of Theotokos by St. Anna	10 8:15am Liturgy St. Menas Αγ Μηννα	11 8:15am Liturgy St. Daniel Αγ Δανηλ	12 8:15am Liturgy St. Spyridon Αγ Σπυριδον	13 8:15am Liturgy St. Lucia Αγ Λουκια	14 9:00am Wreaths Across America – begins with Prayer .
Nativity Fast						
		6:00pm Bible Study/ Faith		6:00pm Church Council	5:00pm Liturgy St. Thyrsos Αγ Θυρσος	Youth Day/Retreat
15 The Holy Forefathers	16 8:15am Liturgy Proph Haggai Προφ Αγγεου	17 8:15am Liturgy Proph Daniel/St. Dionysios Προφ Δανηλ/Αγ Διονυσιου	18 8:15am Liturgy St. Sebastian Αγ Σεβαστιανος	19 8:15am Liturgy Sts Boniface & Aglaia Αγ Βονιφατιος & Αγλαις	20 oo/wine 8:15am Liturgy St. Ignatios Αγ Ιγνατιου	21
Nativity Fast						
					5:00pm Liturgy St. Juliana Αγ Ιουλιανη	
22 Sunday before the Nativity	23 Liturgy St. Paul Αγ Παυλου	24	25 NO Fast	26	27 NO Fast	28
Nativity Fast		<u>Christ is Born.</u> <i>Glorify Him!</i>		Office closed		
29 Sunday after the Nativity	30	31	Holy-days <u>Schedule of Services</u> included. <i>(Back of calendar)</i> <u>For Dec 23 - Jan 7.</u>			

(Οι Ωρες των Ακολουθιων)

(2024–2025)

Δευ. 23 Δεκ. – 8:00πμ Οι Βασιλικες Ωρες, 9:00πμ Λειτουργια

Τρι. 24 Δεκ. – **Το Πρωι** – 8:30πμ Εσπερινος, 9:00πμ Λειτουργια (Μ. Βασιλειου) Εσπερινος Χριστουγεννων

Το Βραδυ – 5:30μμ Ορθρος Χριστουγεννων, 6:30μμ Λειτουργια (Μ. Βασιλειου).

Τετ. 25 Δεκ. – ΔΕΝ θα εχουμε Ακολουθιες

Κυρ. 29 Ιαν. – 9:00πμ Ορθρος & 10:00πμ Θ. Λειτουργια (Αγ. Χρυσοστομου)

Τετ. 1 Ιαν. – 8:30πμ Ορθρος, 9:30πμ Λειτουργια (Μ. Βασιλειου)
Περιτομη του Κυριου & του Αγ Βασιλειου.

ΒΑΣΙΛΟΠΙΤΑ!

Κυρ. 5 Ιαν. – 8:30πμ οι Ωρες Θεοφανιων,
9:30πμ Εσπερ.Θ. Λειτουργια (Μ. Βασιλειου), 10:30πμ Μ. Αγιασμος Θεοφανιων.

Δευ. 6 Ιαν. – 8:30πμ Ορθρος, 9:45πμ Θ. Λειτουργια (Αγ. Χρυσοστομου) & 10:30πμ Μ. Αγιασμος Θεοφανιων.

Τρι. 7 Ιαν. – ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΑ Χριστουγεννα, Του Αγ. Προδρομου
9:00πμ Ορθρος & 10:00πμ Θ. Λειτουργια (Αγ. Χρυσοστομου)

ΚΑΛΛΑ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥΓΕΝΝΑ

Nativity of our Lord (2024) & Theophany (2025)

(Schedule of services.)

Mon. Dec. 23 – 8:00am Service of the Nativity Hours, followed by 9:00am Liturgy.

Tues. Dec. 24 – **MORNING** 8:30am Great Vespers with 9:00am Liturgy (Lit of St. Basil) for the **NATIVITY of our Lord.**

EVENING 5:30pm Orthros, 6:30pm Liturgy (Lit of St. John Chrysostom) (?? CAROLS??) the **NATIVITY of our Lord.**

Wed. Dec. 25 – **NO** Services.

Sun. Dec. 29 – (**Normal Hours**) 9:00am Orthros & by 10:00am Liturgy (Lit of St. John Chrysostom).

Wed. Jan. 1 – 8:30am Orthros, 9:30am Div Liturgy (Lit of St. Basil), Feast of the Circumcision of our Lord & St. Basil
w/ **VASILOPITA** (St. Basil's Bread)

Sun. Jan. 5 – **MORNING** 8:30am The service of the Hours of **THEOPHANY.**
9:30am Vespers Liturgy (Lit of St. Basil) 10:30am Blessing of Waters.
Eve of the Feast of **THEOPHANY.**

Mon. Jan. 6 – 8:30am Orthros, 9:45am Liturgy (St. Chrysostom)
10:30am Blessing of Waters. Feast of **THEOPHANY.**

Tues. Jan 7 – (**Normal Hours**) 9:00am Orthros & by 10:00am Liturgy
Orthodox Christmas & St. John the Baptist (Lit of St. John Chrysostom).

Christ Is Born! Glorify Him!

Notes continued for December 2024

SAINT NICHOLAS – Tele-Santa Program:

Welcome to the home of the St. Nicholas Tele-Santa Program!

The St. Nicholas Tele-Santa Program is a free service provided in collaboration with the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America to bring children closer to the church via a video call from Santa Claus, originally Saint Nicholas of Myra, a priest and bishop of the Greek Orthodox Church.

Use this site www.stnicholas-tele-santa.com ... to book a call with Santa for the child in your life, or if you'd like to join the team, learn about volunteer opportunities as well!

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MUSICIANS, PLEASE READ:

Greetings,

My name is Sofia Kirtchev and I am a Junior at Falmouth high school and a member of the Portland Greek Church. The Hellenic Society Paideia of Maine would like to gather folks from three communities (Portland, Saco and Lewiston) who would be willing to share their musical talents in an orchestra to primarily play Greek music. I have been playing oboe in the Portland Youth Wind Ensemble and Portland Youth Symphony Orchestra for several years and I will be working with Dr. Annie Antonacos – USM Music Professor in this effort. All musicians are welcome! Please let us know via email or feel free to call us at 207-239-6914 or if any questions, email @sofia.m.kirtchev@gmail.com or annieantonacos@gmail.com.

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** ** ** **

ALBANIAN CHURCH CALLS FOR IMMEDIATE CEASEFIRE IN GAZA

Tirana, October 24, 2024

orthodoxalbania.org

The Albanian Orthodox Church, headed by His Beatitude Archbishop Anastasios, issued a statement on the war in Gaza.

The warring parties must give up repeated retaliations and work for an immediate ceasefire, the Church states:

The atrocities in Gaza, with tens of thousands of victims, mostly innocent civilians, children, the elderly, the sick, are causing deep suffering. There is a need to achieve an immediate ceasefire. The parties involved must show prudence and reasoning, prioritizing the value of each human being and peaceful coexistence over continued violence with incalculable consequences. Repeated retaliation does not solve the problem. All major powers must contribute to the way out of this catastrophic human and ecological tragedy.

Building Maintenance – October, 2024

- Power washing has been completed & paid for - \$4,600
- Surveillance/Security System has been completed & paid for - \$6,451
- The Painting # 1 & # 2 installments has been paid - \$20,000
- New Refrigerator & Atlas WIH-5 Hot Food Drop-in Well Unit - \$11,356
- Red Cedar Shingles replaced, where needed, cost-to-date - \$1,178
- Re-stripping parking lot - \$937
- To-date total expenditures are \$44,487

- Refrigerator & Hot Food Well Unit paid for by an anonymous donor - \$11,676
- The Lacones Donation - \$30,000
- To-date total donations are \$41,676

- Net costs to St Demetrios \$2,846

- At the April 4th General Assembly, a vote was taken to proceed with maintenance repairs up to \$90,000

- Future expected expenses: \$33,000
 - Exterior painting & trim \$20,000
 - Exterior door \$2,000
 - Dome windows controls \$5,000
 - Dome windows trim \$6,000

- Contingency \$20,000

Monthly Financial Report. 11/14/2024

(Operating Budget 2024)

Mortgage Balance: \$96,035

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCIAL UPDATE as of October 31, 2024

Total Stewards: 177

Total Stewardship Received: \$146,309

<u>Month</u>	<u>Income (\$)</u>	<u>Expenses (\$)</u>	<u>Operating account (\$)</u>
January	\$22,632	\$21,277	\$1,355
February	\$40,905	\$31,845	\$10,414
March	\$12,548	\$19,854	\$3,110
April	\$25,951	\$26,924	\$2,136
May	\$19,184	\$21,156	\$774
June	\$22,267	\$23,747	-\$705
July	\$14,762	\$22,746	-\$7,984
August	\$13,825	\$23,282	-18,046
September	\$19,729	\$21,292	-\$19,609
October	\$13,525	\$23,189	-\$29,273

We ended October in the **Red** **-\$29,273!** {Compare to 2023: -18,849}.

Our income is down by \$7,000 (compared to *LAST YEAR*).

Our Expenses are up by \$4,000 (compared to *LAST YEAR*).

Compare: Year to date:

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
Total Income:	\$212,011	\$205,328
Total Expenses:	\$230,348	\$234,600

Thank You!!

Let our giving reflect our faith!

KEEP THE FAITH !

GOSPEL READING, according to Luke 17:20-25

At that time, when Jesus was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, he answered them, "The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; nor will they say, 'Lo, here it is!' or 'There!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you." And he said to the disciples, "The days are coming when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and you will not see it. And they will say to you, 'Lo, there!' or 'Lo, here!' Do not go, do not follow them. For as the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one side to the other, so will the Son of man be in his day. But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation."

Thank you Sponsors for making our St. Demetrios Newsletter possible!



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Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Boston

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9:00 AM Orthros

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Winter hours start September 29.

Fr. Basil Arabatzis, Presbyter

Office Hours: Mon-Fri 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Website: stdemetriosofmaine.com

Church: (207) 284-5651

FAX: (207) 283-4641

Home: (207) 284-6170

As the Nicene Creed puts it, it was

'for us men and for our salvation'

that He 'came down from heaven, and was incarnate

by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and became man.'

τὸν δι' ἡμᾶς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους καὶ διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν

κατελθόντα ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν, καὶ σαρκωθέντα

ἐκ Πνεύματος Ἁγίου καὶ Μαρίας τῆς παρθένου, καὶ ἐνανθρωπήσαντα.

Saint Demetrios

Greek Orthodox Church

186 Bradley Street

Saco, ME 04072

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