

**Russian Orthodox Church of the
Resurrection of Christ**

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Schedule for the Week of January 3 - 9, 2010

Sunday Jan 3	Sunday of the Holy Fathers СВЯТЫХ ОТЕЦ
Please see Christmas Service Schedule on this page	
Saturday Jan 9	5:30 PM Vigil
Sunday Jan 10	Sunday after Nativity СВЯТЫХ БОГООТЕЦ 8:30 AM Confessions, Nocturns 9:00 AM Divine Liturgy / Литургия

Christmas Service Schedule

At the Skete, 1201 Hathaway Lane NE:

Wednesday, January 6, 2010:
9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

*The following at St. Mary's OCA Cathedral
1701 5th St NE, Mpls, MN 55413:*

Wednesday, 6:30 PM -- Nativity Vigil

Thursday, January 7, 2010:
10:00 AM Divine Liturgy

Christmas Donation

***Please consider a donation to the Church for
decorating for the Feast of Christ's Nativity:***

From: _____

In Honor/Memory of: _____

Thank You!

Рождество Христово

Зачатие и Рождение Господа от Приснодевы Марии указывают, какая чистота и бесстрастность, смирение и жажда Бога требуются для совершенной меры облагодатствования. Само же Воплощение Христа обнаруживает предельное Его смирение и самоограничение. Нищета Вифлеемской пещеры и яслей также показывает, что величие Божественной любви не связано со славою мира сего и что, бесконечно дорожа свободой человека, Господь влечет его к Себе, не поражая его воображение внешним величием. Но пастухам и мудрецам Востока было дано откровение о Новорожденном Богомладенце, первым – за смирение, вторым – за жажду познания истины. *(Епископ Александр Семенов-Тянь-Шанский)*

**Христос Родается! Славите Его!
Christ is Born! Let us glorify Him!**

Господь наш Иисус Христос, Спаситель мира, родился от Пресвятой Девы Марии в царствование императора Августа (Октавия) в г. Вифлееме. Август повелел сделать всенародную перепись во всей Римской империи, к которой относилась тогда и Палестина. У евреев был обычай вести народные переписи по коленам, племенам и родам. Всякое колено и род имели свои определенные города, потому Дева Мария и прав. Иосиф, как происходившие из рода Давидова, должны были прийти в Вифлеем (город Давид). В Вифлееме они не нашли ни одного свободного места в гостинице. В известняковой пещере, предназначенной для стойла, в холодную земную ночь, в обстановке, лишенной не только земного величия, но даже обыкновенного удобства – родился Богочеловек, Спаситель мира. Но среди полнотной тишины весть о Рождестве услышали от Ангела Господня смиренные пастухи, которые перевымы удостоились поклониться Спасителю. Чудесною звездой Рождество было возвещено и волхвам, в лице которых весь языческий мир, незримо для него самого, преклонил свои колена пред истинным Богом.

The adoration of the magi

The Gospel account of the adoration of the magi has an important meaning for the history of Christianity. This is primarily an account of Christ's appearance to the pagans.

Joseph and the holy Mother of God, together with the Infant Jesus, were still in Bethlehem when the magi arrived in Jerusalem from the far-away lands in the East. Magi, or wise men, was the name given to learned people who observed and studied the stars. At that time people believed that at the birth of a great man a new star appeared in heaven. Many pagans within Persia, having been told by the dispersed Jews, knew of the forthcoming Messiah – the Great King of Israel. From the Jews they could also know of the following prophecy of Balaam concerning the Messiah: "I shall see Him, but not now. I shall behold Him, but not nigh. There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab" (Numbers 24:17); here "Moab" represents the Messiah's enemies. The Persian magi expected a new star to appear in heaven when the promised King was born. Although the prophecy of Balaam spoke of a star in the spiritual sense, in order to bring the pagans to faith the Lord in His mercy gave a sign in the heavens in the form of the appearance of an extraordinary star. Upon seeing it, the magi understood that the awaited King had been born.

After a lengthy and prolonged journey, they finally reached the capital of the Jewish kingdom, Jerusalem, and began to inquire: "Where is He that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the east and have come to worship Him." These words of such dignified strangers excited the majority of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and especially King Herod, who was immediately informed of the arrival of the mysterious Eastern sages.

From the first days of his reign Herod sat on a shaky throne. The people hated him, looking upon him as an usurper of the throne of David and a tyrant, and despised him as a pagan. The last years of Herod's life were further complicated by personal misfortunes and bloody reprisals. He became inordinately suspicious of everyone, and executed his obvious and imaginary enemies at the slightest provocation. For this reason several of Herod's children perished, and so did his wife, whom he had ardently loved. Ailing and decrepit, Herod now lived in his new palace on Mount Zion. Hearing of the newborn King, he became especially agitated, fearing that people would make use of his old age to take away his power and pass it on to the newborn King.

In order to determine who exactly was the new pretender to his throne, Herod assembled all the priests and scribes – people who knew the Scriptures well – and asked them: "Where is Christ due to be born?" They replied: "In the Judean city of Bethlehem, because thus it is written in the book of the Prophet Micah." Then Herod secretly summoned the magi to him, elicited from them the time of the star's appearance, and sent them to Bethlehem. Putting on a pious air, the cunning Herod said to them: "Go and search diligently for the Infant, and when you have found Him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship

Him also." In reality Herod was planning to make use of the information in order to murder the Infant.

After listening to King Herod and without suspecting anything, the magi departed for Bethlehem. And once again the same star which they saw in the East now appeared in the sky and, moving across the sky, it went before them, showing them the way. In Bethlehem the star stopped over the place where the newborn Infant Jesus was staying.

The magi entered the house and saw the Infant Jesus and His Mother. They bowed down to the ground before Him and presented their gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh (precious aromatic oil). In the gifts of the magi one can see the following symbolic meaning: they gave Him gold as to a King, frankincense as to God, and myrrh as to a Man who was due to die.

Having worshipped the long-awaited King, the magi planned to return the next day to Jerusalem and to Herod. However, an Angel appeared to them in a dream, revealed Herod's perfidious intentions to them, and commanded them to return to their countries by another route that did not pass near Jerusalem. Tradition has preserved the names of the magi, who later became Christians. They were Melchior, Gaspar, and Balthasar.

The account of Christ's Nativity also makes note of the wondrous fact that the first people to worship the Saviour born into the world were the shepherds, who had nothing to give Him except the treasure chest of their hearts, full of simplicity, faith, and humility. Only much later came the magi from the East, adorned with learning and wisdom, who with pious joy gave the Divine Infant their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. They had to undertake a long and arduous journey before they reached Judea, and even when they arrived in Jerusalem, they still could not straightaway find the birthplace of the King of the Jews. Does this not speak of the fact that both simplicity of the heart and honest learnedness equally lead to Christ? But the first path is more direct, shorter, and truer than the second. The shepherds were directly guided by the angels, while the magi had to "learn" from the silent star and, through Herod, from the Jewish scribes and elders. They achieved their desired goal only by overcoming great difficulties and dangers, and did not hear the celestial harmony that sounded over the earth: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, goodwill among men."

Bishop Alexander (Mileant)

