

borhood families in need. Thanks to your generosity, the Charity Fund is able to purchase all the supplies for these deliveries. We ask that you contribute to the Charity Fund this Thanksgiving, out of gratitude to God and concern for those less fortunate. Please join us to assemble and distribute the baskets after Liturgy on Nov. 20.

The Nativity Fast begins on Nov. 15, to prepare us for the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ. We observe the Nativity Fast by refraining from meat and rich foods, by prayer and confession, and by giving to the needy. May we be blessed with peace!

On Nov. 21, we celebrate **Entry of the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary into the Temple.** We join with Joachim and Anna in giving thanks for the Virgin Mary, brought into the Temple with joy. Through their offering, the child Mary was raised up to become a temple and dwelling-place for God the Word—Jesus Christ our Lord. This year, the feast lands on a Monday, so we will observe the eve with abbreviated **Vespers following the Sunday liturgy.** For the feast itself, we will celebrate **Divine Liturgy at 9:30 on Monday, Nov. 21.**

We will observe Thanksgiving Day with the **Akathist Service, “Glory to God for all things,”** on Thurs., Nov. 24, at 10 AM. This simple yet profound service is not long, but it does give thanks for every aspect of creation. Consider making it part of your own Thanksgiving.

Our **Annual Parish Meeting** is planned for Sunday, Dec. 4. Reports will be distributed in mid-November.

Rector’s Letter, November, 2022

Dear brothers and sisters:

“Let us give thanks to the Lord.” This is the fundamental calling of all Christians, to give thanks, and it is a blessing that we are reminded of it with Thanksgiving Day each November. God has created the world and all that dwells in it. He has given us life and every gift that we possess. He has sent his Son Jesus Christ to free us from the power of death and share eternal life with us. And in return, we are supposed to do what God created us in the beginning to do: give thanks.

Giving thanks means first that we acknowledge that we are not “self-made men”: “Know that the Lord, he is God; it is he who has made us, and not we ourselves” (Psalm 100:3). If we are pleased with our talents, our accomplishments, or the good things in life, then we need to give thanks to God for giving them to us. If we are not going hungry this day, we need to give thanks to God for the food we are about to eat. If we have been preserved from harm, we need to give thanks for God’s mercy. When we go to sleep, we give thanks for the day that is past, and when we wake up, we give thanks for the day that is to come. And of course we need to come together for the Divine Liturgy, to take up our part in the work of thanksgiving (“Let us give thanks to the Lord!” “It is meet and right...”).

When we give thanks, we turn away from sin and selfishness. We avoid fighting to please ourselves or to grab what we can get, because we remember that God has provided for us. We avoid envy and resentment, because we remember everything any of us has is a gift. We are generous because the Lord told us, "Freely you have received, freely give" (Matthew 10:8). With our "time, talent, and treasure," we offer to God the first and best of our labors, not the leftovers, because God has already offered to us the priceless treasures of the kingdom.

We can be bold with God as a thanksgiving people. We are tempted to spend a lot of time and energy worrying about the problems of our church and complaining about our failures. But God invites us to be confident in his goodness even in the midst of these trials. He even asks us to test him in this:

"Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house, and try me now in this," says the Lord of hosts. "See if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it" (Malachi 3:10).

As God's own people, we do not need to fear any trouble; we can give offerings of thanksgiving to God no matter what, because God has promised to work all things for good, and his promises are sure.

Yours in Christ,



Around the Parish

We have begun a bi-monthly series **Exploring Our Faith**. Sessions will take place online via Zoom. We will explore your questions about the Orthodox Faith this month on Wednesdays, Nov. 2 and 16. If you have been wondering how our faith connects with a particular aspect of life, or you would like to learn more about a point of scripture, history, the saints, prayer or worship, submit your suggestion to Fr. Joshua.

On Sunday, Nov. 6, we will celebrate the annual **Endowment Fund Thanksgiving and Memorial Service** at the conclusion of the Liturgy.

On Tuesday, Nov. 8, we celebrate the **Feast of the Synaxis (Assembly) of the Archangel Michael and the Other Bodiless Powers: Archangels Gabriel, Raphael, Uriel, Selaphiel, Jegudiel, and Barachiel**. We plan to celebrate the eve with Great Vespers at 6:00 on Monday, Nov. 7, and the feast day itself with Divine Liturgy at 9:30.

On Sunday, Nov. 13, we will resume our 25 year tradition of our **annual Thanksgiving Feast**, following the Divine Liturgy. We ask parishioners to prepare a dish traditionally found on your Thanksgiving feast. Please bring your hot and ready to serve contribution to the Fellowship Room before the service begins. Please see Donna Leonowich to make a reservation and learn what is needed for the feast.

As we prepare to celebrate Thanksgiving, our church is organizing **deliveries of Thanksgiving fixings and other food stocks for six neigh-**