



**St. Nicholas**

MAIN STREET  
JACOBS CREEK, PA.

**Orthodox Church**

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**January 3, 2021**

*Sunday before the Nativity of our Lord    Sunday of the Holy Fathers*

**THIS WEEK:**

WEDNESDAY – 8:30 a.m. Vespers &  
Divine Liturgy of St. Basil

6:00 – 7:00 Confessions  
7 p.m. **GREAT COMPLINE &  
MATINS**

**THURSDAY – *Nativity of our  
Lord***  
**10 a.m. DIVINE LITURGY**

FRIDAY – Synaxis of the Theotokos  
8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy



***Strict fast*** For those celebrating Christmas on Thursday, Wednesday is a day of strict fasting: we abstain from all meat and dairy products.

***For Jacobs Creek,*** Tuesday is the eve of Epiphany and is a day of strict fasting.



On the second day of the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord, the Church has established the celebration of the ***Synaxis of the Theotokos***. The name “*synaxis*”

means a “*gathering*” or “*assembly*”. We gather or assemble in order to praise and glorify the All-Holy Virgin, who gave birth to our Savior.

On the first day of the Nativity of the Lord, the Church glorifies the Redeemer of the human race. On the second day of the Nativity of the Lord, the Church calls upon us to honor the Ever-Virgin Mary, the Mother of our Lord, in an appropriate manner.

The day after many of the Church's Feast Days is called the *Synaxis* - such as the day after the Nativity of the Theotokos, when the righteous Joachim and Anna are commemorated; or the day following the Feast of Theophany, when we honor Saint John the Baptist, etc.

“Sometimes we enter a dark place where God seems distant from us. This is only an illusion, for God is closer to us than our own breath. These times are allowed by God to bring us closer to Him, much like the loving parent who stands her child on his feet, walks a few feet away holding out her arms, and waits for the child to take his first steps. She is ever ready to reach out and lift the child up should he start to fall, but she knows she must distance herself for a few moments if the child is going to learn to stand on his own two feet. We are like that.

When you find it difficult to pray, stand or sit silently before your icons. Say to God, *I am hurting and sad, and am unable to speak to You, so I need You to speak to my heart*. Sometimes the most profitable spiritual growth can take place in such periods of brokenness because we see in these moments how very much we need God and depend upon Him.”

*Abbot Tryphon*

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***No fasting*** is permitted Jan. 7 – Jan. 17 for those who celebrate Christmas this week.

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***Sunday school classes*** resume next Sunday.

