



St. Nicholas

MAIN STREET
JACOBS CREEK, PA.

Orthodox Church

SIXTH STREET
MONONGAHELA, PA.

WWW. ORTHODOXMON.ORG

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December 24, 2017

JC: Sunday of the Holy Fathers; eve of the Nativity

Mon: Sunday of the Holy Forefathers

For those celebrating Christmas on Dec. 25; Christmas eve is a day of strict fasting and prayer. We abstain from all meat and dairy products.

To receive Holy Communion at the Christmas eve Liturgy, we fast from all food and water from 6:00 p.m.



THIS WEEK:

TODAY – 9:00 p.m. Vespertal Divine Liturgy (Jacobs Creek)
for the Nativity of Christ

SATURDAY – no Jacobs Creek service

Church decorating We need your help on Saturday at 9 a.m. to decorate the Monongahela church for the Nativity of Christ.

Two Sundays before the celebration of Christmas, the Orthodox Church rejoices in the festival of the **Holy Forefathers** of the Old Covenant, including those who came before the giving of the Law. They foretold the coming of the Messiah and are redeemed by his saving Pascha.

There is a great difference between existing and living. Many people exist. Very few really live. Only those who seek God have life. Only those who delight in His commandments and rejoice in accomplishing His will pass beyond mere existence and actually find life. *"Seek God, and your soul shall live"* (Psalm 69). This is the cry of the psalmist David who is especially hymned on this Sunday and on the Sunday after Christmas. His exhortation is in perfect harmony with the words of God given to Moses in His revelation of the divine Law.

"See I have set before you this day life and death, good and evil. If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you this day, by walking in His ways, and by keeping His commandments, then you shall live and multiply, and the Lord your God will bless you I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life, that you and your descendants may live them."
(Deuteronomy 30)

The holy forefathers and mothers, together with all their descendants, have chosen life. They find it in God's Messiah, Jesus Christ, who is Life itself, God's incarnate Word. The celebration of Christmas is a celebration of Life in God's Word. For *"Christ who is our*

life" has already appeared (Colossians 3). We have *"beheld His glory"* (John 1). Now that glory is hidden in the *"form of a slave"* (Phil 2:7), but it will be revealed at the end of the ages in power for those who *"have loved His appearing"* and *"live in Him"* (2 Timothy 4; Colossians 2)

- Fr. Thomas Hopko



Stewardship Pledge cards for 2018 are now available in the vestibule of the Monongahela church.

We no longer have "church dues" but the submission of a stewardship pledge indicates your desire to be a member of our parish.

Thank you ... to Mary Ann Kelch who offered the flowers for the Feast of St. Nicholas.... to all who helped with our St. Nicholas Day dinner last Sunday....to Dominic Liscotti and Joyce Hann who prepared the main course.

Donor needed for a vigil lamp to be placed before the new icon of the Miracle of St. Nicholas in the Jacobs Creek church. Donation is \$60.

