

**Russian Orthodox Church of the  
Resurrection of Christ  
1201 Hathaway Lane NE  
Minneapolis, MN 55432-5720  
Phone: 763-574-1001  
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***Schedule for the Week of December 27, 2020 - January 2, 2021***

**Sunday Holy Forefathers / Свв Праотец  
Dec 27**

**Saturday 5:30 PM vigil  
Jan 2**

**Sunday Sunday before Christmas / Нед.  
Jan 3 пред Рождеством Христовым  
8:15 AM Nocturns, Hours, Confessions  
9:00 AM Divine Liturgy / Литургия**

**Christmas - Nativity Services**

**Wednesday, Jan. 6, Vigil 6:30 PM**

**Сочельник - 6 января 6:30 вечера**

**Thursday, Jan. 7, Divine Liturgy, 10 AM**

**Литургия - 10 ч утра**

**at St. Mary's Greek Church, 3450 Irving  
Ave S, Mpls. 55408 tel. 612 825 9595**

**COVID-19 GUIDELINES TO FOLLOW FOR NATIVITY SERVICES:**

Since we will be renting a space for the celebration of the Nativity of Christ on Jan 6 & 7, here are some guidelines which we must follow:

\*Please call in advance to indicate if you will be attending. The use of the space is limited by covid-19 regulations.

\* Please observe social distancing in the worship area. Households may gather together.

\* Please use a mask for maximum safety.

\*Hand sanitizers will be available for use at entrance and other locations.

\*If any additional questions, or for any further updates, Call Fr. John at 763-574-1001

## Some serious thoughts on the upcoming New Year

We are finishing the span of the old year and entering a new stage of our life. Who can predict whether this stage will be long and where it ends? Will it be the last in our life or will a new one come after it?

If we are taught to begin every new event in our life with prayer, if we start and end each day with prayer, if we pray before going on a journey or before the beginning of every new business, then even more so prayer should begin a new year of our life. ... For this, the Holy Church, like a caring mother, invites her children to begin this momentous day with intensified, kneeling prayer.

It would seem that on this New Year's Eve our churches should be full of worshipers, but it is not what appears to our eyes. Where are those, our brothers, whose places remain unoccupied here? Why are the numbers of worshipers in this temple so rare today? Where are the missing now? ... Not in order to join the assembly of the jubilant with the jubilation to which their mother, the Holy Church, invites, but [that] which is established by the spirit of this world, by the action of the prince of the air. There they raise their hands and bend their knees, but not for prayer; they sing there, but not hymns in honor of the King Christ; there they rejoice, but not in God the Savior; ... but with that joy, after which crying comes, after that exultation sometimes lamentation comes, then singing often leads to dismal sobbing, those cups of health are deadly, those well-wishes remain only sounds.

After such celebrations, which are not pleasing to God, if the Lord visits us with disgrace, (from which may the Heavenly Father keep us), will we dare to cry out to Him boldly for a pardon? And when we are not heard, shall we dare to say: why, Lord, do you cut off our souls, hide your face from us and do not heed our prayers?

True, in the days of calamity we behaved impeccably: then we honored the holidays and kept abstinence, and the churches were full of worshipers.... In the history of the Israelite people, we have an instructive example that when the celebration was preceded or combined with a violation of the law of God, then neither sacrifice nor prayer was acceptable to God. *Why do I need the multitude of your sacrifices? .. Bear no more vain gifts: your incense is disgusting to Me; new moons and sabbaths, festive gatherings I cannot*

*endure! .. When you stretch out your hands, I hide My eyes from you; and when you multiply your prayers, I do not hear: your hands are full of blood (Isa. 1: 11-15).*

You see, the Lord turned away even from those who came to His temple, and moreover, not with empty hands, but with gifts and prayer - he turned away because their hands were unclean and their conscience was defiled. What to say about those who, bearing the name of Christians, do not pray either in church or at home; being covered from head to toe with ulcers of vice and scabs of sin, are they unaware of their ailments and do not care about healing them?

Let us pay attention to the accusatory word of God. Let's analyze our life. ...

Although the Pharisee in the Gospel prayed for a long time, he repossessed the houses of (widows) and children and for this he heard a threatening word of reproof (*Matt. 23, 14; Mark 12, 40; Luke 20, 47*). You, Christian, ... do not pray at all either in church or at home. The subordinate Pharisee, although he brought tithes from mint, anise and caraway, disregarded judgment, mercy and faith (*Matt. 23, 23*). And we, the children of Christ's freedom, perhaps, do not do this either, ... we do not give tithes, we do not observe the truth, we do not do mercy, and have lost our faith. If the Pharisee was not heard, although he prayed for a long time, then will we be heard, when we do not pray at all? ....

... Yes, the Lord has mercy, much deliverance from troubles. But all this is bestowed upon those who turn to Him in repentance. This is what He requires of us. Wash yourself, - He says to Israel (*Isa. 1:16*). Repent, - He tells us (*Matthew 4:17; Mark 1:15*). Cleanse yourself ... stop doing evil; learn to do good, seek righteousness, save the oppressed, defend the orphan, stand up for the widow, - He spoke to Israel through Isaiah (*Isa. 1, 16-17*). Let all pride be humbled, - He says to us through the mouth of His Forerunner (*Luke 3: 5*). ... Do not offend anyone, do not swear ... (*Luke 3, 11*).

So, this is what we should start the New Year with: prayer, repentance, deeds of righteousness, mercy, faithfulness to God and people and living faith in the Gospel, faith that is manifested from deeds, and not only contained in thoughts.

*(святителя Макария (Невского), митрополита Московского и Коломенского (+1926г.)*