



***Христос Раждается! Christ is Born!
Славите Його! Glorify Him!***

“But the angel said to [the shepherds], ‘Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.’ (Luke 2:10-11)

Through these words from the Gospel of Luke, we are told that “Christmas” and “joy” go with each other “hand in hand.” From its very beginning Christianity has been the proclamation of joy. DO YOU BELIEVE IT? If we Christians have no joy, it would in fact mean that we have had no real experience of the One who is the ultimate source of all joy and who is that to which every experience of joy points, no true experience of the Christ, no genuine experience of the God-who-is-with-us.

I invite all in our Churches to have joy – to experience and to express the joy that can break in on us whenever we contemplate the birth of Jesus, the birth of Emmanuel, the birth of God-with-us, the birth of this shining face of God. I invite everyone to join me to experience the joy of which we sing “BOH PREDVICHNI” “GOD IS WITH US.”

I pray that everyone who sings this Ode to the LORD! About joy will also be blessed this season with a deep and profound *experience* of this same joy. Perhaps some of us will even have the experience of being “surprised by joy.”

Joy surprises. Joy comes to us “unbidden and unplanned for. It cannot be commandeered or coerced or even gently cajoled into existence.” We like to be in control and to have things on demand, we would like to think that by merely showing up at a church on Christmas Eve, joy may be ours for the *taking*. But both priests and psychologists know only too well that for some persons observing Christmas brings no joy.

Joy is more profound than pleasure or happiness and more enduring, such that no one “who has tasted joy would ever exchange it for all the pleasures in the world.”

Our longing for pleasure is a pleasant experience so long as that longing can soon be satisfied. For instance, many are those among us whose Christmas happiness has been “ruined” by the absence under the tree of one gift or another, or by the absence around the table of one family member or another....

(cont'd on back page)

**Services for the 2023-2024 Christmas Season
2023**

Sacrament of Reconciliation - will be held at St. Michael & St. Anne Parishes before and after Regular Sunday Liturgies prior to the nativity.

Sunday, December 24 - Sunday before the Nativity

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy - St. Anne Parish
9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy - St. Michael Parish
11:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy - St. Anne Parish

Sunday, December 24 - EVE OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

4:00 p.m. Family Divine Liturgy (English) - St. Anne Parish
4:00 p.m. Nativity Compline & Divine Liturgy (English) - St. Michael Parish
10:00 p.m. Nativity Compline & Divine Liturgy (Bilingual) - St. Anne Parish

Monday, December 25 - NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy - St. Michael & St Anne Parishes

Tuesday, December 26 - Synaxis of the Mother of God

10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy - St. Michael & St. Anne Parishes

Wednesday, December 27 - St. Stephen Protomartyr & Archdeacon

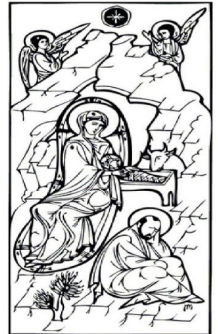
10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy - St. Michael & St. Anne Parishes

Saturday, December 30

4:00 p.m. Divine Liturgy - St. Anne Parish

Sunday, December 31 - Sunday after the Nativity

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy - St. Anne Parish
9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy - St. Michael Parish
11:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy - St. Anne Parish



2024

Monday, January 1 - Circumcision of the Lord, Feast of St. Basil, New Years Day

10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy - St. Michael & St. Anne Parishes

Friday, January 5 - EVE OF THE THEOPHANY

5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Potluck Supper - St. Michael & St. Anne Parishes
7:00 p.m. Divine Liturgy & Jordan Blessing of Water - St. Michael & St. Anne

Saturday, January 6 - THEOPHANY FEAST DAY

10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy & Jordan Blessing of Water - St. Michael Parish
4:00 p.m. Divine Liturgy & Blessing of Holy Water - St. Anne Parish

Join us this Christmas and Rejoice in the Nativity of Our Lord!

Christ is Born - Glorify Him!

...Joy often coexists with pain. Indeed, it is in the very midst of affliction that joy gives proof of its power. In our own Ukrainian Catholic Church, our martyrs have found inexplicable joy amidst immense sadness. In Ukraine now Christmas will not be stopped, Boh Predvichni will be sung as missiles are fired and young lives are put in harm's way for the defense of freedom, but their joy given by Our Lord will not be taken from them.

For joy, unlike mere pleasure or happiness, is rooted in that which transcends our world of suffering and grief and in that which breaks into this world of ours in surprising ways. When God is present and when we acknowledge that God is present, then we just cannot contain ourselves. We sing and dance. We open our mouths, and beauty is created. For God is the one who knows how to bring life out of death. God is the one who knows how to come into a darkened room and turn on the lights, surprising those inside, and bringing joy to all. For Christmas celebrates God's presence with us in human flesh. Christmas celebrates the coming into our world of this unique "bundle of joy." Christmas celebrates the birth of the baby Jesus, who is God-with-us, the incarnate presence of God. And when we acknowledge this as truth, we simply cannot contain ourselves.

This Christmas God wants all of us, too, to be surprised by joy and to embrace the child inside of each one of us" as we once again have this opportunity to encounter and acknowledge the living embodiment of God's image that is Jesus. Please join us in prayer and community and the quest for joy!

Christ Is Born!

Fr. Mark, Fr. Alan & Fr. Mykhalio



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Христос Рождается!



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