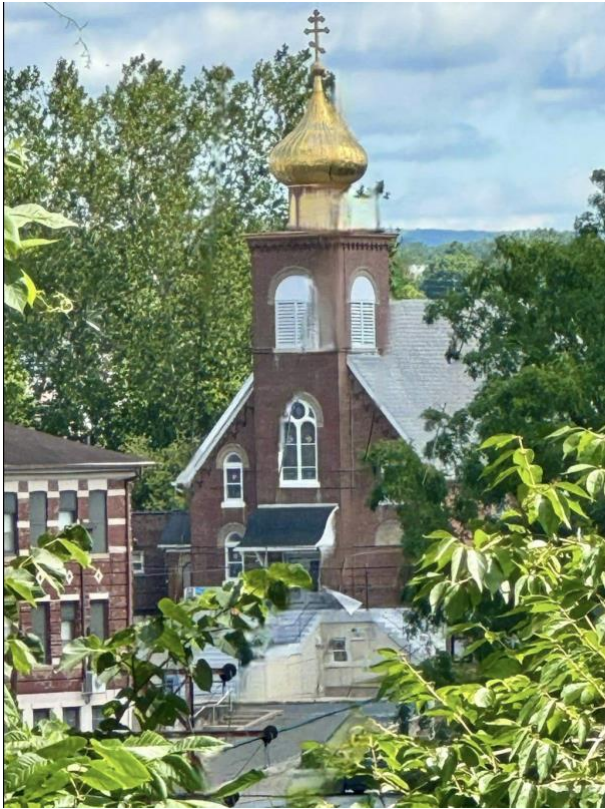


ASSUMPTION OF THE VIRGIN MARY UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH  
ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE OF CONSTANTINOPLE AND NEW ROME



1301 Newport Avenue, Northampton, Pennsylvania 18067

Rev. Fr. Oleg Kravchenko, Rector

Protodeacon Mikhail Sawarynski, Attached

Websites: [holypassumption.org](http://holypassumption.org) and [ukrainianorthodoxchurchusa.org](http://ukrainianorthodoxchurchusa.org) Facebook: Assumption of the Virgin Mary Ukrainian Orthodox Church YouTube: AVM UOC

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Confessions: Vespers on the first Saturday of the month, Sundays before Liturgies, or by appointment.

Make a list of living and deceased and bring it to the Altar. We'll pray for them during a Liturgy.

For pastoral visits at home or hospital or special prayer requests ask Fr. Oleg.

Please, don't throw away the bulletin. Bring it back to the church. Thank you.

You are welcome to contribute articles or pictures to the bulletin. Let's make bulletins together! - Follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/avmuocoftheusa>

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**Христос Посеред Нас! Є І Буде! Christ Is Among Us! Is And Shall Be!**  
Let's pray for peace in Ukraine Молімось за мир в Україні

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**Sun. 15 Dec. 25th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST. TONE 8. SUNDAY of the HOLY ANCESTORS. Hieromartyr ELEUTHERIUS, Bishop of Illyria, his mother, Martyr ANTHIA & Martyr CORIVUS the Eparch (126) Ven. PAUL of Mt. Latros (958) Martyr ELEUTHERIUS (4TH C.) Ven. PARDUS the Hermit. STEPHEN the Confessor, Archbishop of Surozh, Crimea (790).**

**Epistle: Colossians 3: 4-11**

**Gospel: Luke 14: 16-24**

**Today St. Nicholas is coming to our parish right after the Liturgy!**

**Welcome all for the Coffee Hour – Запрошуємо на каву. During the coffee hour: “Journey to Fullness” – 20-minute series about Orthodox Faith.**

**03:30 PM Christmas Concert at St. Nicholas OCA. (980 Bridle Path Road, Bethlehem).**

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**THE BULLETIN IS SPONSORED BY KATHY KUCHINOS IN MEMORY OF HER MOTHER, TESSIE ON THE 5<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF HER FALLING ASLEEP.**

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**MENEION & SCRIPTURES (THE NATIVITY FAST).**

**Mon. 16 Dec.** Prophet Aggaeus (500 B.C.). Blessed Empress Theophania of Byzantium.

**1 Tim. 1:1-7**

**Mk. 9:42-10:1**

**Tue. 17 Dec.** Holy Prophet Daniel (600 B.C.) and the Three Holy Youths.

**1 Tim. 1:8-14**

**Mk. 10:2-12**

**06:30 PM MOLEBEN FOR PEACE IN UKRAINE (HOLLY PROTECTION, ALLENTOWN).**

**Wed. 18 Dec.** Martyr Sebastian at Rome and his companions (287).

**1 Tim. 1:18-20-2:8-15**

**Mk. 10:11-16**

**Thu. 19 Dec.** St. Elias of Murom, of the Kyiv Caves (1188). Ven. Amfilohije of Pochaiv

**1 Tim. 3:1-13**

**Mk. 10:17-27**

**Fri. 20 Dec.** Hieromartyr Ignatius the God-bearer, bishop of Antioch (107).

**1 Tim. 4:4-8, 16**

**Mk. 10:24-32**

**Sat. 21 Dec.** Virgin-martyr Juliana of Nicomedia, and with her 500 men and 130 women.

**02:00-05:00 PM CHRISTMAS AT THE SEMINARY.**

**GREAT VESPERS IS CANCELLED.**

**Sun. 22 Dec. 09:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY. “Journey to Fullness” series.**

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**PROPERS FOR THE LITURGY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM**

**Tropar of the Resurrection, Tone 8:** You descended from on High, Merciful One/ You accepted the three-day burial to deliver us from our passions/ Lord, our Life and Resurrection, Glory to You.

**Tropar to the Holy Ancestors, Tone 2:** Through faith You justified the Forefathers,/ forming through them the Church of all nations/ These saints, exult in glory/ for from their seed came a Blessed Fruit/ She, who bore You without seed, Christ our God/ By their prayers save our souls.

**Glory... now and ever... Kondak to the Holy Ancestors, Tone 6:** Thrice Blessed Ones/ you did not worship the man-made idols/ but armed with the invisible power of God/ you were glorified in a trial by fire/ In the midst of unbearable flames/ you called on God crying/ Hasten, Compassionate One/ come quickly to our defense/ for You are merciful and able to accomplish all that You will.

**Prokimen of the Three Children, Tone 4:** Blessed are You, Lord God of our Fathers, praised and glorified is Your Name to the ages.

**Verse:** For You are righteous in all that You have accomplished for us.

**Epistle: Colossians 3:4-11**

**Alleluia Verses, Tone 4:** Moses and Aaron are among his priest and Samuel among those who call upon His Name.

They called upon the Lord and He answered them.

**Gospel: Luke 14: 16-24**

**Communion Hymn:** Praise the Lord from the heavens. Praise Him in the Highest. Rejoice in the Lord, you Righteous, praise befits the upright. Alleluia (3X)

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**That's where our money goes when we donate to the UOC of USA Ukrainian relief fund. More info: [www.uocofusa.org](http://www.uocofusa.org)**



Are You the One Who Has Been Selected by God?

For many are called, but few are chosen.

Matthew 22:14

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- Please let Fr. Oleg know if you want to go to South Bound Brook for Christmas at the Seminary.

- **Pyrohy schedule:** Dec. 19. Jan. 9, 23. Feb. 6, 20. Mar. 6, 20. First come, first served(until we reach 250 doz.). Please volunteer for peeling, running, cooking/mashing, pinching and clean-up.

- **Church School.** Mrs. Mary Ost (Preschool/ Elementary) 8:55-9:20 AM. Ms. Karen Kankula (Secondary) at 8:45-9:15 AM. Fr. Oleg occasionally. **Welcome all children and youth.**

- **For Food Bank:** baby foods, canned potatoes, and meats, tuna, pasta, sauces, mac. & cheese.

- **Virtual Bible Study Day** - Wednesdays via Zoom: Pan-Orthodox at 12 PM. Meeting ID: 576 301 6482. Passcode: 238492. Tuesdays: with Fr. Demetrios at 7 PM. Ask Fr. Oleg for the link.

### **BIRTHDAYS:**

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**15 Dec...Kathleen Kuchinos**

**17 Dec...Tristan Phillips**

**МНОГАЯ ЛИТА! MANY YEARS!**

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**NECROLOGY: Ukrainian civilians and soldiers, killed in the Russian invasion.**

**Newly departed Father Richard Hawrish 15 Dec...Eva Lubenesky '77, Michael Dorosh '17**

**16 Dec...Archbishop Vsevolod (Majdensky) '07**

**18 Dec...Andrew Hurskyj '30**

**20 Dec...Dmytro Ziatyk '48, Tessie Kuchinos '19**

**21 Dec...Theodore Mazepa '42**

**ВІЧНА ПАМ'ЯТЬ! MEMORY ETERNAL!**

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**PRAYER FOR THE HEALTH & SALVATION OF THE AFFLICTED:** Ukrainian soldiers and civilians, wounded during the Russian aggression, Joseph Killino, Barbara Grason, Helen Crayosky, Rosemarie Pypiuk, Sandra Miller, Tom Petro Jr., priest Demetrius Nicoloudakis, priest Vasyl Dovgan, Martha Dowling, Michael Szymonifka Karen Kankula, Russel Kerick, Christina Truss, Jon Hewko, Matthew Vitushinsky, Nadine Savitz, William Savitz, Nicholas Alexander, William Leszczuk, Mary Berger, , Jessica Meashock, Maria Joseph, Zachary Y. Siyufy, Raisa Melnychuk, Vasyl Beizyn, Lubov Shevchuk, Volodymyr Hranat, Ihor Broda, Debi Hutnick, Eric Hewko, Phil O'Brien, child Charlie, Juliana, Shirl Merolli, Kirk Swauger, Stephanie Donnelly, Danny Berro, child Alexandria, Elizabeth Pastushenko, Aaliyah Osmun, Brendan Phillips, Adam Hewko, Andrew Thaxton, Susan Ferretti, Judy Albright, Daniel Kochenash, Christopher Mack, Joann Hoodmaker, Norman Betrous, Robert Zarayko, Lisa Kulhanek, Esther Wilt, Michele and Ron Moser, Benjamin Tomeo, Olena Kalichenko.

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**What can we get from today's Gospel?** The quote "many are called, but few are chosen" is often associated with Matthew 22:14, not Luke 14. However, in both contexts, the themes of calling, response, and readiness for God's Kingdom are central. In Orthodox Christianity, this phrase reflects profound theological and spiritual truths about salvation, human freedom, and divine grace.

Parable of the Wedding Feast, where a king invites many to a banquet, but some refuse to come, and others who do come are found unprepared.

Universal Call: God's call to salvation is extended to all humanity. The invitation to the banquet represents God's love and desire for everyone to participate in the life of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Human Freedom: While the call is universal, not everyone responds appropriately. Orthodox Christianity emphasizes synergy—the cooperation between human free will and God's grace. Some reject the invitation outright, while others accept but fail to prepare themselves adequately.

**Readiness and Transformation:** The guest without the proper wedding garment symbolizes those who outwardly accept the call but fail to live in accordance with God's commandments or undergo the transformation of heart required to enter the Kingdom. The "garment" is often interpreted as a life of repentance, virtue, and participation in the sacraments.

**Few Are Chosen:** The "chosen" are not predestined arbitrarily but are those who respond fully to the call and align their lives with God's will. Being "chosen" is a reflection of one's willingness to cooperate with divine grace and live a life of holiness.

**Practical Application in Orthodox Life**

**Active Participation in the Church:** Responding to the call involves living as a faithful member of the Church, participating in the Eucharist, prayer, fasting, and acts of love.

**Repentance and Humility:** Recognizing the need for ongoing repentance is essential. The spiritual life requires vigilance and humility to remain prepared for God's Kingdom.

**Cooperation with Grace:** Orthodox teaching avoids a fatalistic view of predestination. Instead, it stresses that salvation is a dynamic process involving both God's grace and human effort.

In summary, "many are called, but few are chosen" in the Orthodox perspective serves as a reminder to respond wholeheartedly to God's call, live in faithfulness, and prepare for the ultimate banquet in His Kingdom. It emphasizes that being "chosen" is less about divine favoritism and more about our willing cooperation with God's transformative work in us.

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## **ORTHODOX WORLD NEWS**

Synod of the Orthodox Church of Albania elected Bishop Astios as the new Metropolitan of Berat, with enthronement in the Cathedral of St. Demetrios.

Metropolitan Elia of Oulu was elected the new Primate of the Finnish Orthodox Church, replacing Metropolitan Leo who retired after 23 years of service.

Bishop Benjamin of Boyarka led the consecration of the new Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Holy Archangels in Chemnitz, Germany.

The Georgian Orthodox Church celebrated the 20th anniversary of Holy Trinity Cathedral in Tbilisi, completed in 2004 and 1,500 years of Georgian autocephaly.

A new Church of Archangel Michael was consecrated by Metropolitan Sergius of Asia in Kuala Lumpur, currently there are 5 Orthodox churches in Malaysia.

Thousands venerated the holy relics of St. Job, Abbot of Pochayev Lavra for 50 years, on the feast of his repose in 1651, brought to the Dormition Cathedral.

Metropolitan Anatoly of Polissya consecrated a new Church of Archangel Michael and the Heavenly Powers in the village of Poliske, Rivne oblast.

The Feast of St. Andrew the First Called Apostle of Christ was celebrated at St. Theodosius' Monastery in Kyiv by Metropolitan Epiphaniy.

At the invitation of the Monastery of the Mother of God in Podlasie, Poland relics of St. John (Maximovich) of Shanghai & San Francisco were brought to Poland.

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**The Nativity Fast guide.**

**Purpose of the Fast.** The Nativity Fast is a time for spiritual renewal, repentance, and preparation to joyfully celebrate Christ's birth. The fast involves not only abstaining from certain foods but also deepening prayer, reading Scripture, participating in church services, and performing acts of charity.

**General Rules of the Nativity Fast. Foods to Avoid:** Meat: Including beef, pork, poultry, and other animal flesh. Dairy Products: Milk, cheese, butter, yogurt, etc. Eggs: All forms of eggs and dishes containing them. Wine and Oil: Restricted on certain days of the fast.

**Permitted Foods:** Fruits and Vegetables: Fresh, cooked, or preserved. Legumes: Lentils, beans, chickpeas, etc. Grains: Rice, wheat, oats, etc. Seafood: Shellfish (like shrimp, crab, and lobster) is permitted on strict fast days; fish with backbones is allowed on certain feast days. Nuts and Seeds.

**Daily Fasting Guidelines.** The fasting discipline varies by the day of the week and particular feasts that occur during the fast: Weekdays (Monday to Friday): Strict fasting with no meat, dairy, fish, wine, or oil. Meals are typically simple and without excess.

Saturdays and Sundays: Wine and oil are usually permitted. Fish is allowed on Saturdays and Sundays until December 20.

Feast Days: Fish, wine, and oil are allowed on major feast days during the fast, such as the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple (November 21).

Last Week of the Fast (December 20-24): Stricter fasting is observed with no fish, wine, or oil, except when liturgical guidelines specify otherwise.

**Spiritual Practices During the Fast.** Prayer: Increase your personal and communal prayer life. Attend services such as the Divine Liturgy, Vespers, etc. Scripture Reading: Focus on the Gospels and readings related to the Nativity. Confession and Communion: Many faithful use this period to go to confession and prepare for Holy Communion.

Charity: Engage in acts of kindness and generosity, helping those in need.

Self-Examination: Reflect on your spiritual life and seek to grow closer to Christ.

**Tips for Fasting Correctly.** Consult Your Priest: Fasting practices can be tailored to your personal health and spiritual circumstances. Speak with your spiritual father for guidance.

Start Gradually: If you are new to fasting, begin with small steps and gradually adhere to the full fast.

Focus on the Spirit: Remember that fasting is not merely dietary but aims to foster spiritual growth. Avoid judging others who may fast differently.

Be Consistent: Strive for regularity in fasting, prayer, and other spiritual disciplines.

The Nativity Fast is an opportunity to deepen your relationship with Christ and prepare your heart to receive Him with joy. "Fasting and prayer are two wings on which our spirit soars" (St. John Chrysostom).

But in this he errs, that he thinks those things good which are indifferent. For there are some things good, some evil, some between the two. The good are chastity, and humility, and the like, which when a man chooses he becomes good. But opposed to these are the evil, which when a man chooses he becomes bad; and there are the neutral, as riches, which at one time indeed are directed to good, as to almsgiving, at other times to evil, as to covetousness. And in like manner poverty at one time leads to blasphemy, at another to wisdom, according to the disposition of the user. (Chrysostom)

It is true that a man's life does not come from his possessions or from have an overabundance of them. He is who is rich toward God is very blessed and has glorious hope. Who is he? Evidently, one who does not love wealth but instead loves virtue, and to whom few things are sufficient (see Luke 10:42). It is one

whose hand is open to the needs of those in poverty, according to his means and the utmost of his ability. He gathers in the storehouses that are above and lays up treasures in heaven. Such a man will find the interest of his virtue and the reward of his right and blameless life.

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### **Additions in Ukrainian**

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**Євангеліє дня:** 16 Він же сказав йому: один чоловік справляв велику вечерю і запросив багатьох. 17 І коли настав час вечері, послав раба свого сказати запрошеним: ідіть, бо все вже готове. 18 І почали всі, ніби змовившись, вибачатися. Перший сказав йому: я купив землю і мені треба піти і оглянути її; прошу тебе, вибач мені. 19 Другий сказав: я купив п'ять пар волів та йду випробувати їх; прошу тебе, вибач мені. 20 Третій сказав: я одружився і через те не можу прийти. 21 І, повернувшись, раб той розповів про це господареві своєму. Тоді, розгнівавшись, господар сказав рабові своєму: піди швидше на вулиці й провулки міста і приведи сюди вбогих, калік, сліпих і кривих. 22 І сказав раб: господарю, зроблено, як ти велів, і ще є місце. 23 Господар сказав рабові: піди на дороги і загороди і умовляй прийти, щоб наповнився дім мій. 24 Бо кажу вам, що ніхто з тих запрошених не покуштує моєї вечері, бо багато званих, та мало обраних.

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