

Conception of The Holy Theotokos by Saint Anna

St Anna, the mother of the Virgin Mary, was the youngest daughter of the priest Nathan from Bethlehem, descended from the tribe of Levi. She married St Joachim (September 9), who was a native of Galilee.

For a long time St Anna was childless, but after twenty years, through the fervent prayer of both spouses, an angel of the Lord announced to them that they would be the parents of a daughter, Who would bring blessings to the whole human race.

The Orthodox Church does not accept the teaching that the Mother of God was exempted from the consequences of ancestral sin (death, corruption, sin, etc.) at the moment of her conception by virtue of the future merits of Her Son. Only Christ was born perfectly holy and sinless, as St Ambrose of Milan teaches in Chapter Two of his Commentary on Luke. The Holy Virgin was like everyone else in Her mortality, and in being subject to temptation, although She committed no personal sins. She was not a deified creature removed from the rest of humanity. If this were the case, She would not have been truly human, and the nature that Christ took from Her would not have been truly human either. If Christ does not truly share our human nature, then the possibility of our salvation is in doubt.

The Conception of the Virgin Mary by St Anna took place at Jerusalem. The many icons depicting the Conception by St Anna show the Most Holy Theotokos trampling the serpent underfoot.

"In the icon Sts Joachim and Anna are usually depicted with hands folded in prayer; their eyes are also directed upward and they contemplate the Mother of God, Who stands in the air with outstretched hands; under Her feet is an orb encircled by a serpent (symbolizing the devil), which strives to conquer all the universe by its power."

There are also icons in which St Anna holds the Most Holy Virgin on her left arm as an infant. On St Anna's face is a look of reverence. A large ancient icon, painted on canvas, is located in the village of Minkovetsa in the Dubensk district of Volhynia diocese. From ancient times this Feast was especially venerated by pregnant women in Russia

Holy Spirit Orthodox Church - Wantage, NJ

Archpriest Samuel Kedala, Rector

Joanne Patrick, Choir Director

Parish Council

Timothy Kachur, Sr. Warden

Mark Benda, Jr. Warden

Michael Olsen, Treasurer

Doris Livanos/Susan Matthews, Co/Recording Secretary

Council members

Edward Engelsman • Michael Chwan

Anna Seniw • Louis Matthews

www.holyspiritorthodox.org

HOLY SPIRIT ORTHODOX CHURCH

Wantage, New Jersey

December 9, 2007



Conception of the Most Holy Theotokos by Saint Anna

ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

102 Route 284
Wantage, New Jersey 07461
(973) 702-0622

e-mail: fr.samuel@holyspiritorthodox.org web site: www.holyspiritorthodox.org

Sunday, December 9, 2007

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES AND EVENTS

Today **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

Saturday, Dec 15,..... 10:00 AM Church School play preparation, **Decoration of the Christmas Tree and the Church – 6:00 PM Vespers/Private Nativity Confessions**

Sunday, Dec. 16 **9:15 AM Church School, 9:35 AM Hours, 10 AM Divine Liturgy**
CHURCH SCHOOL NATIVITY PROGRAM

Today's commemorated feasts and saints... 28th Sunday after Pentecost (12th of Luke) - Tone 3. The Conception by Righteous Anna of the Most Holy Theotokos. Prophetess Anna (Hannah), mother of the Prophet Samuel (ca. 1100 B.C.). St. Sophronius, Archbishop of Cyprus (6th c.). St. Stephen the "New Light" of Constantinople (10th c.). Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos, "UNEXPECTED JOY."

Colossians 1:12-18, Galatians 4:22-31 (St Anna) • Luke 17:12-19, Luke 8:16-21 (St Anna)

BULLETIN

Those of you who had taken **Gift tags for Nativity gifts** for needy children and families, please bring in the gifts by next Sunday. They will be distributed on the next day Monday, December 17. There are more tags available if you have not yet taken one.

Thank you to Matushka JoAnne who hosted the Coffee Social last week. **Pighi Mardaloescu** signed up to host the Social today. **The Engelsman family** is signed up to host next week. **Please sign-up to host a future social.**

The Annual Parish Meeting is scheduled to take place today after the Divine Liturgy. Please plan to attend. We will have someone downstairs to watch your children during the meeting. It is important that we *ALL* participate in this meeting. The Parish Reports were distributed last week.

New members are needed for the Parish Council. Please see Tim Kachur, Mark Benda or any other member of our council if you would like to serve in this honorable position.

Thank you to John & Barbara Clauson for their most generous contribution to our Church and their donation of Christmas Trees to our Church School.

Everyone should prepare themselves to come to the **Sacrament of Holy Confession** as we approach the **Nativity Season**. Father Samuel will be available before and after Great Vespers and by appointment if necessary. Sunday mornings are *not* a good time to go to confession as Father Samuel is preparing for the Divine Liturgy.

Please pray for those affected by the **fires in Southern California**. A fund has been set up by the OCA Diocese of the West to help those affected by the devastation. Visit the diocesan website at www.ocadow.org.

Please place a small donation in the basket at Coffee Social to help pay for the paper

products.

Supermarket Gift Cards will be sold at today's Coffee Hour. Please help support the General fund with your purchases of these supermarket Gift Cards. Five percent of all sales go to the parish General Fund.

ASSESSMENTS - Please be reminded that individual assessments need to be submitted to the parish treasurer so we can continue to support the administrative work of our diocese and central church (OCA.) **Each adult parishioner** is responsible for \$145.00 in yearly assessments. If you have yet to submit your 2007 assessment, please use the specially marked envelopes that are sent to your home and place your assessment contributions in the collection baskets. If you have already made your assessment payment – thank you

A reminder to all who are worshipping at Holy Spirit Church, please turn off your cell phones or leave it in your cars until after Divine Liturgy

PLEASE PURCHASE gift cards for shopping at ShopRite and A & P stores. They are working out wonderfully. Very convenient for shopping. No cash, no checks, just a little card. They are great, and our church benefits by your using them.

WE HAVE SHOP RITE AND A&P GIFT CARDS-STOCK UP ON GIFT CARDS FOR YOUR REGULAR SHOPPING & AS GIFTS TO OTHERS

Please keep the following people in your prayers: Catherine Schwed, Thelma Macheska, Alyssa Karakos, Mary Kwak, Matushka Evelyn Kreta, Christopher, the infant Ella Jane, Corinne Matthews, infant Nicholai, Dan Taylor, Doug Taylor, Stephen Kachur, Pighi Mardaloescu, Valentina Bobrowsky, Archimandrite Joachim (Parr), Frank Higginbotham, Matushka Marie Kreta, Joanne Patrick, Feodora Apanasow, Archpriest Joseph Chupeck, the infant Logan Eugene, Evanthia, Loren Chwan, Jennifer and Matushka Vera Yuschak

SEVEN DAY VIGIL CANDLES

By the Taylor **Family** for the health, and Salvation of **Loren Chwan**

By the **Kedala Family** for the health, and Salvation of **Loren Chwan**

Seven day vigil candles are available for the faithful to sponsor in memory of their departed, the sick, or for the general intentions (anniversaries, birthdays, weddings, baptisms, etc.). They will remain lit on the altar and table of oblation. The suggested donation is \$10.00 each and will burn for seven days. The intentions and those who offered them will be announced in the weekly bulletins. You may purchase your offering at the Parish Council office.

If you would like to have something published in the weekly bulletin, e-mail or bring typed copy to Father Samuel by Wednesday of the week prior to the Sunday you would like it published.

We welcome our guests who are worshipping with us today. Please join us downstairs for refreshments and fellowship. Please sign our guest book before you leave.