When Mary stood at thy grave looking for thy sacred body, angelic powers shone above thy revered tomb, and the soldiers who were to keep guard became as dead men. Thou led hades captive and wast not tempted thereby. Thou didst meet the Virgin and didst give life to the world. Thou who art risen from the dead, O Lord, glory to Thee.

EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS, Tone 1
O LORD, save thy people, and bless thine inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries, and by the virtue of thy Cross preserve thy habitation.

SAINT PARASCHEVA THE NEW, Tone 4
You chose a silent and solitary life; you followed Christ your Bridegroom. You took his easy yoke in your youth, arming yourself with the sign of the Cross. You contended against spiritual enemies through fasting, tears and labors, O glorious Paraskeva. Now you stand before Christ with the Wise Virgins: Intercede for us who honor your precious memory.

SAINTS OF NORTH AMERICA, Tone 8
As the bountiful harvest of Your sowing of salvation, the lands of North America offer to You, O Lord, all the saints who have shone in them. By their prayers keep the Church and our land in abiding peace Through the Theotokos, O most Merciful One.

SAINT John (Maximovitch) The Wonderworker, Of Shanghai and San Francisco, Tone 6
Glorious apostle to an age of coldness and unbelief, invested with the grace-filled power of the saints of old, divinely-illumined seer of heavenly mysteries, Saint John The Wonderworker, feeder of orphans, hope of the hopeless, thou didst enkindle on earth the fire of love for Christ upon the dark eve of the day of judgment; pray now that this sacred flame may also rise from our hearts.

Prophet Nahum
Tone 2
Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit...
The memory of thy Prophet Nahum we celebrate today, O Lord. by his prayers, we beseech thee, O Christ God, save our souls!

THEOTOKION
Tone 2
Both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Exceeding glorious beyond the power of thought are thy mysteries, O Theotokos, for being sealed in purity and preserved in virginity, thou wast acknowledged to be in very truth, the Mother who didst bring forth the true God, wherefore, entreat Him to save our souls.

Lent of the Nativity started. Advent began on Friday (Nov 15 – Dec 25)

Are you prepared to receive the Holy Communion?
“But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body” (I Cor 11:28,29)

Regular confession is required!

Everyone can sing in the Church! You are the Choir! Just follow the chanters!
**Readings of the day (15th Sunday after Pentecost)**

**2nd Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians**  
2 Cor 4: 6-15

It is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyer always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus’ sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So then death is working in us, but life in you. And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, “I believed and therefore I spoke, we also believe and therefore speak, knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

**Gospel of St Mathew**  
Mathew 22:35-46

Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?” They said to Him, “The Son of David.” He said to them, “How then does David in the Spirit call Him ‘Lord,’ saying: The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool’”? If David then calls Him ‘Lord,’ how is He His Son?” And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.

**Life of Saints**

**St Nicholas the Wonderworker and Archbishop of Myra in Lycia**

Saint Nicholas, the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia is famed as a great saint pleasing unto God. He was born in the city of Patara in the region of Lycia (on the south coast of the Asia Minor peninsula), and was the only son of pious parents Theophanes and Nonna, who had vowed to dedicate him to God. As the fruit of the prayer of his childless parents, the infant Nicholas from the very day of his birth revealed to people the light of his future glory as a wonderworker. His mother, Nonna, after giving birth was immediately healed from illness. The newborn infant, while still in the baptismal font, stood on his feet three hours, without support from anyone, thereby honoring the Most Holy Trinity. St Nicholas from his infancy began a life of fasting, and on Wednesdays and Fridays he would not accept milk from his mother until after his parents had finished their evening prayers. From his childhood Nicholas thrived on the study of Divine Scripture; by day he would not leave church, and by night he prayed and read books, making himself a worthy dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. Bishop Nicholas of Patara rejoiced at the spiritual success and deep piety of his nephew. He ordained him a reader, and then elevated Nicholas to the priesthood, making him his assistant and entrusting him to instruct the flock. In serving the Lord the youth was
fervent of spirit, and in his proficiency with questions of faith he was like an Elder, who aroused the wonder and deep respect of believers. Constantly at work and vivacious, in unceasing prayer, the priest Nicholas displayed great kind-heartedness towards the flock, and towards the afflicted who came to him for help, and he distributed all his inheritance to the poor. There was a certain formerly rich inhabitant of Patara, whom St Nicholas saved from great sin. The man had three grown daughters, and in desperation he planned to sell their bodies so they would have money for food. The saint, learning of the man’s poverty and of his wicked intention, secretly visited him one night and threw a sack of gold through the window. With the money the man arranged an honorable marriage for his daughter. St Nicholas also provided gold for the other daughters, thereby saving the family from falling into spiritual destruction. In bestowing charity, St Nicholas always strove to do this secretly and to conceal his good deeds. The Bishop of Patara decided to go on pilgrimage to the holy places at Jerusalem, and entrusted the guidance of his flock to St Nicholas, who fulfilled this obedience carefully and with love. When the bishop returned, Nicholas asked his blessing for a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Along the way the saint predicted a storm would arise and threaten the ship. St Nicholas saw the devil get on the ship, intending to sink it and kill all the passengers. At the entreaty of the despairing pilgrims, he calmed the waves of the sea by his prayers. Through his prayer a certain sailor of the ship, who had fallen from the mast and was mortally injured was also restored to health. When he reached the ancient city of Jerusalem and came to Golgotha, St Nicholas gave thanks to the Savior. He went to all the holy places, worshiping at each one. One night on Mount Sion, the closed doors of the church opened by themselves for the great pilgrims. Going round the holy places connected with the earthly service of the Son of God, St Nicholas decided to withdraw into the desert, but he was stopped by a divine voice urging him to return to his native country. He returned to Lycia, and yearning for a life of quietude, the saint entered into the brotherhood of a monastery named Holy Sion, which had been founded by his uncle. But the Lord again indicated another path for him, “Nicholas, this is not the vineyard where you shall bear fruit for Me. Return to the world, and glorify My Name there.” So he left Patara and went to Myra in Lycia. Upon the death of Archbishop John, Nicholas was chosen as Bishop of Myra after one of the bishops of the Council said that a new archbishop should be revealed by God, not chosen by men. One of the elder bishops had a vision of a radiant Man, Who told him that the one who came to the church that night and was first to enter should be made archbishop. He would be named Nicholas. The bishop went to the church at night to await Nicholas. The saint, always the first to arrive at church, was stopped by the bishop. “What is your name, child?” he asked. God’s chosen one replied, “My name is Nicholas, Master, and I am your servant.” After his consecration as archbishop, St Nicholas remained a great ascetic, appearing to his flock as an image of gentleness, kindness and love for people. This was particularly precious for the Lycian Church during the persecution of Christians under the emperor Diocletian (284-305). Bishop Nicholas, locked up in prison together with other Christians for refusing to worship idols, sustained them and exhorted them to endure the fetters, punishment and torture. The Lord preserved him unharmed. Upon the accession of St Constantine (May 21) as emperor, St Nicholas was restored to his flock, which joyfully received their guide and intercessor. Despite his great gentleness of spirit and purity of heart, St Nicholas was a zealous and ardent warrior of the Church of Christ. Fighting evil spirits, the saint made the rounds of the pagan temples and shrines in the city of Myra and its surroundings, shattering the idols and turning the temples to dust. In the year 325 St Nicholas was a participant in the First Ecumenical Council. This Council proclaimed the Nicean Symbol of Faith, and he stood up against the heretic Arius with the likes of Sts Sylvester the Bishop of Rome (January 2), Alexander of Alexandria (May 29), Spyridon of Trimythontos (December 12) and other Fathers of the Council. St Nicholas, fired with zeal for the Lord, assailed the heretic Arius with his words, and also struck him upon the face. For this reason, he was deprived of the emblems of his episcopal rank and placed under guard. But several of the holy Fathers had the same vision, seeing the Lord Himself and the Mother of God returning to him the Gospel and omophorion. The Fathers of the Council agreed that the audacity of the saint was pleasing to God, and restored the saint to the office of bishop. Having returned to his own diocese, the saint brought it peace and blessings, sowing the word of Truth, uprooting heresy, nourishing his flock with sound doctrine, and also providing food for their bodies. Even during his life the saint worked many miracles. One of the greatest was the deliverance from death of three
men unjustly condemned by the Governor, who had been bribed. The saint boldly went up to the executioner and took his sword, already suspended over the heads of the condemned. The Governor, denounced by St Nicholas for his wrong doing, repented and begged for forgiveness. Witnessing this remarkable event were three military officers, who were sent to Phrygia by the emperor Constantine to put down a rebellion. They did not suspect that soon they would also be compelled to seek the intercession of St Nicholas. Evil men slandered them before the emperor, and the officers were sentenced to death. Appearing to St Constantine in a dream, St Nicholas called on him to overturn the unjust sentence of the military officers. He worked many other miracles, and struggled many long years at his labor. Through the prayers of the saint, the city of Myra was rescued from a terrible famine. He appeared to a certain Italian merchant and left him three gold pieces as a pledge of payment. He requested him to sail to Myra and deliver grain there. More than once, the saint saved those drowning in the sea, and provided release from captivity and imprisonment. Having reached old age, St Nicholas peacefully fell asleep in the Lord. His venerable relics were preserved incorrupt in the local cathedral church and flowed with curative myrrh, from which many received healing. In the year 1087, his relics were transferred to the Italian city of Bari, where they rest even now (See May 9). The name of the great saint of God, the hierarch and wonderworker Nicholas, a speedy helper and suppliant for all hastening to him, is famed in every corner of the earth, in many lands and among many peoples. In Russia there are a multitude of cathedrals, monasteries and churches consecrated in his name. There is, perhaps, not a single city without a church dedicated to him. It is impossible to list all the grace-filled icons of St Nicholas, or to enumerate all his miracles. St Nicholas is the patron of travelers, and we pray to him for deliverance from floods, poverty, or any misfortunes. He has promised to help those who remember his parents, Theophanes and Nonna. St Nicholas is also commemorated on May 9 (The transfer of his relics) and on July 29 (his nativity).

**CALENDAR OF THE WEEK**

**DECEMBER**

1st Prophet Nahum; Ven. Philaret the Merciful (*F,W,O*)


2nd Prophet Habakkuk; Martyr Myrope (*W,O*)

3rd [The Elder George of Cernica; Prophet Zephaniah (Sophonios); Ven. John the Hermit (*F,W,O*)](#)

4th [Great-martyr Barbara; Martyr Juliana; Ven. John of Damascus (*W,O*)](#)

5th [T + St. Sabbas the Sanctified; Martyr Athanasius (*F,W,O*)](#)

7th [F +) St. Nicholas the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia (*F,W,O*)](#)

8th [S +) Martyr Filofteia of Arges; St. Ambrose of Milan (*F,W,O*)](#)

7th [Ven. Patapios and Sophronios; Apostle Sosthenes of the Seventy (*F,W,O*)](#)

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### +++Weekly Services (December 1st – December 8th 2013)+++ ###

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<td>Dec 8, 2013</td>
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God bless you all!