

Sunday Before the Feast of the Nativity
Sunday of the Genealogy of Christ
Twenty-Sixth Sunday After Pentecost

December 22, 2024

On December 22nd we Commemorate:
The Great Martyr Anastasia and her Teacher, the Martyr Chrysogonus.



Icon of the "Root of Jesse" The Genealogy of Christ

Holy Wisdom Orthodox Mission

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Great Vespers, Saturday Evenings at 6:00 pm
Divine Liturgy, Sunday Mornings at 9:30 am (Hours at 9:05 am)
Paraklesis to the Theotokos, Wednesday Evenings at 6:00 pm
Very Reverend Archpriest Luke Uhl, Retired, Interim Rector

Holy Wisdom Orthodox Mission
is a parish in the Diocese of the West
of the Orthodox Church in America
under the spiritual and ecclesiastical jurisdiction of
Archbishop Benjamin of San Francisco and the West



EPISTLE AND GOSPEL READINGS

2

Epistle for Sunday Before the Nativity, Hebrews 11:9-10, 11:17-23

BRETHREN: By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense. By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff. By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones. By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command. And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented— of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

Gospel for Sunday Before the Nativity, Matthew 1:1-25

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham: Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brothers. Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Ram. Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon. Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David the king. David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah. Solomon begot Rehoboam, Rehoboam begot Abijah, and Abijah begot Asa. Asa begot Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat begot Joram, and Joram begot Uzziah. Uzziah begot Jotham, Jotham begot Ahaz, and Ahaz begot Hezekiah. Hezekiah begot Manasseh, Manasseh

Continued on page 3

3 REFLECTION ON THE SUNDAY GOSPEL (CONTINUED)

Continued from page 2 ☞ begot Amon, and Amon begot Josiah. Josiah begot Jeconiah and his brothers about the time they were carried away to Babylon. And after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, and Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel begot Abiud, Abiud begot Eliakim, and Eliakim begot Azor. Azor begot Zadok, Zadok begot Achim, and Achim begot Eliud. Eliud begot Eleazar, Eleazar begot Matthan, and Matthan begot Jacob. And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, from David until the captivity in Babylon are fourteen generations, and from the captivity in Babylon until the Christ are fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us." Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name Jesus.

REFLECTION ON THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

Sunday Before the Nativity of Christ

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

In the Gospel read on the Sunday before the Nativity of Christ, the genealogy of our Savior is reckoned. In the forty-two generations described (fourteen from Abraham to David, fourteen from David until the Babylonian captivity, and fourteen from the Babylonian captivity until Christ) we note that the tribes of Judah and Levi were united in a fusion of their bloodlines.

Why is this significant? Because our Lord, Jesus Christ came into the world as both King and Priest.

Abraham had a son named Isaac, who in turn had a son named Jacob who was later renamed Israel. Jacob (Israel) had twelve sons, and the descendants of these sons comprised the twelve tribes of Israel. Two of Jacob's twelve sons were named Judah and Levi.

Continued on page 4 ☞

REFLECTION ON THE SUNDAY GOSPEL (CONTINUED) 4

Continued from page 3 ☞ When Moses led the descendants of Jacob (Israel) out of Egypt, they camped in the area near Mount Sinai where God gave Moses His laws for His people.

According to God's laws eleven of the tribes were to inherit a portion of the promised land in Canaan; one tribe, the tribe of Levi, was designated to serve the Temple as priests and to subsist from the tithes given by the other tribes.

Jesus Christ is descended from the tribe of Levi, and thus He is of the priestly heritage and filled with holiness.

After the descendants of Jacob settled in the promised land, they choose to have a king for their nation which was comprised of the twelve tribes of Israel. David, Solomon, and the rest of the kings of Israel belonged to the tribe of Judah.

Jesus Christ being also descended from the tribe of Judah shines forth with the splendor of a royal heritage.

Thus, the Scriptures give us clear testimony that our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, is shown to be at once both King and Priest.

At the same time the Gospel reminds us that among the ancestors of Jesus were outsiders, sinners and even very wicked individuals.

Jesus is descended from foreigners (Ruth was from Moab, and not a descendant of Israel), from a murderer and adulterer (King David and the wife of Uriah), and even from a wicked apostate (King Ahaz behaved wantonly and had been faithless to the Lord).

Saint Matthew mentions these to show us that no one should be ashamed of his forefathers but should strive by his own virtue to make even them illustrious. The Evangelist shows us that all of us can be acceptable to God – if we have virtue.

After all, Christ was born to save all who would believe in Him!

Amen.

SUNDAY HOMILY

Sunday of the Fathers

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Last Sunday the Church commemorated all the righteous of the Old Testament who awaited the coming of Christ. Today, the Sunday before the Birth of Christ on earth, the Church remembers all those in the Old Testament who were related to Christ by blood and those who spoke of His Birth as a man. That is why today we have read Christ's family tree from the Gospel of Saint Matthew.

Continued on page 5 ☞

Continued from page 4 ☞ In this way the Church shows us that Christ really became a man, that the Son of God really took on human nature. He was not a ghost, an apparition, a myth, a distant imagined god, the abstract god of philosophers. Such a god does not have a family tree. Our God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He has flesh and blood, human ancestors, many of whom sinned greatly, but like David, also repented greatly. By taking on human nature, the Son of God became like us in all ways, in flesh and blood, in tears and sweat, in mind and soul, in heart and will, He differed from us in only one way, He did not sin. Since we know that Christ's human nature remained sinless, He shows us the way that we too can go in order to strive to avoid sin and so improve and transform our failing human nature.

However, the fact that Christ took on human nature and has a family tree, has another meaning too. Christ is descended from Adam through Abraham and David, through His ancestors Joachim and Anne - in His human nature He is therefore related to us, and we are related to Him. He is a cousin of our ancestors. He is one of our own forebears. He is our kith and kin, and we are His kith and kin, we belong to the same family. It is now that we understand that with Christ we belong to a family, a family of saints and sinners, but a family of which he is the Head, and we are His children, the children of Mother Church and Father God. And believing in the Fatherhood of God, we believe in the Brotherhood of Man.

Holy Fathers of Christ, pray to God for us! Amen.

Reverend Andrew Phillips, Colchester, England

GOSPEL COMMENTARY

Matthew 1:1. The book of the generation.

Why did Saint Matthew not say “vision” or “word” as did the prophets who prefaced their writing in this manner: “*The vision which Isaiah saw*” (*Isaiah 1:1*), and “*The word which came to Isaiah*” (*Isaiah 1:1*). Do you wish to know why? Because the prophets were speaking to hard-hearted and disobedient people, and therefore they would say, “*This is a divine vision,*” or “*This is the word of God,*” so that the people would be frightened and not disdain what was said.

But Matthew was addressing believers who were obedient and of a good disposition, and for this reason he did not begin in the manner of the prophets. I will also add that what the prophets saw, they saw noetically, that is, with their minds, envisioning these things by the Holy Spirit; and this is why they called them “visions.”

But Matthew did not see Christ noetically, nor did he envision Him in his mind, but he was with Him tangibly and listened to Him with his senses and

Continued on page 6 ☞

Continued from page 5 ☞ saw Him in the flesh. Therefore, he did not say, “The vision which I saw,” but “The book of generation.”

Of Jesus. The name “Jesus” is not Greek but Hebrew, meaning “Savior”, for too is the Hebrew word for “salvation” (*Iao is a Greek transliteration of the Hebrew word*).

Christ. The Hebrew kings and priests were called “christs” (i.e. “anointed ones”), because they were anointed with the holy oil poured out from a horn held over the head. The Lord, therefore, is called Christ, both as King because He ruled over sin, and as Priest because He offered Himself as a sacrifice for us.

He Himself was pre-eminently anointed with the true oil, the Holy Spirit; for who else possessed the Spirit as did the Lord? In the saints, the grace of the Holy Spirit was at work, but in Christ it was not the grace of the Spirit at work, but rather Christ being of one essence with the Spirit worked the miracles.

The Son of David. Since Matthew had said “Jesus”, he added “the Son of David”, so that you would not think he was speaking of the other “Jesus” (i.e., “Joshua” the son of Navi, or son of Nun), for there was another renowned Jesus, who became commander under Moses

In Greek and Hebrew “Joshua” and “Jesus” are the same name: *Iesoús* in Greek, *Yeshúa* in Hebrew. There are two forms of the same name used in English, due to the fact that “Joshua” is taken from the Hebrew, rather than the Greek (Septuagint), text of the Old Testament, while “Jesus”, of course, is taken from the Greek of the New Testament. In Hebrew the name “Joshua” simply means “one who saves” or, simply, “savior.”

Joshua, the son of “Navi” or “Nun”, preceded David by many generations and was not of the tribe of Judah, from which David was descended, but of another.

The son of Abraham. Why did he place David before Abraham? He did so because to the Jews David had greater renown, both because he was more recent than Abraham and because he was more illustrious on account of his kingdom. For of the kings, David was the first to please God, and he received the promise from God that the Christ would arise from his seed. For this reason, all men called Christ “the Son of David.”

And indeed, David was also a symbolic type of Christ: for just as David ruled after Saul, that outcast from God who was rejected, so too Christ came in the flesh to reign over us after Adam had been deprived of the kingship and the dominion which he had over all things, both animals and demons.

*From The Explanation of the Gospel of Saint Matthew
by Saint Theophylaktos, Archbishop of Ochrid (AD 1055- 1107)*

From the Synaxarion (Calendar) Read at Matins

On this day, the Sunday before the Nativity of Christ in the Holy Orthodox Church, we have been enjoined by our holy and God-bearing Fathers to make commemoration of all them that from the beginning of time have been well-pleasing unto God, from Adam even unto Joseph the Betrothed of the Most Holy Theotokos, according to genealogy, as Luke the Evangelist hath recounted historically; and likewise for the Prophets and Prophetesses, especially of Daniel the Prophet and the three holy youths.

It is also known as the Sunday of the Holy Genealogy. We remember the aforementioned names, those in the Old Testament who were related to Christ by blood, and those who spoke of His Birth as a man.

In the Divine Liturgy, we shall read of Jesus Christ's lineage from the Gospel of Saint Matthew. In this way, the Church shows us that Christ truly became a man, taking on human nature. He was not a ghost, an apparition, a myth, a distant imagined god, or the abstract god of philosophers; such a god does not have a family tree.

Our God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He has flesh and blood, human ancestors – many of whom sinned greatly, but like David, also repented greatly. Yet, all of these righteous ones in every age had been well-pleasing to God because they loved Him.

By taking on human nature, the Son of God became like us in all ways, in flesh and blood, in mind and soul, and in heart and will. He differed from us in only one way: He could not sin. Since we know that Christ's human nature remained sinless, He is also fully divine, and He shows us the way in which we can avoid sin, and so improve and transform our human nature.

Begotten eternally of the Father in a manner beyond all utterance, the Only Son and Word of God, Who took flesh for our Salvation, is without ancestry in His divine nature; but, in His humanity, Jesus Christ is the Son of Man.

He appeared upon earth when God had made ready a vessel pure and holy enough to receive Him: the Most Holy Virgin Mary, concluding and fulfilling a long period of preparation. Heaven and earth, peoples and times, seasons of gladness or sorrow, all were brought into existence by God in well-ordered sequence, to prepare or to announce His coming.

From Adam, the first man, to the All-Holy Mother of God, the generations succeeded one another according to God's good pleasure and election until the fullness of times (*cf. Ephesians 1:10*), the moment foreseen by God from all eternity, in which would be born a little child, He who is, at one and the same time eternal God and man subject to death, the fruit of all the promises and the hope of all the Righteous.

Tone 1, Troparion (*Resurrection*)

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, • while the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, • Thou didst rise on the third day, O Savior, • granting life to the world. • The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O Giver of Life: • “Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ. • Glory to Thy Kingdom. • Glory to Thy dispensation, O Thou Who lovest mankind.”

Tone 8, Troparion of the Temple (*Midfeast of Pentecost*)

O Savior at the Middle of the Feast, • fill my thirsting soul with the waters of piety, as Thou didst cry to all: • “If anyone thirst, let him come to Me and drink.” • O Christ God, Fountain of our life, glory to Thee.

Tone 2, Troparion (*Holy Fathers*)

Great are the accomplishments of faith, • for the three Holy Youths rejoice in the fountain of flames as though in the waters of rest; • and the Prophet Daniel appeared • a shepherd to the lions as though they were sheep. • So by their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls.

Tone 4, Troparion (*Forefeast*)

Prepare, O Bethlehem, for Eden has been opened to all. • Adorn thyself, O Ephratha, for the Tree of Life blossoms forth from the Virgin in the cave. • Her womb is a spiritual paradise planted with the Divine Fruit; • if we eat of it, we shall live forever and not die like Adam. • Christ is born to raise up again what fell in former times, His image.

Tone 4, Kontakion of the Temple (*Midfeast of Pentecost*)

Christ God, the Creator and Master of all, • cried to all in the midst of the feast of the law: “Come and draw the water of immortality.” • We fall before Thee and faithfully cry: • “Grant us Thy mercies for Thou art the Fountain of our life.”

Tone 1, Kontakion (*Fathers*)

Rejoice, O Bethlehem. Prepare thyself, O Ephratha. • The Lamb is on her way to give birth to the Chief Shepherd she carries in her womb. • The God-bearing Forefathers will rejoice, beholding Him, • and with the shepherds, they will glorify the Virgin nursing Him.

Tone 3, Kontakion (*Forefeast*)

Today the Virgin comes to the cave • to give birth to the Eternal Word. • Hear the glad tidings and rejoice, O universe. • Glorify with the angels and the shepherds • the Eternal God, Who is willing to appear as a little child.

Tone 4, Prokeimenon (*Holy Fathers*)

Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy Name forever. (*Song of the Three Holy Children, v. 3*)

O Come, All Ye Faithful

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!
Come and behold Him born the King of Angels!
O come, let us adore Him;
O come, let us adore Him;
O come, let us adore Him:
Christ the Lord.

Sing, choirs of Angels, sing in exultation!
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, glory in the highest!
O come, let us adore Him;
O come, let us adore Him;
O come, let us adore Him:
Christ the Lord.

Oh Little Town of Bethlehem

Oh little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth, the everlasting light:
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.
For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above
While mortals sleep the Angels keep their watch of wondering love.
Oh morning stars together, proclaim thy holy birth:
And praises sing to God the king, and peace to men on earth.

Silent Night

Silent night, holy night
All is calm, all is bright.
'Round yon virgin mother and child
Holy infant so tender and mild:
Sleep in heavenly peace
Sleep in heavenly peace.
Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight.
Glories stream from heaven afar
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia:
Christ the Savior is born!
Christ the Savior is born

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Hark! The herald Angels sing"
"Glory to the new-born king
Peace on earth and mercy mild
God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful all ye nations rise
Join the triumph of the skies.
With angelic host proclaim:
"Christ is born in Bethlehem"
Hark! The herald Angels sing:
"Glory to the new-born king."
Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings
Ris'n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by
Born that man no more may die.
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.
Hark! The herald Angels sing:
"Glory to the new-born king"





Евангелие

Родословие Иисуса Христа, Сына Давидова, Сына Авраамова. Авраам родил Исаака; Исаак родил Иакова; Иаков родил Иуду и братьев его; Иуда родил Фареса и Зару от Фамари; Фарес родил Есрома; Есром родил Арама; Арам родил Аминадава; Аминадав родил Наассона; Наассон родил Салмона; Салмон родил Вооза от Рахавы; Вооз родил Овида от Руфи; Овид родил Иессея; Иессей родил Давида царя; Давид царь родил Соломона от бывшей за Уриею; Соломон родил Ровоама; Ровоам родил Авию; Авия родил Асу; Аса родил Иосафата; Иосафат родил Иорама; Иорам родил Озию; Озия родил Иоафама; Иоафам родил Ахаза; Ахаз родил Езекию; 0Езекия родил Манассию; Манассия родил Амона; Амон родил Иосию; 1Иосия родил Иоакима; Иоаким родил Иехонию и братьев его, перед переселением в Вавилон. По переселении же в Вавилон, Иехония родил Салафииля; Салафииль родил Зоровавеля; Зоровавель родил Авиуда; Авиуд родил Елиакима; Елиаким родил Азора; Азор родил Садока; Садок родил Ахима; Ахим родил Елиуда; Елиуд родил Елеазара; Елеазар родил Матфана; Матфан родил Иакова; Иаков родил Иосифа, мужа Марии, от Которой родился Иисус, называемый Христос. Итак всех родов от Авраама до Давида четырнадцать родов; и от Давида до переселения в Вавилон четырнадцать родов; и от переселения в Вавилон до Христа четырнадцать родов. Рождество Иисуса Христа было так: по обручении Матери Его Марии с Иосифом, прежде нежели сочтались они, оказалось, что Она имеет во чреве от Духа Святаго. Иосиф же муж Её, будучи праведен и не желая огласить Её, хотел тайно отпустить Её. Но когда он помыслил это,- се, Ангел Господень явился ему во сне и сказал: Иосиф, сын Давидов! не бойся принять Марию, жену твою, ибо родившееся в Ней есть от Духа Святаго; родит же Сына, и наречешь Ему имя Иисус, ибо Он спасёт людей Своих от грехов их. А всё сие произошло, да сбудется реченное Господом через пророка, который говорит: се, Дева во чреве примет и родит Сына, и нарекут имя Ему Еммануил, что значит: с нами Бог. Встав от сна, Иосиф поступил, как повелел ему Ангел Господень, и принял жену свою, и не знал Её, как наконец Она родила Сына Своего первенца, и он нарёк Ему имя: Иисус (Мф. 1, 1-25).

Митрополит Антоний Сурожский

Во имя Отца и Сына и Святого Духа.



В преддверии Рождества Христова, когда мы ожидаем увидеть воочию воплощение Сына Божия, как трогательно и как вдумчиво Церковь вспоминает всех тех, которые свою плоть, свою жизнь дали, чтобы родился Спаситель.

Сегодня праздник предков Господних. Каждый из нас несет в своем теле, в своей душе все прошлое человеческого рода: и Христос, приобщившийся человечеству, не явился новым человеком, которого бы заново сотворил Бог. Он воспринял Свою человечность от тысячелетней, может быть, многомиллионной годами истории человеческого рода. **В Его теле, в Его человечестве жили все те, которые жили когда-то на земле до Него.**

Таким же образом в нашем теле, в нашей душе живет всё прошлое человечества. И Христос соединился с человеческим родом, не избрав в нем праведников или только святых, достойных встречи с Богом, – для которой слов нет, так она изумительна, так она превосходит всякое воображение; **в Нём живет человечество и праведное, и грешное.**

В ряду имен, которые мы сегодня слышали и из которых некоторые памятны нам своей святостью, есть имена, памятные Ветхому Завету грехом. **Но это всё были люди, которые пробивались через грех, пробивались через человеческую немощь, через потемнённость сердца, через восстание плоти, через бушевание истории и жизни вокруг них, пробивались к Богу, искали света, искали правды, искали святости,** даже если не хватало сил осуществить свою мечту.

И с ними поистине был Бог, Который ни от какого грешника не отходит, Которого не пугает никакая неправда, Который может казаться нам далеким, только когда мы холодностью, безразличием не хотим Его знать... Но и тогда Он не отходит. Он остается таким же близким, хотя и скорбно, крестно близким к нам.

И вот, **вспоминая сегодня всё прошлое человечества,** всех этих людей, которые из тысячелетия в тысячелетие соткали плоть и человечество Христа, вспомним их благоговейной, благодарной мыслью; и **вспомним всех тех, которые были нашими предками, знаемых нами и незнаемых, тех, о которых радуется сердце, или тех, которых, может быть, стыдится наша гордыня, – вспомним всех.**

Своей человеческой святостью Христос оправдал всех тех, кто был плотью и кровью Его, – и каждый из нас призван подвигом

2 ☞ подвигом жизни, творением и борьбой, через победы и поражения, идя к Богоотданности, идя к святости, то есть посвященности всего себя Богу, не только себя спасти, оправдать не только свое временное существование на земле, но оправдать жизнь тысячелетий, живущих в нашей плоти и в нашей душе.

И всякий, кто пробивается к святости, всякий, кто делается храмом Святого Духа, кто действительно так соединяется со Христом, что становится частицей Его святейшего, пречистого Тела, всякий, кто делается сыном или дочерью Живого Бога, спасает, оправдывает, прославляет, осмысливает жизнь и судьбу всех тех, чьим наследником он является в своем человечестве.

Поэтому вдумаясь в это родословие Христа, взглянем в эти имена: это все были живые люди, люди плоти и крови, трепетные перед жизнью, порой измученные, а порой – ликующие и торжествующие, и все они живут в чуде Христовой человечности и Христова человечества.

И в нас живет прошлое. Христос все прошлое этой родословной так освятил, что все без остатка стали своими, родными Богу, родными в самом сильном смысле слова. **И мы можем своей жизнью, трудом, подвигом, устремленностью к Богу, тоской по Нему, борьбой за Него, за Его победу в нас, осмыслить и оправдать всё прошлое нашего рода и его принести Богу как дар, и став сами Ему родными, сделать Ему родными также и тех, которые порой Его не знали, а порой, зная, от Него отступали грехом, неверностью сердца и жизни.**

Как это дивно, какое это может дать нам вдохновение к жизни! Не для себя мы живём, даже не только для ближнего, для любимых, даже не для врагов, а для всего человечества, а за ним – для всей судьбы вселенной. Слава Богу, что Он так нам верит и такую великую и дивную судьбу вверяет нам!

Аминь.



Протоиерей Вячеслав Резников

Во имя Отца и Сына и Святого Духа.

Сегодня положено читать «родословие Иисуса Христа», и сегодняшнее воскресение пред Рождеством Христовым носит название «неделя святых отец». Отцы, это - через кого Бог дает временную жизнь. А Святые Отцы,- через кого Он дает жизнь вечную. **Свою веру мы называем «верой отеческой», потому что приняли**

3 ☞ её от отцов, от тех, кто родил нас во Христе благовествованием и святым крещением, кто своим личным подвигом показал, что значит быть христианином.

Святыми Отцами мы привыкли называть православных учителей церкви. Но сегодня упоминаются отцы ветхозаветные: и Авраам, которого вообще называют «отцом всех верующих» (Рим. 4, 11), и его первые потомки. Вспоминаются военачальники, в победах которых Бог являл Свою силу и славу. Вспоминаются и те, кто «сами испытали поругания и побои», «узы и темницу», которые «были побиваемы камнями, перепиливаемы, подвергались пытке, умирали от меча». В их терпении Бог не менее являл свою силу и славу. И они тоже, как и новозаветные отцы, свою жизнью и рождали, и рожают веру в других.

Но - какое отношение имеет приведенное родословие к Иисусу Христу? Ведь это родословие Иосифа, который не был фактическим отцом Иисуса. За разъяснением обратимся к одному из законов Ветхого завета. По этому закону, «если кто умрет, не имея детей, то брат его пусть возьмет за себя жену его, и восстановит семя брату своему» (Мф. 22, 24). И родившийся становился поистине сыном умершего, с его именем, с его правами, с его достоинством. И сила этого закона точно такова, как и сила закона: «плодитесь и размножайтесь» (Быт. 1, 28), потому что оба они вышли из одних Божественных уст.

И получилось, что Своим рождением от Святой Девы, по сравнению с Которой каждый из сынов Адама - мертвец по своим грехам, Бог, согласно закону, восстановил семя умершему во грехах человеческому роду. Евангельское родословие поистине является родословием «Иисуса Христа, Сына Давидова, Сына Аврамова», хотя и кончается словами: «Иаков родил Иосифа, мужа Марии, от которой родился Иисус, называемый Христос».

Так, выполнив и этот ветхозаветный закон, Господь одновременно и упраздняет его, и снимает и с него покрывало, показывая, для чего в конечном итоге этот закон был тогда установлен.

Аминь.



The Children's Word

"Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them, for to such is the Kingdom of Heaven." Mark 10:14

Sunday, December 22, 2024

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A Ministry of the
Orthodox Christian Network 

The most important book

Do you know where the word "Bible" comes from? Well, it comes from the Greek word, "biblos," which means "book." And today's Gospel reading starts with that very word. It starts "The book of the Genealogy of Jesus Christ." The words "the book" are the very beginning of the New Testament, when we learn about our Lord, Jesus Christ.



Why do we call this book just "the book"? Because it's the most important book in the world! It's the book that tells us the whole history of how God has helped us, how God has helped the whole world. That's why we call it "the book," or "biblos." It's the most important one. It's THE book.

Today the Gospel tells us the whole family tree of our Lord Jesus Christ. It tells us where Jesus came from. When we hear all of the names like Abraham and Isaac and Ruth and David and Josiah and Joseph, we think about all the Bible stories we have heard that happened before Christ was born. We think about all the ways that God helped the world, even before Christ was born.

But now we get to read why this is called THE book. We get to read about the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, and how He came to save the world forever!

WORD SEARCH

Can you find these words in the jumble?

- Abraham
- Ancestors
- Bible
- Birth
- Christmas
- Genealogy
- Righteous
- Sarah
- Shepherds
- Visitors

R	T	I	I	F	G	P	D	L	Z	B	A	I	B	B
C	I	T	C	Y	G	O	L	A	E	N	E	G	P	E
S	J	G	D	D	Q	P	C	N	C	I	S	G	Q	V
B	H	J	H	F	J	M	R	E	F	R	P	R	E	Z
F	E	E	Q	T	X	Q	S	F	O	J	K	G	D	Q
S	V	Q	P	M	E	T	M	T	E	E	J	W	X	L
S	A	R	A	H	O	O	I	T	A	L	M	K	K	T
X	A	Z	F	R	E	S	U	F	B	B	D	H	Y	T
I	M	M	S	D	I	R	M	S	R	I	A	M	Y	G
E	U	I	T	V	Z	W	D	F	A	B	I	R	T	H
V	H	L	F	S	O	Q	A	S	H	C	U	G	W	J
A	X	V	U	R	I	W	D	E	A	S	D	N	X	B
L	H	L	Z	Q	S	R	N	P	M	P	J	W	V	M
Y	L	V	S	G	E	S	H	D	C	H	T	N	J	S
M	S	W	F	R	M	I	F	C	N	O	L	D	S	L

WHAT'S IN THE ICON?

How long have we had pictures of the Christmas story? For a long, long time!

Here is a carved picture of the Nativity from 1,700 years ago! Can you find Jesus in the manger? Can you find Mary and the animals?



RIGHTEOUS SARAH THE HOLY FOREMOTHER

Have you ever had visitors at your house? Did you make them feel welcome? Did you talk to them and give them food and something to drink? Welcoming visitors is called “hospitality,” and today we celebrate a saint who welcomed some very special visitors.



Sarah was the wife of Abraham. We call Abraham a forefather of our Lord, Jesus Christ, because he came before Jesus. He was like a great-great-great...grandfather. So, his wife Sarah, was a foremother of the Lord!

Once, three visitors came to see Abraham and Sarah. The old husband and wife welcomed the visitors, even though they were strangers to them. Abraham and Sarah took care of the visitors, and the visitors told them that Sarah would have a baby. Later on, Sarah did have a baby, Isaac, and that was a special miracle. Abraham and Sarah were faithful to God. If you go to a wedding, you will hear their names in the wedding prayers. We remember them because they were married to each other, but they were faithful to God *together*.

The icon up above is called “The Hospitality of Abraham” but we know that Sarah showed hospitality and love for the visitors too! And God knows it too!

We celebrate St. Sarah today, the Sunday before Christmas.

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Saint Sarah, pray for us!



The Children's Word is a weekly bulletin for Orthodox Christian young people. Copyright 2024 Alexandra Houck. Email is orthodoxchildrensword (at) gmail.com. Find it each week at myocn.net.