



Weekly Bulletin

Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

Genealogy of the Lord

Troparion of the Resurrection, Tone 4

When the women disciples learned from the angel, the joyous message of Thy Resurrection. They cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the Apostles: death is overthrown, Christ God is risen, granting the world great mercy.

Troparion of Prefeast of Nativity, Tone 4

Prepare, O Zebulon, and adorn yourself, O Naphtali; River Jordan, cease flowing and receive with joy the Master coming to be baptized. Adam, rejoice with our first Mother and do not hide yourself as you did of old in Paradise; for having seen you naked, He has appeared to clothe you with the first garment. Christ has appeared to renew all creation

Kontakion of Annunciation Tone 8

O Victorious Leader of triumphant hosts! We, your servants delivered from evil, sing our grateful thanks to you, O Theotokos! As you possess invincible might set us free from every calamity so that we may sing: Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride!

The 29th Sunday after Pentecost, Tone 4, December 24th, Matt. 1:1-25

Christ is Born! Glorify Him

The second Sunday which is specially consecrated to preparation for the Nativity is that which immediately precedes the feast of Christmas. It is called "Sunday of the Fathers or of the Genealogy". It falls between December 18th and 24th.

"Turning our thoughts to Bethlehem, let us lift ourselves in spirit to contemplate the great Mystery which is taking place in the cave...Now that the time of our salvation draws near...Prepare thyself, O Bethlehem...", the choir sings during the service, and mentions made of the patriarchs, the prophets, the holy women of the Old Covenant who "through faith shine like the stars". The Church's idea, this Sunday, seems to be to bring the righteous who lived before Christ into the joy of the Nativity "inviting them all by praises and divine songs to prepare for the birth of Christ".

The gospel read at the Liturgy (the whole of Matthew 1) traces back the genealogy of Jesus according to the flesh: "The generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob;...". And it continues up to Joseph "the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ". We have read or heard the genealogy many times. We may have the impression that the reading is of purely historical and documentary interest. What can this list of names bring us that has any spiritual import? But each one of these names does have a particular meaning, if we remind ourselves of the story of the person who bore it. What needs to be clearly understood is that the ancestors of Jesus were not all just and holy men. Amongst them are also sinners; those who have committed incest, adultery, murder; and alien woman: the names of Judas, Tamar, of David and Ruth are filled with spiritual significance. Jesus wanted, humanly, to be linked with "all that" and to "all those". He wanted to clear a way for himself through the sins and crimes of men.

And so it is the history of each one of us that he takes upon himself and overcomes. For each one of us has some of the features of those of Jesus' ancestors who are the furthest from holiness. In each of us can be found, either dormant or awakened, the sins of the patriarchs and all their children. All the same, however, Jesus must be born in us. We must, in ourselves, overcome and go beyond the misdeeds that certain names in the genealogy of Jesus represent. It is necessary for us to live this genealogy, for us to acquire a personal experience of it, so that through falling and starting afresh we shall eventually reach Joseph and Mary. This does not mean sinning deliberately so that we can identify ourselves more closely with the genealogy of the Lord, but simply means recognizing certain elements of this genealogy in the sins that we do commit, and uniting ourselves in spirit to the progressive purification

Announcements and

Activities

Vigil for the Nativity of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ— Tonight, December 24th, at 6:30 PM. So looking forward to celebrating this proclamation of the Lord's Birth through worship and celebration in song.

Divine Liturgy for the Nativity of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ— Monday, Dec. 25th, at 10AM.

Great Vespers— Saturday, at 5:30 PM.

Divine Liturgy— Sunday, at 10AM.

Coffee Hour— This week's Coffee Hour is coffee and cookies, as it is Christmas. Next week's Coffee Hour will be sponsored by Kyle and Erika and Gan and Virginia.

Church School/Adult Ed— Dec. 31st, at 9AM.

Christmas Charity— blessings to all who shopped and donated toward making for a very blessed Christmas for the people we helped.

Pray for... Sarah, the daughter of Fr. Lawrence's godfather, health issues. **Youseff and Jimmy**— who are ill. **Jonathan**— ill. **Reposed Barbara Ranjo**. . **Laure**— battling Cancer. **Paul**— ill **Ralph**—ill **Archpriest Lawrence**, from Canada, progressive eye disease. **Tsige Roman**— our beloved Tsige reposed on December 3rd. Please keep praying for her homeland of Ethiopia. **Brian**— ill.. **Jonathan**—ill. **Katia**— sister of Shkbarra's . **Patrick**, reposed. **Heather Mary**— uncommon fatigue **Lou Mendez**. Battling ongoing health issues. **George and Steve**, a request from Luci. F. Dr. Joseph— personal needs. **Lance**—special request for prayers. **Christian**— prayers for upcoming surgery. **Michelle**— looking for housing. Mike Meko's Mother-in-law, **Lois**. Recovering from a fall. Larissa's newly-reposed husband **Raphael**. Departed **Matushka Priscilla** and **Newly-departed, George**. **Luci F. upcoming surgery**. **Newly- Departed Marylyn**.

which prepared for the birth of Jesus. Thus the genealogy of Christ will become and integral part of our own lives.

(Taken from *Year of Grace of the Lord*, by a Monk of the Eastern Church)

From the Lives of the Saints... THE VENERABLE MARTYR EUGENIA AND OTHERS WITH HER

Eugenia was the daughter of Philip the Eparch of all Egypt and was born in Rome. At that time the Christians had been driven out of Alexandria and lived outside the city. The virgin Eugenia visited the Christians and accepted their Faith with her whole heart. Fleeing from her parents with two of her faithful eunuchs, she was baptized by Bishop Elias. Disguised in men's clothing, she entered a men's monastery where she received the monastic habit. So much did she cleanse her heart by voluntary asceticism that she received from God the grace of healing the sick. Thus, she healed a wealthy woman, Melanthia. After this, however, Melanthia wanted to lure Eugenia into bodily sin, not suspecting that Eugenia was a woman. Since she was adamantly rejected by Eugenia, out of revenge this evil woman went to the eparch and slandered Eugenia in the same manner as Potiphar's wife had once slandered the chaste Joseph. The eparch ordered that all the monks be bound and cast into prison together with Eugenia. But when St. Eugenia was brought before the tribunal, she revealed herself to her father as his daughter. The overjoyed Philip was then baptized with his entire household, and he was chosen as Bishop of Alexandria. Hearing of this, the Roman emperor sent a wicked commander, Terentius, who came to Alexandria and secretly had Philip killed. St. Eugenia moved to Rome with her mother and brothers. In Rome she fearlessly and zealously converted pagans, especially maidens, to the true Faith, and thus she converted a beautiful maiden Basilla to the Faith. Shortly afterward, Basilla was beheaded for Christ as Eugenia had foretold to her. Then both eunuchs, Protus and Hyacinth, were beheaded. Finally, a martyr's end came to St. Eugenia, whose presence had caused the collapse and destruction of the Temple of Diana. The torturers threw her first into water and then into fire, but God saved her. The Lord Jesus Himself appeared to her in prison and told her that she would suffer on the day of His Nativity. And so it was. She was beheaded by the sword on December 25, 262 A.D., in Rome. After her death, St. Eugenia appeared in great glory to her mother and comforted her.

THE VENERABLE NICHOLAS THE COMMANDER

Some think this great saint was a Slav of Balkan ancestry. At the time of Emperor Nicephorus, Nicholas was a commander and had authority over a division of the army that went to war against the Bulgarians. Along the way, Nicholas spent the night in an inn, where he experienced a great temptation and had a strange dream. This dream fully came to pass in the war, where the Greeks were utterly defeated by the Bulgarians in the year 811 A.D. Nicholas was spared, and out of gratitude for God's providence he left his military rank and became a monk. He lived a long life of asceticism and became so perfect that he became a great clairvoyant and God-pleaser. He died peacefully in the ninth century and took up his habitation in the Blessed Kingdom of Christ the Lord.)*

*) In the Greek Synaxarion, the Venerable Antiochus, a monk of Palestine, is also commemorated. He was an eye-witness of the suffering of the Holy Fathers of St. Sava's (May 16) and, as an eyewitness, described their suffering under the Saracens. He also compiled another book entitled Pandect. He wrote many prayers, of which the best-known is the one recited daily at Compline: "And grant us, O Master, as we go to sleep, rest of body and soul."

The Holy New Martyr Ahmed, a Turk by birth and a stonecutter by profession, is also commemorated. He embraced the Christian Faith and laid down his life for it. He suffered at the hands of the Turks in Constantinople in the year 1682 A.D.

Taken from the Prologue of Ochrid, by St. Nikolai (Velimirovich)

"There do not exist many or few, nor small or great problems. The only problem is the absence of Christ from our lives" (From the life and teachings of Elder Epiphanius Theodoropoulos)