

SUNDAY BEFORE NATIVITY
OF THE ANCESTORS OF CHRIST



Icon of the Nativity of our Lord — December 25th

ПАСТИРСЬКЕ ПОСЛАННЯ ЄПИСКОПІВ УКРАЇНСЬКОЇ КАТОЛИЦЬКОЇ ЦЕРКВИ В СПОЛУЧЕНИХ ШТАТАХ АМЕРИКИ ВСЕЧЕСНИМ ОТЦЯМ, ПРЕПОДОБНИМ ЧЕНЦЯМ І ЧЕРНИЦЯМ, СЕМІНАРИСТАМ ТА ДОРОГИМ ВІРНИМ *ХРИСТОС РАЖДАЄТЬСЯ!*

Цього року українці завершили ювілейні відзначення 1025-річчя Хрещення наших предків в річці Дніпро, яке здійснив рівноапостольний Великий Князь Володимир Великий. Через цей грандіозний і благословенний акт наш народ був осяяний світлом Ісуса Христа і Його Слово проникло в їхні серця.

Папа Франциск у своїй Енцикліці «Світло віри» (*"Lumen Fidei"*) зазначив: «Світло віри: це те, як традиція церкви говорить про великий дар, даний Ісусом». Святіший Отець звертається до Євангелія від Йоана, в якому Христос сказав: «Я – світло, на світ прийшов, щоб кожен, хто в мене вірує, не перебував у темряві» (Йо. 12, 46).

Ця темнота розсіялася від появи яскравої зорі, що вела Мудреців зі Сходу. Ми знову й знову можемо святкувати велике таїнство нашої віри – Різдво нашого Господа Ісуса Христа – бо ми успадкували цю віру від наших предків. І що це за таємнича й прекрасна віра! Син Божий, наш Господь Ісус Христос, взяв на себе тіло і поселився серед нас. Ісус стався Чоловіком, щоб всі ми могли стати дітьми Божими, спадкоємцями Царства Божого, причасниками Його слави.

Усе це перевершує наше розуміння. Це дивина, що Всевишній Бог став дитятком задля нашого спасіння. Слово Боже задля нас перейшло весь шлях від зачаття до народження («...воплотився з Духа Святого й Марії Діви, і став чоловіком», – *Нікейський Символ Віри, за перекладом 1988 року*).

Добра новина була оголошена пастухам. Разом з ними ми наповнюємося здивуванням і як небесний ангельський хор прославляємо Бога піснями: «Слава во вишніх Богу, і на землі мир, в людях благовоління» (Лк. 2:14, *Антіохійсько-Візантійський текст, за перекладом 1988 року*). Євангеліє продовжує: «А пастухи повернулися, прославляючи й хвалячи Бога за все, що чули й бачили, так, як їм було сказано» (Лк. 2, 20). В одній з наших Різдв'яних коляд ми співаємо: «Тиха ніч, дивна ніч... Дивне дитятко у яслах лежить – людям Спаситель родивсь». Як і наші предки, ми не самотні, бо то «З нами

Бог! » Ввійшовши в наш світ, Ісус Месія вплинув на кожну нашу дію, на кожен наш порух, на кожне наше прагнення, вдійсності, на все наше життя й призначення. Втілення, Бог, що стався чоловіком, не є ілюзією. Це має сенс. « Ним постало все, і ніщо, що постало, не постало без нього » (Йо. 1, 3-4).

Різдво є прекрасним часом для оновлення. Минулий « Рік віри » заохотив нас до нового відкриття та оновлення наших взаємин з Христом, які були дані нам у Хрещенні. Через чесноту нашого Хрещення ми всі покликані ділитися « Доброю новиною » з іншими, євангелізувати, чи то в наших домівках через приклад молитви і свідчення, чи, можливо, в праці, чи в різних організаціях, релігійних, чи мирянських. Певним чином ми всі опиняємося в ситуації, коли Бог кличе нас засвідчити свою віру.

1025 років тому наші предки були просвічені Христом і Його « Доброю новиною ». Це той благословенний дар, який вони передали нам. Тепер, передаваймо його іншим. Радіймо у це велике свято Різдва нашого Господа, і дякуймо Ісусові за те, що народився нам на спасіння. Христос Раждається – Славимо Його!

Ми зичимо всім вам Різдва, сповненого правдивою благодаттю, і благословенного та успішного Нового Року.

Благодать нашого Господа Ісуса Христа, любов Бога Отця, і причастя Святого Духа нехай буде з усіми вами.

ХРИСТОС РАЖДАЄТЬСЯ ! СЛАВІТЕ ЙОГО!

+Високопреосвященний Стефан Сорока, Митрополит Української Католицької Церкви у США, Архієпископ Філадельфійський для українців

+Преосвященний Річард Семінак, Єпископ Чиказької єпархії святого Миколая

+Преосвященний Павло Хомницький, ЧСВВ, Єпископ Стемфордської єпархії

+Преосвященний Іван Бура (автор), Апостольський Адміністратор Пармської єпархії святого Йосафата

Дано на Різдво Христове 2013 року Божого

PASTORAL MESSAGE OF THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC HIERARCHY OF THE U.S.A. TO OUR CLERGY, HIEROMONKS AND BROTHERS, RELIGIOUS SISTERS, SEMINARIANS AND BELOVED FAITHFUL

CHRIST IS BORN!

This year we Ukrainians conclude the Jubilee Year Commemorating the 1025th anniversary of the Baptism of our ancestors in the River Dnipro by the Grand Prince, St. Volodymyr the Great, the Equal-to-the-Apostles. Because of this dramatic and blessed event, our people were illuminated by the light of Jesus Christ and His Word penetrated their hearts.

Pope Francis states in his Encyclical Letter, *Lumen Fidei*: "The light of Faith: this is how the Church's tradition speaks of the great gift brought by Jesus." The Holy Father continues by quoting St. John's Gospel where Christ says of Himself: "I have come as Light into the world, that whoever believes in Me may not remain in darkness" (Jn. 12:46).

That darkness was shattered by the appearance of a bright star followed by the Wise Men from the East. We are able to celebrate anew the great mystery of our faith – the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ – because we inherited this faith from our ancestors. And what a mysterious and magnificent faith this is. The Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, took on flesh and dwelt among us. Jesus became man so that all of us can become children of God, inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven, partakers of His glory.

All of this is beyond our ability to comprehend. It is astonishing that Almighty God became an infant for our salvation. The Word of God went through the whole process of conception and birth for us ("...by the power of the Holy Spirit He was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man" – *Nicene Creed, 1988 translation*).

This "good news" was announced to the shepherds. Together with them we are filled with wonder as the heavenly angelic host praises God and sings, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, among men good will" (Lk. 2:14, *Antiochian-Byzantine text, 1988 translation in our Divine Liturgy*). The Gospel passage continues, "the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, in accord with what had been told them" (Lk. 2:20). In one of our [American] Christmas carols we

sing: "O Holy Night, the stars are brightly shining, this is the night of the dear Savior's birth." As with our ancestors, now we are not alone; for, "God is with us." Entering into our world, Jesus, the Messiah, affects our every movement, our every action, our every aspiration, in fact our very life and destiny. The Incarnation, God-becoming-man, is not an illusion. It makes sense. "Through Him all things came to be, not one thing had its being but through Him. All that came to be had life in Him..." (Jn. 1:3-4).

Christmas is such an obvious opportunity for renewal. This past "Year of Faith" urged us to rediscover and renew our relationships with Christ that was given to us in Baptism. By virtue of our Baptism we are all called to share the "good news" with others, to evangelize, whether it is in our home in the example of prayer and witness we give, or perhaps at work, or in different organizations, both religious and secular. In some ways we are all given situations in which God is calling us to witness our faith.

1025 years ago, our ancestors were enlightened by Christ and His "good news." This blessed gift they passed on to us. Now, let us pass it on to others. Let us rejoice on this great feast of the Nativity of our Lord and let us be grateful to Jesus for being born for our salvation. Christ is born – let us glorify Him!

We wish all of you a truly grace-filled Christmas and a very blessed and prosperous New Year.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

CHRIST IS [being] BORN ! GLORIFY HIM !

+ Stefan Soroka, Archbishop of Philadelphia for Ukrainians, Metropolitan of Ukrainian Catholics in the United States

+Richard Seminack, Eparch of St. Nicholas in Chicago

+Paul Chomnycky, OSBM, Eparch of Stamford

+John Bura (author), Apostolic Administrator of St. Josaphat in Parma

Christmas, AD 2013

The pre-Nativity of Christ/Theophany Fast began at sundown on the evening of St. Philip's feast day (Nov. 14). That is why this Christmas Fast is popularly called "St. Philip's Fast (Pylypivka)". It is a 40 days period our preparation (in spirit, soul and body) for the celebration of the Nativity/Theophany cycle of the church year. **DARK (RED) VESTMENTS ARE THE NORM FOR THIS PENITENTIAL SEASON WITH THE EXCEPTION OF SATURDAYS, SUNDAYS AND CERTAIN FEASTS.**

FIRST UNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS:

НЕДІЛЯ ОТЦІВ Й МАТЕРІВ ХРИСТОВИХ: почавши від святих Адама й Єви аж до Йосифа Обручника й Пресвятої Богородиці (Лука 3:23-38). Це є Перша неділя перед Різдвом Христовим, отже пам'ять святого (святих) дня пропускається. **THE SUNDAY BETWEEN DEC 18 and DEC 24 IS ALWAYS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF THE HOLY "FATHERS AND MOTHERS IN THE FLESH" (SOMETIMES TRANSLATED "ANCESTORS" OR "FORBEARS") OF OUR LORD, GOD AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST,** commemorating all



The Three

Holy Youths

those who were well-pleasing to God from all ages, from Sts. Adam & Eve to St Joseph the Betrothed of the Most Holy Theotokos, & those who are mentioned in the genealogy of Luke 3:23-38. The holy prophets & prophetesses are also remembered today. If you carry any one of these names, then today is your **Patronal Feast Day, or**

Name's Day. *Thus, we transfer to another day or omit the memory of the saints of **December 22:** Holy Great-Martyr Anastasia "Deliverer from Bonds", her teacher Chrisomnus and the holy martyr Theodotia, and her children Evodus and Euty chius (284-305)*

On both Sundays before Christmas, the icons on the tetrapod should be those of the Holy Prophet Daniel (Belteshazzar) and the Three Holy Youths: Ananiah (Shadrach), Azariah (Abed-Nego) and Mishael (Meshach) (6th century BC), who are also some of the saints celebrated on Dec. 17.

For the liturgical propers for an English Divine Liturgy, we use the Troparion of Tone 6 in the blue *Anthology*: p. 349; in Ukrainian: p. 472, continuing with propers for the First Sunday Before Christmas, the **FEAST OF THE HOLY FATHERS (and MOTHERS) OF CHRIST**, pp. 744-746, 1133. The Propers for the Pre-Feast of Christmas are inexplicably omitted in the *Anthology*, but we do print them below)

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21

4:00-4:30 PM - Time for Holy Mystery of Confession for those who wish to make use of it. Of course, one may confess in the presence of any other Catholic priest, as well; and, if anyone should be in need of an additional time slot, all you have to do is ask any priest, **(see explanation below)**

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21

5:00 PM – DIVINE LITURGY (all English, recited)

+Helen Miller (Katherine & Walter Dziadyk)

Fr. Ivan Chirovsky

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22

There will be no 7:45 am MATINAL LITURGY

9:00 AM - DIVINE LITURGY (English, Ukrainian & O. C. Slavonic; choir)

+John & Catherine Kyle &

+Stephanie Holubiak (M/M Daniel Kyle)

Fr. Ivan Chirovsky

Although EASTERN CHRISTIAN FORMATION CLASSES will resume on January 14, 2014, parents are reminded that their children's presence at Christmas and Theophany worship services still remains as an integral and vital part of "Eastern Christian Formation."

11:30 AM – DIVINE LITURGY (English; congregational plainchant)

God's Blessings upon Parishioners

Fr. Ivan Chirovsky

Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ (MONDAY)

DECEMBER 23

(acts of penance are encouraged on each day of St Philip's Fast)

Ten Holy Martyrs of Crete (249-51): Theodulus, Saturninus, Europus, Gelasius, Eunician, Zoticus, Pompeius, Agathopus, Basilides and Evaristus; holy ven. Father Naum of Ochrid, evangelizer of Macedonia; Commemoration of the Dedication of the Great Church of Holy Wisdom (Hagia Sophia, Свята Софія) in Constantinople. *Churches dedicated to our Lord Jesus, Who is the Holy Wisdom of God, celebrate their patronal feast-day at this time.*

No Divine Liturgy on the Morning on Dec. 23rd

700 pm – 8:45 pm:

"ROYAL HOURS-OFFICE OF READINGS" FOR NATIVITY OF OUR LORD.

We are ready do conduct this service in Ukrainian and in English, but the decision regarding language is made right before the service begins when the priest and cantor look around and see who actually showed up.

This most important Liturgy of the Word teaches everyone how to meditate properly on the scriptures implied by the Feast of our Lord's Nativity (Christmas). *Using Septuagint Greek text and numbering for O.T., these are:*

(First Hour) Psalms 5, 44 and 45, Micah 5:1-3, and Hebrews 1:1-12 with Matthew 1:18-25;

(Third Hour) Psalms 66, 86 and 50, Baruch 3:36-4:4, and Galatians 3:23-29 with Luke 2:1-20;

(Sixth Hour) Psalms 71, 131 and 90, Isaiah 7:10-16, 8: 1-4, and 8:9-10, and Hebrews 1:10-2:3 with Matthew 2:1-12; and

(Ninth Hour) Psalms 109, 110 and 85, Isaiah 9:6-7, and Hebrews 2:11-18 with Matthew 2:13-23.

Attendance at this Office of Readings does not satisfy the obligation/privilege to gather for the Feast of Christmas. **Strictly speaking, the ROYAL HOURS of Christmas (without Typika) are supposed to be celebrated on the morning of Dec 24th from about nine to eleven am, so that these extra prayers can naturally go hand-in-hand with that whole day's extra fasting. Alas today the mandatory rules for fasting on this particular day have been mitigated to include only abstinence from meat and some people have no choice but to go to work on this morning or afternoon. And those who do not work outside the home are often laboring quite extensively to prepare the home and foods for the traditional Ukrainian twelve course meatless Holy Supper on Holy Eve. Therefore, we will be serving ROYAL HOURS on Monday evening, Dec. 23rd, so that those who must labor are not prevented from attending this most important Liturgy of the Word that teaches us how to meditate properly on the scriptures implied by the Feast of our Lord's Nativity (Christmas)**

Eve of the Nativity of Christ (TUESDAY) DECEMBER 24
(Traditionally: a day of fasting, as well as abstinence from meat and dairy; in our times – only abstinence from meat is obligatory)

Holy Venerable-Martyr Eugenia and her two slaves, Protus & Hyacinth (circa 262)

No Divine Liturgy on the Morning of Dec. 24.

MAJOR FEAST: THE NATIVITY IN THE FLESH OF OUR LORD, GOD and SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST, popularly called "Christmas" DECEMBER 25

Both liturgies are for God's Blessings upon our Parishioners and Guests

THE OBLIGATION/PRIVILEGE OF GATHERING FOR WORSHIP FOR CHRISTMAS CAN BE FULFILLED BY ATTENDING EITHER THE SERVICE AT 9:00 PM ON TUESDAY (DEC. 24), OR THE SERVICE AT 9:30 AM ON WEDNESDAY (DEC. 25).

9:00 PM ON TUESDAY (DECEMBER 24)

If you attend on Tuesday evening, please use the special pew book which has been printed for the Christmas Eve "Vespers with Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great", but if you prefer you can make use of the liturgical propers, as they are found in the *Anthology* on pages 747-754 and 760-761, 272-318. Please note however that the pew book does not entirely use the 1988 Synodal translations, as does the *Anthology*.

8:15-8:30 PM – Altar servers are asked to arrive.

8:45 PM – one small segment reminiscent of Great Compline.

9:00 PM - The First Divine Liturgy of Christmas will be the Vigil Service (first part of Vespers of Christmas with Epistle, Gospel & remainder of the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great). NOTE FOR ROMAN (LATIN) RITE CATHOLICS: the vespers part of this service is not a "prelude to the Mass." That means that it is wrong to come later so as to try and skip it. Rather, the vespers part is an *integral* part of the Christmas Mass, or actually of that part of this Mass, which is known in both Latin and Byzantine Rites of the Catholic Church as the "Liturgy of the Word". For Byzantine Catholics this is a special "First Mass" or "Midnight Mass" of Christmas to put it into Latin terms of comparison. According to St John Chrysostom,

all should come prepared for this service by having read at home and by reflecting upon the scriptures of this day: (1) Genesis 1:1-13; (2) Numbers 24:2-3.5-9.17-18; (3) Micah 4:6-7; 5:2-4[1-3]; (4) Isaiah 11:1-10; (5) Jeremiah (Baruch 3:35-4:4); (6) Daniel 2:31-46.44-45; (7) Isaiah 9:6-7 [5-6]; (8) Isaiah 7:10-16; 8:1-4.9-10; (Prokeimenon verses) Ps 2:7-8; (9) Hebrews 1:1-12; (Alleluia verses) Ps 109 [110]:1.2.3; (10) Luke 2:1-20.

9:30 AM ON WEDNESDAY (DECEMBER 25)

8:45-9:00 AM – Altar servers are asked to arrive.

9:15 AM – one small segment reminiscent of Great Compline.

9:30 AM – The Second Divine Liturgy of Christmas will be the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom. NOTE FOR ROMAN (LATIN) RITE CATHOLICS: For Byzantine Catholics this is a kind of “Second Mass of Christmas” to put it into Latin terms of comparison. According to St John Chrysostom, all should come prepared for this service by having read at home and by reflecting upon the scriptures of this day: (Matins) Matthew 1:18-25; (Divine Liturgy) (Prokeimenon verses) Ps 65:2 and 4; (1) Galatians 4:4-7; (Alleluia verses) Ps 18:2 and 3; (2) Matthew 2:1-12.



MAY GOD, ONE IN THE HOLY TRINITY, BLESS US ALL!

Просимо всіх наших парафіян й прихожан прийняти наше щире побажання Божого благословення з нагоди радісних свят Різдва Христового, цивільного Нового Року, та Святого Богоявлення Пресвятої Тройці. Бажаючи Вам всіх Божих благодатей потрібних задля Вашого спасіння: здоровля, щастя, миру Божого, на многі і благі літа. Остаємось з пошаною до Вас, о. Іван Чировський з пані маткою Марійкою, й дітьми Антонієм і Таїсою, та о. Диякон Олександр Вроблицький, з пані добродійкою Джесикою і її дітьми Естеллою та Ісааком.

We ask all of our parishioners and guests to accept our sincere wishes for God's blessings upon you at this time of our joyous celebrations of Christ's Nativity, the civil New Year, and the Holy Theophany of the Most-Holy Trinity. We are praying for God's graces to descend upon all of you, that you may be blessed with the kind of health, happiness and peace of God which will work towards your salvation, for many blessed and happy years to come. Fr. Ivan and Presbytera Mariyka Chirovsky, and their children: Antony and Taïsa; with Fr. Deacon Alexander Wroblicky, his wife, Jessica, and their children Estella and Isaac.

Postfeast of the Nativity of Christ (THURSDAY) DECEMBER 26
(from Christmas to Theophany: free from fasting and/or abstinence)

Synaxis of the Most Holy Mother of God; Holy Priest-Martyr Euthymius, Bishop of Sardis (824); holy martyr Constantine of Sinard (8th century); veneration of the miraculous icon of the Theotokos, called "Blessed Womb." (1392)

No Making and Selling of Pyrohy until January 16, 2014

9:30 am +Maria Spilnyk (Roman Spilnyk) Fr. Ivan Chirovsky

Postfeast of the Nativity of Christ (FRIDAY) DECEMBER 27
(from Christmas to Theophany: free from fasting and/or abstinence)

Holy Apostle, First Martyr and Archdeacon Stephen (1st century); Our Venerable Fathers and Confessors for the Faith in Christ: Theodore the "Branded One" (844) and his brother, Theophane, Bishop of Nicaea and composer of canons.

9:30 am +Shirley Touillon (Lorraine Sobol) Fr. Ivan Chirovsky

Postfeast of the Nativity of Christ (SATURDAY) DECEMBER 28

Holy Twenty Thousand Martyrs Who Were Burned in Nicomedia, esp. the priest Glycerius, the deacons Zenon and Theotheles, and Domna (303); holy apostle Nicanor of the Seventy-two (34); Passing into eternal life (1945) of Blessed Hryhoriy (Gregory) Khomyshyn, Bishop of Stanyslaviv (Ivano-Frankivs'k) and martyr.

No Divine Liturgy This Morning

SUNDAY AFTER (AND POST-FEAST OF) THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST: BRIGHT VESTMENTS. On the Sunday after Christmas, we always remember the holy and righteous: Joseph, the Betrothed of the Theotokos; and David, the Psalm-writer and King; and James, the brother of the Lord according to the Flesh. *We transfer to another day, or omit, the memory of the saints of December 29:* Holy 14,000 Children, Who Were Murdered by Herod in Bethlehem in Judea, for the sake of Christ; Our Venerable Father Marcellus, Hegumen of the Monastery of the Sleepless Ones (c. 470); our ven. Father George, archbishop of Nicomedia and hymn writer (9th century); our ven. Fathers Mark, the grave digger, and Theophil and John, of the Kyiv caves (11th-12th centuries)

For the liturgical propers for an English Divine Liturgy, we use the Troparion of Tone 7 in the blue Anthology: p. 353; in Ukrainian: p. 474, continuing with propers for the Sunday after Christmas, pp. 765-768.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28

4:00-4:30 PM - Time for Holy Mystery of Confession for those who wish to make use of it. Of course, one may confess in the presence of any other Catholic priest, as well; and, if anyone should be in need of an additional time slot, all you have to do is ask any priest, **(see explanation below)**

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28

5:00 PM – DIVINE LITURGY (all English, recited)

God's Blessings upon Parishioners

Fr. Ivan Chirovsky

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29

There will be no 7:45 am MATINAL LITURGY

9:00 AM - DIVINE LITURGY (English, Ukrainian & O. C. Slavonic; choir)

+Anna Wagner (Irene Borodycia)

Fr. Ivan Chirovsky

Although EASTERN CHRISTIAN FORMATION CLASSES will resume on

January 14, 2014, parents are reminded that their children's presence at Christmas and Theophany worship services still remains as an integral and vital part of "Eastern Christian Formation."

11:30 AM – DIVINE LITURGY (English; congregational plainchant)

+Julia Plusa (Steve Zinski)

Fr. Ivan Chirovsky

HOLY MYSTERY (SACRAMENT)
OF RECONCILIATION (CONFESSION, REPENTANCE)

One way of preparing ourselves worthily to welcome the King of ALL is by going to Holy Confession. What is Confession basically? (1) A public acknowledgement of one's sinfulness and need of forgiveness. (2) A tangible sign of God's forgiveness in His Son, Jesus Christ. (3) A reconciliation of man to God through forgiveness of sins that separate us from God. (4) A sincere effort to examine our life, goals, values, priorities, and characteristics. (5) Sincere prayer, asking God for His forgiveness and thanking Him for all the things He has given us, accompanied by a firm desire to live a renewed and changed Christian life. And much more!!!

Confession can be tremendously uplifting and is a real foundation for spiritual growth and renewal (See John 20:21-23, James 5:16). Many ask: What should I say in Confession? That's because Confession is the most neglected Sacrament, since many do not understand its real purpose. As the Holy Scriptures remind us, as a result of baptism, we are to "bring every thought captive to Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:2-6), which means consistently education yourself and forming a conscience that is in accord with the teachings of Christ and His Body, the Church. Then Confession obviously makes sense because "all have fallen short" (Romans 3:22-24). Unfortunately, some people persist in having rather outdated or stereotyped opinions about the Church and about Confession and about what is or is not a sin, and thus they use these as an excuse for avoiding the sacrament. In short, what we ought to say in Confession should be informed by the fact that each of us is tempted to commit sins - to displease God and violate His commandments. **When we give in to these temptations, that is called a "sin", and should be confessed to Christ (in the presence of a priest, acting as the witness on behalf of the Church and a guide for our perseverance in the faith).** A fuller Examination of Conscience is in the Anthology prayer book on pages 9-22. In short, what types of sins are there?

SINS AGAINST GOD: If I lose confidence, trust or hope in God. If I blaspheme, curse Him, mock Him, poke fun at Him. If I absent myself from the Divine Liturgy on Sundays and Holy Days without good reason. If I do not receive Holy Confession and Holy Communion periodically.

SINS AGAINST MY FELLOW MAN: If I am jealous, envious, hateful, malicious, slanderous, vindictive, revengeful, or mean. If I criticize unjustly, ridicule, poke fun, take advantage of, insult, hurt, inflict harm, or gossip in any way.

SINS AGAINST MYSELF: If I lie, cheat, steal, or deceive. If I am unethical in my practices at home, school, or work. If I have impure thoughts in my mind, including acts of fornication and adultery, pornography, profanity, pride and conceit.

Let us remember that the Sacrament of Holy Confession is a "second Baptism". It washes away our sins committed after baptism. It renews and restores our access to God's grace. It enables our souls to become pure and holy as He wants them to be.

When the Church's rule about receiving Communion once a year during the season of Pascha (and thus of going to Confession beforehand when necessary) was first instituted in the 12th century, it was originally meant to merely indicate "the least" that a Catholic Christian should strive to live by and still remain in "good standing." In our times, this rule is often abused and twisted around to mean, "I don't have to go more than once a year." Well, that makes about as much sense as a dentist telling us, "I hope you brush your teeth at least once a year" and we then proceed to never brush our teeth more than just once a year. Obviously, the fact that there are four penitential seasons during each year would indicate that pious Christians presumably confess their sins to Christ (in the presence of a priest as the witness on behalf of the Church) at least four times a year. The Servant of God Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky, of blessed memory, taught that

once a month should be our goal, especially for those involved in any kind of church ministry. Blessed Pope John Paul the Great confessed on a weekly basis, as a personal rule. Finally, it is the time honored tradition of Ukrainian Byzantine male and female monastics to examine their Conscience on a DAILY basis.

NOTICE ABOUT COMMEMORATIONS at DIVINE LITURGIES

Please be aware of the fact that there are no more openings available for Saturday evenings or Sunday Divine Liturgies until January 19, 2014. Since 40th day commemoration requests obviously cannot be scheduled so far in advance, if it must be served on a weekend, when there is no free space for it to be taken as a Divine Liturgy commemoration, we will take the 40th day commemoration at a Panakhyda after the Divine Liturgy. When scheduling a commemoration for a Divine Liturgy for a weekend in 2014, please give as much notice as possible, if a specific date is to be requested. It is always best to call ahead (412-431-2531, Monday or Friday, 9:00-1:00) to see if a certain date is available. This avoids disappointment. On the other hand, available dates for commemorations at weekday liturgies are wide open. Thank you for your cooperation.

PRAYER and FASTING REQUEST

Please keep our parish and its future in your fasting and prayers and almsgiving. On November 12, the PA Commonwealth Court began hearing our case regarding the former Rennekamp property across the street; a decision is expected sometime in January, 2014.

ЗМІННІ ЧАСТИНИ НА ЛІТУРГІЯХ дня 2013 – 12 – 22

ЧИТАННЯ ІЗ СВЯТОГО ПИСЬМА:

**18-24 ГРУДНЯ: НЕДІЛЯ ОТЦІВ й МАТЕРІВ ХРИСТОВИХ:
Перша неділя перед Різдвом Христовим:**

На Вечірній Літургії, Неділі Отців:

- (1) ПЕРШОЇ КНИГИ МОЙСЕЯ ЧИТАННЯ** (*LXX: Буття 14:14-21*).
(2) ДРУГОЇ КНИГИ МОЙСЕЯ ЧИТАННЯ (*LXX: Второзаконня 1:8-11 і 15-176*).
(3) ДРУГОЇ КНИГИ МОЙСЕЯ ЧИТАННЯ (*LXX: Второзаконня 10:14-21*).

На Утренній Літургії, неділі:

(4) Дев'яте Утреннє Євангеліє: ВІД ІВАНА СВЯТОГО ЄВАНГЕЛІЯ (БЛАГОВІСТУВАННЯ) ЧИТАННЯ: Коли настав вечір, того самого дня, першого в тижні, а двері були замкнені там, де були учні, зі страху перед юдеями, прийшов Ісус, став посередині й каже їм: « Мир вам! » Сказавши це, показав їм руки й бік. І зраділи учні, побачивши Господа. І знову Ісус їм каже: « Мир вам! Як мене послав Отець, так я посилаю вас. » Сказавши це, дихнув на них і каже: « Прийміть Духа Святого. Кому відпустите гріхи — відпустяться їм, кому ж затримаєте — затримаються. » Тома ж, один з дванадцятьох, на прізвище Близнюк, не був з ними, коли прийшов Ісус. Інші учні йому сказали: « Ми бачили Господа. » Він відповів: « Як не побачу на його руках ран від цвяхів і не вкладу мого пальця у місце, де були цвяхи, і коли руки моєї не вкладу в його бік, не повірю! По вісьмох днях учні його знову були в домі, і Тома був з ними. Увіходить Ісус — а двері були замкнені — і стає посередині й каже: « Мир вам! » Потім каже до Томи: « Подай твій палець сюди і глянь на мої руки. І простягни твою руку і вклади її у мій бік. І не будь невіруючий, але віруючий! » Тома відповів і сказав до нього: « Господь мій і Бог мій! » Каже йому Ісус: « Тому що ти бачив мене, віруєш. Блаженніщасливі ті, які не бачили й увірували! » Багато ще й інших чудес сотворив Ісус на очах своїх

учнів, що їх не записано в цій книзі. А ці записано, щоб ви увірували, що Ісус — Христос (Месія-Помазаник), Син Божий, та, увірувавши, щоб ви мали життя в його ім'я. (20:19-31).

На Божественній Літургії, подаємо лише те, що бракує в Антології, на стор. 388-460.

На Першому Антифоні: Зображальний Псалом 102 (103): стор. 394, 396.

На Третьому Антифоні: Блаженства: стор. 400, 402.

Тропарі, Кондаки (й Богородичний) оспівують тему дня.

Тропар Воскресний, глас 6: стор. 472.

Тропар Отців, глас 2: Великі подвиги віри, * в джерелі полум'я, як на спокійній воді, святі три отроки радувалися; * і пророк Даниїл пастирем левів, наче овець, являвся. * їх молитвами, Христе Боже, спаси душі наші.

Тропар Передпразденства, глас 4: Готуйся, Вифлеєме, розкрийся всім, Єдеме, * красуйся, Євфрате, * бо дерево життя в вертепі розквітнуло від Діви. * її лоно раєм мисленним ¹ явилось, в якому – божественний сад. * З нього, ївши, будемо жити – і не, як Адам, помремо. ** Христос раждається, щоб оновити упалий колісь образ.

Слава:

Кондак Отців, глас 6: Рукописаному образіві не поклонившись, * але неописанним єством захистившись, триблаженні, * в подвизі вогню ви прославилися * і, посеред нестерпного полум'я стоячи, Бога ви призвали: * Поспішишь, О, Щедрий, і скоро прийди як милостивий нам на поміч, * бо Ти можеш, якщо воля Твоя.

І нині:

Кондак Передпразденства, глас 3: Діва днесь гряде, щоб невимовно родити у вертепі превічне Слово. * Радій, вселенно, почувши це, * прослав з ангелами й пастирями ** того, що хоче явитися дитям малим – превічного Бога.

Щоб приготувитися на читання із Апостола, співаємо:

Прокімен Праотців, глас 4:

Благословен єси, Господи, Боже отців наших,
і хвальне, і прославлене ім'я Твоє на віки (Дан. 3,26).

Стих Праотців: Бо праведний єси в усьому, що створив Ти нам. (Дан. 3,27).

On page 410 of the "Blue Book", this Reading is taken:

Апостол в Неділю Отців й Матерів Христових:

(5) ДО ЄВРЕЇВ (єврейських християн) ПОСЛАННЯ СВЯТОГО АПОСТОЛА ПАВЛА ЧИТАННЯ: (Апостол, Рим – 1991, стор. 432, зачало 328)

Браття!

Вірою Авраам перебував у обіцяній землі, як у чужій,
живучи в наметах з Ісааком та Яковом, спадкоємцями, як і він, тієї самої обітниці.
Бо чекав міста з непохитними основами, якого Бог будівничий і засновник. ...
Вірою Авраам, поставлений на пробу, приніс у жертву Ісаака, єдинородного сина;
він, одержав обітниці, про якого було сказано: « Від Ісаака тобі народиться потомство, »
думаючи, що Бог має силу і з мертвих воскресити;

¹ "Noetic" is an adjective that comes from the noun "Nous". In Ukrainian, these two words are often translated as "мисленний" and "мисл" or "ум". For more, see footnote 11 below.

тому і його одержав назад, прообраз.
 Вірою Ісаак благословив Якова та Ісава на майбутнє.
 Вірою Яків перед смертю благословив кожного з синів Йосифа
 і поклонився, спираючись на кінець своєї палиці.
 Вірою Йосиф, умираючи, згадав про вихід синів Ізраїля і розпорядився про свої кості.
 Вірою батьки Мойсея після народження три місяці його ховали,
 бо бачили красу дитини і не злякалися царського наказу. ... І що ще скажу?
 Не вистачить мені часу, коли почну розповідати про Гедеона, про Варака, про Самсона,
 про Єфту, про Давида й Самуїла та пророків,
 що вірою підбили царства, чинили справедливість, осягнули обітниці,
 загородили пащі левам, силу вогню гасили, вістря меча уникали,
 ставали сильні, будучи немічні, на війні проявили мужність,
 напади чужих розганяли. Жінки діставали назад своїх померлих, які воскресали.
 Інші загинули в муках, відкинувши визволення, щоб осягнути лише воскресіння.
 Інші наруг і бичів зазнали, та ще й кайданів і в'язниці;
 їх каменовано, розрізувано пилою, брано на допити;
 вони вмирили від меча; тинялися в овечих та козячих шкурах,
 збідовані, гноблені, кривджені;
 ті, яких світ не був вартий,
 блукали пустинями, горами, печерами та земними проваллями.
 І всі вони, хоч мали добре засвідчення віри, не одержали обіцяного,
 бо Бог зберіг нам щось краще,
 щоб вони не без нас осягнули досконалість (11:9-10,17-23,32-40)

* * * * *

Щоб приготувитися на слухання Святого Євангелія, співаємо "Алилуя", на глас 4

Стих отців перший: Боже, ушима нашими ми почули
 і отці наші сповістили нам (Пс. 43,2).

Стих отців другий: Ти спас нас від тих, що напастують нас,
 і тих, що ненавидять нас, засоромив Ти. (Пс. 43,8).

On page 412 of the "Blue Book", this Reading is taken:

"Євангелії" (БЛАГОВІСТУВАННЯ) в Неділю Отців й Матерів Христових:

(6) ВІД МАТЕЯ СВЯТОГО ЄВАНГЕЛІЄ ЧИТАННЯ:

Книга родоводу Ісуса Христа, сина Давида, сина Авраама. Авраам породив Ісаака, Ісаак породив Якова. Яків породив Юду і братів його. Юда породив Фареса та Зару від Тамари. Фарес породив Есрома, Есром породив Арама. Арам породив Амінадава, Амінадав породив Наасона, Наасон породив Салмона, Салмон породив Вооза від Рахави, Вооз породив Йоведа від Рути, Йовед породив Ессея, Есей породив царя Давида. Давид же цар породив Соломона від жінки Урії, Соломон породив Ровоама, Ровоам породив Авію, Авія породив Асафа. Асаф породив Йосафата, Йосафат породив Йорама, Йорам породив Озію. Озія породив Йоатама, Йоатам породив Ахаза, Ахаз породив Єзекію, Єзекія породив Манасію, Манасія породив Амоса, Амос породив Йосію, Йосія породив Єхонію і братів його за вавилонського переселення. А після вавилонського переселення Єхонія породив Салатіїла, Салатіїл породив Зоровавела, Зоровавел породив Авіюда, Авіюд породив Еліякіма, Еліякім породив Азора, Азор породив Садока, Садок породив Ахима, Ахим породив Еліюда, Еліюд породив Єлеазара, Єлеазар породив Маттана, Маттан породив Якова, Яків породив Йосифа, чоловіка Марії, з якої народився Ісус, що зветься Христос. Покоління жє всіх було: від Авраама до Давида чотирнадцять, від Давида до вавилонського переселення чотирнадцять і від вавилонського переселення до Христа —

покоління чотирнадцять. Народження Ісуса Христа сталося так. Марія, його мати, була заручена з Йосифом; але перед тим, як вони зійшлися, виявилось, що вона була вагітна від Святого Духа. Йосиф, її чоловік, будучи праведний і не бажавши її ославити, хотів тайкома її відпустити. І от, коли він це задумав, ангел Господній з'явився йому в сні і мовив: « Йосифе, сину Давида, не бійсь узяти Марію, твою жінку, бо те, що в ній зачалось, походить від Святого Духа. Вона породить сина, і ти даси йому ім'я *Єшуа* - *Ἰησοῦς* - *Iesus* - *Ісус*, бо *він спасе* народ свій від гріхів їхніх. » А сталося все це, щоб збулось Господнє слово, сказане пророком « Ось діва матиме в утробі і народить сина, і дасть йому ім'я *Ем-ману-їл*, що значить: *З нами є Бог*. » Прокинувшись від сну, Йосиф зробив, як велів йому ангел Господній: прийняв свою жінку; і не пізнав її, аж поки не родила сина, і він дав йому ім'я "*Ісус*" (1: 1-25)

* * * * *

ON PAGE 414, WE INSERT FOUR Petitions for St Philips' Fast (Nov 15 to Dec 23); what follows here has been translated from the Anthology, pages 1133:

Диякон: Щоб утвердитися святій Христовій Церкві по всьому світі як видимим знаменом близини Царства Божого, щоб вірні, в євангельській надії і вбожестві, сміло очікували Спаса, хто гряде справдити жителів нового небесного Єрусалиму, молимося Тобі: вислухай нас, Господи, і помилуй.

Диякон: Щоб во Христі сестри і брати наші, (на Україні і по всьому світі), які переслідувані нині вчинками темряви, знайшли силу в надії справедливого суду, що погубить несправедливість людей, усердно молимося Тобі, Отче праведний і Боже всякої утіхи: вислухай нас і милостиво помилуй.

Диякон: Щоб у святій цей постний час, самі себе і один одного присвячуючи на приготування "путі" (*дороги*) Тому хто гряде, благий Дух Його благодаті низив гори гріхів і прогрішень наших і вирівняв криві наші дороги, молимося: Господи, вислухай і помилуй.

Диякон: Щоб Божа любов, спонукуючи нас до наслідування Господа Ісуса в Його подвизі примирення людей до Отця і до один одного, творила нас учасниками спасенного діла притягнення всього до купи у згоді й мирі, усильно молимося: вислухай нас, Боже, і помилуй.

* * * * *

Причасний Стих на "Алилуя": неділі:

Хваліте Господа з небес, * хваліте Його в вишніх.

Причасний Стих на "Алилуя": Праотців:

Радуйтеся, праведні, у Господі, правим належить похвала.

Алилуя, Алилуя, Алилуя.

В разі потреби на "Алилуя" до Причасних Стихів можна додати решта стихів, як слідує тут:

Псалом 148-мий

Хваліте його, всі ангели його, * хваліте його, всі сили його.

Хваліте його, сонце й місяцю, * хваліте його, всі звізди і світло.

Хваліте його, небеса небес, і вода, що вища небес; * нехай возхвалять ім'я

Господнє.

Бо він сказав, і сталося, * він повелів, і утворилося.

Поставив їх повік і повік віку, * повеління поклав, і не минеться.

Псалом 32-гий

Славте Господа на гусях, на десятиструнним псалтирі грайте йому. * Заспівайте йому пісню нову, красно грайте, викликаючи.

Бо праве слово Господнє, і всі діла його вірні. * Він любить милосердя й суд. Милости Господньої повна земля.

Словом Господнім небеса утвердилися і духом уст його вся сила їх. * Він збирає, як міх, води моря, кладе в скарбницях безодні.

Нехай боїться Господа вся земля; і нехай дрижать перед ним усі, що живуть у вселенній. * Бо він сказав, і сталося, він наказав, і утворилося.

Господь нищить наміри народів, відкидає замисли людські і відкидає наміри князів. * А воля Господня перебуває повік, помисли серця його з роду в рід.

Блажен народ, що для нього Господь єсть Бог його, люди, що їх він вибрав у насліддя собі. * З неба споглянув Господь, видів усіх синів людських. З наготованої оселі своєї споглянув на всіх, що живуть на землі, – * він, що створив кожне зокрема серце їх, що розуміє всі діла їх. Не спасається цар силою великою і велетень не спасеться množеством сили своєї. * Непевний – кінь для рятунку, і великою силою своєю він не спасеться. Ось очі Господні на тих, що бояться його, і на тих, що надіються на милість його, * щоб визволити від смерти душі їх і жити їх у час голоду. Душа наша надіється на Господа, бо він помічник і оборонець наш. * Бо в ньому звеселиться серце наше, і на ім'я святеє його ми надіємося. Будь, Господи, милість твоя на нас, * бо уповали ми на тебе.

ON PAGE 456:

ЗА-АМВОННА МОЛИТВА в Неділю Отців й Матерів:

Боже блаженних і святих отців Авраама, Ісаака і Якова. Ти єси святий святих, мучеників Спаситель, праведних похвала і вінець тих які Тобі від віку добровгодили. Дай нам пам'ятати всіх святих Твоїх, і співучасниками їхніх подвигів стати. Ти сподобив своїх святих подвижників - мучеників добрим змагом змагатися, біг правовір'я довершити й віру чистого ісповідання зберегти. Дай нам часть насліддя їх, щоб ми сподобилися стати учасниками благ, які Ти для них зберіг. Помилуй і скріпи нас, молитвами й заступництвом Пресвятої й пречистої Богородиці, святих і славних трьох отроків, Ананії, Азарії й Мисаїла, всеблаженного пророка Даниїла й всіх святих Твоїх. Очистивши нас, сподоби нас діянням животворного Духа Твого поклонитися святому Різдву Христа Бога нашого. Бо Тобі належить всяка слава, честь і поклонення, Отцю, і Сину, і Святому Духові, нині й повсякчас, і на віки віків.

Всі: Амінь. Будь ім'я Господнє благословенне....

Відпуст: Христос, що воскрес із мертвих, істинний Бог наш, молитвами пречистої своєї Матері, чесного і славного пророка, предтечі і хрестителя Івана, *якого є храм*, святих славних і всехвальних апостолів, во святих отця нашого Івана Золотоустого, архієпископа Константинограда, святих по плоті отців й матерів Христових, пророків й пророчиць, зокрема тих, що Богоугодними були у всіх віках, почавши від святих Адама й Єви аж до Йосифа Обручника, *яких є день*, і всіх святих, помилує і спасе нас, як благий і чоловіколюбець.

**PROPER (changeable parts) AT THE LITURGICAL WORSHIP SERVICES
FOR 2013 – 12 – 22**

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR SUNDAY BETWEEN DECEMBER 18-24:

SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FATHERS AND MOTHERS OF CHRIST:

First Sunday before the Nativity of Christ

At the Vesperal Liturgy, for Sunday of the holy Fathers:

(1) A READING FROM THE FIRST BOOK OF MOSES: A READING FROM THE FIRST BOOK OF MOSES (*Genesis 14:14-20*). In those days, when Abram heard that his kinsman had been taken captive, he led forth his trained men, born in his house, three hundred and eighteen of them, and went in pursuit as far as Dan. And he divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants, and routed them and pursued them to Khobal (Hobah), to the left (north) of Damascus. Then he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his kinsman Lot with his goods, and the women and the people. After his return from the defeat of Chodologomor (Ched-or-laómer) and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet Abram at the Valley of Sabi (Shaveh, i.e. the King's Valley). And Melchizédek,² king of Salem, brought out bread and

² According to St Athanasius Academy, Melchizedek means "king of righteousness" and "king of peace". According to St. Cyprian of Carthage (+258) the priesthood of Melchizedek typifies the High Priesthood of Christ, who gives his precious body and blood to the faithful in the bread and wine of

wine; he was priest of God Most High. And Melchizédek blessed Abram and said, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, maker of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!" And Abram gave Melchizédek a "tithe" (ten per cent) of everything.

(2) A READING FROM THE SECOND BOOK OF MOSES (*Deuteronomy 1:8-11, 15-17b*). Moses said to the sons of Israel: "Behold, I have set the land before you; go in and take possession of the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give to them and to their descendants after them." At that time I said to you, "I am not able alone to bear you; the LORD your God has multiplied you, and behold, you are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude. May the LORD, the God of your fathers, make you a thousand times as many as you are, and bless you, as he has promised you!" So I took the heads of your tribes, wise and experienced men, and set them as heads over you, commanders of thousands, commanders of hundreds, commanders of fifties, commanders of tens, and officers, throughout your tribes. And I charged your judges at that time, "Hear the cases between your brethren, and judge righteously between a man and his brother or the alien that is with him. You shall not be partial in judgment; you shall hear the small and the great alike; you shall not be afraid of the face of man, for the judgment is God's."

(3) A READING FROM THE SECOND BOOK OF MOSES (*Deuteronomy 10:14-21*). Moses said to the sons of Israel: "Behold, to the LORD your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it; yet the LORD set his heart in love upon your fathers and chose their descendants after them, you above all peoples, as at this day. Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn. For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who is not partial and takes no bribe. He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. Love the sojourner therefore; for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt. You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve him and cleave to him, and by his name you shall swear. He is your praise; he is your God, who has done for you these great and terrible (wonderful) things which your eyes have seen."

At the Matinal Liturgy: (4)

Gospel # 9: John 20:19-31, *Divine Liturgy: an Anthology for Worship*, pg. 50.

Instead of a Synaxarion reading, the following may suffice:

"The second Sunday which is specially consecrated to the 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 mention is 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 Matt. 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*

the Eucharist. Abram typifies our Christian response of complete faith-trust in the Lord. God, One in the Holy Trinity, has given us everything thus in gratitude and trust we give ten per cent of our gross income back to God (through contributions to our parish (5%) and charitable institutions (5%). The main church dedicated to the Mother of God in her Dormition by St Vladimir the Great (+1015) was commonly known as the "Church of the Tithe - Desyatinna" because that is where St. Vladimir customarily entrusted ten per cent of his personal ALONG WITH ten per cent of the national treasury of Kyivan Rus'-Ukraine to the Church.

*whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.*³ We have read or heard this genealogy many times. We may have the impression that this 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; an alien woman: the names of Judas, of 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 of 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 of uniting ourselves in spirit to the progressive purification which prepared for the birth of Jesus. Thus, the genealogy of Christ will become an integral part of our own lives.

The gospel for this Sunday goes on to describe, in a way which is both very precise and very sober, Joseph's doubts, the message brought to him by the angel and his confident obedience.⁴

The epistle (Heb. 11. 9-10, 32-40) praises the faith of the patriarchs: *By faith he (Abraham) sojourned in land of promise.* Isaac, Jacob, Gideon, Samuel, David and others are mentioned. The logical conclusion is not reached in this reading, but is found in the first sentence of the following chapter: *Wherefore seeing we also are encompassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith ... (12: 1-2).*

The day of December 24th presents very interesting liturgical characteristics which, at first, are somewhat disconcerting. On the one hand, the vigil of the Nativity is the culminating point of the hope and expectation of Advent. On the other hand, the services for this day anticipate the feast of Christmas itself: not only do we ask with fervour for the coming of Christ, but the Church already gives us accounts of the Nativity from the gospels. This fusion of two elements — penitence in the expectation of an event, and the announcement of that event as having already taken place — is explained by the play of liturgico-historical factors rather than by any deliberate doctrinal or pedagogical design. (This also happened on Holy Saturday). What does matter is that we should know how to use to the best advantage the double meaning thus given to December 24th. The fact that, by Christmas Eve, we have heard read the scriptural texts, which recount the story of the Nativity and have sung hymns of thanksgiving, does not invalidate the joyful prayer of December 25th. On the contrary, it prepares and facilitates this prayer. The services for Christmas Eve are longer than those for the feast day itself; during these services, we hear biblical accounts of the Nativity which are more detailed than those which we hear the next day. In this way ***on December 24th the Church sets before us the whole panorama of the Nativity; each point of detail has been mentioned and explored; a complete picture has been established in our spirit. On Christmas Day itself, the Church does not go over everything that has already been said; it is assumed that we know it and have meditated on it. The services for the Feast are shorter than those of the vigil. The Church focuses our attention on points; she offers us the opportunity not just to learn and develop intellectually, but to taste and savour as spiritual fruits the words of life which we already know. December 24th speaks to us of the same things as December 25th, but the 24th is a preparation, an instruction, a praise which "welcomes" the event; the 25th is the fullness, the fruition, the praise***

³ "The genealogical table contained in the first chapter of the gospel according to Matthew in no way claims to be of strict historical exactness." Please refer to page 64 of Hieromonk Lev's book, for an extensive footnote on this topic.

⁴ The account of the Nativity of Christ according to Matthew is written more from the point of view of Joseph, whereas the same account according to Luke is more from the point of view of Mary.

which crowns an accomplished fact.

On the morning of December 24th, the "canonical hours" (which, on this day are given the name of "royal hours"⁵) are celebrated with particular solemnity. Each of these hours includes, in addition to the psalms and various hymns, a lesson from the Old Testament, and readings from an epistle and a gospel. At Prime (circa 8:00 am), a passage from the prophet Micah (5. 2-4) is read which refers to Bethlehem, little among the thousands of Judah, but out of which will come the future ruler of Israel; the epistle (Heb. 1. 1-12) says that God, having spoken to us through the prophets, has finally spoken through His Son, who is so much better than angels; the gospel (Matt. 1. 18-25) is the same as for the Sunday before Christmas, and describes the perplexities of Joseph and how they were set at rest. At Tierce (circa 8:45 am), a text from the prophet Baruch (3:36-4:4)⁶ proclaims that God *did show himself upon earth, and conversed with men*; the epistle (Gal. 3. 23-29) declares: *the law was our schoolmaster to bring us onto Christ. ... But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. ... For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ*; the gospel (Luke 2. 1-20) tells of the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem and of the adoration of the shepherds. At Sext (circa 9:30 am), the prophet Isaiah (7. 10-16, 8. 1-4, 9-10) announces the Nativity: *A virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good ...*;⁷ the epistle (Heb. 1. 10 - 2.3) again speaks of Jesus being superior to the angels⁸ and gives us a serious warning: *how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation*; the gospel (Mat. 2. 1-12) tells of the journey and adoration of the Magi. At Nones (circa 10:15 am), we hear Isaiah (9. 5-7): *For unto us a child is born unto us a son is given. ... and his name shall be called "wonderful", "counselor", "the mighty God", "the everlasting Father", "the Prince of Peace"*; the epistle (Heb. 2. 11-18) tells us the reason for the incarnation: *in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a personal and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted*; the gospel (Matt. 2. 13-23) narrates the departure of the Magi, the flight into Egypt, and the massacre of the Innocents.

The "royal hours" are immediately followed by vespers (Evening Prayer, circa 11:00 am). During these, we hear three readings from the Old Testament: the account of the creation of the world (Gen. 1. 1-13), that creation which the Incarnation of God was designed to perfect; then the message: *Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given...* (Isaiah 9. 6-7); and finally the prophecy: *a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son...* (Isa. 7. 10-16, 8. 1-4, 9-10). We have already heard these last two lessons during the "royal hours." After the third reading from the Old Testament, vespers somehow merges into the (Divine) liturgy: the celebrant recites a short litany, then goes immediately on to the prayer which follows the "Little Entrance". The *Trisagion* is sung; then the epistle and the gospel of the liturgy are read: the epistle is that for Prime and the gospel is that for Tierce; we have already mentioned them in speaking of the "royal hours". The liturgy then continues in the

⁵ In liturgical terms, the adjective "royal" as in "royal hours" (Царські Часи) and "royal doors" (Царські Врата or Двери) (of the iconostasion) does not imply a greater intrinsic dignity in some particular service or architectural feature. The origin of the term must be looked for in the imperial ceremonial of Constantinople. The "royal hours" are those during which the emperor was present for the whole time. The "royal doors" are those doors for which the emperor, alone of all the laity, had the right to pass on certain occasions.

⁶ The Book of Baruch belongs to the apocryphal or deuterocanonical writings of the Old Testament. This origin does not mean that they did not have a sacred or inspired character.

⁷ In this text from Isaiah, the word "virgin" translates exactly the Greek word used in the Septuagint; but the Hebrew word used in the original could equally well be rendered by "young woman." No Jewish tradition presupposed a virgin birth for the Messiah and so this would not have influenced the authors of the Greek version. The reasons why they deliberately chose the term "virgin" remain a historical mystery. The reasons must have been very strong, for the translators were scholars who were trained to be well aware of the slightest nuances in the text. A Christian will have no difficulty in admitting that, the Alexandrine translators must here have been guided by a divine light.

⁸ One of the aims of the epistle to the Hebrews — which seems to have been written if not by St. Paul, at least by one of his close disciples — is to combat certain tendencies towards adoration of angels and the worship of "intermediaries" in Christians of Jewish origin.

normal way.⁹

The chants which accompany the "royal hours", vespers and the liturgy are already songs of triumph, *Come, let us rejoice in the Lord, in proclaiming this mystery. ... Light of light, brightness of the Father, thou dost fill with Joy and illumine all creatures ... We glorify thy Nativity, O Christ ...*

All the same, this Christmas vigil does not lose its penitential character. The fast for this day should be observed particularly strictly. ..., the custom exists of fasting until the first star appears. This brings to mind both the star which led the Magi to Bethlehem and Christ who is the true light. May this day also be a day of fast in our souls: let us abstain from all bad or useless thoughts and speech, and await in silence and composure the Saviour who is coming to us. Darkness falls. Soon the first star will rise and mark, according to the Church calendar, the start of the new day and of the great feast of Christmas. With the rising of this star, may the light of Our Lord rise for us so that, in the words of the apostle Peter, *Ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts (2 Peter 1.19).*¹⁰

By the prayers of Your holy Fathers and Mothers, Your holy prophet Daniel and three holy youths: Ananias, Azarias and Misael, O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

FOR THE LITURGICAL PROPERs AT TODAY'S DIVINE LITURGY:

AS WE PREPARE FOR THE DIVINE LITURGY, WE MAY PRAY ALONG WITH THE READER/LECTOR, AS HE/SHE: (A) READS THE PRE-COMMUNION PRAYERS ON PAGES 29FF, OR (B) 35FF, OR (C) HEEDING THE DIRECTIONS ON PAGE 55 - RECITES ONE OF THE HOURS, OR AFTER THE HOLY DOORS ARE OPENED, WE MAY SING ONE OF THE HYMNS ON PAGES 958-963, 978-981, OR ANOTHER HYMN CAN ALSO BE SUNG.

USING THE "BLUE BOOK", THE *ANTHOLOGY*:

WE BEGIN ON PAGE 97.

ON ANY ORDINARY "SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST", FOR THE ANTIPHONS, WE USE THE SUNDAY PROPERs THAT ARE KNOWN AS "TYPICAL" OR "ЗОБРАЖАЛЬНІ", MEANING WE GO FROM PAGE 99 TO "PSALM 102 (103)" FOR THE FIRST, AND THEN WE GO FROM PAGE 107 TO "THE BEATITUDES" FOR THE THIRD.

ON PAGE 115, FOR THE TROPARIA, AND KONDAKIA,

TROPARION OF

TONE 6 FOR RESURRECTION ON PAGE 349 OR 473, AND THEN:

Troparion of the Feast, Tone 2,

pp. 744-745;

⁹ If Christmas Eve falls on Saturday or a Sunday, the liturgy is that of St. John Chrysostom. If the vigil falls on another day of the week, the liturgy of St. Basil [the Great] is celebrated, because of the analogy between Advent and Great Lent (during which this liturgy is often used).

¹⁰ This commentary and its footnotes are excerpted from: A Monk of the Eastern Church [Hieromonk Lev (Gillet)], *The Year of Grace of the Lord*, (ISBN 0-913836-68-0), (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1980, pp. 57-61, 64-65). Fr. Lev (Gillet) explains the meaning of today's Gospel and Epistle for the Sunday of the Holy Fathers and Mothers (Genealogy of Christ): (from Saint Abraham to Saint Joseph the Betrothed) in light of our Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church's liturgy and calendar. (Fr. Lev, a French convert to Ukrainian Catholicism, was a Studite monk in L'viv, ordained to the priesthood by the Servant of God, Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky, in 1924. (For more information about Fr. Gillet, please read: Brian R. Keleher, "Sheptyts'kyi and Three Converts from the West", in Paul Magosci, et. al., ed., *Morality and Reality: The Life and Times of Andrei Sheptyts'kyi*, (Edmonton, Alberta: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta, 1989), pp. 227-243)

Troparion of the Pre-Feast, Tone 4:

Bethlehem, make ready, * Eden has been opened for all. * Ephrathah, prepare yourself, * for the Tree of Life has blossomed from the Virgin in the cave. * Her womb has become a noetic¹¹ paradise * in which divinity was planted. * If we partake of it, we shall live and not die like Adam. ** Christ is BEING born to raise up the likeness that had fallen.

Kondakion of Feast, Tone 6

page 745.

GLORY: and NOW:, *Tone 3*

page 340.

Kondakion of the Pre-Feast, Tone 3:

Today the Virgin is coming to the cave * to give birth to the eternal Word * in a manner beyond expression. * Let the world dance when it hears the news; * with the angels and shepherds glorify the pre-eternal God ** who chose to appear as a newborn child.

ON PAGE 120,

We use the Prokeimenon (p. 745) and verse of the Fathers (p. 746)

ON PG. 123, FOR THE FEAST OF THE FATHERS WE ALWAYS READ THIS READING:

(5) A READING FROM THE LETTER OF SAINT PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE HEBREWS

(though uncertain, most likely written by Paul or one of his disciples circa 70 A.D., 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40, note: some southern Byzantines, such as the Antiochians, skip verses 17-23, but the Slavic

¹¹ "Noetic" is an adjective that comes from the noun "Nous". In Ukrainian these two words are often translated as "мисленний" and "мисл" or "ум". The Web Site at <http://orthodoxwiki.org/Nous> explains, as follows: "Nous ... is the eye of the soul. Just as the soul of man, is created by God, man's soul is intelligent and noetic. St. Thalassios wrote that God created beings "with a capacity to receive the Spirit and to attain knowledge of Himself; He has brought into existence the senses and sensory perception to serve such beings." Eastern ... Christians hold that God did this by creating mankind with intelligence and noetic faculties. Angels have intelligence and nous, whereas men have reason, nous and sensory perception. This follows the idea that man is a microcosm and an expression of the whole creation or macrocosmos; it is through the healed and corrected nous and the intelligence that man knows and experiences God. In this belief, soul is created in the image of God. Since God is Trinitarian, Mankind is Nous, Word and Spirit. The same is held true of the soul (or heart): it has nous, word and spirit. To understand this better first an understanding of St. Gregory Palamas's teaching that man is a representation of the trinitarian mystery should be addressed. This holds that God is not meant in the sense that the Trinity should be understood anthropomorphically, but man is to be understood in a triune way. Or, that the Trinitarian God is not to be interpreted from the point of view of individual man, but man is interpreted on the basis of the Trinitarian God. And this interpretation is revelatory, not merely psychological and human. This means that it is only when a person is within the revelation, as all the saints lived, that he/she can grasp this understanding completely. The second presupposition is that mankind has and is composed of nous, word and spirit like the trinitarian mode of being. Man's nous, word, and spirit are not hypostasis or individual existences or realities, but activities or energies of the soul; whereas, in the case with God or the Persons of the Holy Trinity each are indeed hypostases. So these three components of each individual man are 'inseparable from one another' but they do not have a personal character when in speaking of the being that is mankind. The nous as the eye of the soul, which some Fathers also call the heart, is the center of man and is where true (spiritual) knowledge is validated. This is seen as true knowledge which is "implanted in the nous as always co-existing with it."

tradition does not):

“Brethren” (*Brothers and Sisters*)

By faith Abraham sojourned in the land of promise, as [an alien] in a strange land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise.

For he expected a city which has foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God. ...

By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac;

and the one who had received the promises offered up his only-begotten son,

to whom it was said, "In Isaac shall your seed be called,"

accounting that God is able to raise up, even from the dead;

therefore he also received him back in a “figure” (*type*).

By faith Isaac blest Jacob and Esau, concerning things to come.

By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blest each of the sons of Joseph,

and “worshipped leaning upon the top of his staff.”

By faith Joseph, when his end was near, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave commandment concerning his bones.

By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid for three months by his parents,

because “they saw that he was a handsome” child, and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. ... And what more shall I say?

For the time would fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson,

Jephthah, of David and Samuel, and all the prophets,

who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises [from God],

stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword;

from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war

and turned to flight armies of the aliens. Women received their dead by resurrection,

and others were tortured, not accepting their “deliverance” (*freedom*), that they might obtain a better resurrection.

And others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment.

They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were “tempted” (*interrogated*);

they were slain with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats,

being destitute, afflicted, tormented,

of whom the world was not worthy, wandering [like refugees] in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

And all these, having obtained a “witness” (*martyrdom*) through their faith, did not receive the promise,

since God had foreseen something better for us,

that apart from us, they should not be made perfect.

(Antiochian Book of Epistles -11:9-10,17-23,32-40).

ON PAGE 124,

WE SING THE “ALLELUIA” IN TONE FOUR (p. 344) OR IN ANY ONE OF THE OTHER MELODIES GIVEN ON PAGES 124-125 AND 210-211.

We use the verses for the Gospel “Alleluia” of the Fathers (p. 746)

ON PG. 127, FOR THE FEAST OF THE FATHERS WE ALWAYS READ THIS READING:

(6) A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW:

(according to some scholars: in its present form, this is a Greek work written circa 65 to 75 A.D., wherein a Christian scribe in Matthew's community, with his blessing and spiritual imprimatur, made use of the original Aramaic work of Matthew from circa 50 AD (or its Greek translation), as well as

the Gospel of Mark, which was based on the preaching of St. Peter in Rome.)

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*¹² of Uriah. Solomon begot Rehoboam, Rehoboam begot Abijah, and Abijah begot Asaph. Asaph begot "Jehoshaphat" (*Josaphat*), Jehoshaphat begot Joram, and Joram begot Uzziah. Uzziah begot Jotham, Jotham begot Ahaz, and Ahaz begot Hezekiah. Hezekiah begot Manasseh, Manasseh begot Amos, and Amos 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" (Messiah, Anointed). 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 — Yeshua יֵשׁוּעַ [je'juǎʕ] - Ἰησοῦς - Iesus - IcyC — 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 Im-manu-el, (*Isaiah 7:14 and 8: 8, 10*)" which is translated, "with us – is – God." 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 a Son. And he called His name (Yeshua יֵשׁוּעַ [je'juǎʕ] - Ἰησοῦς - Iesus – IcyC) "JESUS". (*NKJV*).

ON PAGE 128, THE FOLLOWING 6 PETITIONS:

TWO PETITIONS:

APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER - ONE SPECIAL PETITION FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER 2013, FROM GENERAL and MISSIONARY PRAYER INTENTIONS OF POPE EMERITUS BENEDICT XVI

Deacon:

Victimized Children.

We also pray:

That children who are victims of abandonment or violence may find the love and protection they need; and...

Prepare for the Savior's Coming. **That Christians, enlightened by the Word incarnate, may prepare humanity for the Savior's coming, ... we implore You, O Lord, hear us and have mercy.**

FOUR PETITIONS: FOR ST. PHILIP'S FAST, FROM THE ANTHOLOGY, PAGE 1133.

ON PAGE 158: AT THE COMMUNION HYMN:

We use the verses for the Communion "Alleluia" of the Fore-Fathers (p. 742)

SUPPLEMENTAL VERSES FROM PSALM 148, FOR THE RESURRECTION, CAN BE FOUND ON PAGES 1080-1081. WITHOUT OMITTING THOSE OF PSALM 148 FOR THE RESURRECTION, IF THERE IS A FURTHER NEED, WE MAY ALSO TAKE ADDITIONAL VERSES FROM PSALM 32, FOR THE FORE-FATHERS, AS FOL-

¹² Words in italic type have been added for clarity. They are not found in the original Greek.

LOWS:

Give thanks to the Lord upon the harp, with a ten-stringed lute sing him songs. * O sing him a song that is new, play loudly, with all your skill.

For the word of the Lord is faithful and all his works to be trusted. * The Lord loves justice and right and fills the earth with his love.

By the Lord's word the heavens were established; by the Breath of his mouth, all their host. * He collects the waves of the ocean; he stores up the depths of the sea.

Let all the earth fear the Lord, all who live in the world revere him. * He spoke; and it came to be. He commanded; it sprang into being.

He frustrates the designs of the nations, he defeats the plans of the peoples. * His own designs shall stand forever, the plans of his heart from age to age.

They are happy, whose God is the Lord, the people he has chosen as his own. * The Lord has looked down from heaven and beheld the whole human race.

From the place where he dwells he gazes on all the dwellers on the earth; * he who shapes the hearts of them all; and considers all their deeds.

A king is not saved by his army, nor a warrior preserved by his strength. * A vain hope for safety is the horse; despite its power it cannot save.

The Lord looks on those who revere him, on those who hope in his love, * to rescue their souls from death, to keep them alive in famine.

Our soul is waiting for the Lord. The Lord is our help and our shield. * In him do our hearts find joy. We trust in his holy name.

Let your mercy, O Lord, be upon us * as we have hoped in you.

AS WE PARTAKE OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST, WE MAY SING THE HYMNS ON PAGES 964-973, OR ANOTHER HYMN.

FOR THE AMVON PRAYER FOR THE FATHERS OF CHRIST, SEE ANTHOLOGY, PAGE 746.

On page 175: *Dismissal:* Christ, our true God, risen from the dead, through the prayers of His "immaculate" (*Most-Pure*) Mother, of the holy, honorable and glorious prophet, forerunner and baptizer of the Lord, John, whose church this is, of the holy, glorious and all-praiseworthy apostles, of our father among the saints, John Chrysostom, archbishop of Constantinople, [**of the holy fathers and mothers of Christ, in the flesh, including the holy prophets and prophetesses, as well as all those who were well-pleasing to God from all ages, from Sts. Adam and Eve to St Joseph the Betrothed of the Most Holy Theotokos, whose Sunday it is,**] and of all the saints, will have mercy and save us, for He is good and loves mankind.

AS WE CONCLUDE THE DIVINE LITURGY, WE MAY SING THE HYMNS ON PAGES 958-963, 974-976, 978-981, OR ANOTHER HYMN. WE SHOULD ALSO PRAY ALONG WITH THE READER AS HE OR SHE READS THE THANKSGIVING PRAYERS AFTER COMMUNION ON PAGES 324-326.

PRAYER FOR BISHOPS (BYZANTINE STYLE)

Heavenly Father, in these trying times when the spirit of the age threatens Christian values, give our bishops holiness of life and wisdom to direct and guide our eparchial/diocesan families so that we may grow in Your love. We pray that You grant them strength and power in prudently guiding Your spiritual flocks entrusted to them, and that they may enrich those over whom they watch, that together with the flocks committed to their care, they may attain eternal life through Your Only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom You are blessed, together with Your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

USCCB: PRAYER IN DEFENSE OF MARRIAGE (ROMAN STYLE)

God our Father, we give you thanks for the gift of marriage: the bond of life and love, and the font of the family. The love of husband and wife enriches your Church with children, fills the world

with a multitude of spiritual fruitfulness and service, and is the sign of the love of your Son, Jesus Christ, for his Church. The grace of Jesus flowed forth at Cana at the request of the Blessed Mother. May your Son, through the intercession of Mary, pour out upon us a new measure of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit as we join with all people of good will to promote and protect the unique beauty of marriage. May your Holy Spirit enlighten our society to treasure the heroic love of husband and wife, and guide our leaders to sustain and protect the singular place of mothers and fathers in the lives of their children. Father, we ask that our prayers be joined to those of the Virgin Mary, that your Word may transform our service so as to safeguard the incomparable splendor of marriage. We ask all these things through Christ our Lord, Amen. *Saints Joachim and Anne, pray for us.*

PROPOSAL for ACOLYTE ASSIGNMENTS

If servers would like this to be modified, they are asked to notify the office:

5:00 PM — SATURDAYS: (sometimes Michael Levy, Joseph Levy)

9:00 AM — SUNDAYS: Mark Rad;

(sometimes Antony Chirovsky, Joseph Levy; Michael Levy;)

**11:30 AM — SUNDAYS: Antony Chirovsky; (sometimes Joseph & Michael Levy);
Andrew McCauley; Peter McCauley**

LECTOR ASSIGNMENTS FOR DECEMBER

1st SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS:

SUNDAY THE HOLY FATHERS and MOTHERS: Heb. 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40

Saturday, December 21, 2013 – 5:00 PM – Stephanie Vargo

Sunday, December 22, 2013 – 9:00 AM – Joan Hess, Lesya Jurgovsky

Sunday, December 22, 2013 – 11:30 AM – Linda Chomko

MAJOR FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD (Christmas):

Monday, December 23, 2013 – **7:00 – 8:30 PM** – readers are needed to volunteer for the “Royal Hours-Office of Readings” for Nativity of our Lord.

Tuesday, December 24, 2013 - **9:00 PM** – readers are needed to volunteer for **The First Divine Liturgy of Christmas which will be the Vigil Service** (first part of Vespers of Christmas with Epistle, Gospel & remainder of the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great).

Wednesday, December 25, 2013 - **9:30 AM** – **The Second Divine Liturgy of Christmas will be the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.**

SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS: FEAST OF the holy and righteous: Joseph, the Betrothed of the Theotokos; and David, the Psalm-writer and King; and James, the brother of the Lord according to the Flesh. Galatians 1:11-19

Saturday, December 28, 2013 – 5:00 PM – Joanne Giancola

Sunday, December 29, 2013 – 9:00 AM – Irene Borodycia, Lesya Jurgovsky

Sunday, December 29, 2013 – 11:30 AM – Linda Chomko

CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD and SAINT BASIL THE GREAT:

Colossians 2:8-12 and Hebrews 7:26-8:2

Wednesday, January 1, 2014 – 11:00 AM – TBA

SUNDAY BEFORE THEOPHANY: 2 Timothy 4:5-8

Saturday, January 4, 2014 - 5:00 PM – Stephanie Vargo

Sunday, January 5, 2013 – 9:00 AM – Joan Hess, Lesya Jurgovsky

Sunday, January 5, 2013 – 11:30 AM – Linda Chomko

ARCHEPARCHIAL – ARCHDIOCESAN NEWSPAPER:

Our Philadelphia Archdiocesan newspaper, *The Way*, is available in both languages; Ukrainian and English but is no longer printed and sent out to people's homes. However, those who wish, may access it at www.ukrarcheparchy.us or you can sign up to receive it in your emails by writing to theway@ukrarcheparchy.us

Beginning November 30 – COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY AND GLORIOUS APOSTLE ANDREW, THE FIRST-CALLED – Special collection: АНДРІЙ ГРИШ - ANDREW'S PENCE

У кожен неділю грудня можна зложити пожертву на благочинну збірку «Андрій гріш», щоб допомогти нашому Синодові "огорнути духовною опікою всіх вірних нашої Церкви, хоч би на якому континенті вони перебували і хоч би з яких причин покинули батьківщину, ... забезпечуючи опіку нашим вірним там, де ще немає тривалих структур нашої Церкви." Просимо використати спеціальні конверти із датою 30-го листопада.

On every Sunday of December, please feel free to make your donation for the charitable collection of our Synod of Bishops, known as "Andrew's Pence". It is our desire to envelop all the faithful of our church with their own Church's spiritual care, no matter what continent or for whatever reasons they emigrated from Ukraine. To that effect our Church is collecting funds especially "TOWARDS SUSTAINING EXARCHATES IN EASTERN UKRAINE AND CLERGY LIVING IN TERRITORIES WITHOUT OFFICIAL CHURCH STRUCTURES." Please use the Green Envelope in your boxed sets for November 30 which is marked "Andrew's Pence". If you wish you can also use a plain envelope but please clearly mark your name on that envelope. Thank you and God bless you for your generosity.

WHAT'S THE TEMPERATURE IN CHURCH and CHURCH HALL?

During the winter months, our church and chapel will be heated for Divine Worship Services to 63°F/17°C. Otherwise, the buildings will be at about 50°F/10°C. Please remember to dress accordingly.

Meanwhile, the Pyrohy making area poses more difficulty. Unfortunately, the furnace for the whole building at 109 S 7th St (not the church, but the rectory, church office, church hall and basement where the kitchen is located) has not been functioning properly; it was not working from Nov 23 to Dec 3, working for Dec 4-6, but stopped again on Dec 7, working again from Dec 9 in the afternoon and stopped again by evening of Dec. 11. The repairman, at 6 pm on Dec 12, said he may have finally fixed it. Normally, after it is finally fixed, the people where the Pyrohy are being cooked find it too hot; the people doing the pinching find it too cold. Meanwhile, the thermostat is two floors above this entire area. We kindly ask our Pyrohy workers to please be patient as we experiment in January to see which temperature setting will work best.

ST. PHILIP'S FAST, in Ukrainian: PILIPEEVKA

On the Gregorian (new) calendar: NOVEMBER 15 - DECEMBER 23

As each Christian is called to ongoing repentance and amendment of life, the ancient practice of fasting is to be maintained. The following rules apply to those Catholics who have been baptized in the Ukrainian-Byzantine Catholic Church regardless of which parish one attends. Also, according to the 1999 *Pastoral Guide*, "Art. 170 - Although every Catholic may fulfill his obligation of assisting at the Divine Liturgy, Vespers or Matins on Sundays and holy days in any Catholic church, **our faithful should as a rule attend their own parish church.**"

- 1) Fasting or abstaining on all Wednesdays of the entire church year is still traditionally encouraged, but no longer obligatory. Originally this day's fast was a way of honoring the day when our Lord was betrayed and of contemplating that we do not fall into the same sin.
- 2) According to the 1999 *Pastoral Guide*, in the Archeparchy of Philadelphia, and the Eparchies of Stamford and St Nicholas in Chicago: all those from children who have completed their 7th year to adults who have completed their 59th year, as a way of honoring the day when our Lord was crucified, must do Works of Penance (see # 9, 10 & 11 below), which must include abstaining from meat, on each and every Friday of the whole year.

- 3) According to Very Rev. Fr. Archimandrite George Appleyard, Protosyncellus (Vicar General) of our diocese, in our Eparchy of St. Josaphat of Parma, Ohio: all those from children who have completed their 14th year to adults who have completed their 59th year, as a way of honoring the day when our Lord was crucified, must do Works of Penance (see # 9, 10 & 11 below), which may, or may not, include abstaining from meat, on each and every Friday of the whole year.
- 4) In numbers (2) and (3) above, the only exceptions are certain fast-free or "Privileged weeks", or if Friday occurs on a Feast of our Lord or of the Mother of God. The usual penitential rules for the Friday after Thanksgiving Day, November 29, 2013, are NOT mitigated, unless, following the custom of the Latins, one receives permission to do so from one's Pastor or Father Confessor. This permission cannot be presumed - it must be requested.
- 5) Abstaining from meat, in addition to eating only one full meal and a smaller snack, obliges all on Christmas Eve, December 24, and on Theophany Eve, January 5, but only if these feasts do not occur on a Saturday or Sunday because generally Eastern Christians do not fast on a Day of Rest (Saturday) or a Day of Celebration (Sunday). [They do, however, abstain on a Saturday or Sunday during the Great Fast-Great Lent before Pascha (Easter).] The custom of abstaining from all "dairy foods" on the two eves – Dec 24 and Jan 5 – is traditional, but no longer obligatory. "Dairy foods" include products derived from mammals and birds such as milk, eggs, lard, cheese, etc. and their by-products. In 2013, Christmas occurs on a Wednesday; therefore the Service of the Royal Hours with the strict preparatory fasting for the Feast may occur on Christmas Eve (Tuesday, Dec 24). In our St John's parish, for the sake of those who must work during the morning of Dec. 24th, we anticipate the Royal Hours on the 23rd at 7:00 pm.
- 6) Pregnant and nursing mothers, the ill and infirm, those who work at hard physical labor and the "very poor" (living on alms) are excused from fasting and abstinence.
- 7) Traditionally, during St. Philip's Fast, from November 15 thru December 23, a strict fast - with other acts of penance - was kept on Monday's, Wednesday's, and Friday's, with a lesser fast or abstinence on Tuesday's and Thursday's. Anyone wishing to return to this tradition should do so holistically, carefully and prudently, so as not to risk damaging their health.
- 8) **Holy day preparations and decorations are normally attended to between December 20-23 which is called the Fore-Feast, or Pre-Feast, of Christmas.**
- 9) **Although in our times the rules for Fasting and Wedding Receptions have been mitigated, the rules for Prayer and Almsgiving (Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy) continue to oblige all, as it was in ages past.**
- 10) Voluntary penance, prayers for the intentions of the hierarchs of the Church, the Bishop of Rome, the Patriarch (Major Archbishop), the Metropolitan, and the Eparchial Bishop; voluntary offerings to the Church, the seminaries, the Church in Ukraine, self-denial of alcohol, smoking, attendance at entertainment, etc., may be supplementary only with the explicit permission of your Father Confessor. **Attending or hosting so called "Christmas parties" should be avoided as much as possible until after the feast has occurred (Dec. 25).**
- 11) Bread and water alone is a good fast for those who are able to do it without causing harm to their physical health.
- 12) Following the custom of the Latins, our Ukrainian Catholic eparchial bishop can dispense all the faithful of our eparchy, as well as any individual persons, for a good reason, from any of these fasting prescriptions. A pastor may also dispense any of his individual parishioners for a good reason. A pastor cannot, however, dispense the entire parish.

Діла Милосердя для Душі й Духа: (1) грішника навернути, (2) невіжу навчити, (3) у сумніві порадити, (4) сумного потішити, (5) кривду терпеливо зносити, (6) образу з серця прощати, (7) за живих і померлих молитися, на приклад, жертвувати на Парастас, чи Бож. Літургію. *Чи не Найкращий Подарунок це замовити Службу Божу за здоровля ваших рідних і друзів?* Діла Милосердя для Тіла: (1) голодного нагодувати, (2) спраглого напоути, (3) нагого зодягнути, (4) подорожнього в дім прийняти, (5) недужому послужити, (6) в'язня відвідати, (7) померлого похоронити.

Corporal Works of Mercy (in the Early Church, what deacons should model for us): feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, visiting the imprisoned, sheltering the homeless, visiting the sick and burying the dead. ***Spiritual Works of Mercy (in the Early Church, what priests should model for us):*** counseling the doubtful, instructing the ignorant, admonishing

sinner, comforting the afflicted, forgiving offences, bearing wrongs patiently, praying for the living and the dead !

PARISH UPDATE ON PROPOSED GAS STATION AT 700 E. CARSON STREET

As previously shared with you this Spring, on June 3rd 2013, The Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County reversed the City of Pittsburgh Zoning Board of Adjustment's granting of variances for LEAH Holdings, LP to construct a gas station and convenience mart at 700 E. Carson Street. While we rejoiced in this victory, we also have learned that LEAH Holdings, LP is appealing this decision to the PA Commonwealth Court. While we are confident in our legal team and that we will prevail at this next level, we ask you to **please keep our parish and its future in your fasting and prayers as we take this to the next level. The Commonwealth Court began hearing Pittsburgh cases on November 12, 2013.**

HELP SUPPORT ST. JOHN'S LEGAL DEFENSE FUND

While we have retained some of the best lawyers in the area to represent our parish in our legal dispute with LEAH Holdings, LP over the proposed gas station at 700 E. Carson Street, such help does not always come for free. St. John the Baptist will incur an expense of approximately \$25,000.00 to retain the legal services of Babst Calland. To help offset this unforeseen expense, one of our parishioners, Andrew McCauley developed a fundraising video, with Fr. Deacon Alexander Wroblicky's assistance, which can be viewed online at www.gofundme.com/SaintJohnBaptist. Please view this video online and consider making a donation online to help offset our legal fees. **Fr. Deacon Alex is responsible for the transfer of funds from Gofundme to our parish bank accounts.** If you don't have internet access and you would like to make a donation, please feel free to include your gift in a separate envelope in our Sunday collection. You may mark it and also write in the memo line of the check **"Stop the gas."**

VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AT ST. JOHN 'S

If you would like to get involved in helping to develop the area around St. John, Fr. Deacon Alex would like to speak with you about how you can help us in our efforts. While never 100% certain, we are fairly confident that we will prevail in the Commonwealth Court of Appeals and this gives us the opportunity to engage with community development organizations on the South Side to help sway public opinion on the future development of 700 E. Carson Street. There is much work to be done, and you can help even from your own home without having to go to community meetings! If interested, please contact Fr. Deacon Alex directly at 412-527-8456.

CULTURE-HERITAGE BOOTH - Please see Diane Vargo.

The Culture-Heritage glass cases in the upper church hall by the stage, are available for parishioners to view the selection of spiritual books, Pysanky, Easter cards, gifts, etc.

ONGOING CHURCH AUXILIARY PROJECTS

SARRIS "Candy Sales"

The Church Auxiliary is once again selling a variety of Sarris chocolate bars (including pretzel, dark chocolate, plain milk chocolate, chocolate with almonds, crispies, peanut butter and caramel) for only **\$2.00 each**. Normally sales are on Thursdays and Sundays after the Divine Liturgies. If you attend Saturday evening services, please see Margie Klimko or Diane Vargo if you wish to buy some delicious candy at a bargain price.

GFS Marketplace

As you purchase food, you can save money and help your church at the same time. **GFS Marketplace** is a store that offers a variety of food, cleaning products, paper items, etc. at prices comparable to the discount warehouses—except there is no membership fee and our church gets a rebate on the items that you purchase. There are flyers that describe the program. Also on this flyer is an application for a free membership card and a coupon for \$ 10.00 off a \$ 50.00 purchase. The closest GFS Marketplace store is on Route 51. There is also one across from Costco's in Robinson and one in Monroeville. You can also sign up at our parish web site at <http://www.stjohnspittsburgh.com/>, under "Updates" where it says "Like to shop?"

ENJOY COUPON BOOKS

"Enjoy" coupon books are available for \$30.00. Please see Rose Breen or Margie Klimko if you are interested in purchasing a book.

DONATIONS FOR ST. PAUL'S MONASTERY

Once again, the Church Auxiliary was collecting non perishable food items and other supplies for the Food Bank at St. Paul's Monastery. Baskets were placed in the back of the Church to collect these items. The goods were taken to the monastery on Thursday, December 12, 2013.

ORNAMENT SALE

Get a Pittsburgh Landmark ornament to decorate your tree this Christmas. The Church Auxiliary is selling Christmas ornaments and plaques featuring an architectural image of our church by our parishioner Rostyslav "Walter" Boykowycz. The ornaments are \$7.50 and the unframed plaques are \$8.00. Samples are on display in the rear of the church. These items also make great gifts for family and friends. After the Liturgies, you may contact Michael Jula or Margie Klimko. Or call Margie at 412-431-0430.

St. John's STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENT

The repair work on our Church is progressing. Three weeks ago, work on Tower 8 of the church building was completed. It is important that we "point" (patch holes in the mortar) before any work on the interior of the church can begin. Since there are many areas of the exterior that must be repaired, we are also submitting paper work for a small grant. We hope to obtain matching funds to help with other masonry work. Also this coming week an electrician will be looking into re-attaching the cables that are supposed to melt ice and snow on the roofs so that the box gutters do not get damaged.

ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE STEWARDSHIP FUND

IN BELOVED MEMORY OF TOM MATHEWS:

\$100.00 – Irene Mathews and Family

THANK YOU

The Church Auxiliary thanks Marijka Jula for baking the Prospora that we are distributing today. Also Fr. Ivan, on behalf of the entire parish family, would like to thank Michael Jula and Margie Klimko for putting together the Genocide Memorial in November.

PYROHY MAKING AND SELLING AT OUR OWN ST. JOHN'S PARISH

The making and selling of fresh Pyrohy on Thursdays will be suspended from December 13, 2013 until January 15, 2014.

EASTERN CHRISTIAN FORMATION (Catechism) CLASSES

Please note: there will be an ECF Class on Sunday, December 15th. Otherwise, ECF classes will be suspended until January 12, 2014. Please contact Irene B. at 412-881-4635 if you did not get a copy of the tentative calendar for the year that was handed out on Sep 15th.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2013

Sts. Peter and Paul Ukr. Cath. Church in Ambridge, PA. will be celebrating a Midnight Christmas Divine Liturgy which will be broadcast live on KDKA Radio 1020 AM or www.kdkaradio.com. All are invited to attend.

DECEMBER 29, 2013 / JANUARY 4, 2014

The Ukrainian Cultural Trust Choir of Western Pennsylvania, directed by Dorothy Waslo, will perform two concerts for the Christmas season. The first concert will be held at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church, 520 Hillview Avenue, Latrobe, PA 15650 at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 29, 2013. The second will be held at Holy Virgin Ukrainian Orthodox Church, 1701 Kenneth Avenue, Arnold, PA 15068 at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, January 12, 2014. The choir will perform tradition Ukrainian koliadky and schchedrivky. Refreshments will be served after the concert, and there is no admission fee.

FRIDAY (DAY OF ABSTINENCE & FASTING) - JANUARY 3rd

The ROYAL HOURS of Theophany (without Typika) will be celebrated not on the morning of Jan. 5, as would be the usual custom, but at 7:00 PM on Friday evening, Jan. third. This is what the *Ordo-Typikon-Ustav* prescribes as the "solution" for those times, when a service connected with fasting would occur on a fast-free day (Saturday or Sunday); that service is to be moved to the previous Friday, which is already a day of fasting and abstinence.

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 4, 2014: ATTENTION: PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS
AUNTS AND UNCLAS, BROTHERS AND SISTERS, ETC.**

Inspired by the spiritual biography of Saint Nonna in the August 5, 2007 church bulletin, a number of men and women have created a special prayer group for satisfying the need to intercede in prayer for the welfare of our children and grandchildren. Whenever he can, Father Ivan facilitates this prayer gathering for us. Currently we use the Akathist Hymn to the Mother of God in her miraculous icon, known as Vospitanie – Воспитание – Vikokhuvatel'ka Deetey – Викохувателька Дітей – Nurturer of Children (venerated on March 5) and then add spontaneous prayers, if necessary. If you are interested, then please call Irene Borodycia at 412-881-4635. **For the time being, it has been decided that we will meet IN THE CHAPEL on first or second Saturday of each month, at 10:00 am.**

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 5, 2014 - THEOPHANY EVE
"SHCHEDRYJ-GENEROUS" MEAL/EVE**

On Sunday, January 5, 2014, we would like to gather together as a parish family to share a special meal in celebration of the Theophany, the second holiest feast of the year after Pascha (Easter). We are asking people to bring a covered dish from the traditional items listed below. It is very important that you tell us ahead of time what you will be bringing so that we can properly plan. Normally, the eve of Theophany (Jan 5) is a day of obligatory abstinence from meat products, but when the Feast occurs on a Sunday or Monday, then the Royal Hours with the abstaining and fasting is transferred to the previous Friday, which means that in 2014, we should be fasting on January 3rd and not on January 5th. However, for those who have favorite family recipes which are meatless, then there's no reason why these items cannot still be prepared that way. If you are unable to prepare one of the items listed below, a cash donation would be appreciated, however, everyone is welcome at this feast, so please join us. **A number of suggestions have been made about when the dinner should be served and about when the worship services should begin, and about whether or not we should have one or two Divine Liturgies on Sunday morning; so, we will take another week to examine them.** But so as not to delay this announcement, here are the items which we will be needing.

- 1 dozen holubtsi made with kasha / buckwheat or rice
- 1 quart of mushroom gravy
- 1 quart of mushroom soup
- ½ gallon of borshch
- 1 quart of kapusta (your specially prepared sauerkraut dish)
- ½ gallon mashed potatoes – homemade – not instant
- 1 dozen Ukrainian "pampushky" (similar to Polish pączki) – plain or fruit filled
- ½ gallon fresh fruit cocktail
- fresh fruit
- dried fruit
- ½ gallon red wine
- One 12 inch nut roll or apricot roll or poppy seed roll
- "Kutya" – recipe made using about 1/2 pound of wheat with poppy seeds and honey
- Braided bread centerpiece
- Fish
- Herring

Shrimp
 Nuts
 Khrustyky (fried pastries)
 Fruit filled pastries
 Makivnyk (poppy seed cake)
 Medivnyk (honey cake)
 Chocolate candy
 Halushky
 Pop
 Uzvar (Fruit Compote)
 2 bags of ice cubes

Our church will provide the pyrohy, prosphora, honey, garlic, holy water, tea, coffee, utensils, plates, cups, napkins and wax candle.

Please call Irene Borodycia at 412-881-4635 or Margie Klimko at 412-431-0430 by January 3, 2014 to tell them if you will attend and what you will bring.

MONDAY MORNING (THEOPHANY DAY) – JANUARY 6th

The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom will be celebrated at 9:30 AM. The heavily shortened Minor Water Blessing, if it is deemed necessary at the time, will occur after the Amvon Prayer before the Dismissal. Originally, this was the Major Water Blessing, which was supposed to occur at the local river, or near a body of clean water.

A NOTE REGARDING CEMETERY MAINTENANCE

Please indicate the LOT NAME on the outside of the annual Cemetery Maintenance Envelope, located in your box set under the date of January 6, 2013, if it differs from your last name. We would appreciate it. Complaining that things do not always look their best is easy and doesn't cost you anything. But do please keep in mind that mowing the lawn only one time costs the church about \$ 700.00.

THE SUMMARY OF INCOME: 12-14 & 15/2013

We will now be printing in the church bulletin not only the info for the Sunday Collections received at the various Divine Liturgies, but also any income that arrives in the mail or is brought to the church office on a weekday. As our ability to transfer to using the church office computer program for all parish finances progresses towards its goal of full compliance with Canon Law and Eparchial Policy, we will one day soon, God-willing, be able to include in the chart below, all of our income and expenses, including the St John's Pyrohy, St John's Church Auxiliary and St John's Stewardship Council bank accounts. In the sense that the latter two are being recorded and reported separately we are in compliance, but since they are not yet fully integrated into the one computer program at the church office, we have yet to reach our goal.

RE: Sunday Collection. We ask that if you are submitting a blank envelope instead of using your assigned envelope that you include your envelope number. Thank you.

WEEKLY SUNDAY OFFERINGS	1,010.00
WEEKLY CANDLES, including MEMORIAL CANDLES (see below)	66.25
REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE (1 st Sunday)	0.00
MEMBERSHIP DUES (2 nd Sunday)	85.00
UTILITIES & INSURANCE (3 rd Sunday)	347.00
DIOCESAN OBLIGATIONS & ASSESSMENTS (4 th Sunday)	10.00
BOOKS/JOURNALS/ICONS/CULTURE ITEMS	10.00

COLLECTION FOR RETIRED CLERGY - 12/06/2013	50.00
CONCEPTION OF THEOTOKOS BY ST. ANNA - 12/09/2013	38.00
NATIVITY OF OUR LORD (CHRISTMAS) - 12/25/2013	120.00
SEMINARY COLLECTION (CHRISTMAS) - 12/25/2013	15.00
BULLETIN POSTAGE donation (Maryann Kasofsky)	25.00
PROPERTY INCOME USE (ADVANTAGE STEEL) TRAILER	1,000.00
CEMETERY MAINTENANCE	20.00
TOTAL	2,796.25

MEMORIAL FUND

All donations collected in this fund will be used to purchase new Liturgical items, including any new vestments or repairs to existing liturgical items. In the meantime, as we use what we have for the greater glory of God, please remember that we still paying off certain items from the last few years. Your generosity, as always, will be greatly appreciated.

**In Memory of Sophie Reft (Birthday 12/25) & Michael Kostek (Birthday 12/27):
\$20.00 – Olga Walko**

MEMORIAL FLOWERS

If you wish to provide flowers in memory of a loved one, at any time of the year, in thanksgiving for blessings, or to celebrate an occasion, please call Margie Klimko: 412-431-0430.

No donations this week

MEMORIAL CANDLES

If you would like to sponsor a candle in front of the copy of the miraculous Pochayiv Mother of God Icon or in front of the Icon of the Cross of Our Lord, or four lamps at the iconostas icons, or seven lamps in the seven-branched candlestick at our Altar (Holy Table), for whatever intention you desire, at \$5.00 per week, please write to or call the parish office at: 412-431-2531.

**In Memory of Sophie Reft, remembering her 91st birthday on December 25th, Christmas Day (Copy of the Miraculous Icon of Pochayiv):
\$5.00 – Reft Children, Grandchildren and Great Grandchildren**

In Memory of Michael Kostek, remembering his 97th birthday on December 27th (4 Lamps at the Iconostas): \$5.00 – Reft Family

Merry Christmas, Happy New Year & Good Health to Mary Gunning and Olga Walko (Icon of the Cross of Our Lord): \$5.00 – Reft Children

**Health of Steve Terleski and Charles Miller (Candles at the Altar):
\$10.00 – Cathryn Terleski**

Many thanks to Steve Zinski for providing the following reflections for us:

SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FATHERS [and Mothers] OF CHRIST: Sunday Before Christmas

MATTHEW'S STORY: THE FAMILY TREE

"Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah. . ."

That's how the Gospel of Matthew begins: with a 350 word "genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham." It is quite a beginning, not the sort of thing you find today on the first page of the best seller; not the sort of thing you hear on television.

"Obed was the father of Jesse; and Jesse was the father of King David. David was the father of Solomon." And so it goes until the writer reaches the point where he proclaims: "Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of Mary; of her was born Jesus Who is called Christ."

By this time, 42 names divided neatly into three groups of 14 names each have been listed.

The other three Gospels begin quite differently. St. Mark has a fine introduction: "This is the beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God," he explains. There! You know exactly what he is going to tell about in the rest of the book. What's more, he follows immediately with a colorful, attention getting account of St. John the Baptist, who lived on locusts and wild honey and wore a camel skin garment.

The Gospel of St. Luke begins with the familiar, moving story of Zechariah and Elizabeth, a couple blessed with their first child — St. John the Baptist — in their advanced years. The Angel Gabriel visited Zechariah to tell of the coming birth and the man was greatly frightened. An unforgettable story!

St. John's Gospel has a compelling introduction. "In the beginning was the Word," he writes; "the Word was with God and the Word was God. . . Through Him all things came to be, not one thing had its being but through Him." Obviously, someone of great importance is under discussion. But St. Matthew's genealogy of today's gospel reading?

Today, in a writing class, we'd be told to put the important material at the beginning of a story — to get quickly to the point and to work hard at capturing the reader's attention. Can we assume that what the Gospel of Matthew needed was a good editor to rearrange the material and make it more interesting? Or perhaps the writer should have attended a writing class?

"Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat (i.e. Josaphat), Jehoshaphat the father of Joram." Could that have been interesting to people at the time when the Gospel was written?

Long before the time of Jesus, Isaiah spoke of One Who would spring from the line of Jesse. In the Old Testament book of Isaiah we learn that the spirit of God would be with the One to come. In that time, the wolf would lie down with the lamb, "The root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples. It will be sought out by the nations," Isaiah said.

Now the son of Jesse was David, the beloved king. And David's family tree led — after the listing of 26 more generations in Matthew — to Jesus.

Probably most early Christians and most Jews at the time of Jesus knew the story of Jesse and the line of David. They awaited the wonderful times associated with the one to come.

Telling of David's lineage with Matthew's detail might not be the sort of thing the early Christians did regularly. But when Matthew did it, they understood why.

Telling the stories of one's ancestors is the sort of storytelling done in families where people share a common desire to understand their own history and the reasons why their family is the sort of family it is.

The family tree for the ancient Christian family found in the Gospel of Matthew recalls the history of the people — saying more than may meet the eye about what kind of a family the people were meant to be: the family of the Messiah.

GOSPEL: Matthew 1:1-25

"The book of the origin of Jesus Christ." Saint Matthew, who wrote his Gospel for the sake of the Jewish people had as his entire purpose to show that Christ was indeed the Messiah, the long awaited One of the Jews. For this reason he begins his Gospel with the genealogy of Christ from Abraham to David to Joseph, "the husband of Mary, and of her was born Jesus Who is called Christ." Yes, today's Gospel, the Gospel for the Sunday before the feast of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, shows us that Christ is indeed the Son of David, the Son of Man, the long awaited Redeemer. But it shows us more, for Saint Matthew goes on to show us that "that which is begotten in her (Mary) is of the Holy Spirit."

Yes, this child, Whose Feast we must prepare for, is not only the Son of David, the Son of Man, but He is Emmanuel, "God with us." This man Christ is our God! Since there exists an infinite chasm between God and man, from all eternity God had in mind that His Only-begotten Son, the Second Person of the Most Blessed Trinity, would become man that He might lead His people to their God. This Christ Whose birth we are preparing for was from all eternity destined by God to serve as the divine bridge over which men would go unto their God.

This Man is Truly God

That Christ is true God as well as being true man is a defined Dogma of Holy Mother Church. This we cannot doubt; we must believe. But the Gospel of today calls upon all of us not only to believe this Dogma of our Divine Faith intellectually, but it calls upon us to believe it experientially. Its purpose is to awaken in us such a lively faith in this truth that we, as individuals, experience this faith with every fiber of our being.

The Holy Spirit, together with Saint Matthew, wants us to use this Gospel lesson to prepare ourselves in spirit for the birth of Emmanuel so that we can indeed say God is with us. The Gospel tells us that Mary was with child by the Holy Spirit, that is, that it was the Holy Spirit Who cooperated with Mary, in a miraculous manner, to bring about the conception of Christ. It was God the Father Who generated the Son; it was God the Holy Spirit Who breathed upon Mary; and it was God the Son Who gave His every existence to Christ the God-man. This man Christ Who is about to be born is not only a creature of God to Whom was given the Divine existence by God the Son and is, therefore, most truly God and man.

Prepare Yourselves

If we take such diligent care to prepare ourselves for the birth of a child who is the creature of God, then should we not take infinitely more care to prepare ourselves for the birth of God Himself? But this is not the actual physical birth of Christ, merely the commemoration of His birth nearly two thousand years ago. How then can we truly prepare for an event which has already taken place?

It is true that the cycle of Christ's life has already taken place, His birth, death, resurrection and ascension, but this has to do with only the physical cycle of His life. The spiritual cycle is taking place at this very moment and will take place for the rest of time. Spiritually Christ is being born every moment and it is for the spiritual birth of Christ which we must prepare ourselves. Every time we rid ourselves of sin and renew the grace of God within us, Christ is born anew. Every time we turn to Christ and give Him a more prominent place in our lives, Christ is born anew. Every time we bring others to Him by our good works or examples, Christ is born anew. Every time we deepen His grace within us, Christ is born anew. This is the spiritual birth of Christ for which every one of us is able to prepare.

Prepare your souls now that Christ may not only be born anew within them, but may grow and mature. Prepare your souls that on that Christmas morn, you and yours may in one voice cry out, "Emmanuel, God with us."

THE GOOD NEWS

The Good News is that the Son of God became the Son of man and the world will never be the same.

The Good News is that His name is Jesus and He is a man for others. He is patient and loving, poor and humble, tender and compassionate

The Good News is that Jesus showed us how to do it, how to be fully human. We know through Him how to live, how to love, how to care, how to serve, how to pray. He showed us what we can and ought to be.

The Good News is that because One of us is also God, all of us are special people. Although imperfect and sinful, every man, woman and child is lovable because Jesus Christ is his flesh and blood brother Who loves each one of them totally.

The Good News is that Jesus Who is God shared the human condition. He knew hunger, weariness, tears, laughter, loneliness, suffering and death. He knows how it is with each at us.

The Good News is that because the Son of God walked the earth as a human the world is forever a sacred place. The air He breathed, the hills and deserts on which He walked, the trees He fashioned as a carpenter, the food He ate, the waters He fished, the sun, the moon and stars which warmed Him and lighted His way — all are holy and good.

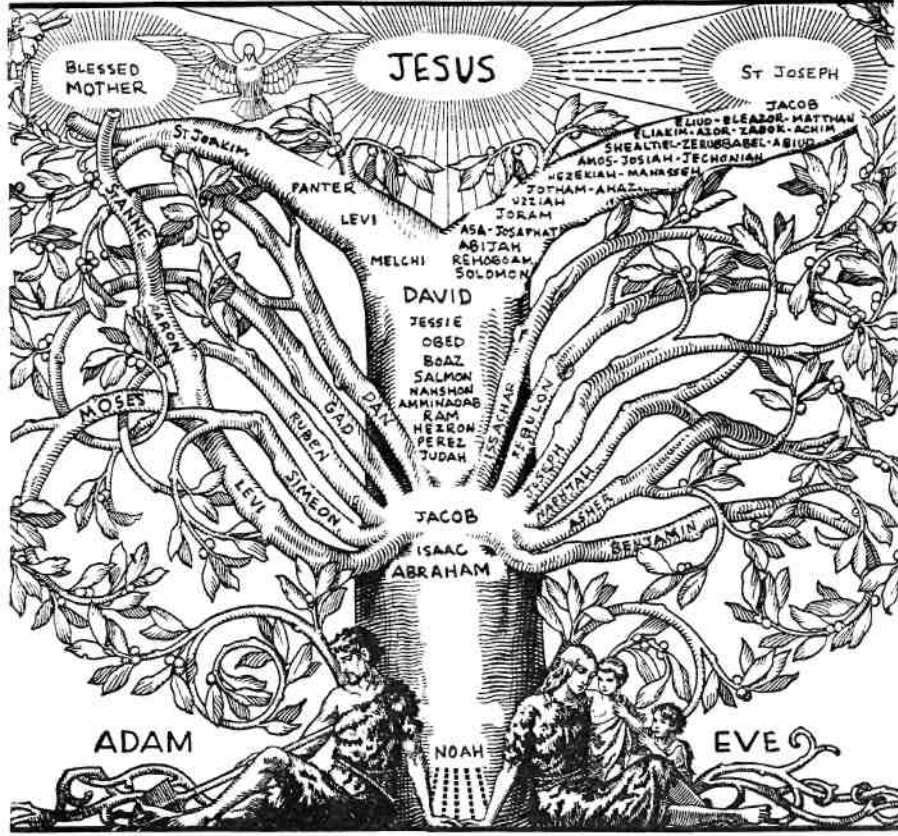
The Good News is that God has given to man this sacred world to subdue it, to bring all things under His feet. Man is capable of purifying the world and using all its riches for the betterment of mankind.

The Good News is that Jesus is not an historical "has-been." He lives and loves and serves and saves through each of us, if we let Him.

The Good News is that we are free to give little or everything or nothing, we are free to say "yes" or "no."

No one of us who really listens to this Good News will ever be the same. It will penetrate our beings, strengthen and transform us, and challenge us to do the "impossible."

For those who hear and live the Good News, the joys of Christmas, the day on which it all began, will be eternally theirs.



Please remember the "Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of St. Josaphat", as well our own "St John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Church", in your will.

Будь ласка, пам'ятайте про свою "Українську Католицьку Єпархію св. Йосафата", та нашу "Церкву/Парафію св. Івана Хрестителя", в своєму заповіті.

COME HOME FOR CHRISTMAS – DECEMBER 24-25 - All are invited !

Most likely we all know of family members, friends, neighbors, co-workers, or schoolmates, who are Catholic (Latin-Roman and/or Byzantine) and no longer regularly come to Mass (Latin-Roman) or the Divine Liturgy (Byzantine).

Christmas is a great time to invite them to come home to the church. So think about it, pray about it, and invite someone to come to the Liturgies this Christmas. There is always the chance that we can be rejected or our invitation may fall on deaf ears.

Just remember that Jesus often experienced the same kind of "reception" and He did not give up. So, if your invitation receives no response or a negative one, just wait a few weeks and ask again.

In the meantime, pray for that person, but don't give up on them no matter how long it takes. It is hard to persevere and it is hard to be rejected, but just be patient and kind and trust in the Lord. Remember the Lord's lessons in Luke 15:11-32.



**PARISH WEEKLY NEWSLETTER
SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST
UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**
Byzantine Rite



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**"Catholic" comes from the Greek, meaning:
"according-to-the-whole" or "universal"**

"Rite" or "Ritual Church" means "One of the twenty-one Eastern Catholic Sister Churches, who are simultaneously in Communion with the Church & Pope in Rome, while living their own distinctly non-Roman (non-Latin), and yet equally Apostolic Tradition (Theological, Spiritual, Liturgical & Canonical Heritage)."

The Nativity of our Lord, God and Savior, Jesus Christ

Come, then, let us observe the Feast! Truly wondrous is the whole chronicle of the Nativity. For this day the ancient slavery is ended, the devil confounded, the demons take to flight, the power of death is broken, paradise is unlocked, the curse is taken away, sin is removed from us, error driven out, truth has been brought back, the speech of kindness diffused, and spreads on every side, a heavenly way of life has been implanted on the earth, angels communicate with men without fear, and men now hold speech with angels.

Why is this? Because God is now on earth, and man in heaven; on every side all things commingle. He became Flesh. He did not become God. He was God. Wherefore He became flesh,

so that He Whom heaven did not contain, a manger would this day receive. He was placed in a manger, so that He, by whom all things are nourished, may receive an infant's food from His Virgin Mother. So, the Father of all ages, as an infant at the breast, nestles in the virginal arms, that the Magi may more easily see Him. Since this day the Magi too have come, and made a beginning of withstanding tyranny; and the heavens give glory, as the Lord is revealed by a star.

To Him, then, Who out of confusion has wrought a clear path, to Christ, to the Father, and to the Holy Ghost, we offer all praise, now and forever. Amen.

St. John Chrysostom