

**Today's Bulletin Sponsors are:****For health of:**

**All parishioners of our Parish** offered by Fr Matthew and Barbara **MaryAnn** Kuzemchak on her birthday, offered by her family.

**For the eternal memory of:**

**Vyacheslav** Markevich, farther of Tatsiana DaGrosa

**Readings:**

- **Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40** (Sunday Before)
- **Matthew 1:1-25** (Sunday Before)

**BRETHREN**, by faith Abraham sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city which has foundation, whose builder and maker is God.

And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets - who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated - of whom the world was not worthy - wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

**The book of the Genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.**

Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king.

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa, and Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the

father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called his name Jesus.

**Saturday service: Vespers – 6:30 PM****Sunday service:****Hours – 9:40 AM****Divine Liturgy – 10:00 AM****Private Confession – Half hour before any service. See Fr Matthew for other times.****General Confession – 9:45 AM on the first Sunday of each month****Pannikhidas – after Divine Liturgy 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month****Coffee hour – after Liturgy****Church School - Sunday 9:30 AM (no classes 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month)**

**We would like to welcome all parish visitors and invite you to join us after the Liturgy, downstairs, for Coffee hour.**

**Announcements:**

- **Christmas Celebration** - We will celebrate the Nativity of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ in the Flesh with a Liturgy on Wednesday morning, **Dec. 25 at 10:00 AM**. This is a very important Holy Day in the course of human salvation. There will be no service on Christmas Eve.

**Special Announcements:**

- **As the year comes to a close**, the parish council wishes to remind parishioners to be generous in their donations, so that our yearly income will cover our yearly expenses.

**Sunday before the Nativity:**

The Sunday before the Nativity of the Lord (December 18-24) is known as the **Sunday of the Holy Fathers**. On this day the Church commemorates all those who were well-pleasing to God from all ages, from Adam 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 and prophetesses are also remembered today, especially the Prophet Daniel and the three holy youths (December 17).

The Troparion to the Prophet Daniel and the three holy youths (“Great are the accomplishments of faith...”) is quite similar to the Troparion for St Theodore the Recruit (February 17, and the first Saturday of Great Lent). The Kontakion to St Theodore, who suffered martyrdom by fire, reminds us that he also had faith as his breastplate (see I Thessalonians 5:8).

**What are we celebrating on Christmas Day?**

For us Orthodox Christians, Christmas is the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ. It is the joyous celebration of the Birth of the Word of God as a child. The Birth of Christ to the Virgin Mary is proclaimed in the Kontakion of the Feast: "Today the Virgin gives birth to the Transcendent One, and the earth offers a cave to the Unapproachable One! Angels with shepherds glorify Him! The wise men journey with a star! Since for our sake the Eternal God was born as a Little Child!" On Christmas we celebrate what we proclaim in the Nicene Creed: "... for us and for our salvation (the Son of God) came down from Heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became man"

The Nativity of Our Lord fulfills what was first revealed nine months before, in the Annunciation by the Archangel Gabriel to the Most Holy Mother of God: the Second Person of the Holy Trinity assuming flesh and becoming human. As St. John declares in the fourth Gospel: "... and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory of the Only - Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

(From: *The Nativity of Christ -- Seven Questions, Seven Answers* The Nativity of Christ--Seven Questions, Seven Answers

His Grace, Michael ~ Bishop of New York & the Diocese of New York and New Jersey)



See us on the web at: [ChurchMotherOfGod.org/bulletin](http://ChurchMotherOfGod.org/bulletin)  
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Sunday Bulletin

**Church of the Mother of God**

*"The Joy of All the Sorrowful"*

*Founded 1966*

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**Glory to  
Jesus Christ**

**Glory  
Forever**

**Sunday before the Nativity**

*Rejoice, Bethlehem! Prepare yourself, O Ephratha!*

*The Lamb is on her way to give birth to the Chief Shepherd she carries in her womb.*

*The God-bearing forefathers will rejoice, beholding Him,*

*and with the shepherds, they will glorify the Virgin nursing Him.*

Kontakion -

**Today the Church remembers:**

**Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ • Sunday before the Nativity**

- Great Martyr Anastasia, “Deliverer from Bonds”, and her teacher, Martyr Chrysogonus, and with them Martyrs Theodota, Evodias, Eutychianus, and others, who suffered under Diocletian (ca. 304).

**December 22, 2013**

**26<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost  
Sunday before Nativity**

**Tone 1** of the Octoechos  
(Nativity Fast)