



## *Protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church*

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### *Celebration of the Holy Mysteries*

**RECITATION OF THE HOLY ROSARY AND CONFESSIONS:** ½ HR BEFORE DIVINE LITURGY

**BAPTISM & CHRISMATION / ANNOINTING OF THE SICK / COMMUNION CALLS & VISITATIONS:**  
CONTACT FR. IHOR TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS

**MARRIAGE PREPARATION:**  
CONTACT FR. IHOR AT LEAST SIX MONTHS PRIOR TO SETTING THE ACTUAL WEDDING DATE

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN:**  
CONTACT MRS. CHRISTINA VOGEL AT (603) 686-2092 TO REGISTER YOUR CHILDREN

**SCHEDULE OF DIVINE LITURGIES:**  
SUNDAYS: 10 AM (September thru May)      MON THRU SAT: AS NOTED IN WEEKLY BULLETIN  
                  9 AM (June thru August)              HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION: 7 PM

#### **DIVINE LITURGY SCHEDULE FOR WEEK OF DECEMBER 24, 2023**

##### **Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup> – Sunday of the Holy Fathers and Eve of the Nativity of Our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ**

Divine Liturgy: 10 AM                              Propers: Tone 5 and Festal Tones              Vestments: Bright  
Epistle: Hebrews 11: 9-10; 19-23; 32-40              Gospel: St. Matthew 1: 1-25

**Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup> (3 PM): Great Compline Service with Liteeya**

**Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup> (4 PM): Christmas Eve Divine Liturgy**

**Monday, December 25<sup>th</sup> (10 AM): Nativity of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Holy Day of Obligation)**

**Tuesday, December 26<sup>th</sup> (7 PM): Synaxis of the Holy Mother of God**

**Wednesday, December 27<sup>th</sup> (7 PM):** Feast of St. Stephen, Protomartyr

**Saturday, December 30<sup>th</sup> (7 PM):** Vespers Service

## ***Divine Liturgy Intentions and Vespers Service Schedule for January and February***

**Sunday, December 31<sup>st</sup> (10 AM):** For all Parishioners

**Monday, January 1<sup>st</sup> (10 AM):** Liturgy of St. Basil the Great - Feast of the Circumcision of Our Lord

**Saturday, January 6<sup>th</sup> (10 AM):** Feast of Theophany with Great Water Blessing (Holy Day of Obligation)

**Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup> (10 AM):** For all Parishioners

**Saturday, January 13<sup>th</sup> (7 PM):** Vespers Service

**Sunday, January 14<sup>th</sup> (10 AM):** For all Parishioners

**Saturday, January 20<sup>th</sup> (7 PM):** Vespers Service

**Sunday, January 21<sup>st</sup> (10 AM):** For all Parishioners

**Saturday, January 27<sup>th</sup> (7 PM):** Vespers Service

**Sunday, January 28<sup>th</sup> (10 AM):** For all Parishioners

**Saturday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> (7 PM):** Vespers Service

**Sunday, February 4<sup>th</sup> (10 AM):** For all Parishioners

**Saturday, February 10<sup>th</sup> (7 PM):** Vespers Service

**Sunday, February 11<sup>th</sup> (10 AM):** For all Parishioners

**Saturday, February 17<sup>th</sup> (7 PM):** Vespers Service

**Sunday, February 18<sup>th</sup> (10 AM):** For all Parishioners

**Saturday, February 24<sup>th</sup> (7 PM):** Vespers Service

**Sunday, February 25<sup>th</sup> (10 AM):** For all Parishioners

### **Saturday Services**

Fr. Ihor is celebrating Vesper services every Saturday at 7 PM. All parishioners are invited to attend this service. Those who wish to have a Divine Liturgy celebrated for a loved one whether living or deceased or for a private intention are still able to do so. Please request your Divine Liturgy by contacting Fr. Ihor at (860) 617-6357 or cantor Jaroslaw Maksymowych at (603) 627-2042. Please note that Saturday Divine Liturgies will now be celebrated only at 10 AM (9 AM June thru August) whenever they are requested. If no Divine Liturgy has been requested for a particular Saturday, then none will be celebrated on that day. The Divine Liturgy schedule in the bulletin will only show Divine Liturgies on Saturdays when they have been requested. If the bulletin does not show a Divine Liturgy for a given Saturday, then this means that particular Saturday is available for your request.

### **Суботні Богослужіння**

Отець Ігор святкує Вечірню кожної суботи у 7-мі годині вечером. Ласкаво просимо усіх парафіян до участі. Парафіяни які бажають замовити Божественну Літургію в суботу для померших або на особисті інтенції можуть дзвонити до о. Ігоря на номер (860) 617-6357 або до дяка п. Ярослава Максимовича на номер (603) 627-2042. Суботні Божественні Літургії будуть відслужені тільки о годині 10-тій ранком (9-тій ранку з червня по серпень) коли замовлені. Якщо Літургія в певну суботу не буде замовлена, то в цей день не буде жодна відправлена. Порядок Богослужінь в бюлетені покаже тільки ті суботні Служби Божі які є замовлені. Якщо в бюлетені не відображається Божественна Літургія на дану суботу, то це означає, що ця субота доступна на Ваше замовлення.

# ***Liturgical Propers, Readings and Sermon for Sunday***

## **Liturgical Propers for the Sunday of the Holy Fathers**

**Resurrectional Tropar – Tone 5:** Come, believers, let us praise and worship the Word. With the Father and the Spirit, He has no beginning. Though He was born of a virgin for our salvation, and He willingly ascended the Cross and suffered death, He raised the dead by His glorious resurrection.

**Festal Tropar – Tone 2:** Faith can accomplish great things: we have seen three youths rejoicing in flames as if they were bathed in refreshing waters. We have seen the prophet Daniel in the midst of lions as if he were a shepherd among sheep. Through their prayers, O Christ our God, save us!

**Festal Tropar – Tone 4:** At that time Mary registered with the venerable Joseph in Bethlehem since she was of the house of David. She was with child, having conceived without seed. When the time for her delivery drew near, they could find no room in the inn, but the cave seemed a joyful palace for the Queen. Christ is born to renew the likeness that had been lost of old.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,

**Festal Kondak – Tone 6:** You did not worship a man-made image, O Thrice-blessed Youths, but were glorified in the test of fire, protected by a power beyond description. From the searing flames you cried out to God, saying: Hasten to help us, O merciful Lord, for, in Your greatness, You can do whatever You will.

now and always and forever. Amen.

**Festal Kondak – Tone 1:** Rejoice, O Bethlehem, and prepare yourself, O Ephrath. Behold the Virgin is on her way to give birth to the great Shepherd she carries in her womb. The holy forefathers rejoice at this sight. Together with the shepherds, they sing praise to the Virgin who nurses Him.

**Prokimen – Tone 4:** Blessed are You, Lord, God of our Fathers, may Your name be praised and glorified forever.

VERSE: You are just in everything You have done for us.

**Prokimen – Tone 4:** Blessed are You, Lord, God of our Fathers, may Your name be praised and glorified forever.

## **НЕДІЛЯ ПЕРЕД РІЗДВОМ ХРИСТОВИМ (Неділя Святих Отців)**

### **До Євреїв послання св. апостола Павла читання. (Євр 11: 9-10; 17-23; 32-40)**

Браття, вірою Авраам перебував в обіцяній землі, як у чужій, живучи у 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; і то єдинородного приніс у жертву сина, він, що обітниці одержав, до якого було сказано: “Від Ісаака тобі народиться потомство,” думаючи, що Бог має силу і з мертвих воскресити; тому його й одержав назад як символ. Вірою Ісаак благословив Якова та Ісава на майбутнє і поклонився, спираючись на кінець палиці своєї. Вірою Йосиф, вмираючи, згадав про вихід синів Ізраїля і розпорядився про свої кості. Вірою батьки Мойсея, як він народився, три місяці його ховали, бо бачили красу дитини, і не злякалися царського наказу.

І що ще скажу? Часу не вистарчає мені, коли заходжуся розповідати про Гедеона, про Варака, про Самсона, про Єфту, про Давида й Самуїла та пророків, що вірою підбили царства, чинили справедливість, обітниць досягнули, загородили паші левам, силу вогню гасили, вістря меча уникали, ставали сильні, будучи недолугі, на війні проявили мужність, наскоки чужинців відбивали. Жінки діставали назад своїх померлих, які воскресали. Інші загинули в муках, відкинувши визволення, щоб досягнути ліпше воскресіння. Інші наруг і бичування зазнали та ще й кайданів і в'язниці; їх каменовано, розрізувано пилою, брано на допити; вони вмирили, мечем забиті; тинялися в овечих та козячих шкурах, збідовані, гноблені, кривджені; вони, яких світ був невартий, блукали пустинями, горами, печерами та земними вертепами. І всі вони, дарма що мали добре засвідчення вірою, не одержали обіцяного, бо Бог зберіг нам щось краще, щоб вони не без нас досягли досконалості.

**Epistle Reading for the Sunday of the Holy Ancestors of Christ (Hebrews 11: 9-10; 17-23; 32-40)**

Brethren: By faith Abraham sojourned in the Promised Land as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs of the same promise; for he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose designer and maker is God. By faith Abraham, when put to the test, offered up Isaac; he who had received the promises was ready to sacrifice his only son, of whom it is said, "Through Isaac shall your descendants be called." He reasoned that God was able to raise from the dead, and so he received Isaac back as a symbol. By faith Isaac invoked for Jacob and Esau blessings that were still to be. By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshipped God, leaning on the head of his staff. By faith Joseph, near the end of his life, spoke of the Exodus of the Israelites, and gave instructions about his burial. By faith Moses' parents hid him three months after his birth, thereby disregarding the king's edict, because they saw he was a beautiful child.

What more shall I recount? I have no time to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephtah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, who by faith conquered kingdoms, did what was just, obtained the promises; they broke the jaws of lions, put out raging fires, escaped the devouring sword; though weak they were made powerful, became strong in battle, and turned back foreign invaders. Women received back their dead through resurrection. Others were tortured and would not receive deliverance, in order to obtain a better resurrection. Still others endured mockery, scourging, even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, sawed in two, put to death at sword's point; they went about garbed in the skins of sheep or goats, needy, afflicted, tormented. The world was not worthy of them. They wandered about in deserts and on mountains, they dwelt in caves and in holes of the earth. Yet despite the fact that all of these were approved because of their faith, they did not obtain what had been promised. God had made a better plan, a plan which included us. Without us, they were not to be made perfect.

**Tone 4: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

VERSE: O God, our ears have heard, and our fathers have declared to us the deeds You did in days of old.

**Tone 4: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

VERSE: You saved us from our enemies; those who hate us You have put to shame.

**Tone 4: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

VERSE: Боже, на наші вуха ми чули, і наші батьки нам розповіли діла Твої з давних часів.

**Tone 4: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

VERSE: Але Ти врятував нас від наших ворогів і засоромив ненависників наших.

**Tone 4: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

**Євангелія (МТ 1: 1-25)**

Родовід Ісуса Христа, сина Давида, сина Авраама. Авраам був батьком Ісаака, Ісаак - Якова, Яків - Юди і братів його. Юда був батьком Фареса та Зари від Тамари. Фарес був батьком Есрома, Есром - Арама,

Арам - Амінадава, Амінадав - Наасона, Наасон - Салмона, Салмон - Вооза від Рахави, Вооз - Йоведа від Рути, Йовед був батьком Ессея - Ессей був батьком царя Давида, Давид - Соломона від жінки Урії. Соломон же був батьком Ровоама, Ровоам - Авії, Авія - Асафа, Асаф - Йосафата, Йосафат - Норама, Норам - Озії, Озія - Йоатама, Йоатам - Ахаза, Ахаз - Езекиї, Езекія - Манасії, Манасія - Амоса, Амос - Йосії, Йосія - Ехонії і братів його за вавилонського переселення. А після вавилонського переселення в Ехонії народився Салатііл, у Салатііла - Зоровавел, у Зоровавела - Авіуд, в Авіюда - Еліяким, в Еліякіма - Азор, в Азора - Садок, у Садока - Ахим, в Ахима - Еліуд, в Еліюда - Єлеазар, в Єлеазара - Маттан, у Маттана - Яків, у Якова - Йосиф, чоловік Марії, з якої народився Ісус, що зветься Христос. Покоління же всіх було: від Авраама до Давида чотирнадцять, від Давида до вавилонського переселення чотирнадцять і від вавилонського переселення до Христа - покоління чотирнадцять.

Народження Ісуса Христа відбулося так: Марія, його мати, була заручена з Йосифом; але, перед тим, як вони зішлися, 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 у сні й 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 даш йому ім'я Ісус, бо Він спасе народ Свій від гріхів їхніх." А сталося все це, щоб здійснилось Господнє слово, сказане пророком: "Ось, діва матиме в утробі й породить Сина, і дадуть йому ім'я Еммануїл, що значить: З нами Бог." Прокинувшись від сну, Йосиф зробив, як звелів йому ангел Господній: прийняв свою жінку; та не спізнав її, аж поки породила Сина, і він дав йому ім'я Ісус.

#### **Gospel Reading for the Sunday of the Holy Ancestors of Christ (St. Matthew 1: 1-25)**

A family record of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham. 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, whose mother was Tamar. Perez was the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram. Ram was the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father Salmon. Salmon was the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab, Boaz was the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth. Obed was the father of Jesse. Jesse was the father of King David. David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been the wife of Uriah. Solomon was the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam the father of Abijah, Abijah the father of Asa. Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, Joram the father of Uzziah. Uzziah was the father of Jotham, Jotham the father of Ahaz, Ahaz the father of Hezekiah. Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh, Manasseh the father of Amos, Amos the father of Josiah. Josiah became the father of Jechoniah and his brothers at the time of Babylonian exile. After the Babylonian exile, Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud, Abiud the father of Eliakim, Eliakim the father of Azor. Azor was the father of Zadok, Zadok the father of Achim, Achim the father of Eliud. Eliud was the father of Eleazar, Eleazar the father of Matthan, Matthan the father of Jacob. Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of Mary. It was of her that Jesus who is called the Messiah was born. Thus the total number of generations is: from Abraham to David, fourteen generations; from David to the Babylonian captivity, fourteen generations; from the Babylonian captivity to the Messiah, fourteen generations.

Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When His mother Mary was engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with Child through the power of the Holy Spirit. Joseph her husband, an upright man unwilling to expose her to the law, decided to divorce her quietly. Such was his intention when suddenly the angel of the Lord appeared in a dream and said to him: "Joseph, son of David, have no fear about taking Mary as your wife. It is by the Holy Spirit that she has conceived this Child. She is to have a Son and you are to name Him Jesus because He will save His people from their sins." All this happened to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The Virgin shall be with Child and shall give birth to a Son, and they shall call Him Emmanuel," a name which means "God is with us." When Joseph awoke he did as the angel of the Lord had directed him and received her into his home as his wife. He had no relations with her at any time before

she bore a Son, whom he named Jesus.

### **SERMON FOR THE SUNDAY OF THE HOLY ANCESTORS OF CHRIST**

Slava Isusu Khrystu! My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

The Sunday before Christmas is known to us as the Sunday of the Holy Genealogy. On this day the Church commemorates the ancestors of Christ from Adam to Joseph the Betrothed. Christ's full humanity meant not just that He possessed a human nature but that He had blood relatives, and that He came from a long family line. To remember our family and our family roots is to affirm our humanity; likewise, to overlook our family connections is to diminish our humanity. To remember is an act of love and faithfulness. We all came from somewhere. Our family heritage is a source of blessing and sometimes a source of pain. As Christians we have both a biological and a spiritual family lineage. Salvation in Christ extends to both family lines. St. Paul writes in Ephesians 3:14-15: "For this reason, I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and on earth is named." Here Paul is looking to the future when all of humanity and creation become one family under the fatherhood of God.

We read the genealogy of Christ in Matthew's Gospel (Matthew 1:1-25) about some of those people of the Old Testament who were part of God's preparation for the incarnation. Entire generations of people preparing the way for the Lord were led by a few very faithful men and women. In the Epistle from Hebrews (Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40) we hear a few more details from the lives of some of those same people who were faithful to God no matter that they suffered for the faithfulness and no matter that they didn't receive the fulfillment of what God promised. They remained faithful to God's promise and trusted that God would fulfill what had been prophesied or promised. All these women and men heard about the promise of the coming of the Messiah but none of them lived to see it, yet they remained faithful to God. Besides all these examples of people who followed God in faith, if we studied the lives of all these people we would find examples of both people who remembered God in times of trouble, and those who forgot God in good times.

Impossible to recount is Christ's descent according to His divinity, but His ancestry according to His human nature can be traced, since He who deigned to become the Son of Man in order to save mankind was the offspring of men. And it is this genealogy of His that two of the evangelists, Matthew and Luke, recorded. But although Matthew, in the passage from his Gospel read today, begins with those born first, he makes no mention of anyone born before Abraham. He traces the line down from Abraham until he reaches Joseph to whom, by divine dispensation, the Virgin Mother of God was betrothed (Matt. 1:1-16), being of the same tribe and homeland as him, that her own stock may be shown from this to be in no way inferior.

Do you see that the family and kin of Christ are not engendered according to nature, but according to grace and the law that comes from grace? This law is so far superior to the law given through Moses that, whereas those called sons according to the law of Moses are neither born of God nor do they transcend human nature, those styled sons by the law of grace are born of God, brought to perfection above nature and made sons of Abraham through Christ, more closely associated with Him than sons according to blood.

All who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ, according to Paul (Gal. 3:27), and although they are other people's children according to nature, they are born supernaturally of Christ, who in this way conquers nature. For as He became incarnate without seed of the Holy Spirit and the ever-virgin Mary, so He grants potential and power to those who believe in His name to become children of God. For "as many as received Him", says the Evangelist, "to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (Jn. 1:12-13).

What we heard in the Gospel—about grandeur and shame, and a new glory for every person and every nation—let us apply in full measure to ourselves, cherishing as the most precious treasure the mystery of our relatedness to Christ and to all those who over the span of millennia have entered into this unfathomable and immortal relationship. In this is the mystery of our salvation and participation in the salvation of humanity. The word of God possesses such penetrating power that it is present in all historical events. On the Eve of the Nativity of Christ, the feast of the Incarnation of God the Word, let us not forget about the feast—when the word of God that we read in the Gospel, as the holy fathers witness, becomes incarnate in human life. Amen.

### **ПРОПОВІДЬ НА НЕДІЛЮ СВ. ОТЦІВ**

Слава Ісусу Христу! Дорогі в Христі браття і сестри!

Завершується час різдвяного посту, а з ним і наше приготування до одного із найбільших і радісних свят у церковному році – Різдва Христового. Піст, це не тільки обмеженість страв і забав, а нагода духовно приготуватися до зустрічі з Христом у даному святі. Щойно ми із вами прослухали книгу родоводу Ісуса. Для багатьох людей ці перші рядки Євангелія від Матея видаються нудними та беззмістовними. Проте для тих, котрі живуть Словом Божим, книга родоводу Ісуса є прекрасною піснею. Ми тут знаходимо великих прабабків, котрі були твердими у вірі, бачимо тут і звичайних людей, котрі провадили своє життя так, як і будь-хто із нас. Бог входить в історію кожної людини, входить в нашу історію для того, щоб цій історії надати спасенний характер. Бог приходить до нас, не зважаючи на те хто ми, які ми. Христос приходить, щоб наша історія, звичайна історія нашого щоденного життя, набрала спасенного характеру.

Для правовірного єврея родовід мав дуже важливе значення. Він запевнював йому приналежність до вибраного народу, а кожен, хто належав до царського роду сподівався, що можливо з його роду вийде очікуваний Месія. Книга родоводу у Євангелії Матея має подвійну

мету. Подаючи родовід Ісуса Христа, євангелист Матей хотів показати Євреям, що Ісус має Божественне походження, він є потомком вибраного Авраама, належить до царського роду Давида, а тим самим є обіцяним Месією.

За певних обставин генеалогічне походження було принциповим і визначало право людини на місце у суспільному або релігійному житті громади. Наприклад, Второзаконня зазначає, що царем Ізраїля міг бути лише одноплемінець. Додатково, цар повинен походити з роду Давидового. Повернення з Вавилонського полону загостило увагу до родоводів, бо вимагало наявності єврейського коріння. Не міг бути священиком той, чиє ім'я не знаходили у родоводах. Наявність доброго родоводу надавала людині легітимності. Ірод Великий, що був наполовину євреєм і наполовину ідумеєм, не міг знайти свого імені в родоводах і тому наказав їх винищити. Логіка Ірода була простою: якщо там не було його, то хай не буде нікого.

Матвій включив чотирьох жінок до родоводу Спасителя. Це надзвичайно несподівано, особливо для єврейського генеалогічного дерева. Напевно цього можна було чекати від Луки, він активніше включав жінок до Євангельського оповідання. Матвій же пише з розрахунку на євреїв, тому теоретично, його родовід не повинен містити жодного жіночого імені. Натомість євангелист робить виключення з правил. Можна було очікувати, що у разі подібного виключення родовід буде містити імена зразкових представників жіноцтва Старого Заповіту. Але там немає імен Сарі, Ревеки, Рахіль або Лії – дружин патріархів, що дали початок родів Ізраїльських. Натомість там імена жінок якими важко пишатися. До того ж ці жінки були язичницького походження та сумнівної моралі. Матвій пише, що "всіх поколінь від Авраама до Давида чотирнадцять родів; і від Давида до переселення вавилонського чотирнадцять родів; і від переселення вавилонського до Христа чотирнадцять родів". У цьому ланцюжку бракує кількох ланок, але Матвій іде на це свідомо обрізаючи родовід так, щоби він виглядав симетрично. Ключем такої симетрії є цифра "14". Єврейською мовою сума цифр, що відповідають написанню імені Давид – "14".

Апостол Іван зводить весь родовід до кількох речень: "Споконвіку було Слово, і Слово було у Бога, і Слово було Бог. Воно було споконвіку в Бога. Все через Нього сталося, і без Нього ніщо не сталося, що сталося". Матвія старанно і ретельно випишує довгі ряди імен.

Цей родовід Христа показує нам, що Ісус не увірвався в історію людського роду, як метеор. Різдво – це не випадок, не вигадка, а милосердя Боже. Ісус Христос – Той, Чий корені, Чий предки є чисто людськими. Ісус Христос – Той, Чий прихід проголошували впродовж багатьох віків, поки не настала повнота часу. І саме в ці дні, коли ще залишився одень день, до Різдва Христового, Церква подає нам увесь Його родовід. Бо це історія нашого усиновлення Богом, історія нашого прощення та спасіння. Підготуватися до Різдва Христового – це бути готовим до того, щоби отримати й прийняти від Бога дар – Його любов, Його прощення, Його спорідненість. Прийняти Того, Хто прагне всіх обійняти й прийняти до Свого Царства; Того, Хто завжди поспішає, спасає та прощає. Прийшовши у світ, Христос взяв на Себе долі усіх людей, гріхи усіх людей, життя та смерть усіх людей. Принесімо ж Новонародженому Дитятку золото, ладан та миро – нашу віру, надію та любов, і нашу подяку та прославу за Його родовід, за всіх тих, з ким Він захотів бути у вічній спорідненості. Амінь!

**Communion Verse:** Хвалить Господа з небес, хвалить Його на висотах. Радуйтеся праведні, у Господі, бо правим належить похвала. Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest. Exult in the Lord you just ones for praise is fitting from the righteous. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.



## ***Parish Announcements***

### **We Welcome You!**

If you are visiting our church today, our parish family is delighted to welcome you here! Thank you and God bless you for visiting with us today! We welcome all our visitors and guests who worship at our parish. We invite families and individuals who wish to become members to register by calling Fr. Ihor at (860) 617-6357.

### **Вітаємо Вас!**

Якщо Ви відвідуєте нашу церкву сьогодні, наша парафіяльна громада рада вітати Вас тут! Щире спасибі Вам, і нехай Бог благословить Вас за Ваші відвідини з нами сьогодні! Ми запрошуємо сім'ї та осіб, які бажають стати членами, зареєструватися у нас по телефоні о. Ігоря на номер (860) 617-6357.

### **Please Pray for our Sick and Homebound Parishioners, Family Members and Friends**

Fr. Ihor Papka, Fr. Zbigniew Brzezicki, Oleh and Valentina Babski, Michaelle Baker, Rick Barr, Marylou Blaisdell, Tracy Crews, Carmel Horangic, Josephine Housty, Christine Kolagji, Helen Kucman, Martha and Ray Majkut, Karen and Jaroslaw Maksymowych, Jean Mandych, Sherri Martel, Katherine Masso, Jennifer McMillan, Katharine McNaughton, Jackie Morales, Lauren Morales, Jonathan Morales, Tanya and Ronald Morales, Elizabeth Mozina, Alan Pasicznyk, Lina Puciw, Billie Sheesley, Derek Stanley, Pauline Stanley, John Terninko, Elisha Wallace, Cindy Wilson, Dr. Mark Windt, Lenora Zelenski. Please contact Fr. Ihor if you would like to add a friend or loved one to this prayer list.

### **Christmas Yalynka Dinner**

The Ladies' Sodality will be hosting the annual Christmas Yalynka dinner on Sunday, January 14<sup>th</sup> in the church hall after Divine Liturgy. A traditional Ukrainian Christmas meal will be provided by the Sodality. All are invited to attend this event. Cost for the meal is \$10 per person with max cost of \$30 per family. Each family is asked to bring a salad or dessert to share. Please see Zhanna to sign up for a dish to bring to the dinner. A raffle will also be held at the dinner. If you have any items to donate to this raffle, please see Anya.

### **December Birthdays**

The following parishioners are celebrating a birthday this month:

December 5 – Martha M.

December 5 – Ray M.

December 9 – Mykola S.

December 9 – Zhanna S.

December 19 – Dawn H.

Our parish community wishes this month's birthday celebrants peace, joy, love and good health on their special day as well as throughout the year. May our dear Lord grant all of you many more healthy, happy and blessed years. Happy Birthday and На Многая літа! (Na Mnohaya Lita!).

## ***Weekly Reflection:***

### **Learning about our Ukrainian Catholic Faith – Christmas Eve Traditions**

For the Ukrainian people Christmas is the most important family holiday of the whole year. It is celebrated

solemnly, as well as merrily, according to ancient customs that have come down through the ages and are still observed today. Ukrainian Christmas customs are based not only on Christian traditions, but to a great degree on those of the pre-Christian, pagan culture and religion. The Ukrainian society was basically agrarian at that time and had developed an appropriate pagan culture, elements of which have survived to this day.

Christianity was introduced into Ukraine in 988 A.D. The flourishing pagan religion and traditions associated with it were too deeply rooted in the people to allow the Church to eradicate them completely. Therefore, the Church adopted a policy of tolerance toward most of the ancient customs and accepted many as part of the Christian holidays. In this way, the ancient pagan Feasts of Winter Solstice, Feasts of Fertility became part of Christian Christmas customs. This is perhaps why Ukrainian Christmas customs are quite unique and deeply symbolic.

Ukrainian Christmas festivities begin on Christmas Eve and end on the Feast of the Epiphany (Yordan). The Christmas Eve Supper or *Svyata Vecherya* (Holy Supper) brings the family together to partake in special foods and begin the holiday with many customs and traditions, which reach back to antiquity. The rituals of the Christmas Eve are dedicated to God, to the welfare of the family, and to the remembrance of the ancestors.

In Ukraine, care was taken that all the animals were fed even before the family sat down to supper. The animals were given fresh, soft hay instead of the usual straw so that they would be content on this night of miracles. Some of the special foods that were to be eaten this night were saved for the animals also. The animals were treated specially on this night because the animals had shared their place of shelter, the stable, with the Holy Family, and had given up their manger for the newborn Christ to sleep in. It was believed that animals could speak and foretell the future at midnight on this holy night, but no one attempted to listen to them, because if one knew the future, one would soon die.

With the appearance of the first star, which is believed to be the Star of Bethlehem, the family gathers to begin the Holy Supper. The table is covered with two tablecloths, one for the ancestors of the family, the second for the living members. In pagan times, ancestors were considered to be benevolent spirits, who, when properly respected, brought good fortune to the living family members. Under the table, as well as under the tablecloths some hay is spread to remember that Christ was born in a manger. The table always has one extra place setting for the deceased family members, whose souls, according to belief, come on Christmas Eve and partake of the food. A candle is lit and placed in the window to welcome a stranger into the home and to join the family for the Holy Supper.

A *kolach* (Christmas bread) is placed in the center of the table. This bread is braided into a ring, and three such rings are placed one on top of the other, with a candle in the center of the top one. The three rings symbolize the Trinity and the circular form represents Eternity.

A *didukh* (meaning grandfather) is a sheaf of wheat stalks or made of mixed grain stalks. It is placed under the icons in the house. In Ukraine, this is a very important Christmas tradition, because the stalks of grain symbolize all the ancestors of the family, and it is believed that their spirits reside in it during the holidays.

After the *didukh* is positioned in the place of honor, the father or head of the household places a bowl of *kutia* (boiled wheat mixed with poppy seeds and honey) next to it. *Kutia* is the most important food of the entire Christmas Eve Supper, and is also called God's Food. A jug of *uzvar* (stewed fruits, which should contain twelve different fruits) and is called God's Drink, is also served.

After all the preparations have been completed, the father offers each member of the family a piece of bread dipped in honey, which had been previously blessed in church. He then leads the family in prayer. After the prayer the father extends his best wishes to everyone with the greeting *Khrystos Razhdayetsya or Khrystos*

*Rodiwsya* (Christ is Born), to which each person responds, *Slavite Yeho or Slaveem Yoho* (Let us Glorify Him). Then the family sits down to a twelve-course meatless Christmas Eve Supper.

There are twelve courses in the Supper, because according to the Christian tradition each course is dedicated to one of Christ's Apostles. According to the ancient pagan belief, each course stood for every full moon during the course of the year. The courses are meatless because there is a period of fasting required by the Church until Christmas Day. However, for the pagans the meatless dishes were a form of bloodless sacrifice to the gods.

The first course is always *kutia*. It is the main dish of the whole supper. Then comes *borshch* (beet soup) with *vushka* (boiled dumplings filled with chopped mushrooms and onions). This is followed by a variety of fish - baked, broiled, fried, cold in aspic, fish balls, marinated herring and so on. Then come *varenyky* (boiled dumplings filled with cabbage, potatoes, buckwheat grains, or prunes. There are also *holubtsi* (stuffed cabbage), and the supper ends with *uzvar* which is a compote made from dried fruit.

After supper, nuts and candies would be scattered in the hay under the table for the children to find. Out of respect for their elders, the children would take baskets of food to their grandparents and godparents after supper. This tradition may have derived from the belief that young innocent children are the messengers of good spirits; as they traveled to the homes they were visiting.

When it was almost midnight, all the members of the family, went to church for the Nativity Divine Liturgy. When Liturgy was ended, families would call out to each other outside the church with the traditional Christmas greeting, "Christ is Born" with the response, "Let us Glorify Him." After visiting with each other, the families then returned home. Now that the fast was broken, the delicious pastries which were prepared for Christmas, might be eaten before the family went to bed.