

Word for the Day

Homily of St. Gregory Palamas on the Forefathers of Christ

Matthew [in his genealogy of Christ]...begins with those born first, and makes no mention of anyone 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, being of the same tribe and homeland as him, that her own stock might be shown from this to be in no way inferior.



Luke, by contrast, begins not with the earliest forebears but the most recent, and working his way back from Joseph the Betrothed, does not stop at Abraham. Having included Abraham's predecessors, he does not end with Adam, but lists God among Christ's human forebears (Luke 3.23-38). He wishes to show, in my opinion, that from the beginning man was not just a creation of God, but also a son in the Spirit, which was given to him at the same time as his soul, through God's quickening breath (Gen 2.7).

It was granted to him as a pledge that, if, waiting patiently for it, he kept the commandment, he would be able to share through the same Spirit in a more perfect union with God, by which he would live forever with Him and obtain immortality. By heeding the evil counsel of the pernicious angel, man transgressed the divine commandments, was shown to be unworthy, forfeited the pledge and interrupted God's plan.

God's grace, however, is unalterable and His purpose cannot prove false, so some of man's offspring were chosen, that, from among many, a suitable receptacle for this divine adoption and grace might be found, who would serve God's will perfectly, and would be revealed as a vessel worthy to unite divine and human nature in one person, not just exalting our nature, but restoring the human race.

The holy Maid and Virgin Mother of God was this vessel, so she was proclaimed by the archangel Gabriel as full of grace, being the chosen one among the chosen, blameless, undefiled and worthy to contain the person of the God-man and to collaborate with Him. Therefore God pre-ordained her before all ages, chose her from among all who had ever lived, and deemed her worthy of more grace than anyone else, making her the holiest of saints, even before her mysterious childbearing.

For that reason, He graciously willed that she should make her home in the Holy of Holies, and accepted her as His companion to share His dwelling from her childhood. He did not simply choose her from the masses, but from the elect of all time, who were admired and renowned for their piety and wisdom, and for their character, words and deeds, which pleased God and brought benefit to all.

Gregory Palamas (1296-1359): Homily on the Sunday of the Holy Forefathers

ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish Of The New England Diocese ✝ Orthodox Church In America

December 17, 2017

28th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — Tone 3. Sunday of the Forefathers.
Holy Prophet Daniel and the Three Holy Youths: Ananias, Azarias and Misael (600 B.C.). Ven. Daniel the Confessor, in schema Stephen, of Spain and Egypt (10th c.). parents, Stephen (1446) and Angelina Brancovich. Prophet Zephaniah.



Our Forefathers and Foremothers

Divine Services

Mon. December 18.....	Daily Vespers	5:30 p.m.
Tue. December 19.....	Daily Vespers	5:30 p.m.
Wed. December 20.....	Divine Liturgy (Forefeast)	9:30 a.m.
	Daily Vespers	5:30 p.m.
Thu. December 21.....	Daily Vespers	5:30 p.m.
Fri. December 22.....	Royal Hours.....	6:00 p.m.
Sat. December 23.....	Great Vespers.....	5:00 p.m.
Sun. December 24.....	Divine Liturgy.....	9:30 a.m.
	Holy Supper.....	4:00 p.m.
	followed by.....Vigil	~6:00 p.m.
Mon. December 25.....	Nativity of our Lord Divine Liturgy ...	9:30 a.m.
	Daily Vespers	5:30 p.m.

Today's Readings

Epistle: Colossians 3:4-11
Gospel: Luke 14:16-24

Next Week's Readings

Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40
 Matthew 1:1-25

For Next Week, Dec. 24

Hours and Thanksgiving PrayersIrene Vassos
 Epistle:Yanni Tafet
 Coffee Hour:Tanya Bogaevskaia

In Memory of: Archpriest Wsewolod Drobot (Nov. 8), Ann Dahulich (Dec. 6), mother of Archbishop Michael Dahulich of New York

For the health and well-being of: Archpriest Joseph and Matushka Julia, Abdullah, David, Tony, Stanislav, Leonard, Timothy, Helen, Fenaeda, Raya, Dennis, Svetlana, Konstantin, Vladislav, Nancy, Maria, Al, Michael, Ludmila, Nick, Koren, Katya, Alexandra, Irina, Gregory, Theodore, Helen, Edie, Ismene, Mat. Brenda, and Lou (son-in-law of Pat).

Announcements

Welcome Fr. John and Mat. Brenda Mikitish!! We are blessed that Archbishop Nikon has found a new Priest and Matushka for St Nicholas much sooner than we expected. Please welcome and pray for them and give them our full love and support.

Thank you to for Cleaning the Church Yesterday! Fr. John, Sorin, Rick, Herman, Irina T., Nick, Marina and Tanya.

Cookie Exchange: Today after Coffee Hour.

Cards to sign: There are Nativity cards (beautifully made by Tanya) in back for Fr. Joseph and Mat. Julia, and for Teddy and Helen Metros. Please sign and send them a message. We will be mailing them tomorrow.

December Charity is Hospice Care in the Berkshires: This organization has operated in the Berkshire for 35 years and provides support and care for those living with live-limiting illnesses, quality medical care and family caretakers.

The Giving Tree! Our beautiful Nativity Tree is also the "Giving Tree". There is a basket under the tree for anyone to bring "warm" gifts for adults: **knit hats, gloves, mittens, socks, slipper socks, scarves, etc.** We will give these to the residents at Barton's Crossing. Please leave your gifts **unwrapped** so that the staff can distribute them to individuals based on need.



The Giving Tree

Nativity and Stewardship Envelopes: There are extra envelopes for our Nativity donations if you didn't get one in the mail. Also Stewardship letters with pledge cards went out this week. If you didn't get those materials please let Irene know. There are extra pledge cards/envelopes also on the back table.

Card from Fr. Joseph and Mat. Mary: On the bulletin board is a Nativity Card from Fr. Joseph, Mat, Mary and little Johnny!

Upcoming Events

Nativity Services: (see all services above); also posted on the website.

Sun. Dec. 24: Holy Supper at 4:00 p.m.: There is a sign up sheet for foods to bring for this wonderful meal. We have listed the traditional foods that are brought for the pre-Nativity meal (an old Slavic tradition).

Note: Lenten meal but wine and oil allowed. No meat, fish, cheese or dairy.

Collections

Last Week's Collection.....	\$2,502
2017 Budget	\$96,142
Progress Towards Budget...	\$79,753