

Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church

DECEMBER 24 2006

Epistle Reading Colossians 1:12-18 BRETHREN, we give thanks to the Father who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities - all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 1:1-25

Sunday before Nativity

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 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

Resurrectional Apolytikion

Let the heavens sing for joy, and let everything on earth be glad. For with His Arm the Lord has worked power. He trampled death under foot by means of death; and He became the firstborn from the dead. From the maw of Hades He delivered us; and He granted the world His great mercy.

Apolytikion for the Sunday before the Nativity

Most glorified art Thou, O Christ our God, Who hast established our Fathers as luminous stars upon the earth, and through them didst guide us all to the true Faith. O Most Merciful One, glory be to Thee.

Apolytikion for the Eve of the Nativity

As the fruit of David's seed, Mary was registered of old with the Elder Joseph in the little town of Bethlehem, when she conceived with a seedless and pure conception. Behold, the time was come that she should bear her Child, but no place was found within the inn for them; yet the cave proved a delightful palace for the pure Lady and Queen of all. For Christ is born now to raise the image that had fallen aforesaid.

From the Bible

For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. **Luke 2:11**

Parish News and Events (www.stnickaa.org)

Apolytikion of the Church

The truth of your manner of life manifested you to your flock as a rule of faith and an icon of gentleness and a teacher of self-control. By humility, therefore, you acquired the things on high, and riches through poverty. Father Holy Hierarch Nicholas, intercede with Christ our God, entreating that our souls be saved.

Kontakion

On this day the Virgin cometh to a cave to give birth to God the Word ineffable, Who was before all the ages. Dance for joy, O earth, on hearing the gladsome tidings; with the Angels and the shepherds now glorify Him Who is willing to be gazed on as a young Child Who before the ages is God.

December 25

The Nativity of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ

The incomprehensible and inexplicable Nativity of Christ came to pass when Herod the Great was reigning in Judea; the latter was an Ascalonite on his father's side and an Idumean on his mother's. He was in every way foreign to the royal line of David; rather, he had received his authority from the Roman emperors, and had ruled tyrannically over the Jewish people for some thirty-three years. The tribe of Judah, which had reigned of old, was deprived of its rights and stripped of all rule and authority. Such was the condition of the Jews when the awaited Messiah was born, and truly thus was fulfilled the prophecy which the Patriarch Jacob had spoken 1,807 years before: "A ruler shall not fail from Judah, nor a prince from his loins, until there come the things stored up for him; and he is the expectation of the nations" (Gen.49:10). Thus, our Saviour was born in Bethlehem, a city of Judea, whither Joseph had come from Nazareth of Galilee, taking Mary his betrothed, who was great with child, that, according to the decree issued in those days by the Emperor Augustus, they might be registered in the census of those subject to Rome. Therefore, when the time came for the Virgin to give birth, and since because of the great multitude there was no place in the inn, the Virgin's circumstance constrained them to enter a cave which was near Bethlehem. Having as shelter a stable of irrational beasts, she gave birth there, and swaddled the Infant and laid Him in the manger (Luke 2:1-7). From this, the tradition has come down to us that when Christ was born He lay between two animals, an ox and

an ass, that the words of the Prophets might be fulfilled: "Between two living creatures shalt Thou be known" (Abbacum 3:2), and "The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib" (Esaias 1: 3). But while the earth gave the new-born Saviour such a humble reception, Heaven on high celebrated majestically His world-saving coming. A wondrous star, shining with uncommon brightness and following a strange course, led Magi from the East to Bethlehem to worship the new-born King. Certain shepherds who were in the area of Bethlehem, who kept watch while tending their sheep, were suddenly surrounded by an extraordinary light, and they saw before them an Angel who proclaimed to them the good tidings of the Lord's joyous Nativity. And straightway, together with this Angel, they beheld and heard a whole host of the Heavenly Powers praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men" (Luke 2:8-14).

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP: Everyone's Responsibility

"Upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." (1 Corinthians 16:2)

This concept of Christian giving is the very essence of Church support. Each of us should return to the Lord a portion of our blessings so the Church may continue to grow and provide a spiritual haven for the faithful. The concept, known as Christian Stewardship is not new to us.

It is important for us to remember that a Church is not mortar and brick but rather a meeting place for the faithful to gather and drink from the cup of Life. Christ said, ". . . Whoever drinks from the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." (John 4:14)

Your commitment to the Stewardship Program of this parish is critical to our continued operation and ministries! If you need to complete your 2006 pledge, please do so as soon as possible. Thank you!

Welcome Visitors!

Please fill out the form on the notepads in the pews and put it in the collection tray so we may welcome you to our Parish.

Visitor's Please Note

Holy Communion is reserved for Orthodox Christians. Visitors are welcome to receive the Antidoro (Blessed Bread), which is distributed at the end of the Divine Liturgy.

Fellowship Hour sponsor needed for Dec. 31.

Christmas Services

Sunday Evening, Dec. 24th—5:00 pm Great Vespers for the Nativity of Christ

Monday Morning, Dec. 25th—9:00 am

Orthros followed immediately by the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great.

Please remember, Holy Communion is distributed to prepared Orthodox Christians during Divine Liturgies only.

Church School News

St. Basil Academy: Again this year the Sunday School will work with Philoptochos during the month of December collecting coins for the Vasilopita on January 7th.

Each classroom will have a money box so the children can begin now to collect their coins. Information has been sent home with your child.

The Modern Greek Program and the Center for European Studies at the University of Michigan is co-sponsoring a lecture by Yannis Evrigenis (Dept. of Political Science, Tufts University). His lecture, "Enlightenment, Emancipation, and National Identity: Koraeos & the Ancients" will be held on Thursday, January 11 at 4 p.m., Room 1636, International Institute, 1080 S. University. Free and open to the public. For more information, please visit www.Lsa.umich.edu/modgreek/modgreevents/.

Part time Work Needed

Anyone who has part time work available or knows someone who has part time work available, of any kind, for an Orthodox Christian, please contact Fr. Nick.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Ring in the New Year in our St. Nicholas fellowship hall on Sunday, December 31, 2006. Start time is 9:00 p.m. and everyone is welcome! Entertainment for children is provided.

There will be a variety of music, door prizes, dancing, finger food and a complementary champagne toast to greet the New Year!

Tickets are \$30 per person for adults, \$15 for students, children 15 and under are free. Seating is limited, reserve tickets today! Please share with everyone you wish.

For reservations or more information, please call Christopher Bekiaries at 734-761-9255 or Billy Res at 734-662-6105.



The Bookstore

You can find at the bookstore: Vasilopita coins, Christmas cards in Greek and English, ornaments, votives, Bibles, cookbooks, and books, including beautiful Christmas books for children of all ages. Look for *Making God Real in the Orthodox Christian Home* by Fr. Anthony Coniaris as found in the Church's *Compass* this month. Come browse today.

House Blessing

Following Epiphany, it is a tradition in our Greek Orthodox Church that the parish priest visits the homes of the faithful and blesses them. If you would like your home blessed, please contact the office and make an appointment with Fr. Nick by January 10th.

SCRIP Gift Cards

Help St. Nicholas by buying SCRIP cards. They start as low as \$5.00. For more information, call 644-1614 with questions. The first and third Sundays of each month are SCRIP Gas Sundays, so please, plan on placing your order for gas cards then. We have SCRIP gas cards for almost every gas company and you can use them at gas stations nationwide. Inquire how you may get Meijer's rewards for your gas if you get your gas from Meijer's.

THE SUNDAY BULLETIN

December 24, 2006



Orthros 9 AM

Divine Liturgy 10 AM

Church School

No Class until 1/7

Epistle Reading

Colossians 1:12-18

Gospel Reading

Matt. 1:1-25

Psaltis

Zannis Res

Choir Director

Dr. Jon Wardner

Prosforo

Betty Manolakis

Fellowship Hour

Pauline Tzavaras

Trisagion

Olga & John Contos

SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY



Glory to God in the Highest and Peace to His People on Earth

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday Evening, Dec. 24th 5:00 pm Great Vespers for the Nativity of Christ

Monday Morning, Dec. 25th 9:00 am Orthros followed immediately by the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great.

Wednesday, Dec. 27th YAL — 7:30 pm

Thursday, Dec. 28th Physical Plant & Maintenance Meeting —7:00 pm

Christ is born! Rejoice and be glad!

Submissions for the Sunday bulletin must be sent to:
office@stnickaa.org by 10 p.m. on the Tuesday prior to publication.

SAINT NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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Reverend Protopresbyter John Paul

MAKE SURE TO CHECK OUR WEBSITE: www.stnickaa.org