

Sunday, December 20th Sunday before Christmas

8:15 AM Orthros
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
11:15 AM Preschool Christmas Program

Wednesday, December 23th

6:00 PM Live-Stream Bible Study with Fr. Hector
7:00 PM Paraklesis to St. Nikiforos

Thursday, December 24th Nativity Eve

9:30 AM Food Box Distribution & Delivery
Sponsored by George and Tina Georges
For the Glory of God

9:00 AM Christmas Royal Hours
6:30 PM Christmas Eve Vespers Liturgy

Office Closed

Friday, December 25th Christmas Day

8:00 AM Orthros
9:30 AM Liturgy

Office Closed

Saturday, December 26th

7:00 PM Vespers



BEREAVEMENT

Joanne Gammache (87), mother of parishioner David Gammache, reposed in the Lord, December 14th

For the family of Harry D. Stratigos (91), December 15th

Bazaar Food Items Available for Sale

4 Cases Chicken Souvlaki
1 Case Pork Souvlaki
(each case is \$50 and contains 50 skewers)
6 Gallons Syrup— \$5 each
5 (11 lb each) Tzatziki Tubs—\$20 each
Please call the office if you are interested in purchasing any of the above items 717-394-1735

A reminder that masks must be worn in the church before, during, and after the services; and please don't congregate in the Narthex.

Service & Outreach

We are collecting slightly used/new coats & blankets for the families in need. Please drop off your donation in the blue bin located in the breezeway.

BAZAAR TICKETS

Please remember to return all your unsold Bazaar tickets & money for sold tickets to Steve Marinos.

Upcoming Liturgies/Services

- † Christmas Royal Hours—Dec. 24 (9:00AM)
- † Christmas Eve Vespers Liturgy — Dec. 24
- † Christmas Day — Dec. 25
- † St. Stephen — Dec. 27 (Sunday)
- † St. Basil— Dec. 31-Jan. 1 Vigil
- † Theophany Royal Hours—Jan. 4 (9:00AM)
- † Eve of Theophany—Jan. 5
- † Feast of Holy Theophany—Jan. 6
- † St. John the Baptist—Jan. 7
- † St. Anthony the Great—Jan. 17

Donors needed for:

Altar Flowers, Altar Candles, & Candelabra Candles
January 31, February 7, 14 & 28

Please call the Church Office 717-394-1735 to make your donation.

Centennial Spiritwear

There are Centennial Aprons available for sale. \$20 each

Please contact Tina Georges if you are interested in purchasing one at 717-314-4678 or email at tneli79@gmail.com

ANNUNCIATION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH, LANCASTER, PA

SUNDAY, December 20th, 2020 — Sunday before Nativity



Forefeast of the Nativity
Ignatius the God-Bearer



Orthros Mode: Third

Orthros Gospel: Luke 24: 36-53

Liturgy Epistle: Hebrews 11:9-10, 32-40

Liturgy Gospel: Matthew 1:1-25

The Christmas Tree and Orthodox Tradition

By Metropolitan Hierotheos Vlachos of Nafpaktos

I suspect that the custom of decorating a tree at Christmas time is not simply a custom which came to us from the West and which we should replace with other more Orthodox customs. To be sure, I have not gone into the history of the Christmas tree and where it originated, but I think that it is connected with the Christmas feast and its true meaning.

First, it is not unrelated to the prophecy of the Prophet Isaiah: "There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots" (Is. 11:1). St. Cosmas the Poet had this prophecy in mind when he wrote of Christ as the blossom which rose up out of the Virgin stem from the stump of Jesse. The root is Jesse, David's father, the rod is King

David, the flower which came from the root and the rod is the Theotokos. And the fruit which came forth from the flower of the Panagia is Christ. Holy Scripture presents this wonderfully. Thus the Christmas tree can remind us of the genealogical tree of Christ as Man, the love of God, but also the successive purifications of the Forefathers of Christ. At the top is the star which is the God-Man (Theanthropos) Christ.

Then, the Christmas tree reminds us of the tree of knowledge as well as the tree of life, but especially the latter. It underlines clearly the truth that Christ is the tree of life and that we cannot live or fulfill the purpose of our existence unless we taste of this tree, "the producer of life". Christmas cannot be conceived without Holy Communion. And of course as for Holy

Communion it is not possible to partake of deification in Christ without having conquered the devil when we found ourselves faced with temptation relative to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, where our freedom is tried. We rejoice and celebrate, because "the Tree of Life blossomed from the Virgin in the cave".

Excerpt from the book titled The Feasts of the Lord: An Introduction to the 12 Feasts and Orthodox Christology, 1993.

WELCOME TO ALL VISITORS

We welcome our non-Orthodox friends and neighbors at all the liturgical services with a reminder that Holy Communion may be received only by *prepared* Orthodox Christians. Please sign the Visitor's Registry in the Narthex if you wish to be contacted by the priest.

Father Hector Firoglanis, Pastor
Father Theodosios Palis, Assistant Pastor; Father Alexander Veronis, Pastor Emeritus

www.annunciationorthodox.org

Liturgy Epistle & Gospel Readings in Greek & English

Ὁ Ἀπόστολος *Εβρ 11:9-10, 32-40*

Ἀδελφοί, πίστει παρώκηνεν Ἀβραάμ εἰς γῆν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας ὡς ἀλλοτρίαν, ἐν σκηναῖς κατοικήσας μετὰ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ τῶν συγκληρονόμων τῆς ἐπαγγελίας τῆς αὐτῆς· ἐξεδέχετο γάρ τὴν τοὺς θεμελίους ἔχουσαν πόλιν, ἧς τεχνίτης καὶ δημιουργὸς ὁ θεός. Καὶ τί ἐπι λέγω; ἐπιλείπει με γὰρ διηγούμενον ὁ χρόνος περὶ Γεδεών, Βαράκ, Σαμψών, Ἰεφθάε, Δαυὶδ τε καὶ Σαμουὴλ καὶ τῶν προφητῶν, οἱ διὰ πίστεως κατηγωνίσαντο βασιλείας, εἰργάσαντο δικαιοσύνην, ἐπέτυχον ἐπαγγελιῶν, ἔφραξαν στόματα λεόντων, ἔσβησαν δύναμιν πυρός, ἔφυγον στόματα μαχαίρης, ἐδυναμώθησαν ἀπὸ ἀσθενείας, ἐγενήθησαν ἰσχυροὶ ἐν πολέμῳ, παρεμβολὰς ἔκλιναν ἀλλοτρίων· ἔλαβον γυναῖκες ἐξ ἀναστάσεως τοὺς νεκροὺς αὐτῶν· ἄλλοι δὲ ἐτυμπανίσθησαν, οὐ προσδεξάμενοι τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν, ἵνα κρεῖττονος ἀναστάσεως τύχωσιν· ἕτεροι δὲ ἐμπαγμῶν καὶ μαστίγων πείραν ἔλαβον, ἔτι δὲ δεσμῶν καὶ φυλακῆς· ἐλιθάσθησαν, ἐπίρσιθησαν, ἐν φόνῳ μαχαίρης ἀπέθανον, περιήλθον ἐν μηλωταῖς, ἐν αἰγείοις δέρμασιν, ὑστερούμενοι, θλιβόμενοι, κακουχοῦμενοι, ὧν οὐκ ἦν ἄξιος ὁ κόσμος, ἐπὶ ἐρημίαις πλανώμενοι καὶ ὄρεσιν καὶ σπηλαίοις καὶ ταῖς ὄπταις τῆς γῆς. Καὶ οὗτοι πάντες μαρτυρηθέντες διὰ τῆς πίστεως οὐκ ἔκομίσαντο τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν, τοῦ θεοῦ περὶ ἡμῶν κρεῖττόν τι προβλεψαμένου, ἵνα μὴ χωρὶς ἡμῶν τελειωθῶσιν

The Epistle *Heb. 11:9-10, 32-40*

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 foundations, 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.

Τὸ Εὐαγγέλιον *Ματ α΄ 1 - 25*

Βίβλος γενέσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ υἱοῦ Δαυὶδ υἱοῦ Ἀβραάμ. Ἀβραάμ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰσαὰκ, Ἰσαὰκ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰακώβ, Ἰακώβ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰούδαν καὶ τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς αὐτοῦ, Ἰούδας δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Φάρες καὶ τὸν Ζάρα ἐκ τῆς Θαμάρ, Φάρες δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἑσρώμ, Ἑσρώμ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἀράμ, Ἀράμ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἀμιναδάβ, Ἀμιναδάβ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ναασσών, Ναασσών δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Σαλμών, Σαλμών δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Βοὸζ ἐκ τῆς Ῥαχάβ, Βοὸζ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰωβηδ ἐκ τῆς Ῥούθ, Ἰωβηδ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰεσσαί, Ἰεσσαί δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Δαυὶδ τὸν βασιλέα. Δαυὶδ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Σολομῶνα ἐκ τῆς τοῦ Οὐρίου, Σολομῶν δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ῥοβοάμ, Ῥοβοάμ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἀβιά, Ἀβιά δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἀσάφ, Ἀσάφ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰωσαφάτ, Ἰωσαφάτ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰωράμ, Ἰωράμ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ὀζιαν, Ὀζιαν δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰωαθάμ, Ἰωαθάμ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἀχάζ, Ἀχάζ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἐζεκίαν, Ἐζεκίας δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Μανασσῆ, Μανασσῆ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἀμώς, Ἀμώς δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰωσίαν, Ἰωσίας δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰεχονίαν καὶ τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τῆς μετοικεσίας Βαβυλῶνος. Μετὰ δὲ τὴν μετοικεσίαν Βαβυλῶνος Ἰεχονίας ἐγέννησεν τὸν Σαλαθιήλ, Σαλαθιήλ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ζοροβαβέλ, Ζοροβαβέλ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἀβιουδ, Ἀβιουδ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἐλιακίμ, Ἐλιακίμ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἀζώρ, Ἀζώρ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Σαδώκ, Σαδώκ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἀχίμ, Ἀχίμ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἐλιοῦδ, Ἐλιοῦδ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἐλεάζαρ, Ἐλεάζαρ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ματθάν, Ματθάν δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰακώβ, Ἰακώβ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰωσήφ τὸν ἄνδρα Μαρίας, ἐξ ἧς ἐγεννήθη Ἰησοῦς ὁ λεγόμενος Χριστός. Πᾶσαι οὖν αἱ γενεαὶ ἀπὸ Ἀβραάμ ἕως Δαυὶδ γενεαὶ δεκατέσσαρες, καὶ ἀπὸ Δαυὶδ ἕως τῆς μετοικεσίας Βαβυλῶνος γενεαὶ δεκατέσσαρες, καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς μετοικεσίας Βαβυλῶνος ἕως τοῦ Χριστοῦ γενεαὶ δεκατέσσαρες. Τοῦ δὲ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἡ γενεαὶς οὕτως ἦν. Μνηστευθεῖσας τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ Μαρίας τῷ Ἰωσήφ, πρὶν ἢ συνελθεῖν αὐτοὺς εὐρέθη ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχουσα ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου. Ἰωσήφ δὲ ὁ ἄνθρωπος αὐτῆς, δίκαιος ὢν καὶ μὴ θέλων αὐτὴν δειγματίσαι, ἐβουλήθη λάθρα ἀπολύσαι αὐτήν. Ταῦτα δὲ αὐτοῦ ἐνθυμηθέντος ἰδοὺ ἄγγελος κυρίου κατ' ὄναρ ἐφάνη αὐτῷ λέγων· Ἰωσήφ υἱὸς Δαυὶδ, μὴ φοβηθῆς παραλαβεῖν Μαρίαν τὴν γυναῖκά σου, τὸ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου· τέξεται δὲ υἱὸν καὶ καλέσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν, αὐτὸς γὰρ σώσει τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ πάντων ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν. Τοῦτο δὲ ὄλον γέγονεν ἵνα πληρωθῇ τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑπὸ κυρίου διὰ τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος, Ἰδοὺ ἡ παρθένος ἐν γαστρὶ ἔξει καὶ τέξεται υἱόν, καὶ καλέσουσιν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἐμμανουήλ, ὃ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνεύομενον Μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ Θεός. Διεγερθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰωσήφ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕπνου ἐποίησεν ὡς προσέταξεν αὐτῷ ὁ ἄγγελος κυρίου καὶ παρέλαβε τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ· καὶ οὐκ ἐγίνωσκεν αὐτήν ἕως οὗ ἔτεκεν υἱόν· καὶ ἐκάλεσεν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν.

The Gospel *Lk. Mt. 1:1-25*

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 Ammin'adab, and Ammin'adab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Bo'az by Rahab, and Bo'az 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 Uri'ah, and Solomon the father of Rehobo'am, and Rehobo'am the father of Abi'jah, and Abi'jah the father of Asa, and Asa the father of Jehosh'aphat, and Jehosh'aphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzzi'ah, and Uzzi'ah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezeki'ah, and Hezeki'ah the father of Manas'seh, and Manas'seh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josi'ah, and Josi'ah the father of Jechoni'ah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoni'ah was the father of Sheal'tiel, and Sheal'tiel the father of Zerub'babel, and Zerub'babel the father of Abi'ud, and Abi'ud the father of Eli'akim, and Eli'akim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eli'ud, and Eli'ud the father of Elea'zar, and Elea'zar 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 fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Em-man'uel" (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.

Apolitikia Hymns of the Day in English & Greek

Entrance Hymn

Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ. Save us, O Son of God, who are risen from the dead. We sing to You, Alleluia.

1. RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION

(Third Mode)

Let the heaven rejoice, and let things on earth be glad, for the Lord has worked powers with His arm; He has trampled upon death by death; He has become the first born of the dead. From the bowels of Hades has He delivered us, and has granted great mercy to the world.

2. FOR THE FOREFEAST (Fourth Mode)

Bethlehem, prepare, Eden is opened unto all. And be ready, Ephrata, for the Tree of life has in the grotto blossomed forth from the Virgin. Indeed her womb is shown to be spiritually a Paradise, in which is found the God-planted Tree. And if we eat from it we shall live, and shall not die, as did Adam of old. Christ is born, so that He might raise up the formerly fallen image.

3. FOR THE FATHERS (Second Mode)

Magnificent are the accomplishments of faith! The holy Three Servants greatly rejoiced, as they stood in the fountain of fire, as if beside the still waters; and the Prophet Daniel appeared to be a shepherd of lions, as if they were sheep. At their entreaties, O Christ God, save our souls.

4. HYMN OF OUR CHURCH (Fourth Mode)

Today is the beginning of our salvation, and the revelation of the mystery of ages. The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin and Gabriel proclaims this gift from God. Together with him we cry out to You, O Theotokos: "Hail thou full of grace, the Lord is with you."

5. PRE-NATIVITY KONTAKION (Third Mode)

Today the Virgin goes forth, making her way to a cave, where from her, ineffably, God the eternal Word will be born. Let the world be filled with joy, hearing these tidings. Joining the angels and shepherds, let us give glory to Him Who is God from all ages, yet wills to be seen as a little child.

Εἰσοδικόν

Δεῦτε προσκυνήσωμεν καὶ προσπέσωμεν Χριστῷ. Σῶσον ἡμᾶς Υἱὲ Θεοῦ, ὁ ἀναστὰς ἐκ νεκρῶν, ψάλλοντάς σοι, Ἀλληλουῖα.

1. ἈΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ ἈΝΑΣΤΑΣΙΜΟΝ Ἦχος γ΄

Εὐφραινέσθω τὰ οὐράνια, ἀγαλλιᾶσθω τὰ ἐπίγεια, ὅτι ἐποίησε κράτος, ἐν βραχίονι αὐτοῦ ὁ Κύριος. Ἐπάτησε τῷ θανάτῳ τὸν θάνατον, πρωτότοκος τῶν νεκρῶν ἐγένετο, ἐκ κοιλίας ἄδου ἐρρύσατο ἡμᾶς καὶ παρέσχε τῷ κόσμῳ τὸ μέγα ἔλεος.

2. ΤΩΝ ΠΡΟΕΟΡΤΙΟΝ Ἦχος Δ΄

Ετοιμάζου Βηθλεέμ, ἡνοικταὶ πᾶσιν ἡ Ἐδέμ. Εὐτρεπίζου Ἐφραθᾶ, ὅτι τὸ ξύλον τῆς ζωῆς, ἐν τῷ Σπηλαίῳ ἐξήνησεν ἐκ τῆς Παρθένου. Παράδεισος καὶ γάρ, ἡ ἐκεῖνης γαστήρ, ἐδείχθη νοητός, ἐν ᾧ τὸ θεῖον φυτόν, ἐξ οὗ φαγόντες ζήσομεν, οὐχὶ δὲ ὡς ὁ Ἀδὰμ τεθνηξόμεθα. Χριστὸς γεννᾶται, τὴν πρὶν πεσοῦσαν, ἀναστήσων εἰκόνα.

3. ΤΩΝ ΠΑΤΕΡΩΝ Ἦχος Β

Μεγάλα τὰ τῆς πίστεως κατορθώματα! Ἐν τῇ πηγῇ τῆς φλογός, ὡς ἐπὶ ὕδατος ἀναπαύσεως, οἱ ἅγιοι Τρεῖς Παῖδες ἠγάλλοντο, καὶ ὁ προφήτης Δανιήλ, λεόντων ποιμὴν, ὡς προβάτων ἐδείκνυτο. Ταῖς αὐτῶν ἰκεσίας Χριστὸς ὁ Θεός, σῶσον τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν.

4. ἈΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ ΤΟΥ ΝΑΟΥ (Ηχ. Δ)

Σήμερον τῆς σωτηρίας ἡμῶν τὸ Κεφάλαιον, καὶ τοῦ ἀπ' αἰῶνος Μυστηρίου ἡ φανέρωσις· ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, Υἱὸς τῆς Παρθένου γίνεται, καὶ Γαβριήλ τὴν χάριν εὐαγγελίζεται. Διὸ καὶ ἡμεῖς σὺν αὐτῷ τῇ Θεοτόκῳ βοήσωμεν· Χαῖρε Κεχαριτωμένη, ὁ Κύριος μετὰ σοῦ.

5. ΠΡΟΕΟΡΤΙΟΝ ΚΟΝΤΑΚΙΟΝ (Ηχ. γ)

Ἡ Παρθένος σήμερον τὸν προαιώνιον Λόγον Ἐν σπηλαίῳ ἐρχεται ἀποτεκεῖν ἀπορρήτως Χόρευε ἡ οικουμένη ακουτισθεῖσα Δόξασσον με τὰ ἀγγέλων καὶ τῶν ποιμένων βουληθέντα ἐποφθῆναι παιδίον νέον τὸν προαιώνων Θεόν.