

SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD
SUNDAY OF THE ANCESTORS



Icon of the Holy Ancestors

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| December 23, 2018: | Sunday Before Christmas |
| Epistle: Heb. 11: 9-10 & 32-40 | Gospel: Mt. 1: 1-25 |
| Mon., Dec. 24 | Christmas Eve 9:00 pm Great Compline 10:00 pm Christmas Divine Liturgy |
| Tues., Dec. 25 | Christmas: Birth of Our Lord 9:00 Christmas Divine Liturgy 11:30 Christmas Divine Liturgy |
| Wed., Dec. 26 | Synaxis of the Mother of God (Solemn Holy Day) 9:00 + Irene Kosakevitch (Roman & Eileen Kushner) |
| Thurs., Dec. 27 | Feast of St. Stephen (Simple Holy Day) 9:00 + Msgr. Stephen Hrynuck (Legate) |
| Fri., Dec. 28 | 8:00 + Mary Vladika (St. Cyril's Holy Name Society) |
| Sat., Dec. 29 | No Morning Divine Liturgy 10:30 Confessions 2:00 Confessions 4:00 pm + John & Olga Yuhnck; + Jimmy Maslar (Family) |
| Sun., Dec. 30 | 9:00 + Fred Jacobs (Elaine Crambo) 11:30 For Our Parishioners |



Christ Is Born! Glorify Him! Christos Razhdayetsia! Slavite Yeho!

Another Christmas is here. Let us reflect on the true meaning of this celebration. We will receive gifts, many will receive more than others. But we will receive one gift equally. That is the gift of the Incarnate God. Let us acknowledge this unique gift by participating in as many of the special Christmas Services as possible and remembering the real reason for the season, and to pray for Peace on Earth!

May the Incarnate Christ, be with each and everyone of you during this holiday season and throughout the year 2019. My prayers for your continued health and happiness.

Christ is Born! -- Glorify Him!

Christos Razhdayetsia! Slavite Yeho!

Father Nestor

Christmas Pastoral of the Ukrainian Catholic Hierarchy of the U.S.A.

Christ is Born!

“Today Christ is Born of the Virgin in Bethlehem. Today, the eternal One has a beginning, today the Word becomes incarnated. All the heavenly powers rejoice, and all who dwell on earth are happy. The magi offer the gift to the Master, the shepherds proclaim the marvel; and we cry aloud unceasingly: Glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace and good will to all.” (Stichera at the Praises, Matins of the Nativity of Our Lord).

The liturgical texts of the Nativity of Our Lord often repeat a word

“Today” and call everyone to respond to God’s invitation. Emmanuel – God with us came to the world over two thousand years ago and was greeted with marvel by shepherds and magi offering him homage and gifts. If we want that joy of Christmas to invade our lives, we must do what the shepherds did so long ago. We must come to our parish churches and bow before the newborn King. Hope is available but only to those who will humble themselves and bow in faith before the Lord Jesus Christ.

We often think about Jesus Christ each year in the Christmas season. We are deeply touched by the beauty of

the nativity scene, and resolve to know Christ personally, follow Jesus in our daily lives and be with Him. But, then the Christmas season passes and the pressures of a new year lead us away from the manger. There is great danger in coming near to Christ but never making a commitment. Sooner or later, we must make a personal commitment that Jesus Christ will be our Lord and Savior. Every time we put it off, it becomes harder the next time.

May God give us, the grace to make room in our hearts for Jesus Christ! The angel said, “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior.” “Unto you.” “For you.” He came for us! This is where Christmas becomes intensely personal. It’s not enough to say abstractly that we believe Christ came. Many people say that and are still lost in their search for the living God. It’s not enough to say that Christ came for someone else. We can never be saved until we say, “Christ came for me. He died for me. He rose from the dead for me.” Two thousand years ago God sent a gift wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. Jesus is God’s Christmas gift to us. But we will never experience Christmas joy until we personally receive God’s gift—the Lord Jesus Christ. There is left to each of us a choice. What will we do with the Christ-child this Christmas?

Will we run to meet him and make him welcome in our hearts? Will we sing with the angels or will we be too busy to go to see the babe in the manger? Will we open our hearts and our homes to Jesus?

Today, let us come and welcome Emmanuel – God with Us. Let us with joy welcome Christ among us! The beauty of this personal encounter with the living God will call us to share this “Good News” with others. This is the same message the shepherds received from the angels. If we want to experience the real joy that Jesus wants for us, then we must learn to share! By sharing what God has so generously given to us, we will receive an even greater gift – the gift of joy. This is the true joy. It is found in a Person – in Jesus Christ our Savior. This joy flows out of a relationship with the One who never changes, the One who never lets us down, the one who never leaves us or forsakes us – the Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior.

On this Christmas day, let us come to our churches and personally encounter this great joy. Let us experience the life-giving Christ. Then, with the deep personal conviction we will be able to share this “Good News” with those whom we encounter in our daily lives, and say to one another “God is among us”!

Christ is Born!

+Paul Chomnycky, OSBM (Eparch of Stamford)

+Andriy Rabiyy (Apostolic Administrator of Archeparchy of Philadelphia)

+Venedict Aleksiychuk (Eparch of St. Nicholas in Chicago)

+ Bohdan J. Danylo (author & Eparch of St. Josaphat in Parma)

+John Bura (Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia)

Christmas Stewardship

During this Christmas season we think about giving and receiving gifts. But as Christians we are called to be stewards, and stewardship goes beyond just giving objects. It entails giving gifts of the heart, mind and soul, as well as our time, talent and treasure. This year let us help ourselves and our children and grandchildren to understand what it means to be wise stewards of Jesus and His Good News for the world. Google the word “Steward or stewardship” and come to

understand what the word “steward” really means. Many times we use words in conversation but not know what they really mean. Part of being faithful followers of Jesus means we continue to educate ourselves spiritually. In order to be good stewards , we must first have the message of hope and love and faith to give, we can’t give what we don’t have. May God made man inspire us to grow in knowledge and faith!

Come Home For Christmas!

We all know family members, friends, neighbors, co-workers, or school friends, who are Catholic and no longer attend the Divine Liturgy. Christmas is a great time to invite them to come home to the Church. Think about it, pray about it, and invite someone to come to Church with you during the Christmas Season . There is always a chance that you will be rejected or your invitation will fall on

deaf ears. Just remember that Jesus experienced the same kind of reception and He did not give up. So if your invitation receives no response or a negative one, just wait a few weeks and ask again. In the meantime, pray for that person, but don’t give up on them no matter how long it takes. It is hard to persevere and it is hard to be rejected, but just be patient and kind and trust in the Lord.

Properly Receiving Holy Communion

When approaching to receive Holy Communion, do not be afraid to approach the Priest. Father's arms are only so long and when you stand too far away, it is difficult to distribute Holy Communion.

We also remind everyone to tilt your head back and open your mouth WIDE. Please keep your tongue in your mouth. Please do not bite down on the communion spoon. There is no need to say anything since the priest says the prayer. There is no need to say AMEN as is done in the Roman Catholic Church.

For those faithful who are a little un-

steady on your feet, please feel free to use the first pew in front of the icon of the Mother of God. We don't want anybody to get hurt. Father will come up and give you Communion.

Now finally, a little about the red Communion Cloth. Sometimes the Altar Servers hold it; sometimes Father holds it. When the Altar Servers hold, simply approach (i.e., come close to the Priest). If Father is holding it, simply lift it up to your chin. The purpose of the Communion Cloth is to help prevent accidents.

Our Condolences

In your Christian Charity, please remember the souls of our Parishioners who recently fell asleep in the Lord.

+ **Elaine Gruzesky** was buried last Monday.

+ **Lubov Tinsley** was buried last Tuesday.

May their memory be eternal! Vichnaya Pamyat!

Our Thanks to St. Cyril's Holy Name Society

Hopefully everyone has noticed that the Parking Lot Lights across from the Church are once again working. This repair/upgrade of the light cost \$1,270.00. We thank

St. Cyril's Holy Name Society for donating \$500.00 in order to help defray the cost of this safety improvement. Any other donations will be greatly appreciated.

2018 Parish Dues

With the end of 2018 quickly approaching, we offer this gentle reminder to make sure that your 2018 Parish Dues are paid. Also, we remind our Parish Family Members

that as of January 1, 2011, Parish Dues are now \$25.00 per adult per year. There is no increased planned for 2019.

2019 Church Calendars

The 2019 Church Calendars are available in the Vestibule of the Church. The calendars are free, but any donations will be appreciated.

Festival of Christmas Carols

The annual festival of Ukrainian Christmas Carols will be held on Sunday, January 13, 2019 at 3:00 pm at our Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Philadelphia. All are invited to attend this annual celebration to praise our new-born King and our Lord Jesus Christ at this Christmas time.

The Way

Did you know *The Way*, our archeparchial newspaper is available for FREE through the internet? Our newspaper is published twice a month in both an English language version and a Ukrainian language version. To receive this online newspaper, simply send your email address to : ukrarcap.org. You may also shareTheWay with family and friends by sending their email addresses to: ukrarcap.org. All parishioners are encouraged to receive and read *The Way*, the Catholic newspaper of our Philadelphia Archeparchy.

Collection Processing Team...

We ask all the members of ALL the Collection Processing Teams to help with this Christmas Weekend's Collection on Wednesday following the 9:00 Divine Liturgy

Sunday Collection for December 15 & 16, 2018: \$

Altar Boy and Lector Schedule for December 29 & 30, 2018

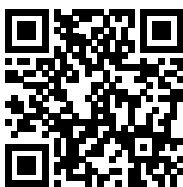
| | Altar Boys | Lectors |
|----------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| 4:00 pm | Nicholas Muchisky -- Brett Lowe | John Sakson |
| 9:00 am | Brennin Marcinko -- Cole Marcinko | Pat Marcinko |
| 11:30 am | Tyler Muchisky -- Jordan Radle | Frank Lesnefsky |

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Rev. Nestor Iwasiw, Pastor

The Story of the Origin of Jesus Christ, Son of David, and the Rest of the Names

Matthew's genealogy is extraordinarily comprehensive in his theology of the roots of Jesus' story in the Old Testament. But that is only one part of the story of Jesus Christ. The story has a sequence as well; and the continuing sequence is what makes the genealogy "good news" for Matthew's audience and for us. Human being have been empowered to preserve, proclaim, and convey the salvation brought by Jesus Christ throughout history. The God who wrote the beginnings with crooked lines also writes the sequence with crooked lines, and some of those lines are our own lives and witness.

A God who did not hesitate to use the scheming as well as the noble, the impure as well as the pure, men to whom the world hearkened and women upon whom the world frowned – this God continues to work through the same melange. If it was a challenge to recognize in the last part of

Matthew's genealogy that totally unknown people were part of the story of Jesus Christ, it may be a greater challenge to recognize that the unknown characters of today are an essential part of the sequence. The proclamation of that genealogy in the Advent liturgy is designed to give us hope about our destiny and our importance.

By stressing the all-powerful grace of God, the genealogy presents its greatest challenge to those who will accept only an idealized Jesus Christ whose story they would write only with straight lines and whose portrait they would paint only in pastel colors. If we look at the whole story and the total picture, the Gospels teach us that Jesus' ministry was not thus; the history of the church teaches us that the sequence as not thus. God's grace can work even with people like us.

Father Raymond E. Brown, S.S.