

daily. Then the calendar date of the feast (December 25th) becomes a blessed reminder and simultaneously a strengthening of that which the person of Christ, permanently feels the rest of the year, despite all the temptations and the sometimes – exhausting - trials.

“What shall we offer you oh Christ”

Let us celebrate this year’s Christmas as befits this great Christian feast, brethren. Let us adorn our heart, so that it will be able to offer hospitality to Christ, like another Manger. Just as then, Christ is searching to find hearts in order to be born, but “there is no room”. Let us think of a God everywhere present, entering in through closed doors into all the homes “of us Christians”, who hears us speaking about Him (the topic of the feast!), but not making room for Him in our hearts. Who can conceive His loneliness?

In our days Christ is not seeking gold, myrrh and incense, as then when He was born historically in Bethlehem. He seeks from each one us to give Him three different and much more important gifts: our mind, heart and our attention. These are more than two or three gathered in His name, in which case He Himself is among them and consequently in us. Thus that which we pray in the Divine Liturgy a little before the Small Entrance will be ceaselessly verified: “Having promised to grant the petitions which two and three or three agree in your name” both in us, but also among us, as liturgized persons who by grace are being born and are giving birth to Christ.

Archim. E. T.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2014, SUNDAY BEFORE NATIVITY, Forefeast of the Nativity of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ , Juliana of Nicomedia & her 630 Companion Martyrs , Themistocles the Martyr of Myra , Saint Peter, Metropolitan of Moscow.

TONE OF THE WEEK: Tone 3rd, Eothinon 6th Eothinon

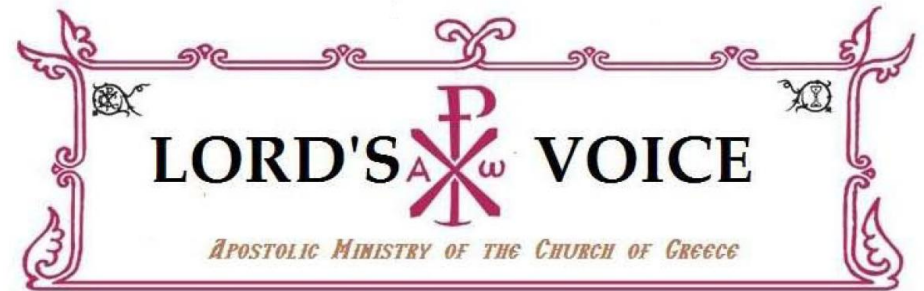
EPISTLE St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 11:9-10; 32-40

GOSPEL Matthew 1:1-25

NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2014, SUNDAY AFTER NATIVITY , 20,000 Martyrs burned in Nicomedia, Holy Martyr Glycerus, Simon the Myrrhbearer, Founder of Simonopetra, Monastery of Mount Athos , Afterfeast of the Nativity

EPISTLE St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 1:11-19

GOSPEL Matthew 2:13-23



62nd Year

December 21, 2014

Pamphlet #51 (3212)

SON OF THE INCARNATE GOD

The metropolis of feasts approached, beloved brethren. God is now becoming that which He never was -man- and is coming to meet us. He is becoming a man, in everything similar to us, except sin, condemning our own sin in His sinless flesh. So for this reason, today’s gospel passage mentions the descending enumeration of generations from Abraham down to even Joseph the betrothed of Mary, from whom Christ was born. This enumeration includes various people, sinners and virtuous people, wishing to show us that Christ became a real man.

Subsequently Joseph’s temptation is mentioned due to the pregnancy of Mary, his decision to secretly chase her away and the appearance of the angel who prevents him and explains to him the supernatural thing that is happening. The text subsequently mentions the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy about the birth of Christ from the Virgin, his naming as Emmanuel. Joseph obeys, and furthermore, the sacred text gives us the information that he did not “know her, until” she gave birth to her firstborn son, Jesus. The “until” is a Hebraism and means forever. Thus our All Holy Theotokos remains a virgin before, during and after the birth. A truth of our faith which is depicted in the iconographic presentations of the person of the Theotokos, where three stars are placed, two on the shoulders and one on her veil, above the forehead.

“Come, Lord Jesus”

Implicitly in the duration of the Old Testament, a cry flows forth from its generations: “Come, O Lord”! According to the prophecies furthermore, the Messiah was anxiously awaited, and giving birth, furthermore was a special blessing because it comprised a “biological”

SUNDAY BEFORE NATIVITY

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW 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 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 David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa, and Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

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 borne a son; and he called his name Jesus.

contribution to the coming of the Savior. So for the same reason furthermore childlessness was considered a shame.

The descending enumeration which Saint Matthew gives to us, is separated into three periods each one lasting fourteen generations. The first period of Abraham-David, corresponds to the democratic state. Then the Patriarchs and the Judges lived. The kingdom follows for a period from David down to and including the Babylonia captivity, for the difficult period of submission to foreign rulers, to come afterwards, an authoritarian period.

People, in one way or another, lived under survived under all three states. The deliverance however from each type of slavery, mainly from the internal slavery to the passions, which function like other "tyrants", was inaugurated with the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to the earth.

Life with Christ is real Christmas

Everything near him and next to him is sweetened and is altered from wounds and trials into ineffable joy, a source of rejoicing. For us to understand this somewhat, we will refer your love to the case of a childless couple, who arriving once to the stole of the spiritual father, declared very joyously that God adorned them with the grace of childlessness so that they could learn to love the children of the whole world as their own children! This is what surpassing the "trial" and its transfiguration from a "curse" into a blessing means. Only through Christ and in Christ are all these things comprehensible, in other words, they obtain meaning, and the person, is not only not caught in the trap of despair, but on the contrary he is blessed, and his manner becomes a place of comfort for those around, near and far from him.

A person's heart then obtains immeasurable dimensions, it fits everyone, everyone is contained inside it and they hold Christmas