

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD



It was God's angelic messenger, Gabriel, that announced to the Holy Virgin the awesome news of the Saviour's upcoming birth. At that time, he also proclaimed the name of this Child. He said, "Behold, you shall conceive in your womb and bring forth a son, and shall call His name JESUS." His name means "Saviour."



ST. RAPHAEL ORTHODOX CHURCH

Orthodox Church in America, Diocese of the South

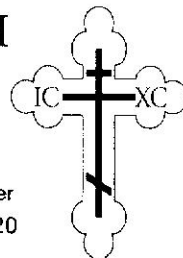
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SUNDAY, DEC. 22, 2019 – 27th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 2. Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ. Sunday before the Nativity.

A Warm Welcome to Our Guests ~ Welcome to St. Raphael Orthodox Church.

We are thankful for your visit and for praying with us. Please join us for Brunch at Myrrhbearers Hall following Divine Liturgy. We would like to get to know you. Please sign our Guest Book!

HOLY WORSHIP THIS WEEK

Sun.: Reading of The Hours 9:45 AM

Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM

Forefeast of the Nativity

Tue.: **Vespertal Divine Liturgy**
of St. Basil 9:00 AM

Nativity Great Compline 4:00 PM

Wed: **Nativity Divine Liturgy**
followed by Christmas Dinner 10:00 AM

Thu.: Akathist to St. Herman 4:00 PM

Sat.: Great Vespers 4:00 PM

*Please bring a
Donation of food
each Sunday for
the Citrus County
Family Resource
Center*

*Please invite our
visitors to join you
at Brunch in
Myrrhbearers Hall*

DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS

Mon: 2 Timothy 2:20-26, Mark 10:46-52

Tue: See insert

Wed: Matthew 1:18-25; 2:1-12, Galatians 4:4-7

Thu: Hebrews 2:11-18, Matthew 2:13-23

Fri: Acts 6:8-15; 7:1-5; 47-60, Matthew 21:33-42, Titus 1:15-2:10, Mark 12:1-12

Sat: 1 Timothy 6:11-16, Matthew 12:15-21, Ephesians 1:16-23, Luke 17:3-10

+EPISTLE, Sunday Before+ (Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40) By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense. By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith Jacob, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones. By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command. And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented – of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

+GOSPEL, Sunday Before+ (Matthew 1:1-25) The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham: Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brothers. Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Ram. Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon. Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David the king. David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah. Solomon begot Rehoboam, Rehoboam begot Abijah, and Abijah begot Asa. Asa begot Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat begot Joram, and Joram begot Uzziah. Uzziah begot Jotham, Jotham begot Ahaz, and Ahaz begot Hezekiah. Hezekiah begot Manasseh, Manasseh begot Amon, and Amon begot Josiah. Josiah begot Jeconiah and his brothers about the time they were carried away to Babylon. And after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, and Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel begot Abiud, Abiud begot Eliakim, and Eliakim begot Azor. Azor begot Zadok, Zadok begot Achim, and Achim begot Eliud. Eliud begot Eleazar, Eleazar begot Matthan, and Matthan begot Jacob. And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, from David until the captivity in Babylon are fourteen generations, and from the captivity in Babylon until the Christ are fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins." So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which is translated, 'God with us.'" Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.

The 2020 Annual Parish Meeting is being held on Sunday, January 26, 2020, in the Temple after Divine Liturgy. Copies of the agenda, proposed budget & the 2019 Annual Parish Meeting minutes are now available in the narthex

THE GIFTS - DEC. 15

Attendance 51

Regular Offerings	596
Candles	125
Brunch	66
Vespers	200

We sincerely thank the Charles E. Davis Funeral Home for its ongoing quarterly donation

VIGIL CANDLES - DECEMBER 15

Susanna & Martin Bane - Health of Fr. Sergious, Pam, Linda, Paula, Joe.

Nancy Kinley - Health of Bill, Julianna, Jakob, Zoe, Peter, Jim, Mary Ann, Dolores, Margaret, Ken, Fr. Sergious, Judy & Paul.

St. Matthew in his Gospel tells something of the meaning of this name when he quotes Gabriel: "you shall call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins." The chosen name, Jesus, depicts exactly the chosen work of the Lord. Why did God become Man? Why did He leave the heights of heaven and dwell in the depths of earth? Why did the Creator take upon Himself the frailties of the creature? He did it to save mankind, to do something for people that they could not do for themselves. He came to save.



Himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

As for the word "Christ," which has come to be used as a proper name for our Lord, it really is His title. This is the name that identifies Him. The word means "The Anointed One." It refers to the Messiahship. Christmas is the celebration of the birth of our Saviour. Let Him enter our hearts and truly make this day a holy and joyous one.

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