

## A new tree

The Evangelist, however, will document also the sign of the fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old Testament in the person of Christ. The Evangelist presents the word of the Prophet Isaiah that “behold the virgin will be with child and shall give birth to a son and they shall call his name Emmanuel” (Mt. 1:23), in order to show people that Christ is not simply a genealogical continuation of his forbears in the flesh. He comes in order to fulfill a mission: to materialize God’s promise of the Messiah’s mission to the world. At the same moment, He fulfills essentially the tree, because He Himself and His work belong to all people. A new tree sets out from Himself, in other words, the Church, to which henceforth relatives of Christ, whoever accepts this double mission are able to become his friends and children, as it is expressed with His names: “Jesus” means that “God saves His people, through Him also and “Emmanuel” means that “God is with us”.

Let the reading the genealogical tree of Christ make us ponder so that we live the feast of the Birth of our Lord as a new opportunity to be placed in the new tree of the genealogy of faith, in the tree of the Church, and may Christ be born in our hearts.

Fr.T. M

## SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20 2020, SUNDAY BEFORE NATIVITY,

*Forefeast of the Nativity of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, Ignatius the God-Bearer, Bishop of Antioch, Our Righteous Father Philogonius, Bishop of Antioch, Our Righteous Father Philogonius, Bishop of Antioch, John the New Martyr of Thassos , Holy Father John of Kronstadt.*

**TONE OF THE WEEK** : Third Tone

**EOTHINON** : Sixth Eothinon

**EPISTLE READING** : *St. Paul’s Letter to the Colossians 1:12-18*

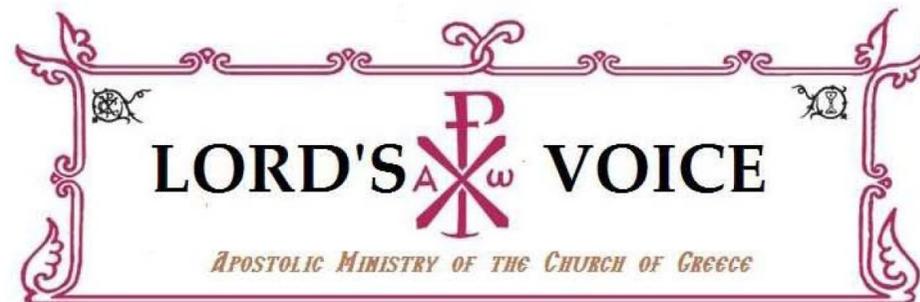
**GOSPEL READING** : *Matthew 1:1-25*

## SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27 2020 SUNDAY AFTER NATIVITY ,

*Stephen, Archdeacon & First Martyr , Theodore the Confessor, brother of Saint Theophanes the Poet , Theodore, Patriarch of Constantinople .*

**EPISTLE READING** : *Acts of the Apostles 6:8-15; 7:1-5, 47-60*

**GOSPEL READING** : *Matthew · 2· 13-23*



68<sup>TH</sup> YEAR DECEMBER 20 2020 PAMPHLET # 51 (3525)

## “BOOK OF THE GENEALOGY”

“Book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of David son of Abraham” (Mt. 1:1). The beginning of the gospel of Matthew has been appointed by the Church to be read on the Sunday before the Birth of Christ, in order to be catechized in the importance of the feast and show us its content!

## Christ as a historical person

And presentation of names witnesses the Church’s conviction that Christ as a man was a historical person. The witnesses of the historians of the age add to this, and furthermore, the non Christians (Tacitus, Josephus). Simultaneously, we ascertain, with quite a few references in the New Testament, that Christ was considered by his compatriots as a genuine Jew. They wonder how he knew how to interpret the Scripture, even though he had not studied and had not become a teacher of the law. In Nazareth they did not accept His preaching, because they would not put up “from the son of Joseph”, as they believed that he was, to be teaching them. They give Him the surname “Nazarene”, which accompanied Him until His death by crucifixion. This data witnesses that the genealogical list which Matthew presents, in writing a Gospel that was addressed to the

## THE SUNDAY GOSPEL (*Mathew 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 Aram, and Aram 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 Amon, and Amon 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 Salathiel, and Salathiel 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.

Christians of the Jewish background, shows that for the Church, Christ was in everything human.

### **Synergy of God and man**

The Evangelist also makes another distinction. Without denying Christ's enlistment in Jewish society, he will note that His conception and birth were not simmer with those of the rest of people. He's not speaking about a God-ghost, as later on, the heresies did, which start with the "gnostics" and continue with the followers of monophysitism and its deviations. They speak about a God who takes on flesh and bones, His birth in human terms, does not start out in the natural way that the existence of each person does, in other words, with the union of the man and of the woman. In the person of Christ, we have the combination of the natural with the divine (Mt. 1:18). Christ descends from the heavens and is incarnated of the Holy Spirit and of Mary the Virgin. The incarnation is a mystery. The incarnation is an event "beyond nature". However, it is not also "outside of nature". Otherwise, it would be a transfiguration of God into man, which nevertheless, would not leave boundaries to human freedom to function. If God had not become man with the synergy of man also, we would not have a say in our theosis and our freedom would be violated by God who gave it to us. Whomever God wants, they also would be the ones saved. However, the incarnation occurs with the "yes" which humanity says to the person of the Most Holy Theotokos. Salvation presupposes our own participation as well.