

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.

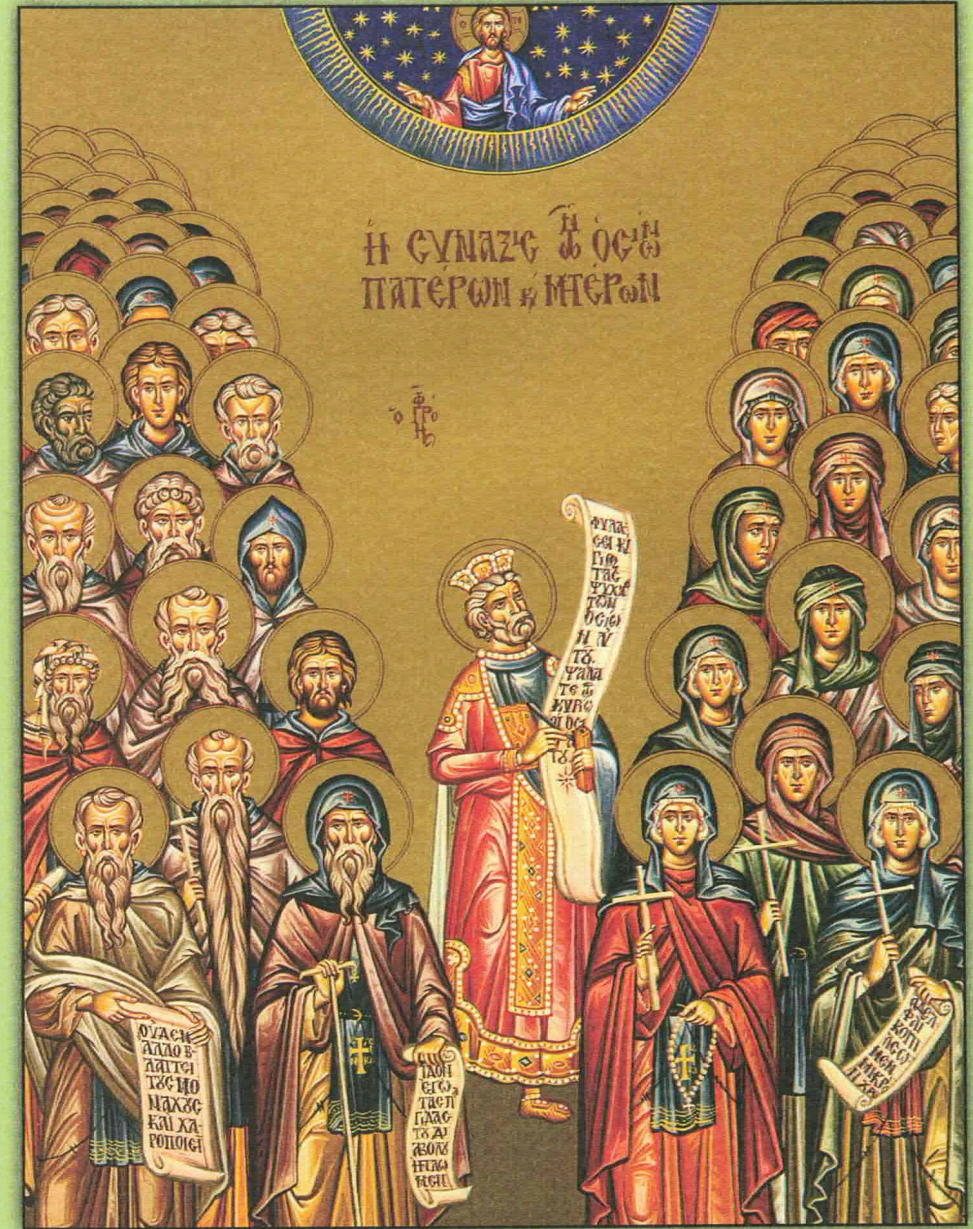
Human being have been empowered to preserve, proclaim, and convey the salvation brought by Jesus Christ throughout history. The God who wrote the beginnings with crooked lines also writes the sequence with crooked lines, and some of those lines are our own lives and witness.

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.

SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD SUNDAY OF THE ANCESTORS



Icon of the Holy Ancestors



PATRONAGE OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH - BALTIMORE

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Divine Liturgy Schedule: Saturday, December 27th, at 4:00pm

PATRONAGE CHURCH SERVICES SCHEDULE

Date	Time	Service	Intention
Sunday Before Christmas – of the Ancestors 12.21.2025	9:00am	Divine Liturgy	For the Repose of the Soul of: +Caroline Belensky From: Linda and Jack Russell
Vigil of Christmas 12.24.2025	4:00pm	Compline with Vigil Divine Liturgy	For the Health and Salvation of Parishioners
Christmas – Nativity of Our Lord 12.25.2025	9:00am	Divine Liturgy	For the Health and Salvation of Parishioners

Sunday Before Christmas – of the Ancestors

Today's Propers can be found as a handout on the shelf in the Narthex.

HOLY MYSTERY OF REPENTANCE: Confession is available beginning an hour before Divine Liturgy, and ending 15 minutes before the start of services.

HOLY COMMUNION AND VISITATION OF THE SICK: Holy Communion can be brought to parishioners who are ill, in the hospital, or at home. If you would like to receive Communion, or a visit by either Fr. Vasyl or Deacon Tony, you can send the church an email, and let us know, or contact either one personally.

Slava Isusu Christu! Slava na v'iki! Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever!

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER: The people of Ukraine, that peace may be soon be restored to their land, our parishioners, the founders of our parish, our benefactors, those who are sick, and those who cannot make it to church. Also, Fr. Vasyl Symyon, Greg Rudy, Charlie Toth, Larissa Toth, Tony Kotlar, Jr., Mary Hrinda, Michael Demyan, Michael Skovran, Mary Ann Ondrish, Betty Charlock, Elizabeth Hresko, John Hanyok, Ann Marie Elwell, James DeWolfe, Clara Valeika, Joe Belensky, Kay Dinko, Doris Ruszin, Veronica Ruszin, Anna Martin, Joseph Repasi, Mary Jo Kelly Wilhelm, Howard Guba, Melanie Copper, Julie Wiegand, Natalie, Edin, +Walter Lourdes Najera Herder, Mark and Betsey Herder, our first responders, and all military service men and women throughout the world. Please help us keep our prayer list up to date. Let us know if we need to remove or add a name by sending an email to our church. *May our Lord Jesus Christ, the Physician and Healer of souls and bodies, grant them peace and good health for many blessed years!*

STEWARDSHIP: You honor God and our Church by continuing to tithe each week. An offertory basket is on the table in the back of our Temple for your weekly donation. You may also mail your donation to our church, or donate using Tithe.ly online at: <https://tithe.ly/give?c=2346733>. The link is also on the first page of our website. *“Remember then, it is the Lord, your God, who gives you the power to acquire wealth” (Dt. 8:18).*

CHRISTMAS EVE CHILDREN'S PROGRAM: If your child is participating in our Christmas Eve program on Wednesday evening, we will have a short practice after Divine Liturgy this morning, in our church, beginning at approximately 10:15am. Parents, please ensure your child is present for this practice. Booklets will be distributed to those who will have reading parts. Sharon Kotula and Sarah Roberts will be organizing our youth for this program.

FREEZER SALE: Help us clear our church freezer. Items for sale are: a variety of Pirohi at \$7/bag; smoked and fresh Kolbassi at \$6/bag, cheesecake (only 1 left) for \$15; and nut, poppy, and apricot Kolachi at \$16/each. Please see Mary Demyan after Liturgy if you are interested in purchasing any. Quantities are limited!

2026 PRAYER VIGIL FOR LIFE: Please join us at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., on January 22 and 23, 2026. Bishop Kurt will celebrate the Byzantine Catholic Compline on January 22nd, at the Crypt Church, after the Holy Hour for Life. Bishop Kurt will also celebrate the Divine Liturgy for Life in the Byzantine Chapel on January 23rd, at 9:15am.

ADULT ENRICHMENT MINISTRY: Thank you to everyone who attended our Adult Enrichment sessions this fall. Adult Enrichment will start back up, again, in January. Tentative dates and topics will be announced after the first of the year. Everyone is welcome to join us, and we look forward to seeing you then!

“THE CALL OF THE DISCIPLES” PILGRIM VOCATION ICON PROGRAM: Week #11 – Every family is encouraged to sign-up on the bulletin board in the Narthex. By welcoming the icon into your home for one week, you become part of a powerful movement of prayer and discernment. Be a source of inspiration and grace in our parish community. Remember to bring the icon and prayer booklet to church the following week, and place it on the Tetrapod for the next family on the list. Any questions, please contact Fr. Vasyl.

UPDATE - BISHOP'S APPEAL 2025: The Bishop's Appeal 2025, began in October. Congratulations! We have now exceeded our goal of \$9,800.00! *God bless you for your generosity to our Eparchy.* You can still pledge to the Bishop's Appeal, and payments will be accepted through June 30, 2026. Any contributions received after December 31, 2025, must be attributed to the 2026 tax year. Checks must be made payable to: Eparchy of Passaic, and mailed to: 445 Lackawanna Avenue, Woodland Park, NJ 07424-2969. You can also pledge online at: www.eparchyofpassaic.com, then click on “Giving.” Pamphlets are still available in the Narthex.

Reflection from Mount St. Macrina, Uniontown, PA

By: Sister Barbara Jean Mihalchick, OSBM, Sisters of St. Basil the Great

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Now we come to the Sunday of the Ancestors. Think about this: when you're trying to retell a really important event in your own life what a struggle it is to convey the fullness of that experience to another.

It helps me to understand the telling of the Christmas story in the Gospel, for instance, and the stories of the coming of the Savior and His whole History.

So, we see it through the eyes of four Gospel writers. Matthew starts with the genealogy of Jesus and starts way back in the beginning of time and goes on to the relationship of Joseph and Mary before it gets to the Christmas story.

Luke begins with the birth of John the Baptist and goes right through the birth of Jesus and the flight into Egypt and all the rest we know as part of the Christmas story.

Mark's Gospel skips the whole beginning and starts with the adult Jesus in a ministry. John's Gospel takes a completely different approach – a very spiritual, mystical, theological approach and brings us to recognize Christ as the Light of the World and the great happening of history.

We need these different perspectives just as you would try in various ways to convey an event that's really special and big and to bring the inner meaning of it to be shared with another person.

In this reflection time as we approach Christmas, it's good to ask ourselves – in this great story we face each year – what part of it, particularly, speaks to me this year? That's how I approach getting into the spirit of Christmas. What of all these elements that we surround ourselves with in this special season touches my heart this year?

I'll tell you what it is so far and that is the phrase which says the Christ child comes in a form that looks like me. If we were comparing baby pictures, there wouldn't be too much difference, and that amazes my heart this year.

It might be other things that touch you. It might have been the humble surroundings that Christ was born into It might be the foreigners – the kings. Who came to worship and seemed

to understand more than others did. It could be the dear shepherds who are amazed; the angles who bring the message and bring light into this scene.

What is this year and that may help you get inside the experience of the greatest moment of history? The greatest gift humanity has ever received. Is Christ, our Savior.

Let that touch our hearts and inspire to us the kind of loving generosity that the Father has shared with us in giving His Son. Let it change our whole perspective to a loving one – to generosity and to the call to imitate this love by serving others, as well.

May God bless us and bring to this Holy Season this Christmas a spirit of love, peace, and joy.

THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD ANNUAL PARISH POT-LUCK LUNCHEON:

Save the date – please join us for some parish fellowship on **Sunday, January 11th**, **following our 9:00am Divine Liturgy**, for our annual Theophany pot-luck luncheon in our social hall. More details to follow.

EASTERN CATHOLIC LIFE (ECL):

For those who are not familiar with the ECL, this is our Eparchy of Passaic's newspaper. We are in the process of updating our ECL subscription list for 2026. If you would like to either newly subscribe or renew your subscription to the ECL, please send the church an email, and let us know by **Sunday, January 4th**, so that we can send our updated parish list to the Eparchy of Passaic. The cost is \$20/year, and checks should be made payable to: Patronage Church (please mark on the memo of your check that this is for the ECL). Cash will also be accepted. Those that receive church envelopes, can find a pink ECL envelope in the packet you received in the mail.

CHRISTMAS FLOWER SALE: Many thanks to those who ordered Poinsettias that are being used to decorate our church for Christmas. We appreciate your support of our fundraiser!

ICONOGRAPHY CLASS: There are only 2 slots left for our Iconography Class scheduled for **February 27th, 28th, and March 1, 2026**, at Patronage Church. If you are interested in participating, please contact Kevin Ross (keviross@gmail.com), as soon as possible. The total cost for this Iconography class is \$250, with \$50 due immediately to hold your registration, and \$200 due on the date of the first class.

Night Before Christmas Rusyn Style (Courtesy of the Carpatho-Rusyn Society)

T'was the night before Rozdestv and all through the house
The Rusnaks all gathered to eat sauerkraut

The Kolach was nestled all snug in its dish
While babalky were cooking and so was some fish

Women in their babushkas and men in their caps
Has all settled down with food in their laps

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter
We all left our meals to see what was the matter

Away to the window Cetka flew like a flash
Screaming 'Lock all the doors and hide all the cash'

And what to our wondering eyes should appear
But a pagac shaped sleigh and reindeer

With a little old Rusnak so lively and quick
We knew in a moment it was Big Juzik

More rapid than ruzanci his reindeer all came
As he shouted, 'On Stefan' and each reindeer's name

On Stefan, on Petro, on Janko, and Georgij.
On Vasil, on Andrej, on Pavel and Dimitrij.'

Down the smoke vent he came with a leap and a bound
Dancing a csardas and twirling around

He did a short polka then went to his work
And gave us pirohi then turned with a jerk.

We gave him kapusta and Zedo's old clothes
Then we sang D'ivnaja Novina and up the smoke vent he rose

But we heard him exclaim as we took off our coats
Vesely Svjat to all and to all Dobru Noc.

Children's Corner - Nativity of Our Lord



Fill in the blanks using these words:

heavens Theotokos mandorla magi Christ Bethlehem
Angels ox earth Nativity star glory shepherds manger

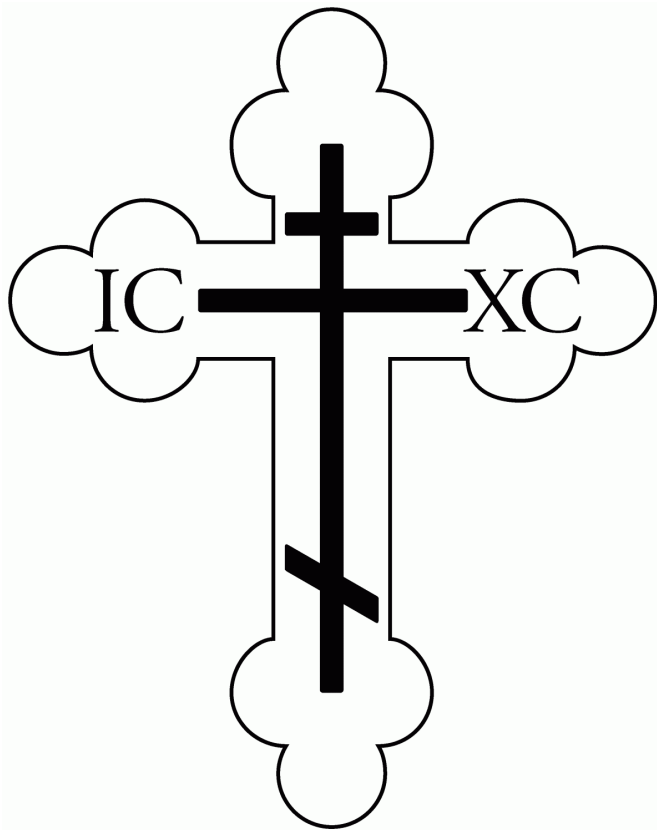
The above image is the _____ icon. In the center is the infant _____ lying in a _____. The _____ is beside Him, and an _____ is behind Him. At the very top is a shape called the _____. It signifies the presence and the _____ of God. It beams from the _____, pointing to the Christ child, which shows His descent from heaven to _____. On the left, the 3 _____ are traveling from afar, following the _____ in the sky. _____ appear in the heavens above and tell the good news to the _____ in the field so that they can see this divine child born in the little town of _____.

GCU COOKIE SOCIAL: Many thanks to the GCU for their generous donation for today's social. Their continued support of our church is greatly appreciated!

WELCOME TO OUR PARISH: We welcome all new visitors, to our parish family, and are happy you are joining us to share in the celebration of the Divine Liturgy and hope you will become an active part of our parish community. We receive the Body and Blood of Christ in our mouth by spoon; please DO NOT stick out your tongue. All Catholics may receive the Eucharist if you are in good standing and prepared. If you would like to be added to our parish email list, send us an email at patronage.church@gmail.com. ***If you want to make us your home church, registration is the OFFICIAL way to join our church.*** Simply complete a census form that is located on the bookrack in the Narthex, or on our website, and either mail it to the church, or place it in the offertory basket in the back of our Temple. On-line donation information can be found under "Stewardship" in this bulletin.

"My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples" (Isaiah 56:7).

**Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year!**



**Christ is Born! Glorify Him!
Christos Razdajetsja! Slavite Jeho!**



**PATRONAGE OF THE MOTHER OF GOD
BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND
CHRISTMAS 2025**



Christmas Poinsettias have been placed in our church for the Glorious Nativity of Our Newborn Savior by the following:

IN HONOR OF:

- ❖ **Our Children and Grandsons;** From: Kelley and Clyde Wood (marble Poinsettia)
- ❖ **Our Children and Grandchildren;** From: Deacon Anthony and Theresa Kotlar (pink Poinsettia)
- ❖ **Jocelyn McClelland;** From: Katie McClelland (red Poinsettia)
- ❖ **Our Children and Grandchildren;** From: Dennis and Sharon Kotula (marble Poinsettia)
- ❖ **Dennis and Robin Bartko;** From: Mary Beth Bartko (red Poinsettia)

Mnohaja l'ita

IN MEMORY OF:

- ❖ **+Robert Elwell, Sr.;** From: Ann Marie Elwell (red Poinsettia)
- ❖ **+Michael and +Anna Kuchta;** From: Ann Marie Elwell (marble Poinsettia)
- ❖ **+George Bartko; +Elizabeth Bartko; and +Nicholas Bartko;** From: Mary Beth Bartko (red Poinsettia)
- ❖ **+William and +Martha Rudy; and +Philip and +Esther Kotula;** From: Dennis and Sharon Kotula and Family (marble Poinsettia)
- ❖ **+Michael and +Ann Totin;** From: John and Cathy Gunter (red Poinsettia)
- ❖ **+Christine Colorito;** From: John and Cathy Gunter (red Poinsettia)

- ❖ **+Edward & +Gertrude Muiznieks;** From: Charlie and Larissa Toth (2 red Poinsettias)
- ❖ **+John and +Mary Toth;** From: Charlie and Larissa Toth (2 red Poinsettias)
- ❖ **+Josephine Kotch;** From: Regina Yackanicz (red Poinsettia)
- ❖ **+Simeon Esquela;** From: Anna Esquela (red Poinsettia)
- ❖ **+Karl R. Karlson;** From: The Karlson Family (marble Poinsettia)
- ❖ **+Our Deceased Loved Ones;** From: The Karlson Family (pink Poinsettia)
- ❖ **Deceased Members of the +Kotlar and +Bodaj Families;** From: Deacon Anthony and Theresa Kotlar (pink Poinsettia)
- ❖ **+George Dulina, Sr.;** From: Stephen Dulina (white Poinsettia)
- ❖ **+Marge Dulina;** From: Stephen Dulina (red Poinsettia)
- ❖ **+Richard McClelland, Sr.;** From: Katie McClelland (white Poinsettia)
- ❖ **+Gordon and +Marge Jones;** From: Katie McClelland (marble Poinsettia)
- ❖ **+Phyllis Skovran;** From: Michael Skovran (white Poinsettia)
- ❖ **+John and +Anna Skovran;** From: Michael Skovran (white Poinsettia)
- ❖ **+Andrew and +Dorothy Benlock;** From: Michael Skovran (pink Poinsettia)
- ❖ **+James Roberts;** From: The Roberts Family (red Poinsettia)
- ❖ **+Reynaldo Bautista;** From: The Roberts Family (red Poinsettia)

Vičnaja Pamjat

Christ is born: glorify him. Christ from the heavens: go out to welcome him. Christ on earth: exalt him. All the earth, sing to the Lord, and praise him with joy, O peoples, for he is glorified.

The Canon of the Nativity, Ode 1

By these words from the Canon of the Nativity, we proclaim the majestic and joyful news: Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is born in Bethlehem! This news fills me with great joy and prompts me to share it with you, my dear brothers and sisters!

I would like to encourage you, my dear brothers and sisters, to follow the Christmas Star this Christmas time. With courage and joy, together with the shepherds, let us embark on a journey in our hearts to see the newborn Jesus, and together, let us majestically glorify Him. After all, we all need Him, and more than anything, we need only Him.

Today, the Savior is born for us! Today, there is no place for sadness in our hearts or in our families. There is no place for sadness when life is born! Today, life is born that conquers the fear of death! Today is the fulfillment of God's promises, which gives us eternal life!

No one can feel excluded from this joy! No one can be beyond this joy! Today, we are all called to share this joy and proclaim this great event to all: Our Lord, the Winner over death, comes into this world to set us free from the death of sin and grant us eternal life!

In these days of Christmas, we are all filled with joy because Love is among us. This love is the presence of the Child Jesus. Only this love of Jesus can bring true peace and tranquility into our hearts, families, and countries.

During these holidays, as we celebrate the Birth of our Savior and meditate on the majestic mystery of Redemption, first and foremost, let us give thanks to God for His grace in coming down to us, that we may know and love Him. Also, in these days, confidently and courageously decide to live as His children, in order to enter the Kingdom of God.

From the bottom of my heart, which is filled with the joy of Christ's birth, I sincerely congratulate all of you – my brothers and sisters, your families, and all your relatives and friends – on the Great Feast of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ. I wish for all of you to follow the Christmas Star, which represents our vocation, and may we all be called to live a TRUE Christian life, fully aware that we are children of God. Only this real and original vocation, and the life lived according to it, leads us to meet our Savior, Jesus Christ. Therefore, never lose sight of the light of the Bethlehem star in your hearts, never lose the light of your vocation to serve God and your neighbors, so as not to lose God in your life.

Please, never forget that the Holy, humble Lord came into the world to sanctify us, and that all of us are called to holiness. Follow the Christmas Star! Follow your vocation, and the God of peace will be with you!

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

Fr. Vasyl Symyon