

UKRAINIAN RESOURCES FOR THE DOMESTIC CHURCH SUNDAY OF THE HOLY ANCESTORS OF CHRIST

THE TRISAGION PRAYERS

Parents: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen. *(Three times)*

Response: Glory be to you, our God, glory be to You.

Parents: Heavenly King, Advocate, Spirit of Truth, Who are everywhere present and fill all things, Treasury of Blessings, Bestower of Life, come and dwell within us; cleanse us of all that defiles us, and O Good One, save our souls.

Children: Holy ✠ God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal, have mercy on us. *(Three times)*

Glory be to the Father ✠ and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

Trinity most Holy, have mercy on us. Cleanse us of our sins, O Lord; Pardon our transgressions, O master; look upon our weaknesses and heal them, O Holy One; for the sake of Your name.

Lord, have mercy! *(Three times)*

Glory be to the Father ✠ and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

RESURRECTIONAL TROPARION - TONE 3

Let the heavens be glad, let the earth rejoice,
for the Lord has done a mighty deed with His arm.
He trampled death by death;
He became the first born of the dead;
He saved us from the abyss of Hades and granted great mercy to the world."

EPISTLE: HEBREWS 11:9 - 10; 32 – 40

Brethren, by faith, Abraham lived in the Land of the Promise as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the co-heirs of the same promise, for he was looking for the city with fixed foundations, of which city the architect and builder is God. And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barac, Samson, Jephthe, David and Samuel and the prophets, who by faith conquered kingdoms, wrought justice, obtained the fulfillment of promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of sword, recovered strength from weakness, became valiant in battle, routed foreign armies.

Women had their dead restored to them though resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to yield for their release in order to obtain a better resurrection. Others again suffered mockery and blows, even chains and jailing's. They were stoned, cut to pieces, put to the question, killed by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, distressed, afflicted (of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts, mountains, caves and holes in the ground.

And none of these, despite the positive witnessing of faith, received what was promised, for God has something better in store for us, so that they were not to reach their final perfection without us.

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 1:1 - 25

The book of the origin of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, Jacob begot Judah and his brethren. Judah begot Perez and Zarah whose mother was Tamar. Perez begot Hezron, Hezron begot Ram. And Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, Nahshon begot Salma. Salma begot Boaz of Rahab. Boaz begot Obed of Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, Jesse begot David the King.

And David the King begot Solomon of the former wife of Uriah. Solomon begot Rehoboam, Rehoboam begot Abijah, Abijah begot Asa. And Asa begot Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat begot Joram, Joram begot Azariah. And Azariah begot Jotham, Jotham begot Ahaz, Ahaz begot Ezechiah. And Ezechiah begot Manasseh, Manasseh begot Amon, Amon begot Josiah. And Josiah begot Jeconiah and his brethren at the time of deportation to Babylon.

And after the deportation to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel. And Zerubbabel begot Abiud, Abiud begot Eliakim, Eliakim begot Azor. And Azor begot Zadok, Zadok begot Achim, Achim begot Eliud. And Eliud begot Eleazar, Eleazar begot Matthan, Matthan begot Jacob.

And Jacob begot Joseph, the husband of Mary, and of her was born Jesus, Who is called Christ.

So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations. And from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to Christ, fourteen generations.

Now the origin of Christ was like this. When Mary His mother had been betrothed to Joseph, she was found, before they came together, to be with child by the Holy Spirit. But Joseph her husband, being a just man and not wishing to expose her to reproach, was thinking of putting her away privately. But while he was considering these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Do not be afraid, Joseph, son of David, to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is begotten in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she shall bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins."

Now all this came to pass that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled, "*Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son; and they shall call his name Emmanuel;*" which is interpreted, "God with us." So, Joseph, arising from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him, and took Mary to be his wife. And he did not know her till she brought forth her firstborn son. And he called His name Jesus.

CATECHETICAL SUMMARY

The genealogy of the Lord is often underappreciated. All too often we tune it out or gloss over it when we read the Bible because it might seem "boring." It is anything but boring! The genealogy of the Lord is *breathtaking* because it tells us of God's abiding love for us – his abiding love which culminates in him taking us to himself in the incarnation.

He embraces us so fully that we can say the two – God and Man – have become "one flesh" in Jesus. It is not just a list of names but it is our story – our history – the accounting of God's abiding love in our life.

However, there is more; something hidden, something missed by many who hear this "list" of names.

Those who are counted as "ancestors" of Christ were not particularly holy, some were far from it, and yet, they are given the most exalted status of being ancestors of Christ. As one author put it – It seems that the "Sinless Lord" was happy to descend from an awfully sinful stock."

So why include them? They are included to show us the very depth and breadth of God's abiding love for us. Regardless of our weakness and sinfulness, the Lord has a future plan for each and every one of us if only we would open ourselves to that plan.

Even Bethlehem, the very place the Lord chose as the place where he would come into our midst, as it is even today, is not a great city – it is not Jerusalem, or Rome or New York, and yet, somehow in its “smallness” it is chosen by God. In a similar way Mary is chosen – a small, apparently insignificant Palestinian girl.

By outward appearances, she is of little value, much as Bethlehem is “too small” to be considered great. And yet, the Lord does not see as we see. he does not judge as we judge. While we see what is on the outside, he reads the heart.

When we hear the genealogy of the Lord this Sunday, let us be reminded that it is not by our own strength that we will be saved, but by our willingness to allow the Lord to act in our life. As we approach the feast of the Nativity – the feast of God's humility in taking on our human nature – let us become small that the Lord who is Great might lift us up to Glory.